

# ADVENTIST Review

December 23, 1999

AnchorPoints



A Night to Meet  
Our Need





**I**n the two millennia since Christ's birth, humanity's quest for peace and security has gone largely unfulfilled. But what is impossible from a human standpoint is possible with God. So we say, with the apostle Paul, "Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57, NIV). May this experience be yours—until Jesus returns.

Pictured front row (left to right): Ruth Wright, Steve Chavez, Chitra Barnabas, William G. Johnsson, Melynie Tooley, Ella Rydzewski. Back row: Myrna Tetz, Jean Sequeira, Bill Kirstein, Bill Tymeson, Steve Hanson, Roy Adams, Bill Knott, Carlos Medley, Kimberly Maran, Fred Wuerstlin, Charlotte McClure.

# LETTERS

## Mothers, Take Heart

I just finished reading the article "Mothers, Take Heart" (Sept. 23). While I certainly appreciate the final outcome and the hope that we can all share, as our young people find their own relationship with Christ, I was also bothered by the paragraph describing the Adventist academy the young man attended.

Each of us working at Adventist academies is working continuously to share the good news of how God is blessing our student body and the growth that takes place. But yet, here in one paragraph at the beginning of the article, we once again reinforce some of the old stereotypes that our schools struggle to overcome—that the faculty can't be trusted, that those who are trusted are fired, that injustices are always done to students.

Do these things happen? I'm sure they do. Is it the exception, rather than the rule? You bet it is. God is doing some fantastic things through the lives of dedicated teachers in Adventist academies. I hope the editors will be careful to share the great news of what God is doing through the work of dedicated teachers in our educational system again and again.

—Charles R. Castle  
SHELTON, NEBRASKA

## Tuesday's Child

Thank you very much for this weekly feature. Our family is enjoying the worship ideas and stories.

—The Darrouh Family  
MODESTO, CALIFORNIA

## City Lights

After reading Clifford Goldstein's "City Lights" for the fourth time (Aug.

26), I felt compelled to write and thank you for the article. I have read many of Goldstein's articles and was accustomed to his mental gymnastics, but when I began this one, I wondered where he was going with it. It wasn't until I read the last paragraph that I had to yell "Yes!"

It isn't often that we have the opportunity to revisit the past while standing in the present, and to realize how God has led us to where we are. Being a product of the sixties myself, I could relate all too well to traveling down dead-end paths in my search for meaning and happiness. But thanks be to God, who knew what I was searching for and where I longed to be and was gracious enough to patiently lead me to my destination. The peace and happiness that I now experience in my relationship with God shines much brighter than those "city lights."

—Tedd and Kay West  
BRIGHTON, TENNESSEE

## Principles of Marriage

My wife, Betty, and I read "Principles of Marriage" (Oct. 28), by Clifford Goldstein, together before we went to bed one night. When I got up in the morning I remembered that it was good but couldn't remember exactly why, so I read it at the breakfast table again with my wife.

It was better than good. It was simple, essential, biblical. But sometimes the principles given in the article are easy to forget and hard to practice.

I plan to read it again, again, and again so it will become a part of my nature.

—Carl Hartman  
ANDREWS, NORTH CAROLINA

# ADVENTIST Review

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# 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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**Special Contributors:** P. D. Chun, L. T. Daniel, L. J. Evans, Ulrich Frikart, Lee Huff, Israel Leito, Ruy H. Nagel, L. D. Raelly, Ron Watts, Bertil Wiklander

**To Writers:** We welcome unsolicited manuscripts. (Please query before submitting long articles.) Include address, telephone number, and Social Security number, where available. Address all editorial correspondence to 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600. Editorial office fax number: (301) 680-6638.

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# Moments

*"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors'"*  
(Luke 2:13, 14, NRSV).

What's your favorite Christmas carol? Suppose you were being sent to a lonely island, cut off from the rest of civilization, and you were given the option of taking with you one tape with a single carol on it, which would it be? I suspect most of us would choose "Silent Night." For me, it would be "O Holy Night."

And why? It has to do, I think, with a certain *moment* in my life.

Years ago, while spending Christmas at my uncle's in LaRomaine, Trinidad, I attended a concert at the San Fernando Adventist Church. At the height of the celebration a young woman took the microphone. If the famed sirens of Greek legend sang Christmas carols, that's how the chief among them would have done "O Holy Night." Her voice strong, rich, clear, she sang with passion and made me a captive of the carol ever since. Over the years I've listened to great renditions of the piece from countless competent vocalists and choirs, but none has ever reached the level of richness and emotion that lingers in my memory.

So what actually happened that night? Was it really the best rendition ever? If I were to listen today to a recording made that evening, would I still think it was the best? Likely not. But something about that night, something about the atmosphere, the ambiance, the people, the singer—made it all come together for me. And notwithstanding all rational reflections to the contrary, the impression lingers: *"That night in San Fernando was the best!"* It was *the moment*.

Another indelible moment came to me last June at the North Australia Conference camp meeting in Townsville. I had found the people warm, friendly, gracious. The music superb, the fellowship sweet. And each evening's meeting included a prayer time, coordinated by Carol Ferch-Johnson, prayer ministries director for the South Pacific Division.

The moment that would shake me up came at the end of Wednesday, the fifth day of the meetings. Feeling by then the full strain of the assignment (speaking twice a day and talking to many on a personal basis), I had been much in

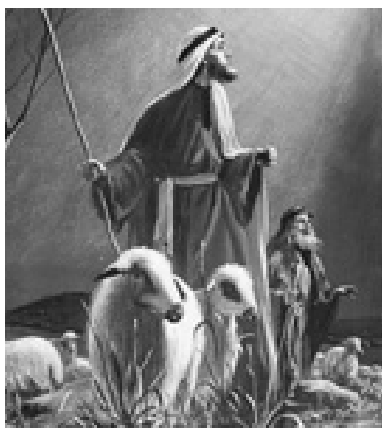
prayer. Even so, as I entered the tent that evening, I had a strong sense of my deep need for extra grace. The Peres family had been selected to pray that night, and unbeknownst to me, I was to be the subject of one of their petitions. As the season drew to a close, I suddenly heard my name called out. "And dear Jesus, please bless Pastor Adams, and help him to . . ."

By the second clause I was already done for, and my handkerchief came out. You see, if it were one of the parents praying for me, I think I could have endured it. But the suppliant was 9-years-old Daniel. To hear that tender, innocent voice lifting me up in prayer choked me up. It was as if the Holy Spirit literally came into that tent and flooded over my soul. For about five minutes after ascending the podium, I found myself stumbling, unable to speak, totally overcome with emotion. I'd never experienced anything quite like that before.

What had happened? Only heaven knows for sure. But I think that it was something about the atmosphere that evening, something about the ambiance, something about the people, and—in particular—something about that youthful suppliant that made it all come together for me. In other words, it was *the moment*—that critical time in our lives when, through a combination of events, circumstances, and emotions, God moves to bring upon us influences designed to move us at the very core of our being.

Those moments are beyond our planning or manipulation. When the shepherds ate their scanty evening meal that night, they had no idea that a most gloriously terrifying moment was just ahead—that they'd been selected as the sole audience for a heavenly performance. I would imagine that forever afterward the memory of that celestial choir made every form of earthly music sound insipid.

I believe one day there'll be an encore. In heaven, don't you think? As the angels who announced the birth of Jesus gather, methinks a mighty cry will echo from the redeemed: "Sing it again! Sing it again!"





# I Remember Zarephath

STEPHEN CHAVEZ

I thought about Zarephath today.

Nearly every day for more than a year now practically every newspaper, magazine, and radio or television newscast has had some mention of the Y2K bug and how it has the potential for causing widespread uncertainty, even economic and social collapse. Personally, I don't think it will amount to anything more than a hiccup, but still, billions of dollars have been spent upgrading computer systems, warning consumers, and preparing people for what could *possibly* happen in a few days, on January 1.

Many people have made preparations. They have extra cash on hand, in case banks and cash machines malfunction; they have extra batteries, candles, and drinking water, in case utilities fail; they have extra food, in case distribution systems are disrupted; some have generators to power their homes; and I've heard reports of some people (none I know personally) who have bought handguns and ammunition as a precaution against looters.

Against this setting I thought about Zarephath.

After the prophet Elijah pronounced God's judgment sentence against wicked King Ahab, God directed Elijah to Zarephath, a small village where he could ride out the remainder of a killer drought that gripped Israel (1 Kings 17:8-16).

Once there, Elijah met a woman—a widow—who was nearly destitute. He asked her to use her last bit of flour to fix him a meal.

Human nature being what it is, it's not unreasonable to believe the woman thought Elijah was out of his mind. How dare he make such an outrageous request! People don't go around giving things away, especially if it means the difference between life and death (even comfort and convenience).

We moderns believe that there's safety in stuff. In most industrialized countries most of us have more food than we can eat; more clothes than we can wear; closets, attics, and basements bulging with things we haven't used in years.

Yet the temptation remains to keep everything we can for ourselves, for our own use.

In any setting, but particularly in the setting of the Y2K "crisis," our connection with Christ demands that we look beyond our own needs as individuals and churches to the needs of those around us, even those who may not have

taken the same precautions we did or been as thorough in their preparations.

Zarephath reminds us that miracles occur when we rely less on what we have stored up for our own use than what we can give in service to those who have less than we do. It's the miracle of the five loaves and two fish: what we keep

for ourselves amounts only to a meal for a few. What we offer in service to Jesus becomes a banquet for thousands. The widow who "sacrificed" the last of her flour and oil never had to worry where her next meal would come from as long as the famine lasted.

Of course, she didn't know that when Elijah asked her for something to eat. She had to believe that somehow God would look after her if she gave what little she had to

one of God's children. And that's the beauty of this adventure we call "discipleship."

The decade of the nineties has been defined variously as "the decade of excess," "the decade of greed," "the decade of cynicism," or "the decade of me." A few rare and shining examples of altruism have been reported (organ donations, lifesaving rescues, community disaster relief, etc.), but here we are at the end of the decade (and the century) being encouraged to adopt a "siege mentality" in preparing for the dreaded Y2K computer bug.

We can do better—as a church and as individuals. In addition to asking How can we survive? we ought also to ask How can we serve?

The next decade will doubtless bring a variety of challenges that tempt us to look after our own interests primarily and exclusively; to stockpile God's blessings for use by our own small circle. But God's mandate, from the apostle Paul, is unequivocal: "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:4, NIV).

That attitude is reflected in many Bible stories, as well as in the lives of many of Christ's disciples I've known over the years. But I especially like to remember Zarephath.

*We are being encouraged to adopt a "siege mentality."*



# GIVE & TAKE

## RETIREMENT PLAN ADMINISTRATOR RETIRES



**A 40-YEAR QUILT:** Donald R. Pierson, administrator of the Seventh-day Adventist retirement plans, officially retired on September 1, 1999. He served in the retirement office for 17 years, the last 10 years as administrator. He was involved in the processing of most of the nearly 14,000 retirees who currently receive benefits each month. A quilt was made to commemorate and recognize his 40 years of service to the Adventist Church, which included service in Africa, Europe, and the United States. In July 2000 his wife, Betty, will retire, and they will move to Florida.

## ADVENTIST LIFE

A recent kindergarten program featured the story of the birth of Jesus. Although it was not the Christmas season, the story was told with the help of the children in full costume. There were three “visitors” this particular Sabbath—my grandson Jeffery played Joseph, a little brunet played Mary, and her brother played King Herod. It was obvious each child knew the story, because they played their parts perfectly, sometimes even saying the words without prompting.

The story progressed, and as the teacher instructed Joseph to take Mary and the Baby and flee to Egypt because wicked King Herod was looking for the Baby to kill Him, a rage that has been unspoken but felt by humanity through the ages was declared for all to hear. Mary turned to King Herod with a look of surprise and shock, and with a clear, loud voice, she poured out all the emotion her little body could muster. She leaned toward him, looked him in the eye, and said:

“Shame on you! Shame on you!”

—Donna Bechthold, Tillamook, Oregon

A “beauty recipe” for spiritual growth:

For our lips, the truth

For our eyes, understanding

For a clear voice, nothing better than prayer

For smooth hands, charity

For our body, integrity

For a pure and clean heart, love!

—Hilda Valentin, Carolina, Puerto Rico



ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

## QUOTES

“Love is better than selfishness. Jesus is stronger than the devil. God is smarter than I am. That’s my bottom line.”

—Pastor Dale Wolcott, in a sermon at Monument Valley, Utah, when he was the pastor there

“If you run ahead of Jesus, you meet the devil alone.”

—Pastor Ed Eigenberg, in his July sermon at the Midland, Michigan, church

## LET’S PRAY

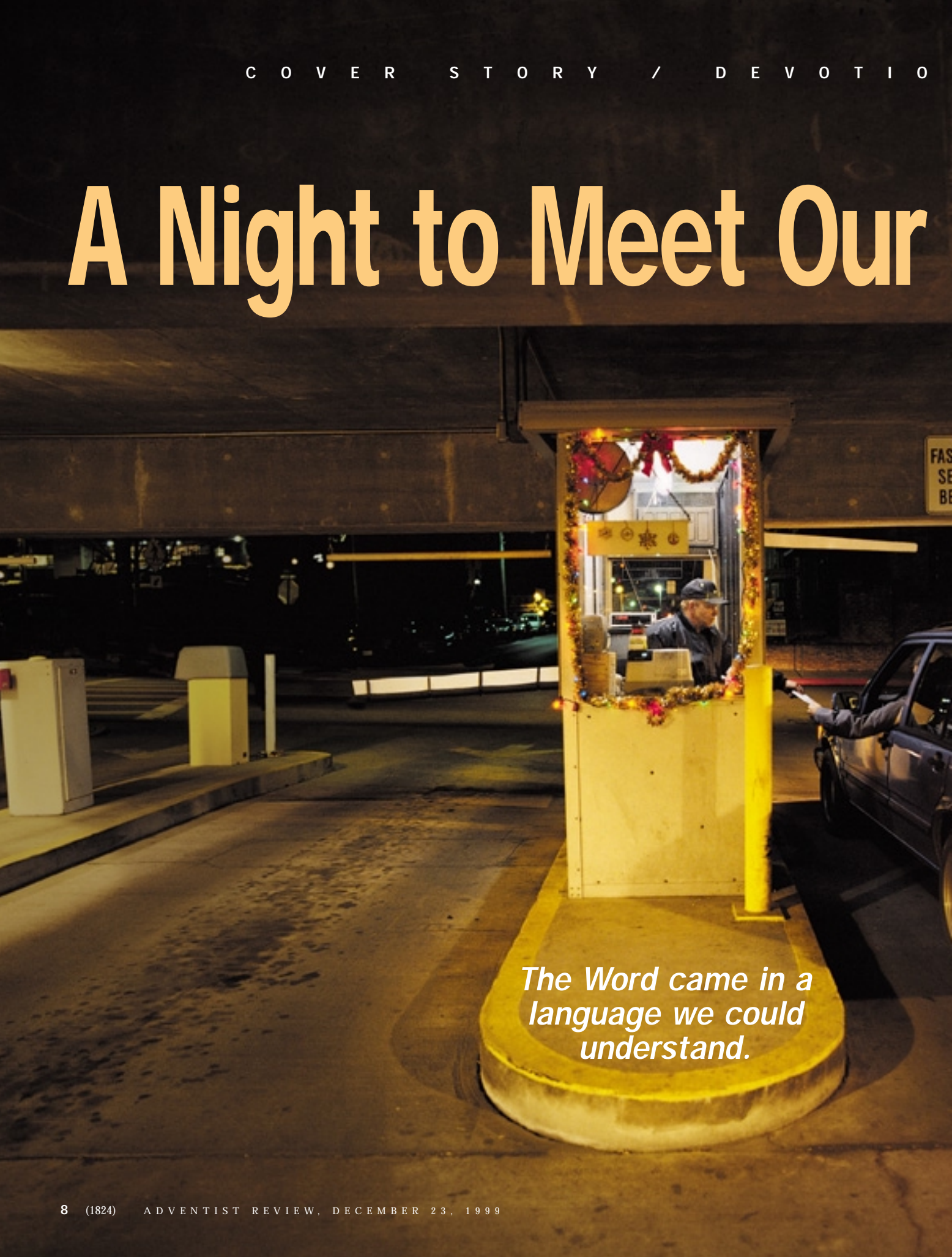
Have a prayer need? Have a few free minutes? Each Wednesday morning at 8:00 the *Adventist Review* staff meets to pray for *people*—children, parents, friends, coworkers. Send your prayer requests and, if possible, pray with us on Wednesday mornings. Let’s share in each other’s lives.

## WE NEED YOU

Send Give & Take submissions to . . .  
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Please include phone number. Submissions will not be returned.



# A Night to Meet Our



*The Word came in a  
language we could  
understand.*



# Need

BY BILL KNOTT

**E**ACH CHRISTMAS, IF we listen closely, we can hear the word of God for those who work the night shift.

Ever since I was a child, I have had a kind of pity in my heart for those who worked away the hours of the night. Perhaps it was the stories my dad told about working the graveyard shift in the plastics factories during college that first impressed me with the sentiment. Though I have never seen the places, I have visions of cold cement floors and frosty storerooms, of endlessly clattering injection-molding machines that turned out hundreds of cereal box trinkets by the hour, of pale lightbulbs suspended from cracked ceilings. Dad might flinch if he ever knew how completely his stories succeeded in making me dislike most factories and all night jobs.

For several years in college, my older brother worked the late-night round on campus security. His stories made me even more a lover of daytime labor. There were countless dark hallways to be trudged along throughout the night, and all manner of shadows to frighten you, until you realized they were your own. There was the cold that bit beneath your warmest coat, and heavy eyes that blinked to stay open. There was the endless round of clock stations to be punched, reminding you of just how many hours there were till dawn.

As I passed through college and seminary, I came to know still more of what it means to work at night. Numerous friends worked the 11:00 to 7:00 shift at area hospitals, and their tales of both boredom and emergencies in the small hours of the morning convinced me that I was meant to labor in the light. I took a special satisfaction in the biblical text that says "the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). That was certainly written with me in mind.

At the heart of all the reasons why we would not rather work at night is the undeniable fact that there is very

little prestige in working when everyone else is asleep. We may all salute the brave men and women who peer at their computer screens in the night to protect us from enemy attack, but few of us ever want to take their places. We may all sputter tomorrow morning if the snowplow operator hasn't yet cleared our street during the night or if we discover that the downed electric lines haven't been repaired. But we don't fall asleep dreaming of becoming snowplow operators or electric linemen. We have attached status and success to those lucky enough to end their day at 5:00 p.m. Even though some institutions offer better pay to attract more help at night, it's rare to find a night supervisor who has all the help needed.

So let's not be too quick to glamorize the lot of the shepherds out on the hills around Bethlehem. Theirs was a hard and unenviable job. Though the Christmas cards decorating our mantelpieces or dining rooms may paint a kind of rustic charm over the scene, it's well to remember that almost none of us would have given up our warm beds in Bethlehem to trade places with them. Anyone who has spent even part of a night on the ground with farm animals will confirm this.

Several centuries ago, when Europe had traveled just about as far down the road to decadence and false taste as it's possible to go, it became fashionable to admire the life of the shepherd. Poets rhapsodized about the lives of these natural philosophers, these charming rustics who led their flocks over hill and dale, free from all care and trouble. Artists littered the palaces of the Continent with thousands of paintings of peaceful streams where sheep might stop to drink, where red-cheeked shepherds and shepherdesses might frolic in some wooded nook. Playwrights, including Shakespeare, sustained the illusion that the shepherd's life was little else but dreaminess and laughter. Much of that mythology remains with us today.

But notice that the Word of God never engages in such fanciful stuff. Those who wrote the words of Scripture

PHOTO BY JOEL D. SPRINGER

knew the real lives of shepherds, some of them by personal experience, like David and Amos. There's no false sentimentality in the pictures they paint. They don't try to pretend that there was anything enviable about being a shepherd, or anything particularly wonderful about guarding the sheep that night on the Bethlehem hills.

Most of those to whom God entrusted His sacred word were common men and women from common trades, and to them we owe the marvelous fact that Scripture still speaks the language of real, everyday humanity. The Word of God touches us

dreaded paces away, then you'll perhaps begin to understand how these shepherds must have felt, with one exception: you probably half-expected something awesome in the storm, while these men had no reason to suspect that this night shift would be any different from hundreds of others they had spent in those fields.

And now, here they were, with the hair rising on the back of their necks, their hearts pounding loudly somewhere up around their wisdom teeth, and their knees shaking.

What does this brilliant being say to them? The King James Version reads

Even little insights like these help us build a better theology, for theology is simply the sum of our understanding of God. When we recognize that God doesn't rebuke us for being afraid, or call us names, or tell us how foolish we are, we're more ready to listen to the good news that He and His messengers bring. God understands that we aren't the towers of strength and confidence we too often pretend to be. And so His first words to us are always words of gentle assurance: *"My child, you can stop being afraid now."*

There's a real logic to why the angel takes the time to quiet the fears of



No  
politicians,  
please.  
We only need  
a Saviour.

where we live because it was phrased in the language of men and women who lived lives very much like our own: common lives, regular lives, lives of pain and sweat and joy and hope and work—yes, even work on the night shift.

### Stop Being Afraid

Luke's Gospel tells us that to these common, sleepy shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem came an angel of the Lord still shining with the brilliance of God Himself. It almost seems unnecessary to say that "they were sore afraid." Who wouldn't be afraid? If you've ever seen a white-hot bolt of lightning split the night sky and destroy a tree a hun-

*"Fear not."* The Revised Standard Version reads *"Be not afraid."* Both of these familiar translations miss the real point of what the scripture is saying here. In reality the angel's first words to these terrified night laborers were *"Stop being afraid!"*

You may think it a small point, but you'll notice that there's a difference between *"Don't be afraid"* and *"Stop being afraid."* The first implies that there is no reason for fear, that fears are groundless and probably foolish, while the second recognizes that fear is a very natural result when common men and women confront the awesome glory of the Lord. It says instead, *"Peace! You can stop being afraid now!"*

these frightened men before delivering his message. Have you ever tried to communicate anything vitally important to a person, only to discover that all they could hear was the knocking of their own knees? If you want your message to be heard and understood, you have to understand that fears and prejudices and anxieties can make a person just as deaf as if they were born that way.

I'm also caught by the fact that the angel spoke in a language these shepherds could understand. I don't know what language heaven speaks, but I'm willing to guess that it isn't Aramaic, which is what these shepherds probably spoke. I even have some doubts that

English is the preferred tongue in the heavenly courts. The real point is that when God decided to communicate the marvelous good news of the birth of His precious Son, He took upon Himself the responsibility for putting it in a language that the hearers could understand. He didn't choose Latin, the language of law and commerce and government. He didn't choose Greek, the tongue of poetry and education and culture. No, He chose to convey the good news in a rather corrupted little language spoken mainly by the common people of Palestine—the farmers, the fishermen, the tax collectors, the carpenters, the shepherds.

Here again we see how much the Word of God is adapted to the limitations of our humanity. The other great religions of the world are full of tales of gods uttering strange and unintelligible sentences that must be interpreted or translated or deciphered by their followers before the truth can be learned. But Christianity has proclaimed itself the religion of common men and women from the moment Jesus Christ was born into this world as a common baby. The Word that comes from God is put in a language we can understand; it's filled with the stories of men and women just like us; it's meant to be plain and clear, and not mysterious. It's intended to be understood by the world's greatest thinkers and also by those who haven't yet learned how to read or write. God condescends to give the message that we need in the language we can understand.

And what is that message that we need? What truth could be so important that God would stop at nothing until dull human ears could hear it and dull human minds could understand it? What news was so marvelous that it had to be delivered to the first people that could be found, even if they were only sleepy shepherds in the middle of the nightshift? Simply this: *"Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord"* (Luke 2:11).

### The Best News

There is more good news in that simple line than in all of 1999's newspapers stacked together. But that's too pale a comparison, I fear, for newspapers sell by reporting mostly what is wrong with the world. There's more good news in this announcement of the angel than if tomorrow morning's headlines proclaimed authoritatively that world leaders had found cures for cancer and AIDS, signed a declaration of lasting peace, destroyed all nuclear and conventional arsenals, and vanquished disease and poverty and unem-

*Christianity has proclaimed itself the religion of common men and women from the moment Jesus Christ was born into this world as a common baby.*

ployment and famine—all in a single day! For as much as the people of this hurting world need food and health and peace and wealth, we need one thing even more: we need a Saviour. We need a Saviour who can deal with the problems much deeper than can be discussed in the editorial pages or on the evening news; problems that eat out our souls in the middle of the night; problems that torture our minds even when there are jobs enough and food enough to go around.

As we stagger toward a new year and a new century, we're forced to

admit that the world doesn't need another philosopher, even a great philosopher. There have been more than enough wise teachers in the history of the world to give us all the guidance we could want. And we don't stand in great need of any new light that another philosopher might bring. As Mark Twain is reported to have said, "I am not very interested in discovering new light. I have trouble enough living up to the light I already have." We don't need another philosopher. We only need a Saviour.

And the world doesn't need another adviser, to counsel us on where to invest our money or our time in the new year. There are advisers enough already in the world, from the shrewd, no-nonsense types who offer up financial advice on Wall Street to the dreamy counsel served up in the newspaper column of the local astrologist. No, the world doesn't need another adviser. It only needs a Saviour.

And the world doesn't need another business tycoon, to make his millions on the sweat of working men and women and then return a fraction of it to fund the local library. We need no billionaire philanthropists who can casually dole out millions to silence the voices of those who have been crushed by greed and industrial power. The world needs no more business tycoons. It only needs a Saviour.

And the world doesn't need another politician to guide us down the oily path of rhetoric and compromise. We need no great orators who can stir us all with visions of a bright and glorious tomorrow, but who are just as powerless as the rest of us to change the things that cause the greatest hurt. No politicians, please. We only need a Saviour.

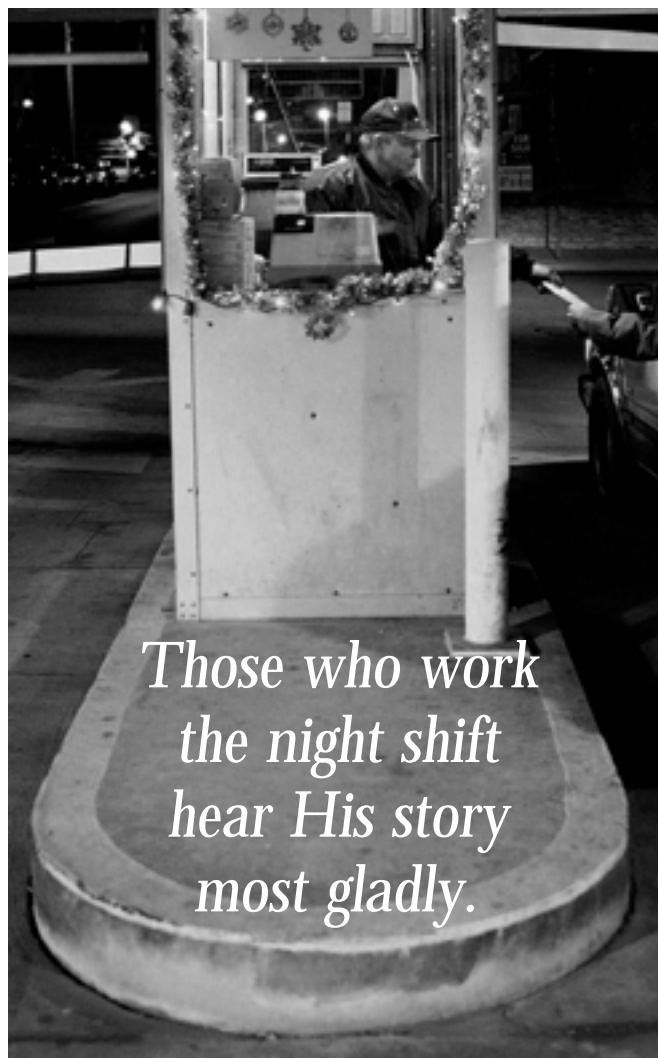
And the world doesn't need another military leader, for heaven and earth can only weep to see where they have brought us at the end of another year. We weep for the day's dead in Kosovo, in Chechnya, in Angola and Colombia, and we turn in disgust from those who think nothing of throwing away a



thousand lives to simply seize some mad mountaintop. No, in heaven's name, we need no military hero with a finger on the button that controls our destiny. We only need a Saviour.

And according to that old and well-worn story in Luke, that is exactly what we received on a midnight clear nearly 2,000 years ago—a Saviour. Heaven looked down on our pain and hurt and wretchedness and sin and saw that only a Saviour would meet our need. And so that's what Heaven sent—a Saviour. And though the philosophers and the advisers and the business tycoons and the politicians and the soldiers debate Him and discuss His life and critique His teaching and analyze His influence, it's the common men and women of this world who have always heard of Him most gladly: the men and women who drive the snowplows and run the plastic machines and stay up with the sick children and nurse the elderly. They know in their souls that the Saviour born in the middle of the night shift is *their* Saviour, that He doesn't belong chiefly to the worshipers in great cathedrals or the scholars in the great universities. No, He is *their* Saviour, and they will claim Him, though every other person be false.

This is the cause for Christmas joy: not that you can deck your house with hundreds of icicle lights or fill your living room with dozens of gifts, but that the Lord of heaven and earth entered into the commonness of our little lives to be our Saviour from sin and selfishness. This is the reason why, at every Christmas, a song rises from thousands of redeemed men and women to mingle with the song of the angels. When we discover that life on earth can be something other than a mean little existence between the cradle and the grave; when



we learn that human life can be full of joy and possibilities, we search for the words of that angel hymn: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

#### In Our Own Language

When I was in elementary school, it seemed that every Christmas season would find me in one of those fresh-faced cherub choirs all decked out to sing in the Christmas musical program. There was always the usual assortment of carols and holiday songs, and every now and then some idealistic young teacher would try to pretend that she actually heard unison in what we were singing.

There was always one thing that puzzled me, however. Since no Christmas program was complete without singing that long-winded song that concluded

with "*Glo-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh-oh-or-i-a, in excelsis Deo,*" what did "*in excelsis Deo*" mean? Some teachers took pains to explain that it really should be pronounced "*in exchelsis Deo,*" but not one of them ever told that it meant anything. It was just another those "grown-up" phrases that kids had to learn to make it in the adult world. I added it to the list that already included "Please" and "Excuse me."

And then, one day, the lights went on. I discovered that what it meant was "Glory to God in the highest," and that unbeknownst to me, I had been singing Latin all those years! So the song really did have a meaning all that time, and I never understood it until I heard it in my own language.

That is the heart of the old story, I believe. It has had a meaning, a profound meaning, all these years. But only when we hear it in our own language, only when we see that the child born that night was the great God of the universe come down to live with common men and women like us, will we ever

understand it. Only when we see the Jesus who was born in the middle of the night shift will be we ready to trust Him as the Saviour of our lives—lives lived out in sweat and pain and joy and hope and work, yes, even work on the night shift.

This is the Lord we proclaim at Christmas, the Word who was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. And with millions of common Christians all over this world, I pray with every fiber of my being for the day when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

Bill Knott is an associate editor of the Adventist Review.



# Saviour of the World

LESLIE KAY

There is a spontaneous bond of kinship between otherwise diverse people who have endured common hardships. Combat veterans gather to trade war stories. Middle-aged ex-jocks relive their glory days. And mothers of young children compare birth experiences—with the sort of vivid, unsparing detail that sends their blushing husbands fleeing from the room in acute embarrassment.

So it happened that my friend Camille and I (sans husbands) talked childbirth over a lunch of white corn tortillas, guacamole, and banana bread. “My first one was like medieval torture,” Camille confessed, as her third little one wriggled in her arms. “After I lived through it, I had a new respect for even the wimpiest woman who’s ever had a baby.”

As the four oldest products of our combined adventures in childbirth giggled and scampered at our feet, Camille continued with a shudder, “It was a horrendous experience! I was totally out of control. For hours and hours I grabbed Ron by the neck and fell to the floor, crying and groveling, too scared to breathe into the contractions, fighting the pain.”

“Was it different with Sirena?” I asked over a fourth slice of Camille’s addictive banana bread.

“I knew I’d have to do things differently the second time around,” she answered. “With Sirena I reminded myself that every contraction got me closer to her birth. I decided I would *love* the pain—I’d *embrace* the pain—because when it was over, I’d get a baby.”

The wisdom of my friend’s words impressed me deeply. The life that is quietly conceived “in the secret place” becomes manifest only through excruciating pain—pain that must be embraced, even loved, like a friend (Ps. 139:15).<sup>\*</sup> Surely childbirth is a hard but holy privilege that can help us comprehend something of what our Saviour has endured to bring redemption to the human race.

To the undiscerning eye it all began unremarkably enough. A baby born in a Bethlehem stable to poor, nondescript parents, attended only by shepherds and the shrill bleating of sheep. Yet that baby carried within Him what no other human being had ever brought into this world—the corporate life of the fallen human race, diffused with the very nature of God (see *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 250, 251).

Throughout childhood this unique life remained hidden

within Him. Into adulthood He carried it quietly, unobtrusively, as a pregnant woman carries the fragile, developing, life within her. He nourished and fed it, purifying it from sin and self, carrying it to full spiritual maturity, until in due time that which had been conceived in Christ was ready to be made manifest to the world.

He was not permitted to wrestle with His birth pangs in private. On His uplifted cross, in full view of every cynical, unsympathetic eye, Christ endured His monumental agony. Publicly despised and rejected, His tender spirit pierced and crushed, He was mortally stricken for our sakes, “cut off from the land of the living” (see Isa. 53:3-8).

Yet He endured it—He embraced it—because He knew that every rack-ing contraction that crushed out his life brought Him closer to the birth of a new and greater life—a shared life that would extend beyond

Himself to suffuse the entire human race. And in sharing this life, Christ earned the right to be called “the Savior of the world” (1 John 4:14).

Ellen White wrote: “In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 68). Because of this gift, He is able to make “his sun to rise on the evil and the good” and His rain to fall on “the righteous and the unrighteous” (Matt. 5:45). Through this gift He has delivered “justification that brings life for *all* men” (Rom. 5:18)—life filled with blessing, hope, and pardon.

And for those who, by faith, receive Christ in His fullness, there is *eternal* life—Christ’s own divinely indwelt humanity. For us there is the sometimes painful but holy privilege of having His image conceived and formed within us—that the unique life which was once hidden “in Christ” may become manifest to the watching world as “Christ in [us], the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

<sup>\*</sup>All texts in this article are quoted from the New International Version.

Leslie Kay lives with her husband and two daughters in Chloride, Arizona.



*Christmas joy for the young at heart**The Child and*

BY ELLEN G. WHITE

**A**ND, LO, THE ANGEL OF THE LORD came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Dear children, shall not these precious words, coming from the lips of heavenly angels, find a response in our hearts? Shall they not awaken gladness and melody in the soul because Jesus has come to our world to bring back to God those who through sin were estranged from Him? If the angels of heaven glorified God, and poured forth their joy in divine melody and sacred song over the plains of Bethlehem, shall our hearts be cold and unimpressible? Shall we with indifference turn from the salvation brought to light through Christ?

The astonished shepherds could scarcely comprehend the precious message borne to them by the angels, and when the radiant light had passed away, they said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child."

They were filled with joy; they could not keep to them-

selves the precious knowledge of the advent of the Redeemer, but with glad enthusiasm they told to all whom they met the wonderful things they had seen and heard; and all who heard them related the wonderful experience of the shepherds to the others, and many wondered and rejoiced, for they believed the words that had been spoken by the heavenly messengers. Glorifying and praising God, the shepherds returned to their flocks on the plains of Bethlehem.

All heaven was moved on the occasion of the Saviour's birth. The triumphant song which the shepherds heard was only an echo of the praise resounding round the throne on high. The whole angelic host rejoiced and sung praises because salvation was presented as a free gift to fallen man. After the proclamation song to the shepherds, the heavenly multitude veiled their faces from human sight, the flood of heavenly light passed away, the thrilling song of praise was no longer heard by the shepherds; but the remembrance of that song could never die out of their hearts. O, what reason have we to praise God that this wonderful revelation from heaven was made to humble men! It is not those who occupy high positions, who hold most honored places in the world, who are selected as bearers of God's message of peace and salvation, which is of the greatest interest to fallen men. The Lord has said, "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

Those who love God should feel deeply interested in the children and youth. To them God can reveal His truth and salvation. Jesus calls the little ones that believe on Him the lambs of His flock. He has a special love for and interest in the children. Jesus has said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me [let no one place any obstruction





# *the Children*

in the way of the children's coming to me]; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Jesus has passed through the trials and griefs to which childhood is subject. He knows the sorrows of the young. By His Holy Spirit, He is drawing the hearts of the children to Himself, while Satan is working to keep them away from Him. The most precious offering that the children can give to Jesus is the freshness of their childhood. . . .

What matchless love Jesus has manifested for a fallen world! If angels sung because the Saviour was born in Bethlehem, shall not our hearts echo the glad strain, Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men? Although we do not know the exact day of Christ's birth, we would honor the sacred event. May the Lord forbid that any one should be so narrow-minded as to overlook the event because there is an uncertainty in regard to the exact time. Let us do what we can to fasten the minds of the children upon those things which are precious to every one who loves Jesus. Let us teach them how Jesus came into the world to bring hope, comfort, peace, and happiness to all. The angels

explained the reason of their great joy, saying, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Then, children and youth, as you celebrate the coming Christmas, will you not count up the many things for which you are to be grateful, and will you not present a gratitude offering to Christ, and so reveal that you do appreciate the heavenly Gift?

The angels were amazed at the great love of Christ that led Him to suffer and die on Calvary to rescue man from the power of Satan. The work of redemption is a marvel to the angels of heaven. Why, then, are we, for whom so great a salvation has been provided, so indifferent, so cold and unloving? Children, you can do errands for Jesus which will be wholly acceptable to Him. You can bring your little gifts and offerings to Christ. The wise men who were guided by the star to the place where the young child was, brought offerings of gold and frankincense and myrrh. When they found the Promised One, they worshiped Him. Children, you may ask, "What gifts can we bring to Jesus?" You can give Him your hearts. What offering is so sacred as the soul

temple cleansed from its defilement of sin? Jesus stands knocking at the door of your hearts; will you let Him in? He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Will you let Jesus into your hearts? Will you clear away the rubbish, and throw open the door, and willingly, gladly welcome in your heavenly guest? I shall not need to plead with you to bring your thank offerings to God if you will but let the Saviour in. You will be so grateful that you cannot be restrained from laying your gifts at the feet of Jesus. Let the hearts of all respond with exceeding joy for the priceless gift of the Son of God.



*This article first appeared in the December 17, 1889, issue of the Advent Review and Sabbath Herald (now the Adventist Review). Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.*

# Want to Serve? Get a Life!

*Committee memberships are no substitute for time spent with Jesus.*

BY KENT A. HANSEN

*“As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, ‘Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!’*

*“‘Martha, Martha,’ the Lord answered, ‘you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it shall not be taken away from her’” (Luke 10:38-42, NIV).*

**D**ISCUSSING THIS story is a surefire way to start a debate in a small group Bible study. We like to empathize with Martha. We may even secretly resent that Jesus didn’t show more appreciation for her efforts. She was working hard on a thankless task. All she wanted was a little help. Her plaintive “Lord, don’t you care . . .” is the prayer of tired, frustrated laborers in the Lord’s vineyards everywhere.

Also, the account immediately follows the parable of the good Samaritan in the Gospel narrative. So Jesus was really saying that service is as important as prayer, worship, and Bible study—right?

Wrong! As one writer succinctly puts it: “Jesus is warning us that while trying to live out the story of the Good Samaritan, we must not lose our spiritual center—Jesus. Without sitting at His feet, we lose sight of what service is about. We get distracted by unimportant things.”<sup>1</sup>

But our driven selves cry out, “*To love is to serve!*” Didn’t Paul tell us to have the same attitude as Jesus, who emptied

Himself of personal ambition and became an obedient servant (Phil. 2:5-11)? Didn’t Jesus kneel and wash the disciples’ feet and tell them to do the same thing for each other? (John 13).

We seek justification for our identities, as “Sue the nurse,” “Kent the lawyer,” “Dave the physician,” and “Pamela the teacher.” We are known by the work that we do with the best of motives. But Jesus defined “eternal life” as a matter of relationship, not activity (John 17:3). He warned that those whose claim to heaven is staked on good works will lose out to those who took the time to get acquainted with Him (Matt. 7:21-23).

To those of us who would earn Christ’s favor by service, he says, “Get a life—a spiritual life!” He told the woman at the well, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water” (John 4:10, NRSV).

Many of us find our ideals tested to the breaking point by job demands, marital strains and eco-

nomic uncertainty, even church duties, leaving us spiritually drained and empty. We are confronted by the stark spiritual reality that we cannot give what we don’t receive through prayerful, openhanded waiting on the Lord. We hunger for a personal relationship with Christ in growing awareness that our committee memberships and task orientation are no substitutes for that relationship.

## Spiritual Renewal

For the past nine years I have participated in spiritual renewal with a small group of women and men seeking a resting place with God as we reach midlife. Every one of us

*Eternal life is  
a matter of  
relationships—  
not activity.*



who has experienced the awakening of God's grace has followed the leading of the Holy Spirit to personal service. Our surprising responses to the Spirit include work with at-risk adolescents and recovering alcoholics, feeding the homeless, assisting in hospitals and hospices, tutoring illiterate adults, child evangelism, prayer outreach to neighbors, establishing home fellowships for encouragement and nurture, and medical missions in developing countries.

Jesus said that if our relationship with Him is alive, effective service will naturally flourish. "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5, NRSV).

If you and I are serious about serving Christ, then we will commit ourselves to developing our relationship with Him over any other consideration, no matter how demanding or distracting. In the words of Ellen White: "The 'one thing' that Martha needed was a calm, devotional spirit, a deeper anxiety for knowledge concerning the future, immortal life, and the graces necessary for spiritual advancement. . . . Jesus would teach His children to seize every opportunity of gaining that knowledge which will make them wise unto salvation. The cause of Christ needs careful, energetic workers. There is a wide field for the Marthas, with their zeal in active religious work. But let them first sit with Mary at the feet of Jesus. Let diligence, promptness, and energy be sanctified by the grace of Christ; then the life will be an unconquerable power for good."<sup>2</sup>

*Portions of this article were first published in La Sierra Today, the alumni magazine of La Sierra University, in the spring of 1996 and are used here by permission.*

*Kent A. Hansen is an attorney living in Corona, California. He is a member of the Loma Linda University church.*

<sup>1</sup>"On Misinterpreting Stories You Don't Like," *Discipleship Journal*, Issue Eight Nine, 1995, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 525.





# From the People, With the People, for the People

*A report on ACTS 2000 in Bucharest, Romania*

BY JONATHAN GALLAGHER, NEWS DIRECTOR FOR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

A packed auditorium in the center of Bucharest is the focal point for a massive satellite outreach series: ACTS 2000. In this modern version of Acts, the biblical pattern is being repeated—with lay believers spreading the Word around the world.

"This is very much a lay-led, lay-driven program," says Mark Finley, evangelist for ACTS 2000 and speaker/director of the *It Is Written* television program. "I want to pay special tribute to Donna and Denzil McNeilus, who have taken this Bucharest ACTS 2000 event and made it happen. They have dedicated one year of their very busy lives, and made many financial contributions, to make sure that as many as possible in Europe could hear the gospel message for these times. ACTS 2000 is very much from the people, with the people, for the people."

With many local volunteers, ACTS 2000 had a direct impact on the lives of 4,500 in Bucharest at the uplink site. Nearly 50,000 watched across Romania in 600 downlink sites.

ACTS 2000, with the motto "Hope for Generation 2000," was watched by up to 120,000 nightly and was broadcast every day except Monday. Having run from September 3 to 19, the live program is being followed by an even larger outreach through the use of videotapes. The Ukraine alone arranged for 520 sites to show the series two weeks after it was completed.

"In more than 1,000 towns and villages throughout Europe, God is moving," says Finley. "In countries as far

apart as Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, Slovakia, Hungary, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, the message is getting through. Romanian-speaking churches in Spain and France are also very much involved. We have even received a report of the series being received in Denmark." Other countries that will be using the taped series include the Czech Republic, Portugal, Angola, and Mozambique.

Visiting the program on September

11, Jan Paulsen, General Conference president, said he was delighted to see the response to the seminar series.

"The number and distribution of the downlink sites all across Europe show that people want to hear a message of hope," Paulsen said. "I am immensely encouraged to hear of the responses from many different places. Using these modern communication methods means that the gospel is able to touch many lives in widely spread locations."

Paulsen, the featured speaker for

**HOPE FOR 2000:** Evangelist Mark Finley, speaker for the ACTS 2000 satellite series in Romania, shares a message that focuses on the theme "Hope for Generation 2000. At this uplink site in Bucharest, Romania, more than 4,500 people watch the satellite evangelistic series unfold. It was an event that was "lay-led and lay-driven," with many local volunteers.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF IT IS WRITTEN/ACTS 2000

two Bible presentations uplinked live by satellite on September 11, highlighted the importance of the Holy Spirit in the Christian's life.

Through the contact the many translators have with their respective countries, many encouraging reports are being received on the impact of ACTS 2000, according to the *It Is Written* staff in Bucharest.

"In Sofia, capital of Bulgaria, one lady had given up on life and was on her way to commit suicide when she saw one of the ACTS 2000 posters," says Finley. "She began attending meetings, and she has found reasons to live. In another part of the country, 1,500 Gypsy people were watching a giant screen set up on the street, since there is no hall large enough to accommodate them. The local community is very happy to promote our advertisements because they have seen how lives are being changed."

In Madrid, Spain, 550 watched at a downlink site in a bar. These expatriate Romanians encouraged others from their community to attend the satellite broadcasts, and their usual meeting place in a city park became deserted, according to local reports.

In Romania itself church members of another denomination were attending one of the downlink sites. Because of the distance, they requested a site at their own church. In another situation members of another denomination were warned against attending the ACTS 2000 meetings by their minister.

The response was: "We want to see why he has told us not to attend, so let's go." Not wanting to attend alone, they went together and made up half of those present to watch the downlink. They watched and listened intently and at the end of the meeting announced they would attend all the presentations.

A health fair in Bucharest ran simultaneously with the ACTS 2000 presentations and saw up to 2,000 attend daily. Presentations via satellite on how to have a healthy lifestyle caught the interest at many downlink locations.

"I enjoyed doing the health presentations here," says Teenie Finley, who worked with her husband in Bucharest. "Combined with our health fair, they seemed to have made a real impact on the people in a lot of places. We got word that in some downlink sites they



**ACT ON IT:** Audience members at the Bucharest, Romania, uplink site raise their hands during prayer in response to a call made by ACTS 2000 speaker Mark Finley.

are serving vegetarian food because so many people attending wanted to become vegetarians. We have placed the health computer graphics both in English and Romanian. The Romanians have an unusually high interest in health. They seem to have responded positively to each one of our health presentations."

Many reports of technical miracles have also been received by *It Is Written* staff in Bucharest. Many challenges from the use of the high-tech equipment have been met by prayer—including restored power, malfunctioning projectors, and frequent loss of signal.

This doubting Thomas saw one with his own eyes. On September 8, despite the work of the technicians in Bucharest for more than an hour, they

could not get a signal to the satellite, orbiting 23,000 miles high. Mark Finley came in: "We're on the air in two minutes, and we still don't have a signal." In a demonstration that prayer really does work, immediately after urgent prayer the news came: "We have the signal!"

The weather was not kind to the satellite uplink either. Torrential rain made transmission difficult using the uplink frequency used in Europe: on Sabbath, September 4, the signal wattage had to be doubled just to push the signal through.

Satellite technician Marcello spent days on the roof in the rain, just making sure the dish was aligned and the system functioning.

The mayor of a small village in Transylvania came along to the meetings. But he criticized the advertising, saying people hadn't heard about the event.

"Your program was wonderful, but you don't know how to advertise," said the mayor. "If you had asked me, I would have asked the village drum-

mer to beat his drum all day long to call people to the hall."

So they asked him to arrange it. Before each of our satellite evangelistic meetings the village drummer marched through the village beating his drum to call people to the meeting. God uses unique ways to bring people to hear His present-truth message for this hour.

"We are so happy for the success of this program," says Adrian Bocaneanu, president of the Romanian Union. "The church members are enthusiastically leading out in this direct evangelism."

This report is just a glimpse of how God is using all kinds of men and women to spread the gospel message from the people, with the people, for the people.

# "Throw Yourself Down"

BY: GARY B. SWANSON, COLLEGIATE YOUTH QUARTERLY EDITOR

**T**hor Axel Kappfjell was at the top of his sport, literally. As a member of the worldwide BASE organization, Thor liked to jump off tall things; BASE stands for buildings, antennas, spans (bridges), and earth (cliffs). BASE jumping is parachuting from fixed objects. Fun, huh?

Thor had gained quite a bit of notoriety by jumping off things without permission. He leaped off the eighty-sixth-floor observation deck of the Empire State Building in New York and, three days later, the eagle heads on the Chrysler Building. Authorities said, "Hey, you can't do that!" but both times Thor disappeared into the crowds of the city before anyone could nab him. When he jumped from one of the World Trade towers, however, they were ready for him. He was arrested and sentenced to seven days of community service.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

Thor was the third of 12 jumpers who were planning to leap from the 3,300-foot Kjerag, a cliff near Stavanger, Norway. It was Thor's last jump; he hit the rock face and fell into a fjord.

When Jesus was on earth, He was tempted to become history's first BASE jumper. While He was at the top of the Temple Satan suggested, "Throw yourself down" (Matt. 4:6, NIV). To some that may sound like fun, but, of course, doing something simply for the thrill of it wasn't Satan's point. Jesus saw clearly what was implied.

The point wasn't thrill-seeking, but presumption. Quoting Deuteronomy, He said, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test'" (verse 7, NIV; see also Deut. 6:16, NIV). Here is where this temptation becomes universal. Who among us can say we've never stretched God's protection for us a bit too far?

## NEWS BREAK

### Adventist Scientist Challenges Noah's Flood Theory

**S**peculation that the biblical account of Noah's flood describes a localized, Black Sea-area flood is flawed, says James Gibson, director of the California-based Geoscience Research Institute, a service organization of the General Conference.

Gibson, a Seventh-day Adventist scholar, made his comments in response to recent claims by underwater explorer Robert Ballard that the Genesis flood story may refer to a flood that occurred in the Black Sea region about "7,500 years ago."

Ballard says that his research suggests a sudden flood that submerged the old Black Sea coastline, possibly covering settlements and forcing thousands to flee. He points to sonar images of the floor of the Black Sea, at a depth of 550 feet, which show features such as sandbars that appear consistent with an ancient coastline.

Ballard's findings build on theories published recently by Columbia University geologists William Ryan and Walter Pitman, who argue that rising water levels from melting glaciers caused the Mediterranean Sea to overflow into what is now the Black Sea area.

"This attempt to confine the biblical account of a

worldwide flood to a local region fails to deal adequately with other evidence," says Gibson. "If the Genesis flood was confined to the Black Sea area, what is the explanation for the fossils found buried throughout the world?"

Gibson says that a worldwide, catastrophic flood is the only explanation for the different fossil layers that is consistent with a biblical, rather than evolutionary, explanation for the origins of the earth.

Other aspects of the biblical narrative are undermined by the Black Sea flood theory, Gibson points out. "If the Genesis flood was confined to the Black Sea area," he asks, "what was the need for an ark? If the people living in the area knew the flood was coming, they could simply move away, with no need for Noah to waste his time building an ark."

Gibson also notes that no scientist has yet produced evidence that humans once lived on what is now the bottom of the Black Sea—a point that is pivotal to the current speculations.

"If someone should find evidence of buried cities in the Black Sea, one would need to examine the nature of the evidence before drawing any conclusions," says Gibson. "But I don't see how this could be equated with the Genesis flood."—*Adventist News Network*.



## Religion in the News

### Study: Heart Patients Who Were Prayed for Fared Better

Heart patients who were prayed for without their knowledge suffered 10 percent fewer complications, a study has found.

"It's potentially a natural explanation we don't understand yet," said William S. Harris, a heart researcher and lead author of the study. "It's potentially a supernatural or other-than-natural mechanism."

He and other researchers at the Mid-America Heart Institute, the heart program of St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri, conducted the study of 990 patients admitted during a year to the coronary-care unit of the institute.

By a random process, the patients were divided into two groups—one in which they were prayed for daily by community volunteers for four weeks and another in which no one was assigned to pray for them.

The volunteers were given only the first names of the patients and asked to pray daily for their rapid recovery with no complications. The patients, their families, and their caregivers were not aware of the study, the Associated Press reported.—*Religion News Service.*

## Historical Note

### 100 Years Ago . . . Boarding Academy Costs Rise

An announcement in the December 26, 1899, issue of the *Review* announced new rates for boarding students at Cedar Lake Academy (now Great Lakes Adventist Academy), which had opened in Edmore, Michigan, just one year earlier.

Principal J. G. Lamson acknowledged that a shortage of student labor would raise costs for families sending their children to the school, but offered that an average of six hours' work a week was still available to interested students.

The following costs would be in place for the term beginning January 3, 1900:

Dormitory: \$2 a month, including light and heat.

Library: 50 cents for a three-month term.

Tuition: \$4 a month for the basic four-subject plan; specialized 12-week courses for shorthand and bookkeeping would cost \$5 per month.

According to Lamson, the "probable expenses" for a three-month term would be about \$30 (approximately \$500 in 1999 dollars). At those prices, a full academic year comparable to today's school year would have cost a 1999 equivalent of \$1,500—quite a bargain when compared to the cost for most Adventist boarding schools today.

## NEWS BREAK

### NET NEW YORK '99 Closes

On the closing Sabbath of the Millennium of Prophecy Seminar, 45 persons were baptized at the host site in New York City, with more baptisms planned for the near future. The Manhattan follow-up team is continuing studies with another 120 active interests and also visiting an additional 1,300 persons who had some contact during the meetings.

Nearly 1,300 downlink sites registered for the series in North America, and about 5,000 sites participated worldwide. The meetings were translated into 14 languages. Weekly follow-up meetings are being scheduled, and planning is under way to start a church in the area.

E-mails and faxes from many parts of the world indicate that the series made a major impact, as church members worked together to host the series, and maintained a strong prayer initiative. The *Adventist Review* will print a major report on the meetings in an upcoming issue.

### News Notes

✓ **Bible teachers, students, pastors, and lay members** gathered at Bolivia Adventist University in Cochabamba for the Second South American Biblical Theological



Symposium October 29-31.

The theme of the symposium was biblical hermeneutics. Some 45 papers were presented on the topic. The program serves to nurture theological unity among the numerous growing ethnic groups in the Adventist Church in South America, says Gerhard Pfandl, associate director of the Biblical Research Institute.

### What's Upcoming

- Dec. 25** Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the Southern Asia Division
- Jan. 1** Soul-Winning Commitment Day
- Jan. 15** Message and Mission Emphasis

# Christmas Is for All

R. LYNN SAULS

**B**abies born since last Christmas have come into a world where evil dwells. But they don't know it yet. Like the innocent babes of Bethlehem, they do not know they have been born to die.

Neither do they know why green trees have been brought inside during the past few weeks, why lights have been strung, why the smells of cookies permeate the house, why presents have been wrapped in bright paper and placed under the tree.

Christmas is for them. It is because a special Baby was born 2,000 years ago that these little ones live in a world of hope, not just a world of sin, disappointment, and death. As the babes of Bethlehem were slain by Herod in place of the infant Jesus, so Jesus later was slain for them. He was slain for the little ones born this year who are experiencing their first Christmas.

Christmas is for older children and young people who will experience their third, fourth, fifth, or even sixteenth Christmas this year. Their lives have been measured in Sabbaths and in Christmases. From Sabbath to Sabbath they have been developing. From Christmas to Christmas they are growing up.

Christmas is for workers; for them to get away from work for a few days. Come unto Him all you who labor and are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Like those shepherds who left their flocks, they can leave their jobs for a few days and come even unto Bethlehem and remember Him who gave dignity to labor by growing up as a carpenter.

Christmas is for students. Like the Magi who left their stargazing and their scrolls, they can leave their tests and books and classes and follow the star to Bethlehem. There they can bow down and worship the Source of all wisdom.

Christmas is for parents; a time for them to do things for their children. A time to take time with them. To go shopping with them. To decorate the Christmas tree with them. To wrap gifts with them—and for them. To bake cookies and cakes and pies with and for them. To gather them around and read to them, tell them of past Christmases, and tell them the story of Jesus.

Then when Christmas Day is over and the children are in bed, it is time for parents to linger by the Christmas tree in silence and thank God for their children. And thank God

for sending Jesus. Like quiet Joseph and gentle Mary, they can ponder all these things in their hearts.

Christmas is also for us older people—more so than for anyone else, it seems to me. At this time of year we are forced to realize that Christmas comes around more fre-

quently than it used to; that each Christmas brings us nearer to the time we will have to let go of the gifts we have received—the taste of water, the smell of cut spruce or pine, the sound of birds singing, the feel of beach sand on the feet, the pleasure of crawling between clean sheets to rest after a busy day. As Christmases come and go we recognize that we must someday leave all these things.

But Christmas tells us more if we believe. We can have eternal life because of that first Christmas. We will not have to leave forever the things God gave us dominion over. Because of Christmas there will be new heavens and a new earth.

Like Simeon and Anna, we older people are the ones who really understand and appreciate Christmas. We are the ones who can say with Simeon, “Lord, let Your servant depart in peace, for my eyes have seen Your salvation” (see Luke 2:29, 30).

Some of our friends and loved ones who were alive last Christmas are no longer with us. It is especially hard to face this fact. Christmas has for us a touch of deep sadness. But it can also be a time of hope. Christmas reminds us that God cares for us; that He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; that He suffered and died for us; that He is the resurrection and the life.

Christmas is for those who are longing for Jesus to come again.

This column was adapted from my “Remember Your Christmases,” *Adventist Review*, Dec. 18, 1986. Ellen White discusses the need to celebrate Christmas and how it should and should not be celebrated in such passages as *The Adventist Home*, pp. 477, 478.

*Christmas  
reminds us  
that God cares  
for us.*

*R. Lynn Sauls is a retired professor of English and journalism who lives with his wife, Helen, in Naples, Florida.*





# Surprise!

Stay in the backyard," Mother said as she smiled at her two neatly dressed children.

"Clint, watch that Jennifer doesn't get dirty. We'll be just in time to catch the last morning bus into town for Taylor's birthday party. I'll just be a few minutes."

Mom hurried into the house. Soon Clint and Jennifer were swinging happily. Suddenly Clint spied the hole he and Jennifer had started digging the day before. Jumping off the swing, he ran over to the garden to see if the hole had changed any.

Jennifer joined Clint, and they both started digging again. Soon the hole measured to their knees at the sides.

"Is the world made up of just dirt?" asked Jennifer.

"I don't think so," answered Clint. "My teacher says that there is water down there, and sometimes it is hot inside, and then we get a volcano."

"But what if water comes in this hole and we fall in here?" questioned Jennifer.

Clint laughed, "I can swim. I'll help you."

Soon Jennifer grumbled, "I don't think there is anything but dirt. I quit!"

Clint sat on the edge of the hole as his little sister stalked off. He wondered what would happen if he poured water in his hole. Would it stay in the hole? Dragging the hose to the hole, he finally filled it, and then sat looking in the pool. It was a hot day. Slowly he took off his shoes and put his feet in the water.

"Jennifer, come see my pool," he called as Jennifer and their dog, Blue, came around the corner of the shed.

"Our own pool!" shouted Jennifer, leaping in with a big splash.

"Now see what you've done," scolded Clint. Blue barked in excitement. Jennifer jumped up and down and shouted in glee. What fun!

*Oh, well, I am already wet,* thought Clint as he jumped in with Jennifer.

"You look funny," laughed Jennifer as she plunked a gob of mud on Clint's head.

"And how would you like a yummy chocolate head?" chuckled Clint. The mud fight was on.

Just then the back door opened. "Oh, no. I can't believe my eyes!" exclaimed Mother, and she stared in horror at her two mud babies. Slowly the two youngsters shuffled across the lawn, leaving a muddy trail behind.

Mother didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. Sometimes it was so hard bringing up her children all alone. "Do you realize that the bus leaves any minute? We'll never make it now," she said despairingly.

"There goes the bus!" Jennifer pointed to the bus stop. Clint's lip trembled. "I'm sorry, Mom," he whispered.

Jennifer patted her brother's arm and soothed, "It's OK, Clint. Everybody makes mistakes."

"Me too," Mother sighed as she looked at her soggy children. Suddenly feeling grateful for her two little muddy buddies, she led them into the house to clean up.

## Family Time

On Tuesday (or whatever day you choose) invite your family to worship God with you.

✎ Does God treat us as we deserve? Read the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10. Share with each other one time when you did something you shouldn't have and someone treated you kindly.

✎ Role-play—without too much prompting—the story of Zacchaeus from Luke or use the version in My Bible Friends. Find costumes to make it more fun. Decide what role everyone will play and get your props in place first. Then have a good reader read the story very slowly, pausing for action to take place. The actors can mime the words and act as they believe would best describe what happened.

✎ Sing a special song about being more like God. You could try No. 319 in The SDA Hymnal: "Lord, I Want to Be a Christian."





# All Is Bright

*Is any time more depressing than the days after the holidays?*

BY J. GRANT SWANK, JR.

**C**HRISTMAS WREATHS STILL HUNG on the walls of the front meeting room, but it was evident that the season's mirth had ebbed away.

Some of us from the church had gone to the convalescent home to bring Advent's good cheer. Since other organizations had clogged the home's December calendar, we stepped aside from our usual first Sunday afternoon of the month to opt for January's first Sunday.

"Even though Christmas is over, we'll still sing the carols," someone suggested, with the rest of us unanimously agreeing. Therefore, with carol books in hand, we greeted our elderly friends.

## Working the Audience

One of the women kept pushing the tablecloth over the edge of the table, while another resident yanked at it from another direction. Both seemed unaware of our presence.

Across from those two women another woman was strapped into her wheelchair so that she wouldn't fall on the floor. She kept leaning forward as if to defy the strength of the cloth restraining straps. As we sang she mumbled under her breath, as though she felt quite unhappy with her state.

More women than men populated that nursing home, so when we were able to get even a couple men to attend services we felt quite elated. But one of the men folded his arms in a defiant stance as though shouldering himself against our presence.

*What a pitiful sight*, I couldn't help thinking to myself. One of our members read aloud from Luke 2. I wondered what the several children were thinking as they pondered the forlorn mood of the room. Certainly this was a far cry

from the joy and cheerfulness they had enjoyed in their own homes during the holiday season.

Still, the words "Holiday Greetings" hung in huge red-and-white letters from the ceiling beams. At least the caregivers thought enough of the season's joy to tack up the usual saying.

But the decorations were secular. On the shelves there were only Santa figurines, not a hint of the Nativity scene anywhere. Surely a number of these elderly folk had church backgrounds and had at one time worshiped faithfully in some sanctuary.

To my right there was a resident who insisted in calling out unintelligible words while we gave forth with "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing." The people from the church courteously ignored her clamor in favor of the traditional Christmas strains of gladness.

*The staff is to be commended for taking care of these poor people day in and day out*, I concluded. I wondered if we were having any impact on their tethered minds.

## Turn Up the Volume

"Let's give it our best," I cheered on as I announced that "Joy to the World" would be our next carol. That upped the decibels somewhat, but not the mood. I thanked the Lord for loyal church members who had come out and would sympathize with the pastor in feeling with him the lack of enthusiasm that no one wanted to put into words.

Outside the frosted earth gave us no warmth to encourage our faltering attempts in communicating the gospel story. Frost on the windowpanes warned of more days of frigid temperatures.

Several times our group was interrupted by outsiders who



had come to the home to visit relatives or friends. As the passersby traipsed through, they cut into what flimsy attention we had mustered.

*Some days are like this*, I whispered to my soul. *Just keep on keeping on—patient in well-doing.*

One of the church women had brought along a large box filled with fresh oranges. It was now time for the boys and girls to hand a couple oranges to each of the residents in attendance.

As the children wove their way in and out of the wheelchairs, going around the several tables and returning again to their seats, I watched their young faces. They wore smiles that reached up into the older ones' eyes. Their smooth little hands touched the wrinkled old ones. One elderly woman took hold of a little girl's arm and drew her near. No doubt it had been months, even years, since she had touched a child or seen one carrying such a simple gift.

"The children do make a difference," I observed between verses of the carol. Several nodded in agreement.

I remembered that these people were once babies and then toddlers. They once romped as boys and girls, sliding down back slopes and climbing apple trees. They had fallen in love, married, and had children of their own. They had jobs, paid bills, and worried about world events. But now they sat lined up in a front room, some perhaps hardly knowing that it was Christmas.

The Christmas tree lights kept blinking off and on, oblivious to the surroundings. Being artificial, the tree would not grow old as we know old. It could enjoy its stable splendor.

"Now we're going to close with the most favorite Christmas carol of all time," I announced. "Let's all sing 'Silent Night.'"

A sigh seemed gently to come from the church folk as they realized that today they had been faithful helpers for the Lord. The battle waged against the contradiction of the season's weariness would soon be won by a benediction.

### All Together Now

Yet the marvel happened before our eyes. Whereas no one from the home had sung with us in any of the other carols, as one voice they joined in on this hallowed hymn. Slowly but surely the minds came together, alert and touched by some miracle from without.

## The marvel happened before our eyes.

"'Silent night, holy night . . .'"

Lips that had seemed glued shut were now moving and singing gladly. They *did* know why we had come. They were discerning the meaning of Christmas joy for one more year. That special familiar carol had unlocked their awareness.

The two women stopped pushing at the tablecloth. The other one quit pulling at her wheelchair straps. The man unfolded his stiff arms from in front of him. One by one the elderly

residents came together with those of us from the church. By the time we had sung the last verse, the whole mood had changed. One could sense that, with the tree's lights, our hearts also glowed.

*It has been worth it after all*, I thought. *God has honored our being here. His Spirit has reached into the gloomy hearts of those too often forgotten by the rest of the world for most of the year.*

"You've sung so well on that hymn that I think we should sing it again as a prayer to the Christ child," I suggested. With that the voices reached the ceiling as one smiling face glanced at another. A wreath of cheer had come down upon us all.

As I closed with prayer, I could think of no words so appropriate to the occasion as those from the carol: "All is bright." Certainly in the gathering together in His name, His glory had embraced us—and the season—once again.

*J. Grant Swank, Jr., is pastor of the Church of the Nazarene in Windham, Maine.*





# Solely, Totally, and Only Rome

**T**ime to revise our worn, outdated views of papal Rome, which are rooted in nineteenth-century American prejudice, not in sound prophetic principles? Time to rethink our antipathy to the papal system, which has greatly changed since Vatican Council II? Time to decide whether we are one Christian church among many, or whether—by clinging to our antiquated prophetic views—we “must stand alone over and against all other Christian bodies”?

Not only have these questions been asked recently, but some people have answered Yes to them all. I reject not just the answers but the questions, too.

First, the Seventh-day Adventist understanding of papal Rome is founded not on nineteenth-century American bigotry, but on the prophecies of Daniel interpreted through the historicist method, the method that the texts themselves demand. The chronological sequence of Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome (of which three are mentioned by name) prove that the prophecies unveil a successive progression of world *history*, which is why the *historical* interpretation had been used by Jewish and Christian scholars centuries before Adventists adopted it.

In the statue of Daniel 2 itself, Babylon (gold), Media-Persia (silver), and Greece (bronze) are all followed by the iron in the legs that extends through the toes to the end of time. What power comes up after Greece and, though eventually changing form (the iron mixes with clay in the feet and toes), remains the same power until supernaturally destroyed? It's Rome—solely, totally, and only Rome, which rises after Greece and ends only when the world does (remember, even though mixed with clay in the feet and toes, the *iron* goes from Greece all the way to the end, proving that the power after Greece is the last earthly one).

In Daniel 7, after Babylon (lion), Media-Persia (bear), and Greece (leopard), a fourth beast appears, one that comes up after Greece and extends to the end of time when supernaturally destroyed, just like the iron in Daniel 2 (the little horn power that arises in the head of the fourth beast is still part of the fourth beast). What power comes after Greece and remains (in another form) until the end?

Solely, totally, and only Rome.

In Daniel 8, after Media-Persia and Greece (which are

named!), another power arises and remains until destroyed “without hand” (verse 25). What power comes after Greece and endures until the end?

Again—solely, totally, and only Rome. And because Scripture often depicts pagan and papal Rome as *one power*, and because the pagan phase has long disappeared, papal Rome alone remains, the entity unmistakably depicted—and condemned—in Scripture.

The premise, therefore, that Adventist attitudes toward Rome arose, not from correct biblical hermeneutics, but from prejudice is like claiming that Western aversion to pedophilia is rooted, not in moral absolutes, but in hatred of ancient Athens.

And what about the claims that Rome has changed? The new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* proves that Rome

is no more in harmony with the gospel now than when, at the Council of Trent, it damned to hell those who believed in justification by faith alone. Rome *can't* change, at least not in what matters, because Scripture clearly depicts its prophetic role, and God is never wrong. Does this mean that those in Rome are predestined to their fate? No, it means only that the Lord, with His perfect foreknowledge, saw what these people—using their free will—would ultimately do, and He warned us about it in His Word.

And the last point, that our position on Rome somehow pits us against “all other churches.” Even if one accepted that dubious assertion, my answer would be *So what?* Sure, we shouldn't be putting up incendiary billboards; but we shouldn't water down present truth, either. We have been called to preach the three angels' messages of Revelation 14, which includes a distinct cry against “the beast.” We can't do that without implicating “the beast.” If, in this age of ecumenism, that's offensive to some, let it be offensive.

When we compromise on Rome (an entity that began through compromise) we become like what we have condemned. Thus, when we compromise on Rome, we condemn ourselves.

*Clifford Goldstein is the editor of Adult Bible Study Guides.*



# THE CAB RIDE

*I needed a ride, and the cabbie needed encouragement.*

BY MICHAEL H. JACKSON

I'LL PICK YOU UP IN FRONT OF THE HOTEL AT 7:00, and we'll ride to the reception together," Ron had said. But as 7:30 neared, I found myself wondering whether I had remembered the conversation correctly.

I had been up since 4:00 a.m.; perhaps in my fatigue I simply had not listened carefully to his plan. Maybe Ron was already at the event waiting for me to arrive. Finally I decided that I couldn't wait any longer. I asked the hotel bellman to hail me a cab.

## The Ride of My Life

"Where are you from?" the cab driver asked as we began the five-minute journey to my destination.

"Southern California," I answered.

"Is it as dangerous there as we hear on the news?"

"Well, it can be a challenging place to live," I admitted. "Prior to moving there, my wife and children and I each received a series of threatening telephone calls; after we had moved in, an attempted murder took place in our neighborhood, and our mail was stolen—not from our home mailbox, but from within the post office itself. As you can imagine, all of this was quite frightening for our family."

"Where will society be in another 10 years?" he responded, anxiety filling his voice. "I often find myself wondering, *How will this all end?*"

The thought flashed through my mind, *Should I witness, or shouldn't I?*

"Your question has a spiritual answer," I ventured, not knowing how the cab driver might respond. "I believe that Christ will return soon and restore order out of this chaos."

"I believe that He's coming too," the cab driver immediately responded, "but I'm having a difficult time making a commitment to Him."

I tried not to sound surprised at his candor and openness. "What's holding you back?" I asked.

"The Bible says that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit," he answered. "Well, I smoke. I know that I shouldn't, but I do. I feel that I can't make a commitment to God until I quit."

As I listened to the cab driver describe his struggle, I was amazed at his understanding of Scripture. Clearly this man had spent time with his Bible.

"May I make a suggestion?" I offered.

"Sure."

"Don't wait," I urged. "Don't wait to present yourself perfectly to God. Give your heart to Him now, just as you are. He'll accept you and send the Holy Spirit to empower you to deal with the challenges that face you in your life. All you have to do is ask in faith and it'll happen. With His guidance you'll know when you should quit smoking,



PHOTO © PHOTODISC

and He'll give you the power to overcome it."

"I don't know," he said thoughtfully, "I just can't seem to make a commitment."

### Just a Minute

By then we had reached our destination. I felt the need to talk just a bit more, but a woman began to knock loudly on the cab's window. Without invitation she opened the rear door of the car and impatiently began to climb in. Later I thought, *This is just like the devil, always ready to distract and interfere at the most inopportune time.*

"Would you mind waiting on the curb until we've finished our conversation?" I said to the woman. "It'll be only a moment."

Looking surprised, she exited the cab and closed the door behind her. The cab driver watched intently as she retreated to the curb and waited. So far, so good, I thought to myself as I

returned to our conversation.

"You know, there was a time in my life when, in my confusion, I thought that God had abandoned me," I admitted. "I didn't think I could risk placing my trust in Him. Others had failed me. What if God failed me too? I was unwilling to surrender my life to Him, but deep inside I knew I desperately needed Him. All I could do was to pray this prayer: 'God, please make me willing to be made willing.' The good news is that God was there and immediately answered. He had been patiently waiting for me all along. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, I developed a willing attitude and made the decision to surrender my life to Him. It can happen to you, too. God is waiting for you to invite Him into your heart."

With the woman on the sidewalk still watching, we bowed our heads in prayer and approached the Lord of the universe. It was an awesome moment that I'll never forget. I could feel God's

presence and power tangibly in the cab that night, reaching out to the heart of this searching soul. I was blessed to be chosen to participate in the process.

Later Ron arrived at the reception. "Michael," he began, "the strangest thing just happened. Twice I started to drive the three miles from my hotel to yours. Both times I got lost, even though I knew the way."

I thought back over the wonderful experience that had just occurred. "Ron," I said, smiling, "I think I know why."

Michael H. Jackson is senior vice president of strategic planning and business development for Loma Linda University Adventist Health Sciences Center.







## Bulletin Board

## At Rest

**VOYLES, Ernest W.**—b. June 16, 1923, Sedalia, Mo.; d. July 16, 1999, Escondido, Calif. He served as a pastor in the Minnesota, Upper Columbia, Montana, Central California, and Southeastern California conferences for 35 years. He was a departmental director in Southeastern California Conference prior to his retirement in 1987. In 1991 he came out of retirement to pastor the Paradise Valley church in National City, California. His wife of 57 years preceded him in death by three weeks. He is survived by one son, Howard; one daughter, Vickie; two sisters, Edna Rose and Diane Larsen; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

**VOYLES, Myldred M. Nowland**—b. Aug. 2, 1924, St. Joseph, Mo.; d. June 28, 1999, San Marcos, Calif. She was a homemaker, mother, and assisted her husband in his ministry for 57 years. She is survived by one son, Howard; one daughter, Vickie; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

**WALKER, Sonja Jackson**—b. July 10, 1941, Lubbock, Tex.; d. June 7, 1999, Thousand Oaks, Calif. She served as a secretary in the Regional Affairs and Communication departments of the Pacific Union Conference. She is survived by two daughters, Saun and Lori.

**WELLMAN, Blanche**—b. Apr. 6, 1913, Knox, Ind.; d. Mar. 10, 1999, Orlando, Fla. She served as a church school treasurer in Knox, Indiana. She is survived by two sons, Clarence and Loren, Jr.; one daughter, Ivy Brooks; six grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

**ASHBAUGH, Kraid**—b. Oct. 28, 1914, Sherwood, Oreg.; d. Oct. 4, 1999, Loma Linda, Calif. He served in the church for 32 years teaching at Mount Ellis Academy, Montana, and Lynwood Academy, California. He served as a missionary in Bolivia for one year. After retirement he was an assistant pastor in the Loma Linda area and volunteered at the Quiet Hour. He is survived by his wife, Alice; one son, Floyd; two daughters, Janet Cosgrove and Carmen Ashbaugh; one sister, Kreta Fae Peers; 12 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

**CARTER, Robert H.**—b. June 17, 1925, Bridgeport, Conn.; d. Sept. 21, 1999, Spring Hill, Fla. He served almost 42 years as a pastor and administrator in the Northeastern Conference

and the Lake Union Conference, where he was president before his retirement. He also served as president of the Uganda Field and the Bermuda Mission. He is survived by his wife, Rose Marie; one son, Kermit; one brother, Eugene; one sister, Elizabeth Cleveland; and two grandchildren.

**CRIDER, Jean Howard**—b. Apr. 3, 1914, Ingersoll, Ont., Canada; d. Oct. 14, 1999, Mesa, Ariz. She served as a nurse for many years and as a nursing instructor at Andrews University until her retirement in 1978. With her minister/educator husband she served in Ohio, Alabama, Florida, California, and Michigan, as well as in the countries of Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon. She is survived by one son, Charles Crider, Jr.; three daughters, Sharon Webb, Dawn Moser, and Carol Crider; 13 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

**ESCANDON, Antonio**—b. Oct. 27, 1929, Barranquilla, Colombia; d. Aug. 6, 1999, Mayagüez, Puerto Rico. He served as a minister, field secretary, and evangelist in three Colombian conferences; Panama, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico, including Antillean College (now Antillean Adventist University). He is survived by his wife, Nila; two sons, Jorge and David; one brother; and three sisters.

**FINDLEY, Warren Brooks**—b. July 20, 1922, Dalworth, Tex.; d. Aug. 1999, Keene, Tex. He served as a pastor in Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, and Texas from 1945 to 1965. After his pastoral service he served his community as a builder and businessman in Massachusetts and Texas. He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Wanda; one son, Warren Brooks Findley II; one daughter, Donna Pike; and three grandchildren.

**MATTHEWS, Ray A.**—b. Aug. 3, 1911, Moncton, N.B., Canada; d. Aug. 14, 1999, Almonte, Ont., Canada. He served for more

than 32 years as a pastor in the Maritimes and Manitoba; as president of the Newfoundland Conference; and as an administrator in the Ontario-Quebec Conference and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. For 40 years he had a radio ministry in the Maritimes. He is survived by his wife, Dora; one son, R. Brian; one daughter, Janette Dooks; one brother, Lawrence; five grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; five stepchildren; seven stepgrandchildren; and seven step-great-grandchildren.

**SMITH, Floda V.**—b. Apr. 26, 1916, Boulder, Colo.; d. June 8, 1999, Missoula, Mont. She taught church school in Oregon for one year, then was head librarian at Union College, Nebraska, from 1941 to 1981. She retired to Salmon, Idaho, where she shared her skills in the church and school.

**MONTEITH, Mary Helen Colby**—b. Jan. 2, 1901, Oakland, Calif.; d. Sept. 19, 1999, Ukiah, Calif. She served on the nursing staff of Pacific Union College from 1934 to 1943. She also worked at other church institutions, including White Memorial Hospital, Loma Linda University, Montemorelos University, and in Medellín, Colombia, for a total of 37 years of service. She is survived by one nephew, Robert Colby, and one niece, Mary Grace Colby.

**ROBERTSON, Elmer Arthur**—b. Apr. 30, 1908, Draper, S. Dak.; d. June 1, 1999, Berrien Springs, Mich. He taught church school in Wyoming, served as dean of boys at Oak Park Academy, Iowa, and was principal of Union Springs Academy, New York. He served as secretary of education in the Greater New York and Minnesota conferences and the Northern and Columbia unions. He is survived by one son, E. Arthur Robertson, Jr.; five grandsons; and five great-grandchildren.

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I certify that my statements above are correct and complete.

Mark Thomas  
Vice President, Marketing  
Review and Herald Publishing Association

## ADVENTIST REVIEW INDEX

Attention Readers: The *Adventist Review* index, which generally appears in the magazine at the end of June and at the end of December, has been discontinued in our print edition. A number of you wrote to say that you thought the index took up too much space, while a few still wanted to receive it. If you are one of those who makes use of our six-month index, you can find it on our website ([www.adventistreview.org](http://www.adventistreview.org)), or we will mail you a copy from our office. To request a copy, please write to:

Index Editor  
*Adventist Review*  
12501 Old Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20904

# An Extreme Beginning

BY SARAH COON

**J**ust what was I thinking? I was standing (using the term loosely) at the top of a hill on a pair of in-line skates that, 10 minutes prior to that moment, had never been on my feet. I was frightened and suddenly realized how I enjoyed having all of my 206 bones intact.

For several years our girls have enjoyed Rollerblading. Being an avid walker, I never felt the need for breakneck speeds, but when the store had skates on sale, Larry and I thought this would be a good opportunity for some enhancement of family time, not to mention a workout for a different set of muscles. Little did I realize just which ones. We bought the blades, modeled them proudly, and put all four of our heads together, planning outings and routes and all the wonderful fun we could have as a bonded family unit.

At night Larry and I envisioned ourselves as in the days of our preteen years, instantly swooshing down driveways, zipping safely around corners, and basically having an inbred instinct toward propulsion on half-inch-wide wheels. It seemed only natural. Then reality struck its cruel blow. I put the blades on in the basement—to practice my form, you understand. Ellen and Mollye were hovering as I tottered across the floor.

Amazing things, these blades. They are able to roll independently of their occupants. I began to pick up speed, but my body was still in first gear while the blades switched into overdrive. I never knew before what it felt like to levitate—but I do now. It lasted about a half second; then gravity reminded me I was mortal. It seemed to take unnecessary pleasure in forcing my back into contact with the concrete floor. My lesson for Monday was over.

Tuesday, a revival of the human spirit and stupidity. “Hey let’s go to the funeral home parking lot (the connection here never really did click in my mind until later). OK. What fun. Ha! Now to show those little whippersnappers a thing or two. They can see just what their mama is made of. “All I want to do is go in a straight direction, nothing fancy,” I declared. And so I did, right to the top of a decep-

tively steep little grade. *What do I do now?* I began to free-roll backward, and so, on instinct, I fell to my unprotected knees. I was all over that parking lot, and it didn’t just happen with me on my feet. I took those “things” off, all the

while expostulating on how *this is not fun*, thereby leaving my family behind to bond without me.

When I look back I realize that there is a modicum of humor in this scenario, but also a spiritual application. Where was my helmet? Where were the soft knee and elbow pads, the wrist protectors? You could say that I set myself up for failure.

Do not we, as Christians, do the same thing? Every morning we get up, hook on our figurative Rollerblades, to then find ourselves being

tripped up and knocked about willy-nilly during the day without the security of our spiritual protective gear. Paul admonishes us to “put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Eph. 6:11). He then continues in verses 13 through 18 with the specific articles of protection available to us through the grace and the immutable power of God.

This year I have made it my project to learn to Rollerblade with skill. But first I will purchase and then put on my protective gear—my shield against physical injury. I know I will still fall. As a Christian, I will undoubtedly have my tumbles, but it won’t hurt nearly as bad with the armor. God’s protection is free for all, having been bought for you and for me by the blood of Jesus.

So I challenge you this year: put on the armor of God as protection for your soul and daily fall down on your unprotected knees. And come spring, if you see a red-topped blur scream past you on the road, it will probably be me—in the “extreme.”

*Sarah Coon is a wife, mother, and registered nurse living in Waynesboro, Virginia.*



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