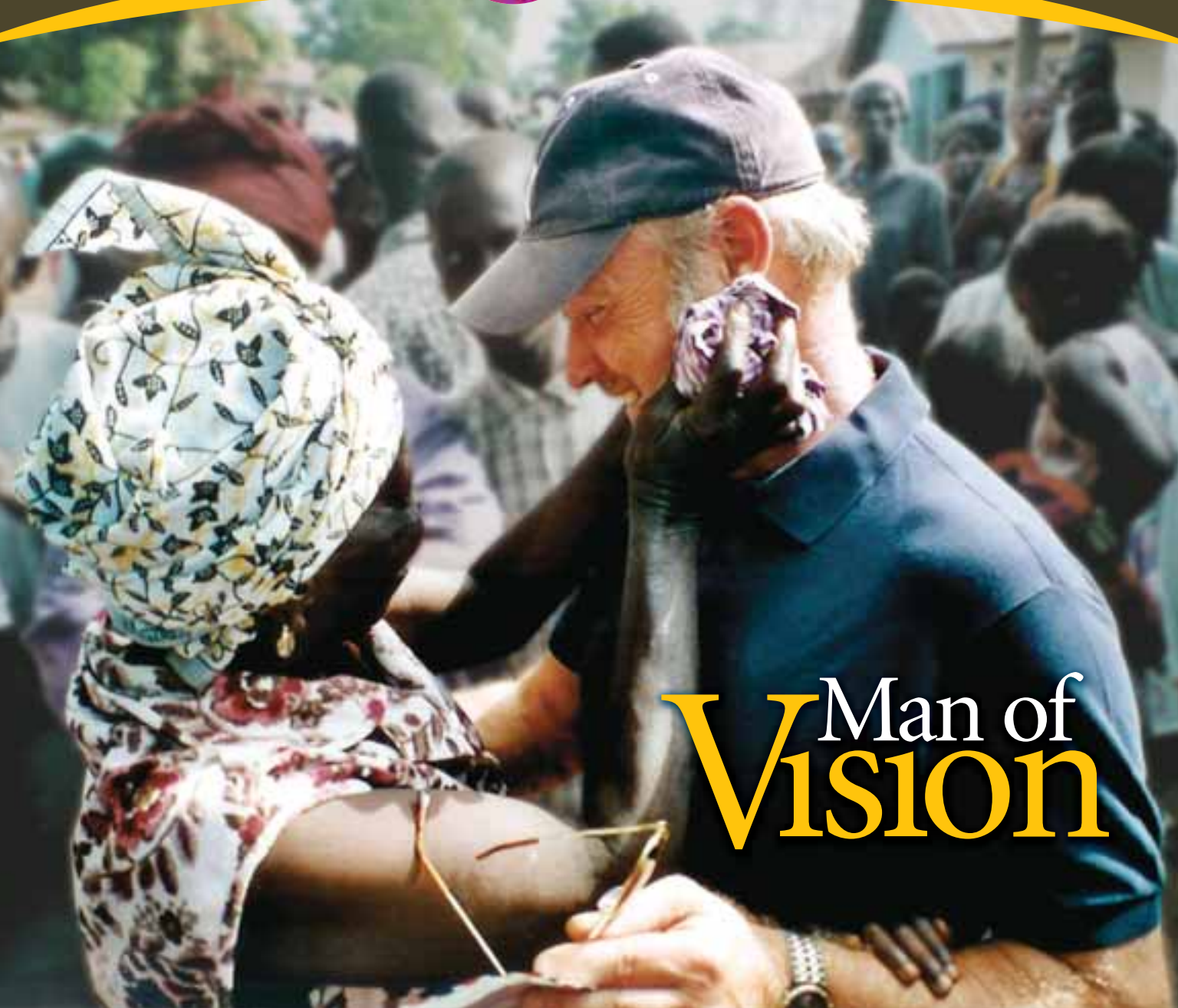


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On the cover: THANKS!: This relief recipient embracing Pfeiffer in spontaneous gratitude represents thousands of others touched by the work of the Swiss-Sierra Leone Development Foundation.



From the EDITOR'S PEN

It wasn't easy to be a follower of Jesus Christ in the early years of Christianity. Even among the slaves—and many Christians were slaves—anyone who confessed Jesus was subject to abuse and scorn.

An inscription that has come to light shows a slave kneeling before a cross. On it is the figure of a man with the head of a donkey. Underneath are words that mock the slave's faith: "Alexamenos adores his lord."

In those days, calling Jesus "Lord" took courage. It even brought risks, because the emperors of Rome demanded not only respect but also worship as divine beings.

Christians, however, bowed to only one Lord—Jesus Christ. They refused to accept any other claim, not even by the emperor. And for many that refusal meant being thrown to the wild beasts or burned at the stake.

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead,

you will be saved," wrote the apostle Paul (Rom. 10:9, NIV). Thus, the earliest baptismal confession was probably: "I believe that Jesus is Lord."

It still costs to call Jesus our Lord, if we really mean it. When Jesus is Lord, He is our master, the boss. He gives us our marching orders. He sets the agenda. It's no longer what we want, but what He tells us to do.

More than 2 billion people in our world call themselves Christians. While only God can read their hearts, the lives of a great many so-called followers of Jesus aren't one bit different from the lives of those who don't claim to be Christians. In fact, a big obstacle to the spread of Christianity is the bad things done by those who are Christians in name only.

In these last days the world needs to see living demonstrations of what it means to follow Jesus. It is waiting for people who are loving and compassionate; who are pure and honest; whose word can be trusted; who love Jesus more than life itself.

People for whom Jesus is truly Lord.

—WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

WORLD REPORT

BRAZIL: More Than 2,000 Pathfinders Participate in Online Camporee

■ One of the most important programs for Pathfinders in many regions throughout the world is the camporee—an event in which Pathfinders demonstrate their skills in various areas, participate in specific tests, strengthen their faith through topical Bible study, and increase their circle of friendships by meeting youth from other clubs. But recently, in São Paulo, Brazil, more than 2,000 youth from 75 different Pathfinder Clubs participated in a new approach to the Pathfinder experience—an "online camporee."

Online Camporee is an innovative project that connects the clubs through

tests developed on computers, and it's been a hit.

"I like to go camping, sleeping in a tent, participating in activities with my friends," says Brenda Raíssa, a 13-year-old member of the Órion Pathfinder Club in Brazil, when describing a typical Pathfinder Camporee experience. "With the Online Camporee the feeling is also neat, because I do the things that I like to do via the computer. I'm used to exchanging ideas with my friends through the Internet, and the camporee had a chat room and interactive competition. It was



RADICAL CHANGES: Online Camporee is a hit with Pathfinders in Brazil.

COURTESY OF THE ADVENTIST CHURCH IN BRAZIL

fun. Everyone enjoyed it."

The Online Camporee test marathon took one and a half hours. Participants divided into units from their respective clubs and, connected via the Internet, answered questions about the Bible, Pathfinder history, general activities, and the annual

WORLD REPORT

Reading Club books, which are distributed by the Brazil Publishing House. About 270 units participated in the activities, which included a chat and “lightning round” questions that had to be answered within a limited time.

“Young people currently spend a large amount of time navigating on the Internet, and our idea is to utilize this tool for the preaching of the gospel,” said Jose R. Veneffrides, Youth Ministries leader of the São Paulo area. “The Online Camporee has this objective. It was wonderful to see thousands of computers interconnected for two or three hours involving young people in wholesome competition and activities that contribute to mental and spiritual development” —*Adventist News Network/AR.*

ENGLAND: Adventists and Muslims Share Perspectives

■ In a joint venture between the Global Center for Adventist-Muslim Relations (GCAMR) in Loma Linda, California, United States; Newbold College in Binfield, England; and the Shia Muslim community in the United Kingdom, Adventists and Muslims met recently to share their perspectives on last-day events. About 50 Adventists from Newbold College and the South England Conference attended the event.

Jerald W. Whitehouse, director of GCAMR, was the main speaker on behalf of the Adventist Church, and Sheikh Bahmanpour, head of the undergraduate and postgraduate departments of Islamic Studies at

Islamic College, located in London, England, was the featured Muslim speaker on behalf of the Islamic Center of England. Other presenters included Oscar Osindo, also of GCAMR, and Sheikh Ali Al Hakim, researcher for the Islamic Center of England.

Many common biblical beliefs and perspectives were discussed, including the second coming of Jesus and how both Adventists and Muslims look forward to His coming and see it as the time when peace and justice will be restored.

“I hope that many more similar events will take place between Adventists and Muslims in the future,” says Whitehouse.

—*Global Center for Adventist-Muslim Relations/AR.*

ENGLAND: Two “Radical Discipleship” Programs Reach Young Adults

Two Hundred Attend First London Live Event

■ An idea that started with a few friends sitting together at lunch eventually developed into an innovative community outreach program called London Live.

London Live was kick-started with a program held in a central London café that featured praise music, spiritual drama, and a motivational message by local Adventist pastor Eddie Hypolite, who challenged the 200 attendees from throughout London to make a commitment to “things that matter” and wage a “war on indifference.” Program organizers reported that several people made life-changing decisions as a result of the event.

For more information, go to www.mylondonlive.com.

A New Way to “Do Church”

■ “Come as You Are,” or CAYA, is a nontraditional way to “do church” developed at Stanborough School, a 200-student Adventist boarding academy in Herts. The program was developed for students who have little church background. CAYA strives to present the gospel message in simple, basic ways through programs such as dramatic monologues, sketches, and group activities. The mission is to help young adults learn to apply gospel principles to their daily lives.

Although adults are currently involved in leading out in the program, plans are being formulated to allow young adults to eventually take over total leadership responsibility—making it a church for teens by teens.

Even though CAYA is still in the experimental stage, church and school leaders say the results so far have been very positive.—*British Union Conference/AR.*



COURTESY OF BUC

TUNING IN: The simple, basic methods used by CAYA to teach the gospel message are capturing the attention of young adults.



MATT VINCENT

COME AND SEE: A London Live team member invites a woman on Oxford Street in London to attend a community outreach event.

Sowing Seeds in Myanmar

By OMAR BOURNE, *summer intern for the Adventist Review/Adventist World and a senior print journalism major at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee, U.S.A.*

His name is Saw Thein. He may not be well known in most parts of the world, but in central Myanmar (formerly Burma), Saw Thein is a familiar name to many living in that region.

After completing the Ministerial Training Course at Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary, Myanmar, in 1983, Thein served as a literature evangelist in the Myanmar Union, where he spread the gospel and “sowed many seeds” for Jesus. In 1994 Thein decided to further his studies at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the Philippines, where he completed his Master of Pastoral Theology degree in 1997.

It was during his three years in the Philippines that Thein became friends with Clyde Morgan and Abner



Dizon, directors of Adventist Frontier Missions in the United States and Philippine Frontier Missions, respectively. With some financial help from his two friends, Thein founded the Myanmar Frontier Missions (MFM) on November 25, 1997. Thein said the primary objective of MFM is to focus on the unentered urban areas of Myanmar with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Beginning of a Mission

By 1998 Thein was working with Pastor Lay Htay, director of the Myanmar Union’s Global Mission Department. After approvals from different missions and

Continued next page

NEWS COMMENTARY

Discovering Our Roots

By FYLVIA FOWLER KLINE, *director of Special projects, Scheer Memorial Hospital in Nepal*; AND JEZANIAH FOWLER KLINE, *who writes from Maryland, United States*

When Tom Robinson, an amateur yet avid genealogist, sent a sample of his DNA to a bioarchaeology firm, the resulting discovery required more than a letter in the mail. Robinson received a personal phone call that informed him that he was a direct descendant of Genghis Khan, the Mongol warrior who conquered vast tracts of Asia and Europe in the thirteenth century.¹

For some, genealogy is just a hobby; for most, it is a pastime that rapidly turns into an addiction. This obsession to trace and document one’s lineage is not a new fad—the Old Testament devotes large portions to genealogy. It is as though human beings are inherently driven to discover their roots. Finding and sifting through the lives of ancestors, in some unfathomable way, brings meaning to the living. Details of family history can heal wounds of

an abandoned childhood, boost the low self-esteem of a dull and boring life, explain a harmful habit, justify attitudes and actions, or simply quell a yearning to answer the question Who am I?

Genealogy helps people understand who they are. Robinson’s connection to Genghis Khan caused him to reflect on personal traits that could be a result of his lineage to this noteworthy world leader (albeit ruthless warrior), such as his supervisory role at work and his ability to ride a horse.

For Christians, however, it takes more than family history to understand the significant slots that we fit into. Whether our research unveils a hero or a villain, who we are and what we are destined to be result not from DNA or genes or history but from a lineage that connects us directly to Jesus Christ. We must remember that we are “all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:26, NLT).² With this knowledge in our hearts, we must live lives worthy of that connection to the cross. We must live like children of God.

¹ http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20060607/ap_on_sc/britain_genghis_khan_s_kin.

² Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, copyright © 1996. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189. All rights reserved.

WORLD REPORT

unions within the church, the General Conference aided Thein's mission with financial funding. Thein also received help from Garwin McNeilus, a supporter of Maranatha Volunteer International, who donated 20 buildings that were used as primary schools in Rakhine State, and 30 buildings that have been transformed into mission-based centers in central Myanmar.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MFM

Above: LEARNING TO SERVE: Students at the Myanmar Frontier Missions training school in Meiktila. **Right:** DOING THE RESEARCH: U Pong Myint, a layperson who works with Myanmar Frontier Missions, researches Buddhist literature to help him better understand the people in the region.



“At the point of time of seeing success, I felt that God so loved Myanmar by opening the doors of evangelism,” he said. “[And] because God so loves our people, we, the MFM, have a great responsibility to implement our tasks.”

Because of the success of MFM, Thein shifted his focus to other projects in central Myanmar, transferring the management of the Rakhine State programs to local missions. This new focus resulted in the establishment of 12 preschools operated by MFM in central Myanmar, and a discipleship training school in the city of Meiktila. Thein is currently raising funds to build an orphanage child-care center there. So far, MFM has grown to 24 volunteers, who serve as preschool teachers, and Thein is enthusiastic about finding more workers.

“We are looking for more evangelists who are willing to serve together with us,” he said.

Making Disciples for Christ

MFM started its discipleship training school in Meiktila in May 2005. As a result of this school and the leadership of Thein and three laypersons—Mr. U Pong Myint, Mr. Kaiji Tatli, and Mr. U Soe Myint—eight Bama Buddhists have been baptized into the Adventist Church so far this year. Part of the training curriculum included a holiday program organized and conducted by Thein and a group of his workers on December 25, 2005. The program was held in a local prison, which housed about 700 prisoners, 24 of whom were Christian. The Adventist group led out in singing songs and studying the Bible, and they and many of the prisoners bonded with one another emotionally.

“We all were weeping with those who were weeping inside the prison,” Myint wrote in a letter to the *Adventist Review*. “Our hearts were filled with sympathy and empathy. We rejoiced with those who rejoiced and wept with those who wept. Oh! a wonderful day had passed together with Jesus!”

Thein and his group have now formed close relationships with the prison officers. Tatli sees this as an opportunity to develop a strong prison ministry in Meiktila.

“We, the MFM, have got something more to do,” he said. “These people were very happy when we visited them. They could easily comprehend the love of God, which they never would have perceived throughout their lives.”

After the prisoners are released, MFM trains them to become disciples of Christ. Tatli tells the story of three teenaged prisoners, Ah Pong, Tang Gun, and La Grawng, who spent two days with the MFM workers after being released from prison. The MFM team studied the Bible with the young men, instructed them on how to develop devotional lives, and helped them get involved in the organization's praise and worship program. Before the boys left to return home, they assured the MFM workers that they would be “faithful and helpful to the Lord, their parents, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” Tatli noted.

Along with prison ministries, Thein's group teaches three discipleship training seminars a year, held in the months of January, May, and September.

Thein, with the support of his workers, plans to continue educating and training people in and around Myanmar for the mission field.

To contact MFM, e-mail myanmar_frontiers@mail2Minister.com, or write Myanmar Frontier Missions, 68, U Wisara Road, P.O. Box 977, Yangon, Myanmar. 

The Fulfillment of Matthew 24:14

By RUBENS S. LESSA

All my life I have thought about the solemn declaration of Jesus in Matthew 24:14: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” When I first heard this Bible verse, I felt that the end of the world was close at hand. In my childish perception, the world was very small, and in no time all of its inhabitants would be reached with the gospel message.

However, as the years went by, I reformulated some of my opinions. I saw the spiritual condition of the church, and realized that the majority of its members do not get involved in missionary activities. On one hand, I believed, and still do, in God’s power. On the other, I felt frustrated with the feeble human response to the challenge of preaching the everlasting gospel “to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Rev. 14:6).

After five years of pastoral ministry in northern Brazil, I was called to serve the church as an editor at the Brazil Publishing House. I read reports of the progress of God’s work around the world, and hope sprang up again in my heart. The church *was* fulfilling its role in the proclamation of the gospel.

But in the early 1980s, when I attended Newbold College, in England, I realized for the first time the impact of secularism on millions of people, especially in Europe. As I participated with my colleagues in an outreach campaign in two British cities—Slough and Reading—I noticed that people lacked interest in spiritual matters. How do you preach the gospel to people who don’t want to hear it? How do you communicate to them the message for these times? My understanding of the great challenge facing the church expanded even more when Borge Schantz, in his missiology classes, spoke about the barriers Christians face when trying to preach the gospel to followers of other world religions.

Today, 25 years later, I think of the immense number of people who live within the so-called 10/40 window—the


countries between 10 degrees and 40 degrees north latitude. Only a small percentage of them are even Christian. Although Adventist World Radio and the courageous missionaries of our church have performed a wonderful work within these areas of difficult penetration, my question still hangs in the air: How will the proclamation of Matthew 24:14 be fulfilled?

If we try to find answers in our own efforts, we will certainly become discouraged. But there is one aspect that warms our hearts: *Jesus promises that the gospel will be preached in all the world.* Therefore, it’s up to us to do two things: (1) allow God to use us in a powerful way as we serve as His witnesses, and (2) believe that He will accomplish His part in this great final task.

The first aspect depends totally on us. But let’s not forget that our positive response is the fruit of exercising a will that has been transformed by God’s grace. Ellen White says, “Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 195). If we fail in fulfilling the mission God has entrusted to us, He

will use other people to carry out His plans.

We don’t know when the end will come. If we focus on the magnitude of the task at hand, we may tend to think that the fulfillment of Matthew 24:14 must be in the very distant future. But we should remember that God is the owner of the harvest field. He will send the outpouring of the latter rain, and as a result every inhabitant of the world will receive the minimal necessary knowledge of the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ.

In the final proclamation of the gospel God will bring down, in no time, the towers of modern Babylon. “Then the end will come.” I believe it, and I want to participate in this heavenly work. How about you? 



Rubens S. Lessa is editor-in-chief of the Brazil Publishing House, and editor of the *Adventist Review*, Brazilian edition.

Adventist Isolationists?

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has a rich heritage of continuing community involvement. Throughout the world thousands of Dorcas Societies work tirelessly for those less well off. Adventist Community Services in many countries is always ready to assist people in times of tragedy and need. Adventist Volunteer Services provides opportunities for church members to share their time and skills in various positions of service. Global Mission pioneers become active in their communities, making friends, helping the people, and sharing the love of Jesus. And of course the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) each year reaches into hundreds of communities with practical humanitarian assistance, regardless of race or creed.

And yet, according to the 2002 Adventist World Survey, more than 70 percent of Adventists are not involved in any form of regular community service. One of the seven major goals of Tell the World is to encourage at least 40 percent of church members, over the next five years, to become involved in their neighborhoods.

Why not look for opportunities in your community to get involved? Many organizations are

always looking for volunteers to help with visiting the elderly, mentoring young people, helping with soup kitchens, and many other projects.



No Time to Be Spectators

By JAN PAULSEN

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’” (Ellen White, The Ministry of Healing, p. 143).

When a church shuts itself off from its community, it also closes its doors on an essential aspect of mission. Too easily we can get caught up in catering to our own spiritual needs, our own comfort, and forget that each local church is in a specific place—in a specific neighborhood—for a purpose. To make a difference.

At the heart of the Tell the World initiative is the concept of “involvement”; of a faith that is active, not passive. A faith that compels us to live what we believe, not merely talk about it; a faith that leads us out of our churches and into our communities.

Now is not the time to be a spectator. Now is not the time to get too comfortable in our church pews. This is a time for every member of the body of Christ—layperson, young person, pastor, and church administrator—to step fully onto the stage, and take up their role as Christ’s hands, Christ’s voice, in a world that needs to hear Him and feel Him.

Many of us believe we can make an impact in our neighborhood only through an organized project. But sometimes the best way is simply to be a friend, taking the time to be with people not of our faith. Often we will find those who are lonely or unsure, who feel their future is fragile.

Have you been touched by Christ’s healing? Then share it with someone! Do you find comfort in the assurance of salvation? Well, don’t keep it to yourself! Have you experienced joy and security in being a part of God’s family? It would be the ultimate selfishness to hoard it away.

Are we ready to do this?

What we value most as believers displays itself best in interaction with other people; it creates hope, joy, security, a sense of purpose, and the promise of an eternal future.

It has been said: “The greatest discovery anyone can make is that somebody loves you!” Well, Christ does, and He wants us to tell others. But words alone will not do.



Jan Paulsen is president of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Serving *Like* Jesus



More than 3,500 Romanian young people have made a commitment to “serve like Jesus did” through a project called YouServe. Teams of young people go into different towns and villages—usually where there are no Seventh-day Adventists, or the church is not well known—and undertake a number of community projects. These can range from painting the town hall, building a house for a needy family, cleaning parks, chopping firewood for the winter, or repairing a school or public building. They visit nearby hospitals and run errands for elderly people in town. In each place they also organize a Kid’s Club, which provides recreation and activities for the children of the town.

The goal of YouServe, say organizers, is to model an approach to service for young people based on the ministry of Jesus.

Wherever they go, the young people attract attention—from both the town leaders and the general community. Comments from townspeople include: “I can’t believe you are doing all this for free”; “I didn’t believe there were young people like you”; and “Jesus has come to our village.”

A Christmas Gift

Twelve years ago husband and wife Sérgio and Marli Azevedo felt called to do something about the problem of poverty in Brazil. Out of this conviction, the Mutirão de Natal project was born. Starting with a Christmas food collection effort in Botafago Adventist Church, Rio de Janeiro, the project has grown to embrace hundreds of Adventist congregations across South America, involve more than 80,000 volunteers, and touch an estimated 1 million people. The effort culminates each year in a Christmas pageant that is broadcast live by satellite from Canada to Argentina.

The goal of Mutirão de Natal is not just to collect food and clothing to distribute to the poor, but to involve Adventist laypeople in personally touching the lives of people in their communities.





Into Australia

Compiled by HANS OLSON,
Office of Adventist Mission

Often referred to as “Down Under,” Australia lies totally in the Southern Hemisphere, between the Indian and South Pacific Oceans. Australia is the sixth largest country in the world and the smallest continent. In the seventeenth century Dutch explorers extensively mapped the northern and western coastlines of Australia, but it wasn’t until 1770 that British explorer Captain James Cook claimed the continent for Great Britain. On January 1, 1901, the British colonies of Australia federated themselves as states to form the Commonwealth of Australia. As a constitutional monarchy it has a parliamentary system of government, but still recognizes the British monarchy as the head of state.

Although Australia was originally a penal colony of Great Britain, most of the population descends from nineteenth- and twentieth-century British and Irish immigrants. Since World War I the population has quadrupled due to aggressive immigration policies: today more than one quarter is foreign-born. The native peoples, known as Aborigines, declined for 150 years, but policies established in the mid-twentieth century have helped reestablish them.

British colonists took advantage of the country’s vast natural resources and developed agricultural and manufacturing industries that quickly established Australia as a world

leader. Its strong economy compares with the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. Australia is an exporter of wheat, barley, sugarcane, fruits, cattle, sheep, and poultry. Industries include mining, industrial and transportation equipment, food processing, chemicals, and steel.

ADVENTIST LIFE: Ellen White arrived in Australia in 1891. Her nine years there had a deep impact on the Church’s early work in the South Pacific. She first received visions of the work in Australia on April 1, 1874, and January 3, 1875. However, it wasn’t until 1885 that Stephen Haskell, J. O. Corliss, M. C. Israel, William Arnold, and Henry Scott, along with their families, left San Francisco harbor to become the first Adventist missionaries in Australia.

By the middle of 1886 the first church, Melbourne Seventh-day Adventist Church, had grown to 90 members. Like most postmodern secular nations today, the church in Australia struggles to grow in membership. Over the past 10 years the Church in Australia has grown by only 8 percent, as compared to the world church’s growth of 66 percent.

- Ellen White contributed to the selection of the site for Avondale College in 1894 and the Sydney Sanitarium (now Sydney Adventist Hospital) in 1903.
- Sydney Adventist Hospital is the largest private hospital in New South Wales, the most populous state in Australia. The church also operates 15 retirement centers throughout the country.
- The first Adventist primary school was established on June 10, 1900, with two teachers and 60 students. Today there are more than 55 primary and secondary schools in Australia.
- In 1927 Pastor David Sibley is believed to have broadcast the first Adventist radio program in Melbourne. In 1956 Faith for Today was the first Adventist television program broadcast in Australia. In 1966 the Adventist Media Centre in Australia began production on Focus on Living films.

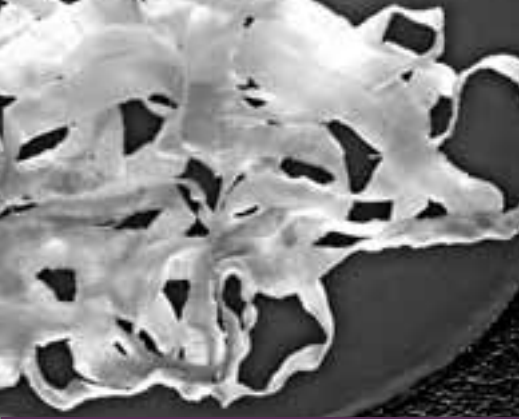


AUSTRALIA

Capital: Canberra
Language: English (official)
Religion: Catholic, 25 percent;
 Anglican, 25 percent;
 Uniting Church,* 10 percent;
 other faiths, 15 percent;
 no affiliation, 25 percent

Population: 20 million
Adventist membership: 52,000
Adventist to population ratio: 1:388

*The Uniting Church in Australia is a union of three churches: the Congregational Union of Australia, the Methodist Church of Australasia, and the Presbyterian Church of Australia.



An adult specimen of the pork tapeworm, *Taenia solium*, from the intestine of a human.

PEGGY GREB, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Parasites are miserable little organisms that live off us. They vary from one-cell organisms, such as malaria and amoeba, to fully developed worms. Some migrate and live in our tissues, where they can damage us severely—especially if they get into our brains. Others are in our bowel, and yet others get into our lymphatics or skin.

The following questions illustrate the global problems with parasites.

My 7-year-old was coughing and vomiting, and a worm came out of his nose. It looked like an earthworm—only about two inches long and pink. Could you advise? I thought worms came from eating meat.

Some worms do come from meat. The pork tapeworm (or *Taenia solium*) and the beef tapeworm (*Taenia saginata*) come from eating meat that is infested with tapeworm cysts. Good, thorough cooking prevents these diseases, but so does being a vegetarian.

Your little boy's worm was not a tapeworm. It was probably an *Ascaris lumbricoides* worm. These worms are the most common of all human worm parasites. More than a billion people have the worm in their intestines. The worm lives about one to two years. The female lays 200,000 eggs a day into the bowel content, which pass out in the stool. If a human eats the eggs by way of unwashed hands, food handling, etc., then a little larva hatches out of the egg. This larva bores into

Worms and other Parasites

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES and PETER N. LANDLESS

the intestinal wall, and travels in the veins to the heart and then the lungs. It then bores from the blood vessels into the air sacs.

The worm climbs the respiratory tubes and is swallowed and restarts the cycle. Such worms can be so abundant they can block the intestine, causing vomiting. Children sometimes vomit up a worm, which could come out the nose. The worm also causes lung inflammation, but this is because the larvae are passing through the lungs.

What an important lesson to us about washing our food—and especially our hands! It's not nice to think we eat eggs from someone else's bowels, but a billion people obviously have done so.

My mother always makes me wear shoes, and half the other kids in our village go barefoot. The weather is warm in Zambia, and I think she is being overprotective. Don't you?

You are living in the tropics. Lucky you! But that warm, humid weather is good for some miserable little organisms that are mean parasites. There are several worms that can live in us and in the soil that we need to be aware of.

One worm that can bore through your skin and infest you is the hookworm. About a quarter of the world's population is affected by hookworms. They burrow through the skin, go to the lungs, then crawl into the respiratory tubes and climb up into the throat, where they are swallowed. Then they hook on to the small intestines and suck blood. These little bloodsuckers lay eggs that are passed

in the feces. That is why latrines are so important, because unless we control human feces, we have no hope of controlling some of these diseases. Of course, it helps to wear shoes! So guess what? Your mom is correct!

We live in a beautiful part of Canada, and a beaver pond is at the bottom of the hill. Our grandchildren visit us, and want to swim in the pond. Is there any danger?

Parasites are organisms that live inside or on another organism and give nothing in return. In fact, some can be very harmful to humans. "Beaver fever"—as the parasite infestation with *Giardia lamblia* is called in Canada—is not a nice illness. Beavers may have giardia and contaminate beaver ponds with it. *Giardia* causes diarrhea, abdominal cramping, and foul-smelling gas. The diarrhea can last a long time (weeks) and cause weight loss.

While we may sound like spoilsports, we have to be wise. Swimming in lakes or rivers in Canada would be much less of a risk than swimming in a beaver pond. ●



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God's SUPREME

By LUKA T. DANIEL

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Our only hope. And the most powerful agent is human society.

This article was first presented as a devotional at the General Conference, October 3, 2005.

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." I'd like to focus on this very familiar text, dividing it into five parts.

1 "For God so loved the world..."

THE GREATEST LOVER!

In Romans 5:8 Paul underlines God's display of His love as follows: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." This means that this love has been showered even on the unlovable. Here God is pictured as the greatest lover, lavishing the greatest love on undeserving recipients.

What supreme love!

2 "He gave His only begotten Son..."

THE GREATEST GIFT!

In Romans 8:32 Paul captures the immeasurable greatness of God's love in the following inquiry: "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" God gave "all things" when He gave His only Son, Jesus

Christ, the greatest gift. In other words, He emptied heaven, as it were, just for us.

What supreme love!

3 "That whoever believes in Him..."

THE GREATEST INVITATION!

This is indeed the greatest invitation! Note what we derive from accepting God's invitation. John 1:12 says: "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."

It is a thing of joy to know that our spiritual adoption is not just a privilege but a right. Since God is King of kings, we automatically become princes and princesses. What is more? This greatest invitation knows no boundaries. It is extended to everyone, irrespective of age or gender, caste or creed, race or nationality. (See Gal. 3:26-28.)

What supreme love!

4 "Should not perish..."

THE GREATEST DELIVERANCE!

God's supreme love guarantees deliverance to all who accept it, no matter how deep in sin they have sunken. We find this guarantee in Hebrews 7:25: "Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

The Greek word *panteles*, translated "uttermost" in the New King James Version, is also translated "completely" in Darby's translation and "perfectly" in *The Amplified Bible*. The word suggests that God's love can fully deliver any sinner who accepts His offer. God's deliverance reached a self-righteous Pharisee



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*Love is to be given away
and not hoarded. It's not genuine love until
it has been shared.*

such as Nicodemus of old, brought eternal hope to a moral wretch such as Mary Magdalene, and lavished abundant pardon to Saul of Tarsus, who in modern terms would be rightly branded a terrorist.

What supreme love!

5 *“But have everlasting life...”*

THE GREATEST POSSESSION!

No normal person will deny that the greatest possession one can have is one's life. Thus, it is amusing to read Satan's reminder in Job 2:4 that “all that a man has he will give for his life.”

I do not think that God needed that lecture from Satan in that unusual dialogue. Rather, I like the way Jesus put this obvious fact in Matthew 16:26, where He queried: “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” If we can go to any length to preserve our temporary life, how much further should we not go to gain eternal life?

The good news, however, is that we do not need to struggle to earn that life. It cannot be bought or sold. God's love has made eternity and immortality available absolutely free of charge to all who accept it.

What supreme love!


Our Response

The Bible itself suggests to us the best way to respond to God's supreme love. First John 4:11 says: “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

Love begets love. Love is to be given away and not hoarded. It's not genuine love until it has been shared. Anyone who does not heed the biblical advice in verse 11 above will be confronted with the clear indictment in verses 20 and 21, as follows: “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.”

If we really loved others, there'd be no hatred, no wars, no child abuse, no spouse abuse, or any such evils. Then peace, respect, and care would abound among us.

In light of the foregoing, we'd do well to repeat John 3:16 often to ourselves (and in public): “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

What supreme love! 

We are living a miracle.

Prior to moving to Canada, my wife, Cindy, and I were not Seventh-day Adventists. We didn't move to Canada because we were looking for the "better land." As a matter of fact we had it fairly good in Jamaica, if all that mattered was having material things. At one point we owned five cars, which we leased for part-time income. We made a lot of money, but that's another story.

agencies, without knowing much about the business. In the West Indies most people don't use travel agencies.

Cindy got an appointment to interview as the result of the first call she made. She interviewed and got the job at Bayview Travel Agency.

Soon afterward I left my job, looking for something else besides sales. While I was looking for a new job we were baptized. About the same time the owner of Cindy's

Living Our Dreams

By
CARL C. CHIN

*Being Adventist has its challenges,
but also its rewards.*

One Thing and Another

When we first arrived in Canada, Winston Bradshaw, Cindy's brother, invited us to services at the Perth Avenue Seventh-day Adventist Church. Since I knew absolutely nothing about Seventh-day Adventists, it shocked me to go to church on Saturday. But since I was meeting Winston for the first time, I thought it best to be friendly and try to make a good first impression.

On our first visit to the church Pastor Earl Parchment, Sr., invited us home for lunch. That led to Bible studies, and that, eventually, led to baptism.

At the time I was working with an investment company. But I didn't really care for selling mutual funds, life insurance, etc. Cindy wanted a job related to the travel industry, but not something that would require her to be away from home for extended periods, such as that of an airline flight attendant.

We looked in the telephone Yellow Pages for travel

travel agency decided to open on Sabbaths.

I'll never forget the night Cindy came home and told me about his decision. She asked what she should do. We had a young baby, and Cindy was our sole source of financial support. After talking and praying about it, we decided she would not work on Sabbaths. The next day she went to work and told her boss of her decision.

He said that since she was his best worker, he would allow her—and her alone—to have Saturdays off, if she worked Friday evenings. That evening we had more prayer and more discussion.

The next day Cindy thanked her boss for his offer, but she told him that we celebrate the Lord's Sabbath from sunset to sunset, and she could not work Friday evenings.

He gave her Sabbaths off and didn't require her to work Friday evenings. She was the only one in the office with that arrangement.



And Another

Cindy's boss was getting older. One day he announced his plans to sell the business. His announcement created a lot of uncertainty in our minds. In private Cindy and I discussed how we'd like to buy the business, but we didn't have the kind of money we needed. When we mentioned it to him, Cindy's boss said he appreciated her hard work and dedication over the years, and he worked out terms that made it possible for us to buy the business.

We acquired the business, convinced that it was God's gift to us.

The first thing we did was close

the office on Sabbaths. The man who sold us the business said it wouldn't work. But now, more than 21 years later, we can look back and see that we have always shown a profit. Granted, we aren't millionaires, but every time the industry takes a downturn, and we begin to worry about our future, God reminds us that He's in control.

The travel industry has changed vastly since Cindy first began working in it. Airlines no longer pay commissions to travel agents. The Internet and Web-based travel companies have brought significant challenges to traditional travel agencies. But still God smiles on us, and we ignore the gloom and doom reflected in our trade magazines. We know who is in control.

Acting on our faith in God is what life is all about. We are children of the only true God. We feel undeniably blessed. He's allowed us to travel the world, provided us with all the material things we need, given us health, and provided us with a worldwide church family. With His great and precious promises for even better things, how can we not love Him? 🍇

Top: TOGETHER: Under God, Cindy and Carl have built up an enterprise that serves not only the general community but also many Adventist leaders in the Toronto metropolitan area, in their national and international travels. **Bottom: WHERE IT'S AT:** Bayview travel is a well-known landmark in the Toronto area. On a typical day Cindy and her daughter, Tanya (inset), have no time to lose as they arrange the itineraries of people traveling all over the world.



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*A German physiotherapist,
hospital in the heart of*

His first mission to Sierra Leone would last only seven months. A longer absence would be too heavily felt at the Clinique La Lignière in Switzerland, where he worked. That visit opened the mind and heart of Harald Pfeiffer to the enormous needs of a population lacking in almost everything.

Sierra Leone is one of the poorest countries in the world. Life expectancy at birth is 40.3 years for males and 45.4 for females; the death rate reaches 20.7 per 1,000 persons; the infant mortality rate is 146.9 per 1,000 live births (2003). In regards to health conditions, there were 339 physicians in 1996 (1 per 13,696 persons); and in 1998, 3,364 hospital beds (1 per 1,250 persons).¹ Other equally staggering statistics suggest widespread destitution.



Without realizing it, Harald, perhaps motivated by Jesus' parable on service in Matthew 25:34-40, had contracted the "African humanitarian bug." Back in safe, rich Switzerland, he could not forget what he'd seen, and he made a decision. He would do whatever he could to help reduce the suffering he'd encountered, beginning with the lepers of Masanga. He felt growing

within him a call to mission that totally changed his life. Yes, he continued to work in Switzerland, but his heart remained in Sierra Leone.

Those Seven Months Changed Him

Born in 1941 at Werder-Havel, a small subdivision of a town close to Berlin (which became part of Eastern Germany after World War II), Harald was the last of four children in a modest Adventist family. His father died as a soldier in 1944. Harald's future looked particularly bleak, and being extremely shy, he fell into bad habits under the influence of peer pressure at an early age.

Informed by fellow church members about her young son's problems, Harald's hardworking mother,



Pietro E. Copiz served as education director of the Euro-Africa Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church before retiring in Gland, Switzerland.

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By PIETRO E. COPIZ

*with no personal means, builds a
Sierra Leone.*



initial studies in West Germany. At first specializing in the treatment of the local soccer and hockey team players, Harald eventually was invited to serve at Clinique La Lignière, the historic Lake Geneva Sanitarium in Gland, owned and operated by the Adventist Church, and soon became head of the Physiotherapy Department.

It was after serving in this position for 20 years that a sabbatical took Harald to the Masanga Leprosy Hospital, while Karin and their two children remained in Gland. (The hospital was owned by the government of Sierra Leone, but operated by the Adventist Church.)

Those seven months at Masanga were to change Harald's life forever.

Left to right: PLEASED: During his tour of the hospital facilities on inauguration day, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah was accompanied by Minister of Health and Sanitation Abator Thomas and Dr. A. B. D. Sesay (right), head physician of MCH. **SETTING THE RULES:** Before the distribution of rice and clothes would begin, Pfeiffer (center) would sit down for a traditional meeting with the village authorities. **IMPORTANT WORK:** As in all hospitals, the surgery wing represents a central focus of operations. Here (inset) surgery takes place under the supervision of one of the visiting Dutch physicians. Another physician (left) records the scene for medical authorities back home.

Margarete, arranged to leave the area, eventually moving to Brunswick, Lower Saxony, in West Germany.

Life in the West did not turn out to be easy, however. Margarete worked as janitor of the local Adventist church building (where she and her son also lived). Harald, still poor, fell again into bad company and resumed his old unhealthful habits. But through a series of events too long to tell here, he eventually began attending church, where he met the lovely Karin Rickmann. They were baptized together in 1961 and married one year later.

After holding down a series of jobs, Harald finally became attracted to physiotherapy as a profession, moving with his wife to Bern, Switzerland, in 1967, following

Doing Something

However dismal the situation he'd found in that African country, what could he as one individual actually do about it?

The most obvious thing for him was to provide medicines, medical equipment, wheelchairs, crutches, bicycles, clothes. By 1992, after a slow start, enough donated material had arrived on the premises of the Gland clinic to ship the first container. Eventually, in order to send these items duty-free, Harald and his helpers established, in 1996, the Swiss-Sierra Leone Development Foundation (SSLDF). The foundation quickly received NGO (non-governmental organization) status in Sierra Leone, having regular contacts with the government through partnership with the Ministry of Health.

As the project became more widely known, help and donations began to flow in—from local church members, from friends, from Harald’s patients. One patient contacted the French Swiss radio, and got them to broadcast some of the project’s specific needs. In addition, the local newspapers kept readers informed about the yearly shipment of materials, whether by containers or by caravan. (Such missions were led by Harald himself during his vacation time, usually around Christmas.)

The shipments of items mentioned above did not include food relief, a constant challenge for Sierra Leone’s undernourished population. The group decided it was cheaper to buy food within the country itself.

Masanga and its lepers remained the first beneficiaries of the help coming from Gland, especially after the hospital was destroyed and closed in 1995 because of civil war. Leprosy and

dream? Should they pursue the project? Harald wasn’t sure. Although some of the foundation members have only humanitarian motivations (with no particular profession of religion), Harald and Karin made a deal with God in October 1996: If God wanted them to go ahead with the project, they should receive the tentative cost of \$100,000 by the end of 1997; otherwise, it meant that it was not part of God’s plans. In which case Harald would just continue with his “normal” humanitarian activities. A small group of friends joined them in praying for God’s answer.

One year went by. Then one day, when Harald came home for lunch, Karin invited him to open a letter that had been delivered in the morning. Inside was a check for \$100,000! A sponsor, whose wife had spent many years in one of the clinic’s rooms at Gland and who used to attend Sabbath worship



Left to right: GIVING THEIR SUPPORT: For the inauguration ceremony, workers built a large pergola with bamboo poles, covered with palm branches. The tropical sun shining down on guests through the cracks created an interesting ambiance. Pfeiffer (inset) was at once solemn and joyful as he addressed the audience. **BEFORE AND AFTER:** The right leg of Mariatu, a 20-year-old victim of elephantiasis, was too far gone to save. SSLDF paid for her surgery in Senegal and for her prosthesis. She is now a happy woman and exceedingly grateful.

polio victims, as well as other poor people, would gather in expectancy of the yearly distribution of rice and clothes by Harald himself, whom many referred to as “the father of Masanga.”

Plans are under way to help also with agricultural programs, in spite of the physical limitations of the people involved.

A Crazy Dream?

Enter Dr. A. B. D. Sesay, an Adventist physician active in SSLDF projects, and one who’d worked at Masanga Hospital. Now living in Makeni, a town just over 100 miles northeast of Freetown (the capital) and with a population of about 120,000, he came up with what appeared to be a crazy proposal. With some patients having to walk three to four days to receive medical help—if, indeed, they could make it that far—he came up with the suggestion that Harald should build a community hospital.

After some time, in anticipation, a piece of land was purchased in the village of Magbenteh, near Makeni.

Harald consulted the SSLDF members. Was it a crazy

services with Karin during her stay, had become aware of the plans for the hospital, and had simply decided to intervene. Upon opening the envelope, Harald burst into tears.

The procedure of making sure every new venture was according to God’s will would be repeated at different steps of the project. Harald and Karin call it the “red thread” of their faith adventure.

The Dream Takes Shape

In the beginning, only a 50-bed “bush hospital” was planned, for \$100,000. But the project evolved into 120 beds in several buildings: administration with radiology, maternity, women, men, children, pharmacy, surgery, physiotherapy (of course!), and mortuary. (A school building was already located on the property.)

The contributions came in rather slowly. An Adventist family from Germany provided the funds for the essential electric generator. Through his example and consistent activity, Harald managed to motivate church members as

well as other persons of goodwill in the community around and beyond. Ultimately, a total of about \$700,000 came in. So far, all equipment received, including an ambulance, have been provided by hospitals, physicians, and private individuals.

The actual construction of what was to become Magbenteh Community Hospital (MCH) began in 2002, periodically interrupted for lack of funds. It was a long struggle, and eventually Harald applied for early retirement so he could personally supervise the work. (It was a sacrifice for him, since he wouldn't receive retirement benefits until September of this year, when he reaches the required age.)

The Official Inauguration

MCH began functioning as soon as some wards had been equipped. And when a sponsor recently provided some much-needed cash, Harald decided that the time had come to officially inaugurate the hospital. This, he felt, would provide momentum and additional motivation for donors, friends, and personnel.


Perhaps a few members of the government would attend the inaugural ceremony, he and his helpers initially hoped. But what actually happened pleasantly surprised them. The president of the country, Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, honored the occasion with his presence at the January 27, 2006, ceremony, accompanied by several government ministers, including Mrs. Abator Thomas, Minister of Health and Sanitation. In his speech President Kabbah heaped praise on Harald's tireless efforts and expressed to him and SSLDF² the appreciation of the government and the people of Sierra Leone.

The Spiritual Dimensions

First of all, it should be noted that a Bible is part of SSLDF's logo, an enlarged reproduction of which appears at the entrance of the hospital. Each morning begins with a devotional, in which everyone participates—personnel and patients. Of the current personnel (2 physicians, 10 nurses, 30 assistant nurses, and 10 other employees for radiology, pharmacy, and maintenance), about half are Adventist. Dr. Sesay serves as head physician. Evangelistic campaigns are anticipated, and health education for both patients and the general community is part of MCH's future. A church building is already planned on the compound, though the funds for it will have to be provided by sources independent of SSLDF.

During a recent meeting at the Gland church, Harald stated that "although the name is Magbenteh Community Hospital, it is an Adventist hospital. On paper, the owner is SSLDF, but God is the ultimate owner. We are just His instruments. This project is pursued to God's glory."

During his official speech at the hospital's inauguration, Harald repeated those sentiments: "I want to ascribe all the glory to God, because He is the founder, the author, and also the finisher of this hospital. ... It is God who runs this hospital."

Even a dreamer endowed with a rich imagination could never have foreseen the extraordinary adventure of faith, commitment, generosity, courage, perseverance, and ultimate success of Harald Pfeiffer, a relatively small but determined man. In what direction will the "red thread" lead in the coming months and years? Only God knows. 

¹ *Britannica Book of the Year*, 2005.

² See: www.statehouse-sl.org/speeches/magben-hosp-jan27.html.

THE Challenges Ahead

BY PIETRO E. COPIZ

Shortly after the inauguration Harald came back to Switzerland to ship three 40-foot containers. When he presented a list of needed items to the Swiss Army, he was offered some of army's surplus materials, some of the items brand-new. The Lausanne university hospital gave 40 hospital beds. The technical elements for the mortuary, which is still in the building stages, were given at the same time by another Swiss hospital. An additional water tower is almost completed.

It's difficult to build a hospital anywhere. But it's even harder to run one. The

costs are enormous. There is no medical insurance in Sierra Leone, and few patients can afford the hospital fees. In addition, MCH's policies present built-in conditions for financial disaster. For example, a recently renovated old hospital, owned by another Christian denomination and located just a few miles away, admits only patients who can pay for the assistance they receive. MCH doesn't refuse anyone. Orphans get free treatment. And the fees for the patients who can pay are about 60 percent lower than those in the neighbor hospital (a typical surgical intervention, fol-

lowed by an average seven-day hospitalization, costs about \$100 at MCH). Ambulatory treatment is also offered.

How then, to meet the financial challenges of running the hospital while continuing the relief operation is a matter of constant study for the Swiss-Sierra Leone Development Foundation (SSLDF) committee. But there are signs of help, such as that coming from a former Dutch patient of Harald's, through whose efforts it's beginning to seem likely that the hospitals of one Dutch city will choose MCH as a pilot training center for some of their physicians. Should this materialize, it would provide running costs not covered by patient fees, for the next five to ten years. MCH will appreciate help from anywhere.

Giving to a God

The story of Ananias and Sapphira is an illustration of the disappointment that occurs when we discover that people are not always what they appear to be. It stands out in the early Christian church narrative as a unique event that raises perhaps as many questions as it answers.

Koinonía

Luke describes the early Christian community using the Greek word *koinonía*, meaning “a fellowship, a brotherhood, a communion, a partnership.” It was a community that gave careful attention to the Hellenist (or Greek) widows and the poor, a community in which the Holy Spirit was accomplishing much in a short time. Against that backdrop, the story of Ananias and Sapphira would seem to fit better in the books of Judges, Kings, or Chronicles.

In the New Testament, and particularly in the book of Acts, we find the quintessential example of true Spirit-led giving. Not just tithes and offerings, but generous philanthropic and planned giving. A true manifestation of a harmonious, committed church community.

Three Basic Stewardship Concepts

1. Relationship

God/humanity, owner/manager, steward—these terms describe the traditional/biblical stewardship motif. However,

Scripture offers us another model: *Jesus Christ, steward of His Father.*

The members of the Trinity relate, decide, and act in harmonious union, as we find in the Creation, for example (“Let Us . . .”).¹ They present to us a model of relational love. Together They are God, and individually They are God.

Scripture identifies Jesus as the very expression of the Father—“the image of the invisible God,” Paul says in Colossians,² who became flesh to incarnate the very essence of the Father.³ Their interdependence reveals Their love, and love presupposes a focus on the other.⁴ As chief steward of His Father, Christ showcased His character to the universe through His sinless life and death on the cross.⁵ Jesus speaks about the Holy Spirit as “another Helper,”⁶ a divine agent who persuades us to be *stewards of the gifts and abilities we have been entrusted with.*⁷

2. Motive

God created us to establish with the human family a relationship of love. God claims us as His possession by virtue of His redemptive work.⁸ Love is the reason for God’s action⁹ and should be the appropriate response of humanity to God’s saving

act.¹⁰ In fact, in God’s administration, love comes before duty and obedience,¹¹ and is the only acceptable reason for giving. For although I bestow all my good to feed the poor and give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.¹²

Fiscal and legal regulations require that the funds we give to any public charity or enterprise be treated with rigor and discipline. And those regulations require the same for the funds we give for tithes, offerings, or as large philanthropic gifts, through trusts or wills. Because of this, many consider giving to God and His cause the same as giving a donation to any public charity of their choice. But in thinking that way, they seem to lose sight of the fact that *giving to God is an act of individual worship*, which strengthens our relationship with God.¹³

3. Character

Giving calls for love, faith, and trust in God. Trust in a God who is able to calm the storm, and in a Lord who is able to bring peace to the heart in the middle of the storm.

Giving requires believing

Stewardship

We are God’s stewards, entrusted by Him with time and opportunities, abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. We are responsible to Him for their proper use. We acknowledge God’s ownership by faithful service to Him and our fellow men, and by returning tithes and giving offerings for the proclamation of His gospel and the support and growth of His church. Stewardship is a privilege given to us by God for nurture in love and the victory over selfishness and covetousness. The steward rejoices in the blessings that come to others as a result of his faithfulness. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15; 1 Chron. 29:14; Haggai 1:3-11; Mal. 3:8-12; 1 Cor. 9:9-14; Matt. 23:23; 2 Cor. 8:1-15; Rom. 15:26, 27.)



We Trust

By JUAN R. PRESTOL

that God's promises are true, and that the giver will not lack anything. Will not lack anything because an infinite, omnipotent God is able to keep His children under His care, causing them not to miss in their daily living the funds they generously give.¹⁴ On the contrary, He has the power to make our resources go beyond the limits of reason.¹⁵

Giving builds character. It calls for the individual to organize their life and finances, and develop habits to facilitate the funds flowing freely and constantly to the place designated to receive them and distribute them. Giving is a test of faithfulness that culminates with the funds being brought to the church.¹⁶ In *Testimonies*, volume 9, page 247, E. G. White counsels: "The portion that God has reserved for Himself is not to be diverted to any other purpose than that which He has specified. Let none feel at liberty to retain their tithe, to use according to their own judgment. They are not to use it for themselves in an emergency, nor to apply it as they see fit, even in what they regard as the Lord's work." (See also Lev. 17:1-9; Deut. 12:1-8; Neh. 10:38; Eph. 3:11.)

Trusting in the Lord prepares us to face tribulation and death, and deepens the sense of eternity in our lives.¹⁷

Disrespect for Leaders

Let us go back to the story of Acts 5. Neither Ananias nor Sapphira

seemed to have regarded leaders highly, or they would not have dared lie in an attempt to deceive them. Peter, however, guided by the Holy Spirit, knew what he needed to say and what were the correct questions to put to them. When they attempted to deceive him, the knowledge of their secret deeds was revealed to him. Peter was not responsible for their deaths, but he was the instrument to deliver to them the judgment rendered by the Holy Spirit.¹⁸

We can only hope that even today God uses humble people like Peter to provide answers in situations when He chooses to manifest His will. It behooves leaders to stay in close communion with the source of wisdom and power to be able to serve as God's mouthpiece, use wisely the resources available to them, and respond responsibly to their constituents and to God.¹⁹

I give to God because He loves me and trusts me with His possessions. I am a steward of Jesus Christ, as He is the chief steward of God the Father. Giving prepares me for other spiritual privileges. It deepens a sense of eternity in my life.

¹ Gen. 1:26; cf. Matt. 3:13-17; 28:18, 19; John 10:14-18; 11:41, 42; 14:8, 9; 16:13-15.

² Col. 1:15-17; cf. John 1:1-3.

³ John 3:16, 17; 5:30; 17:3, 23-26.

⁴ Wim Altink, "Six Lessons From the Trinity," *Adventist World* (NAD edition), October 2005, p. 34.

⁵ Phil. 2:5-11; John 10:17, 18; 1 Cor. 3:21-23.

⁶ John 14:16, 26; Gr. *Parakle'tos* (comforter). Also see 16:13-15; 1 Cor. 3:21-23.

⁷ John 10:27; 17:20-23; Rom. 8:14, 16, 17; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 17-21.

⁸ Isa. 40:25-31; 42:5-7; 43:1-3, 11, 15.

⁹ John 3:16.

¹⁰ Deut. 7:7, 8; 10:12, 13; 30:6, 15, 16, 19, 20; Matt. 22:37-29.

¹¹ John 14:15.

¹² 1 Cor. 13:3.

¹³ See *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 15.

¹⁴ Ps. 1; 91; 125:1; Isa. 26:3, 4; Mal. 3:10, 11; Phil. 4:19; 1 Peter 5:7.

¹⁵ Deut. 29:5.

¹⁶ The process of the planning, budgeting, and giving culminates with bringing the funds to the house of worship, the local congregation, which is the door to God's storehouse (Matt. 6:33; 1 Chron. 28:12; Neh. 10:38, 39; 13:11, 12; 2 Chron. 31:4-12; Mal. 3:10). For a discussion about the storehouse concept refer to Hermes Tavera Bueno, *El Alfoli Equivocad [The Mistaken Storehouse]* (Santo Domingo, Republica Dominicana Instituto de Investigación Bíblica, 2003), Asociación Central Dominicana de los Adventistas del Séptimo Día, and to Angel M. Rodriguez, *Tithing in the New Testament and the Christian Church* (Silver Spring, Md.: Biblical Research Institute, 2003). Also, for information about the use of tithes, offerings, and other gifts, visit www.nadadventist.org, choose Resources, Department, Treasury. The reader may find valuable information on the NAD Stewardship Web site: www.adventiststewardship.org.

¹⁷ Eccl. 3:11.

¹⁸ Refer to the comments on Acts 5:9 in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1980), vol. 6, p. 178.

¹⁹ Acts 6:1-7.



Juan R. Prestol is the treasurer of the North American Division, and an associate treasurer of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in Silver Spring, Maryland.

While it is true that the Lord guides individuals, it is also true that He is leading out a people, not a few separate individuals here and there, one believing this thing, another that. Angels of God are doing the work committed to their trust. The third angel is leading out and purifying a people, and they should move with him unitedly.

Those who were in our work at the beginning are passing away. Only a few of the pioneers of the cause now remain among us. Many of the heavy burdens formerly borne by men of long experience are now falling upon younger men.

This transfer of responsibilities to laborers whose experience is more or less limited is attended with some dangers against which we need to guard. The world is filled with strife for the supremacy. The spirit of pulling away from our fellow laborers, the spirit of disorganization, is in the very air we breathe. By some, all efforts to establish order are regarded as dangerous—as a restriction of personal liberty, and hence to be feared as popery. They declare that they will not take any man's say-so; that they are amenable to no man. I have been instructed that it is Satan's special effort to lead men to feel that God is pleased to have them choose their own course, independent of the counsel of their brethren.

Herein lies a grave danger to the prosperity of our work. We must move discreetly, sensibly, in harmony with the judgment of God-fearing counselors; for in this course alone lies our safety and strength. Otherwise God cannot work with us and by us and for us.

Oh, how Satan would rejoice if he could succeed in his efforts to get in among this people and disorganize the work at a time when thorough organization is essential and will be the greatest power to keep out spurious uprisings and to refute claims not endorsed by the Word of God! We want to hold the lines evenly, that there shall be no breaking down of the system of organization and order that has been built up by wise, careful labor. License must not be given to disorderly elements that desire to control the work at this time.

Some have advanced the thought that as we near the close of time, every child of God will act independently of any religious organization. But I have been instructed by the Lord that in this work there is no such thing as every man's being independent. The stars of heaven are all under law, each influencing the other to do the will of God, yielding their common obedience to the law that controls their action. And in order that the Lord's work may advance healthfully and solidly, His people must draw together.

The above article first appeared in *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pages 488-493. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

The spasmodic, fitful movements of some who claim to be Christians is well represented by the work of strong but untrained horses. When one pulls forward, another pulls back; and at the voice of their master, one plunges ahead, and the other stands immovable. If men will not move in concert in the great and grand work for this time, there will be confusion. It is not a good sign when men refuse to unite with their brethren and prefer to act alone. Instead of isolating themselves, let them draw in harmony with their fellow laborers. Unless they do this, their activity will work at the wrong time and in the wrong way. They will often work counter to that which God would have done, and thus their labor is worse than wasted.

“Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart.” Let us each wait on the Lord, and He will teach us how to labor. He will reveal to us the work that we are best adapted to perform. This will not lead men to start out in an independent spirit, to promulgate new theories. In this time when Satan is seeking to make void the law of God through the exaltation of false science, we need to

Pulling Toget

The Church Needs—and the Times Demand—United Effort

guard most carefully against everything that would tend to lessen our faith and scatter our forces. As laborers together with God, we should be in harmony with the truth, and with our brethren. There should be counsel and cooperation.

Even in the midst of the great deceptions of the last days, when delusive miracles will be performed in the sight of men in behalf of satanic theories, it is our privilege to hide ourselves in Christ Jesus. It is possible for us to seek and to obtain salvation. And in this time of unusual peril, we must learn to stand alone, our faith fixed, not on the word of man, but on the sure promises of God.

Among all God's workers there should be a spirit of unity and harmony. The Lord has especially blessed some with an

experience that has fitted them to be wise counselors. In our several callings there is to be a mutual dependence on one another for assistance. Of this, Peter says:

“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”


But this does not authorize any one man to undertake the work of ordering his brethren arbitrarily to do as he thinks advisable, irrespective of their own personal convictions of duty. Nor are God’s chosen laborers to feel that at every step they must wait to ask some officer in authority whether they may do this or that. While cooperating heartily with their brethren in carrying out general plans that have been laid for the prosecution of the work, they are constantly to look to the God of Israel for personal guidance.

Sometimes a man who has been placed in responsibility as a leader gains the idea that he is in a position of supreme authority, and that all his brethren, before making advance moves, must first come to him for permission

to do that which they feel should be done. Such a man is in a dangerous position. He has lost sight of the work of a true

leader among God’s people. Instead of acting as a wise counselor, he assumes the prerogatives of an exacting ruler. God is dishonored by every such display of authority and self-exaltation. No man standing in his own strength is ever to be mind and judgment for another man whom the Lord is using in His work. No one is to lay down man-made rules and regulations to govern arbitrarily his fellow laborers who have a living experience in the truth.

God calls upon those who have exercised undue authority to take off from His workers every dominating hand. Let everyone to whom has been entrusted sacred responsibilities seek to understand his individual duty before God, and do that duty humbly and faithfully. Let no one regard himself as a master, with controlling power to exercise over his brethren. The principles of the Word of God are to be taught and practiced....

God desires that we shall come into right relation with Him. He desires that every voice shall be sanctified. He wants all there is of us—soul, body, and spirit—to be fully sanctified to do His will. It is time that we begin to know that we are fastened to the Lord Jesus Christ by a living, working faith; it is time for us to lay hold of the help proffered by the Spirit of God, and let our words reveal that we are under divine control. Let us believe in God, and trust in Him; and we shall see His mighty power working among us. 

By ELLEN G. WHITE

her



By W. A. SPICER

“It Was Not of Our Doing”

The Origins of the Remnant Church Testify to God’s Leading

*As Seventh-day Adventism has circled the globe, bringing millions of believers into a worldwide fellowship of truth, the story of God’s leading in the launch of this movement has sometimes been obscured. More than 75 years ago, then General Conference president W. A. Spicer penned a compelling narrative of the origins of Adventism entitled *Certainties of the Advent Movement* (Review and Herald, 1929). A key figure in the church’s “second generation” of leaders, Spicer had personal knowledge of the men and women who led in the early decades, as well as a keen sense of the needs of the church as it moved into the twentieth century. What follows is a remarkable excerpt from that book that we believe will be both informative and faith-building for millions of believers today.—EDITORS.*

The launching of the movement of the prophecy in 1844 was not by any human foresight or devising. It was not that any body of men came together and decided that the time was ripe to start a movement in fulfillment of the prophecy.

The group of Adventist believers in the mountains of New Hampshire [a small northeastern state in the United States] who in 1844 began to keep the commandments of God, had not the remotest idea that they were forming the nucleus of a distinctive people and movement to come. They had found the light of the Sabbath truth, and were walking in the light to save their own souls, expecting soon to see the Lord come in glory.

That group of believers in the western part of the State of New York who, after the disappointment of October 1844, were led to study into the truth regarding the cleansing of the sanctuary, had no thought that they were contributing a key



JAMES AND
ELLEN WHITE



WILLIAM FARNSWORTH

factor to a new movement fulfilling prophecy. They, with others, had expected the coming of the Lord at the close of the long prophetic period of 2300 years. The prophecy had declared, “Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” All had supposed that this meant the coming of Christ to cleanse the church and the earth. But the disappointment came. Then it was that the group of believers in New York were led into the truth about the cleansing of the sanctuary, and knew by the sure word of prophecy that when the hour of the prophetic period came, in 1844, the hour of God’s judgment had indeed come. It was not Christ’s appearing on earth, however, but His appearing before the Ancient of days in the heavenly sanctuary, in that scene described by Daniel the prophet: “The judgment was set, and the books were opened” (Dan. 7:10).

It was a great discovery of truth, so plain that one must wonder why a student of prophecy had not seen it before. But this group to whom the light came, had no thought at the time that they were contributing their part to the movement of the prophecy.

The groups of Adventist believers in Maine and Massachusetts [northeastern states in the United States], among whom appeared the gift of the Spirit of prophecy in those days of 1844 and 1845, had not as yet the light on the Sabbath truth, and they had not the light as to the judgment hour and the meaning of the cleansing of the sanctuary. In general they had decided that there was some error in computing the 2300-year period, and were looking for the appearing of Christ very shortly, with no idea of any special movement to prepare the way.


Then began to come messages to them through the Spirit of prophecy. The first view, given in 1844, described a large work yet to be done—the gathering out of many thousands of believers to be made ready for the coming of the Lord.

Even those who accepted the experience of the youthful agent through whom the Spirit of prophecy spoke, had no idea of another movement to carry a message to the world. So firmly fixed in their minds was the idea that Christ would shortly appear, that they did not understand what was plainly revealed in the first message of the Spirit of prophecy—that a great soul-winning work was yet to be done.

Thus it was that the pioneering factors in the Advent Movement did not themselves understand what they were beginning. They did not meet together and say, “Now the time has come for the movement of the prophecy to begin; let us launch it.” Such an idea was not in the thoughts of any of them.

But the Lord had declared that when the hour of the prophecy should come in 1844, a people keeping the commandments of God would appear, lifting up the Sabbath of the Lord and warning against the mark of the great apostasy. The gift of the Spirit of prophecy would appear in this commandment-keeping “remnant” church. In a worldwide movement a message of reform was to be carried to men with the proclamation, “The hour of His judgment is come.”

As the hour came, the various pioneer factors were led into the light regarding the distinguishing features of the message of the prophecy; and as these various groups were brought together in counsel and study, each contributing its part, they came to understand that here was a message, a great system of truth, the everlasting gospel of Revelation 14:6-14, which they were bound to carry to men. They saw that the time had come, the time of the prophecy. The message of the prophecy had been placed in their hands. Dimly foreseeing even then the full scope of the work, they yet saw that these truths were to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, and they set their faces to carry out the commission which God Himself by His own providence laid upon them.

The Advent Movement did not rise by the oversight and planning of men. The Lord made ready the human agents, and led them into the light, as the time came, in a way that precluded any possible suggestion that a group of men could have met together in the days of 1844 and after, and devised a program to meet the demands of that prophecy of Revelation fourteen. The Lord Himself, who foretold the rise of the movement by the prophets, brought it forth when the hour of the prophecy came. 



JOSEPH BATES



William Ambrose Spicer (1865-1952) was a missionary, editor, and administrator who served the Seventh-day Adventist Church for nearly seven decades. He wrote continuously for the *Review and Herald* (now the *Adventist Review*)

for 50 years, and authored numerous books.

QUESTION: *A friend of mine tells me that all the benefits of Christ's death were given to the human race when He died. This doesn't seem biblical. Is it?*

Such an idea, called by its proponents "legal universal justification," is not biblical. Some Adventists find it attractive and embrace it without critical analysis, but this is a dangerous approach. Truth should not be determined by what seems to make sense, or by what makes us feel good, but by what we find in the Bible. The following points may help you in evaluating that teaching.

1. *The Totality of Scripture:* We must submit any claim of truth to the teachings of Scripture. The fact that a few texts seem to support such teachings is not enough to demonstrate the correctness of their claims. These claims have to be examined within the context of the totality of Scripture in order to clarify how the texts ought to be interpreted. Some people come up with what appears to be an original idea and proceed to look for biblical texts to support it. They bring to the text those ideas and read them into it. Their interpretation may appear to be logical and persuasive, but they are, in fact, imposing their ideas into the text. In evaluating those ideas we need to examine the biblical teaching in full, not just a few texts.

2. *Impact on Other Clear Biblical Teachings:* These views may appear to be innocuous, but we should examine their impact on other teachings of the Bible. If the implications of a new teaching undermine other biblical teachings, there is something wrong with its claims, despite the fact that biblical texts are used to support it. That means the texts being used should be interpreted in a different way.

3. *A Case in Point: The Mediation of Christ:* One example may be enough to illustrate this last point. Since universal legal justification teaches that before the Lord all the sins of the human race have already been forgiven and the

human race has been saved, as a practical matter it leaves no room for the biblical teaching of Christ's high priestly mediation before the Father. According to Paul, the death and resurrection of Christ make possible the mediation of Christ before the Father (Rom. 8:34). Mediation means that human sin and guilt are still relevant before the Lord in heaven and that it is only through Christ's work for us in the presence of the Father that we receive the benefits of His sacrificial death. The fullness of those benefits is granted only to those who believe. Guilt and sin continue to be part of the human experience in the sight of God!

The role of our Mediator before the Father is an indispensable element in the plan of salvation (Heb. 7:25; 9:14). So we must ask, if it is true that in the sight of God the sin of the human race has been forgiven and humanity

has already received the totality of the benefits of His death, why would John write, "My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense— Jesus Christ, the Righteous One" (1 John 2:1, NIV; cf. Acts 2:38)? John went on to suggest that the forgiveness of sin through the effectiveness of the mediation of Christ before the Father is assured because "he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2, NIV).

Christ is the mediator for anyone who wants to approach the Father to receive through Him forgiveness, justification, redemption, reconciliation, etc. The views

you mentioned tend to interpret the mediation of Christ in terms of the cleansing of the human heart from sin. But the doctrine also deals with the work of Christ in heaven and the application of the benefits of His sacrifice to repentant sinners. Proponents of legal universal justification do not seem to be fully aware of its serious doctrinal and theological problems. In some cases they tend to redefine the doctrine of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. ●

Bible-Tested

By
ANGEL MANUEL
RODRÍGUEZ



Angel Manuel Rodríguez is director of the Seventh-day Adventist Biblical Research Institute.



On the Edge of Eternity

By MARK A. FINLEY

Thinking men and women everywhere wonder what the future holds for those who live on this planet. World leaders struggle with overwhelming problems. In many parts of the world political instability leads to the constant threat of war. In other countries hunger, poverty, and diseases such as HIV and AIDS devastate large segments of the population. Natural disasters destroy entire cities. Energy prices are rapidly rising. Crime is out of control. Divorce is common. Pornography stares us in the face. Nations continually build more sophisticated weapons of mass destruction. And we are polluting our atmosphere at frightening levels. What does all this mean about the nearness of our Lord's return?

1. Although no one knows the day or hour of Christ's return, what can we know about the times when Jesus will come? Read the following text and write the answer in your own words.

"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!" (Matt. 24:32, 33).

2. What prediction did Jesus make regarding political conditions before His return? Circle the key words in the following text.

"And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. . . . For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (verses 6, 7).

Our world has always been plagued by wars. In the twentieth century we had World Wars I and II. And in the first few years of the twenty-first century armed conflicts have exploded in many countries in the form of tribal conflicts, sectarian violence, international turmoil, and civil wars.

3. How are today's conflicts different from those that came before? What can humankind do to our planet today that it could not do 100 years ago? Write the phrase that best answers the questions on the lines below.

"The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth" (Rev. 11:18).

Never before in the history of the human race has humankind had the potential, because of nuclear weapons, to destroy life on this planet.



4. At the same time nations arm themselves for war, what will they talk about? Circle the two words that describe the motto of many nations at the end time.

“For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them” (1 Thess. 5:3).

Nations talking about peace and security but arming for war is a clear fulfillment of the apostle Paul’s words.

5. Jesus predicted a cluster or group of signs in the natural world before His return. Read the texts below and list at least five signs in the natural world that point to the Lord’s return.

“And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places” (Matt. 24:7).

“And on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring” (Luke 21:25).

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

6. With what other time in this world’s history does Jesus compare His coming to? Read the text and fill in the blanks below.

“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be (Matt. 24:37).

Jesus compared His coming to _____

7. Why has Jesus given us these signs? Read the text and circle the answer that shows what Jesus desires for your life when He comes.

“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (verse 44).

Beyond knowing and understanding the signs of His coming, Jesus wants us to be ready for His return. He’s coming for *us*. He loves us too much to leave us in this world of sorrow and suffering much longer. Soon He is coming for us. This is the blessed hope of each child of God.



Next month we will continue our study about the signs of Jesus’ return with the lesson **“End-Time Living.”**

LETTERS

Words of Comfort

I was so much delighted to receive this most splendid magazine, *Adventist World*. Thanks for the articles that give me comfort, especially “Lord, Remember Our Children” in the May 2006 issue.

The sweetest texts and articles draw my thoughts to our loving, passionate Savior. I admire the simplicity, but striking assurance in Isaiah 50:2, which says, “Was my arm too short to ransom you? Do I lack the strength to rescue you?” (NIV). His indivisible love and care cannot be compared. His interminable sympathy is an inspiration to love Him more and to follow His beautiful design. I like this touching message of Sister Ellen White from *Mind, Character, and Personality*, which says: “Your child is not your own; you cannot do with her as you like, for she is the property of the Lord” (vol. 1, p. 169). “At all times the mother should endeavor to be quiet, calm, and self-possessed.... That which may be small to the mother is large to them. And a word of direction or caution at the right time will often prove of great value” (*ibid.*, p. 168).

God will be pleased to look down upon the efforts of parents with their abiding closeness of prayer in all walks of toughness.

STARLETTE A. JORDAN
Prilly, Switzerland

Women and Witness

Many thanks for the article “Women and Witness” in the April 2006 *Adventist World*. I am happy that Brian Strayer highlighted the contributions made by Roxie Rice, Mary Priest, and Mary Haskell in forming and shaping the vision of our church’s

most successful evangelistic ministries. How I wish the world leadership would more actively encourage those at the division, union, conference, and local church levels to include more women in our outreach work. The significant membership of the female gender within our world church membership is sadly under-represented. Ella Smith Simmons made a commendable movement in the right direction.

DENNIS E.N. WILSON-COLE
London, England

Would Love to Receive *Adventist World!*

I was glad to receive my first issue of *Adventist World*, and wanted to know how I could continue to get it.

BOAS DONZA
Via e-mail

There are currently two divisions that do not yet receive Adventist World—the Euro-Africa and South American divisions. If you are from a division other than these two, please contact your division office to receive it.

—EDITORS

I read with much awe and interest the October 2005 *Adventist World*. The many methods used in praying really caught my attention and puzzled me. I had not yet grasped that praying can be so enjoyable using many different ways.

I really enjoyed *Adventist World* and was wondering how I could receive monthly copies? I tried in vain to get hold of the November and December 2005 issues as our local conference did not receive them either. Many Adventists around here are asking for it, and as a youth director I decided to write directly to you.

May God richly bless you.

KHUMBULANI DOUGLAS
DubeMidlands, Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe falls under Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division territory, and therefore should be receiving Adventist World. Please contact their offices to secure your free subscription.

—EDITORS

Bolstering Our Faith

We praise the Lord for publishing a great conveyor of our worldwide work. The cover stories have fascinated us so much and helped us to know more about the progress of Adventism in the world. Articles on our fundamental beliefs and the Spirit of Prophecy also served as great pointers in widening our scriptural knowledge, and helped to sharpen our faith and instill a deeply rooted knowledge of Adventism. The Bible study by Mark Finley was also a good review piece for new and old Adventist members.

MEMBERS OF THE HANGING
BRIDGE SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST CHURCH
Bulacan, Philippines

Connecting With Other Believers

I am a Seventh-day Adventist Christian, and I greet you all in the precious name of Jesus Christ our Lord. I am an old man of 75 years. On reading the January 2006 *Adventist World*, I came across a small article [on the Muscat church in Oman] with a picture of East Indians dressed just like us (with saris and long hair) in South Africa. It made my heart so happy.

SAM MOODLEY
Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

LETTERS

Blessed With His Best

The “Hope for Humanity” piece in *Adventist World* (NAD edition, May 2006) was very informative and interesting. I have memories of Harvest Ingathering from way back in the late 1930s and 1940s going up and down the streets with a singing band. The Lord did bless us as the years passed by.

During the past few years my husband and I have had a burden for our own Native Americans. So we have helped them and have wondered what our church was doing, especially for the poorest of these groups in the Southwest—the Navajo, Apache, and Hopi.

I appreciate your writings on the issues of the church. It is like you challenge and then affirm. God bless your work with His best—He always does.

JEANNE HARDAKER

Bridgewater, New Jersey

A Thorough Examination

I find this article more than a little irritating. Is this an Adventist magazine? Is Brother Rodríguez familiar with *The Desire of Ages*? Certainly his exegesis is a thorough study of the Bible, and in addition he seems to be very thorough in examining all possibilities. However, he particularly

avoids the obvious, as if he assumes only the Bible is authoritative for Adventists. The article completely ignores these clear statements: “His brothers, as the sons of Joseph were called, sided with the rabbis” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 86). “All this displeased his brothers. Being older than Jesus, they felt that He should be under their dictation” (*ibid.*, p. 87). “Here were His mother, His brothers and sisters, and all eyes were turned upon Him as He entered the synagogue upon the Sabbath day, and took His place among the worshippers” (*ibid.*, p. 236).

JAMES BURRY

New Dimension, China

Response:

Dear Brother James:

I apologize for causing you some discomfort. I am sorry that for some reason you missed my final conclusion in the last paragraph: The brothers of Jesus were the sons of Joseph and not of Mary. I did not use Ellen G. White because I am expected to provide a biblical answer. It is obvious that the answer she provides in her writings is the same found in the Bible. Based on her prophetic role within the church, we should consider what she

says on this subject to be extremely valuable extra-canonical information.

Blessings,

Angel Manuel Rodríguez

Such Good Things

Many years ago I observed my father reading what then was called *The Review and Herald*. And I would ask him, “What do you get out of that?” “Oh,” he said, “there are such good things in here!”

Little did I know that someday I would be baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Today I receive *Adventist World*. When it arrives, I stop what I am doing and read it from cover to cover.

Oh, how I wish Pop could read it now! It’s much thicker, has stories from all over the world, and has such beautiful, colorful illustrations. I would tell him, “There are such good things in here!”

LEE MAY

California, United States

Letters Policy: Please send your letters to the editor to: letters@adventistworld.org. Letters must be clearly written and to the point, 250-word maximum. Be sure to include the name of the article, the date of publication, and page number with your letter. Also include your name, the town/city, state, and country from which you are writing. Letters will be edited for space and clarity. Not all letters submitted will be published.

THE PLACE OF PRAYER

I have already obtained admission to go to graduate school in England, but the lack of funds, including school fees, doesn’t allow me to go there. I have been struggling to solve it, but my financial situation is still very weak. I have learned that with God everything is possible. I believe that my Lord will strengthen me and let someone help me.

—SUN-MIN, *South Korea*

I need prayer, as I wish to join a technical, nursing, or Bible college, and am in need of the Holy Spirit to uplift my sense of well-being.

—OWEN, *Malawi*

Please pray for my husband. He does not attend church, nor does he read any Bible or other religious materials. Also pray for my family so that the Holy Spirit will bring us closer to God.

—VICTORIA, *Malaysia*

My wife and I have been praying for a better business to enable us to support our children in their pursuit of higher education. Pray that God will supply the means. Also, please pray for Leo, who is suffering from a stroke that seems to be incurable, and for Edwin, who suffered a broken leg in an auto accident.

—NKEDE, *United Kingdom*



NAVEEN SAXENA

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

AWR Listeners From

India

Blessed by This Ministry

Pastor Thambiraj tells Adventist World Radio about India's special listeners.

Blessed Through the Airwaves

I received a telephone call from Jai Jawan Nagar, close to the airport area of Pune. On the other side was a male voice calling me over to meet a group of people. I wondered what sort of people they could be and asked myself what they expected from me.

I decided to meet them. According to plans, I arrived at 7:30 p.m. A group of about 40 people were waiting under the basement car park of a building. The person who called me introduced the group and stated that they were rag pickers who were attracted by Adventist World Radio's (AWR) broadcasts. Through their rag picking, they earned some income for their survival. As soon as they returned from their activities at 8:30 p.m., they got together in small groups in front of the radio at various spots and listened to the broadcast.

Over several months, more listeners were added. Those small listener groups started to form small prayer groups, which contacted one another for spiritual fellowship. They formed a small congregation and started to worship together twice a week. They came together on Thursday and Saturday evenings to worship and encourage one another with the messages that they were hearing from our AWR broadcast. I was so glad and privileged to meet AWR listeners among them.

Planting Powerful Seeds

The pastor of the church at Thiruninravur, Chennai, recently visited our Adventist Media Centre in India and conveyed greetings sent by listeners. There are more than 70 families residing around that locality who are visually challenged. Some of them are educated up to the degree level. Most of them earn their daily livelihood by selling toys in the metro trains, and a few are employed in the government sector.

They found that the radio is the most easily accessible mass media tool, and ideal to operate for news items or entertainment. Therefore, some of our church members who are visually challenged give priority to radio over any other mass media outlet. AWR broadcasts meet their needs and introduce the Savior to them.

Some of these listeners tune in not only for their own spiritual growth, but also share the messages with others who are similarly challenged. As a result, our listener audience is increasing, and some listeners describe Adventist World Radio as a spiritual eye-opener to those who are physically blind.

Pastor Thambiraj says: "Let us not treat the ministry of Adventist World Radio lightly. It does its ministry silently but lays seeds powerfully in the hearts of the people."

For more information, write to Adventist World Radio, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-6600 U.S.A.; visit www.awr.org; or phone 800-337-4297.

"Behold, I come quickly..."

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ, uniting Seventh-day Adventists everywhere in beliefs, mission, life, and hope.

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The
PEOPLE'S
 PLACE

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Fourteen-year-old Anthony Quimbo Esguerra is new to the Adventist family, but he is already playing an active role in spreading the good news of the gospel. Just recently baptized on March



4, 2006, in Palayan City, Philippines, Esguerra is a student literature evangelist who distributes literature to different places including churches, offices, and banks. He is also an avid speaker at worship services in his school and different churches in the Philippines. Esguerra is a junior student at the Bongabon Essential School Seventh-day

Adventist Company and attends the Bongabon Essential Seventh-day Adventist Company Church located in the Central Luzon Conference in the Southern Asia-Pacific Division.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



JOHN LOOR, JR., MONTANA

ADVENTIST LIFE

At a weekend Pathfinder retreat one of the progressive classwork requirements was to study ceremonies that were given by God to the children of Israel. While we were reviewing what we had discussed in a larger group, a question was asked as to whether the church practices any ceremonies today. Hands went up, and answers of baptism and Communion were quickly given. But the answer that brought the smiles was “potluck”!

—Duane Bennett, Rockland, Wisconsin

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Courage is not the absence of fear. It is moving on in spite of fear.”

—Pastor Samuel Thomas, Jr., during a sermon at the Orchard Park Seventh-day Adventist Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA).