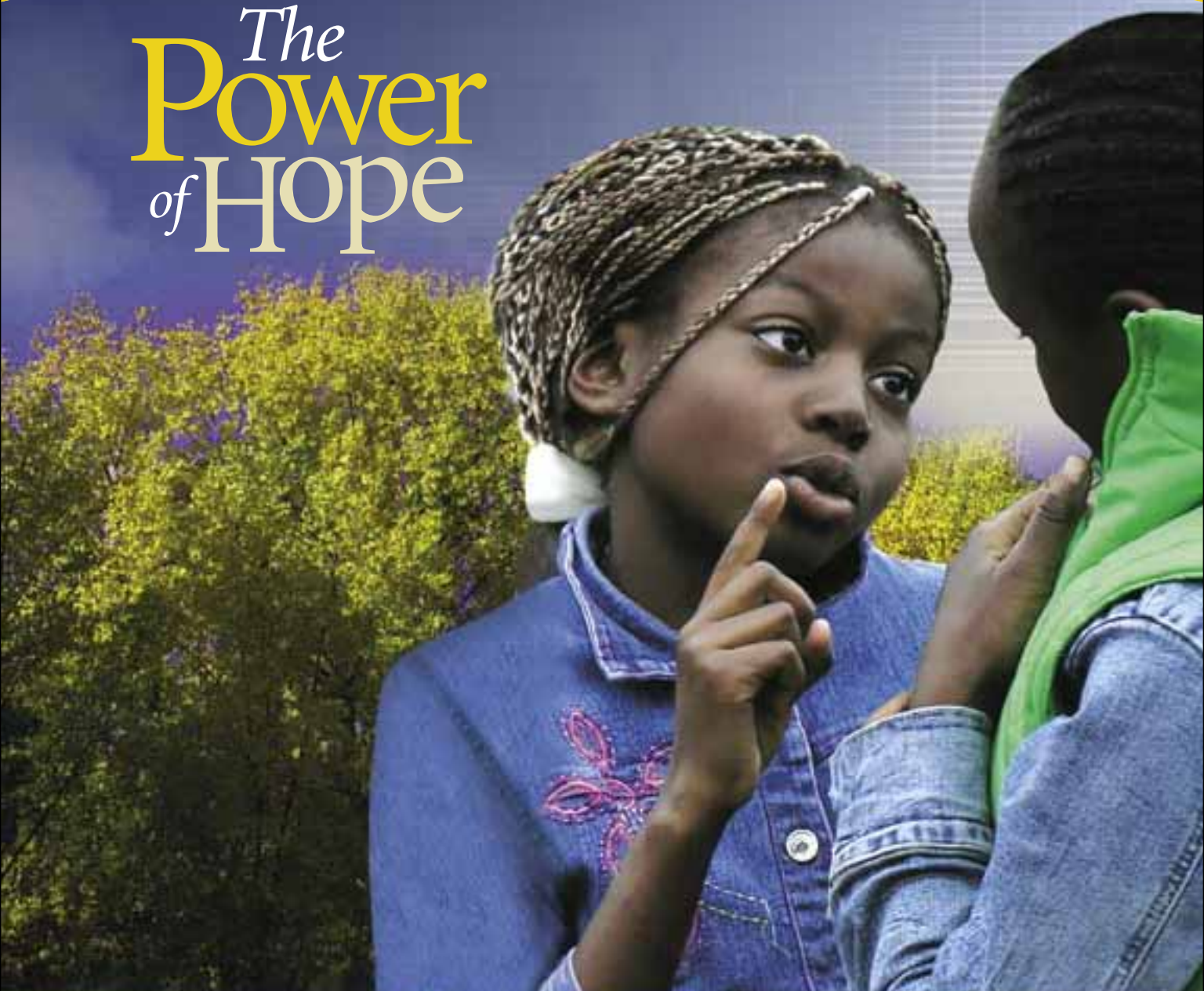


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MARJA FLICK-BUIJS/
DIGITALLY MODIFIED

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From the EDITOR'S PEN

Great Cities, Greater Vision

The oddities of my travel schedule have taken me to three of the world's great cities in the last 18 days. São Paulo, Seoul, and New York City are all receding into snapshots now. The fresh and urgent sense of each metropolis is fading into memory.

Besides the tastes, the colors, the vibrant sounds of each, I remember the almost numbing sense of their sheer size and density: the rolling, single-storied favelas of São Paulo, the thicket of 10,000 suburban apartment towers in Seoul, the faceless backyards of New York as my train rolls toward home.

Who will tell these people that a Savior loved and lived for them? Who will bring His death to life—impressing on 30 million minds the need to be made right with God? Who will penetrate the gated neighborhoods, the locked high-rises, the unfenced but unfriendly suburbs where millions now accept only what comes at them via television or computer screens?

Adventist imagination is required now as never before. Our witness must go where our feet may not be allowed to go, and we are under no less obligation to tell the world because the telling often can't be done in person. Television, radio, print media, the Internet—each will win its share and all must be employed. We dare not shake the dust of any of the world's great cities off our feet until we find ourselves kneeling at the feet of the coming One.

Jesus wept over Jerusalem, a city filled with people whom He loved. Now as never before, it's time for Adventists to weep and plead before the Lord for the great cities of our globe. We must cry out for greater vision, greater imagination in doing the work of witness, and for the stamina that won't give up when results seem meager or thin.

"Give me Scotland or I die," John Knox demanded of the Lord 450 years ago. Today, a similar audacity must fill those who carry God's present-day message of reform and restoration.

"Give us these cities, even if we die in the process," God's saints now whisper on their knees. It is a prayer—and a promise—that He cannot refuse to answer.

— BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

BRAZIL: New Record for Nationwide Christmas Food Collection Initiative

Nearly one-third more food donated than expected; Paulsen thanks volunteers

■ A nationwide Christmas celebration in Brazil brought tears of joy and shouts of excitement from volunteers and national celebrities during the December 15 culmination of a Seventh-day Adventist Church initiative to help those in need.

"Tonight we did the unexpected and broke last year's record of collecting 2,500 tons of food for the needy. The result tonight is 3,200 tons," announced Sergio Azevedo, the creator of "Christmas Mutirão—



Left: COMMENDATION: Geraldo Alckmin, presidential candidate and former governor of São Paulo, and his wife, Lu, commend

Adventist Church member Sergio Azevedo, who created "Christmas Mutirão" 14 years ago. The program raised 3,200 tons of food this year for local food banks to help Brazilians in need. **Top: COMPASSION:** Adventist world church president, Jan Paulsen, at the Botafogo Adventist Church in Rio de Janeiro, thanked volunteers and church members for their "compassion" and commitment to serving the community. Williams Costa, Jr., left, an associate communication director for the Adventist Church, translates.

PHOTOS BY RAJMUND DABROWSKI/ANN

WORLD REPORT

Sharing Hope,” the 14-year-old joint action of thousands of volunteers in local Adventist churches across South America’s largest nation.

The event was broadcast from Rio de Janeiro’s Botafogo Adventist Church to an international audience on the church’s Hope Channel.

The celebration of local community action across the country involved teams of volunteers in local congregations competing in three areas: writing and performing a brief Christmas pageant, choosing a service project in the local community, and collecting food for local Adventist Development and Relief Agency food banks. A jury comprising community leaders and household names from government, business, and entertainment was on hand along with church leaders to serve as the event’s judges. Among those was president of the Adventist world church, Pastor Jan Paulsen.

“What a wonderful achievement we are celebrating tonight,” Paulsen said of the Christmas Mutirão. “What a testament to the power of working together with a shared vision for making our community a better place.”

Mutirão is a Brazilian Portuguese expression used to describe a collective service project.

“For us, the reward is seeing the smiles of these families and children when we give them the food,” said Benivaldo Ramos, a team leader at the Botafogo Adventist Church. “For some families, it may be the only quality food they have all year. Our reward is giving them a Christmas without hunger.”

The jury recognized a community health project in the Babilonia and Chapéu Mangueira slums in Rio de Janeiro. The initiative has been tested and implemented within the past few months and involves promoting nutrition and seeking the improvement of quality of life.

A presentation of the Rio Youth Choir joined by the children of the notorious and famed 20,000 Rocinha favela in Rio de Janeiro introduced a social responsibility project involving children reaching out to children.

The presentations resonated with Paulsen when he commended the church: “Christianity without compassion is empty. Without compassion—that deep, motivating compassion of our Lord—our religion is nothing.”

Top to Bottom: CHOIR: A children’s choir comprising members of the Rio Youth Choir and children of the Rocinha favela district perform for the December 15 celebration broadcast internationally on the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s Hope Channel. **CELEBRITIES:** National Brazilian celebrities participated in the Adventist Church’s initiative to raise donations for food.

RAJ MUND DABROWSKI/ANN

“The most effective Christians are more familiar with the streets of their neighborhoods than with the pews of their church,” he said.

The celebration broadcast brought numerous declarations of support, pledges of donations, and endorsements for the project. Azevedo, the program’s creator, introduced each juror, inviting them to share how they had participated. Geraldo Alckmin, former governor of São Paulo and presidential candidate in recent elections, was joined by his wife, Lu, and said the initiative of Seventh-day Adventists is an example of leadership responding to poverty in Brazil.

Entrepreneur and philanthropist Milton Afonso also participated. A contingent of film and theater stars, including television actress and comedian Helga Nemeckz, was warmly welcomed by the audience. She burst into tears during her testimony, which included an a cappella Christmas carol and an admission of having an Adventist heritage and being proud of “her” church making a stand for the poor.

This year’s Christmas Mutirão included church leaders from several South American countries, including Peru, Argentina, and Ecuador. Church leaders from the former Soviet Union also participated.

—Rajmund Dabrowski, director of communication, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Adventists Meet Nation’s President

■ Top Seventh-day Adventist leaders recently met with the Dominican Republic’s president, Leonel Fernandez Reina, to discuss the church’s work on the island and worldwide. The one-hour private meeting at the National Palace was the first such meeting



Adopt a Clinic Program to Team Adventist Churches With

South Pacific Clinics

Partnership expected to rehabilitate region's treatment facilities

By ELIZABETH LECHLEITNER,
editorial assistant, *Adventist News Network*

MEETING: Dominican Republic president Leonel Fernandez Reina, second from left, met with Adventist Church leaders at the National Palace on November 22 to learn about the church's work in the nation and around the world. From left, Moises Javier, treasurer for the church in the country; Cesario Acevedo, the region's church president; and Silvestre Gonzalez, the church's executive secretary for the region.

DOMINICAN UNION

between national leaders and a non-Roman Catholic religious organization, Adventist leaders said.

"We had the opportunity to meet with President Fernandez and tell him about the Adventist Church's work in educating youth, strengthening families, serving the community, as well as its medical work," said Silvestre Gonzalez, executive secretary for the church in the Caribbean nation of more than 9 million, which occupies one half of the island of Hispaniola. Haiti is its next-door neighbor on the island.

President Fernandez thanked the nine church leaders for the meeting. "We are so busy in our work that sometimes we fail to see that there are valuable groups like you that can do so much for society, for the benefit of others," he said.

Cesario Acevedo, president of the church in the Dominican Republic, gave words of encouragement to Fernandez and offered a prayer for the leader and his government.

The Adventist Church, with its more than 238,000 members in the Dominican Republic, operates 92 elementary and secondary schools, one university, six radio stations, and one hospital.

—*Libna Stevens, Inter-American Division, with Adventist News Network.*

Kukuku Clinic, an isolated Seventh-day Adventist health-care center in the Solomon Islands, is the poster child for a new initiative by the Health Ministries Department in the Adventist Church's South Pacific region. Five years ago, the then meagerly staffed and supplied clinic first received funding from church members at the Hillview Adventist Church in Morisset, New South Wales, Australia.

Today, the clinic is clean, efficient, and fully contributes to the church's medical outreach work in the region.

But unlike Kukuku Clinic, most of the 54 health clinics operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific are reportedly in need of more emergency care than the patients they serve. Some 70 percent don't have medical equipment to check blood pressure, local church health officials discovered during a three-month evaluation earlier this year.

To revive the ailing health-care centers, Adventist health officials in the region are launching Adopt a Clinic, a program to team each Adventist church in Australia and New Zealand with one of the region's clinics, which range from bush huts to modern-style buildings.

Continued next page



KEY LOCATION: Local Adventist health officials say the church-operated Kukuku Clinic in the Solomon Islands is a key health-care center for the isolated region, due in part to five years of support from the Hillview Adventist Church in Morisset, New South Wales, Australia. Church leaders in the region are modeling the Adopt a Clinic program after the Kukuku-Hillview partnership.

SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION

WORLD REPORT

“What amazed me most was the steadfast commitment shown by the staff in these dilapidated clinics without so much as a stethoscope,” says Dr. Peter Landless, an associate health ministries director for the Adventist world church, who visited the South Pacific region recently. “Many in similar situations might have said, ‘You know, we’ve had enough. Let’s pack our things.’ But they stayed on, and this program gives them hope.”

The 80 to 90 percent of the South Pacific’s population

But the support does not extend to building maintenance or adequate equipment. Staff battle termites and rust and often live in houses more “appalling” than the clinics where they work, Duffy has observed.

Some say repair and maintenance of local clinics lie with the villagers they serve, but most of the indigenous people are subsistence workers who do what they can but are not able to support the clinics, Landless says. Given the region’s rampant poverty and unemployment, he says

self-sufficiency for the clinics is not feasible and that Adopt a Clinic will likely be “a long-term relationship.”

In Tumbolbil, situated in the New Guinean highlands, one clinic, built by villagers equipped only with axes, awaits funds for furnishing and medical supplies.

Each church will provide US\$1,000 to \$40,000 over time to fully refurbish one clinic, Duffy estimates. “That doesn’t mean that a church will have to be very rich, but that they have a mission focus,” Landless says. “Whenever a church stops focusing purely on itself, its mission flourishes.”

Duffy, too, expects the benefits of Adopt a Clinic will boomerang. “It’s

easy for our churches to become more congregational and focused on just what happens within their church, and the Adopt a Clinic program would give them a broader mission focus.”

So far, congregational response to the program is “overwhelming,” Duffy says. He expects the moral support resulting from the clinic-church partnerships will prove as valuable as the money. Villagers on remote islands often feel isolated from the world church, he says, and Adopt a Clinic will let them know that “they are not forgotten, but [are] a part of a big church family.”

At Hillview, members hope a 50-foot catamaran they’re turning into a mobile clinic will boost that sense of connectedness. By December the boat will provide medical care to the islands in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands—just east of New Guinea and northeast of Australia—where few clinics exist. Oliver expects similar mobile clinics will follow.

Duffy says the church’s South Pacific region headquarters is distributing DVDs about the Adopt a Clinic program to each church in the area. ●



Top to Bottom: HANDMADE CLINIC:

In the New Guinean village of Tumbolbil, villagers—equipped only with axes and other hand tools—built a clinic, which, along with dozens of others in the region, awaits funds for furnishing and medical supplies from an Adopt a Clinic church partnership.

LOW SUPPLIES: Following a three-month evaluation, church health officials in the South Pacific determined

some 70 percent of the region’s clinics are so undersupplied that staff don’t have medical equipment to check blood pressure.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION

that lives in remote areas of the region depends on small local clinics for health care, immunizations, and emergency treatment. But often staff at the nearest clinic don’t have so much as running water or electricity, let alone the more advanced medical supplies needed to prevent and treat malaria and waterborne diseases that otherwise spread unbridled in the region.

Villages without a clinic face an additional challenge: the cost of traveling to a clinic via inter-island canoe often far exceeds a family’s annual income, says Trevor Oliver, a member of the Hillview Adventist Church. Oliver says most of the islands are too small to support airstrips, making travel by makeshift watercraft the only way to get even rudimentary medical treatment.

“As a church, we’ve long been proud of our health work, but we haven’t always been able to keep up with the growth of the church when it comes to maintaining our health facilities,” Landless says.

Most of the clinics receive basic drug supplies and staff wages from the government, says Jonathan Duffy, director of health ministries for the church’s South Pacific region.

WINDOW

Into Belarus

By HANS OLSON



ALEXANDER LOYKO

OLGA MACHKOVA

Tucked between the Baltic and Black Seas, Belarus was settled by Eastern Slavs during the sixth century. The Eastern Slavs joined forces with Baltic Slavs and Scandinavians to form Kievan Rus. This early polity ruled the region for some 400 years. After the fall of Kievan Rus, Belarus was divided between several neighboring countries, chiefly Russia and Poland.

For one year, from 1918 until 1919, Belarus was an independent country that ultimately became part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). In 1945 Belarus, along with Russia, became a charter member of the United Nations. When Soviet Communism fell in 1991, Belarus declared itself an independent country and formed a presidential republic.

Ethnic Russians have long lived in Belarus, but it wasn't until the end of World War II that the Russians substantively moved into the region. Most Russians have integrated into Belarusian society, but have kept their own national culture and language. Russian is now considered one of Belarus' national languages.

This landlocked nation borders Russia on the east, Poland on the west,

Ukraine on the south, and Latvia and Lithuania on the north.

Belarus' key position between Europe and Asia and its hard-to-defend borders and flat plains have made the country a common battlefield in times of war. According to some sources, at least one fourth of the country's population died during World War II. Today the country is considered economically stable, but it depends largely on Russia for raw materials and oil to produce its biggest exports: manufactured goods and farm products.

The 1986 Chernobyl catastrophe in neighboring Ukraine blanketed Belarus with toxic, radioactive debris. More than 20 years later, nearly 20 percent of the Belarusians still live within areas that have radiation levels beyond that considered safe. The catastrophe continues to affect the country's morale and sense of mortality. People have turned to religion for comfort as a result.

When Communism fell, many former Party members and nonreligious people returned to the faith of their forebears, either Russian Orthodox or Roman Catholic. In this culture so-called minority faiths struggle to gain a foothold. Adventists

have experienced various kinds of oppression, including arson and threats on pastors' personal safety.

According to police reports first made public in the 1990s at the St. Petersburg Tsarist libraries, in 1906 there was an Adventist church in Minsk with 14 members and another in Mogilyev with 17 members. However, the first official Adventist company in Belarus was organized in 1925 in Zhoekino, a village in the Brest region. Within five years Belarus had a total of six churches and 215 Adventists.

By 1960 some 550 Adventists lived in Belarus, but the church was no longer officially organized. In 1990 the church was reorganized. Today the Adventist Church is slowly growing in Belarus with some 5,000 members worshipping in 83 churches and companies. The Belarus Conference is part of the Euro-Asia Division.

For more information about Adventist mission in Belarus and elsewhere in the world, visit www.Global-Mission.org.



BELARUS

Capital	Minsk
Official Languages	Belarusian and Russian
Population	9.7 million
Ethnic Groups	Belarusian 81%, Russian 11%, Polish 4%, Unknown 4%
Religion	Eastern Orthodox 80%, other major religions (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim) 20%
Adventist membership	5,000
Adventist to population ratio	1:1,955



Working Together, Seeking Consensus

Mission challenges around the world, the church's organizational structure, funding outreach in the 10/40 window, and attitudes toward cohabitation and same-sex partnerships—these were a few of the issues considered by some 300 church leaders from every part of the world church who gathered recently at the General Conference. In a conversation with Adventist World editor Bill Knott, General Conference president Jan Paulsen discusses some of the key decisions of the 2007 Annual Council, and reflects on the significance of this yearly event.

Bill Knott: Pastor Paulsen, what makes Annual Council an important event for the church?

Jan Paulsen: This is a unique occasion in the life of our global church. It's the time each year when church leadership comes together from around the world—from every country where we have a presence. We meet together to counsel, plan, agree on statements, and decide how to share our resources. It's a process of consultation and of seeking consensus. There are times when we can't find complete consensus. But the mission of the church never stops, and so we work toward decisions with a spirit of deference toward each other and with sensitivity to how our actions will impact the world field.

Most committee members are elected church leaders or administrators of church institutions. But there are always a number of church pastors as well, who are not there by virtue of elected position. As a church we are saying: "We need to hear directly from those who nurture our congregations." We also include a significant number of lay people from each world division; we want their voice to be heard clearly.

So this isn't just a "magisterial" event?

It's not. It's not a show. We're very deliberate about doing this with openness and transparency, and with the



broadest possible spectrum of the church involved in decision-making.

I was struck by the fact that when a decision was almost evenly split, committee members seemed to be saying: "If we're this divided then we're not yet ready to make the decision." There was agreement, among even the parties who differed, that we needed to stop, rethink, and reformulate and see if we could emerge with something better.

Exactly. I thought there was a wonderful spirit. I was so pleased when one individual, who had great concerns about the wording of a proposed statement, was able to speak out and have adjustments made. He came back later to the microphone and said: "This is what I love about my church. We can be open, and supportive, and work together to find a way forward." I thought this said something about the spirit in which we do our work.

The issues are not always easy. One item at this Annual Council touched on how we, as a church, relate to those who make lifestyle choices that run counter to

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our values. And for some, these issues are difficult to even talk about: cohabitation; what constitutes marriage; those who establish relationships with a same-sex partner. [See “Safeguarding Mission in Changing Social Environments” at www.adventist.org/beliefs/other_documents/safeguarding.html.]

We have to remember that the church exists in the world; we cannot step out of it. We’ll encounter many different points of view, many things we may not like. And so at this Annual Council we needed to find language that could carry the same standards back into every part of the world church, into every culture. And do it with sensitivity to the will of God and to the frailty of humanity. The process of voting this statement became a typical example of our global church, which encompasses huge cultural differences, looking at a sensitive issue and finding a way to express a shared understanding.

And that, in a way, is the church at its finest. It’s an example of moving past a strictly democratic process to one that reflects the nature of the church as a Spirit-led entity. You can win a vote but damage unity at the same moment.

Yes. At Annual Council we do something that no other church does. When we make decisions about core issues—whether they are policies, position statements, or the sharing of resources—we come to agreement as a worldwide family. We pray together and we look at the authoritative documents—the Scriptures, the writings of Ellen White—and we search our own hearts. And then we affirm where we are as a global church.

A few years ago we made a decision to change the timing of Annual Council so we would always begin by celebrating the Sabbath together. This is not merely an “introduction” to Annual Council. Our first and most

important item of “business” is to worship God. And then on Sunday we set aside the morning to look at the mission agenda of the church. Since 2005, we’ve focused on the “Tell the World” initiative. We spend time looking at how we’re doing: hearing reports and statistics, and considering challenges. By starting every Annual Council with Sabbath worship and with a mission focus we build a foundation for all that follows. It’s our intention that everything the Executive Committee does will be shaped and driven by the church’s spiritual mandate.

Perhaps, in times past, some have felt Annual Council has been primarily driven by financial issues. But are you saying this new agenda reflects our most basic concern—mission—and that church finances take their place merely to support this?

Yes, both during Annual Council and in our premeetings with division leadership, we constantly ask: How do we make sure that our use of resources reflects our mission priority?

This year we were presented with an unusual situation. The church received a large amount of money—funds that were given very specifically for the mission work of the church. How should these resources be used? We’re now in the process of consulting with each of the world church divisions to develop a list of core mission activities. I use the word “core” because we are not thinking of “novelties”—plans we might try out for a while, but then discontinue.

We are talking instead about what, for lack of a better expression, is the “bread and butter” of the church’s mission; things we have been called to do. We must be more effective in reaching into the “10/40 window” [a geographical region that stretches from West Africa, through the Middle East, and into Asia]. We must develop the resources that will allow us to go into these regions where so few people have heard about Christ. And there are other places outside the 10/40 window where we’re also very thin on the ground. I would include in this the large cities of the world, where more than 50 percent of the world’s population lives, and where the church does not have a strong presence.

There was an expression that Elder Bob Lemon [General Conference treasurer] used in regard to these funds: “It will move the mission of the church ahead by half a generation.” I asked him to unpack that, and he said: “There are plans we’ve had on the drawing board, which

WORLD VISTA

we saw happening perhaps in 7 to 10 years from now. But these have become possible much sooner.” As you listened to various leaders at Annual Council, did you hear a sense of hope because of this possibility?

Yes, very much so, from every part of the world field. These funds will be focused on the church’s global mission, and I expect in the next few years we’ll move forward with a number of core activities that will widen and advance the



mission impact of the church around the world. These tithes have come to us as the expression of someone’s faithfulness to God, and in our use of these resources, we will demonstrate that same faithfulness to God.

Annual Council also voted—by an overwhelming majority—some recommendations that would seem to have far-reaching consequences for church structure. What was the significance of this?

This marks an important change in our mindset. Historically, we’ve defined church structure in a somewhat wooden, inflexible manner. The walls have been fixed and very specific: the local church, the local conference, the union, and then the divisions and the General Conference. Wherever you are, you fit into one of these “predefined slots.”

While we haven’t done away with these slots, we’re now saying to church leadership: Examine your needs, your resources, your capacity, the mission before you, and what makes sense within your boundaries—whether they are national, language, or cultural boundaries. And then ask yourself: “How can we best do mission? What structures will best serve the church where we are?” This is

a significant paradigm shift—the needs of the church will drive its structure.

But it’s important to remember that there are two structural anchor points that will remain: on one end is the local, constituency-based congregation, and on the other end is the link with the global church family—through the divisions and General Conference. Regardless of how the church defines itself locally, it must never forget that it belongs to something that is larger—something global.

It seems that these new guidelines allow greater flexibility at the constituent level to determine the use of resources. I suspect one of the driving forces for this is the desire to reserve more funds for mission.

Yes, very much so. Lay people in many different countries have said: “We have to ease the burden of so much administrative structure. We’re short of pastors. Our resources are not sufficient. Our membership is small and seems not to grow. Can we find a better way?” Unions of churches are an alternative that may serve the church well in these areas. At Annual Council we affirmed that alternative and made clearer provision for unions of churches in policy.

But the new principle of flexibility goes beyond this: divisions now have the ability to make structural arrangements that meet other unique local needs. In areas where there’s rapid church growth—such as in some parts of Latin America or Africa—church leaders may want to have some local supervision in place before the territory is ready to be defined according to one of the preexisting slots. Once the area is settled and matured, and there is infrastructure in place, then one of the regular categories of structure can be used.

What the church is saying is: Consider the needs of the church—with a constant eye to mission and unity; consider its capacity in terms of resources. And let these be the defining criteria in the administrative structure that is set up.

A final question: What would happen to the church if we didn’t have an Annual Council?

It’s inconceivable to me that this church could function as a global family if we did not constantly come together around the table. If we didn’t, the church would very quickly start to come apart as a worldwide community. Annual Council represents a sharing of our resources, our plans, and our policies. It’s the moment each year when we reconnect as a global church, when we recommit ourselves to a shared vision and to the mission God has entrusted to us. ●



Reducing Cancer Risk

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES
and PETER N. LANDLESS

Are there steps I can take to reduce my risk of cancer?

Your question is very topical—and the answer is yes. At the end of October 2007, the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) released a very important report on this subject.* It is the most comprehensive ever published on the link between cancer and diet, physical activity (exercise), and body weight. Seven thousand studies were used as the basis for the analysis of the data. The panel that constructed the report was composed of 21 world-renowned scientists. Among the official observers of the report's process and progress were UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Keeping your body weight at a healthy level is one of the most important things you can do to prevent cancer. There is convincing evidence that at least six different kinds of cancer are related to increased body fat. These include cancer of the large bowel (colorectal cancer) and breast cancer that occurs after menopause.

The recommendation from the WCRF is to be as lean as possible within the healthy range and to avoid gaining weight throughout adulthood. If one is overweight one should aim to reduce weight. This is a lifelong commitment and sometimes a struggle! We know that from our own personal experience.

Other important findings of the WCRF include the following:

- Processed meats increase the

risk of colorectal cancer.

- The evidence that red meat is a cause of colorectal cancer is very strong. The WCRF recommends that people should not eat more than 500 grams, or approximately 1 pound (in cooked weight), of red meat per week.
- Breastfeeding is strongly recommended. Mothers are advised to breastfeed exclusively for six months. Thereafter they are urged to continue breastfeeding as part of the feeding scheme (complementary breastfeeding). Breastfeeding helps to protect the mother against breast cancer. It is probable that breastfeeding also protects the child against obesity in later life.
- Dietary supplements are not recommended for cancer prevention. We have shared studies previously that show that substances such as beta carotene, when taken as a supplement, can increase the incidence of cancer.
- The evidence that alcohol causes cancer is stronger now than ever before. This emphasizes yet another already known health hazard of alcohol. It also gives perspective to the recommendation that some make that one should take a glass of wine daily to improve heart health; well, one glass of wine daily is sufficient to cause a significant increase in breast cancer in women in menopause! Exercise and weight control are able to improve heart health and protect against cancer. Why should one then take the risk of drinking alcohol when it can be addictive, is a proven carcinogen (agent in the causation of cancer), and impairs judgment and choices?

Other recommendations for cancer prevention:

- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes every day. Any type of activity counts. The more you do, the better.
- Avoid sugary drinks and processed foods high in sugar and fat and low in fiber.
- Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and legumes.
- Limit consumption of salty foods and food processed with salt.
- After treatment for cancer, cancer patients should follow the guidelines for cancer prevention.
- Never chew, smoke, or snuff tobacco.

These recommendations echo and reflect the counsel given by Ellen White starting with the 1863 health vision. These same principles have been confirmed by the Loma Linda University Adventist Health Studies and are now formulated as prevention guidelines throughout the world. It is important to note that cancer has many varied causes. Preventive measures delay and modify these other factors, but do not guarantee a cancer-free life this side of the kingdom. ●

*www.wcrf-uk.org/research_science/recommendations.lasso



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Awesome Dimensions

By LAWRENCE G. DOWNING

John 3:16. It's perhaps the most well-known text in the entire Bible: *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

What follows below is a simple reflection on this familiar scripture.

"For God So Loved"

Love that rests quiet within a private reserve does little for anyone other than the person in whom it resides. Quiescent love may offer comfort when held close, but true love—the love that is from God—is of a different kind. The love we find in John 3:16 brooded deep within, broke forth, and was made manifest. It's a love that has been nurtured and charged. The dynamic of God's love was evidenced in a specific Person at a specific time in a specific place for a specific purpose.

"That He Gave"

God gave His Son. "The wonder of it all!" wrote the poet. The wonder of it all that God should give! We cannot fathom the intricacies that led to the decision to leave heavenly places and share our earthly life. How could this be? We have no comparison to try out our theories of what we call Incarnation. There is but one answer: God's love—*agape* in Greek. What power, this love!

The fate of our world depends upon this love. And when it fills and envelops us, we have the courage and the faith to face tomorrow and the endless tomorrows that will follow.

Love defines God's character. God gave. We receive. And in this gift is life, now and forevermore.

"His Only Begotten Son"

The mystery of God's person: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! No word or metaphor, no turn of phrase nor stretch of mind, can make it simple for us to understand the Godhead. God's only begotten Son, God's unique Son—how does one put into a tidy package the notion that

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The most familiar

an eternal Being has an eternal Son? Explain this if you can. What comes before forever? What comes after everlasting? In the beginning was the Word and the Word was God (John 1:1). God gave this Word to our world.

Our knowledge and comprehension are built on the development of a relationship between existing things. One thing follows and is related to another. We know that when a switch completes an electrical circuit to a bulb, the result is light. We turn a knob and a picture forms before our eyes. We know the elemental laws that govern such things. Electrons are not foreign to us.

But now this! How can we put words or thoughts around the statement that proclaims God gave His unique Son? Our logic ends before it can begin.

"That Whoever Believes in Him"

Believe! Only believe. At the root of belief is trust. So this is a trust statement. But what are the boundaries of your trust?

Suppose a person on the street comes up to you and announces that they have in their pocket a check for one million dollars, given them, they say, by some strange fate. And this unknown soul tells you they are ready to endorse the entire sum to you, giving you no reason for such



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text in the Bible brings it all together.

generosity. Saying only that you look like a good person, they hand over the check, signed right and proper. Would you rush to the bank and demand payment? A check for a million dollars from the hand of a stranger likely exceeds your trust boundary.

But suppose a friend gives you a check for five dollars, what are the limits of the trust between that person and you? Would your trust boundary extend far enough for you to deposit that check?

The belief system we're talking about in John 3:16 does not involve money, of course. Life is the issue here—your life and mine. And the question is: how wide is your trust boundary? How wide is mine? Do you trust—do you believe—that God will save Simon Peter or the apostle John? How about Moses or Abraham? Do you believe that Jesus' mother, Mary, will be in the kingdom? If you have no doubts about these, then why not?

So then, does your trust boundary extend to the point where you believe that God will save you? That you are included in God's kingdom? The text before us asks us to accept that God in His love gave His Son, so that you and I could be citizens of the kingdom.

God's integrity is at stake. It's a contract. It does not come with complications and legalese. Rather, it's a simple,

straightforward, declarative sentence: "Whoever believes in Him..."

It does not say "Whoever believes and promises never to sin again." Or, "Whoever believes and lives the kind of life a good Christian should." No, Jesus simply says, "Whoever." This means anybody—anybody and everybody who believes on Him.

Is this cheap grace? No. We don't have a permission slip to live whatever life we please. The statement in John 3:16 is a statement of *cause*, a statement of *process*. We're saved through faith, by our belief—our trust—in Jesus Christ. Period! Additions to this statement are unacceptable. Amendments to it are overruled. We must take it as it is: God loved the world and its creatures so much that He chose to give His Son so that anyone who makes the choice to believe will have everlasting life.

Think of this promise as God's bond.

"Should Not Perish but Have Everlasting Life"

Here we have two mutually exclusive words: *perish* and *life*. We cannot have life and, at the same time, perish.

From all that we know about God's plans and purposes for His creation, perishing was not part of the original deal. We were created with life and everything necessary for its continuance. But we know what went wrong. We have a notion of the events that broke the life-chain, but exactly how it all came about is more complex.

What we can say, however, is that at the point where God's plans for the human family went awry, at the point where our first parents chose to violate their Maker's explicit command and go their own way—at that point a new factor appeared, the reality of *perishing*. Before this the idea of perishing was only a distant option.

To separate from the source of life is to perish. But God was prepared—with the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. And now life is again possible. The text does not extend an invitation. Rather, it's a collection of statements describing an action, namely, *what God has done*. We learn why the action was taken and we're told about its result.

We call it God's great salvation plan! "For God so loved, that He gave." ●



Lawrence G. Downing was the senior pastor of the Ellen White Memorial Church in Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. when he wrote this article. He now teaches at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) in the Philippines.

I leaned toward the window, crowding the passenger next to me in an effort to get a glimpse of the approaching Honduran coastline. It was beautiful—emerald green mountains emerging from clear blue Caribbean waters, hillside fields of fruit dissected by lazy rivers flowing by thatched-roof dwellings.

An hour later we were driving away from our arrival city, San Pedro Sula, headed for the small town of Santa Barbara in the northwestern region of the country. After several hours of lurching through mountain roads in a particularly valiant school bus, we arrived at El Hogar de Niños (The Children's Home), sponsored by REACH International, Inc., a humanitarian aid organization based in Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States, that focuses on providing help to children.

El Hogar is an unassuming place, just off the main road into town, perched on the side of a hill surrounded by mountains. Built like a large hacienda, the concrete block structure houses almost 50 children between the ages of 7 and 18. I was there with other members of my home church—Washington Spanish Adventist Church in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States—to help construct additional living spaces and do other much-needed maintenance to the facility. As I walked up the dirt driveway, lined by palm trees and leading from the road to the compound, I had no idea this place would change my life.

El Hogar originated with seven children 12 years ago, when director Nelson Rodriguez witnessed the dire need after returning to his hometown following six years in the United States. Even today, several babies are left at the local hospital every month by mothers who cannot take care of them. At first Rodriguez focused on the children's immediate needs—food, clothing, and other basic necessities. But as the children began to grow, Rodriguez realized another essential was education. Finding no elementary school to fit the bill, however, he decided to establish one just down the hill from El Hogar. That school now provides affordable education to the region and serves nearly 200 students.

Eventually, as the children's education progressed, a high school was opened in a nearby government-abandoned facility. Almost 150 students are currently enrolled—and the school continues to expand.

About two years ago, the high school launched an



César Antonio González is initiatives coordinator of the North American Division Adventist Volunteer Ministries Network.

From the Mouths of Ba

By CÉSAR ANTONIO
GONZÁLEZ

accredited nursing program. Rodriguez, a licensed nurse anesthetist, spearheaded the initiative so career options would be available to the older students when they leave El Hogar, which the law requires them to do when they reach the age of 18. The first class of nurses will graduate in April 2008.

But Rodriguez could not stop with El Hogar and the three schools.

"People kept asking us to take care of their children for just a couple of days, but we were just not set up to do it," Rodriguez says. So after getting permission to utilize yet another unused government property, Rodriguez launched a day care center in the town. Remarkably, every weekday at about 10:30 in the morning children as young as 4 years just start showing up at the center—many by themselves. Caring staff feed and care for them, and teach them the alphabet and numbers. The children also play together, learn songs, and hear Bible stories. Then late in the afternoon, they head back to their homes.

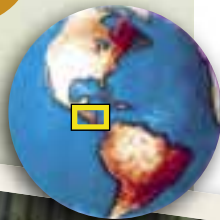
Watching a 5-year-old wandering off into the hills alone is an experience I won't soon forget, but that's the way life is for them. With a 40-percent unemployment rate, those parents who have work are the lucky ones, and they are very grateful to have a center that cares for their children.

El Hogar is at once the happiest and saddest place I've ever been to in my life. A child can find refuge there for one of only three reasons: they must be orphaned, abandoned, or abused. Because of this, one might imagine El Hogar as a dreary place—but the reality is far from it. Energy that is difficult to describe abounds. Life there seems pure and powerful, undiluted by distractions and superficial commitments. I lived while I was there.

In speaking with the children it was not uncommon to

A mission trip to Honduras imparts a closer view of God.

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Top to bottom: PRAISING GOD: In their praise during worship time, the children seem to forget the tragedies in their lives and sing as if they understand that God is

their most prized possession. **THE REASON FOR THE SACRIFICE:** The children's home houses almost 50 children between the ages of 7 and 18.

PHOTOS BY CÉSAR GONZÁLEZ AND GRACE GONZÁLEZ

hear about the life-shattering events that brought them to El Hogar—parents killed in accidents or by thieves; mothers involved in prostitution and not capable of caring for their children; older children from a previous relationship abandoned after a new marriage; or reasons much worse. But the good that El Hogar is doing is evident in every young face.

On my first evening there I met Manuel—or rather, he claimed me. I was sitting in a rocking chair on the veranda, minding my own business, when he came walking by and just sat on me, as if we were old friends or I were a piece of furniture. We talked a bit, and then he wandered off.

Later I learned how Manuel came to El Hogar. As a deathly ill baby he was abandoned at the day care center. Erica Russell, an American volunteer working at the orphanage, took on the task of caring for Manuel, both day and night, until he recovered. Today Manuel is thriving and more precocious than most; he can usually be found climbing the nearest tree.

Caring for and feeding so many children is a difficult challenge shared by a small but wonderfully dedicated staff and led by sisters Maria Jose and Maria Jesus Hernandez from Spain. It costs only US\$20 dollars a month to care for one child.

The children are not idle. So much work needs to be done that the children themselves spend much of their time doing chores. The boys work hot afternoons in the fields, where they grow vegetables to supplement their food supply. The girls do most of the daily cleaning and laundry. The children also clean the schools after class, help in the kitchen, and wash an endless pile of dishes after every meal. I often remember one young girl whose job it was to haul a wheelbarrow full of wet clothes from the laundry to the hillside to be hung up to dry, her tiny arms straining but a smile always on her face.

The spirit of these kids seems unbreakable. In the two weeks I was there I never witnessed a fight—or even an argument. They did their jobs without complaint. They shared everything they had. And the stronger ones looked after the weaker.

The memory I cherish the most, however, was evening worship. Listening to those children sing was a spiritual highlight of my life. Joy poured out of them in a way rarely witnessed and difficult to describe. In their praise they seemed to forget the tragedies in their lives and sang as if they understood that God was their most prized possession. Heaven and earth were in close proximity.

It was not only a privilege but a pleasure to give of myself to these children. Could it be that I, too, am so precious in Jesus' eyes that He feels the same way about His sacrifice for me?

To contact El Hogar de Niños, e-mail director Nelson Rodriguez at nar@hondutel.hn.

The Power of Hope

By ADRIAN BOCANEANU



The following is a condensation of a sermon delivered by the author during the Annual Council of the General Conference in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A., in October 2007.—EDITORS.

When sharing with His disciples the prophetic message recorded in Matthew 24 and 25, Jesus was fully aware of the tragic events soon to come upon Him. He also expressed many concerns for the future of His beloved church in a disintegrating world.

Surprisingly, however, He seems to downplay these catastrophic movements and asks His followers not to become obsessed with them. Against the disheartening background, He raises His voice twice in triumphant tones when giving us assurances of the complete victory of the gospel: It “will be preached in all the world” (24:14), He says; and it will produce a worldwide harvest to be gathered by angels “from one end of heaven to the other” (24:30, 31).

Jesus Is Not an Alarmist

I see a certain pattern in chapter 24 of Matthew. Jesus starts with a warning that expresses His concerns

for the church. He speaks as the Pastor of His beloved flock: “Take heed that no one deceives you” (verse 4). He then names some of the dangers to confront the church after His return to the Father: messiahs with forged identities, wars and rumors of wars, famines and earthquakes. But Jesus seems to minimize the importance of these events as prophetic indicators of an imminent return. This is the way history is going to be, He seems to be saying. Do not panic. Do not become obsessed with statistics. Do not spend time gathering data that this generation is worse than others. “This is routine history; this is no sign of the end,” as *The Message* paraphrases verse 6.

Then Jesus comes closer to His church and speaks first on the terrible times He envisions for it. The Champion of love is heartbroken to conclude that “the love of many will grow cold” (verse 12). But now in verses 13 and 14 He makes two surprisingly positive predictions in regard to *steadfastness* and *evangelism*. (We will return to these verses below.)

A little later Jesus seems to start again, warning the church against false christs (verse 23). He predicts an

unparalleled time of tribulation and even informs us that that time is going to be shortened (verses 21, 22). He then describes the circumstances of His true coming (verses 27-30), and then reaches a new climax of His prophetic message with verse 31, echoing what He had said in verse 14. In verse 14 He’d said that the gospel will be preached in all the world, and now we learn that there will result a worldwide harvest and that “His elect” will be gathered “from one end of heaven to the other”!

What strange, wonderful words for Him to utter there on the Mount of Olives, rejected and despised (as He was) by the leading men of the nation, and with suffering and shameful death just ahead of Him!

“He will send His angels.” They are His, for He Himself is God. The voice of the trumpet at Mount Sinai was exceedingly loud. How much louder and more awful will be the trumpet call that wakes the dead and summons the living and the dead alike before His throne!

The angels are His; the elect are His; they are Christ’s, bought with His precious blood; His, because they have been made “elect according to



the foreknowledge of God the Father” (1 Peter 1:2), and given to the only begotten Son. They are His, and none can pluck them out of His hand. His angels will gather them from the four winds. Not one of them will be lost, wherever they may be, in the remotest corners of the earth, or lying in long-forgotten graves.

The angels will gather them all—from the cottage and from the palace, from the crowded cities of Asia and from the *altiplano* (the cold highlands) of South America; from the sophisticated centers of learning in Western Europe and North America and from the huts of the world’s war refugees. The angels will bring every one of God’s elect safe to the Lord who loved them and died for them, in whom they have believed, and whom they have loved and trusted even unto death.

Exciting Predictions

Let’s now return to verses 13 and 14. Here we have, side by side, two glorious predictions of this end-time message of Christ: one on the *steadfastness of His followers* and the second on the *universality of the gospel proclamation*.

They’re presented together because they belong to each other. Steadfast patience, perseverance in our allegiance to Christ, is absolutely necessary to the proclamation of the gospel message. And who are those who are going to resist every attack on their faith and love? What makes them so unshakeable? Are they naturally strong, defiant, and insensitive to physical pain or emotional distress?

Probably not! Rather it’s because they have *hope*—they’ve trusted the promises of their Savior and made them the center of their lives.

I’m astonished when I see the progress the gospel is making with the support of modern technology. We have preached that in the time of the end “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase” (Dan. 12:4). And the results are amazing. Modern transportation at affordable prices, work emigration, peace in places previously known for permanent troubles, digital communication, and relative prosperity in places with no history of sufficiency. All these stimulate young and old to go everywhere, from the most familiar places to the most unreached territories.

What God Has Done!

I’m privileged to work as a church pastor and also for the television station our church launched in Romania. The day before I left to come here, the youth leaders of my church took an action to start the preparation for a mission trip to Africa next year. We come out from isolation and look around and see the world as our mission field. In this committee we have a very young lay member from Romania. He is a student in dental medicine, and he has already been on three medical missionary projects in Central and South America! A group of 30 just returned from Kenya—among them a couple of high school and college students, the wife of the Romanian Union president, and the whole family of the treasurer.

And I cannot tell you how delighted I am when I see every day



Adrian Bocaneanu is the director of Hope Channel in Romania, and a local church pastor in the Euro-African Division.



thousands of homes added to our list of potential viewers for Speranta TV, the newest member of the Hope Channel family. Now we count on almost 2 million homes by cable and DTH*—not to mention the Internet. In five months there have been 1.2 million visits to our Web site, where people can watch us live.

It's incredible! We started the use of satellite technology only a few years ago (with NET '96 and NET '98, and then It Is Written's ACTS 2000 project in Bucharest, Romania), and now, only a few years later, we have a 24/7 Romanian program entering millions of homes across Europe!

The other day one of our technicians was calling a company to order a product. When he gave his e-mail address, the man asked: "Really? Do you work for Speranta.tv? I like it very much. Congratulations!" I just received a message from a viewer who in the beginning was so upset that his cable company had added our program to the menu that he

called them asking to remove us. They didn't, and now that same viewer was writing to say how much they like us!

And what's happening in Romania is just a little bit of this growing work around the world. From this very place, streams of light, compelling initiatives, and generous endowments flow to every part of the world—all for this single purpose: *the gospel into the whole world, and as soon as possible*. More than in the past, this is a generation of hope that what previously seemed to be a hopeless task is now being fulfilled. Of such people Jesus said: "This generation will by no means pass away till all things take place" (Luke 21:32).

Not by Technological Power

In the end, however, success will not be decided by who has the best technology or who is managing the financial resources in the most efficient manner. The gospel will be preached in the whole world, Jesus said, by those only who endure. And the only reason to endure and remain unshaken is *hope*.

Sometimes the testimony of the people of hope comes in unexpected

ways, under the disguise of apparent weakness and defeat. The impact it makes on people often is brought to light only after long delays, as evidenced by the following story, which I take verbatim from a Romanian newspaper with the highest circulation in the country. Written by a journalist I've never met, it was published about the beginning of 2007, a time when the country was fiercely debating certain religious freedom issues surrounding the removal of Orthodox icons from Romanian classrooms—icons that had been installed after the fall of Communism. Entitled "Forgive Me, Beatrice!" the story ran as follows:

"About a quarter of a century ago, I was a seventh-grade schoolboy in a workers' section of Bucharest. I had a schoolmate called Beatrice. She was short, beautiful, and smart. She would sit on the second bench, the middle row. She was the best in the class. She wouldn't speak without permission. And she was dressed in compliance with the regulations. In short, she was a dream child, compared with the rest of us—noisy, nasty, and rebellious.

"For the whole class, Beatrice was

*The gospel will be
preached in the whole
world by those only who
endure. And the only reason
to endure and remain
unshaken is **hope.***

a mystery. We all felt a strong envy of her. At that time it was something unbelievable for a school child to miss one full day of classes every week. Besides missing all Saturday classes, Beatrice would also leave before the last classes on Friday. We all had classes in the afternoon, so as soon as the dusk would come, she would gather her things and disappear. She was like a Cinderella hastily leaving the ballroom before midnight.

“Beatrice was a daughter of physicians, and her family belonged to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Every Saturday she was reported as missing without reason. The principal of the school and other members of the administration were always asking her parents to come to the school, where they were blamed, humiliated, and threatened. Beatrice herself was discussed and criticized in every school meeting, scolded and despised for her faith.

“One Friday afternoon we had a history class. Toward the end, five minutes before recess, the teacher suggested to the class to prevent Beatrice from leaving. ‘It’s time to put an end to this special treatment,’ she said. ‘I will

ask your schoolmates to keep you here in class. And I will remain here until the next teacher comes.’

“Beatrice, undaunted by threatening, quietly started to gather her possessions. The teacher called us to intervene. Some boys, including myself, jumped to the door, keeping it closed. Others surrounded her, trying to convince her to give up. Beatrice sat back on her chair. After a few minutes of listening to our senseless insults, she covered her ears as if to protect herself and began weeping. Tears ran down her cheeks like two rivulets finding their way to daylight. We were in shock and powerless. There was perfect silence, as if, in that same instant, the whole class had a revelation. We all were ashamed of ourselves.

“Not paying any attention to the protests of our teacher, we all returned to our places, humble and penitent. Beatrice went out, tears still running down her beautiful face. Above us reigned the only icon allowed in schools in those years—featuring Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu.

“From that day on, Beatrice no longer had problems when the time


would come to leave from school. A mysterious solidarity developed among us. We actually helped her go—we surrounded her and walked with her out in the corridors to prevent teachers from observing her. We shared our notes from Saturday classes, and we even whispered to her when examined—even though she never was in a need for that. Two years later she emigrated with her family. I don’t know anything about her since then.

“In a normal society, if there is just one school with just one student coming from a family with a different faith, icons should be taken out from classrooms. Otherwise cohorts of children will live again and again the painful story of Beatrice.”

You see, 25 years later this man was speaking out. His encounter as a 12- or 13-year-old schoolboy with a tiny Adventist Sabbathkeeper had changed his understanding and given him, years later, the moral courage to take an unpopular stand. An emotional encounter with a steadfast Christian giving a testimony of her faith had started a process that eventually bore fruit.

Building Hope

Our task—our main task—is to build such witnesses of hope. They are our most precious asset, worth every energizing hour we spend with them, worth every invigorating sermon we preach to them, worth every training session we deliver to them, and worth every sacrifice we make to affirm, empower, and equip them. All the means in the church are nothing without people with such hope prepared to endure to the end. All the means in the church are not too much to spend in building such persons of hope.

They are the best-kept secrets of the army of the Lord—unshaken and unbeaten, irresistible, and irreplaceable. People of hope! Are we part of them? Are we contributing to them? 

*Direct to Home, also known as DBS—Direct Broadcast Satellite.

NUMBER 6 *Making Sense* of *Creation*

By GRAEME LOFTUS

After completing a degree at Christ's College, Cambridge, preparing to become a minister, Charles Darwin sailed in 1831 as a passenger aboard the H.M.S. *Beagle*, setting off on a path that was destined to impact the world.

His five-year voyage took him to the western coast of South America, where he observed various kinds of exotic and formerly unknown animals. One set of creatures in particular, the Galapagos finches, caught Darwin's attention. He studied the birds, collected samples, and observed that they had various beak sizes and shapes. It was his observations of these variations that inspired the development of his theory of origins.

Darwin returned to England in 1836, and in 1842 he began drafting his book, *On the Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (often referred to simply as *Origin of*

Species), eventually published in 1859.

Shortly after the book's publication, Darwin carried on a long correspondence with his friend and colleague Asa Gray, sharing his doubts and his sense of confusion about the end and ultimate directions of evolution. "I am conscious that I am in an utterly hopeless muddle," he confessed. "I cannot think that the world, as we see it, is the result of chance; and yet I cannot look at each separate thing as the result of design." (www.darwinproject.ac.uk/darwinletters/calendar/entry-2998.html)

The confusion Darwin expressed came as he tried to connect all the wonders of the natural world that he observed with all the harsh things he saw existing alongside that beauty. Because of all the destructive forces he witnessed, he chose to reject God rather than seek a biblical interpretation of those distortions

within the created world.

The same dilemma faces every one of us as we struggle to understand origins. We cannot help asking questions such as: "Where did I come from?" "How did I get here?" and, "How do I ascribe meaning to my existence?"

Darwin ultimately adopted an *atheistic* theory of origins. In other words, he left God out of the picture altogether. *Theism*, on the other hand, offers an explanation of origins that takes God into consideration. Because none of us were actually there to personally witness how everything began, we have to examine the available evidence and make up our own minds.

Assumptions of Evolution

Evolution is based on certain assumptions, outlined as follows by the late G. A. Kerckut of the University of Southampton in England (*Implications of Evolution* [Pergamon, 1960]):

- Nonliving things gave rise to living material.
- This spontaneous generation occurred only once.
- Viruses, bacteria, plants, and animals are all interrelated.
- The one-celled organisms gave rise to many-celled organisms.
- All the organisms without vertebrae are interrelated.

Creation

God is Creator of all things, and has revealed in Scripture the authentic account of His creative activity. In six days the Lord made

"the heaven and the earth" and all living things upon the earth, and rested on the seventh day of that first week. Thus He established the Sabbath as a perpetual memorial of His completed creative work. The first man and woman were made in the image of God as the crowning work of Creation, given dominion over the world, and charged with responsibility to care for it. When the world was finished it was "very good," declaring the glory of God. (Gen. 1; 2; Ex. 20:8-11; Ps. 19:1-6; 33:6, 9; 104; Heb. 11:3.)

- Those organisms without vertebrae gave rise to ones with vertebrae.
- Fish gave rise to amphibia, then reptiles, then birds, and finally mammals.

I leave readers to make their own conclusions about the probability of these assumptions actually occurring. The Bible, however, gives us compelling evidence to help us draw other conclusions concerning our origins.

The apostle Paul rightly says that all human beings know something about God through nature, even when they have no knowledge of Scripture†: “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20).

We may not know everything about God from studying nature, Paul says, but there are two things we can know about His invisible qualities. The first is that He is eternally powerful and the other is that He is divine. Darwin may not have chosen to align the power governing his “natural selection” with the God of the Bible, but he still describes it as eternal and in terms equivalent, in essence, to divinity. His deity was, in some sense, unknown.

The Bible declares the real nature of that “unknown” God without apology: “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth.... He himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth.... ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ ... For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead” (Acts 17:24-31).

Creative Power in Jesus

The question of origins is decided by whether or not we accept the resurrection of Jesus and His claims to be the Creator of everything that exists and, as such, our Lord (see John 1:13, 14). When in the Gospel of John, Jesus is called the “Word” who has never had a beginning, the One who is just as much God as the Father, and who made everything that existed, we have to decide whether that is authentic or a delusion.

The Genesis story of Creation describes the Word speaking things into existence—in the oft-repeated statement: “And God said....” And

“I cannot think that the world, as we see it, is the result of chance.” —CHARLES DARWIN

it claims that that which did not previously exist suddenly came into existence.

There is an intangible quality in the nature of Christ’s spoken words that intrinsically brought life. In the presence of a man who’d been dead for four days and whose body was decomposing, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” [and] the dead man came out” full of life again (John 11:43, 44). Someone said that if Jesus hadn’t limited that command to Lazarus alone, every dead person in the grave would have come forth at His words.

What Darwin Saw Wasn’t Always So

Even a casual reading of the Genesis account of Creation reveals the heart of God for His creatures and His creation:

“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good” (Gen. 1:31). There was nothing in all of creation that reflected the destruction that confused Darwin. Every animal, every plant, every aspect of that freshly created planet reflected the glory of God and His benevolent purpose for His creatures. It is not until humanity rejected that life-giving word of Jesus, their Creator, that the earth brought forth thistles and everything else was cursed (see Gen. 3:1-16).

This understanding helps us make sense of the current state of the earth and everything in it. But the same creative Lord who originally spoke the world into being says, “I will create new

heavens and a new earth” (Isa. 65:17).

Until then, writes the apostle Paul, the creation “waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.” The whole creation groans, he says, “as in the pains of childbirth,” waiting “eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies” (Rom. 8:19-23).

And Jesus is as good as His word. ●

*This article is a shortened (and slightly edited) version of a piece that appeared in *Signs of the Times* (Australia), September 2005. Used by permission.

†All scriptural passages are from the NIV.



Graeme Loftus is a retired Seventh-day Adventist pastor who lives in Charlestown, New South Wales, Australia

Christ says to His followers, “Ye are the light of the world.” Then let your light shine forth in clear, steady rays. Do not wrap about you a cloud of darkness. Cease to suspect others. By good works represent the character of Christ. When you are tempted to yield to despondency, look to Jesus, and talk with Him. Your Elder Brother will never make a mistake. He will judge righteously. He will guide you aright.

God is not well pleased to see His children wrapped in gloom and sadness. His arm is mighty to save all who will lay hold on Him. He desires us to be cheerful, but not trifling. He says to each one of us, “As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” God wants us to be happy. He desires to put a new song in our lips, even praise to our God. He wants us to believe that He forgives our sins, and takes away our unrighteousness. He wants us to make

Our Only Hope

The hope set before us—what is it?—The hope of eternal life. Nothing short of this will satisfy the Redeemer, and it is our part to lay hold of this hope by living faith in Him. If we are partakers with Him in His sufferings, we shall be partakers with Him in the glory which will be His; for His merits have purchased forgiveness and immortality for every sinful, perishing soul. This hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. Our trust in this hope, purchased for us by the atonement and intercession of Christ, is to keep us steadfast and unmoveable in every hour of conflict. With such a hope as this before us, shall we allow Satan to cast his shadow across our pathway, to eclipse our view of the future?

Christ values human beings with a value that is beyond any human computation. Then let us encourage

he will not be driven upon the rocks or drawn into the whirlpool. His ship will out-ride the storm.

The Lord desires tempted souls to stand firm and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of God. To the sinking Peter Christ said, “Wherefore didst thou doubt?” Often, like Peter, we dishonour God by our lack of faith.

The mightiest power is vouchsafed to us that we may stand firm. Looking unto Jesus, it is our privilege to say, boldly and yet humbly, The Lord is my helper; I shall not be moved from my steadfastness. My life is bound up with the life of Christ. Because He lives, I shall live also.

Children of Hope

Close the door of the heart to distrust, and throw it open to the heavenly Guest. Put away all fretting and complaining, for this is the snare of the devil. Let us make a pledge

By ELLEN G. WHITE

Living as People

melody in our hearts to Him.

In Christ our hope of eternal life is centered. Of this Paul declares:

“God, willing more abundantly to [show] unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered.” Hebrews 6:17-20.

faith. Take your eyes off yourself. Faith and hope are not to be centered in self. They are to enter into that within the veil, whither our Forerunner is for us entered. Talk of the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We are exposed to great moral danger, and if we trust in self, looking no higher we shall make shipwreck of the faith. Do not fail or be discouraged. Hope is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast, when it enters into that within the veil. Thus the tempest-tossed soul becomes anchored in Christ. Amid the raging of temptation,

before God and the heavenly angels that we will not dishonor our Maker by cherishing darkness and unbelief, by speaking words of discouragement and mistrust. Let every word we utter, every line we write, be fraught with encouragement and unwavering faith. If we live faith, we shall talk faith. Think not that Jesus is the Saviour of your brother only. He is your personal Saviour. If you entertain this precious thought, you will beat back the clouds of despondency and gloom, and make melody to God in your soul. It is our privilege to triumph in God. It is our privilege to lead others to see that their



BLAKE CAMPBELL

the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls” (1 Peter 1:3-9).

Open the windows of the soul heavenward, and let the rays of the Sun of righteousness in. Do not complain. Do not look on the dark side. Let the peace of God reign in your soul. Then you will have strength to bear all suffering, and you will rejoice that you have grace to endure. Praise the Lord; talk of His goodness; tell of His power. Sweeten

of Hope

Our assurance of eternal life is centered in Jesus.

only hope is in God, and to flee to Him for refuge.

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.” Stay your soul upon God. We are saved by faith in Christ. To those who realize this, it is, day by day, a source of infinite comfort.

Every act of consecration to God brings us joy; for as we appreciate the light He has given us, more and greater light will come. We must banish the spirit of complaining, and open the heart to the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness. There is peace in

perfect submission. Peace follows grace. They work in perfect harmony, and are multiplied in progression. When the hand of faith takes hold of the hand of Christ, the expression of the heart is:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in

the atmosphere which surrounds your soul. Do not dishonor God by words of repining. Praise Him with heart and soul and voice. Look on the bright side. Praise Him who is the health of your countenance and your God. ●

This article, written while Ellen G. White ministered in Australia, first appeared in the Bible Echo on September 24, 1900. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

“Thomas! The dogs are barking! Look, a wolf! Oh, my baby!” Katherine screamed. Grabbing a pitchfork, Thomas outran his wife to where their baby daughter lay sleeping.

That morning the parents had bundled up little Katie, laid her on the grass, and bade their two faithful dogs to keep guard while they worked some distance away shocking hay. A huge wolf had emerged from the woods to challenge the dogs, who held him at bay.

“Oh, thank God! She could have been carried off and eaten!” the mother rejoiced.

Early Training

The Lindsays had recently emigrated from Scotland and settled on a wooded claim in central Wisconsin near Lake Mendota. They built a sturdy log cabin for protection against wolves, bears, and the Wisconsin winter. As Katie grew older she not only helped care for her seven younger brothers and sisters but assisted with the farm work as well.

From the time she first learned to read she developed an insatiable appetite for books. To attend a little log schoolhouse meant a four-mile walk through the woods with its eerie wildlife noises. But books and school were her life. Her desk had been made from a log split in half with the smooth side up. Her slate pencil was a long, pointed stick and her first slate a level spot in front of the schoolhouse.

After reading a book about Florence Nightingale, she began to think of nursing as a career. “The Lady of the Lamp,” as she was known, had spent endless hours caring compassionately for the wounded soldiers of the Crimean War. Kate recalled the deaths of four of her younger brothers and sisters from childhood diseases. If only she had known what to do to save their lives.

In November 1859 Elder Isaac Sanborn picked Hundred Mile Grove northeast of Madison for his next lecture series. When the train in which he was riding was blocked by snowdrifts, he simply picked up his luggage and plodded on through the deep snow. He inquired for a schoolhouse, then announced nightly meetings. In his audience sat the Lindsay family and their neighbors, the Rankins, with their eight redheaded daughters. Kate and her family accepted the Bible-based Adventist teachings.

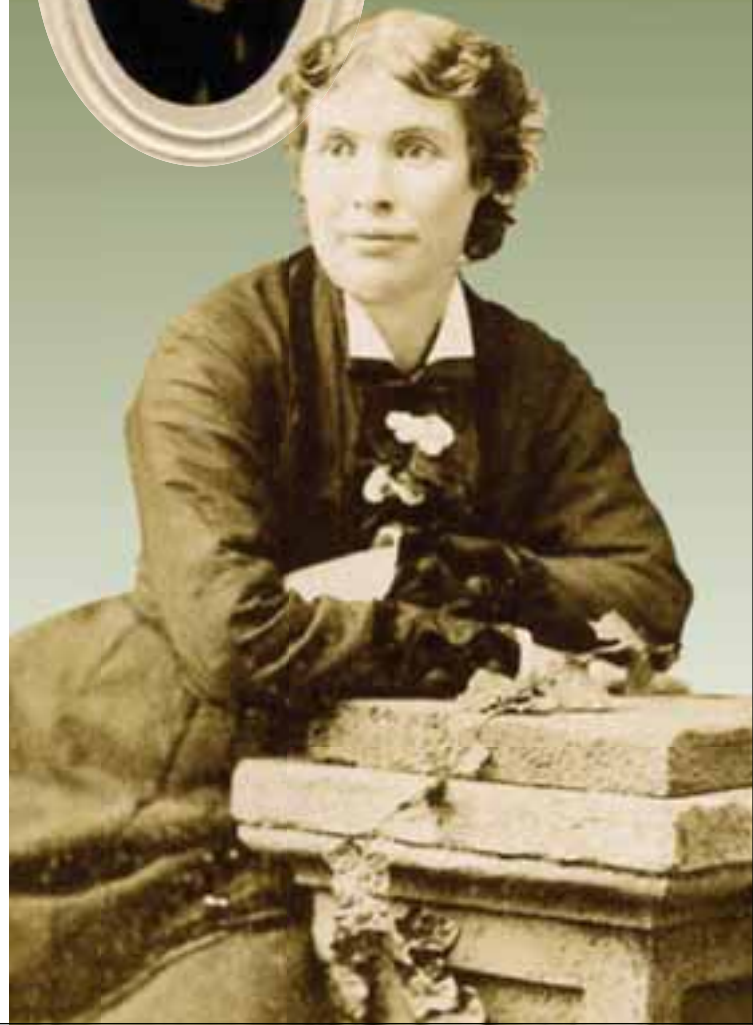
When the need for a meetinghouse arose, Thomas Lindsay offered a half acre of ground, and next-door neighbor Alexander Rankin did likewise. A church soon appeared straddling the boundary line of the two properties. It became known as the Hundred Mile Church and stood for nearly a century.

One day Kate hurried into the kitchen excitedly waving the latest church paper, the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. “Look! It says that Battle Creek has opened a small hospital called Western Health Reform Institute. That’s where I must go and learn how to help sick people.

Committed to Caring

*Adventism’s first female
physician taught us a lesson
about determination.*

By
ADRIEL D. CHILSON



I'd really like that kind of work. I could become a nurse or maybe even a doctor!"

Kate had a mind of her own. She would manage to get to Battle Creek somehow; her aspirations for helping the sick could not be squelched. A few months later a determined Kate Lindsay left home and headed for the new Health Reform Institute.

Specialized Training

Dusting, scrubbing, mopping—her first assignments weren't a bit exciting, but she was where she wanted to be. Here, in a hospital atmosphere, were a few patients with whom she could share compassion, and a doctor-mentor from whom she could learn much. Strangely, not one trained nurse could she find. She determined that someday she would be one herself, then train more.

Kate had heard of the growing number of "water-cure" institutions where patients benefited greatly from hydrotherapy treatments instead of the usual poisonous drugs. One of the most prominent was conducted by Dr. Thatcher Trail in Florence Heights, New Jersey. As soon as she was able to scrape together a few dollars, she left for a two-year nurses' training at Dr. Trail's.

Returning to Battle Creek in the fall of 1869, she worked faithfully as a nurse, but never lost sight of her goal of medical doctor. When the University of Michigan Medical College at Ann Arbor opened its doors to female students, Kate enrolled in the study of medicine.

Not without misgivings did Ann Arbor agree to women students. "A doubtful experiment" it was labeled. Female university students were eyed with curiosity by the citizens of this small city. They were pointed out, ridiculed, and hissed at. Boardinghouses hesitated to admit them. On the streets Kate and her companions were alert to the many remarks purposely intended for their ears: "The feminine mind cannot grasp the teaching of professional subjects." "Their health will break down under the strain." "It appears to be sheer folly." "It will ruin the institution because the force of public opinion will soon break down the policy." ...

Finally, in 1875, the glorious day arrived when Kate received her degree in medicine from the University of Michigan. She returned to the Battle Creek health institute (now labeled Battle Creek Medical and Surgical Sanitarium) as a full-fledged physician under Dr. J. H. Kellogg, chief of staff.

Dr. Lindsay was assigned to head the Department of Obstetrics and Pediatrics. While there she sacrificed home comforts by sleeping in a room adjoining her office so that she might be available for night calls. She rarely used the elevator, because she considered walking the stairs more healthful. She placed great emphasis upon the use of natural remedies. She was a thorough advocate of fresh air and open windows at night, as well as lots of water for drinking and bathing.

Through her persistent efforts a school of nursing was inaugurated. Her textbooks were pamphlets compiled from her extensive notes. Punctuality she considered a virtue, and she expected it of every student. She was often seen between classes carrying a big alarm clock in one hand and an attendance record in the other....

Training Others

Dr. Lindsay's philosophy of nursing is expressed in her address to the graduating class of November 9, 1891:

"It is unfortunate that the world did not sooner consider that this work required careful study and preparation. Just as it has been thought that a woman knew by her intuition all that was needful to fulfill her duties as a mother, so it has been considered that a woman could nurse by intuition. Only lately has it been discovered that the profession of nursing requires such education and such painstaking care that the most highly cultured mind may find in it exercise for all its faculties....

"The nurse should remember that each sickroom is a field for missionary efforts. The consolation of religion is never so precious as when one is sick and suffering, and when perhaps the things of this life are slipping away. No one else is, for the time, so closely allied to the sufferer as a nurse. The minister and the doctor may make periodical calls, but they cannot stand in such close, confidential relations to the patient as the nurse.

"Remember, each of you, that your mission is to do good to your fellows, to heal the sick, and to alleviate suffering. In this way you will be following directly in the footsteps of the Master."*

In 1895 Dr. Lindsay answered a call to help the medical and nursing staff at the pioneer Claremont Sanitarium in South Africa. Her knowledge and skills were soon recognized by the best doctors in Cape Town, who frequently called on her for consultation.

When she returned to the United States four years later, she served on the staff of the Colorado Sanitarium at Boulder.

She passed to her rest in March 1923, in the heart of the Rocky Mountains that she loved so much. ●

*Kathryn Jensen Nelson, *Kate Lindsay, M.D.*, pp. 111, 112.



This article is adapted from the book, *They Had a World to Win*, by **Adriel D. Chilson** (copyright © 2001 by the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Used by permission). The author, a descendant of Ellen and James White, was for more than 50 years an Adventist pastor and evangelist. For information about this book and other titles telling the stories of Adventist pioneers, go to www.reviewandherald.com.

QUESTION: *I cannot find a Bible passage that says Christ suffered the penalty for our sins. How can we support that claim?*

This question, together with many others of a similar nature dealing with the work of Christ for us, suggests that the meaning of Christ's death remains an important subject of discussion in the church, and in some cases can be divisive. A detailed answer to your question would require a careful study of the nature of sin, its consequences, and an examination of how Christ dealt with the problem of sin. Here I will discuss only three main ideas to support the claim that Jesus suffered the penalty for our sin.

1. He Bore Our Sin: The phrase "to bear sin" is important in the Old Testament, particularly in passages dealing with the sanctuary services. For example, a person who cursed God "shall bear his sin" (Lev. 24:15); a person who witnesses a crime but does not come forward "will bear his guilt/iniquity" (see Lev. 5:1); a person who acts defiantly against the Lord will bear his sin (Num. 15:31). The phrase is a legal declaration that identifies the sinner as responsible for the sin they committed. In this case the sin is objectified and described as a heavy burden that will crush the individual unless something or someone delivers them from this mortal load. The phrase means to be responsible for the sin committed and liable for its results or penalty. In a good number of cases the penalty is death inflicted by a human or divine agency (e.g., Ex. 28:43; Lev. 22:9; 19:8).

There are cases in which a person bears the sin of the sinners, thus removing the load and freeing them from the penalty. The most important example of this is found in Isaiah 53, a prophecy about the experience and work of the Servant of the Lord, the Messiah. The Servant bore the sins of the people and they crushed Him (verses 4-6, 10-12). In other words, He assumed responsibility for the sin of the people and suffered its penalty. This same phrase is applied to Jesus in the New Testament. Hebrews clearly states that Christ was "offered once to bear the sins of many" (Heb. 9:28). The Old Testament background of the phrase allows



Set Free!

By ANGEL MANUEL RODRÍGUEZ

us to understand it as meaning Christ assumed the full responsibility and penalty for our sins in order to free us from both.

2. He Was Made Sin: According to Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:21, God "made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." The first thing to notice is that Christ became sin for us vicariously; meaning that even though He was innocent—He knew no sin and did not deserve to die—He became sin for us. Second, in the Bible the words for sin designate not only the sin committed but also the consequence or penalty that follows the sin.

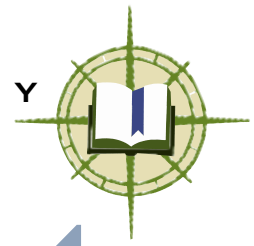
After Cain killed Abel the Lord announced to him the penalty for his sin, and Cain exclaimed, "My punishment/sin is too great to bear!" (see Gen. 4:13). Thus when it is said that Christ became sin, the emphasis is not so much on the sinful acts themselves but on the guilt, the consequence, the punishment for our sins. This idea is even clearer if we translate the phrase "became sin" as "became a sin offering." In the Old Testament the sin offering bore the sin of the Israelite and died in place of the sinner, i.e., experienced the

penalty for the sin.

3. He Became a Curse: Paul also wrote: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13). This passage contains several ideas that need brief comment: First, the violation of the law brings with it a specific penalty, called here "a curse." Second, this is considered a valid claim that needed to be dealt with. Humans needed to be freed from that curse. Third, the legal demand of the law was met by Jesus, who took upon Himself the curse, the result, and penalty for our violation of the law, and thus redeemed us. Our punishment as sinners was appropriated by Christ, our substitute.

I hope this explanation is useful to you in your Christian experience.

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



When **GOD** Created Rest

By MARK A. FINLEY

Rest is part of God's divine cycle of life. We were not created to work without ceasing. Our bodies do much better when we have opportunity to rest. But rest is not just for our bodies. Have you ever lain down to sleep with something troubling you? If you are unusually worried, sleep may not come; you will have no rest. In today's lesson, we shall discover how to experience total rest for our minds, as well as for our bodies.

1. How did God illustrate the importance of rest at Creation? What did He do Himself? Read the text below and write your answer on the line.

"And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done" (Gen. 2:2).

At creation God revealed the importance of rest by _____

on the seventh day from all His _____

2. Did God intend the Sabbath rest be His alone? Read the text below and circle two words that indicate God's purpose for His people on Sabbath.

"Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work, which God had created and made" (Gen. 2:3).

It was God's intent for all His created beings to receive spiritual, mental, and physical strength each Sabbath. He sanctified the day—set it apart—by placing a special blessing on it. Just as God "was refreshed" when He rested on the Sabbath (Ex. 31:17), there is a special refreshing for each of us on Sabbath.

3. What two descriptions of the Sabbath did Moses give? Read the text below and fill in the blanks.

"Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all of your dwellings" (Lev. 23:3).

a. The Sabbath is a day of _____ and a _____.

b. What is a holy convocation? _____.

Notice the relationship between a holy convocation and rest. Each Sabbath as we worship the Creator of the universe we seek His care and love. We honor the One who created us and find complete rest in Him.



4. Where does physical, mental, and spiritual strength originate? Who is its source?

Read the verses below and fill in the blanks.

“In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength” (Isa. 30:15).

“Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him” (Ps. 37:7).

Our strength comes as we _____ and _____ in the Lord.

The Sabbath calls us to find rest in the One who made us. It invites us to return to our roots. Each Sabbath is an opportunity to find life’s true center in our Creator.

5. The fourth commandment commands us to “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Ex. 20:8). Why do you think God made this command? Read the text below and answer the questions.

“For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it” (Ex. 20:11).

God gave the Sabbath command to _____

6. Why did many of God’s Old Testament people never experience His “true rest”? Read the text below and write your answer on the line.

“So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief” (Heb. 3:19).

It takes faith in Jesus as our Creator and Redeemer to truly keep the Sabbath. Just as we rest in a completed creation, we rest in a completed redemption. We also rest in anticipation of the new creation that will take place at Jesus’ second coming.

7. How does the Book of Hebrews describe God’s invitation to each one of us? Read the text below and fill in the blank.

“There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His” (Heb. 4:9, 10).

God invites us to _____ in Him.

Next month’s Bible study,
“A Sign of True Worship,” will
examine how loyalty to God is
related to the Sabbath.



LETTERS

The Joy Set Before Us

I can't thank you enough for reprinting the 100-year-old article by Ellen G. White, "The Joy Set Before Us" (see *Adventist World*, November 2007). Of all the articles I have read this year it is one of the most relevant for today's Christian.

MELVIN CHRISTIAN
Oregon, United States

Christianity's Great Mystery

I appreciated the careful extrapolation by Angel Manuel Rodríguez concerning Christ's human nature (see "Christianity's Great Mystery," November 2007). As people of faith, we need to have a greater appreciation for mystery and paradoxical truth. The truth of Jesus' divine and human nature is a mystery too deep to be explained by intellectual prowess. We should approach it with an attitude of sacred wonder.

We can spend all our energy debating one nature over the other when, in reality, the two natures are not so far from each other. God's downward condescension meets humanity's divine potential in the person of Jesus Christ. The epitome of the divine is to become a human and the epitome of being human is to reflect the divine.

Thanks for the emphasis on mystery. It helps to remind me of my small place in the universe!

KRIS BRYANT
Oklahoma, United States

Window Into Colombia

This is just a note to let you know how much we appreciate getting *Adventist World*. I read it and pass it on to my son, John. We are originally from the Bay Islands of Honduras, Central America. I was born and grew up at Oakridge, Ratan—my father was from Guanaja, and my first wife was from Utila—so I have connections to the areas mentioned in the feature "Into Colombia" on page 10 of the October 2007 issue.

My interest was caught by the mention of the men who went to Panama but died of yellow fever in Bocas del Toro. There is a book titled *King of the Storm*, by Jewel Parilla, which gives the total story of how the Advent message began in the Bay Islands.

MITCHELL O. TATUM
Texas, United States

Of Spiritual Help

I'm one of the readers of *Adventist World* since it began in 2005. I am a member of Adopt a Minister International (AaMI), under the care of Ms. Reva Lachica Moore. Presently, I am working as a pastor in the Pato-o Seventh-day Adventist Church.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to *Adventist World*. It encourages me to learn more and helps me to solve controversial issues regarding our beliefs. The magazine was especially helpful when I read the Bible Questions column "Images of the Holy Spirit," written by Angel Manuel Rodríguez (p. 26, September 2007). My mind was lifted up—this magazine helps me to study

more while pastoring and feeding the flock of God. More power to you!

REYNANTE CHAVEZ
Pato-o, Odiongan, Romblon, Philippines

Another Question

A question came to mind after I read the July 2007 "Why Lucifer?" article by Angel Manuel Rodríguez. My question: Can God (being God) also choose or will if He so wishes, not to know the end result when He creates another being?

J. BARTEL
California, United States

Tell Me Again

I am glad to find an article in *Adventist World* that speaks to parents like me. I am referring to Heather-Dawn Small's "Mommy, Tell Me Again" of December 2006. This article has encouraged me so much. I have realized the importance of training our children about Jesus, in the way Heather used to do. Though her son is dead, the couple will surely meet him and rejoice together once again in that promised land where there will be no more tears.

We need more such articles for we are really blessed by the wonderful and inspiring message. May God bless *Adventist World* for the work it is doing in serving many souls worldwide.

MUKUKA MUTALE MERCY
Katete, Lusaka, Zambia

LETTERS

A Wonderful Work

I wish to thank you for the wonderful work you are doing with *Adventist World* magazine. May God bless you for this.

What will it cost me to receive enough copies of the magazine? It will be of help to me in my personal ministry evangelism.

LAWRENCE IKE ALOZIE
Onitsha, Nigeria

Adventist World is distributed to church members for free. Our advice to this reader and others with similar concerns is to contact the Seventh-day

Adventist Church union or division office in your region of the world. We are gratified that the magazine is filling this important need.—EDITORS.

I enjoy *Adventist World* very much. It is encouraging to see that young adults are given a voice in the church (see the October 2007 Church Works section of the magazine, for example). They volunteer abroad in building projects and learn to love the Lord through serving. That is how I started out, and now at 90 years old, I've been on more than 20 mission trips with Maranatha and SAGE.

Thank you for giving us such an informative periodical. God bless your efforts.

MARGUERITE K. ANDERSON
Washington, United States

Correction

In regard to the November 2007 page 7 Window feature: China is geographically the world's *fourth* largest country.

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

Please pray for Cecilia. She was diagnosed with cancer and is in severe pain. She was given little hope for recovery. She has many things that she still wants to accomplish for the Lord, including teaching Bible and starting a church in a difficult area.

MARTY, *Tanzania*

I have tried in so many ways to repent from my sins but no change in my life has occurred. It is not God, it is my weakness of faith. Please pray that the Lord helps me.

JANTAP, *via e-mail*

I need financial help with my education. Please pray for me.

DENIS, *Kenya*

I am 19 and have been suffering from heart disease since I was 6 months old. Please join me in my prayer to finish all my requirements so that I can have my free operation. I've been waiting for so long because the operation

is too expensive for my family, but there is an organization that will help me. There are many requirements to process, however, so I need God's help in getting them all taken care of.

SHERYLL, *Philippines*

My Internet business is struggling. The bills are piling up and loans remain unpaid. At times I am very depressed. Won't you please pray earnestly that the Lord will remember me—with a steady permanent job, increased customer presence, and a big financial breakthrough?

CARETTA, *Jamaica*

I work in a large organization where, oftentimes, my colleagues' work is slipped into mine. I am not expected to ask why I've gotten the work or seek training to handle it—I am expected to just figure out how to do it. Each time I have applied for a higher grade job I get a negative response, even though I'm qualified

to do it. (These are only some of the problems I face.)

I have prayed that God will show me a positive way out but I need others to pray with me. I have asked Him to strengthen my faith and to show His hand in my workplace—please join me in this matter.

JUDITH, *England*

Please pray that I will be able to work full-time and through this job that God will use me to witness to others. I know God has many ways to answer prayers and that He will guide me so I will see His leadings.

LYNN, *United States*

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.

“Behold, I come quickly...”

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

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The 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, Brazil, Indonesia, Australia, and the United States.

Vol. 4, No.2

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

Daddy's Shoulder's

*This month,
a reader shares her
thoughts about God's
point of view.*

“For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light” (Ps. 36:9, NASB).

It was our oldest son's first parade in his band uniform! His youngest brother, Daniel, couldn't wait to see him march, so we lined up early on the side of the street. Before long, the sidewalk thickened with people, and I held on tight to my little one's hand. A drum roll filled the air.

“The parade is starting!” I yelled.

Something tugged at my coat. I looked down and saw my Daniel in tears.

“Can't see,” he said slobbering. From where he stood, all there was to see were legs and coats. My husband quickly raised him up above his own shoulders. Now high above the crowd, Daniel's view was unhindered. Daniel could see what had passed, what was there, and what was to come.

In life, I often get frustrated because I can see only what is right in front of me, and my sight is limited, distorted. When I cry out for help, my Father in heaven lifts me up on His shoulders and allows me to see from His point of view.

When I am on His shoulders, I am reminded that He sees the end as well as the beginning. He is in control—I can trust Him again with my today.

Nothing escapes His notice. Let's remember to thank God for His willingness to lift us up on His shoulders.

—BARBARA CROCE, *Creekside, Pennsylvania, United States*



HELMUT GEVERT

The PEOPLE'S PLACE

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

"I love what I do," says Leah Adams of Tampa, Florida, United States, about her volunteer service at the Incheon SDA Language Institute in South Korea. "The opportunity I have to plant the seeds of truth in the students and to be a living example of God's power and faithfulness is awesome!"

Since April 2007, Leah has been serving at the language institute. Although her primary job is to teach English as a Second Language and religion classes, she and other volunteers do much more than that in order to help their students have the opportunity to develop a relationship with Christ. "We do vespers on Friday nights, and on Saturday mornings we hold clubs that help students improve their English by using Adventist Christian material," says Leah. Leah feels truly blessed that God has led her to serve in South Korea, and she plans to stay there until April 2008.

If you would like to read stories about other Adventist volunteers around the world or learn about how you can participate in the volunteer program, go to www.adventistvolunteers.org.



CHO SANGHUI AND ANGELA WATTS



Leah (right) poses with friends at the language institute.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



EDWARD KIMOTHO

ADVENTIST LIFE

The students in my sixth- through eighth-grade class were studying the doctrine of salvation by faith. In the course of discussion we reviewed the beliefs of other major world religions, noting that they all had ways of saving themselves but didn't have a Savior.

One eighth-grade boy wisely observed, "They *do* have a Savior. They just don't know it yet."

—Anita Whitney, Deltona, Florida, United States

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"My tragedy was God's strategy."

—Bhaju Ram Shrestha, the first Nepali Seventh-day Adventist in Nepal, when sharing his testimony with other Adventists in 2007

ANSWER: This building, which is under construction, is the Kangu Seventh-day Adventist Church near Kutus town in Kenya. The project of building this church was started by Kari Lill Sandholt and her son-in-law, Thomas Samsting, in conjunction with the East Norway Conference church.