



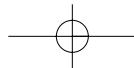
July 9, 1998

World Edition

ADVENTIST Review

“No Survivors,” They Said

**The Man in White
Life Begins at 60
Wrestling Till Dawn**



LETTERS

Cuba

Regarding William G. Johnsson's "Cuba: Four Amazing Years" (May 14



World Edition), what a wonderful manifestation of the latter rain! We were particularly thrilled to hear about the Pathfinder honor guard. Is there any way a Cuban honor guard could come to the International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh? I wish someone could take it on as a project.

—Ron Neilsen

BREWSTER, WASHINGTON

The Work

I love the way Myrna Tetz writes. So easy, open, deceptively casual—like a conversation I once had with her while she made sandwiches in her kitchen. So approachable.

Then at the end she catches you by surprise: wait a minute, this is a new way of connecting these two ideas.

Regarding her editorial "The Work" (May 14): At one time I felt called to work for Native Americans in urban Vancouver, and I recall my initial feelings about the importance of the work (and it was). I recall after a few years of being both preacher and janitor how I felt both positions had dignity (and they did). I recall that after a few more years passed I had an enormous surprise: most of the work being done was not my work for others, but God's work in me (by far!).

"How is the work going?" will, for

me, always take on the "individualized" meaning Tetz wrote about: "How is the working going in me?"

—Kenneth van Ochten

BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA,
CANADA

The Gift of Grandmothering

Many thanks to Sandra Vincent for her beautiful article "The Gift of Grandmothering" (May 14). I found much this grandpa also can use. And she can dismiss her fears that Paul, in his zeal, may have forgotten to mention the gift of grandmothering in Scripture. In 2 Timothy 1:5, 6, Paul writes to the young minister Timothy: "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands."

Paul's ordination of the young Timothy conferred no special efficacy. It merely recognized the gift God already had bestowed—the gift of faith passed on to Timothy by his godly grandmother and needing only to be stirred up.

—Bob DuBose, PASTOR

HOT SPRINGS, NORTH CAROLINA

The Remnant

I agree with William G. Johnsson that the concept of the "remnant" has suffered a great deal among

Adventist believers (see "In Defense of the Remnant," May 14). Yet the problem is, as Johnsson says, in a "key biblical idea."

The end-of-time scenario portrayed in Revelation is the by-product of the three angels' messages—the everlasting gospel. A closer and careful look at the term *remnant* in the Hebrew context of the Old Testament, in comparison with the Greek context in the New Testament, will show that the end-of-time remnant is the *outcome* of the everlasting gospel (as explicit in Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection) and its *eternal effect* in the lives of those who heed this message.

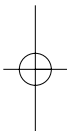
Yes, God "has given us a message and a mission that come straight from Scripture." That's unique and a singular characteristic of our highest call. Yet understanding what was done "once and for all" at the cross will produce a people who respond to the everlasting gospel by keeping the commandments and having the faith of Jesus.

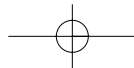
—Regina Araujo

VIENNA, VIRGINIA

If the "remnant church" concept means that God has given the Seventh-day Adventist Church truths that He has not given to others, then Johnsson is right in saying we need to proclaim it. If it means that God has given us a special commission to spread the gospel in the last days, then we should not hide that remnant commission.

However, if the concept of the remnant is interpreted to mean that





the Adventist institution enjoys God's unconditional favor, no matter what, then that triumphalistic attitude distorts Scripture (e.g., Jer. 7; Rom. 11; Matt. 3). If the Adventist Church succumbs to false doctrine or decadent lifestyles, then all the eschatological exegesis in the world cannot make it God's remnant church.

—**Ron Thomsen**
HOUSTON, TEXAS

Why Obey? (cont.)

Regarding the arbitrary view of God presented by Elder Robert Folkenberg in his "Why Obey?" (May NAD Edition), who'd want to live with such a God? I hope Elder Folkenberg continues his struggle with this question a while longer.

Instead of attacking reason, we need to remember that reason was a gift from God when He created us in His image. Through this gift we are differentiated from beasts, and when we reason best we are most Godlike. Satan's sin was not in saying "I will decide." If God hadn't wanted His creatures to decide, why did He give them reasoning abilities? And if not "I," then who? David Koresh? Isn't there a reason Satan is called the "deceiver"? Didn't he deceive even himself? Irrationality, not reasons, is what underlies sin. Truth—seeing things as they really are—frees us.

Eve's sin involved temptations of appetite and aesthetics. Reacting from appetite, emotion, or a "burning in the bosom," as some believers do, is not a safe response. Eve should have used her reasoning ability along with all the evidence God had given her of His love and trustworthiness. Her problem was too little reason, not too much.

I wish there were space to respond to several of Elder Folkenberg's other points. However, my comments would be only human reason anyway, so I'll leave it at this.

—**Robert Johnston**
LAKE JACKSON, TEXAS

Sin isn't bad because God says it is. God says it's bad because it is. If going against God's counsel would lead to harmony among beings, dependable friendships, sweeter relationships, better health, lasting happiness, or peace on earth, God wouldn't be against it.

To me it's not so much a matter of "submitting to the authority of Christ" as it is realizing (through the Spirit's leading) that God is right. Sin just won't work; you can't make a workable alternative to God's law of love in any society. That is being proved again and again on this planet.

—**Vera McMurdo**
WHITEFISH, MONTANA

A Protest

I have read so many letters praising the "new" *Review* that I think it's time someone raised a protest. My principal objections: 1. I can no longer count on getting to read each issue. Either my wife or one of the children has it in their possession. 2. The journal is no longer suitable for worships. When I do find a copy and bring it to worship to read an article, invariably someone says, "I've read that already!"

There were definite advantages to the old format.

—**James Astleford**,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ADRA/SOUTH SUDAN
NAIROBI, KENYA

Letters Policy

The Review welcomes your letters. Short, specific letters are the most effective and have the best chance at being published. Letters will be edited for space and clarity only. Send correspondence to Letters to the Editor, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; Internet: Reviewmag@Adventist.org CompuServe network: 74617,15.

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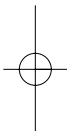
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Unfinished Business

Six years after leaving Thailand, Andy Nash returns to meet old friends and evaluate his effectiveness as a student missionary.



ADVENTIST Review

"Behold, I come quickly . . ."

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ through stories of His matchless love, news of His present workings, help for knowing Him better, and hope in His soon return.

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Vol. 175, No. 28

The Second Week of July

BILL KNOTT

In the summer, an old counselor's memories lightly turn toward thoughts of camp.

Even over the sweeping rush of the oscillating fan in my office I hear them—boisterous, urgent voices, belting out the campfire anthems over the black and silent lake. Kids who have never seen a deer, much less an antelope, are still eulogizing a home on the range. Wide-eyed 9-year-olds continue to proclaim their faith that a mysterious “she” will yet come round the mountain, though after many years, I am beginning to have my doubts. Old red roosters are certainly comforted by the delay.

Like those of hundreds of my peers, my summers 20 years ago were filled with early-morning line calls, mystery loaf lunches, and sun-soaked, water-splashed afternoons at an Adventist youth camp. Selected from a crowd of applicants because of some presumed skill package (was it archery?) or vaguely defined “leadership ability,” we struggled through those urgent weeks to grow into the roles we were expected to fill: teacher, roommate, counselor, Christian. Stretched at every turn by unfamiliar tasks, we learned in fits and starts to share the names of trees, our living space, a warm embrace, our love for Jesus.

The weeks at camp brought adolescence to a close: responsibility loomed on every hand. *If I take away my arms, this child will drown. If I take away my care, this child will soak a sleeping bag with tears—and maybe more than tears.* We came to know the burden that a child's trust always imposes, and for a week at least, we parented with all the love and wisdom that surrogates can muster. On Sundays, when we said ‘goodbye’ with hugs and ‘high fives,’ we felt a little like the artist who must watch his latest work go to some other gallery. There was part of us that traveled home with every child.

But most enduring have been the personal, the spiritual rewards. Compelled by our own choice to be part of an overtly faithful environment, we discovered, ready or not, how much we lacked, how insufficient was our faith. Who dares to talk of Jesus, healer of the blind, to a dozen sightless boys from inner cities? Whose heart is naturally big

enough to love the unlovely—the bitter, arrogant teenager who taunts you to send her home when you stumble on her stash of cigarettes?



I recall how urgently I prayed one summer, head and heart bent over the Gospel of Luke, asking for the kindness of Jesus to be seen in me, who wasn't naturally compassionate. I prayed for what the psalmist also prayed—a heart of flesh, unstained by prejudice and pride. And, gracious as He is, God cast that stony heart of mine somewhere beyond the furthest buoy.

The disciplines, the life commitments, formed by summer ministry have nourished me for years. I discovered, in surprise, that I could rise at 6:00 and pray; that Scripture was a living testament to Jesus in my mind; that halting, fumbling words for Him still count, still make a difference. And on some nights, when grace was in the air, I told His stories to the campers in my darkened cabin with skill and words beyond my own, knowing that His Spirit dwelt in me.

This is the stuff that forms a life. And for thousands of Adventist young adults in dozens of camps around the world this year, the heat is on, the hours are long, the pay is modest. While they guide our children through ropes courses and coach skiers from deep-water starts, they are being shaped into the men and women who can be trusted with the church. From swimming docks and nature trails will come the persons to open the Word, heal the sick, balance the accounts, lead the congregation. Their passion for our kids and for the Lord is Adventism at its best, for they help to keep the kingdom always before us.

Chances are you know one or more of those who serve at camp this summer. Wrap them in prayer, lift up their hands. The children and the grandchildren they bless may be your own.

The church they bless certainly is.



Set Apart?

MYRNA TETZ

We've often quoted Jesus as saying "be in the world but not of the world." That's close, but really is a shortened version of His prayer just before His crucifixion. He explained to His Father that He has "sent them [His disciples] into the world" (John 17:18, NIV), "for they are not of the world . . ." (verse 14, NIV).

I wonder if we, as Christians, might concentrate more on the "not of the world" than the "be in the world." Ellen White says that Christ "sends in you a letter to the family, the village, the street, where you live."¹ "Personal, individual efforts and interest for your friends and neighbors will accomplish more than can be estimated."² And there's this familiar passage: "The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good."³

There are members who have followed this counsel, and we pay tribute. You are involved in community service organizations not only to serve but to make friends with those not of your faith. You intentionally live in neighborhoods in which the people on your street are not Adventists. You move into communities in which there is no Adventist presence to minister to the people there and perhaps establish a church. You attend social functions at which you can be a witness. And you have non-Adventist friends.

In a panel discussion during a recent Communication Strategy Commission meeting, Dan Landrum of Southern Adventist University suggested that "we are a people set apart but we are set apart too far."

When my husband hosted a lifestyle talk show each Saturday night in Vancouver, British Columbia, we received invitations to the radio station's yearly Christmas party. These weren't the events to which we most looked forward, but when we could, we attended.

One party we remember well. We had delayed, purposely, to miss a portion of the happy hour. When we did arrive the people we knew were absorbed with each other in the far corner of the room, and already we felt out of place. We wandered to the window, then to the wall, then by the

window again, talking to each other, hoping we looked as though we hadn't conversed for months.

He: I wish we hadn't come. I feel so out of place.

I: Maybe we could leave. They'd never know we were here.

He: I hate events like this.

I: Me too.

We droned on—same song, same verse, until the host announced dinner. We found our table. Introductions began. One woman was a secretary, and there was a salesman. Others were at our table, but we don't remember much about them.

The soup came first. It was cream of something, and was followed by

the main course. The small serving of potatoes and the two tablespoons of vegetables disappeared quickly. The glowing red item that, in the soft glow of candlelight seemed to move, we avoided, and with that questions came quickly.

Grateful for a topic to discuss, Bob explained, albeit briefly, about our health message relating that frequently our lifestyle program centered on nutrition topics. Then, with silence falling and casting about for another conversation piece, he began a description of other programs.

"For instance," he said, "last Saturday night I interviewed an expert on grief recovery." The salesman looked surprised, and told us that his best friend had died just the week before. The secretary said that her sister had died recently. They leaned forward and asked questions about death and grief and the hope beyond. (The entering wedge was tapped into position.)

There in the dimly lit banquet hall with revelers in all states of holiday happiness, Bob rehearsed Dr. Larry Yeagley's helps for the bereaved. There were tears, and as we parted they added expressions of gratitude and friendship.

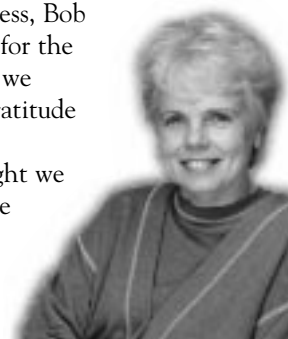
Yes, we're set apart. But that night we learned again that we should not be set apart too far.

This wasn't the event to which we most looked forward.

¹ *Steps to Christ*, p. 115.

² *Welfare Ministry*, p. 93.

³ *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143.



GIVE & TAKE

LET'S PRAY

Have a prayer need?
Have a few free minutes?
Each Wednesday morning
at 8:00 the *Adventist Review*
staff meets to pray for
people—children, parents,
friends, coworkers. Send
your prayer requests and, if
possible, pray with us on
Wednesday mornings. Let's
share in each other's lives.

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HELLOOOO OUT THERE

In this, the World Edition of the *Adventist Review*, we aim to feature materials from Adventists outside of North America. If you're an Adventist in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, or South America, we'd love to hear from you. If you're an Adventist in Antarctica, we'd *really* love to hear from you.

Send articles, letters, and Give & Take submissions (anecdotes, quotes, photos/captions, church-related tips, requests for correspondence on a specific subject, etc.) to *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

ADVENTIST LIFE

Here in Malaysia our friends' 2-year-old, Timmy, was walking past the construction site of a new dormitory for the Penang Adventist Hospital School of Nursing. The building is nearing completion, but has lots of scaffolding, sand, and brick surrounding it—all of which caused Timmy to exclaim, "Look, Mommy! It's the walls of Jericho falling down!"

—Lana Rose, Pulau Penang, Malaysia



STAFF IMITATION CONTEST

In March, after receiving a photo of the South Pacific *Record* staff members imitating *Review* editor William G. Johnsson's editorial photo, we invited other *Review* readers to do the same—just for fun.

It has been one of our least popular contests.

Nevertheless, we received two submissions worth sharing. First, Joseph Bishop, of El Dorado, Panama, imitates associate editor Roy Adams. Then Charles Chavez, of Mariposa, California, imitates his son, assistant editor Stephen Chavez.

OK, everyone back to work.



Roy Adams and . . . Joseph Bishop



Stephen Chavez and . . . his daddy

C O V E R S T O R Y

>S.S. HUICHOL...>NO SOBREVIVIENTE...

"No Survivors," They Said

*A dark night descended on me. I questioned God.
I was beside myself.*

BY ROXANA MORENO, AS TOLD TO LORON WADE

SUPPOSE JOB WOULD BE THE BEST ONE to ask. I mean, about the Lord taking away and then giving it all back again. But maybe I could tell you something about it too.

It was Christmastime 1985. Things were not perfect at home, but they were so much better than they had been that we could do nothing but rejoice. After months of searching, my husband, Hugo, had found a job, and it was a good one. He had signed on as a systems engineer on the *Mazahua*, a ship operated by the oil company Petroleos Mexicanos.

One of our most important goals since becoming Adventists three years earlier had been to provide a Christian education for our children. To this end, we had moved to Montemorelos, near the Adventist university. Here Marta was doing well as a music student and Pat was on her way to becoming a lab technician. Andrés was finishing academy, and little Yeshua, only 4, was not yet in school.

The hard part for all of us were the long weeks of separation while Hugo was out at sea. But for the time being there seemed to be no other solution if we wanted to keep our children in school.

So here we were at the holiday season, overflowing with the joy of being together and with gratitude for the new job. "Can you believe it, Roxana?" Hugo kept telling me. "The captain has not only given me Sabbaths free, but he has allowed me—in fact, even encouraged me—to organize a Bible study group. We meet every Friday night and Sabbath morning. There are quite a few attending, and several are really interested."

As the months went by after that memorable holiday leave, with each phone call and visit Hugo told of his joy at being able to share his faith. Several of the crew had accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour, and the captain himself seemed interested.

Suddenly, Dark Clouds

Then one day another call brought a cloud on the horizon. "It seems there was a riot on board our sister ship, the *Huichol*," Hugo told me. "The company has transferred one of the ringleaders to the *Mazahua*, and they are going to send me to the *Huichol*. They seem to think I can help pacify the situation over there."

After that I spent four anxious weeks praying. Would the new captain be as kind as the captain of the *Mazahua*?

The next time Hugo arrived on leave, he greeted us affectionately as usual, but I could tell something was wrong.

When we were alone, I asked him: "What is it? You are having problems on the new ship, aren't you?"

"Roxana," he said, "when the captain discovered I wanted Sabbaths off, he was furious. He yelled at me in front of the entire crew and said that I would be fired instantly if I asked for a single Saturday free or if he caught me trying to talk with anyone about the Bible. He said that there was no place on his ship for people who wanted to use religion as an excuse for their laziness. After his rampage I have been subjected to a lot of hazing from my new ship-mates."

A terrible fear seized me. "Hugo, what are we going to do?"

"Well, we are together now. We will just have to enjoy the time as much as we can. When my leave is over, I will report for duty and see what happens."

"No, no, I mean, if you get fired; what about the children? What about their tuition? And our rent—what will we do about that?"

My husband just shook his head. We didn't want our children to worry, but the remaining days of the home leave were very stressful. We fasted and prayed almost without ceasing. All too soon it was time for him to leave.

"Remember that you are not alone," I whispered in Hugo's ear, holding him tight. I was trying to encourage myself as much as him, but it was hard.

Tragedy

The next few days seemed like an eternity. Campeche, the city the *Huichol* was going to, was a two-day journey from Montemorelos, so we couldn't expect news at once. After the two days had passed and there was still no call from Hugo, my worry took

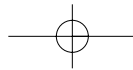
know. It was the third alternative that worried me the most. Had he felt so pressured by what I had said that he concluded there was no way out but to work on Sabbath?

Every time the phone rang I jumped to answer. Finally a call did come, but it was not from Hugo. Rather it was his mother calling from Cuautla, in the



AS THEY WERE: Taken about the time the events in the story took place, the photo shows the members of the Moreno family (left to right): Roxana, Marta, Andrés, Hugo, and Yeshua.

another direction. If the captain had granted him Sabbath privileges, I was sure he would call. And if he was on his way home, he would certainly let us



The Enigma of Divine Providence

BY ROY ADAMS

*The story by Roxana Moreno is a ringing testimony to divine providence. Good as it is, however, it can raise troubling questions: How about the crew that perished? How about their families? Was God not concerned about them? Here, for what it's worth, is part of an editorial I wrote on this difficult subject a few years ago.**

When I visited the Brazilian city of Manaus in the heart of the Amazon rain forest in the early part of 1994, I was taken to see the Sambodromo, a large outdoor stadium built for the 1994 carnival celebrations. And I remember former South American Division president Joao Wolff telling me that that was the venue selected for a mission-wide rally scheduled for April 19, with 15,000 members expected to attend.

But on April 18, just one day before the scheduled convention, the 100-metric-ton structure collapsed. "The Lord saw fit to bring it down upon itself," said Wolff in a memo to me, "intervening . . . [to prevent] the loss of many lives." "Praise the Lord," said Wolff's memo, "for His constant care and keeping."

Indeed!

On the Other Hand

But at the very moment that our believers in South America were savoring this powerful evidence of divine providence, the tragedy of Rwanda was unfolding, a mind-numbing savagery that would see more than 1 million people brutally slaughtered and millions more thrown into total physical and economic chaos.

In an interview with me in the city of Abidjan, headquarters of our work in the Africa-Indian Ocean Division (AID), of which Rwanda is a part, former AID president Jacob Nortey referred to the horrifying incident that took place at an Adventist church on the grounds of our Mugonero Hospital in Rwanda, where thousands of our Tutsi members—men, women, and children—had fled for safety.

As our people prayed and sang, soldiers, accompanied by an armed mob, invaded the premises, tossing grenades into their midst. Hundreds were killed instantly. Those who survived the initial attack were brutally hacked to death. In one hour more than 2,000 were murdered there in the sanctuary. Their bodies were dumped into five mass graves on the hospital grounds.

As it happened I was carrying Elder Wolff's memo with me on my trip, intending to use it as the source for a ringing year-end declaration of God's providence in the life of His church. Now I was forced to grapple with the tragedy at Mugonero. How could one explain the providence of Manaus against the slaughter of Mugonero?

Puzzling

As every reader knows, such contradictions can be multiplied around the world. Every passing year fills up its toll of blessing and woe, triumph and defeat, sunshine and shadow. On the one hand, the shout of joyful ecstasy rises to the very heavens. On the other, the groan of excruciating agony shatters the human spirit to the ground. The lifelong vegetarian dies of cancer, while the flesh-consuming hedonist comes up negative for the dreaded disease. The careful teetotaler is killed behind the wheel, while the reckless drunk walks away unharmed—to drink again.

No, it doesn't always happen that way, as we all know. But it happens often enough to give us pause. How can we reconcile such contradictions?

My understanding of providence is that what happened in Manaus *represents what God delights to do*. And what happened in Mugonero *represents what God sometimes does not prevent*. We must not allow what He permits in a Mugonero to stifle our appreciation and celebration of what He prevents in a Manaus. And only the incorrigibly cynical would deny that the ecstasy in the world far outweighs the agony, the triumph far outdistances the tragedy, and the joy supersedes the sorrow.

Even so, however, the contradictions confound us.

Unless we live in a random universe, we have to believe that there are reasons behind it all. In our human limitations, however, such reasons prove intractable, incomprehensible—buried deep in the inscrutable wisdom of God.

But through it all, our knowledge of God's unchanging goodness helps us face the future unafraid—in the calm assurance that someday we'll understand. Someday He'll make it plain to us.

Meanwhile, let us rejoice with Roxana.

* See "Manaus and Mugonero: How Does Providence Work?" *Adventist Review*, Dec. 29, 1994, p. 5.

Roy Adams is an associate editor of the *Adventist Review*.

state of Morelos. At first I had a hard time making out what she was saying, because she was weeping and nearly hysterical: "Roxana, where is Hugo?" she wanted to know.

"Ah—well, I think he is in Campeche. Why?"

Now there was even more panic in her voice. "But what ship was he on?"

"The *Huichol*."

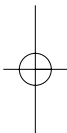
"Haven't you seen the news?"

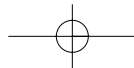
"No. What is it, Conchita? What's wrong?"

"They have interrupted regular pro-

gramming on the TV, and every five minutes they are broadcasting news bulletins. The *Huichol* has gone down, and there are no survivors."

As I hung up, the world seemed to go dark. I sank into a chair, trying to collect my thoughts. Our own television





was soon confirming the terrible news.

But the children said, "Look, Mom, it's too early to panic. Maybe Dad wasn't on board. Maybe they fired him and he just decided to come home without letting us know."

Immediately we began trying to call the port captain's office in Campeche. The lines were jammed, but after a long time we succeeded in getting through. There was a pause while the captain's assistant checked the list; then came the most terrible sentence I ever expect to hear: "Yes, sorry. Hugo Moreno was on board the *Huichol* as systems engineer. Our sympathy, ma'am. The company lawyers will be getting in touch."

"But wait . . . wait! Are you sure? I mean, do you know that he was really on board?"

There was a pause, and moments later he came back: "Señora, there are two crew members here from the *Mazahua*. They were friends of your husband, and they saw him on board the *Huichol* just before it sailed."

I Was in Deep Crisis

For a long time after that I felt I had betrayed a sacred trust, because I must admit that in that terrible hour my faith failed me. Hugo and I had been deeply in love, and to lose him in this way was painful beyond words. What made it much worse was the conviction that I was partly to blame. Helpless and hopeless, I felt totally abandoned by God.

It was much later that I read the story of Job beyond the first two chapters and realized that, contrary to what I had believed, Job's faith had staggered too, when his world came crashing down. "Why are You doing this to me, God?" he had said. "It isn't fair."

What encouraged me the most was God's reaction. There was no flash of lightning to turn Job into a puff of smoke. God just stood by and waited until Job and his friends had worn themselves out trying to explain it all. Finally, when they were done, God spoke. But even then it was not to offer an explanation. God simply said:

"Job, I've given you plenty of evidence of My wisdom and love. Now you're just going to have to trust Me."

How I wish I'd understood that when my terrible trial came! But I didn't.

The children knew I would never rest until we had the last bit of news, the last shred of evidence, and, if possible, their father's body to bring home

*"Then came
the most terrible
sentence I ever
expect to hear:
'Yes, sorry.
Hugo Moreno
was on board
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systems engineer.
Our sympathy,
ma'am.'"*

for burial. They persuaded me to drink some herb tea that was supposed to be a tranquilizer and tried to get me to lie down while they readied my suitcase for the trip to Campeche. I did lie down for a while, but the bed seemed like an anthill.

Suddenly the Sun Came Out

Finally at 4:00 a.m. Adrés and I made our way to the little Montemorelos bus station. There we were, standing in line to buy our tickets, when suddenly I heard the most beautiful voice I ever expect to hear until Jesus comes again.

"Mi amor, what a surprise! How did you know I would be on this bus? . . .

What? Now what are you so emotional about?" It was Hugo—alive and well, and dumbstruck at our reaction.

What had happened?

Sad and upset when the captain had furiously ordered him off the ship just before sailing time, Hugo had been too disheartened to call before starting out for home. Yes, he had noticed the friends who told us they had seen him on deck, but he was heading for his bunk to pick up his Bible and a few other personal belongings, and the last thing he wanted to do at that time was to stop and explain things to them.

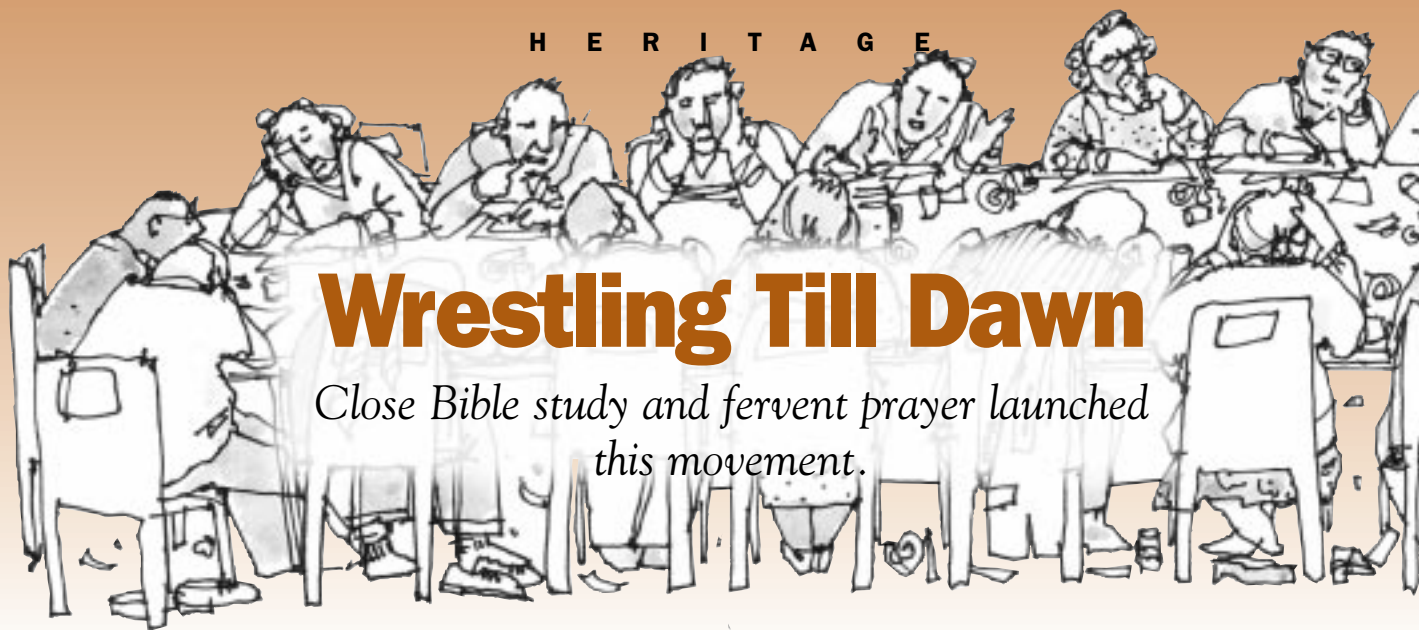
Hugo had no inkling of the disaster that had overtaken the *Huichol*, and had spent many gloomy hours on the trip home thinking about how God had let him get fired from a good job just for being faithful. People must have thought it strange, but we didn't care. We knelt down right there on the floor of the Montemorelos bus station and poured out our hearts to God. Grateful for getting fired? Oh, yes, overwhelmingly grateful! But we not only thanked God. We also prayed for more faith so that next time a trial comes we will be able to hear God's voice when He says, "Hugo and Roxana, you just have to trust Me." ■

Postscript: Not long after losing his job with Petroleos Mexicanos, Hugo Moreno was employed by the University of Montemorelos. He and Roxana have since seen their older children graduate from the university. "Little" Yeshua, now 16, is planning to follow in his father's footsteps and study systems engineering at the university.

Roxana Moreno lives in Montemorelos, Mexico. Loron Wade is the head of the Department of Religion at Montemorelos University in Montemorelos, Mexico.



H E R I T A G E



Wrestling Till Dawn

Close Bible study and fervent prayer launched this movement.

BY JERRY MOON

IT IS A SESQUICENTENNIAL THAT SEVENTH-day Adventists can both celebrate and learn from.

A series of Sabbath and Sanctuary Conferences beginning in 1848, 150 years ago, started a process of consensus formation among ex-Millerite Adventists that led in two years to an agreed-upon doctrinal core and culminated 15 years later in the organization of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The series of conferences included seven in 1848, six in 1849, and 10 in 1850.¹ Following the great disappointment of 1844, the conferences represented the first concerted attempt by the Sabbatarian group of ex-Millerites to acquaint their Millerite friends with the newly discovered concepts of the seventh-day Sabbath and the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary—as James White put it, to “establish those already in the truth, and to awaken those who were not fully decided.”²

The conference that James White later labeled “the first general meeting of the Seventh-day Adventists” convened April 20-24, 1848, at Rocky Hill, near Hartford, Connecticut, in a “large unfinished chamber” of a new house owned by Albert Belden.³ The main speaker was Joseph Bates. White reported that “Brother Bates’s principal subject was the commandments. He was able to make the case plain that the only entrance to ‘life’ was by keeping the commandments, and to break them was sure ‘death’ (eternal). . . . Ellen spoke with considerable power of what God showed her in vision concerning the Sabbath.”⁴ Total attendance was “about 50,” but even at that James White observed that “in point of numbers and influence,” the conference “marked a new era in the cause.”⁵ A second conference occurred in nearby Bristol, Connecticut, apparently in June.⁶

The third conference met Friday and Sabbath, August 18-

19, at Volney, northwest of Syracuse, New York. Ellen White recalled that “there were about 35 present, all that could be collected in that part of the state. There were hardly two agreed. Each was strenuous for his views, declaring that they were according to the Bible. All were anxious for an opportunity to advance their sentiments, or to preach to us. They were told that we had not come so great a distance to hear them, but had come to teach them the truth.”⁷

David Arnold, whose barn was the venue for the meeting, held three “strange differences of opinion”—(1) that the millennium of Revelation 20 was past; (2) that the 144,000 were those raised at Christ’s resurrection; and (3) that the Lord’s Supper should be done only at the annual Passover.⁸ As Arnold “spoke of the 1,000 years being in the past,” Ellen White “knew that he was in error,”⁹ but did not know how to refute the error.¹⁰ “Great grief pressed my spirits,” she recalled, “for it seemed to me that God was dishonored.”¹¹ Under this anxiety she fainted. Immediately the others present formed a prayer circle and interceded for her. She revived—but not to normal consciousness. In a visionary state, unaware of what was going on around her, she took up a Bible and began to turn the pages, pointing out texts relevant to the issues under discussion. At the same time her eyes were turned “upward and in an opposite direction from the Bible,” as if looking at something distant.¹²

While those around her were curiously documenting her outward behavior, she herself was “lost to earthly things.” When the vision was over and she again became aware of her surroundings, she told the group that her “accompanying angel” had explained “some of the errors of those present, and also the truth in contrast with their errors.” So the method by which the vision resolved the doctrinal disagreements was by calling attention to specific Scripture passages relevant to



their study. As John Loughborough noted later: "The reason these persons gave up their differences was not simply because Sister White said they must give them up, but because in the same vision they were pointed to plain statements of Scripture that refuted their false theories, and had presented before them in contrast a straight and harmonious track of Bible truth."¹³

The meeting continued in a fourth conference a week later, August 27-28, at Hiram Edson's barn, near Port Gibson, New York, just southeast of Rochester. Hiram Edson had invited the Whites to the Volney meeting and was also specifically mentioned as one of those who prayed for Ellen White during the Volney conference.¹⁴

The fifth conference returned to Albert Belden's home in Rocky Hill, Connecticut, September 8-9; and a sixth conference was held October 20-22 at Topsham, Maine, in the home of Stockbridge Howland, a civil engineer.¹⁵ Featured speakers were again Bates on the Sabbath and James White on the developing sanctuary doctrine.

The seventh known conference of 1848 was held November 17-19 in Dorchester (now part of Boston), Massachusetts, in the home of Otis

Nichols, printer. Joseph Bates presented a Bible study on the seal of God, further light came through a vision to Ellen White, and the group then tested the new concepts by further Bible study.¹⁶

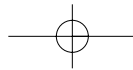
The conferences of 1848 remain significant today for at least four reasons. First, the conferences brought doctrinal and spiritual unity to a group of hard-headed New England individualists who prior to the conference had been characterized as "hardly two agreed" on many biblical topics other than the Millerite theme of Christ's second coming.¹⁷

Second, the conferences united doctrinal concepts that remain at the heart of Adventist theology and life 150 years later. Joseph Bates's insistence on the continuing authority of the Ten Commandments in the lives of converted Christians was united to James White's studies on the intercession of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. This juxtaposition of doctrines was no mere coincidence, but a synergistic union that still goes far toward explaining the uniqueness of Adventism. Apart from the grace and power that flow from the ministry of Christ, the commandments lead to legalism because of the inability of the unregenerate heart. But through the ministry of Christ and the Holy

Spirit indwelling the believer, the commandments become a promise of God's power to transform the ordinary life into a foretaste of heaven.

Third, the conferences set a methodological precedent that has proved its effectiveness on subsequent occasions for recovering the unity and certainty of the pioneers.¹⁸ The conferences were constructed around the union of prayer and study. The participants investigated one point at a time. They deliberately chose to minimize minor points of disagreement. Ellen White recalled that "we tried to make our differences as slight as possible by not dwelling on points that were of minor importance, upon which there were varying opinions." After the main presentations by Bates and James White, there was discussion, in which "each one expressed his opinion freely."¹⁹ Remembering what caused the 1844 disappointment,²⁰ they "sought most earnestly that the Scriptures should not be wrested to suit any man's opinions." Their response to deadlocked disagreement was to separate for individual prayer and study.²¹

"Sometimes one or two of the brethren would stubbornly set themselves against the view presented, and



Celebrating the Spirit of Discussion

As the *Adventist Review* moves toward its own sesquicentennial year (1999), we will highlight special events that continue the focus on Bible study and prayer described in Jerry Moon's article.

The New York Conference, in which many of the early conferences were held 150 years ago, will host a two-day conference on August 21-22, 1998, to encourage Bible study, affirm the important doctrines of the Sabbath and the sanctuary, and to promote Christian unity.

Presenters include B. J. Christensen, administrative assistant to the North American Division president; Richard Davidson, from the SDA Theological Seminary; and Jerry Moon, also from the seminary.

Locations for the conference include the Bay Knoll SDA Church in Rochester, New York, and the Hiram Edson barn, in Clifton Springs.

Further information can be obtained by contacting the New York Conference office at (315) 469-6921.

would act out the natural feelings of the heart; but when this disposition appeared, we suspended our investigations and adjourned our meeting, that each one might have an opportunity to go to God in prayer and, without conversation with others, study the point of difference, asking light from heaven. With expressions of friendliness we parted, to meet again as soon as possible for further investigation."²²

Recalling the intensity of their search, she wrote: "Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word."²³ "Often we fasted, that we might be better fitted to understand the truth."²⁴

The order of their study was first to search the Scriptures until they reached the limits of their ability to understand the available evidence. "When they came to the point in their study where they said, 'We can do nothing more,' the Spirit of the Lord would come upon [Ellen White], . . . and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given."²⁵ Direct revelation from the Holy Spirit through visions was not usually given until after they had thoroughly examined the biblical evidence.

As a result, the meetings that opened with a burden for unity—for "we knew that Christ is not divided"—climaxed with "a clear explanation of the passages" under investigation.

"Difficult portions were made clear through God's appointed way."²⁶ The foundations were laid for a doctrinal system: "Light was given that helped us to understand the Scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God was made plain."²⁷ Unity of understanding provided a basis for unity of action. "Then there was perfect harmony. We were all of one mind and one spirit."²⁸

Fourth, the key elements of their theological method established the distinctive ethos that has characterized the Advent movement. The centrality of Scripture was enhanced, not diminished, by the visions given. The visions directed the believers' attention to Scripture passages that corrected their misunderstandings. Thus, to the degree that their consciences were captive to the Word of God, there was both freedom of conscience and doctrinal unity: freedom of conscience because ultimate authority was vested in God and His Word, not in human authority; and doctrinal unity because of their conviction that the Word does not contradict itself. That freedom of individual conscience and its corresponding unity in the Word are the enduring legacy of the 1848 Conferences. ■

¹ C Mervyn Maxwell, "The 1848 Sabbath and Sanctuary Conferences: What Actually Took Place?" in *Source Book for Development of*

SDA Theology, ed. Gerard P. Damsteegt (Andrews University, 1994), pp. 325-327. See also George R. Knight, *Millennial Fever*, p. 319; "Sabbath Conferences," *SDA Encyclopedia*; Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: *The Early Years, 1827-1862* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 1985), pp. 137-151.

² James White to S. Howland, quoted by Ellen G. White in *Spiritual Gifts* (Battle Creek, Mich., 1860), vol. 2, p. 93.

³ James White, *Life Incidents* (Battle Creek, Mich.: SDA Pub. Assn., 1868), p. 271. Albert Belden would become the grandfather of F. E. Belden, SDA hymnwriter.

⁴ James White to Leonard and Elvira Hastings, Apr. 27, 1848, quoted in A. L. White, p. 137.

⁵ *Life Incidents*, p. 271.

⁶ James White to Dear Brother, July 2, 1848, twice calls this the "Bristol Conference." See also Maxwell, p. 326.

⁷ *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, pp. 97, 98.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ For her experience during this time, see *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1958), book 1, p. 207.

¹¹ *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 98.

¹² J. N. Loughborough, in *Review and Herald*, Mar. 3, 1885, cited in A. L. White, p. 142.

¹³ A. L. White, p. 142.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 139, 141-144; James White to Dear Brother, July 2, 1848.

¹⁵ Maxwell, p. 326.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 97.

¹⁸ For instance, compare the 1855 Conference on the time to begin the Sabbath, A. L. White, pp. 322-326.

¹⁹ *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 206, 207; *Testimonies to Ministers* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1962), pp. 24, 25.

²⁰ William Miller had accepted a then-popular concept that one meaning of sanctuary was the earth; hence, the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14 was thought to refer to the cleansing of the earth by fire at the Second Coming. This was taken as support for the expectation that the Second Coming would occur October 22, 1844, at the close of the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14.

²¹ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 25.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 206.

²⁴ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 24.

²⁵ *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 206, 207.

²⁶ *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 24, 25.

²⁷ *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 207.

²⁸ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 25.

Jerry Moon, teaches church history at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Good Counsel

CALVIN B. ROCK

Sometimes when I am looking for encouragement or help in decision-making, I close my eyes and open my Bible at random. Then whatever verse my eyes fall upon I interpret as guidance for my situation.

My wife criticizes me for seeking scriptural direction in this manner, but I find it a convenient way to get inspiration, especially when I'm in a hurry. Is there anything wrong with asking for direction like this?

"All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17, NRSV). Otherwise stated, there is no page or verse in the Bible that does not have meaning.

In spite of this fact, the Scriptures should be studied in context or ways that provide one with accurate background for its statements. Opening the Bible and finding verses in this arbitrary way (even after praying about it) is not consistent with this principle.

That is not to say that one cannot "land" upon helpful instruction by the method you describe. The problem is that it is just as likely to produce unpleasant or repulsive directions.

Such was the case, or so the story goes, of someone who tried this way of finding God's will, only to come upon the verse that reads: "And he [Judas] . . . went and hanged himself" (Matt. 27:5). Not willing to believe that this was God's true will for him, he tried again, and this time his eyes fell upon the words "Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:37). Knowing full well that his search was not yielding good results, he again closed his eyes and opened the Bible, only to read, "That thou doest, do quickly" (John 13:27).

Emergencies do arise that disrupt our routine of daily devotions. In these very exceptional cases it is better to repeat passages already committed to memory or to meditate upon well-known verses rather than to manipulate the Scriptures in a desperate, random search for guidance.

As for knowing God's will for specific decision-making, the best advice I know is that given in John 7:17 and Proverbs 3:1-6.

Our daughter, who has attended two different Adventist colleges, informs us that at these schools there are students who drink, smoke, have sexual addictions, and are openly homosexual. Is it true that our schools keep students no matter what they do?

That is not true. What is true is that most, if not all, of our colleges and universities now have in place counseling programs for individuals with such problems.

This does allow these students to stay longer than in the past, when they were summarily dismissed. But these policies do not intend their presence "no matter

what." They provide that if the student does not attend the counseling sessions and show progress, he or she is to be dismissed.

There are, of course, dangers involved in this more merciful posture. The primary one is the potential for such persons' negative influence upon other students, although young people today are more informed than those of yesteryear and probably not as quickly surprised or influenced by those in the categories you mention. On the other hand, campus leaders and board members must remember that Adventist parents send their offspring to our schools with the expectation that they will study in an environment in which the vices of society are not tolerated.

But the greater discipline concern in Adventism is not that on our campuses, as important as that is, but rather in our local churches. If my read is correct, disciplining of church members is rare to nonexistent in far too many congregations.

Our school leaders should be held accountable as spiritual guardians of the students on our campuses. But their task would be simpler if more church boards and congregations followed faithfully the counsel of the Bible and *Church Manual* in matters of discipline. That would do two things: (a) demonstrate the proper example, and (b) reduce the number of applicants to our schools who are able to claim "regular standing" while maintaining an irregular (contrary) lifestyle.

*There is no page
in the Bible
that doesn't have
meaning.*

Calvin B. Rock is a general vice president of the General Conference. He holds doctoral degrees in ministry and Christian ethics.



Understanding a Global Village

BY BETH SCHAEFER, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER FOR THE ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF AGENCY

Adventist Development and Relief Agency's Global Village (GV), a one-of-a-kind development education exhibit that transports visitors to the developing world, presented its seventh demonstration April 16-29.

Approximately 160,000 school-children, families, adults, and representatives from prominent organizations journeyed "around the world" without leaving the Washington, D.C., Mall. The attendance was more than the combined totals of all prior GV events.

Students came from as far away as New York and Alabama, and nearly 1,400 people volunteered to serve as hosts, guides, and greeters. From architects, doctors, and teachers to students and photographers, the volunteers kept GV running smoothly.

"I'm homeless and this looks pretty realistic," Jerry said to a habitat host. After talking for a while, the host told Jerry about Pack-a-Box and where the boxes that visitors were packing would go. "He asked if I wanted to volunteer," Jerry says, "and I said, 'Yeah, can I?' I started that day [Friday, April 17] and stayed until they packed up and moved on."

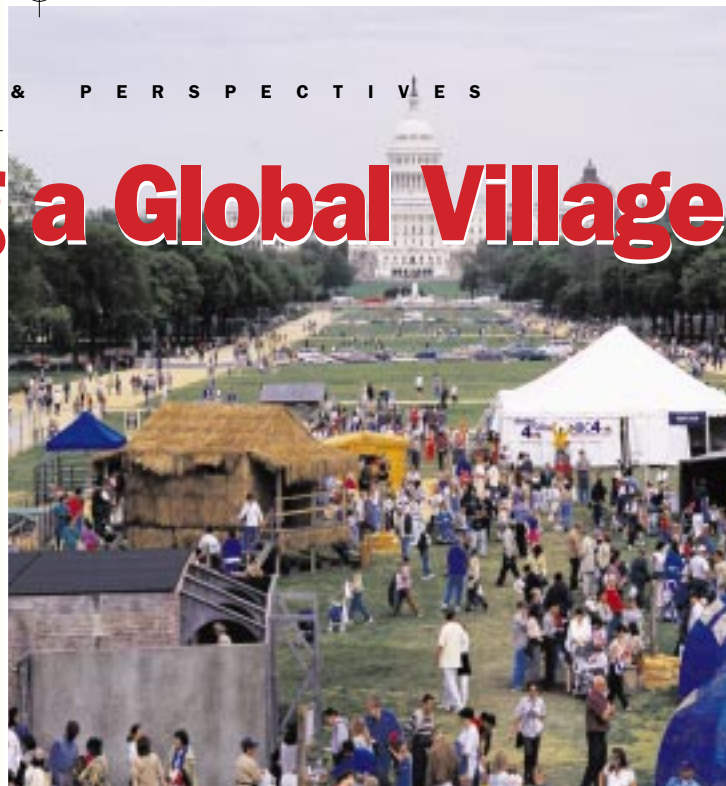
Jerry is one of GV's most touching volunteer stories, but only one of at least 200 each day who volunteered their time and

experience with the visitors. Many volunteers came from Columbia Union churches and schools, including Shenandoah Valley, Highland View, Blue Mountain, Vienna, Takoma, and Pine Forge academies.

With life-size habitats and interactive learning stations, ADRA developed Global Village as a way to expand children's worldviews and to raise an understanding of universal human needs and interdependence, and the importance of cultural differences.

At the Pack-a-Box station visitors packed boxes of clothes and personal hygiene items like mouthwash, soap, and lotion. More than 6,500 boxes were packed for families in Haiti, with additional boxes going to charities in the Washington, D.C., area.

Located between the U.S. Capitol building and the Washington Monument, GV attracted officials from government, the media, and major corporations. The sponsoring organizations of the five-acre event included ADRA International, World Bank, WWRC-TV, InterAction,



HIGH CONTRAST: The United States Capitol building stands in stark contrast to the habitats of ADRA's Global Village, on the Washington, D.C., Mall, April 16-29. ADRA estimates that 160,000 visitors toured the village.

United States Agency for International Development, Adventist HealthCare, Target Stores, Citibank, and other partners.

Representative Tony Hall, who first saw GV in his congressional district in Ohio in 1996, said, "When I first saw it, if I could have just taken the trees away and some of the people, I thought I was really back in places like Chad, Ethiopia, or North Korea."



FIRST CUT: Francesca Louis, of Haiti, cut the ribbon officially opening ADRA's Global Village.



YOUR PASSPORT, PLEASE? Volunteers stamped passports, acted as habitat hosts, led tours, and greeted visitors.



STRAW HOUSE: The thought of living on a floating island intrigued some young visitors to the Titora Reed house from Lake Titicaca, Peru.



JUST LIKE HOME? With more than 3 million homeless in North America, vans such as these provide shelter for many.



HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE: Students learned that pounding rice takes coordination and perseverance. The hands-on exhibit was part of Global Village's learning stations.



INTERACTIVITY: Children visiting the Masai habitat enjoyed the interactivity of the hands-on displays.



SENDING A SIGNAL: "I hope that having these structures on the Mall for everyone to experience will begin to change the minds of those in the big building at the other end of the Mall [Congress]," says USAID administrator Brian Atwood.



CULTURE CLASH: The well-known Smithsonian castle (background) towers behind the Southeast Asian stilt house and refugee boat at ADRA's Global Village.



VIPs: ADRA president Ralph S. Watts, Jr., watches as Maryland representative Connie Morella signs a box she just packed for families in Haiti.

Review and Herald Publishing Association Revives a Tithing Practice

BY TIM CROSBY, REVIEW AND HERALD PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION EDITOR AT LARGE

Things are picking up at the Review and Herald Publishing Association, based in Hagerstown, Maryland, the Adventist church's oldest publishing house.

For many years the Review and Herald gave significant sums of money to the General Conference and the world church. The publishing house funded many special projects and subsidized the salaries of all union personal ministries directors and publishing directors.

It was a common practice for the publishing house to set aside 10 percent of net profits for what was originally called the Rehabilitation Fund, then the Publishing Development Fund. The money was used to help publishing institutions around the world to recover from the devastation of World War II. A committee within the General Conference Publishing Department collected requests from publishing houses around the world and disbursed the funds to various projects, often for the purchase of equipment.

In the late 1980s the custom lapsed when the publishing house began to experience harder times than some of the institutions that were receiving its aid. Originally many publishing houses contributed to the fund, but eventually only the Pacific Press and Review and Herald publishing associations supported the fund. Since most of the war damage had been repaired, the

fund was closed out. The Review and Herald's constitution had specified that it return a tithe, but this was taken out at a constituency meeting some years ago.

During this period publishing house officials found themselves in a financial morass. Each year the losses were greater. A costly major project went sour. When Hepsi Singh was asked to serve as vice president for finance in

been. The publishing house had exceeded the limit of its line of credit, and no more funds would be available. Singh was relieved temporarily that the payroll was assured for that week, but deeply troubled for the future.

She called the new president of the publishing house, Robert J. Kinney, and said, "We are in trouble. If we need money next week, we have nowhere to go." There was no other known source of funds.

Kinney said he would call the board chair.

Singh then walked into the office of her assistant, Glenn Beagles, explained the situation, and said, "I don't know what to do."

"Let's pray," he said. They knelt down by his desk and prayed earnestly and tearfully that God would enable the publishing house to meet its obligations to its 200 employees.

The following day checks totaling \$1 million came in, and the loan balance was gradually reduced.

Since that day the Review and Herald has never again borrowed money. Many oth-

ers were praying throughout the year. The administration took steps to trim staff, travel budgets, and inventories. By March 31, 1992, the entire \$3.8 million line of credit was paid off. Since then profit margins have sometimes been slim, but cash flow has never been a problem. All equipment has been purchased on a cash basis.

However, the story doesn't end there. The publishing house had



RETURNING A TITHE: Review and Herald board chair Philip Follett (far left), financial vice president Hepsi Singh (left center), and president Ted Wilson (far right) return the publishing house tithe to General Conference undertreasurer Martin Ytreberg.

1991, the publishing house was several million dollars in debt and had to borrow money daily to ease the severe cash flow problems.

One sultry August morning the finance division asked the bank to transfer \$275,000 to their account to cover the week's payroll. A few hours later the manager of the bank called back and said that the money had been transferred, but should not have

another difficult year in 1997. There wasn't enough work coming in to keep the factory busy. The first quarter statement showed large losses. In July, after much soul searching and prayer, Ted N. C. Wilson, the publishing house's current president, suggested that the Review and Herald begin returning tithe on profits to its parent organization, the General Conference. This was unanimously voted by the administrative committee.

This decision was not prompted by any prior suggestion on the part of the General Conference, nor was there any known Spirit of Prophecy counsel on the matter. Few of the committee members were aware of the earlier giving policy. The new practice differed from the old one in that the money would go directly into the General Conference tithe fund.

In spite of early losses, God blessed the publishing house with a modest profit for 1997. In November work orders began to flow. The press was

*Review and Herald
continues to strive
to glorify God.*

inundated with jobs for 1998, and the profit statement for the first quarter of 1998 showed a dramatic reversal of the situation a year earlier.

On April 7, at the semiannual meeting of the board of directors, the Review and Herald had the privilege of handing over to GC undertreasurer F. Martin Ytreberg, a member of the

board, a \$30,000 tithe check for 1997.

"We at the Review and Herald will continue to strive to glorify God by following scriptural principles and the Spirit of Prophecy counsel regarding the publishing work," says Ted Wilson. "Prayer is an important part of our operation. We feel that our current good fortune is not merely a natural result of market forces or good management or our fine staff, but is because of God's blessing, and we want to praise Him for His goodness."

Institutional tithing is not mandated in Scripture, but Proverbs 11:24, 25 reads: "One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed" (NIV). Perhaps this timeless principle of generosity applies even to institutions.

NEWS BREAK

Adventists Expelled From Their Homes in Mexico

Many Adventists were expelled from the town of Santo Tomas Quieri, in San Carlos Yuntepec, Oaxaca, Mexico, on May 27 for refusing to pay taxes that are used to finance festivities held in honor of the town's Catholic saint, reports Daniel Loredó Cruz, South Mexican Union communication director.

According to reports from the area, the 11 Indian families, 87 individuals, left their belongings behind and were received in the home of their fellow member, Anselmo Martínez, in a nearby town, and the Oaxaca Mission office. The mission provided the group with a month's worth of food and other necessities.

Most of the families have subsequently been offered more permanent lodging and work in the farms of several Adventist families. The group has expressed the desire to remain together, as many of them are related. To that end, the South Mexican Union has discussed placing the families together in an 800-acre Mayab Mission property in the Yucatán that serves as an Adventist campsite.

According to Cruz, these Indian families could continue to farm the land, as they did by trade in Santo Tomas, although the geographical separation and lan-

guage barrier would be a challenge to them culturally, since their first language is a Zapotecan dialect, not Spanish.

Although the Adventist families in Santo Tomas, Oaxaca, were not subjected to violence in this incident, they have endured harassment for their religious beliefs for years, says Cruz.

Initially, the families were accused of not meeting the town's community service requirements because of Sabbath conflicts. The town required that Adventists do three days' work to compensate for not working on the Sabbath.

The Adventists were also forbidden to purchase goods from the government-subsidized community store. Some were forbidden to cut firewood for cooking, and others were not permitted to sow their lands. The townspeople decided to expel the families from Santo Tomas and consider Protestants as undesirable in their town.

Attorney Jose Hayasaka, representing the Adventist Church in Mexico, appealed the case before Mexican authorities. Although the authorities summoned the townspeople together so they could explain that Mexican law guarantees religious liberty, the townspeople did not accept any law that protected what Catholics regard as traditions of fanaticism and ignorance.

Selling Principles Cheap

BY JONATHAN GALLAGHER, NEWS DIRECTOR, GENERAL CONFERENCE

The Methodist Church in Britain plans to give up its antialcohol stand, BBC radio recently reported. Their governing body is even considering applying for a liquor license for their meetings and conventions in order to raise \$28 million for refurbishment work.

From the beginning of their movement, the Methodists took a strong temperance position, urging many to "take the pledge" never to drink. This total abstinence stance, along with tough requirements not to gamble and to keep the Lord's day holy, added a strong social component to their preaching.

But now? The antigambling pledge has disappeared, and already the concept of social drinking in moderation does not bring condemnation.

Some may argue that standing against alcohol and gambling is merely a cultural or lifestyle issue and is not

part of the "essential truth." But that misses the point by a mile.

What you do and the way you live reflects who you are. And if you can so flexibly accommodate what you do, then *who* are you? *Where* are you?

What real difference does it make to drink just one glass of wine? some ask. From a chemical and biological view, perhaps not a great deal, aside from killing off a few brain cells and chancing alcohol addiction. But that's not the issue.

If I drink, what am I saying to myself about the use of alcohol, caring for my health, my own self-worth, and most important, the God who says "wine is a mocker"?

It's sad to see the Methodists, who stood for so much, diluting their principles and allowing social convenience to outweigh their previous convictions. Once you give up your fundamental principles, there's not much left.

NEWS COMMENTARY

NEWS BREAK

Under pressure and intimidation, seven families gave up their Adventist faith to stay in Santo Tomas. Reports from Oaxaca indicate that these families were pressured to accept religious obligations of the Catholic Church, since the religious celebrations are compulsory.

Cruz also said, "The Mexican Congress is currently discussing the establishment of a law that would give autonomy to Indian towns in their rule of law."

If passed, this law would make it more difficult for Indian Protestants to exercise their faith while residing in their hometowns, where Mexican law is subordinate to the law spoken by their Indian chiefs.—*Adventist News Network*.

First Cell Church in North America Organized

The first cell church in North America to be organized with full church status was voted on May 3, at a constituency session of the Washington Conference.

Based in Lakewood, Washington, the Voice of Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church was born from a cell group ministry, a small Bible fellowship group that trains members for missionary work, say North American Division officials.

Since only 50 percent of the cell members can be

church members, the group is designed to multiply exponentially. The Voice of Hope congregation expects to start a new cell church within one year.

News Notes

✓ **Gerhard Pfandl**, South Pacific Division field secretary and ethnic coordinator, was recently elected as an associate director of the Biblical Research Institute, based at the General Conference. Pfandl will replace William Shea, who is retiring.

✓ **K. J. Moses**, Global Mission coordinator for the Southern Asia Division, was recently elected division secretary. Moses previously served as president of the Central India Union and vice president of Spicer Memorial College in Pune. Moses replaces James M. Campbell, who returns to North America after serving 17 years in the division.

What's Upcoming

July	18	Home Study International Day
Aug.	1	Global Mission Evangelism Day
Sept.	5	Lay Evangelism Day
Sept.	12	<i>Adventist Review</i> promotion
Sept.	19	Family Togetherness Day

Ransomed!

ANGEL MANUEL RODRÍGUEZ

Could you give me a couple passages from the New Testament from which the substitutionary death of Christ is taught?

That Christ died in our place belongs to the very heart of the biblical understanding of the atonement. It is an attempt to unfold the meaning of Christ's death rather than a rational description of the process.

Possibly one of the most important passages on this subject is Jesus' words in Mark 10:45: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (NIV). The term *ransom* designates the means of release or redemption and is associated with situations in which the life of the individual was in jeopardy (Ex. 30:12; Num. 35:31).

The idea of self-sacrifice in Mark 10:45 is defined as giving one's life for others. Here the Greek preposition "for" (*anti*) should retain its full substitutionary force: "in place of." The payment required from the many was their own lives. Yet they could not have ransomed themselves. They would have died. The only way out of their predicament was for someone else to die in their place. Jesus paid the penalty for their sins by giving His own life as their substitute.

The idea of substitution is strengthened in Isaiah 53 in connection with the words "give," "his life," and "many." If we consider the fact that Mark 10:45 contains a rather short saying, Isaiah 53 establishes the dependence of the one on the other.

Besides, conceptually the Servant dies in place of the many, bearing their sins. And in Mark the Son of man gives His life "in place of the many." In both cases God's instrument does something for the benefit of others, and the language of substitution unpacks the meaning of that action.

Paul also says that Christ "gave himself as a [substitutive] ransom [*antilutron*] for [*hyper*] all men" (1 Tim. 2:6, NIV). In this context Paul describes one of the ways in which Christ functioned as our mediator: He gave His life as a substitute—ransom—for the benefit of all. The mediator took the place of those who had been condemned.

Another important passage is Galatians 3:13: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse

for us" (NIV). First, the "curse" is the one pronounced by the Mosaic law upon its violators, and Paul argues that no one is capable of observing the Law completely (verse 10).

Consequently the whole world is under the law and liable to receive its curse (verse 22).

Second, the law's curse was ordained by God Himself. It expresses a judicial action of God, the validity of which is not questioned, much less rejected, by Paul. Therefore, the curse of the law occupies a legal place in the human predicament on account of the universality of sin.

Third, the righteous claims of the law against sinners need to be fully satisfied. The curse could not be canceled out as if it never existed or ignored as irrelevant. This unavoidable phenomenon makes hopeless the plight of humanity and threatens its very existence. Without the legal claim of the law, the gospel becomes irrelevant and lacks purpose. This claim is to be satisfied, and this God did through Christ.

Fourth, Christ takes the curse upon Himself and dies in place of sinners on the cross. In this particular case the preposition "for" (*hyper*) contains the idea of substitution, because Christ became the recipient of the curse in our place, freeing us from its power. Although the word "satisfaction" is not used by Paul, the concept of substitutionary satisfaction is employed here. Love and justice are brought together in a mysterious way.

There is no clear attempt in the New Testament to explain in detail *how* this act of atonement took place in Christ. We are simply called to proclaim it. There is indeed a profound element of mystery in what took place on the cross and specifically in the transfer of sin and its penalty to the Son of God.

Contemplating this unfathomable act of divine love, Paul exclaimed, "The mystery of godliness is great" (1 Tim. 3:16).

*The hopeless plight
of humanity
threatens its very
existence.*

Angel Manuel Rodríguez is an associate director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference.



S T O R Y

The Man in White

BY VERENA JAGGI

My husband works as a medical doctor in the Adventist mission in Malawi, Africa. The death rate among patients who have AIDS is appalling. One wonders what good is accomplished with all our teaching, seminars, and other meetings.

Last year we lost a wonderful African friend to this insidious disease. My husband was so tired from being "eaten up" by the stress of the nearly constant demands on his time and compassion that I felt inspired to pay him this tribute based on conversations we've shared.

"Hello, Doctor; come quickly. The patient in room 15 is not well."

I breathe deeply and close my eyes. All I need is a sound, undisturbed sleep after having been on duty for two days and two nights. I've seen more than 200 patients in the past 48 hours, and tomorrow I'll be on duty again.

My head is empty; my body is numb from fatigue; the telephone falls from my hand before the caller finishes. Sleep . . . sleep . . . sleep is the only thing I can concentrate on.

Still, the demands are relentless: "Hello, Doctor; come quickly . . . Hello, Doctor . . . Hello . . ."

Robotically I put on my white coat. In my head there is one sentence playing again and again like a broken record: "You are the man in white in this place of soiled linen . . ." Where have I heard that before? I have no idea. My brain is burned out.

Yes, death, here we are again, I think as I attend to another patient. You want to win. I've fought you many times. But God will have the last word, not you.

Last night it was a young mother; at 3:00 a.m. it was a little boy. Their eyes looked to me with confidence. I wanted to scream. All I could see was the word AIDS piercing my brain. I don't wear God's mantle. I'm less than the little finger on His mighty hand. Still, I fight sin, darkness, and the devil.

I seem to have forgotten the ones who walked through the hospital door wrapped in joy, their bodies restored to health. I did wonder about their souls, but only for a moment. I had to run to attend to others. I still wish I knew the answers. But how do I heal the unhealable? How do I reach the unreachable?

I learn to be humble; to work instead of sleep, to pray instead of cry. These lessons my teachers could not teach me in medical school. I have to find my own answers to the eternal questions: *Why? Why me? Why now?*

And on I run down the corridor to Room 15. "Here I am, my friend." Without you saying a word I understand the question in your eyes: *Why me? My children are still young. My task is far from finished. Why is it now, Lord, why?*

I hold your hand. I give you an injection to soothe your pain. But I want to cry. *Oh, Lord, I'm losing a friend.* Yet the man in white is not supposed to cry; not for a friend, not for the misery all around. They don't want my tears or my feelings. Only my skill, my brain, my sleep, my life!

Lord, did You see our friend? Lord, did You hear? He moved his lips. He whispered, "Let me go." Lord, did You hear? He is *Your* friend. I have to pack my heart in steel so that it won't break.

So many hundreds I have seen whose life drained fast away. But this was my friend, Lord; I can't go on. Please help me keep going.

I have to face another day: to fight, to cheer, to lose, to win a race that never seems to end. No time for sleep, no time for dreams of sand and sea and beauty. They—my patients, my colleagues—did not see my heart break last night. I've quickly put it back in its encasement, before anyone could see my eyes misty with tears.

Oh, Lord, how do *You* bear the misery of this world? How do *You* heal? The fragment "We have to pray to comfort God" rings in my ear. Is that true, Lord? Does my prayer console *You* as it comforts me?

So hear my prayer then: *Here am I, Lord. Help me make it through another day. My task is with the ones who live.*

The telephone rings again. I have to go. My task is with the ones who live. ■

Verena Jaggi is, according to the needs at Malamulo Hospital in Malawi, Africa, a teacher, a medical technical assistant, or a secretary.



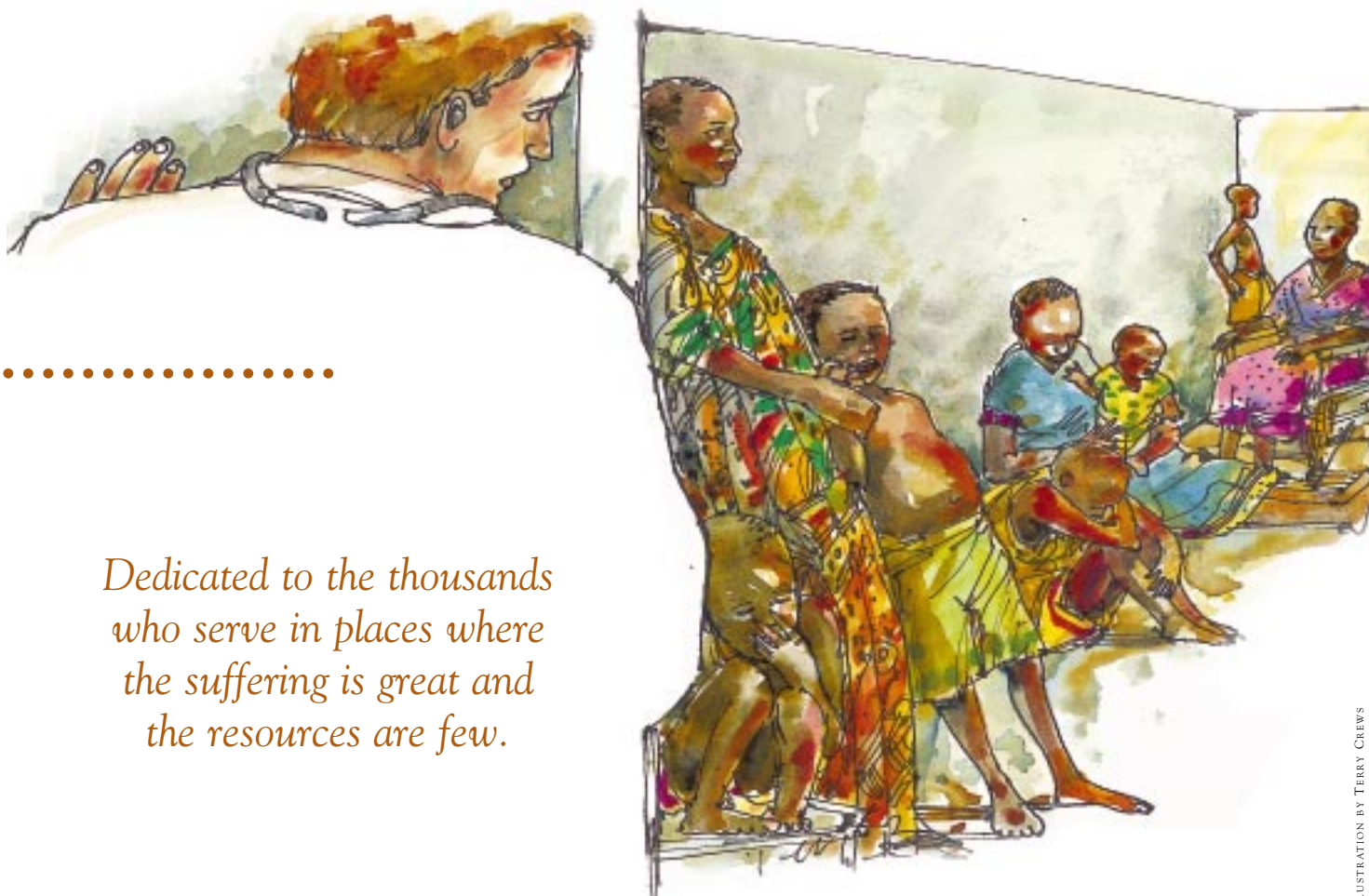


ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

*Dedicated to the thousands
who serve in places where
the suffering is great and
the resources are few.*

Bonding Agents

ROSY TETZ



Have you ever eaten paste? I never have, but I know some people who have eaten it. Eating paste doesn't seem like a good idea to me. What if it glued my insides together?

Actually, paste wouldn't do that. Paste is made by mixing flour and water—you can easily make it at home. Paste is very good for sticking paper together; however, it dissolves in water. If you broke a dish and you tried to put it back together with paste, the dish would fall apart again the next time you washed it.

Glue is stronger. Glue is made from the skin and bones of animals. (Bet

you'll never eat glue again!) How does glue work? Let's say you want to glue two pieces of wood together. Wood has tiny holes on its surface. The glue fills in the holes, and when the glue dries, it holds the two pieces together.

Mucilage is made from plants. (If you've ever seen mucilage, you'll understand why no one would ever want to eat it!) Mucilage isn't very strong, but it's great for gluing paper together. If you change your mind, you can lift the pieces apart and reposition them.

We call paste, glue, and mucilage "bonding agents" because they join or bond things together. There are many kinds of bonding agents. Some of them

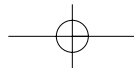
contain chemicals that become a part of the pieces that are being joined. This "superglue" is super-strong, and I wouldn't be surprised if you are not allowed to play with it. You could glue your fingers together!

Bonding agents are useful to have around the house. You often need them for fixing things and making things. Each type is good for a certain task. But none of them can fix a broken heart.

Jesus can. Jesus came to earth "to bind up the brokenhearted" (Isa. 61:1, NIV).

People can come to Jesus, and He will mend their broken hearts. "They will come and bind themselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten" (Jer. 50:5, NIV). You can bind yourself to Jesus. His love acts as a bonding agent that is stronger than super-strong. His love lasts forever.

Jesus asks you to share His love with others. You can bring them to Jesus so He can bind up their broken hearts. Then you will be a bonding agent for Him.



L I F E S T Y L E

Life Begins at

Four tips to ensure that the latter part of life is as blessed as the first.

BY MOLLY K. RANKIN

LIFE BEGINS AT 60. NO ONE CAN CONVINCE me otherwise. At that age most people have paid off their mortgages and, provided their ambitions are not too grandiose, can save a little money for a trip to Rotorua or Rarotonga. Their children have finished their education and are able to pay their own debts. Aged parents are usually no longer a responsibility, and when the grandchildren aren't visiting, there is time to think and plan.

After 25 years in the ministry, the last eight in the same church, my husband and I were quietly settling into an old-age rut. It was comfortable but enfeebling. Then one morning, without warning, the phone rang.

"Molly"—my husband's voice was a mixture of disbelief and suppressed excitement—"they want us to go back to Papua New Guinea; I would be business manager at Sopas Adventist Hospital."

"What!" I shrieked. My mind raced. How could we go back? I had responsibilities. What were they? Mother? She had been gone for a year or more. Daughter? She was married now and happily exploring Missouri with her husband and baby. Youngest son? He had finished medicine and was now earning enough to support even his lifestyle. The other two boys were well set up and quite independent.

My husband and I exchanged a glance. "Look," Ian said into the phone, "we're rushing off now to conduct a funeral. I'll phone you when we get back."

We jumped into the car and set off on the two-hour journey to Hamilton, but we hadn't even reached the highway before we had agreed that our answer would be yes.

Suddenly life took on a totally new aspect. "I feel young again. Recycled—that's what we are," I said.

We made a shopping list—boots, umbrellas, torches, gum boots, lots of things we would need at an altitude of 7,500 feet (2,300 meters).

So what if we were the oldest by far at the mission-orientation course? So what if the young man who would be Ian's boss was our son's contemporary at medical school? We didn't care. Life was exciting, we were needed, and there was still plenty of work for us to do. Like Caleb, we found it hard to wait for God to give us "this mountain."

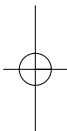
Every day has its challenges, its blessings, its laughs, and its sorrows. We're trying to cram as much as we can into the short time available to us. But we don't deceive ourselves. We aren't as young as when we came here 20 years ago. It would be foolhardy to say, as Caleb did, "I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then" (Joshua 14:11, NIV).

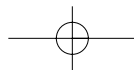
We're more careful what and when we eat. We go to bed earlier so we can get up before 6:00 a.m. We allow the young people to help us up the mountain paths. We wear hats in the sun and use sunblock cream on our noses. Ian drives more slowly now and wears thermal underwear when he baptizes people in cold mountain streams.

Not everyone has the privilege of serving in another country when they are "over the hill and descending," but everyone should do their best to ensure that the latter part of life is as blessed as the first.

Here are a few tips:

1. Don't convince yourself that because you're a grandparent and eligible for superannuation you are old. Treat





city



your retirement as an opportunity to do all the things you've never had time to do before. Take a lift to the top of that tower, wear some thongs and paddle in the sea, walk the Milford Track (if you're able), and go on a moonlight harbor cruise.

2. Do your best to keep fit. Take time to cook adequate meals, to get enough exercise. Walking can be fun and is a wonderful opportunity to get inspiration for reorganizing your garden.

3. Find something to do, something with enough challenge to make life interesting. Banish those feelings of uselessness and loneliness some people experience in retirement.

One of my old schoolmates feared retirement until she hit upon the idea of going back to university to learn Russian. On enrolling she was classified

as a historic student, since her name wasn't on the university computer anymore. Did that deter her? Of course not. She was even more determined to achieve. It was hard competing with young minds, and it took hours of intensive concentration to get the vocabulary into her mind, but in the end she was one of three in the class who scored an A+ grade after the first year.

Working with and for other people can be an absorbing pastime. One retired teacher I know has no time to become old even at 80, because she visits people in hospitals and nursing homes and reads to them. Some people enjoy being "Grandma" to children who are long-term hospital patients.

When we get home again, Ian wants to learn carpentry, and I have

a great desire to master math.

4. The greatest joy when your hair is gray, or when you have no hair, is your grandchildren. But beware they don't become a full-time occupation. Ensure that you take time to do your own thing.

At 60 you don't have a lifetime yet to live, but you do have days, months, or years ahead of you. Just go out there and cram as much as you can into the indeterminate time you do have left. ■

Molly Rankin was a missionary in Papua New Guinea when she wrote this article. It is reprinted from the October 2, 1993, Record, with permission of the Signs Publishing Company, Victoria, Australia.

D E V O T I O N A L



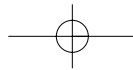
From Outcast to Role Model

*An ancient story
with very modern
implications
for our touchy
times*

BY DENISE DICK HERR

WHY DO SO MANY PEOPLE ENJOY reading the book of Ruth? Among the reasons are the following: First, it is a self-contained unit, unlike some narratives in books such as Genesis, Samuel, and Kings; the reader can easily tell where the story begins and ends. Second, although the book is set

in the time of the judges, the events in it are basically pleasant; it does not deal with tent pegs being pounded into temples, messages in the form of daggers being delivered to kings, or fired-up foxes running through fields of grain. Instead it is pastoral—people are harvesting and eating. Third, it has no dangling ends, and readers are not left wondering if people really made the right decisions. And fourth,



many like the book because it is at least slightly romantic—two of the main characters get married.

But a careful reading of Ruth provides more than a pleasant experience, for the book invites its readers “to perceive, in this apparently personal, mundane story of food and family connections, large realms of spiritual significance.”¹

A Tainted Background

One significant aspect of the book begins to surface when readers notice the repetition of the word “Moab.” Ruth came from Moab. She is called “Ruth the Moabitess” five times, and “Moab” and “Moabite” are mentioned an additional nine times in this brief book. We read that Naomi “started with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the Lord had visited his people and given them food” (Ruth 1:6).² An overseer tells Boaz that Ruth “is the *Moabite* maiden, who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab (Ruth 2:6).

The writer seems deliberately to be repeating this term. And as we ask ourselves what the word “Moab” would have said to Israelite listeners and readers, we begin to understand the book more fully.

The Jews would have felt great moral superiority to people from Moab. The Jewish nation began gloriously: there was a call from God, a promise to Abraham that he would become a great nation, and Abraham’s promised child was conceived in the face of great odds through the intervention of God. There is a feeling of the numinous surrounding the stories of Abraham and Isaac.

On the other hand, a feeling of darkness and evil clings to the inception of the nation of Moab. These people began when one of Lot’s daughters engineered an incestuous incident with her drunken father so she could have a child.

On a second level, the Israelites would have hated the Moabites because of their negative dealing with them after the Exodus. Israel had asked the king of Moab for permission to go through his

country, but he had refused their request (Judges 11:17). Such lack of concern would have been incomprehensible to the Israelites, who had a strong code of hospitality.

About this same time, another event happened that caused the Israelites to scorn the Moabites: Balak, king of Moab, sent for Balaam to curse the Israelites. Of course, Balaam could only bless the Israelites, but this story would have made the Israelites laugh at the Moabite king who was so stupid that he thought that he could hire a prophet to curse God’s chosen people!

In fact, many of the recorded dealings Israel had with the Moabites show Israel’s superiority. One of the greatest fools in the Bible is Eglon, another king of Moab. He was so gullible that he did not have his guards search Ehud, the left-handed Israelite messenger who came bearing not only a message from God but also a dagger to kill the king. Eglon, whose name means “calf,” was so “fatted” that when the dagger entered his intestines, it disappeared into the folds of his fat. And the final indecency was that his guards did not realize he was dead—they thought he was merely relieving himself!

Certainly, with good cause, a darkened brow or a self-satisfied chuckle would be the response whenever Israelites mentioned Moabites. Ruth does not come from respected stock: her background is tainted. But Ruth the Moabitess does not conform to Israel’s expectations of Moabites. She upsets—or perhaps even rewrites—the stereotype.

Scaling the Barriers of Prejudice

The story of the origins of Moab reveals an overpowering concern for offspring—a concern so great that Lot’s daughters were willing to commit incest to obtain children. However, Ruth the Moabitess does not overtly focus on offspring, but rather on finding, within the law, a redeemer for herself and Naomi. In fact, it is Naomi, the Israelite, who seems to be the schemer, telling Ruth to uncover Boaz’s feet and to wait for him to tell her what to do.

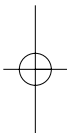
Some writers think Naomi was hinting that Ruth should offer herself sexually to Boaz that night, but Ruth does not do this. Although Boaz has called her his “daughter,” she is not willing to be like Lot’s daughters—silent and deceitful. Instead she takes the initiative and tells Boaz what to do: his duty is to take care of Ruth and Naomi.

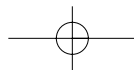
Moabites were abhorred by Israel because of their failure to show hospitality when the Israelites came out of Egypt: the complete opposite is true for Ruth. She exudes hospitality and caring. Although she has no home in Bethlehem in which to offer hospitality,³ Ruth, the super gleaner, not only takes home between 29 and 47 pounds (13-22 kilograms) of barley after one day’s gleaning, but also shares with Naomi the leftovers from her lunch. And after her night on the threshing floor, she takes home six measures of barley to her mother-in-law. The lack of feeling and care exhibited by the Moabites has certainly not been shown by Ruth the Moabitess.

Lack of knowledge about the true God is shown by Balak, king of Moab as he tries to manipulate the Creator of the universe; but Ruth the Moabitess leaves Moab, turns her back on the worship of Moab’s God, Chemosh, and tells Naomi, “Your God [will be] my God” (Ruth 1:16). Cynthia Ozick calls her vow “incandescent” and states that her words “have set thirty centuries to trembling.”⁴

The naïveté that Eglon, king of Moab, displayed when he failed to search Ehud is not exhibited by Ruth. We see that she is wise in the ways of the Israelites, telling the silent Naomi that she is going to glean, and requesting from Boaz what is thought to be a special favor given only to clan members⁵—permission to “gather among the sheaves after the reapers” (Ruth 2:7). Later she admonishes Boaz to do his duty as a kinsman-redeemer.

Boaz’s voluble reply to Ruth’s brief words may give insight into his reaction: “And now it is true that I am a near kinsman, yet there is a kinsman nearer than I. Remain this night, and in the morning, if he will do the part





of the next of kin for you, well; let him do it; but if he is not willing to do the part of the next of kin for you, then, as the Lord lives, I will do the part of the next of kin for you" (Ruth 3:12, 13). His frequent repetition of "next of kin" may indicate that Ruth's suggestion of his obligation to her and to Naomi has caught him off guard. Ruth is not naive and gullible; she does not remain silent, waiting for Boaz to take the initiative. Instead she awakens him to his responsibility.

Before this time Boaz had been willing to leave her in God's hands. In their first meeting he had said, "The Lord recompense you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!" (Ruth 2:12). The Hebrew word for "wings" is *kanaph*. Interestingly, the same word is used by Ruth on the threshing floor when she asks him to spread out his "skirt" and cover her. In other words, Ruth says, "You know how God is going to take me under His wings, Boaz? You are supposed to marry me and take me under your blanket." Ruth endeavors to avail herself of the Israelite traditions more fully than her Israelite relatives think possible.

When the Pieces Come Together

This Moabite woman would wipe the self-righteous smirks off the faces of the Israelites. The book shows that Ruth is certainly superior to the stereotypical Moabite. From reading Ruth more carefully, we can see that the present is more important than the past and that each person should be judged on his or her own merits, not on the merits of an ethnic or gender group.

As Christopher Weber states, "God's choice of a Moabite woman not only reiterates . . . that divine election is an undeserved gift but also underlines the fact that God is not limited by human expectations. He can use whomever He will to carry out His designs, blessing and raising up those scorned by others. God does not admit of any human barriers, whether these be theological or nationalistic, racial or sexist."⁶

"Ruth's words 'have set thirty centuries to trembling.'"

This can be both challenging and comforting. It is a challenge to realize that we must not be swift to judge others—we need tolerance and open minds. And it is a comfort to know that we can overcome problems in our background.

My sister sometimes gives a devotional talk about quilts. Our great-grandparents made some lovely quilts, and each of the women in my family cherishes one or two of them. However, when we look carefully at the appliqué material, we notice that it is unattractive, and we would not want to wear clothes made from it. But sewn together with love and care, the pieces make a beautiful whole.

Similarly, what each of us has been given in our lives may not be beautiful—we may have suffered from abuse, disabilities, divorce, unjust treatment,

loss of a job, chronic illness, or a plethora of other problems. But it is how we work with the pieces of our lives that will determine whether we have a pile of ugly scraps or something that is lovely. Ruth was given scraps, and because of her ideals, her care, her ability to change, and her knowledge, she made a beautiful heirloom. ■

¹ Judith A. Kates, "Women at the Center: Ruth and Shavuot," in *Reading Ruth: Contemporary Women Reclaim a Sacred Story*, ed. Judith A. Kates and Gail Twersky Reimer (New York: Ballentine, 1994), p. 190.

² All scriptural quotations are taken from the Revised Standard Version.

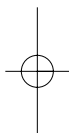
³ The name of the town means "House of Bread."

⁴ Cynthia Ozick, "Ruth," in *Reading Ruth*, pp. 221, 225.

⁵ Jack M. Sasson, "Ruth," in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, ed. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode (Cambridge: Belknap/Harvard University Publishers 1987), pp. 324, 325.

⁶ Christopher Weber, "Ruth: The Understatement of a Lifetime," *The Bible Today* 94 (1978): p. 1755.

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Lifestyle and Life

Since becoming an Adventist I've struggled with the issue of women's makeup. At 67 years of age I don't feel good about myself without a little blush and lip color. Do I displease the Lord when I wear cosmetics?

You ask a question that calls for a personal choice. No one can make this decision for you—not a pastor, friend, church, or other group. You need to ask yourself why you believe you would displease the Lord by wearing a tasteful amount of makeup. Is this someone else's opinion? Do you believe there is scriptural evidence for such a belief?

While it is true the Bible teaches that what we do is more important than what we wear (1 Tim. 2:9, 10), I know of no scriptural support for not improving our appearance.

The use of cosmetics has more to do with our environment than our spirituality. (Of course, one who uses colorful cosmetics to an extreme in the Adventist culture may be rebelling against family and/or church.) In some parts of the world cosmetic use would be scorned, and we need to be sensitive to that.

In writing from a North American perspective, however, I believe that the use of cosmetics in moderation and with good taste is appropriate. None of us, especially as we get older, has the glow of Eden. Looking healthy is important for ourselves and even our witness. Along with the rest of our bodies, we can protect our skin by using skin-care products and following a good diet.

Teenagers rarely need cosmetics. I recently visited a school in the West where the students follow a vegan diet. They have complexions free from the blemishes that plague many other teens. They are beautiful without makeup.

Cosmetics in natural colors can easily be found in today's stores. Even in the secular world, clownish makeup is out. Long fingernails bearing whole panoramas and blood-red lips are usually worn only by entertainers or the immature. May God bless and guide you in all areas of your life and in service to others.

By Ella Rydzewski, an editorial assistant at the Adventist Review.

I've been reading about the beneficial effects of wine taken in moderation. Could you tell me what properties in wine make it beneficial, and whether regular grape juice has those same properties?

Over the past few years vintners in North America and Europe have gotten a lot of mileage from the *alleged* benefits of using wine in moderation. A little alcohol doesn't hurt anyone, they say. In fact, they assert, the moderate use of wine lowers cholesterol and leads to other health benefits.

The truth is that alcohol—even in moderate doses—impairs nearly every aspect of information processing, including the ability to think abstractly, to conceptualize, and to interpret incoming information. In brief, a person under the influence of even moderate doses of alcohol is less able to appreciate and integrate the potential dangers of a particular action. There has even been research that indicates that alcohol enhances the cancer-causing potential of other chemicals taken into the body.

Where, then, did all this information about wine's benefits come from? In October 1997 the Center for Science in the Public Interest published a pamphlet entitled *Vintage Deception: The Wine Institute's Manipulation of Scientific Research to Promote Wine Consumption*. The conclusion states: "The industry lobby group skillfully manipulates evidence in order to magnify the supposed protective benefits of wine. Many have understood those reports as advice that one should drink for one's health; not just any alcoholic beverage, but wine, in particular."

The wine industry clearly has a vested interest in promoting the supposed benefits of wine "used in moderation." So it's not surprising that they would make exaggerated claims about the health benefits of alcohol, and wine in particular.

The fact is that God has packaged all the health benefits found in wine—and more—in the grape. Judicious use of grapes and unfermented grape products will give us all the benefits without any of the liabilities.

By Thomas Neslund, executive director of the International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency (ICPA).

Fully Covered

BY JOYCE RIGSBY

That afternoon I eagerly leafed through my mail—a request for funds from the National Children’s Cancer Society, *Newsweek*, *Adventist Today*, two letters and a long, thick envelope from the Billing Department of the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) Hospital.

I was expecting the long, thick envelope—but not so soon. Twelve staples had just been removed from my scalp, and I was finally starting to feel normal again. I wasn’t sure I was up to looking at the bill—especially because I didn’t have complete confidence that insurance would cover it. I sat down and opened it last.

Until now, the only time I’ve had surgery that required extended anesthesia was in Addis Ababa, where we were missionaries in the sixties. Dr. Alex Bokovoy spent hours one Sabbath evening cheerfully repairing the cut tendons in my right hand following an accident. He did a great job, and I don’t remember a bill. What I do remember is how separated from the world I felt for days after the surgery.

Had I recovered enough from my cochlear implant to read this bill? *Maybe I’d better wait until Shirley comes over and I’m not alone*, I thought to myself. But Shirley had spent the morning chauffeuring me to the doctor, the plant nursery, and the grocery store, so I didn’t expect her back soon, and I’d been told not to drive for a while.

Unsuccessfully, I had tried to get a written promise of coverage from my insurance carriers. Would I have felt better if I’d heard the verbal promise myself? Impossible! Because I couldn’t hear. After all, my deafness was the reason for the implant, and I didn’t even have a guarantee that it would do more than improve my speech-reading ability. I clung to the referring physician’s words: “The surgeon won’t operate unless the insurance company promises to pay.”

In the end I took a leap of faith and grasped the insurer’s verbal promise. I recognized that, this side of heaven, a cochlear implant was my one best chance of hearing again.

S-l-o-w-l-y I opened the envelope.

The smallest of charges was for Hydrocodone—I could handle the 61 cents. The largest charge was for the cochlear implant—\$20,075. And there were dozens more in between.

I’d never even heard of a Bair hugger blanket/machine, but there was a charge of \$87 for using it. The total bill was about the same as Bob’s pay during the five years of our first term of mission service!

So I sat with the three-page bill before me. I knew the insurance company had my name on their list: I got regular bills. They’d covered smaller claims, but this was not a small one. How I wished I were more confident that my insurance would at least cover most, if not all, of the bill.

As I looked at the charges against my name from UCSF

Hospital, I longed for the day when I would learn that insurance had indeed covered the charges. That my bill had been paid in full.

I didn’t have the same confident assurance it would be paid as I have in Christ’s promise that full forgiveness of my sins is assured. He’s already covered everything and will not assign even a portion of the payment to me. I have only to ask and submit. He’ll not quibble:

“I can’t cover that; it’s not FDA approved.”

“It’s a preexisting condition.”

“There’s a waiting period before that can be covered.”

He covered any eventuality at Calvary, and whatever is charged against my name is fully covered as long as I choose to belong to Him. This, to me, is a comforting certainty, with no doubt attached, a guarantee with no fine print. After all, I have it in writing: “And the blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).

Sabbath, December 27, 1997, I sat in the balcony of the Hanford church and *heard* Pastor George Johnson’s sermon—“Looking Back.” Tears of joy filled my eyes as I looked back and realized I wouldn’t have heard a word a year ago. And the insurance company did pay—not quite up to the Lord’s promise, but almost! ■

Joyce Rigbsby is a retired missionary and freelance writer living in Hanford, California.



I took a leap of faith and grasped a verbal promise.