

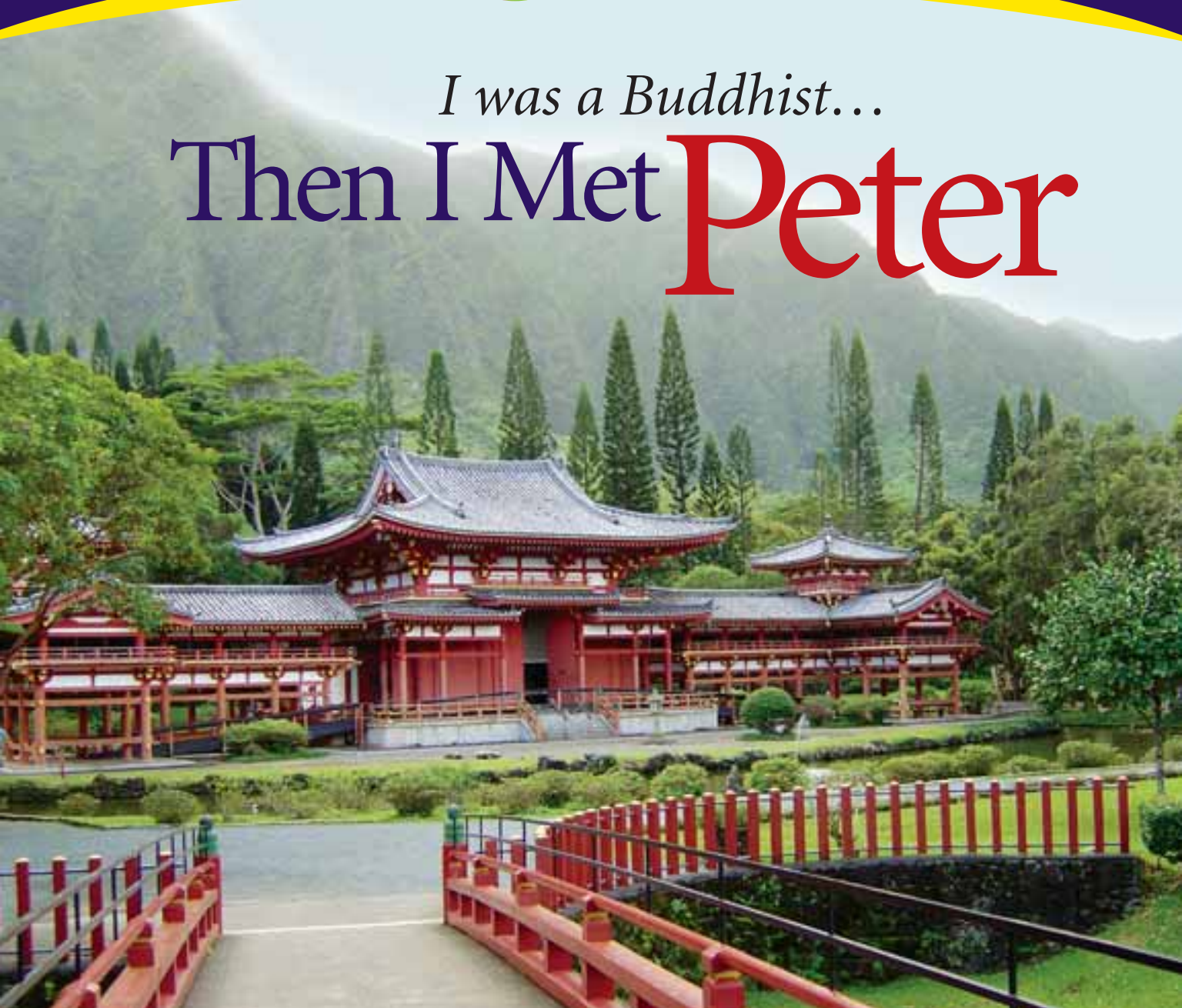
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ON THE COVER: This Buddhist temple, in the Valley of the Temples on the Island of Oahu, Hawaii (USA) is a replica of the 900-year-old Byodo-In temple located in Uji, Japan.



From the EDITOR'S PEN

For Those Who Lead

“Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct” (Hebrews 13:7).

It's the most common of human signs, and in the church, one of the most troubling.

We shrug our shoulders, roll our eyes, and say with gentle sarcasm, “But what can you expect of leadership?” It's a line good for a momentary laugh as we forge a fleeting bond with some other believer by diminishing those who have been called to lead God's church. “We,” who pretend to be the great unvoiced, unheard congregation, describe ourselves as helpless to overcome the faults and foibles in those we have elected.

Whether the leaders we are criticizing are in our local congregation, our region, or the General Conference, we find it tempting to catalog their mistakes and inefficiencies as though we had no more responsibility toward them than

we do toward the mail carrier or the market owner. Indeed, in many instances, we speak more kindly of the nonbelievers, hoping they may yet turn to faith. In some way, a leader has failed to meet our expectations, and in our disappointment, we turn to the closest words at hand—usual words that someone once used about us. “Arrogant,” we say, or “foolish”; “wasteful,” or “unapproachable.” Our words become the painful and costly leveler of the church by which we “bring our leaders down to earth”—and thus reduce our claim upon the promises of heaven.

There is another way, one filled with grace and inner quietness. The love of Christ can train our hearts and tongues to speak well of even things we don't fully understand, to be patient until we know more than our fractional share of truth. The apostle urged us to “remember those who rule over you”—not because they are in danger of being forgotten as leaders, but because believers are in danger of forgetting to pray for them. Christ can set His church straight and make all things right when He finds humble hearts in both followers and leaders.

This month, remember to pray for the leaders who serve and speak the Word of God to you. Your following of Jesus will be all the better for it.

—BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

INDONESIA: Bomb Deactivated Outside Adventist Church

■ Adventists in Poso, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, alerted police after discovering a bomb at their church entrance on January 13. An explosives specialist deactivated the bomb, which police say could have been detonated by a cellular phone. Officials added that leads point to a Muslim extremist group.

The Poso Adventist Church, the second one to be built, has a membership of 100, down significantly from the 200 original members when the feud between Muslims and



Christians flared up six years ago. The previous Poso church was among four other Adventist churches in the area burned down by extremists in the past few years. Church leaders in the area say the attacks do not specifically target Adventist churches, but Christian churches in general.

“Members of that church are

again on red alert,” said Erenst Sahensolar, president of the Adventist Church in Central Sulawesi. “It is not safe and easy now worshipping God in any place.”

“This [isn't] the only bomb incident that happened [in that area],” added Moldy Mambu, associate treasurer of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division. Five

WORLD REPORT

years ago a bomb exploded near the Poso Adventist Church, timed to strike Adventists at the height of the New Year's celebration. The terrorists weren't aware that the Adventist believers had already observed the New Year at sunset, the biblical mark of a new day, Mambu explained.

Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country; only 8 percent of the people are Christian. More than 6,500 Adventists worship in 41 churches in the Central Sulawesi region.—*Adventist News Dispatch/ANN/AR.*

ZAMBIA: Fifteen Baptized in Remote District

■ Some 200 people attended evangelistic meetings and 15 were baptized in Zambia's remote Chisomo Valley this past summer.

Located in the Serenje District, Chisomo Valley presents transportation challenges to those wishing to visit the area. Motor vehicles are scarce, so most people travel there on foot, covering a distance of about 90 kilometers (56 miles) from the nearest towns and villages. Residents of Chisomo walk three days one way to sell reed mats, chickens, and other items to earn a living. Because of extremes in weather that cause flooding and drought, food production is low, so hunger is rampant.

The Adventist Church had long been planning ways to take the gospel message to Chisomo, but many barriers deterred those efforts. Then David Hanzala, a worker for the area's Department of Health, district pastor Richard Chiluya, and retired pastor Edward Tuyu Mpolamaunga decided to meet the challenge.

Organizing a series of meetings using the theme "The Bible Speaks," Hanzala, Chiluya, and Mpolamaunga



HEADQUARTERS: Zambia Union Conference office.

COURTESY OF ZAMBIA UNION

visited the local tribal chief, who welcomed the meetings to the area. Word of the series spread, and some 200 people came to the first meeting.

"The attendance was impressive, and the number kept increasing," said Chiluya.

By the end of the series, 15 people were baptized in the nearby Lukusashi River.—*Zambia Union/AR.*

VIETNAM: State Grants Adventists Certificate of Religious Practice

■ After more than 30 years of seeking official recognition of religious activity, Adventists in Vietnam are now worshipping freely.

In late December 2006, Vietnam's Committee for Religious Affairs officially granted certificates of religious practice to Adventists, Baptists, and other religious groups, reports Vietnam's *Thanh Nien News*. The certification guarantees religious groups the right to favorable conditions for religious practice, freedom to print and distribute literature, the right to build and upgrade places of worship, and the legal leeway to organize meetings, seminars, and other religious events.

Adventists leaders in Vietnam say they hope the certification will signal a new era of religious liberty for the country's approximately 13,000 Adventists worshipping in seven churches and some 100 small groups.—*Adventist News Network/AR.*

WALES: New Company Organized in West Wales

■ Adventist church leaders and local members in Pontargothi, Wales, United Kingdom, officially organized a new church company on January 20. Some 27 people were present for the event, and Welsh Mission president John C. Surridge and district pastor Michael Logan led out in the service.

The number of Adventist members in this isolated region of western Wales has steadily increased during the past 15 years. A local facility that seats more than 100 people, Pontargothi Memorial Hall, was rented to accommodate the growing congregation.

Although Pontargothi is centrally located for the members, for some it still means a two-hour journey to attend church.

"It's not too bad," says Libby Goodman, who serves as treasurer for the company. "Unless you get behind traffic, that is; then it can take a bit longer."

Elisabeth Williams, leader of the newly formed group, says she is grateful for how the Lord has blessed the new company, and looks forward to when it will become a "fully-fledged church."—*British Union Conference Communication Department/AR.*



NEW PONTARGOTHI COMPANY: Core members of the new group stand outside the hall.

JOHN SURRIDGE, WELSH MISSION PRESIDENT

WORLD REPORT

South Pacific Pathfinders Gather for Division's First Camporee

By MELODY TAN, public relations officer for the South Pacific Division

More than 6,000 Pathfinders throughout the South Pacific gathered in Australia to attend the first-ever South Pacific Division (SPD) Pathfinder Camporee in early January. An initiative of the division's Adventist Youth Ministries, the camporee took place at the Seventh-day Adventist Convention Centre in Stuarts Point, New South Wales, Australia.

"This is the first time we have organized something on such a grand scale for our Pathfinders," says Gilbert R. Cangy, director of SPD's Adventist Youth Ministries. "And it [was] an unforgettable experience that will remain in the memories of all the campers for a long time to come."

Themed "The Twelfth Gate," camporee activities were based on heaven. Pathfinders entered "heaven" when they first crossed the gates into the campground, and a group of "angels" welcomed them. They were divided into 10 separate sub-camps identified by gems found in heaven, and campground streets took on names such as Redemption's Walk and Love Street.

Pathfinders participated in a variety of activities on the beach, in the lake, and in bush areas. These included obstacle courses and games constructed largely on site by volunteers and youth workers during a grueling two weeks.

"My favourite activity was The Lost Gate because it allowed me to work with other people," said Pathfinder Michael Tunai from Samoa.

The Lost Gate, an obstacle course, was the biggest construction project completed for the camporee. It consisted of six circuits and 80 different elements.

The centerpiece of the camporee was the evening program, during which actors treated Pathfinders to a drama titled *Threshold*. Based on an original script written by Australian Union Conference Youth Ministries director Anthony W. Knight, the six-act drama was performed on a split-level stage 16 meters (52 feet) high and 30 meters (98 feet) wide. *Threshold* focused on both the heavenly and earthly realms, depicting five children who met an angel sent to minister to them at a playground.



Top to bottom: KEYNOTE SPEAKER: José V. Rojas, director of Adventist Volunteer Ministries in North America, was the evening worship speaker. OPENING CEREMONY: Some 6,000 Pathfinders attended the first camporee to be held in the South Pacific Division. SETTING THE STAGE: A six-act drama was performed on a split-level stage 16 meters (52 feet) high and 30 meters (98 feet) wide. STAYING THE COURSE: A Pathfinder cautiously treads through one of the many obstacles of The Lost Gate.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION

During the drama's finale on Sabbath evening, 6,000 Pathfinders crossed the threshold on stage through The Twelfth Gate, and were greeted by angels and "Jesus Himself."

During the closing ceremony, keynote speaker José V. Rojas, director of Adventist Volunteer Ministries in North America, urged Pathfinders to "testify to everyone what you have learned and seen at this camporee."

"My favorite part of the camporee was attending the worship at night," said Fern Napwatt of the Portoroki Pathfinder Club in Vanuatu. "Pastor Rojas was funny and spoke straight to the point. I have learned about Jesus more and gotten closer to Him at this camporee."

Fourteen countries throughout the South Pacific were represented at the camporee, including Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands.

To read more about the South Pacific Camporee, visit www.12thgate.org.au.

WORLD REPORT

Restoring Sight to the Blind

By DELBERT B. PEARMAN,
treasurer of the Ethiopian Union



HEAD OF THE EYE CLINIC: Guillaume Mulenga

COURTESY OF ETHIOPIAN UNION

Pausing a moment before applying the surgical instrument to his patient, 39-year-old Guillaume Mulenga bows his head in prayer, asking God to bless the eye procedure he is about to perform. Assistants stand nearby, ready to aid Mulenga at a moment's notice. The delicate operation to remove an older man's cataracts begins, and by the next day the patient exclaims, "I can see! I can see again."

Cataract and other eye surgeries are commonplace in many regions in the world, but in Djibouti, a small country of some 800,000 people in the Horn of eastern Africa, qualified doctors and other health professionals are scarce. The poor are especially vulnerable to disease and other health risks because of the lack of quality care available to them. But it is here, in the poorest area of Djibouti's capital, the city of Djibouti, that the Adventist Church has established a health clinic that offers eye and dental care. It also operates an English language school within the same facility.

What makes the eye clinic here different from most is that Mulenga, who has successfully performed hundreds of surgical procedures during

the past 10 years, is not actually a trained surgeon—but an ophthalmologist nurse who is licensed in Djibouti to perform eye surgeries. Many say he "has the gift of healing" and that "God is using him" in the absence of specialized medical doctors. His assistants have no education past the secondary level, but Mulenga has trained them. And his surgical success rate has been exemplary.


In 1994 the local government provided land in the poorest region of the city on which the Adventist Church could open a health clinic. The government is now urging the church to launch another clinic in an affluent section of the community. They have offered to provide the land for free.

During a recent visit to the Djibouti clinic, I scrubbed up, donned a hospital gown, and observed Mulenga at work. It was a life-changing experience to see patients who had been completely blind for two or more years being led into the operating theater, and then rejoicing the next day because they are able to see again.

The guard who monitors the clients crowding the facility and

keeps a watchful eye on the premises was once himself totally blind until Mulenga operated on him. Now he expresses his gratitude by serving in a security position at the clinic.

Mulenga, a Congolese, and his team have frequently been featured on national television transporting equipment to refugee camps and other poverty-stricken areas to provide free surgeries and other treatments. He allocates one or two days a week for such outreach activities. As the son of a pastor, Mulenga also serves as head elder of the Djiboutian Adventist congregation. He and his wife, Alphonize, have three young children.

Mulenga says his greatest desire is to attend medical school to become a fully qualified ophthalmologist, but with a monthly income of less than US\$500 and a family to support, his chances of realizing that dream appear bleak. But he trusts God for his future, and in the meantime he helps those he can and continues to make a difference in the lives of the poor in Djibouti. 



CLIVE SLADE



WINDOW



MARJA FLICK-BUIJS

Considered by many to be the birthplace of civilization, Egypt was one of the most sophisticated cultures of the ancient world. For more than 2,000 years Egyptians ruled the Nile River Valley, making theirs one of the world's longest-lived dynasties. Egypt is home to some of history's greatest marvels, including the pyramids and Great Sphinx of Giza and the Valley of the Kings.

Egypt is situated along the Mediterranean Sea on the northeast corner of Africa, and extends to the Sinai Peninsula. Egypt's strategic location, along with control of the Suez Canal, the 100-mile waterway between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, affords it control of land and water traffic between two continents.

Known in the ancient world as "black land" for the black, rich soil deposited by the annual flooding of the Nile River, Egypt has survived because of the river. Today nearly 99 percent of Egyptians live along the Nile Valley Delta or the Suez Canal, an area of only 4 percent of the country's geography. Most of the rest of the nation is dry, desolate desert.

Egypt was a cultural and intellectual center of the ancient world. Egyptian hieroglyphics exhibit early forms of writing and mathematics. During the Hellenistic era, Jewish scholars in Alexandria produced the Greek translation of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint. Alexandrian astronomers developed the 365-day calendar used today.

Most Egyptians consider themselves Arabs. However over the centuries other nations have invaded Egypt, and their peoples have intermarried. Many Egyptians are able to trace their roots back to Persians, Turks, Ethiopians, Greeks, and Europeans.

According to tradition, Mark, the writer of the Gospel that bears his name, brought Christianity to the country in the first century A.D. The Coptic Orthodox Christian Church, also known as the Church of Egypt, survives to this day, practiced by 9 percent of the population. Nearly 50 million people worldwide consider themselves Coptic Christians. In A.D. 639 Islam came to Egypt, carried by invading Sunni Arabs. Today

Into Egypt

90 percent of Egyptians are Muslim, mostly Sunni. In 1877 a group of Italian Adventists living in Naples sent the French paper *Signes des Temps* (*Signs of the Times*) to some Italian friends in Alexandria. This became the first Adventist contact in the Middle East. A year later Romualdo Bartola, a self-supporting missionary and traveling businessman, visited Alexandria. His efforts resulted in seven baptisms, and a small Adventist group started meeting. The church grew slowly. At the beginning of 1912 there were only 18 known Adventists in Egypt. But later that year George Keough, an Irish missionary, learned that a group of 24 Sabbathkeepers were worshipping in southern Egypt. He visited them and organized the first Adventist Church made up of Egyptians. Other congregations at the time were made up mostly of Europeans living in Egypt. Today some 800 Adventists live in Egypt. Although Adventists are free to practice their faith in Egypt, local laws make it hard for the church to grow.

Nile Union Academy, located on the outskirts of Cairo, will receive part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the second quarter of 2007 to develop a vocational school program and build a new student center. More than half the students at this school are not Adventists. Nile Union Academy is an investment in Egypt's future. Please pray for the work in Egypt.

Compiled by Hans Olson, Office of Adventist Mission

EGYPT	
Capital	Cairo
Languages	Arabic (official); English and French widely understood
Religion	Muslim (mostly Sunni) 90%; Coptic Christian 9%; other Christian 1%
Population	74 million
Adventist membership	828
Adventist to population ratio	1:89,304



DIEGO ORTUEGA

WORLD VISTA

Women *and* Minis

A Good Comb

The church's president shares his views on women in ministry with Adventist World assistant editor Kimberly Luste Maran.



BETTINA KRAUSE



Left: Women are engaged in many ministries in Angola, including community service, evangelism, and outreach. Here, a ministry team in Luanda participate in a rally welcoming Pastor Paulsen. **Right:** During the day, Onilza Abreu Gerth is preoccupied with judgments and decisions that impact the civic life of her city. One evening each week the scene changes as the home of her mother turns into a church and Judge Gerth shares her faith, instructs in the precepts of Christianity, and distributes kernels of hope.



Maran: Many estimates suggest that 70 percent of the membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is female. Do you think the world church adequately acknowledges the contributions of women in its overall mission?

Paulsen: No, I don't think so. The work of women in our church is more extensive in some cultures and in some parts of our world than in others. It may surprise many, but in Africa, for example, there is a huge engagement of women in ministry. They run evangelistic series and are publicly engaged on a large scale—in community services, in the teaching profession, and in proclaiming the Word.

Would you say the traditional roles assigned to women have at times relegated them to bystander status? And if so, what would you see as a more egalitarian approach in church?

You know, none of us can step fully out of our culture. And it isn't very helpful for me, from a Western perspective, to look at another culture and to prescribe how they should address these issues. In the church, everyone has to ask himself or herself, "How can I most faithfully serve God where I am? How can that best be expressed here?"

I accept there are some cultures in which women are not trusted with the same responsibilities as in other parts of the world. It's a cultural issue, and it will also affect the church. But I think the church should be a mover—even in these places—to lift the value of women. The church can and should be at the forefront of encouraging society to trust women with greater responsibilities and leadership.

That leads me to the next question. Should the church consider some method to ensure that women are more proportionally represented in church structure and leadership in ministry?

I understand what you are asking, and I want to remind you that some of these processes are slow. As you know, at the 2005 General Conference session in St. Louis we brought three women into officer positions here at the General Conference. It was done deliberately, with the intention to make a statement. But at the same time we made sure that the ones who were brought in weren't merely symbolic individuals. They are professionals who are every bit as competent as a male counterpart would be for the tasks they are entrusted with.

On the boards of our educational and health care institutions we have, generally speaking, a good representation of women. Where we are very short of female representation is on boards and committees of the church structures: the General Conference Executive Committee and the conference and division executive committees.

Improvement will come only if we are proactive. It's not always easy to find available individuals—women who have had some experience in a leadership role in a decision-making forum of the church and who also have the time available to attend meetings. I have said many times to my colleagues in leadership around the world that we have to make a special effort. There are women, probably a considerable number of them, who are saying, "Look, I'm a professional person. I have my work, but I also want to do this. I'm prepared to make that personal sacrifice in order to be involved in a forum

try ination



RAJMUND DABROWSKI

WORLD VISTA

that makes key decisions for the church.” We need to be focused about finding these people. It’s not going to happen by itself.

Your recent conversation with women—“Time to Talk”—which was broadcast on the Hope Channel, has prompted a number of responses from our readers. One reader from Nigeria, for example, is excited about the possibilities opening up in his church for women in ministry.

I’m delighted when I hear that mind-sets are changing and new opportunities are opening up for women. Many years ago while I was president of Newbold College, a woman—a staff member—preached at the college church. She preached a wonderful message. One of the men who shook my hand at the door as I went out, said, “How could you sit there and let her, as a woman, preach?”

This mind-set is changing in our church. Women are gifted and have capabilities that should flow into the various ministries of the church. Let us discover how the Spirit is leading them.

A second letter describes an experience that saddened our reader. He recounts a recent decision at his church in North America to exclude women from saying prayer during the worship service.

That is unacceptable. It does not reflect the view held by the wider church. You don’t have to be elected to a position to lead out, or to pray, or to announce the hymn, or to receive the offering. There is also no teaching of the church that should prevent a woman from being elected into a leadership role in the local church. In many churches, as you know, we have women who are elected elders. They do a wonderful job, and why should they not? This goes back many years. In the small church in north Norway where I grew up, 50

to 60 years ago, we had a woman as elder at the local church, and we had a woman as the *only* elder in the local church. It works. It works well.

What should the church be saying to its female members, particularly about the opportunities to serve in leadership roles, for which the Spirit has given women gifts?

The church should encourage women to make professional choices that will lead them into some areas of service or ministry. I know the fullest kind of recognition to pastoral ministry—ordination—is a direction the church has said, on at least two different occasions when we have met together as a world body, “This is not the way we can go now.” But I would still encourage women to train for ministry. There is a wide spectrum of ministries open to women: in the local church pastorate, in evangelism, and in a variety of educational and institutional services.

In many cultures women are already employed to a considerable extent in local pastoral ministry. And when they are employed in this capacity, we don’t intend to differentiate in pay—they carry the responsibility of the church pastor and they are to be paid as the church pastor.

As a college teacher, 30 to 35 years ago, I was privileged to teach women who were preparing for the ministry. My own niece trained as a minister. She has a young family now and that, in some ways, impacts how she is able to function. But for several years she

Top: At the Orion Seventh-day Adventist Church in Moscow, Russia, an 18-year-old woman teaches Sabbath school.


Bottom: A women’s ministry team in India operates a literacy class for other women. This is only one of the services Adventist women in India provide.

RAJMUND DABROWSKI



GLOBAL MISSION

was the pastor of a local church. I have heard her preach and have been blessed by the wonderful way in which she communicates.

So I would say to women, get professional qualification, let the Spirit flow through you and your talents, energies, and creative initiatives, and let the church benefit from your calling and your skills. 



Exercise

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES and PETER N. LANDLESS

I am 55 years old and have never had a regular exercise program. What are the benefits of exercise, and will I benefit starting at this later stage of my life?

Exercise has been shown to be beneficial at *all* ages. It is important to seek advice from your health-care provider (physician) regarding the kind of exercise suited to your present health condition. You will need direction as to what is the best exercise for you and how much you should do as you start out on such a program.

Regular exercise helps keep us energized, and is also important in helping to prevent and aid in the treatment of certain diseases. Exercise can help to lower hypertension (high blood pressure). This is especially true of aerobic exercise (such as walking, running, jogging, and swimming). Individuals who have moderate hypertension may additionally need medications in order to achieve the best blood pressure control.

Regular exercise helps to strengthen bones. Exercise can help to increase the healthy or high density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL). Individuals who exercise regularly have less chance of developing type 2 diabetes in adult life. In those patients who already have this disease, exercise can help control or even reverse the diabetes, as long as the lifestyle

changes are continued. Any changes in medications should be made by the treating physician.

Regular exercise appears to decrease the risk for certain cancers. The evidence is most convincing for breast and colon cancer; it is thought that exercise may also decrease the occurrence of prostate, lung, and uterine (womb) cancers. This benefit of exercise may be partly because physical activity helps to reduce weight, and excess weight is a risk for cancer.

Regular exercise is good for you only if you do it! It is never too late to start.

It is difficult to stay motivated and exercise regularly. I know of the physical benefits; are there perhaps any advantages other than physical that may encourage me to continue exercising?

Regular exercise not only energizes the body, but also gives one a feeling of well-being. This is associated with a generally better quality of life both physically and mentally. Exercise helps to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. Some of these effects are due to certain chemicals produced by the body (with exercise) called endorphins. These substances help to elevate the mood.

Exercise improves mental function. Exercise may delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease in individuals who may be prone to this disease, and also decrease the worsening symptoms of Alzheimer's. Measurable improvements in memory have been demonstrated after 9 to 10 weeks of regular aerobic exercise.

These additional benefits of regular exercise should help keep you motivated. Keep at it—it's worth it!

What is the best exercise, and how much should I do?

The best exercise is the one you actually do on a regular basis! There are three general types of exercise:

- Aerobic or endurance
- Flexibility or stretching
- Strength-building (weights and resistance)

Although all forms are important, aerobic exercise is highly recommended. Walking is an excellent form of exercise, and one should walk briskly for 30-45 minutes most days of the week. For the best health benefits, up to 90 minutes per day is recommended.

The exercise time can be divided up into two or three sessions over the 24-hour period. A simple way of measuring the amount of walking you do each day is to use a pedometer (a small measuring device worn on the belt/waist). One should strive to walk 10,000 steps per day to enjoy the best health. Don't be frightened by these goals. Press on!

"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;...they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint" (Isa. 40:31).



Allan R. Handysides, M.B., Ch.B., FRCPC, FRCSC, FACOG, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.



Peter N. Landless, M.B., B.Ch., M.Med., F.C.P.(SA), F.A.C.C., is ICPA executive director and associate director of Health Ministries.

Dreaming Revival

By
FORDSON
CHIMOGA

*As we wait for the Second Coming,
what is our greatest need?*

As we near the end of the world, should we as members of the remnant talk about spiritual revival? Is spiritual revival something needed among church leaders, workers, and members? Is it relevant or irrelevant to focus our energies and resources on how to bring about spiritual revival?

In the book of Ezra there is a call for revival. Why? What was the setting?

The Israelites were in Babylonian captivity. They were there because they had transgressed God's law. Obedient to God's law, they were stronger than the other nations; but as soon as they forsook God, the reverse happened. They became weaker than the surrounding nations, were taken by King Nebuchadnezzar into Babylonian captivity, and became exposed to the evil teachings and practices of Babylon.

During their 70 years of captivity, most of the Israelites came to accept the lifestyle of Babylon as normal, and forgot the life of devotion and strict obedience to the God of their fathers. They started building houses and even marrying the daughters of Babylon. "When these things were done," Ezra says, "the

leaders came to me, saying, 'The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, with respect to the abominations of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, so that the holy seed is mixed with the peoples of those lands. Indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this trespass'" (Ezra 9:1, 2).

Ezra's time is distant, but the practices of his day are close to us. How many of us Christians still support our children marrying outside the church, despite Paul's counsel that we "not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14)? How many of us leaders still pose ourselves as if we are rulers of this world? How many of us still fight for positions in the church as if this was the most important thing to have in this world? We have somehow been "mixed with the peoples of the lands," just as during the time of the prophet Ezra.

It is interesting to note that according to the last part of Ezra 9:2,



OFFICE OF ADVENTIST MISSION

"the hand of the leaders and rulers [had] been foremost in this trespass." Could this be true of church leaders today? Are we not immune to such evil practices?

Jesus said in Matthew 7:21-23: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name...?' And

then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

Many Had Settled Down

Ezra was astonished by the unwillingness of the majority of the people to return to Jerusalem. The time had come to return as God had said, but most of the Israelites had become comfortable in their captivity. Ezra 9:5, 6 shows the spiritual struggles Ezra went through in trying to correct the situation: "At the evening sacrifice I arose from my fasting; and having

growth movement in contemporary Christianity, says that "two principal preconditions of revival ... are prayer and feeding on God's Word."¹ Let us briefly consider these two.

1. *Prayer.* How does prayer bring about revival? According to McGavran, "Revival is God's gift. Human beings can neither command it nor make God grant it. God sovereignly gives revival when and where He wills. It 'breaks out,' 'strikes,' 'quicken a church,' 'comes with the suddenness of a summer storm,' 'makes its appearances,' 'inaugurates a

not remain the same. The Word of God impacts the life. Jesus said: "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

The Outcomes

What about the outcomes of revival—on the individual, on the group, on the entire church or community? McGavran lists, among others, holy living, "the restoration of New Testament Christianity."

Another outcome, he says, is power—"tremendous spiritual power to do Christ's will." It affects our conduct as Christians, he says. The infilling of the Holy Spirit leads to the confession and renunciation of previously hidden sins. "Evil habits of mind and body—covetousness, ... lust, addiction to drink, idolatry, race prejudice—that had for years enslaved women and men—are broken. The Holy Spirit gives new standards of justice and mercy to the revived, and they begin to advocate advanced social righteousness."⁴

Finally revival drives Christians to proclaim the gospel. The believers, once revived, become coworkers with God. They take up the work of Jesus as their own. They are no longer *forced* to witness for Christ. Instead, witnessing becomes their second nature.

We are living at a time when this world is about to come to an end, and revival is more needed today than ever. Ellen G. White reminds us that "Bible conversion and sanctification—a radical change of heart and transformation of character—is the great need of the churches of today"⁵

¹ Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1970), p. 134.

² *Ibid.*, p. 135.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 135, 136.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 306.

God sovereignly gives revival when and where He wills.

torn my garment and my robe, I fell on my knees and spread out my hands to the Lord my God. And I said: 'O my God, I am too ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God; for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown up to the heavens.'"

Ezra prayed to God not only for the forgiveness of his own sins, but also for the sins of his people. We should learn to pray like Ezra—not only for ourselves, but for the flocks assigned to us.

As a result of Ezra's spiritual struggles and commitment to God, some people decided to follow him—a small group decided to return to Jerusalem with him. And we find evidence of repentance and revival. Ezra 9:8 says: "And now for a little while grace has been shown from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and give us a measure of revival in our bondage."

Donald A. McGavran, regarded by some as the father of the church

work of grace,' and 'blesses his people.' But God responds to sincere continued prayer.... 'Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you.'"²

God is willing to bring about revival in our church—in both members and leaders, if we earnestly pray for it.

2. *God's Word.* Feeding on God's Word is the second precondition of revival. According to McGavran, knowledge of the Bible does not always lead to revival. But without it, revival in the classic sense does not usually occur. Historically, he says, a careful study of the Word has always preceded revival, as, for example, in Europe and America. The Korean revival of the twentieth century owed much of its power, he says, "to the thorough Bible study that formed an integral part of the Presbyterian Church's regimen from the days of its inception in 1895."³

We should not minimize the power a person can derive from the proper and consistent study of God's Word. The Bible student does

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Maintaining a Vibrant Prayer Meet

Steps to help keep your members

It's an empirical fact that prayer meetings in many Adventist congregations are losing their vibrancy. The total number of attendees has rapidly declined in recent years. Prayer meetings seem to have lost their fervor, and are almost dead. This decline is, of course, the result of many factors. It could result from the mood and style of the organization that fosters a lifeless atmosphere. Another reason could be that the leadership for prayer meetings feels frustrated.

But the question remains, "What can be done to revive interest and attendance in prayer meeting and boost the desire of our members to have meaningful prayer lives?" The following steps could help make for more effective and vibrant prayer meetings:

1. The need for prayer. The apostle Paul says, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17).^{*} Prayer must be a life partner of the Christian. It is the means by which we communicate with God and make our requests known to Him. We must talk to God. He bids us to come to Him. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). This rest is from everything, including a hard-day's work. We must remind our members of this promise and, hence, encourage their growth from mere formality to service with understanding.

2. Time management. Time for prayer meetings must neither be rushed, nor should it be prolonged beyond its scheduled time. Many people need to prepare reports and other materials for the next day's activity. Others travel a great deal. Still others prefer to attend the prayer service after work before going home to see their family. When long prayer meetings become the norm, it will prevent many people from attending prayer meetings. Leaders must manage prayer meeting time for maximum effectiveness.

3. Leadership in prayer meetings. Much preparation must be taken to offer a well-organized presentation. The sermon or devotional talk must be thoughtful but short, and the rest of the time given to prayer. Many forget that it is not the sermon that must be heated in the oven. Spiritual

gifts have been given to all members, and each member's gifts must be sharpened and used to edify the church. Pastors and elders must also be careful in choosing persons to lead the prayer meeting who are of upright character.

4. Diversities and dynamism. While we should be careful not to cross over from Adventism to Pentecostalism, prayer meetings must have life and hold the interest of those in attendance. In too many places they have become boring services.

Prayer meetings may be organized into small groups so that group discussion can take place. In this setting the leader can also lead participants through particular prayer points. Prayers may begin right away, along with the singing of hymns. A short Bible presentation given before the prayer time will encourage a mindset of prayer and worship. In whatever way, let vibrancy be seen and experienced in the prayer meetings. God has given us abundant knowledge in these last days (Dan. 12:4), and the church should experience the new understandings God is giving to His people. Let our divinely inspired knowledge be coupled with innovation.

5. The pastor's part. Prior to the prayer meeting, the pastor can—when possible—contact members to inquire as to whether they have a particular problem that the church can help them pray about. Members want to hear their pastor pray for them. When members see their pastor in this way, they will trust the pastor more. The pas-

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OFFICE OF ADVENTIST MISSION

sermons. Hearing the rhythms and voices of fellow believers is an inspiring means of leading listeners to praise, thanksgiving, and prayer. Music can also relax the body and elevate alertness. However, music for prayer meetings should be solemn in nature. Hymns should be selected carefully.

ing *alive*

By
CLIFFORD
OWUSU GYAMFI

tor's relationships with members through the prayer meeting will energize wider church participation.

Pastors and elders who want to add flavor to their prayer meetings must allow the church to hear people they have never heard before. There is no rule against inviting another Adventist pastor to help in the prayer meeting service. We all like meeting new people, and new people frequently have fresh ideas and guidance to share. Inviting a pastor or elder from outside the district will add new flavor to the prayer meeting.

6. Time for testimonies and thanksgiving. Planning for member testimonies is another way to turn hearts in the church. Our Christian lives have been watered, made stronger, and we can face various situations in life because of the testimonies of other believers. Sadly, many prayer meetings are dropping testimony times. Testimony time gives members an opportunity to tell how God has been listening to their prayers. These times also allow us to listen to the miracles that God has been doing in the lives of church members as a result of their faith in Christ.

7. Music appreciation. The purpose of prayer meetings should not be that of entertainment. It should be for time to talk with the Lord. We need to lay our cares and concerns aside, and bow before the throne of God to receive strength for our lives. Music is another effective method we can use to elevate the minds of our members to the ultimate Source of power. Music has the potential to encourage more than


8. Members' suggestions. After each prayer meeting, the pastor should ask members how they felt about the experience and what they would like in the next week's prayer meeting. Pastors and elders should not presume they know the best way to lead a prayer meeting. Members have constructive criticisms that can make prayer meeting an encouraging and uplifting time.

9. Program outline. A printed program lists the order of service, as well as how members are involved. It is good for participants to know the order of service ahead of time so that no one is surprised about what role they are to play in the program. Those having duties in the service should also be reminded of their responsibilities. If possible, let each member have a personal copy of the program. Having a printed program also allows members to see themselves playing a part in the program; it may encourage them to participate more.

10. A time for fellowship. Prayer meetings can be an effective means of reuniting the church to Christ and to each other in fellowship. In groups of two or three, the participants may want to come together to pray for one another. They could then each choose a prayer partner and continue to pray for one another throughout the week. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Ps. 133:1).

Warm Fellowship

These steps can be reviewed yearly in order to keep your church's prayer meeting on fire. Make every effort to help your church prayer meetings stay alive. A praying church is a growing church. Allow the gospel commission to be the central theme of your church. Thus, all the activities in the life of your congregation, such as witnessing and evangelism, will be energized by the power of prayer.

Keep church members alive through a living prayer meeting. 

*All Scriptures in this article are taken from the King James Version.

Great-grandfather was a Buddhist priest, blessed with the power to heal through prayer. For 36 years I had heard of his remarkable magical gifts and the miraculous healings he performed. From removing snake curses to the exorcising of dead centipedes from a man's ear, Great-grandfather could do it all.

Great-grandmother was "samurai" (warrior class) and versed in the healing arts of moxa, acupuncture, and massage. She had healed people of cancer with acupuncture treatments long before the Western world knew what cancer was. She was a healer in her own right.

Such was my upbringing, steeped in ancestral pride and worship. I was proud of my heritage and comforted in knowing I had powerful ancestors to watch over me. Comfortable, that is, until I met Peter.

Peter was Hawaiian, and he was a Christian. At 5 foot 11 and 235 pounds, he was a big man with a big Christian heart. Peter was the kind of guy who would buy you lunch even though he needed the money for groceries. Peter was always ready with a hug and with encouraging words of gracious aloha. Peter was kind and gentle, never harsh or crass. He was always at peace.

But Peter had one fault. He agitated my mind!

Peter said that when we die our spirit returns to God and there is no more consciousness. But I knew differently. I had lived with spiritualism. I had seen spirits. I had been attacked by spirits. How could he say there was no life after death? I needed to set him straight. But every time I tried, he would quote something from his Bible to explain his Christian belief. Peter told me story after story after story out of the Bible. I knew it must be a mistake, but how could I make him see that?

One day as we were discussing his religion, it hit me. The way to prove Peter wrong was to prove the Bible wrong. If his authority was no longer valid, then all of his arguments were also invalid. Maybe then I could interest him in meditation methods and spirit worship.

"I'll prove to you that you're wrong," I said.

"Please," he replied, "if you can lead me into further truth, I'll gladly change."

To Prove the Black Book Wrong

The challenge was on.

I didn't know much about Christianity or the Bible, but I was a trained investigator. I had been a police officer



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for four years and a prosecutor's investigator for five years. Surely with my training and experience I could find at least one flaw in Peter's Bible. But where to begin? I decided to start from the beginning and work my way backwards, confident it wouldn't take long.

Using a Bible Peter had given me a few years before, I began the task of proving the Bible wrong. Little did I know at that time the profound impact this innocent undertaking would have on my life.

Now where is that place about Saturday? Peter said it would be in Genesis 2. H'mmm, it sure doesn't say anything about not going to work on Saturday, only that God rested

According

and blessed the day. Peter must have misinterpreted this verse! That was easy! I can't wait until tomorrow.

But Peter had an answer for that one: Exodus 20. *Guess I'll have to do a better job of investigation next time.* This Bible thing might not be as easy as I thought!

And so it went, day after day, for three months. Questions, questions, questions, but always Peter had the right answer to satisfy me that that was the truth. *The gospel according to Peter* came fast and furious, but it was always mixed with a Christ-like spirit.

Turmoil and Change

My heart and mind were really going through turmoil now as I began questioning everything I read and everything around and about me. *What's wrong and what's right? Where does this all lead? How is this going to end? Can it be true that my great-grandparents are asleep and not watching over me? Can it be true that the miracles they performed were Satan's deceptions?* Nothing made sense anymore. But I needed to find the truth!

For two more months I struggled with myself as the messages from Peter worked on my heart. Conversion came slowly, almost imperceptively, but a definite change was taking place. Fellow workers commented on how I wasn't as obnoxious as before, and when I used a swear word, I would quickly apologize. I also noticed a change in myself. The name Jesus took on a new meaning for me, and hearing people use it callously to express anger or frustration made me feel curiously uneasy. My beer drinking gradually slowed and eventually stopped. I couldn't explain what was happening to me, but it felt good. I could see a commitment coming soon but how could I be sure I was making the right decision?

THE Gospel

By
DENNIS T.
YOSHIOKA

To Peter

I was a Buddhist. My father and mother were both staunch, miracle-working Buddhists. Then I met Peter.



Above: BIG DAY: Next to their baptism, the day of their ordination to the gospel ministry stands out in the memory of the Yoshiokas.



FITTING: Appropriately, Peter, whose intrepid witness had made the difference in Dennis' life, sang for David's ordination, accompanied by his wife Yolanda.



REJOICING: Posing here at his desk (also in the prosecuting attorney's office) shortly after Dennis' conversion, Peter shows the joy of someone who's just brought a soul to Jesus.

A Strange Prayer and God's Strange Answer


The answer came a few weeks later in, of all places, Las Vegas. In "Sin City" for four nights and five days of "training," the glitter and glamour sure looked inviting. I arrived on a Sunday afternoon with \$350 burning a hole in my pocket. I was eager to get out onto the craps table. By Tuesday afternoon I was broke, except for \$40 and my airline ticket that I had prudently tucked away in a safe deposit box for the return trip home. But what would I do now? We didn't leave until Thursday. I hated to borrow money, especially when it was to be used for gambling, but the thought of just sitting around for the next two

thing wrong, and it's bothering me. I guess my family could have used the \$400 I just blew, but You know how much pleasure I get from gambling. You also know how much I hate to owe people money, yet I actually borrowed money to gamble with. I must need help. Lord, if You are really up there and listening to my prayer, You'll have to show me. I need to know You truly exist! This is what I propose. Tomorrow morning I'm going to play a game of Keno. I'll bet \$3 on three numbers: 46, 69, and 80. At 42:1 odds, I'll win \$126. Now here's the deal. If You let me win, I'll tip the Keno runner, repay David the \$100 I borrowed, I'll quit gambling, and whatever monies I return home with, I'll donate it to the church. Amen."

When I awoke the next morning, I had all but forgotten about my prayer until I sat down for breakfast and saw the Keno board. Taking out a Keno card, I nervously marked the numbers 46, 69, and 80. As the Keno runner passed by, I gave her my card and \$3. I don't remember my breakfast much, nor the conversation that David tried to get going. All I could think of was the upcoming Keno game. When the betting closed I imagined it was only a matter of minutes before my life would be drastically changed.

The numbers began appearing on the Keno board. Random numbers, 20 in all, were mechanically chosen from a pool of 80 numbers. The combinations one could expect were unlimited, and I knew my chances were slim. After all, I had played the game a number of times before and had never won. I had been to FBI classes and learned that Keno was the "sucker's game," with winners coming few and far between. Yet I felt that, somehow, something was different this time.

I tried to remain calm and detached from the game, but my eyes remained glued to the Keno board. When "46" lit the screen, my heart skipped a beat. After about 10 more numbers, "80" blinked on, and I stopped chewing.

I wasn't excited because I had won \$126, nor was I excited because I had the money to repay my roommate. I was excited because God in heaven had listened and responded to my prayer. The God Peter had told me about—the God he assured me loved *me* and was interested in *me*—really existed! This is what I got excited about, and it all began with the Gospel According to Peter. 

* Keno is a game of chance, similar to lotto, involving the random drawing of numbered balls or cards.



Above: WITH JESUS IN CONTROL: At his desk in the prosecuting attorney's office in Hilo, Hawaii, Dennis has the countenance of someone under new management. **Right:** THAT WAS THEN: Taken around 1974, the photo shows Dennis as an officer in the Kau district of Hawaii. He was a policeman when he first encountered the gospel through his friend Peter.



days was too much for the gambler in me. Within minutes, I was back at the tables with \$100 borrowed from my roommate David. By evening I had lost another \$60 and decided to retire for the night. Since it was still relatively early, I decided to read the hotel's Gideon Bible.

A nagging thought kept intruding into my already mixed-up mind. "Gambling is a sin," the voice said. "But why?" I protested. I've always participated in gambling of one form or another ever since childhood. Everyone I knew gambled, either with cards, on ball games, bowling, bingo, the outcome of political races—it was in my blood! I tried to rationalize, but the nagging feeling could not be denied.

As the weight of this new burden forced me to my knees, I cried out: "Lord, I feel as though I'm doing some-



Sandra Yoshioka, impressed by the changes she saw in her husband Dennis, joined him in baptism into the Adventist Church.

Rounding Out *the* Details

We did not want to touch the story our author sent—it was so strong! Yet feeling the need for answers to round out some of the details, we asked him to respond to the following questions.—Editors.

You referred to “my family” in connection with the Vegas incident. Were you already married? And with children?

Yes, I’d been married 13 years, with three children: Gregg was 12, Pamela 9, and Bradd 7.

And what was your work at that time?

I was chief investigator for the Hawaii County prosecuting attorney’s office. The fellow from whom I borrowed the \$100 was my victims’ witness counselor, David Yamada.

Were you still in touch with Peter at the time? Did he have the joy of seeing you baptized?

Yes. Peter was working as one of my special investigators. And there was a Glenn Taka, also one of my special investigators, who happened to be Peter’s cousin, a former police officer and a Seventh-day Adventist. Both Glenn and Peter “worked” on me and gave me Bible studies.

Where is Peter now?

Peter died in January 2005.

How soon after that Vegas incident were you baptized?

The Vegas incident occurred in September, 1982. My wife, eldest son Gregg, and I were baptized November 6, 1982.

And your wife, Sandra—how did she come to be interested in the church?

As Peter shared with me I shared with Sandra. When she noticed the changes in me, she took an interest in *what* was changing me. As she studied with me and later with the pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Hilo (Pastor Ralph Neidigh), we all decided to follow Christ.

Did you ever become a minister? And are you now an ordained minister?

This is another long story, but the short version is yes. I pastored the Mount View Japanese Adventist Church after returning from the mission field in 1992. I was ordained in 1996, and pastored until 1997.

How did you come to be at the Northern California Conference (NCC)? And how long have you been there?

This is another long story, with ample examples of how God leads. I left pastoring when I was offered a position with the Central California Conference as a planned giving consultant. Three years later, in 2000, I was called to the NCC as associate director of trust services. In December 2005 I was voted codirector; and when my predecessor retired in June 2006, I took on full responsibility as director.

Made in God's NUMBER 7 Image^{*}

By ROLF J. PÖHLER

How we were formed, deformed, and re-formed

It's considered one of the most moving, shocking, and at the same time wonderful films ever made—*The Elephant Man*, by David Lynch. The film depicts the plight of Joseph Merrick, branded the “Elephant Man” because of the abnormal growths that deformed his body since childhood.

In 1884 Frederick Treves, surgeon and lecturer on human anatomy, discovered Merrick at a freak show in London; and partly out of curiosity, partly out of pity gave him a bed in his hospital. “The most striking feature about him was his enormous and misshapen head,” Treves said later. “From the brow there projected a huge bony mass like a loaf, while from the back of the head hung a bag of spongy, fungous-looking skin. From the upper jaw there projected another mass of bone. It protruded from the mouth like a pink stump, turning the upper lip

inside out and making the mouth a mere slobbering aperture.”

Dr. Treves' report gives us an idea of the pain and shame that such a disfigured creature had to bear. He was kept like an animal and put on display before gaping crowds. The deformations covered his whole body.

Surprisingly, however, Dr. Treves discovered that the creature behind the grotesque sideshow exhibit was not an apathetic imbecile, but an intelligent, sensitive, and friendly being. That news soon made the “Elephant Man” famous, with even Queen Victoria sending a personal expression of sympathy. One evening—by then it was the year 1890—a theater performance was held in his honor. Upon returning from the play to his room in the attic, the 28-year-old removed from his bed the pillows meant to prop him up while sleeping, and placed himself flat on his bed, so that the weight of his massive skull slowly caused him to suffocate.

Merrick had no greater wish than to be loved just as he was, and we are no different. Can we discover a Joseph Merrick within ourselves? Who are we anyway? Cultivated animals, lonesome and disfigured creatures? Or maybe more?

The Bible gives an astonishing answer—sobering and encouraging at the same time. On the one hand, it doesn't hesitate to point out the cause of our deeply ingrained deformities. But on the other hand, it paints us in a completely different light, a portrait full of beauty and dignity. (This picture is described in *Adventist Fundamental Belief*, No. 7.)

Nothing illustrates the destiny and dignity of humans more strikingly than the biblical expression “the image of God” (Gen. 1:26, 27). The emphasis here is more on personality than appearance. The ability to think creatively and independently, to understand the feelings of others, to interact with others, to assume responsibility—these are all qualities that identify free and mature personalities. Moreover, they are divine qualities. “For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor” (Ps. 8:5).



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What Are We? Who Are We?

The story of the Elephant Man is a poignant example of human suffering and the longing for comfort in a brutal world. Joseph

But what has become of the “image of God”? What about those with exploited bodies and without rights? Or those who have been tortured and murdered by marauding gangs and brutal soldiers? What about the captives, stripped of all clothes and with a leash tied around their neck, reduced to mere pawns in the hands of their captors? Or the 850 million suffering from undernourishment and the 100,000 of them that die every day of starvation? What about the sick, whose bodies are consumed by incurable diseases? Or the countless abused children and mistreated women and all those who have no prospect or hope of a humane existence? What are their lives actually worth? What has happened to their inalienable human dignity, to their high position under God?

What virus could deform the image of God so profoundly? What disease could cause such terrible mutilation? We may not like to hear it, but the Bible bluntly reveals the name of the cause: SIN.

Sin—the Unpardonable Word

Sin is the situation in which we all find ourselves from birth—separated from the God of life and caught in the clutches of evil that brings us death. You may deny this sobering diagnosis, thinking it only applies to others. But we have all been affected. Sin distorts the image

of God into the grimace of the devil.


The almost unbelievable message of the Bible is that in Jesus Christ God came down into the midst of this world of sin and identified Himself completely with our fate. In the words of Isaiah’s prophecy, “His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men” (Isa. 52:14). “He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.... He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.... But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed” (Isa. 53:2-5; cf. 24:25-27).

Paul was referring to this astonishing truth when he said that God sent “His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: [and that] He condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). Christ “made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.... He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:7, 8).

Instead of pointing fingers at us sinners and leaving us to the fate we deserved, Jesus became one of us and took upon Himself what we also must bear.

Lifted Up

God’s compassion for our human predicament doesn’t exhaust itself in His personal participation in our suffering (see Heb. 2:17; 4:15). It is God’s will, in addition, that we regain our original dignity lost through sin, the dignity of His sons and daughters. The reason He came all the way down was to lift us all the way up again to Himself. He overcame sin that He might one day eliminate it for eternity. His goal is nothing less than the “restoration of all things” (Acts 3:21). That’s why He has reconciled us to Himself in Christ and is now working to restore His divine image in us.

All those who accept this call to reconciliation may know that they have become a “new creation” in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17-21) and are predestined to be conformed to His image—that is, to become like Him (Rom. 8:29; Eph. 4:24; 2 Peter 1:3, 4; 1 John 3:2). To reflect His righteousness and mercy, to love Him back and give His love to our fellow human beings—indeed, to all creatures—is what we were created for. So that we might live “for the praise of his glory,” and honor Him with our whole existence (Eph. 1:12). 

*Translated by Brent Blum, this article is a shortened version of the author’s chapter on Fundamental Belief No. 7, taken from a 30-part series on the Adventist faith published in German and scheduled to be released in book form in the latter part of 2007.

Nature of Man

Man and woman were made in the image of God with individuality, the power and freedom to think and to do. Though created free beings, each is an indivisible unity of body, mind, and spirit, dependent upon God for life and breath and all else. When our first parents disobeyed God, they denied their dependence upon Him and fell from their high position under God. The image of God in them was marred and they became subject to death. Their descendants share this fallen nature and its consequences. They are born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil. But God in Christ reconciled the world to Himself and by His Spirit restores in penitent mortals the image of their Maker. Created for the glory of God, they are called to love Him and one another, and to care for their environment. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7; Ps. 8:4-8; Acts 17:24-28; Gen. 3; Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12-17; 2 Cor. 5:19, 20; Ps. 51:10; 1 John 4:7, 8, 11, 20; Gen. 2:15.)

In every land there are thousands of souls in darkness, without the knowledge of the truth—souls who have never heard the last message of mercy to a perishing world. They know not that the end of all things is at hand. “Peace and safety” is the cry that is sounded from the popular pulpits. And yet how many of God’s professed people are at ease in Zion. The churches in general are weak and dependent. They think that some one must be with them every Sabbath to spread for them a gospel feast. They do not realize that they must individually appropriate to themselves the truth that has been unfolded to them, and communicate its light to those who know it not; and they are doing comparatively nothing, either in home missions or in the “regions beyond.” Can you, dear brethren and sisters, be doers of the Word of God while indifferent to the souls that are perishing around you? Can you listen to the truth, Sabbath after Sabbath, and not impart its light to others?

The church must not depend so fully as she has done in the past upon the ordained minister alone to carry the gospel to the world. God has given to every man his work. For many years He has been bidding His people, “Go work today in my vineyard.” He calls upon men who understand the Scriptures to go into places where the message of truth has never penetrated, and there work, imparting to others what God has imparted to them. They can be as the salt, communicating saving properties to those with whom they come in contact.

The standard of truth may be raised by humble men and women; and the youth, and even children, may be a blessing to others, by revealing what the truth has done for them. God will use the most feeble instruments if they are wholly submitted to Him. He can work through them to reach souls to whom the minister could not obtain access. There are the highways and byways to be searched. With your Bible in your hand, with your heart warm and glowing with the love of God, you may go out and tell others your experience; you may make known to them the truth that has impressed your heart, praying with faith that God will make your efforts successful in their salvation. Communicate light, and you will have more light to communicate. Thus you may become laborers together with God.

God desires that His children shall make use of all their

powers, that in working to bless others, they may grow strong in the strength of Jesus. You may not be learned; you may not be thought capable of doing a great work for God; but there are things which you can do. You can let your light shine forth to others. Through the prophet Isaiah, Christ has said: “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.... And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.”

Every one may have an understanding of the truth, and exert an influence for good. Then go to work, my brethren

Stepping Out Beat


*If we don't change
our direction,
we'll end up where
we're headed.*

The above is excerpted from an article that first appeared in the January 12, 1897, edition of the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (now the *Adventist Review*; see www.adventistreview.org). Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

and sisters. Gain an experience by working for others. You may make mistakes; but this is not more than the most intelligent, and those in positions of trust, have done again and again. You will not always meet with success; but you can never know the result of humble, disinterested effort to help those who are in darkness. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, you may win souls from error to truth, and in so doing your own souls will be filled with the love of God. Unaccustomed paths will open before you in your work of ministry. You will often have to step out of the beaten track, and, under the Holy Spirit's guidance, do special work for God; but if you make Him your dependence, He will give you wisdom and strength according to your need.

I pray that church members may see the peril of departing from God's expressed commandment, and repent of their lifelong neglect of the service of Christ while professing to be His followers. If they would go forth as pilgrims and strangers, and make for themselves homes where there is work to be done, letting their light shine forth to those who are in darkness and error, they would then be able to say, "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." We shall receive fresh supplies of grace, as we impart to others that which we already have.

The Holy Spirit will impress upon the mind the truth that the religion of the Bible is a grand and precious reality. You need not only to assent to the truth, but to put it into practise. Let every ray of light which shines from the Word be heeded as the eternal truth of God. Then as you place your will on the Lord's side, look around for some work to do for the Master. Set to work at whatever your hand finds to do; for it is in practising truth, in blessing others, that you work out your own salvation. If God works in you to will and to do of His good pleasure, you will cultivate those traits of character that every heir of heaven must possess.

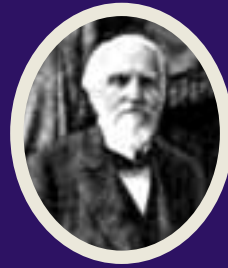
The reason many have so superficial an experience is that they do so much for themselves and so little for Jesus. Intercourse with those who are in need of help, with the purpose of saving their souls, will lead us to pray for wisdom, and look to Jesus as our helper. By unselfish labor for others, we shall establish ourselves in the faith far more firmly than by listening to so many sermons. The Holy Spirit will be our helper, giving us arguments with which to meet opposition, and in all our work giving us steadfast faith and unshaken confidence. Thus we shall gain an experience of more value than gold, silver, or precious stones. 

of the

By ELLEN G. WHITE

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The Demand of Bible Pro

By
LEROY EDWIN
FROOM

Only the Holy Spirit could have launched this

Seventh-day Adventist understanding of Scripture grew out of an intensive dialogue between believers gathered around the Word of God, a faithful habit to which the modern church is continually called. In this article an Adventist historian traces the ways in which God led men and women to focus on long-neglected Bible truths, especially the truth about Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.—EDITORS.

The year 1844 is intriguing, as it marks the close of the 2300 years of Daniel 8:14. It also signals the time of the take-off of the *Third Angel's* flight. The about-to-be-discovered *Third Angel's* Message must, in the very nature of the case, develop an entity and an emphasis of its own. To this end there came the individual discovery and then the merging of three distinctive, foundational truths—the Sanctuary, Sabbath, and Spirit of Prophecy. And out of the convergence of these three would develop a Heaven-born message and mission that would carry God's final Everlasting Gospel appeal to all mankind. These three basic doctrines would form the nucleus. All other structural truths would be clustered about them and be united with them.

Within a few years a unified *system* of doctrine would be well on its way to fruition, lifting up truths that entrenched error and hoary traditions had long "trodden underfoot."



LeRoy Edwin Froom (1890-1974) was a long-time professor of historical theology, editor, and much-published author. This article is excerpted from his book, *Movement of Destiny* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1971), pp. 77-80.

The dominant apostasy of the Middle Ages had in verity "cast down the truth to the ground" (Daniel 8:12), and had tragically and dominantly "practised, and prospered."

It had struck at the very heart of all three of these fundamentals by substituting the sacrifice of the mass daily, on 10,000 altars, for the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross; a human priesthood with auricular confessions, and the intercession of "saints," for Christ's ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary; a spurious festival in place of the true Sabbath; and the alleged infallibility of the pope and the continuing inspiration and inerrancy of the church for the Holy Spirit's unerring guidance.

These were all involved as background subversions. The divine provisions and relationships had been "cast down." Now they were to be lifted up, and restored. That is truly the heart of it all—the essence of the great spiritual controversy of the centuries.

This recovery involved the truth of the once-for-all *Act of Atonement* on the Cross and subsequent mediatorial Priesthood of Christ in the Heavenly Sanctuary, together with the eternal moral law and its enshrined Sabbath. And along with that was the awesome transaction that we have come to call the "Investigative Judgment"—and thence on to the final events.

Such a simultaneous revival of these specific truths, just at this time, came not through the foresight and planning of man. Rather, the appointed hour had come in the plan and provision of God for the discovery—or, more accurately, the recovery—and establishment of these neglected but latent truths.

The hour on the prophetic clock had struck. And so, with the coming of the hour, men obviously called of God were impelled to search out and proclaim the special truths



phency

movement of destiny

IMAGES COURTESY OF ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

now due the world—truths that were fundamental to the emergence and development of God’s distinctive Church and Message for the last days. It was an epochal hour.

These pioneer searchers were men sedulously seeking for foundational lost truths—the “hidden treasure” of the parable of Matthew 13:44. To this end they combed the field of Holy Scripture to find that “treasure” that had long been trodden underfoot, covered over, and well-nigh forgotten. And they were not disappointed. Note the unique character of that search, and its epochal results.

The principal doctrinal truths of the early Sabbatarian Adventists unfolded gradually, as well as independently and separately, to earnest minds in different places. Immediately after the October, 1844, Disappointment, the earliest group to engage in such study began at once to meet in Port Gibson (or nearby Canandaigua), New York [United States]. There Hiram Edson, O. R. L. Crosier, and Dr. F. B. Hahn came jointly upon certain basic facts regarding the distinctive Sanctuary question.

Its structural importance had been indicated by the paramount place of the Sanctuary types and ceremonial system of the Old Testament Church. The findings of the New York State trio came as a result of intensive Bible study and candid historical search and review—this unique study group evidently continuing together and searching for weeks, possibly months. Here was to be found the Biblical key unlocking their recent Disappointment. Here was light on the baffling future. For them it was paramount present truth, undergirding all others.

Their joint findings were first published in the autumn of 1845 in the *Day-Dawn*, a paper edited by Crosier and issued at Canandaigua, New York. But it had only a small and rather local circulation. So the conclusions were then pub-

lished in fuller form in the larger *Day-Star* of Cincinnati, Ohio [United States], in an “Extra” dated February 7, 1846. This had a fairly wide distribution and so reached nearly all of our pioneer leaders. It exerted quite an influence.


The fundamental point coming out of this intensive group study was that there are definitely *two* grand divisions, or phases, of Christ’s High-Priestly Ministry *in the heavenly sanctuary*, just as was indicated in the ancient earthly type. Christ’s ministry does not consist simply of a single unit of service in heaven, as had inaccurately been conceived in the Millerite Seventh-Month Movement. Then there was the further point that, according to type, Christ had only just *entered upon this second phase of His heavenly ministry on October 22, 1844*. That now seemed clear, and Biblically sound.

October 22 was, of course, the day that to the great Millerite host was so bitterly disappointing, because Christ had failed to come out of the heaven of heavens—or “holies,” as they had envisioned it—to “bless His waiting people” on the anticipated “day of atonement.” This coming out they had equated with His Second Advent in glory, and which they had, in the Seventh-Month Movement, taken for granted as being merely a twenty-four-hour day.

Crosier and his associates were persuaded that our heavenly High Priest was even then engaged in the final, or Judgment, phase of His ministry—which they thought would doubtless continue for a period of years. That was the heart of the study and the findings on the Sanctuary emanating from Port Gibson and Canandaigua—along with lesser features, such as the fact that the “scapegoat” represented Satan, and was not merely another figure of Christ, as commonly held.

As to the Sanctuary light, this was clearly Bible truth that explained the very things that those who had passed through the Great Disappointment most needed to know. It revealed the nature of the mistake involved in their 1844 misconception. It likewise illuminated their current precarious position. And in bold strokes it outlined the destined future events—on to the Great Consummation.

Thus, starting with the Sanctuary group study at Port Gibson-Canandaigua, in time the 1844 Disappointment experience became “clear as noonday” to our founding fathers. The unfolding Sanctuary light had provided the key, explaining their past confusion and bringing understanding, hope, and certainty as to the future. (And it also enfolded the Sabbath light, as they were soon to see.)

Thus the Sanctuary truth, so long “cast down” and trodden underfoot throughout much of the Christian Era—until the prophesied end of the 2300 years—began to be recovered in 1844. *That was the demand of Bible prophecy. That was the significant fulfillment of history.* It is tremendously impressive. With the coming of the time came the people called of God, and the recovered message of the Sanctuary truth foretold in Holy Writ. 

QUESTION: *How did Adventists arrive at the identification of the kingdoms represented by the symbols in the books of Daniel and Revelation?*

In some cases this has not been difficult; but in others, much more so. It is important to be aware of the limitations and risks involved in interpreting those symbols. We must begin by establishing a proper method of interpretation, then discuss how to use it.

1. Proper Method: Christians have used different methods to interpret the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. Adventists have adhered to what is called a *historicist* system of interpretation. According to this understanding, prophecies cover a broad outline of the history of God's people from the time of the prophet to the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. This is the methodology provided to Daniel by an angel sent to interpret the vision of Daniel 7. The prophecy had to do with events that covered the historical period from the Babylon Empire to the time of the end (Dan. 7:38, 44). This approach was confirmed by Jesus, who indicated that the last part of the prophecy of Daniel 9 was going to be fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:15). Paul also understood the coming of the antichrist as a future event (2 Thess. 2:7-9). We have simply followed the biblical system of interpretation.

2. Kingdoms Clearly Identified: The book of Daniel provides the historical application of the symbols. The angel interpreter told Daniel that four kingdoms were to rise on earth and the fifth one was going to be the kingdom of God. The angel identified by name three of the historical kingdoms: Babylon (Dan. 2:38), Medo-Persia (5:28; 8:20), and Greece (8:21). The fourth kingdom is not identified, but a detailed description of its nature and actions is provided (7:19-26). Jesus implied that it was Rome (Matt. 24:15, 16; Luke 21:20, 21). As long as we follow the biblical materials we are on safe ground. But many other symbols were not interpreted by the angel (e.g., the 10 horns, the little horn, two other beasts in Revelation 13, Babylon, etc.). How do we identify the prophetic fulfillment of those symbols?

3. Kingdoms Not Clearly Identified: What controls should we use to identify the broad outline of history found in the visions? We have to move from what is

clearly revealed in the prophecies themselves to what is left historically undefined.

First, we have to realize that in Daniel 2 and 7 we have the most important outline of apocalyptic prophecy in both Daniel and Revelation. This prophetic backbone provides the indispensable historical outline to be used in fitting other apocalyptic prophecies and their fulfillments within history. We know that the fourth kingdom is Rome, according to the prophecy, that it would be divided, and that one of the small kingdoms—a political-religious power—would dominate the others. By about A.D. 200 Hippolytus interpreted the fourth beast as the Romans and the little horn as the antichrist.

Christian interpreters early in the Christian era continued to use the system of interpretation used by the angel interpreter to identify the historical fulfillment of apocalyptic prophecies.

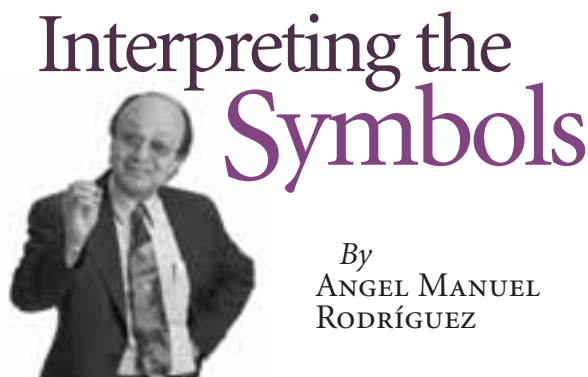
Second, we pay attention to the chronology of events located in the prophecy itself. For instance, Revelation 12 moves from an attack against

the Child (Christ), to an attack against the woman (His church), and finally against the remnant (those alive when Jesus returns). Notice the historical progression.

Third, we examine historical events, taking into consideration the prophetic line of thought. History indicates that Satan attempted to destroy Jesus and persecuted the church. The remnant is located between Satan's failure to destroy the woman after 1,260 years and the end-time attack against it. The eschatological role of the beast from the sea and the other from the earth (Rev. 13) takes place during the time of the remnant.

Finally, we should consider that history tends to reveal a self-correcting process that reaches its climax when the prophecies find their historical fulfillment.

Moving from the known to the unknown could easily take us into the dangerous zone of human speculation. We should use the same procedure employed by the angel interpreter, keeping in mind that prophecy only provides a general outline of what will take place as we approach the final days of earth's history. ●



By
ANGEL MANUEL
RODRÍGUEZ

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

Love *Written in* Stone

B I B L E S T U D Y



By MARK A. FINLEY

Although it may appear too simple, the entire theme of the Bible can be summed up in three words, "God is love" (1 John 4:8). He intends for us only good, never harm. All His commands flow from a heart of love. In our lesson today, we will discover how God expressed His love in stone.

1. Why did a loving God give us His commandments? Write your answer on the line below.

"And the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day" (Deut. 6:24).

2. What was the psalmist David's attitude toward God's law?

Write the two words that express David's attitude in the space below.

"And I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I love" (Ps. 119:47).

a. _____

b. _____

Spend a little time thinking about why David delighted in God's law.

3. What does God offer to those who, like David, love His law and delight in it? Circle the gift God gives in the text below.

"Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble (Ps. 119:165).

Complete this sentence: God's peace in my heart means I have

4. In Psalm 119:32 David declared: "I will run the course of Your commandments, for You shall enlarge my heart." How does God "enlarge my heart" when I obey Him? Write your answer on the lines below.



5. How did Jesus describe His attitude toward God's law? Complete each sentence below.

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17).

a. Jesus came to _____ the law.

b. To fulfill means to _____

6. Jesus gave us each command in love. What did He tell His disciples their love for Him would lead them to do? Read the text below and circle the words that express our response to His love.

"If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15).

Many modern translations of the Bible are faithful to the original text and translate this passage, "If you love me, *you will keep* my commandments" (emphasis provided). Obedience is the natural response of a heart that loves God.

7. When Christ fills our heart, what is our attitude toward God's law? How does this attitude contrast with the attitude of an unconverted person? Read the texts below and write your answers in the spaces provided.

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3).

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

a. For the Christian the law is not _____

b. The carnal mind is not _____

In great love, God wrote His law in stone. The Ten Commandments reveal God's way of life. When we surrender our lives to Christ, He places within our hearts the desire to obey Him. His law is not a burden. It is the joyful way to live. We see it not as a legalistic requirement, but as love written in stone.

If you would like to commit your life to loving obedience, simply write yes on the line.



Next month's Bible study,
"Growing as a Christian,"
will look at the ways in which we can become more like Christ.

LETTERS

Membership in South America

In looking through the January 2007 *Adventist World*, I noted the news of the new president of the South America Division (World Report, p. 4) with its 2.6 million church members. Having spent a number of years of mission service in South America, I was even more interested later in the same issue upon coming across the article “A Living Witness,” by David Brillhart, also about South America. In the first paragraph it states: “Today the church numbers 6 million members in South America.” I am familiar with the term “Evangelistic figures” but am really wondering what the membership might actually be.

AL DENSLow
Florida, United States

The 2.6 million figure is the correct one. We regret the error.—EDITORS.

Advice Needed

I am responding to the World Health article in your *Adventist World*, January 2007, on page 11. The question asked was if someone’s father was an alcoholic would the person be more likely to become an alcoholic or their children to become alcoholic if they drank.

While the response did have some valid comments and concerns, at no time did the two doctors (Allan Handysides and Peter Landless) offer

any advice with regard to organizations such as Alanon and Alcoholics Anonymous, which are free services available to alcoholics or people who have lived, or currently live, with alcoholics. [While these programs may be particular to the United States,] there was also no mention of therapy and the benefits of therapy. The only advice given was “Prevention is the cure—stay away from alcohol.”

I’m disappointed that the experts answering these questions would not have more advice or insight on such a diverse and ever-changing topic.

JOY MCKEON
Via e-mail

Children and Communion—One More Time

I have been reading with interest the dialogue on children and Communion (in *Adventist World’s* World Exchange). I would like to have responded sooner, but our issues arrive rather late after all the forwarding! I would like to share with you (and the church at large, if you feel my comments are valuable enough to share) the approach my husband and I have taken with our children when they have asked about Communion.

Ellen White wrote: “The little children may be Christians, having an experience in accordance with their years. This is all that God expects of them. They need to be educated in spiritual things; and parents should give them every advantage that they may form characters after the similitude of the character of Christ”

(*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 84).

It is our aim that we will make the very best use of each and every teaching opportunity with our children, especially where spiritual things are concerned. Communion is no different. As Seventh-day Adventists practice open Communion that permits nonmembers to partake of the emblems, we see no reason to forbid our children who believe the very same.

Our sons asked us about Communion around age 3. We told them about Jesus’ Last Supper with His disciple friends, how He washed their feet and shared special grape juice and bread with them. We explained that washing someone else’s feet shows you love them, and drinking the grape juice and eating the bread shows that we remember that Jesus lived a perfect life and died for us so that we can be with Him in heaven when His work there is done. When they then asked if they could take part, we responded by first asking them if they love Jesus and believe He lived and died to save them (the juvenile counterpart of the introspection that should take place in adults). When they responded positively, we let them help wash our feet and gave them sips of *our* grape juice and bites of *our* bread.

LETTERS

Here is our reasoning: It has been said that no one will get into heaven riding on someone else's coat tails. We believe this to be true for individuals over the age of spiritual maturity, but not for small children. These junior members of God's family are in training and most certainly "ride along" with the parents. As long as our sons are riding with us, we will "give them every advantage," which includes sharing Communion with them.

KRISTINA FREED
Cambridge, England

One-sided Head Butt

The news commentary on Zinedine Zidane's clash with Marco Materazzi at the World Cup finals last year (September 2006 *Adventist World*) was one-sided and partial, almost to the point of patting one offender on the back and acquitting him simply because his co-accused had, in a moment of extreme anguish of the soul, lost his temper.

While it may be true that Zidane was hoisted onto a very high pedestal by his teammates, fans, and country-

men, Materazzi's racist insults may have required extraordinary strength to endure. Even the strongest men have their weak points, as Moses' and Samson's stories in the Bible so vividly illustrate.

ERIC ORINA
Nairobi, Kenya

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 am sick and have stayed in my house for four months. Please pray for me.

WILKIN, *Kenya*

Please pray for me. I am in deep financial straits for the past two years. This misery is causing conflicts in my family. I would like to secure a better job and reap from what I will have sweated for.

RANGA, *Zimbabwe*

Please pray that God will help me go through the military recruitment. God bless you all with the wonderful work you are doing.

JAPHETH, *Kenya*

I desire to be granted custody of my son from his uncle, and it is my hope that he comes back to the Adventist Church. Pray also that we should be united as father and son.

JOEL, *Malawi*

I am happy to be alive at 26 years of age. Please pray that God gives me wisdom and that I find a good job so that I can continue with my professional studies. I would also ask you to pray for a friend who has recently lost both parents. Also pray that God will give me a godly life partner.

SITHANDAZILE, *Zimbabwe*

I am a boy of 14 years, and I want you to pray for me that I will become a good boy.

OPOKU, *Ghana*

Do you remember how the Great Depression of 1929 affected the American nation's life? Try to picture the same depression affecting a single person's life in all ways—spiritually, economically, mentally, etc., making this person feel like everything around him is collapsing. This is exactly how I feel. I feel there is no escape. I have sinned, but could this actually be the results of my sins? Please pray for me!

GUERRY, *Haiti*

Please pray for me because things are hindering my pursuit of missionary training at a college in Tanzania. I have had resistance from my parents, who are poor and old and say becoming a missionary will destroy my future. I also need sponsors to help pay my school fees.

OBADIAH, *Tanzania*

The Place of Prayer; send to prayer@adventistworld.org. Send us your prayer requests and praise (thanks for answered prayer). Keep your entries short and concise, 75 words maximum. Items sent to this category will be edited for space and clarity. Even though we will pray for each entry during our weekly staff meetings, not all submissions will be printed. Please include your name and your country's name with your entry. You may also fax requests to: 1-301-680-6638; or mail them to *Adventist World*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.



COURTESY OF ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

A New Day

This month a reader shares his experience at Oak Hill Cemetery.

The cold went right through me as I stood in the predawn light at the snow-covered resting places of James and Ellen White. A business trip had made possible a long-held hope to visit the burial site of some of the Adventist pioneers at Oak Hill Cemetery in Battle Creek, Michigan. I hurried to spend a few minutes alone at the cemetery before catching a flight in Detroit that morning.

I stayed up late the night before reading about Oak Hill Cemetery—who was buried there, what they went through at their passing, who attended the funeral services, and what was said. It was a melancholy study. That morning the mercury hovered at 7 degrees Fahrenheit.

Many thoughts ran through my mind as I braced myself against the cold. James and Ellen White rest from their labors. Only a blink of an eye separates their last conscious moment and their future, joyful meeting with Jesus. They are secure; no one can steal away their precious treasure in heaven. What would the world trade for such security, such eternal riches? I thought of all their labors, sacrifices, sorrows, and joys. They fought the good fight; they finished the race.

I also thought of the countless hours, late nights, early mornings, long journeys, agonizing prayers, and strenuous labors the Whites invested in publishing the many volumes of inspired pages. *How much effort do I invest studying the counsels, testimonies, and inspiration found in those pages?* I knew the answer.

The cold was numbing. I brushed off the snow from their markers. On bended knee, Ellen tended this family plot—planting flowers on her precious baby's resting place; young Henry White next to him. She held on to the blessed hope.

I looked around at the numerous grave markers dotting the 50 acres of the cemetery. How many will awake on that morning? How many in the second resurrection? What about me? How is it with God and me?

I longed for a closer walk with my Savior. A warm tear fell to the snow-covered ground where those saints sleep in Jesus. Before God and those silent witnesses, I renewed my commitment to take more time to feed my soul with God's Word and the inspiration that came from Ellen White's prolific pen. She knew Jesus, conversed with angels, visited the Promised Land. As I turned toward the waiting warmth of the car, the brilliant rays of the emerging sun brightened my face. It was a new day.

—JIM JOHN, *College Place, Washington, United States*

“Behold, I come quickly...”

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

Publisher

The *Adventist World*, an international periodical of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is housed in the Korean Adventist Church. The General Conference is the publisher.

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Adventist World is published monthly and printed simultaneously in Korea, Australia, and the United States.

Vol. 3, No. 4

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



COURTESY OF THE OFFICE OF ADVENTIST MISSION (WWW.ADVENTISTMISSION.ORG)

The PEOPLE'S PLACE

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Meet Clyde Gale and his wife Helen (Smith) Gale, who live in Fullerton, California, U.S.A. (see photo below). Clyde is 92 years old and grew up in an Adventist family in Wisconsin. He and Helen are greeters at their local church where Clyde, a retired cabinetmaker, built the Fullerton church's pulpit.

His family spans six generations of Adventism. His grandparents on both sides (Mr. and Mrs. George Gale and Mr. and Mrs. George Samson) were all converted pioneer Seventh-day Adventists—the first generation of Adventists to ever exist!

While Clyde is a third-generation Adventist, his wife Helen is a convert. Their two daughters, Karen Rigby and Beverly Farley, have remained Adventists, and each married Adventists. Clyde's and Helen's grandchildren are fifth-generation Adventists. Clyde and Helen also have six great-grandchildren who are sixth-generation Adventists.

Clyde prays that his family will continue to remain true to their Lord and their faith, and wonders if a seventh generation of his family will be Adventists or if Jesus will come first!

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“It is the work of faith to rest in God in the darkest hour, to feel, however sorely tried and tempest-tossed, that our Father is at the helm.”

—Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 575.

ANSWER: This photo was taken in Lesotho, South Africa and is a sewing class for HIV-positive women. The women can sew clothes for themselves and for their families. They also have a social time together, something very important when they have felt like outcasts. Adventist missionary doctors Oscar and Eugenia Giordano helped set up this program.

