

# ADVENTIST REVIEW



WEEKLY NEWS AND INSPIRATION FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

JANUARY 20, 1994

## ***Our God Provides***



### School Vouchers

In reference to the item in the November 25 Newsbreak noting that "the NAD executive committee revised the division's policy on church-state relationships," I was shocked to read that we now *do not* "disapprove of government assistance that flows directly to the benefit of the parent or church." Isn't this 180 degrees away from counsel received and from our firm position for decades?

Does this mean that we are now for a voucher system? Will we join the Catholics, Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, James Dobson, ex-secretary of United States education William Bennett, and others in pushing for a voucher system that would pump billions of taxpayers' dollars into the hands of parents who opt for educational choice, and ultimately into the hands of private or church schools?

When voucher distribution begins, do you believe that Seventh-day Adventist parents will refuse government help and continue to pay school tuition out of their own pockets? The government would care less through what channel the money flows to a school. Government money means government control and regulations.

Jack Hall  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

*The Adventist Review will discuss the pros and cons of school vouchers in a forthcoming article.—Editors.*

### Last-Day Events

"More Catholic Than the Pope?" (special issue on last-day events, corresponding to Oct. 21) aroused my interest. I appreciated Eric Anderson sharing his research on Malachi Martin's background; I also appreciated his analysis of the main thrust of Martin's book *The Keys of This Blood*.

As Anderson rightly points out, Martin sees the internal structure of the church in disarray. The important point is that this declining situation is caused by the pope's obsession with his grand design for world dominion. While he travels the world promoting his one-world government, Catholic-style, he is failing as the shepherd of the flock.

Where we break with Martin is on how the "endgame" will end. He is not a prophet, and, as Anderson points out, he's all mixed up on what the future holds. We, in the light of Bible prophecy and *The Great Controversy*, know better. Let's not throw out the baby with the bathwater.

Orley Berg, Pastor  
North Fork, California

I am not an expert on the New Age movement, so I eagerly read "The Last Great Deception." While I agree with the author's concern to warn people about the New Age, I came away with several questions regarding the accuracy of the article.

The author suggests that because Hillary Clinton imagined conversations with Eleanor Roosevelt to help herself cope with the stresses of the U.S. presidential campaign, she was taking part in New Age thinking or spiritualism. It seems to me that many of us have gained new insights through imagining a dialogue with a hero or role model.

I have read M. Scott Peck's *The Road Less Traveled*, as well as several other books by him. Vasquez claims that Peck "presents reincarnation as a viable belief for the Christian." Peck, however, was not a Christian when he wrote this book (he became one shortly after), and there is no evidence that the book was written for Christians. Furthermore, if we look at the content, we find that Peck was discussing the basic principle that in order for growth to occur in a person's life, some of the old habits and ways of thinking must be given up. Christ stressed the same principle when He said, "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse" (Matt. 9:16, NIV).

Teresa Reeve  
Mound, Minnesota

"Living in the Last Days" was dynamic and persuasive. But it put God in the position of allowing one group of people to be more sorely tempted than people

of other times. God is completely fair to everyone in every age.

People in the past have also said that they were more sorely tempted than any others. God has given us a different answer, however. He tells us Enoch "was surrounded with society no more friendly to righteousness than is that which surrounds us" (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 122). But there is another answer for people of all times: "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. 12:9).

Mary H. McLaughlin  
National City, California

### In All Things

Re "Giving Thanks When Your Heart Is Breaking" (Nov. 25).

My husband and I have recently been through a crushing experience where someone very dear to us was found guilty of theft and imprisoned. We were totally shocked and unaware of such a thing having taken place. I filled several of God's "tear bottles" (and still add a few drops now and then), and prayed desperately for God's help to get through the heartbreak.

Through this experience, I too have gained new insight about giving thanks in all things. While I cannot thank Him for the sin this dear one committed, I do thank Him for carrying us through this difficult time and for His healing love.

Name Withheld

### Amazing Pictures

When I received my Week of Prayer readings (Oct. 28 issue), I was amazed at the illustrations. The detail of each picture is perfect; I cannot get over looking at them.

I am an Adventist of some 60 years' standing, and this is the first time I have put pen to paper. I live in a home for elderly people and we have a wonderful time. I show the pictures to everyone.

Mrs. Gladys M. Judd  
Northants, England

*As for the past several Week of Prayer issues, artist Darrel Tank prepared the illustrations for the 1993 readings.—Editors.*



# ADVENTIST REVIEW

JANUARY 20, 1994

## DEPARTMENTS

- 2 Letters
- 6 Newsbreak
- 10 Children's Corner
- 11 Dear Miriam
- 17 The Way It Was
- 20 World Report
- 23 Reflections

## EDITORIALS

- 4 What Often Isn't Said—1
- 5 The Snows of Redemption

## NEXT WEEK

### "Tiring Out Partridges"

Do we encourage or discourage one another?

**"What Part of 'No' Don't You Understand?"** It is said that date rape exists among Seventh-day Adventists. What can we do?

## ARTICLES

### DEVOTIONAL

## 8 Christ Our Leader and Provider

Throughout history Jesus has always provided for His people. He's given us salvation, sustenance, fellowship, a future, and opportunity. How should we respond? *by Sharon Cress*

### EDITOR'S REPORT

## 12 Papua New Guinea

Membership in this island country has skyrocketed in the past 10 years, topping 141,000. Why is our church there growing so rapidly? *by Myron Widmer*

### LIFESTYLE

## 15 Going Home—Again

Ever-increasing numbers of young people are flocking back to the family nest to visit or to live. How can you adjust to the change without losing your cool? *by Colleen L. Reece*

### STORY

## 18 The Day My Husband Disappeared, Part II

Manuel Ramirez had been missing for more than three weeks. His family, the police, and church members feared he was dead. Was there any hope? *by Alicia Ramirez*



## 12 A journey back in time



## 15 Home, sweet home

Cover photo by Joel D. Springer

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# What Often Isn't Said—1

I must admit that I enjoy traveling locally and overseas to report to you, our readers, on our church's worldwide work. A bonus on the trips is the opportunity to experience the natural wonders of the world.

I've walked among the bogs of Newfoundland, landed in a bush plane on a frozen lake in frigid February in northern Alaska, walked the sidewalks of Snake Street in Hong Kong, eaten hard-boiled quail eggs in Myanmar (Burma), and journeyed back in time when visiting some isolated jungle villages in Papua New Guinea.

Why wouldn't I like the traveling. It's great! It helps make up for all the days of work spent in a windowless office in the General Conference complex.

## Long Days, Short Nights

Yet the travel isn't all fun and games. It's exhausting. But the hardest part is not the long flights, the short nights, the icy cold or broiling heat and oppressive humidity, the missed meals, or sleeping in a different bed every night.

The hardest part is coming face-to-face with the incredible needs of the church in so many areas of the world. Not so much the spiritual needs, but the need of physical resources that could be supplied if donations were given.

What we take for granted in wealthier countries as the least-acceptable minimums is often out of the question for many of the developing nations.

At certain times the needs really get to me, and I turn away so the tears welling up in my eyes won't be seen by my hosts. And at other times when I return to my own country, it's anger that I feel at the wasteful, extravagant, and selfish use of money—by individuals and organizations, even our churches—that could do so much to further God's

cause both at home and abroad.

But the needs around the world are usually out of our sight. And we often don't say or don't print the true conditions for fear of deriding or offending the best efforts of the individuals or organizations in need.

The struggle is between reporting the true conditions and thereby encouraging giving and responsible interdependence of fellow Christians, or making mission work seem as if everything is rosy and thereby subtly encouraging unneeded consumption at home or at our local churches for things not directly tied to soul winning.

## Beyond Belief

Without doubt one thing is certain: the basic needs of our church in so many parts of the world are almost beyond belief. Ask any of those who travel quite a bit.

I've seen a mission office trying to coax a few more letters out of a worn-out 40-plus-year-old typewriter; pastors and theology students whose entire libraries are little more than a Bible; schools without decent desks; students without textbooks; schools without adequate dormitories for the number of students who want to come; and missions that must drop valuable workers because they cannot afford the US\$40 a month to keep them on the payroll.

I've sat on rough-sawn wood "pews," and visited primitive housing for school and office staff; dormitories without dividers, clothes closets, dressers, or mattresses; school "cafeterias" so needy that the students must eat their meals on the lawn without chairs or tables, year-round; and falling-down shacks for church buildings.

I've witnessed hundreds of children without Sabbath school classrooms or

basic teaching resources, and hospitals and clinics with severely outdated equipment—or little at all.

I've seen openings for mission work left unentered for lack of funds, and Adventist children left uneducated because schooling is not an option for them.

## The Past Speaks

In a pile of old *Review and Herald* magazines given to me several years ago, this statement by Ellen G. White on the front cover of the July 7, 1932, issue caught my attention:

"I know that times are hard, money is not plentiful; but the truth must be spread, and money to spread it must be placed in the treasury.

"Our message is worldwide; yet many are doing literally nothing, many more so very little, with so great a want of faith, that it is next to nothing. Shall we abandon the fields that we have already opened in foreign countries? Shall we falter and become laggards now, in the very last scenes of this earth's history?

"My heart says, No, no! I cannot contemplate this question without a burning zeal to have the work go. We would not deny our faith, we would not deny Christ, yet we shall do this unless we move forward as the providence of God opens the way. The work must not stop for want of means."

I know that we might never be able to supply all the needs, *nor should we*. But I would hope that glimpses of the true needs around the world might encourage us to live simpler lives and possibly give a few more dollars for God's mission work.

MYRON WIDMER





# The Snows of Redemption

Not all snow is alike. It has its moods, its ways, its own persona. It holds a power over us far beyond its mere presence. When winter comes, snow draws us into an evocative theater that may speed us from past to present to future. For me snow is a catalyst for introspection.

## A Wild Symphony

Nebraska snows, it seemed to me, were seldom gentle. As a college student I sheathed myself in coats and scarves but could not protect my face from the piercing blast of a blizzard's siege. Around crevices of brick and stone, the wild wind piled the snow in shapes fantastical—or with knife-edge it carved drifts long and lean.

From a wide third-floor window in a warm college dormitory, however, I could survey the landscape more dispassionately. From there the snow looked less like a storm and more like a symphony.

Ten thousand snowflakes lifted in crescendo and then burst into fanfare. In concert they swirled and spun, drifted and fell, then dropped in a final bow. Though tested by the driving cold and wind, I found that the sight of such a snow could cleanse my soul with beauty.

## Light and Solitude

Elsewhere, the snows of reverie have captured me both with bold abundance and with understated sparseness.

It was in the Walla Walla Valley that I first experienced *optional* snow. One could enjoy it from afar, or drive up the mountain to it, passing beneath trees bent low under "Russian greatcoats," all thick and ruffed and white.

Sometimes the heavens opened and the sunlight shot down through a brilliant sky, ricocheting glory from tree-

tops and from mountain peaks. The diamond clearness and flowing whiteness transfixed the eye, the imagination. Here was purity, grace, and unspeakable wonder.

And if one grew tired, wet, and hungry, or feared the drifts might deepen too much too quickly, the roads below beckoned, clear and free—albeit to a world that was stubbled and unshaven and that worked no magic.

*Snows from all the  
years flowed around  
me. All things  
were made new.*

On other days, when early snow came lightly on the foothills, I would drive to a farmer's pasture, abandon my car, and hike up and up as one hill leaned into another. Like a horse's mane, dark pines edged the ridges above; below, scrub brush outlined the rumps of the ravines.

The air was windless and deafeningly still. If the faint brush of snow did not at first reveal to me the brown forms of wintering deer and elk, I found them by listening. Startled by my presence, they telegraphed me their location as their hooves clattered against the stones. I would begin my tally: on one Sabbath more than 200 deer.

The wild things and I shared the camaraderie of this quiet world given to us by the snow. For the snow that rebuked casual hikers summoned the

deer and elk from the high pastures down to meet me.

## The Never-Empty Sky

Eventually I spent nine winters in Michigan, where snow shawls down from a never-empty sky. It falls down motionlessly and mounts up effortlessly. It comes early and stays late. Even snow on its way somewhere else seldom fails to drop by.

On such an evening I walked alone through a nearby field. Flakes big as silver dollars pelted me, plopping heavily on the hood of my wool coat. They pummeled my back and laid down a thick pad across my neck and shoulders.

An old oak gathered the snow in its gnarled arms like goose-down pillows. Thistles and milkweed pods netted it like butterflies. And in the distance it flocked under streetlamps like sparkling, fluttering birds.

Everywhere it fell it soothed and quieted the world. It stilled my soul. It filled my deep tracks even as I made them.

That evening the snows from all the years flowed around me. Time was no more. Old things passed away. The world's sharp edges were smoothed, its petty boundaries erased. All things were made new.

My trail vanished on the hill as though it had never been. The blanket of Christ's snowy righteousness enveloped me. In that moment I stood before God without a past and open to the future—fully clean, fully loved, and fully forgiven. In that moment I found a holy peace luminous with the snows of redemption.

KIT WATTS





More than 10,000 Adventists gathered at a sports stadium in Guatemala City for a Sabbath Day of Victory to give thanks for their new churches and schools. The music of various groups (inset) highlighted the day filled with happiness and thanksgiving.

## Guatemala '93—Maranatha Completes an Ambitious Project

GUATEMALA CITY—More than 10,000 Adventists from across this mountainous country walked, drove, or rode for hours to gather in this capital city for a special Sabbath day of giving thanks—thanks to God and to Maranatha Volunteers International.

Within just one year Maranatha Volunteers International has completed, except for a few finishing touches, its most ambitious single construction project ever—50 church buildings, 3 large school complexes, and 17 buildings, including staff homes, for the Adventist-run International Children's Care orphanage and boarding academy. In addition, Maranatha completed 75 church buildings that had been partially built by local congregations.

That's the reason so many Guatemalan Adventists converged on a huge sports stadium for the Dia de Victoria (Day of Victory) or Dia de Acción de Gracias de Maranatha '93 (Day of Giving Thanks to Maranatha).

And indeed it was a day of victory, of thanksgiving, of joyful celebration—for the members of 125 congregations now have brand-new buildings for worship and evangelism, hundreds of Adventist children now have new school facilities, and all of the staff members at the Adventist orphanage now have adequate housing.

While most of the new cement

block-constructed church buildings would be considered basic by Western standards (see photo), they are a wonderful gift to the church in Guatemala. No longer will the members have to scramble to find a place for baptism. No longer will the children have to sit someplace outside for their Sabbath schools. And a few congregations will no longer have to feel embarrassed about inviting people to their churches.

While Maranatha (an Adventist supporting ministry with more than 9,000 volunteers) and its donors funded most of the construction, each congregation was asked to fund \$3,000 of the near \$20,000 cost of its church building. Volunteers constructed the three schools and other buildings, and local crews worked with Maranatha construction superintendent Darrell Hardy to construct the churches.

For the Sabbath morning guest speaker Robert S. Folkenberg, it was like coming home. Folkenberg, now president of the General Conference, served as president of the Central American Union (1975-1980) when its headquarters

was here, before it moved to Costa Rica.

Folkenberg, speaking fluently in Spanish, urged members to remain committed to Christ, to accept Christ's assurance of salvation in Him, and to put aside all



Sixty-one persons were baptized in an afternoon baptismal service.

*By Myron Widmer, an associate editor of the Adventist Review.*



Maranatha board members and others toured one of 50 nearly completed church buildings.





GC president Robert S. Folkenberg put on some work clothes and helped lay block at a school project in Escuintla.

things that hinder a relationship with Christ. He commended the members for their evangelistic work that has helped the Adventist Church here grow nearly 10 percent per year—bringing membership to nearly 60,000 members in 208 churches, 228 groups, and 82 branch Sabbath schools.

Following the morning services, 61 individuals were baptized. They join more than 1,000 who have been baptized since September as the result of evangelistic meetings held by pastors and lay members alike. During Sabbath school Maranatha president Don Noble reported that as part of Maranatha's overall construction program, each church has received \$500 to hold evangelistic meetings in its new church building.

On Sunday, Elder and Mrs. Folkenberg and others traveled north to Poptun for ribbon-cutting ceremonies for 17 new buildings at the International Children's Care (ICC) orphanage and its boarding

academy next door. When the Guatemala Mission could no longer care for the boarding academy, ICC accepted the responsibility (in 1990) and now through donations and limited tuition charges cares for about 275 youth—from preschool to grade 11—at the two facilities.

Children at the orphanage put on a special program for the visitors, including music, handwritten thank-you cards, and a Pathfinder drill team performance.

As Guatemala '93 ended in December, Maranatha is now turning its attention to an even larger project—100 new church buildings in Mexico this year.

## WORLD CHURCH

**Northern Brazil Coast Notes Marked Growth.** In the Cariri region of northern Brazil, Adventist pastor Marcus Rodrigues says he holds weekly baptisms. A second congregation has been organized with 60, according to the South American Division paper.

In Milagres a new Adventist church building is under construction that seats 200 persons, and three Voice of Prophecy programs are broadcasting in the state.

**New Church Buildings in Pakistan.** Four new church buildings that house new Adventist congregations in previously unentered areas were recently dedicated in Pakistan. Less than 3 percent of Pakistan's 120 million residents are Christians, says General Conference presi-

dent Robert S. Folkenberg.

Four more new Adventist church buildings will be dedicated in the next few weeks as part of a Global Mission program to organize 15 new congregations by the summer of 1995.

## NORTH AMERICA

**To New Position.** Jose V. Rojas, Central California Conference associate church ministries director, has been elected director of youth and young adult ministries for the North American Division.

Rojas replaces Ted Wick, who recently became director of volunteers for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International.

**California Honors White Memorial Physicians.** The California Office of State-wide Health Planning and Development honored White Memorial Medical Center physicians Hector Flores and Edward Cruz for their work in addressing the health-care needs of underserved populations.

Flores codirects the residency program at the Adventist-owned hospital in Los Angeles. The program is the first of its kind in the nation to focus the training of young doctors on becoming family-practice physicians in low-income and

medically underserved communities.

Cruz, a graduate of the program, has developed a family practice in a migrant health center in Fresno, California.

**R&H Book Gets National Media Attention.** A story from the second volume of *Christmas in My Heart*, by Columbia Union College English and Communication Department chairperson Joe L. Wheeler, was read on the December 23 broadcast of *Focus on the Family*, which is heard on more than 1,300 radio outlets throughout the United States.

## ALSO IN THE NEWS

**Amity Press Continues in China.** Amity Press in Nanjing, China, recently reported printing the 6 millionth Bible in Chinese, according to the General Conference Communication Department.

Amity Press's initial financing came from Germany's Christian community, including the Adventist Church. Future plans include the printing of 1.6 million Bibles this year and 1.8 million in 1995.

Amity also has permission from the Chinese government to print *The Desire of Ages*.

## CHURCH CALENDAR

Jan.	22	Health Ministries Day
Feb.	5	Bible Evangelism Day
Feb.	12	Christian Home and Marriage Week begins
Feb.	19	Youth Temperance Emphasis
Feb.	19	Health and Temperance Magazines Emphasis



# Christ Our Leader and Provider

*Mighty things can happen as we open up to Him.*

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BY SHARON CRESS

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*The following is a condensation of a devotional given at the Annual Council of the General Conference Committee in Bangalore, India, last October.—Editors.*

*"I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel. I will bring them together like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture; the place will throng with people. One who breaks open the way will go up before them; they will break through the gate and go out. Their king will pass through before them, the Lord at their head" (Micah 2:12, 13, NIV).*

**W**hat comfort and hope we find in this message! When we as the remnant are gathered, we need a leader. And we have One provided for us—Jesus Christ!

Just as the Lord went before His people in the pillar of fire and the cloud in the wilderness, so we are told—three times in verse 13—that God will go before His flock, to guide us and do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

Today, again, God is calling this remnant together. He who has broken out for His people so frequently in the past will do so once again in these final days

just before His second coming.

## Notice the Promise!

Jesus provides everything we need. Throughout history He has always provided for His people—for our salvation, for our sustenance, for our fellowship, for our future. The text says also that He is the "one who breaks open." What does that mean? What has He broken open?

The thing He has broken open for us, the thing He has provided for His people, is *opportunity*. Jesus provides an opportunity for the whole world—*His* global mission. Jesus provides an opportunity for the whole church—*our* global mission. And He also provides an opportunity for us as individual members: *my* global mission.

According to the passage, the "one who breaks open the way will go up before them." This suggests that Jesus clears the way for each of us to follow Him. He leads each one in victory and success. No longer are we to be confined to the old places and the old ways. We are not a herd of bleating sheep milling about aimlessly in a sheep pen. Our Leader has gone up before us. He has opened the way before us! Ours is a

triumphal march toward home! Our victory is assured because of the victory He achieved!

Micah's description of the King leading His people in victorious triumph can be personalized in the invitations in the book of Revelation: "I have placed before you an open door," and "I stand at the door and knock" (Rev. 3:8, 20, NIV).

"Door." That single word can signify an invitation to come in, or a barrier to keep others out. But the picture of an open door destroys the concept of a barrier and clearly connotes invitation. At one point, some of our pioneers believed the door of opportunity had been shut! The keen experience of their own disappointment had led them to exclude those who had not *suffered* like themselves. But God's plan is radical, all-inclusive. He opens doors, breaks down barriers, and provides opportunity for the church to carry out its global mission.

It would be tragic to become so preoccupied with peripherals that opportunity passes by unnoticed. Even apparently good things can distract us. Shrill calls for repentance and reform, for example. Often such calls serve only to obstruct our members from hearing the call of opportunity. We need repentance, of course. And we need reform. But should we wait until the church is perfect to follow the lead of our Great Provider? The genius of God's method is that He chooses a motley crew of ordinary people to be His champions of truth. If we bypass Christ's opportunities for mission until the entire church somehow becomes simultaneously perfect, we will wait in our graves.

Jesus has His own method to bring about repentance, revival, and reform. Listen to this statement by Ellen White: "If you will go to work as Christ designs that His disciples shall, and win souls for Him, you will feel the need of a deeper experience and a greater knowledge in divine things, and will hunger and thirst after righteousness."<sup>1</sup>

If you want spiritual conversion, renewal, revival, go to work to win someone else to Jesus. Christ, our provider, knows the problem. Christ, our provider, offers the solution. His



solution is *opportunity*! Triumphant victory! Global mission! Winning souls!

### Jesus Knows All About Us

Wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, Laodicea doesn't even know the extent of its need. We think that we are rich, increased with goods, needing nothing—at the very moment that we need everything. But just as Jesus provided opportunity to His people in the past, He will provide an open door to us today. We must not lose sight of or neglect the very reason for which we exist as a denomination: *the wooing and winning of men and women to Jesus Christ, the calling and preparing of a people ready to meet their Lord.*

Yes, Jesus knows us well. He knows the challenges we have faced—the crunch on finances, the siphoning of tithe funds by pseudoministries, the theological extremes of fringes to the right and left that have shattered the faith of many. He knows about Waco, recession, and negative tithe increases. He knows about lapsed clergy and apathetic laity. But here's the marvel: despite knowing us for what we are, Jesus loves us and provides for us! Our heritage has been one of growth.

Adventism was born in evangelistic fervor and will triumph in the same.

The future belongs to those with enough imagination to seize the opportunities presented to them.

And, thank God, all of us are needed.

A Los Angeles newspaper once ran a sports section headline that read: "No Room for Losers at Ohio State." While that may be true for Ohio State, it must never be true of God's church. Church must be the place with plenty of room for "losers" who want to make a comeback. For them also Jesus has provided an open door.

Jesus continues to provide His church with opportunities, with open doors. Sometimes such opportunities come through careful thought and planning—

as we study facts, figures, and trends. Sometimes, however, new opportunities are thrust upon us unexpectedly—in such a way that human ingenuity or planning could never take credit. Such was the case when the doors to the former Soviet Union opened for the gospel. It was Heaven that opened the door! It was our Provider who gave the opportunity.

Opportunities come to us as a corporate body. But also individually. And individually we must choose to make a difference.



On the west coast of Florida where I grew up, a story is told about a little boy rescuing starfish blown to shore in a fierce storm. Repeatedly he tossed them back into the ocean to save them. As she watched the boy working feverishly, a passing woman remarked, "Most of them will die, you know. You can't save them all. Why do you even bother?"

Lifting a starfish high above his head and throwing it with all his might into the receding surf, the boy responded, "But ma'am, I'll make a difference for this one!"

We must always remind ourselves that the opportunities Jesus provides are not just for the corporate church. They are for me! I must choose—individually—to minister.

Jesus has opened the gate. Jesus has opened the door. Jesus has gone out before us. Jesus wants us no longer to remain penned up in the sheepfold. He waits for us to follow His lead! He is waiting for me! He is waiting for you! We can and we must exchange the petty divisions that continue to weaken and distract us from seizing the opportunities before us.

We are living in "a confused, chaotic, convulsing world, gasping for life and breath," someone said. "To affect a dirty world, it will take a clean church; to infect a sad world, it will take a joyous church; to inspire an apathetic world, it will take a convicted church; to challenge a dying world, it will take a vital, living church; to heal a sick world, it will take a healthy church."<sup>2</sup>

The opportunities our Lord provides will demand "a church unafraid of cancer, unaffected by roadblocks, unflinching in the face of criticism. It will take a church that dares to dream big, to work long, to pray unceasingly, to plan carefully, and to fight bravely against evil and lethargy."<sup>3</sup> It will demand a church willing to compromise on nonessentials, willing to defend to the death the fundamentals, and capable of discerning the difference. "It demands a church willing to sacrifice, willing to risk." "It will take a church whose strength is equal to her task."<sup>4</sup>

### Let's Give It Our Best

Jesus is our mission, our message, and our methodology. He has a saving cure to offer a dying world, and we are His delivery system. Therefore, let us each ask of our own souls today: Am I doing my very best? Am I making the most of the opportunities Jesus has provided me personally?

In his autobiography *Why Not the Best?* former U.S. president Jimmy Carter tells how, after graduating from the Naval Academy, he requested to see



Admiral Rickover to apply for the nuclear Navy. As he walked into the admiral's office he saluted and said, "James Earl Carter; I was fifty-ninth in a class of 830."

Waiting for the anticipated congratulations, Carter tells how he was confused by the admiral's silence. In fact, Admiral Rickover, never noted for interpersonal skills, moved toward the door and turned to indicate the interview was over. Suddenly he looked back at Jimmy Carter and asked, "Did you do your best?" The future president said his whole life passed in review and a cold sweat came down his backbone as he had to reply, "No, sir, I didn't." "Why

not?" asked Admiral Rickover.

That is the question Jesus directs to me—and perhaps to you, too: "Have you done your best with the opportunities I have provided?"

Jesus is ready to lead us out triumphant. He has brought us together, the remnant of Israel. He has broken open the way, and He will open more paths for us in advance of His coming.

To our first fallen parents God promised deliverance from this world. The price for our escape was provided at Calvary. His resurrection marked the surety of our salvation. His priestly ministry is the guaranteed provider of our success! And His Holy Spirit provides

our empowerment. Jesus has passed through before us, at our head. The best we can do—the *very best* we can do—is to follow His lead!

<sup>1</sup> *Steps to Christ*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in *Congregational Tidings*, Sept. 13, 1989.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



Sharon Cress serves pastors' wives and families in her capacity as coordinator for Shepherdess International, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland.



# The Ducks

EDNA MAY OLSEN

Ruby sat with her mother on a bench near the edge of the pond and watched the ducks. She tore up slices of bread and threw the pieces to them.

There were many ducks in the pond, but the ones that fascinated her the most were a mother and five babies that followed her wherever she went. Mother duck noticed a scrap of bread on the bank and left the pond to retrieve it, her babies following closely. Suddenly as the babies reached a small bump in the grass, one of them stumbled, rolled over onto its back, and lay squeaking in surprise!

Mother duck stopped in her tracks, waddled over to it, and made noises that plainly said, "What are you doing in that silly position? Get up on your feet." But the mother's command didn't help at all. Baby duck couldn't right itself, but lay shrieking in frustration. Mother duck pushed at her baby with her beak, flapped her wings,



and then pushed at it again, but it still couldn't get back on its feet.

"Mom, I've got to help," said Ruby, skipping over to the baby duck. But mother duck saw her coming and didn't like it one bit. In fact, she was downright angry that anyone would presume to interfere in a domestic problem.

"You'd better come back, Ruby," said her mother. "She doesn't want you to touch her baby. I'm sure she'll find a way to get it back on its feet."

As they watched, mother duck pushed at her baby again, while the other ducks flapped and shrieked their approval. Finally, after several more pushes, the baby duck was once again standing upright and made off behind its mother, which waddled off back to the pond.

A short time later, however, mother duck and her babies once more ventured onto land. When they reached the same bumpy patch of grass, the same little

duck that had fallen over before did exactly the same thing! There it lay, squeaking piteously, unable to help itself. Mother duck stopped, turned around, and went back to it. She flapped her wings, gave a loud squawk, and shoved at it with her beak. Immediately it flipped over and scrambled to its feet! Then mother duck resumed her walk with her babies lined up behind her.

Ruby and her mother chuckled at them.

"I was just thinking," said her mother, "how like them we are. Even though we follow Jesus, we sometimes fall over. And despite all the encouragement He gives us, it sometimes takes a long time for us to get back up on our feet. But we learn, so the next time it may take only a little push to set us up again. But the important thing to remember," she concluded as they began their walk home, "is to always follow behind Him closely, and then when we stumble or fall we can be sure He'll be right there to pick us up again."





By Miriam Wood

# No Magic Solutions

**I**'m having a problem with my sister (two years younger) and her family. To my face my sister has always been very loving and supportive. We grew up together and attended the same academy and then the same college. We both married, had two children, and settled in the same city. Our parents died, but I was comforted to know that I still had my sister.

It has seemed to me that my children are always reluctant for me to invite their aunt, uncle, and cousins to our house. I now realize that my sister is violently jealous of me and she disparages me to my children and, I suppose, to mutual church friends.

During a conversation regarding a planned family celebration, my daughter burst out, "Mommy, I don't want Auntie to say that Grandma and Grandpa loved you more than they loved her and that they bought you lots more clothes than they bought her. Do we have to play with our cousins?" I sat right down with my child and let her talk it all out: "Auntie says that our daddy makes lots more money than Uncle Ralph [not his real name] and that we have a nicer house than they have and it's not fair . . ." and so on.

I was almost dumbstruck to realize, first, that my sister felt so bitter toward me and, second, that she would criticize me and my husband and our deceased parents to my little children. I want to handle this heartache in a way that is pleasing to the Lord, but I'm not sure how to proceed. Please help me.

The best help I can give you is to point you in the right direction for help—namely, counseling for you and your sister, and possibly your husbands.

I have the feeling that you have been in a condition of denial for many years, for it seems impossible that you would not have heard something your sister had said from someone somewhere.

Have you searched your memory in regard to your parents? Is there a possibility that they *did* favor you, for many reasons, as does happen frequently in families?

I feel that it is necessary to confront your sister immediately, not in anger, and not as a wounded person, but as a sister who wants to get rid of negativity and build a love relationship. A counselor can help both of you to do this. If she refuses to take this step, perhaps she would counsel with your pastor. If your sister still refuses to have counseling, then the two of you must have some sessions together where you are completely honest with each other, and you need to pray together. Remember that both families are affected by this situation.

After you have made a start toward a better relationship, then your husbands should be brought into the picture, and last, the children. Try to make your goal a loving extended family where no one is making snide remarks against another family member. After all, where do we turn in this cold world for love and comfort if not to our families, extended families, and church families? It is important to confront at once each situation that includes both families, and get it ironed out so that it is not a festering sore. I hope you can defeat Satan and have a peaceful, happy, devoted Christian extended family.

**I** have a strong feeling that too many of our church members are so belligerent about our doctrines and principles that they actually turn peo-

ple away from any desire to learn more about our wonderful truths.

For example: Within a few days after moving to a new neighborhood, one of my friends called on the neighbors on either side and told them that she would like to give them Bible studies so they could "find the truth." She was very insistent. She had not bothered to find out if the neighbors were loyal members of other Christian churches. They were, and they were deeply offended at what must have been a very superior, patronizing attitude on her part.

I have been conscious of a number of incidents similar to this one. I know we are told to "witness," but there must be a better way.

I didn't know this type of approach still exists. It was rather common in previous generations when we had not learned all we now know about how to present our truths and especially ourselves in an acceptable way.

When witnessing, we first need to find common ground, such as musical programs to which neighbors can be invited; Vacation Bible Schools for the neighborhood children; seminars of various kinds during the week, to which we can pass out invitations; etc. Also, one must prove oneself to be a good neighbor by helping others in every way possible and being active in community organizations before one should ever get into a doctrinal discussion.

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*Miriam Wood, author of 16 books, is a retired English teacher whose lifelong hobby has been "observing human nature in all its complexity."*





Members of the Adventist church next to Sopas Adventist Hospital in the 7,500-foot central highlands listened during their regular afternoon meeting to the author tell mission stories from around the world.



Pacific Adventist College enjoys a beautiful campus set among the lakes and rural countryside just outside Port Moresby.

**P**ort Moresby:  
Exotic and mysterious, Papua New Guinea

brims with conspicuous contrasts: sweltering equatorial rain forests and towering volcanic peaks, flashy cars and wooden dugout canoes, animists and Adventists, skyscrapers and villages straight out of the Stone Age.

Even tourist guidebooks speak of the contrasts and assert that if you crave a journey back in time, visit Papua New Guinea.

And they're right. Yet the Stone Age isn't anywhere near the hundreds of cities and towns—they're as modern and Western-influenced as those of most developing countries.

But in the bush areas of the central highlands and the northwest toward Irian Jaya (the western half of the island), hundreds of villages remain so isolated that outside civilization hasn't infected them. It's an anthropologist's dream and a sensational place to visit!

And the people all over this island country have been extremely receptive to Seventh-day Adventism. During the past 10 years, membership has soared 100 percent, topping 141,000—and still

# PAPUA NEW GUINEA

*An exotic land brimming with mystery and contrast—all the way from animists to 141,000 Adventists*

**BY MYRON WIDMER**

growing rapidly! Half of all the members in the South Pacific Division are now Papua New Guineans—a big surprise to me.

In my week here—as part of a month-long itinerary through the South Pacific Division—I've gone from this coastal capital and nearby Pacific Adventist College to the cool highlands and Sopas Adventist Hospital, and by mission plane and canoe to bush villages in the hot, humid, mosquito-laden northwest lowlands, where time has essentially stood still.

The natural sights and sounds have been spectacular, including the colorful birds and giant fruit bats—with near-four-foot wingspans!

Yet it has been the dedication of the members and missionaries, both present and past, that has truly inspired me.

The first Adventist missionaries landed here in 1908 and found that the government had divided up all the Papuan land among the Methodists, the Anglicans, and the London Missionary Society. Unfazed, Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Carr and Beni Tavodi, a

Fijian teacher, eventually succeeded in leasing mountain land, a rugged 27 miles inland from Port Moresby. Their courage, stamina, and fledgling school laid the groundwork for the church's solid growth today.

Today I visited that lonely mountain-top setting and stood next to the grave of Beni Tavodi, a supposed victim of snakebite after six years of pioneering. And I stood in awe of him and all the other pioneers who have left their homelands and endured hardships and sometimes death in fulfilling Christ's command to take His gospel to the ends of the earth. What an inspiration!

Beni's footprints and those of others can be seen in the dedicated work of the



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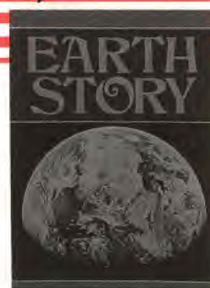
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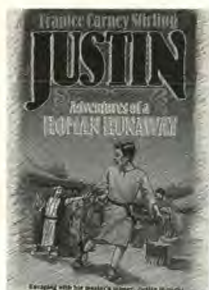


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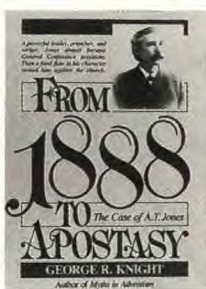
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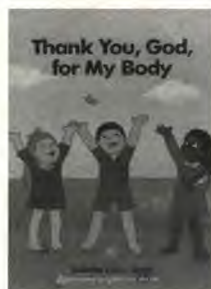
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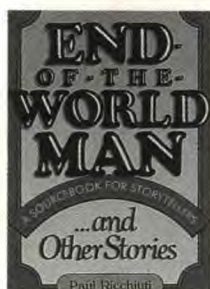
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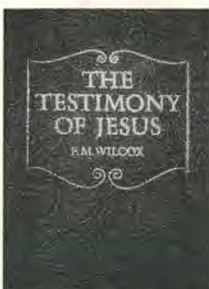
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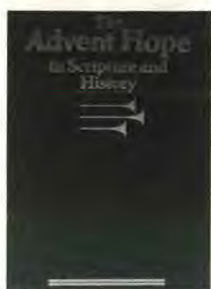
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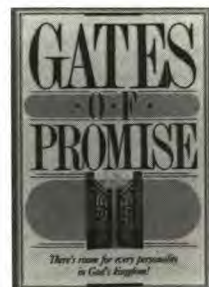
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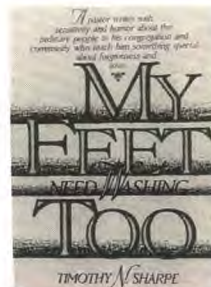
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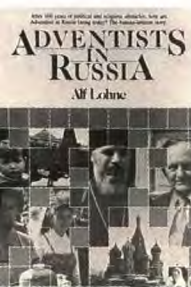
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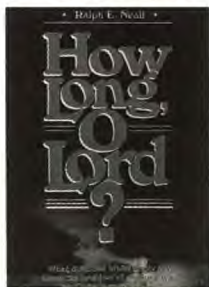
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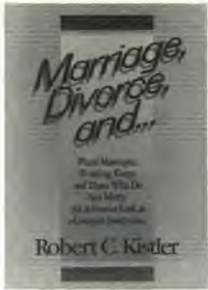
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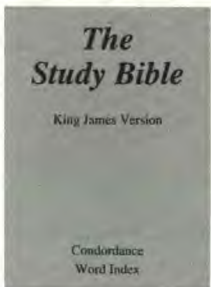
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Quality medical care is given by the physicians and nurses at the 99-bed Sopas Adventist Hospital.



Adventist Church membership is growing right at 10 percent a year, bringing the total for Papua New Guinea to more than 141,000 members, which equals more than half of all members in the South Pacific Division.

members, leaders, and institutions that have sprung to life here. I'll share a few portraits of our work and challenges in this country of many islands, 700 languages, and numerous villages only a generation away from head-hunting.

### Pacific Adventist College

My trip began with a visit to brand-new Pacific Adventist College in the rural outskirts of Port Moresby. Opened in 1984, Pacific Adventist has been designed to serve as the four-year college for the South Pacific Division's island fields, which, by the way, comprise about 85 percent of the division's membership. (Avondale College in Australia is the only other four-year Adventist college in this division.)

PAC, with 158 students, is near its full accommodation of 170 and offers degrees in theology and education, and three-year diplomas in business, secretarial administration, and agricultural business management.

As in most South Pacific countries, the government pays nearly all of the students' tuition fees, which Principal Allan Sonter says is a great boost to the students from these less-than-rich developing countries.

But the ride isn't free. Besides paying for room and board, every student works in the college's model work-study program, which is reminiscent of those in the early days of

Adventist education. The program is working so well that government officials recently came by to get all the details so they can implement it in their schools. That's quite a compliment. But the even greater compliment is the waiting line by the church and area businesses for the college's graduates—nearly 400 so far.

The college's academic quality is high, but the dropout rate is near zero because of the nurturing of a strong student and staff "safety net." And the college's program has strong spiritual underpinnings.

Yet the college has its work cut out for it on several fronts:

1. Staffing is difficult because of the perception among the island countries that Papua New Guinea is dangerous. High unemployment and the disruption of tribal life and discipline have contributed to roving urban gangs called rascals. They live off crime, causing high levels of tension among residents. The college has

installed a high fence topped with barbed wire around the entire perimeter of the campus and keeps it floodlit all night. In addition, a large group of security guards with two attack dogs patrol every night and man a lookout tower.

Before the fence went up, Dr. Len Tolhurst, chairman of the Theology Department and one of my hosts, said a few break-ins occurred, but that *no one* has been hurt in the college's 10 years. Despite that reality, few missionaries choose to come here. The college recently asked 29 people to fill a vacancy, and not one accepted. And as I write, no replacement has been found for the principal, who is retiring to Australia in January—this month.

Attracting national teachers is also difficult because the national salaries aren't sufficient to attract many of the qualified nationals, who when they work must help their extended families.

2. Getting qualified student applicants is also a source of concern. Many students from other islands would prefer to go to colleges in their homelands. And since few Adventist "feeder schools" exist here to prepare students for the high standards of the college, few of the Papua New Guinea applicants qualify. Of the 600 applicants this year, only 70 met the entrance requirements.

But despite all the challenges—and there are more—the new college is a credit to Adventist education! The diffi-



In one of the most isolated places in the world—May River—Adventists are bringing people out of animism to Christianity.



culties must not overshadow the tremendous contribution Pacific Adventist College is making to the church's work. School officials already are implementing changes to meet the challenges.

### Western Highlands Mission

A one-hour jet flight takes us up to the cool 7,500-foot central highlands city of Mount Hagen, headquarters of the Western Highlands Mission. The mission has 26,000 members and 112 organized churches (or "mother churches"), which are responsible for 672 companies (called "hand churches," as they are part of the larger body).

As in the rest of Papua New Guinea, membership growth is skyrocketing—54 percent in the past six years. "Explosive" is the word for it! And the year's gain through October 1993 already had surpassed all of 1992.

And it's the laypersons who shoulder the majority of local church nurturing and evangelistic work, since each of the 60-plus pastors oversees nearly 11 churches and companies.

Why the growth? I asked Lionel Smith, secretary of the Western Highlands Mission, an Australian and my host. He suggested six reasons:

1. Less materialism.
2. Less individualism—this society has traditionally followed village leaders.
3. Members are unafraid of openly talking about God and are willing to assume leadership roles.
4. The traditional culture is accustomed to worshipping something. In the traditional animist villages, the residents worship numerous spirits who, they believe, control everything and cause everything to happen. Thus, when the true God is presented, the people are ready to accept such a loving and powerful God.
5. It's a young people's church.
6. It's a "first-generation love" experience.

The growth doesn't come without challenges: lack of financial resources (per capita tithe is about US\$23 per year; yearly salaries range from \$100 to \$400); regionalism (or tribalism); and little opportunity for advanced educa-



Members of the large Kimininga Adventist Church on the grounds of the Western Highlands Mission portray the happy spirit of the members in Papua New Guinea.

tion, because of the few Adventist and government schools and the fierce competition for available spots.

Smith said that more than half the pastors in this mission have schooling only up through the eleventh grade, often taken at our recently closed (because of nearby tribal fighting) Omaura Vocational Bible School. Only 10 percent of this mission's pastoral force holds a three-year college diploma or degree.

Lionel pointed out, however, what seems to be a worldwide phenomenon—the more educated the pastors get, the less likely they will be willing to work in rural village districts. Most pastors here with degrees end up working in the Papua New Guinea Union Mission or one of its 10 local mission offices.

### Sopas Adventist Hospital

A two-hour ride through a high mountain pass brings us to 99-bed Sopas Adventist Hospital, which provides quality medical care for more than 20,000 people annually. Hospital administrator Ian Rankin, an expatriate, says the majority of injuries cared for are wounds from intertribal fighting (from knives, arrows, etc.).

The mission hospital supports a clinic, community outreach programs, an ambulance, a three-year fully accredited nursing school (with 37 students), and a beautiful vegetable farm.

### May River Journey

A one-hour trip via the mission plane thrusts me into a different world—a journey far back in time, even to the Stone Age.

It is the land of grass skirts, witch doctors, spirit worship, incessant mosquitoes, bows and arrows, and oppressive heat and humidity. It is the territory that lies between the northwest-

ern mountains and the ocean—a vast swampy lowland jungle dotted with villages along the banks of the great Sepik River (700 serpentine miles) and its smaller tributaries.

This primitive outback is home to two families with Adventist Frontier Missions (a supporting Adventist organization). They have set up camp and are doing frontier mission work—just like mission work must have been done in the earliest days of our church.

The isolation is real. The nearest road is two days' travel (180 miles) downriver in a 35-foot powered "canoe." Air service is possible but is too expensive except for dire emergencies. And last year the grass airstrip was under water for seven months—something not that unusual here, considering the 20 feet of rain yearly.

But the missionary work is paying off. Now, four years after John and Belinda Kent and their four children entered the May River area, baptisms are occurring and several congregations have formed—an amazing and wonderful breakthrough under the blessing of God.

A second family of two nurses, David and Holly Lackey with their three children, joined the Kents two years ago, and several student missionaries are currently settling into a village upstream.

There is so much more to tell about this place, the people, and the outreach. The March 3 issue of the *Adventist Review* will carry the full story and photos of the May River frontier mission.

Now it's time to return to Australia—to catch a sense of the spirit of the Adventist work in that vast territory. ☞

*NEXT WEEK: Series concludes with part 4, "Australia!"*



Myron Widmer is an associate editor of the *Adventist Review* on a monthlong itinerary in the South Pacific Division.





# Going Home—Again

*What parents and adult children may need to talk over as they try living together under the same roof.*

BY COLLEEN L. REECE

Carrie Johnson could hardly wait for the holidays. All her children were coming back home. Once more the big old house would ring with laughter and the sound of small feet.

A week later Carrie told her family goodbye and collapsed into her husband's arms. Guilt and relief mingled in her confession, "I didn't think I'd make it. Have we changed—or have they?"

"Both," Dan sighed. "Maybe it's true what people say about not being able to go back."

College senior Bill Dennison shared some of Carrie and Dan's feelings.

"It was bad enough having my kid brother Pete grab my room when I went to college. After all, I was close enough to get home a lot of weekends. What really bugged me was coming home over as oldest son. I could handle sleeping in the guest room and keeping my stuff in the attic, but I felt my home had put up a 'closed for the season' attitude. I wondered if I still belonged."

Ever-increasing numbers of teens and

young adults (with or without children) are flocking back to the family nest. Victims of divorce. Left-behind spouses of military personnel. College students. Families caught in a house-buying-and-selling crunch in which closing dates don't match.

## Expect Some Problems

With this migration of persons going home again comes a whole new set of problems.

### 1. False expectations

It is unrealistic to believe things



remain static. Grown children or parents who want life to be "as it was" are inevitably set up to be let down. Recognizing that things have changed helps immeasurably in fitting returnees back into the family nest.

## 2. Overcrowding

Nothing shortens tempers more quickly than too many persons jammed into too small a space. Before moving back home or inviting your grown children back, take stock of how crowded you'll be.

## 3. Lack of privacy

I think God created into every person a need for personal space. Surrendering privacy for the common good may be necessary. But it also may be hazardous to a blended family's mental, emotional, physical, and, sometimes, spiritual health.

## 4. Interdependence

Once children have become adults, they treasure independence and the right to make their own decisions. Being back home often results in a situation in which surviving the new living arrangements can't be made on a parent/child relationship but on an adult/adult one.

## Negotiating Good Solutions

How can families that include two or three generations meet the challenge of living under the same roof successfully?

"By working at it," Mike and Doris Smythe say. "Our daughter, son-in-law, and our 5- and 8-year-old grandchildren lived with us for six months while waiting for their new home to be finished. It wasn't easy, but we found great benefits in sharing," Mike laughs.

"Our lighthouse motto that kept us from sinking in some pretty bad stormy seas was Galatians 5:22, 23. It took everything mentioned—'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control' (NIV). Now we're just glad we could be here for them when they needed us."

"So are we," say their daughter and her family. "They'll never know how much we appreciate what they did."

There is no magic formula that guar-

antees going home will work, but these ideas may help:

### 1. Think it through.

If you're going home, remember you are as loved as ever, but your parents' lifestyle probably isn't yours. Even families who get along in working out the necessary finances stumble over lifestyle.

If Nancy had observed that her mother, Suzanne Willis, now lived a quiet, kid-free life and savored time to read, study, garden, and retire early, she would not have expected instant baby-sitting while she socialized. Yet when

*The blending of  
families needs boundaries  
so hurt feelings  
won't ensue.*

Suzanne agreed to have Nancy and 4-year-old Julie live with her, the agreement carried unspoken willingness to give up some of her time.

### 2. Talk about it!

Suzanne had good reason to resent extra work and no help. Yet she never sat down with Nancy, pointed out the obvious, and then set up a fair cleaning/cooking schedule.

Bill Dennison finally spilled his feelings. To his amazement, he learned that his younger brother, Pete, never wanted his place; Pete just wanted such recognition as the brother he adored had won in sports and academics. The Dennisons were able to learn a valuable lesson only at the point that Bill felt so alone in the midst of his family that he finally expressed it aloud.

### 3. Recognize the differences—and deal with them.

The Johnson children remembered the holidays as one big fun and food-filled party. Meanwhile, their parents

had settled into a more disciplined life. Health considerations demanded that they have regular meals and bedtimes. No wonder a week of hilarity until midnight, early rising by the little ones, and meals on demand left Carrie exhausted.

The next year the Johnsons admitted they couldn't cope with it. Some of the children's families stayed elsewhere. The traditional big dinner became a potluck—and everyone had a far better time.


### 4. Limit the stay when possible.

The blending of families needs boundaries so hurt feelings won't ensue. After her divorce, Nancy needed time to heal, and her mother's home beckoned. She was shocked when Suzanne felt compelled to end the stay.

If possible, set a time limit when you go home again: entrance into college, when the new house is ready, or the beginning of alimony. It is neither wise nor kind to foster a belief that the visit is permanent unless it will be.

### 5. Reassess your feelings of guilt.

It isn't wrong not to welcome and care for your children. Or to be irritated if Mom and Dad treat you as a child. Feeling guilty often triggers arguments and misunderstanding. Talk the situation over.

So if your bags are packed to go home again, or if you're waiting for a returning son or daughter, be prepared for the ups and downs that will accompany such a visit. Talk things over realistically. Doing so will help you develop a positive relationship that will outlast the visit. With patience and love you can negotiate many problems into positive experiences. 



*Colleen L. Reece is a freelance writer living in Auburn, Washington.*



The passing from an old to new year provided newspaper editors too good an opportunity to poke fun at the Millerites and their beliefs for them to let the occasion pass by unnoticed. As an example, in the January 6, 1844, issue of the Augusta, Maine, *Gospel Banner* the following notice appeared:

### Death of a Humbug

"On Sunday night last [December 31, 1843], at precisely twelve o'clock—in the very blackness of midnight, that irreligious monstrosity, which was born without parents and lived without issue, *Millerism*, died and was buried in the shades. Himes, and Litch, and Cox, and Spaulding supported the pall as bearers, and the very Rev. Hawes, with divers of his sympathizing Baptist brethren and sisters, followed as chief mourners in tears. May the country have one year's rest before another equally blighting humbug is put upon the revival course."<sup>1</sup>

Other newspapers seemingly needed no excuse to poke fun at the Millerites. The *Daily National Intelligencer* of January 10, 1844, published in Washington, D.C., quoted the *Jackson* [Mississippi] *Southron* as follows:

## The Way It Was

Reliving the Year 1844

"Parson Miller has certainly missed a figure in his calculations. The continued rains for the last six weeks have so completely saturated the earth that it will not burn during the present year, and no mistake."<sup>2</sup>

Public meetings also provided ripe opportunities for cynics and troublemakers to make fun of Millerites. Doubtless Nebuchadnezzar's image, which figures prominently both in the book of Daniel and in Millerite teachings, triggered one wag's question at a Millerite meeting, as reported in the *Boston Daily Evening Transcript* of January 18, 1844. He wondered how

much it cost to pasture Nebuchadnezzar during his seven years of insanity.<sup>3</sup>

About this same time, but in another place, the claim was made that a "unique" egg appeared in a hen's nest with "1844, end" written on the shell. A customer at the local store where the farmer who found the egg usually took his to sell is reported to have offered 25 cents for the egg (a phenomenal sum considering that the daily wage of a common worker at the time was only 50 cents). Even the local Millerites who were shown the egg had no explanation for it. Later the egg and its supposed ominous message were all

shown to be a hoax,<sup>4</sup> but these and other similar incidents give evidence to the conditions facing believers in Christ's soon return 150 years ago.

<sup>1</sup> *Gospel Banner and Maine Family Visitant*, Augusta, January 6, 1844, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in F. D. Nichol's notes for *The Midnight Cry*, "References to Millerism in Daily and Weekly Newspapers," p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in F. D. Nichol's notes for *The Midnight Cry*, "References to Millerism in Daily and Weekly Newspapers," p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Sue to Shubael Kennicutt, December 30, 1843, pp. 2, 3, in James Nix's personal collection.



Compiled by James R. Nix, associate secretary, White Estate.



# The Day My Husband Disappeared, Part II

*He'd been missing for several weeks, and they feared he was dead.*

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BY ALICIA RAMIREZ

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*Manuel Ramirez was a hardworking husband, father, member of the West Covina Hills Seventh-day Adventist Church, and owner of a contracting business. One day he went to meet some contractors and promised his wife he'd be home for supper. But he did not return.*

*For weeks his family, the police, and members of the church searched, hoped, and prayed for him, seemingly to no avail. Would they ever find him?*

## Monday, June 28

**W**e prayed and fasted all day long. We couldn't help noticing that our friends were giving up hope. My family was exhausted. They were beginning to wonder if we would ever find Manuel. Finally my mother reminded us, "God said to stand back and watch Him. We won't find him; God will bring him back."

"But when?" I cried.

The day finally came to an end, and I prayed through a good part of the night.

Finally I heard a voice say, "Go to sleep, he'll be home soon."

## Tuesday, June 29

It was the beginning of the fourth week since Manuel had disappeared. I woke up and had breakfast and told my mom, "Something is going to happen today. I can sense it." Mom confessed to having similar feelings, and we praised God together.

I started dialing Manuel's beeper number, calling him three times in a row. At around noon I noticed that every time I dialed, the phone would ring, but no one was on the line. About 2:30 p.m. I got this strange feeling and told my children that if no one answered, call out, "Dad." I thought that possibly he was hurt or couldn't remember. Around 4:00 p.m. I dialed again, and the phone rang soon after. Joel answered, looked at me questioningly, and said, "Dad, is that you?" No answer.

That night my mom came into my room and said, "Another day—I just pray that God will keep him safe."

Suddenly I was very angry. I looked at a family portrait by my bed and said, "Satan, get your filthy hands off my family. You can't have us, for it is written that no one can separate that which God has united. He united my family and my husband and me, and you have no right to come between us."

I looked at Manuel in the portrait and said, "Manuel, in the name of Jesus, call home right now!"

I picked up the phone and dialed his beeper. Not more than two minutes passed before the phone rang.

"Hello," I said as I picked it up. All I could hear was what sounded like someone clearing his throat. Again I said hello, and again I heard the same sound. Then it dawned on me. "It's Manuel!" I called out, "Manuel, is that you?" I heard the same sound, but it seemed like he was trying to say "Yes." I continued talking and asking what was wrong. All my family was around my bed staring in disbelief. My mother was on her knees thanking God and crying.

I kept talking to Manuel until finally I heard him say haltingly, "Th-they dumped me by the ocean."

I asked him where he was. At first he said he wasn't sure; finally he told me he was at a Chevron gas station on Pacific Coast Highway. I asked him to be more specific. It took a long time before he said, "I think it's Santa Monica. Yes, Santa Monica."

I told him to hide in a dark area, and not to stand by any light. "We'll find you," I promised.

I ran out of the house, screaming to my neighbor, Mildred, across the street. The whole neighborhood came out. They knew by my excitement that I must have heard from Manuel. My neighbor's husband had just come home from work and gone to bed. It was almost 11:30 p.m., and he was tired. She rolled him out of bed, and they prepared to go with me to find Manuel. As I was running back to my house, another neighbor caught me in her arms and made me take a deep breath. She had me repeat what Manuel had said and wrote it down.

"How are you going to find him with such sketchy directions?" she asked.

"I'll find him!" I answered confi-



dently. I instructed my children to call the pastor and to stay near the phone. We took off and drove at about 90 miles per hour. I prayed all the way, asking the Lord to protect Manuel and hide him so that no one would hurt him.

When we got to Santa Monica we started looking for Chevron stations. Finally we saw one. The lights were out, and the station was closed. All we saw was a small white car with a clean-cut young man in a white shirt. It looked as if he was eating. We got out of the car and started looking around.

"He's not here," my neighbor said at first. But then he exclaimed, "Look over there! There's someone by that corner!"

I ran to the spot and found someone squatting down in a fetal position. It was Manuel! I knelt down and called to him. No response. He just stared ahead. I called him again. Still no response. Then I kissed him.

"What happened?" I asked. "Don't you know me?"

Then I faintly saw tears rolling down his cheeks. My neighbors helped me pick him up—he could hardly stand. We practically carried him to the car. He had the same clothes on that he had left home in, and he smelled very bad!

In the car I asked him over and over, "What happened?" He kept repeating, "They dumped me by the ocean."

"Who?"

"I don't know."

"How did you get here?"

"I walked. I just remember walking and walking. All I knew was that I had to call this number."

"Do you know how long you've been gone?"

"Two or three days," he answered.

"Three weeks!" I told him.

"What!" he exclaimed. He told us his back hurt a lot, and his throat and stomach also. We wanted to take him to the hospital, but he insisted on seeing his boys and resting first.

When we got home, everyone was waiting. All the neighbors were crying and hugging him. Manuel, Jr., was the last one to greet him, and he clung to him tightly and asked him, "Dad, who did this to you?"

We could see that Manuel was in pain. We began to check him out more



**Manuel Ramirez, shown here with his wife, Alicia Ramirez, and church pastor Gerard Kiemeney, was separated from his family for more than three weeks after he was kidnapped. Although he was feared dead, he has returned to his family and church congregation and is doing well.**

carefully. His clothes were all torn, and he was barefoot. His face was very swollen and his eyes were bulging out. He was so swollen that he looked as if he had gained 30 pounds.

I called the police. They had an ambulance take him to Queen of the Valley Hospital, where they checked him over. They couldn't tell if he had been drugged. The doctor said he was definitely swollen, but couldn't tell why. From the marks and bruises, it seemed as if he had been beaten.

When we got out of the emergency room, all the family was there waiting. *Manuel was home!*

### **Saturday, July 3**

We went to church together, even though Manuel was very ill. At the close of the service the pastor called us to join him on the platform, and all the church praised God and welcomed Manuel home.

It has been several weeks since Manuel returned, and he still gets dizzy spells and bouts of nausea. He can remember only bits and pieces of what happened. He remembered calling me the day he left and walking to the back of the car to wait for the contractors. The next thing he remembers is waking up in a small dark room with no windows. There was a restroom with a toilet

and an old tub. On a couple occasions he remembers waking and finding fast food and drink—always cold. The drink tasted awful, and he slept after tasting it. He thinks he may have been drugged. He slept on a cold cement floor, and he could hear the pounding of the surf against the rocks.

At one point he felt so hopeless that he thought of opening the gas jet on an old wall heater, but the gas line didn't work.

We asked him about the man in the white car we saw when we picked him up. He said that the man drove up to him, rolled down his window, and said, "If you need me, I'll be here." He stayed in his car until we drove off with Manuel. We wonder if he could have been a guardian angel.

We have truly seen a miracle. God preserved Manuel's life, even though more than three weeks elapsed and many gave up hope. Our faith was increased, and hope once more returned to the hearts of those who doubted.

God truly answers prayer! He is the same yesterday, today, and forever! ☞

*Alicia Ramirez is a member of the West Covina Hills Seventh-day Adventist Church in Azusa, California.*



## ■ MICHIGAN

# Adventist Information Ministry Prospers

*Dollars stretch to win people, train soul winners, and pay tuition.*

A dollar gets spent three times every day at Adventist Information Ministry (AIM) while serving multiple purposes. On the campus of Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, the same dollar wins people, trains soul winners, and helps students pay for their Christian education.

AIM was established by the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists in 1983 to serve the division as the central place for receiving requests coming from viewers and listeners of Adventist television, radio, and print ministries.

But televisions and books don't baptize souls. People do. So AIM's central focus is to provide a bridge between viewers of Adventist media and the local church. This makes AIM a unique follow-up ministry within the church and means the dollars spent at AIM enhance the soul-winning work of the church.

AIM's dollars are then spent to prepare Christian young people for ministry to others. Chaplains are trained and supervised by Craig Willis, AIM associate director and follow-up coordinator. Their primary function is to refer callers wishing Bible studies or a visit to the local Adventist pastor. They also are available for spiritual counsel and prayer.

AIM's dollars are spent a third time when student employees use their earnings to finance their education at Andrews University.

## How AIM Helps

The concept of multipurpose, triple-duty dollars is hardly new. Ellen G. White promoted the concept in her idea of education in which teachers and students would work together to learn, pay school fees, and win people. They do that and more:

- **International reputation.** Among seminary students AIM enjoys an international reputation for being a positive work experience. Michael Walters, a former AIM chaplain, first learned about AIM while teaching German as a student missionary in Japan. The same was true for Todd Horinouchi, a Japanese-American, who taught English to Japanese.

- **Toll-free calls.** AIM's toll-free 800 numbers are flashed on television screens, broadcast over radio, and printed on book jackets as an avenue of response for people who are interested in literature or have questions. On a busy day, operators field up to 3,000

calls. Lines are open each day from 6:00 a.m. to midnight to take orders. When operators are not available, callers may use an automated message system.

One caller's son found a book written by Ellen G. White lying in the middle of the road, read it, enjoyed it, and saw an 800 number listed in the back. AIM operators helped him with some questions about Adventists and referred him to the Adventist Book Center.

In Hatcher Lake, Nova Scotia, Mrs. Lillian Wilson, an Anglican, purchased a copy of *Planet in Rebellion*, by George Vandeman, at a flea market. Later she saw *It Is Written* and made the connection between the program and the book and became a regular viewer. Several years later when she phoned AIM to request *Cry of a Lonely Planet*, she also requested a visit from an Adventist pastor. AIM chaplain Joel Cantave connected Mrs. Wilson with Halifax pastor John Gilbert. His ministry, including a visit to Mrs. Wilson



Trained operators at Adventist Information Ministry (AIM) located at Andrews University work to win people and pay tuition.

*By Stanley Maxwell, former public relations assistant, and John Hood, business and operations manager, Adventist Information Ministry, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.*



## ■ HONG KONG

# Evangelizing Hong Kong

*A new experience, one cell group at a time*

during a hospital stay, helped her decide to be baptized.

One day an AIM operator received a prayer request from Tanya. Her pregnancy was complicated by a cancerous uterine tumor. A student worker then shared the prayer request at AIM's morning worship. Later Tanya called to announce gratefully that ultrasound tests revealed the cancer was gone. She felt certain prayers at AIM had been answered. At worship a prayer of thanks was offered to God for His miracle.

• **Fund-raising.** Before becoming the speaker for *It Is Written* in 1992, Mark Finley held an evangelistic series in Moscow, Russia. Russia responded favorably by offering him an exclusive prime-time television program. However, airtime cost \$800,000 annually.

*It Is Written* asked AIM to raise the money. AIM fund-raisers were to be professional but not pressuring. Rapport with donors was more important than reports of vast sums rolling in from reluctant givers. Solicitors were trained to listen to viewers' problems and pray with them. AIM fund-raisers have recorded pledges of more than \$700,000 since beginning work in May of 1992.

• **Community Services.** In late summer 1992 more than 16,000 calls poured into AIM from callers offering donated goods and volunteer assistance for victims of Hurricane Andrew through Adventist Community Services (ACS). ACS provides disaster relief and coordinates the handling of donated goods and services.

• **Reclamation Project.** Recently when the North American Division called for names and addresses of former and inactive Adventists to be sent in for compilation of a mailing list, AIM was chosen as the site. Tens of thousands of names were received and compiled. A letter of invitation was sent to those on the list, inviting them to special services last November.

I was concerned. Something was missing. The conference was conducting a major evangelistic program in Hong Kong, a city of more than 5 million. A large hall had been rented, but not one handbill, newspaper ad, radio, or television spot had been prepared.

With considerable apprehension I made my way to the auditorium the first night. There were 1,000 empty seats. The evangelistic team made the final preparations and opened the doors at 7:00 p.m.

Soon the hall echoed with the sounds of people. As I stepped to the microphone a half hour later, the hall was filled. I found myself speaking to a very warm, receptive audience. I also noticed that the attendees came in small groups and sat together. Each had a reserved seat for the meeting.

On the first evening a call was made to accept Jesus as personal Saviour. Because I have preached in Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong on previous occasions, I expected to see only five or six people respond. On that first night more than 50 persons came forward. In four nights more than 200 persons responded.

On the fourth night a specific call was made for those who wished to be baptized. Fifty roses had been prepared. As the flowers disappeared, James Wu, the coordinator for the meetings, said, "Our faith was too small."

Of those who responded, 57 have been baptized, and more are being followed up.

## The Pilot Project

Three years ago the Hong Kong-Macao Conference organized and equipped an evangelism center with James Wu as director and Johnny Yip as assistant. Prayerfully the team developed their plans and prepared materials. The

main thrust of the evangelism program was the development of small cell groups.

One year ago 50 volunteers were organized into five cell groups. They were to take part in a pilot project to test new materials and concepts, make adjustments, and then share the concept with all the churches in the colony. The following activities were suggested:

1. Each cell group was to work in four-month cycles. At the end of the period each group was to divide into two groups.

2. Each group was invited to participate in three activities:

a. Gospel activities: Bible study, prayer bands, study, and experiencing righteousness by faith.

b. Support activities: Developing friendships and supporting each team member. Many converts were the only Adventists in their families. Loving support was urgently needed for successful evangelism.

c. Witnessing activities: Each group was to share their faith.

3. The four-month cycle was to be divided into three periods:

a. Weeks 1-3 were for organization and securing members.

b. Weeks 4-12 were for developing bonding among members and spiritual growth witnessing.

c. Weeks 13-16 were for preparing cell division and securing new members.

4. Cell groups were to engage in meetings, of which there are three types. First is the basic cell meeting, in which the group has a light meal, Bible study, and fellowship prayer bands. Then there are monthly social meetings, in which the group has potluck dinners, picnics, hiking, or other social activities. Sometimes two or three cell groups band together for socials. Finally there is a celebration of praise and testimonies



on a quarterly basis. Members from all cell groups in the city come together for this meeting.

5. There was to be a monthly newsletter in which experiences, plans, and testimonies were to be shared with all members.

6. The evangelism center was to prepare several training videos as well as Bible videos for the cell groups to use.

7. The evangelism center was to develop a data bank.

a. The city of Hong Kong was to be divided into small areas.

b. Within each area the names and addresses of active members, missing members, radio interests, seminar attendees, etc., were to be compiled. (Two hundred new names were added during the 1993 four-day harvest meeting.)

c. Team members were to receive the above information so that personal visits could be made with each person. All were invited to join a cell group.

d. The evangelism center was to target unentered sections of the city for new cell groups to be formed. Their goal was to enter every part of the city with the gospel.

A year ago there were only five cell groups. It was hoped that as the fourth month began, there would be 10 groups; there were 12 instead. A number of months later the target of 40 cell groups was surpassed by 20.

It was these 60 cell groups that made the difference for the harvest meeting. They had reserved the 1,000-plus seats in the auditorium. They had developed personal relationships with missing members, relatives, friends, and other interests. They had met in their cell meetings for 16 weeks. They had involved their new friends in Bible study, witnessing, and sharing activities.

The auditorium was filled with interests. What a thrill to speak to hundreds of non-Adventists who were already so closely tied to church members. No wonder there was such a good response.

No wonder the audience applauded when their friends came forward to express their decision for baptism.

After the four days in the auditorium, the entire group was invited to come to the conference camp meeting. Four additional topics were presented in a follow-up to the crusade. Chapman Wong, Hong Kong-Macao Conference president, reported that this was the best attended camp meeting in the history of the conference. The cell groups brought new members, and churches were revived.

This past December all the cell groups and the new groups formed came together for the quarterly celebration. There were testimonies, praise to God, and wonderful fellowship.

The Hong Kong church is young. Seventy-five percent of the members are under 35 years of age.

If the caring cell groups can bring success under the Holy Spirit's blessing, any city in the world can see a new experience in evangelism.

*By J. H. Zachary, associate secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Association, Silver Spring, Maryland.*

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# Treasures of the Snow

*"Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?" (Job 38:22).*

It is true that the word "treasures" used in Job might better be translated as "storehouses." And it is true that God meant for the string of questions in chapters 38-41 to broaden Job's perception of his Creator. But having grown up in Michigan, where winter equals snow, I can't help recalling treasures of the snow I have experienced.

## Great Expectations


First of all, I anticipated its arrival. From the moment the weather forecast predicted even the possibility of a slight flurry, I would stand ready—snow gear stationed handily at the door, myself often at attention in front of a window to witness the first flakes. Only the approach of Christmas could rival my expectations concerning the advancing army of white-clad soldiers that would liberate me from the winter doldrums.

Another treasure was snow angels. My friends and I created these by lying on our backs in new-fallen snow, then swishing our arms and legs back and forth. We would then arise carefully to gaze upon impressions that looked like flying angels.

Third, I treasured the snowflakes themselves. My third-grade teacher taught me to wear dark-colored mittens when it snowed. Why? Because when the white snowflakes landed on your mittened hands, you could see clearly the unique design of each individual flake.

Last, I found the very whiteness of the snow to be a treasure. Glittering in the noon sun, cradling the long shadows of shivering trees, or glowing faintly pink against the gray horizon of winter twilight, the brush of snow could paint a landscape as breathtaking as any great artist's.

Now that I live where it doesn't snow a great deal, I must rely upon my memories of these snow treasures. Like the questions God asked Job, my reflections concerning these treasures often point me to the Creator. First of

  
  
*As a child I often  
stationed myself at  
attention by a win-  
dow to witness  
the very first  
snowflakes  
of the year.*

all, for every moment I recall anticipating snow, I wonder if I now spend time longing for the Second Coming. Am I as prepared for that event as I was for the white countryside? How much do I desire that first glimpse of an advancing heavenly host coming to set me free from the doldrums of sin?

For every angel I remember swishing into the snow as a child, I think of the thousand times ten thousand angels traveling between earth and heaven. Some of them have protected me from evil. One of them is my very own. This guardian has led me since birth, has observed my first steps, and will be the first to greet me in the resurrection. Together in heaven we will review the history of this being's intervention on my behalf, and my perplexities will vanish like snow in early-spring warmth (*Education*, p. 305).

And recalling individual snowflakes I examined on my navy blue mittens reminds me that God has created us all with a unique blend of talents and abilities. Just as each snowflake is needed to blanket the ground, so are we all needed to cover the earth with the good news of salvation.

## Alabaster Memories

I fondly remember the white blankets of snow defining the dull winter landscape with strokes of brilliance. Such alabaster memories remind me that "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18). And this is truly the greatest treasure of all—that the landscapes of our sinful lives could ever be as brilliant as a field of snow sparkling in the sun.



*Lyndelle Chiomenti is associate editor of the adult Sabbath school quarterly, Church Ministries Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

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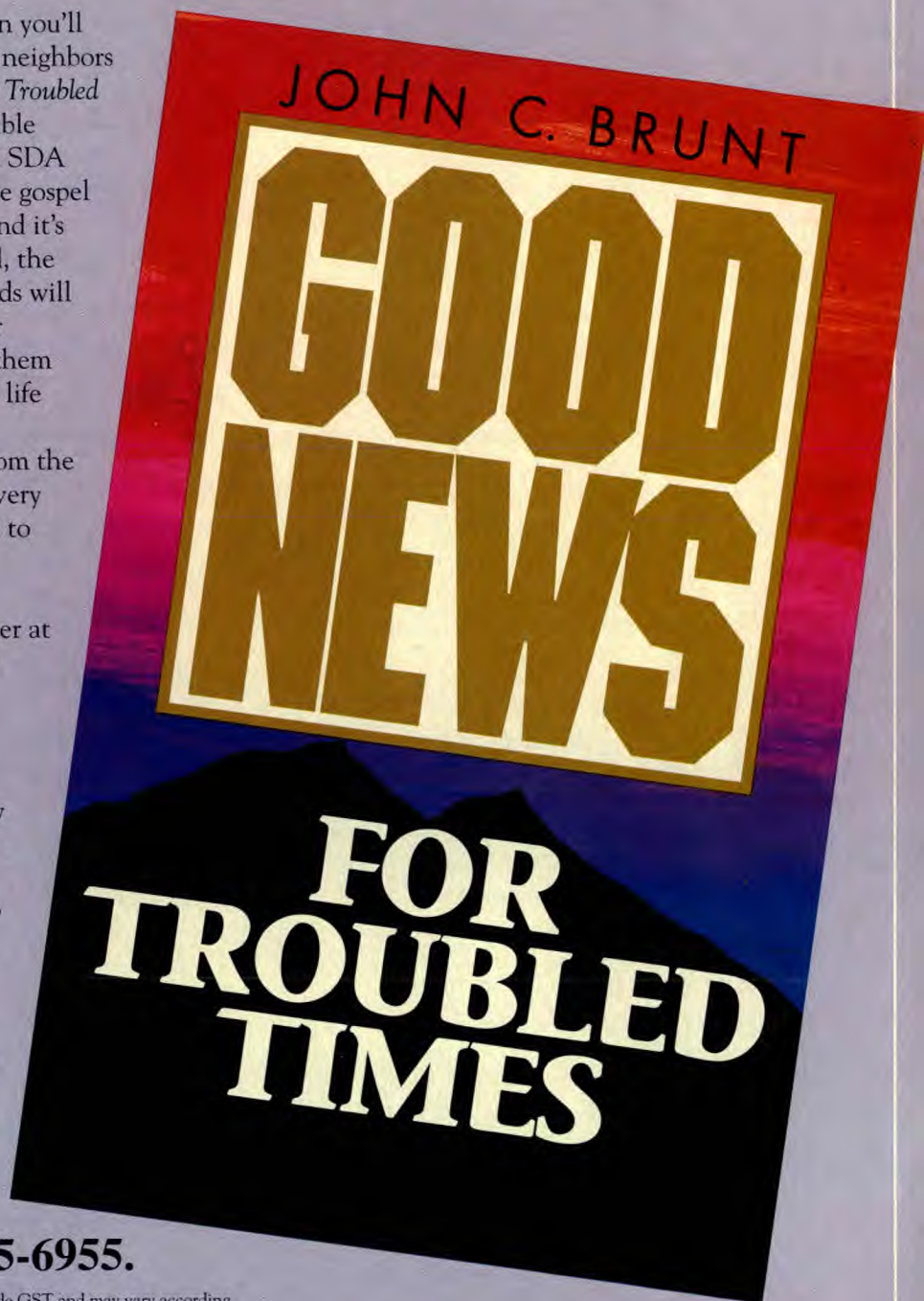
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