

July 2008

ADVENTIST WORLD



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Sabbath

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On the cover: A NOTED LANDMARK: St. Basil's Cathedral is located on Red Square in Moscow, Russia. Red Square is Moscow's oldest and most famous square and the home of the city's best known landmarks: St. Basil's Cathedral, the Kremlin, and the Lenin Mausoleum.



WORLD VIEW

When Esther Got Baptized

An old African-American and Caribbean chorus is floating around the world just now:

*Take me to the waters;
Take me to the waters;
Take me to the waters—
To be baptized.*

From Ankara to Anchorage and Manaus to Mombasa, it's an invitation being voiced hundreds of times a day by men and women joining this remnant people of God. In ponds still choked with winter ice, and in muddy jungle rivers where the onlookers sometimes include the crocodiles, nearly 3,000 people a day are sealing a covenant with Jesus and His end-time church through baptism. The gains of Pentecost are repeating every day.

That gentle continuous “splash” you hear around the Adventist world is the sound of someone being immersed every 30 seconds—“in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Those wet footprints down the aisle of the church were made by one of more

than a million new believers who joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the past 12 months.

But how are we doing at welcoming our new brothers and sisters? Are we making room for them at the family table, including them in our “life together”? Do they know that they are precious to the Lord—and to us? When did they last feel a hand of kindness on the shoulder or hear us praying for them? Do they find us quick to forgive, eager to encourage, slow to criticize?

Their needs are not complex, and their hopes not difficult to satisfy. They need what young lives always need: kindness, food, and clothing. Wrap them in the garments of praise. Feed them with the manna you are finding in the Word. Listen to their griefs, their struggles, and their triumphs.

Renew your own baptismal vows by making a covenant with the newest among us. Pledge that you will not let another Sabbath pass without blessing the life of someone who has recently waded in the waters. You have surely come to the kingdom for such a time—and such a task—as this.

— BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

Adventists Organize in Channel Islands

■ One of the few places in the United Kingdom without a sustained Seventh-day Adventist presence is now finding one, thanks to the migration of members to the region—and the help of Britain's South East Conference.

The Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey are among the world's most desirable—and expensive—places in which to live. The islands, about 12 miles off the northwest coast of France, were annexed to the Duchy of Normandy in 933, according to online references. In 1066, William II of Normandy, a vassal to the king



ADVENTISTS IN JERSEY: Mount Orgueil Castle is an iconic image of the British Channel Island of Jersey. Adventists are now holding regular worship meetings in Jersey and Guernsey and hope to organize congregations there.

COURTESY OF JERSEY TOURISM

WORLD REPORT

of France, invaded and conquered England, becoming William I of England, also known as William the Conqueror. Since 1204, the loss of the rest of the monarch's lands in mainland Normandy has meant that the Channel Islands have been governed as separate possessions of the British Crown.

Noted for their tourism and off-shore banking centers, the islands, whose combined population is about 160,000, now count about 14 Seventh-day Adventists between them, as well as at least two people interested in the church's message.

"A few young islanders in Jersey and Guernsey had been praying that one day they would once again be able to experience the vibes from a good old Sabbath school gathering," Tambu Muoni told the British Union's news service.

According to Muoni, "We were all very encouraged when the South England Conference contacted us and, last August, Pastor Aristotle Vontzalidis, [the conference's church growth] director, along with his wife, visited us and had a meeting ... in Guernsey."

Vontzalidis returned to the Channel Islands in May 2008, and this time a hospital chapel on Jersey was the setting for Sabbath worship and a communion service.

Muoni wrote, "Alternating between the islands, members now plan to meet more often on a regular

basis and fellowship together. We believe that one day through God's grace the church will continue to grow and that soon there will be established churches on both islands.

"The South England Conference has long wanted to establish an Adventist presence on the islands," Muoni noted. "Over the years literature distribution and even [literature evangelists] have played their part. However, it is the global village of immigration that is helping bring the dream to a reality."

The Channel Islands have a rich and storied history. Victor Hugo spent many years in exile, first in Jersey and then in Guernsey where he wrote *Les Misérables*. Guernsey is also the setting of Hugo's later novel, *Les Travailleurs De La Mer (The Toilers of the Sea)*. The islands were the only part of the British Commonwealth to be occupied by the Nazis during the Second World War. The five-year occupation was marked by extreme privation and cruelty. Today, the islands are prime tourist destinations for many in the United Kingdom and Europe. —*BUC news with Adventist World staff.*

Adventists Explore Partnerships with Global Health Groups

■ The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is seeking to engage in partnerships with Faith-Based Organizations, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Health Ministries, as part of its effort to connect with FBOs that deliver as much as 40 percent of health care in many developing nations.

RAJMUND DABROWSKI/ANN



FORMING PARTNERSHIPS: Adventist Health Ministries director Dr. Allan Handysides believes partnering with international health organizations will help broaden Adventist students' understanding of global health issues.

Representatives from both organizations met at the Adventist Church's world headquarters recently to explore ways of implementing the UN's Millennium Development Goals through the church's structure, including its health leaders and health care institutions.

"I was very impressed in learning how much health is an integral part of what the Adventist Church is all about, and I thought that was fascinating," said James Hill, PAHO external relations officer.

PAHO is the World Health Organization's regional office in North and South America and predates its parent organization.

Church leaders said partnering with such organizations and receiving international standards of care would give even more credibility to its work.

“We would like to see Adventist health professionals and churches that are interested in health to perhaps align some of their activities to ameliorating some of these problems like childhood and infant mortality in South and Inter-America,” said Dr. Allan Handysides, the church’s Health Ministries director.

He said a collaboration might offer Adventist students more internship and missionary opportunities: “We usually think of missionaries as going to our own institutions, but it would be possible that if we place some of our Adventist students with organizations like this, it would help them in their understanding of global health issues and create natural networking among the young people that would lead to lifelong partnerships,” Handysides said.

—Ansel Oliver, *Adventist News Network*

Philippines Adventists ‘Tell God’s Love’ via Text Messaging

■ The world’s text-messaging capital will soon have the option of a distinctly Adventist voice.

Members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Philippines are teaming up with Globe Telecom, Inc., a major telecommunications provider in the Philippines, to create a cell phone chip, or SIM card, unique to Adventists.

A SIM, or Subscriber Identity Module, is used to connect a mobile phone to the subscriber’s selected network and reload airtime. SIM

cards are used in cellular devices as a removable card/chip that stores the personal identity information, mobile number, phone book, text messages, and other data.

Jonathan Catolico, communication director for the Adventist Church in the Southern-Asia Pacific region, is hoping the card will be used by some 250,000 Adventists, or about a quarter of the church’s membership in the Philippines.

Part of a church project called “Committed to Tell God’s Love,” Advent SIM card users can minister to others by using the unique features of the card: Bible verses, daily prayer, prayer requests, Bible trivia, news, a directory of Adventist churches in metropolitan cities and towns, and abbreviated versions of the church’s core doctrines.

“If one church member sends an inspirational message already incorporated in the SIM card to someone he wishes to inspire, he or she is already actively involved with the soul-winning program of the church,” Catolico says.

A percentage of each text message charge will also be donated to special church projects.

Rodolfo Bautista, Jr., a part-time professor of Bible and History at the Manila Adventist Medical Center and Colleges, helped spearhead the project. He says the Advent SIM will be a useful tool to reach a generation hooked on sending short cell-phone messages to their friends.

“A young person can have at least 300 persons in his phone book who are not Adventist, so the card

makes it easy for them to do personal evangelism,” Bautista says.

In 2002, the Adventist Church in the Philippines started a “mobile ministry,” a simple procedure of sending inspirational messages to any mobile phone subscriber, Catolico explains. But the project went into high gear in 2007 when Bautista heard that Globe had already created community-specific SIM cards for six other religious organizations in the Philippines.

—Taashi Rowe, *Adventist News Network*

Adventist Health Food Leaders Hold Conference, Share Ideas

■ In March, representatives from several Seventh-day Adventist health food businesses from around the world held a three-day conference in Sydney, Australia. Sanitarium Health Food Company in Australia, the largest producer of breakfast cereal in the country, was host for the gathering of the International Health Food Ministry Conference.

The theme of this world conference was “Together Sharing Health and Hope.” Opportunities for sharing and collaboration were enriched by seminars on “The Philosophy of the Health Food Ministry”; “The Role of Branding and Marketing”; “Innovation and Growth: New Product Strategies”; “Building Supply Chain Efficiency”;

WORLD REPORT

and “Nutritional Components of Soy Milk and Meat Analogues.”

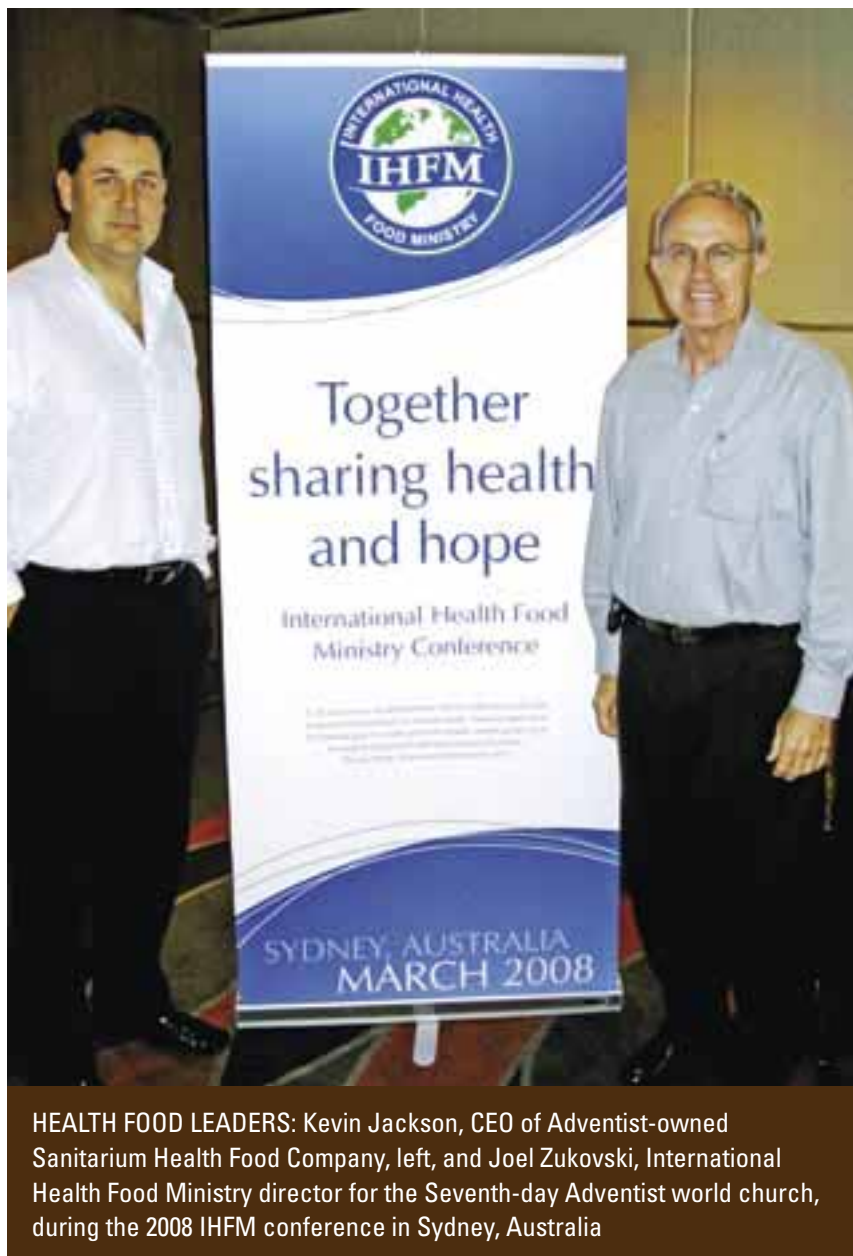
“It has been our privilege to host the recent International Health Food Ministry Conference,” said Barry Oliver, president of the Adventist Church’s South Pacific Division. “I would like to commend [Sanitarium] chief executive officer, Kevin Jackson, and his team for the professional manner in which the conference was convened. There is obvious benefit in meeting together to exchange ideas and strategies. The health food companies can forward the mission of the church by being actively involved in mission-focused activities.”

Stoy Proctor, associate director of the Health Ministries Department of the General Conference and presenter of one of the seminars, commented, “The health food ministry is far more complex and important than I realized. The ministry permeates the workforce and consumer with the mission of Christ, while being on the cutting edge of production.”

Collectively, the food factories around the world contribute millions of dollars to the mission of the church each year.

Making and marketing vegetarian foods—a business related to the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s health-promotion message, yet one of the movement’s “best-kept secrets,” as it has been called—is having a positive effect in many nations. With more than 40 health food companies scattered in various parts of the world, the church’s International Health Food Association oversees this “major player” in what is becoming a worldwide health-conscious trend.

—Reported by Gerry Karst, with additional information from Adventist News Network



HEALTH FOOD LEADERS: Kevin Jackson, CEO of Adventist-owned Sanitarium Health Food Company, left, and Joel Zukovski, International Health Food Ministry director for the Seventh-day Adventist world church, during the 2008 IHFM conference in Sydney, Australia

GERRY KARST/AR

WINDOW

Into Canada

By HANS OLSON



CANADA

Capital	Ottawa
Official languages	English and French
Religions	Roman Catholic 42.6%, Protestant 23.3%, other Christian 4.4%, Muslim 1.9%, other 11.8%, none 16%
Population	32.6 million
Adventist membership	57,324
Adventist to population ratio	1:568

Framed between the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic Oceans, Canada is often cited as a model of how people from different cultures who live in vastly different communities can dwell together in peace and prosperity. Taking up most of northern North America, Canada's landscape varies, from east coast fishing villages to major cities such as Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver to the great plains of central Canada and the rugged Rocky Mountain range of the west.

During the seventeenth century, then-European superpowers Great Britain and France both established colonies in Canada. In 1763 France ceded control of its territories after losing the Seven Years' War to Great Britain, making all of the Canadas—as they were called at the time—part of the British empire. In 1867 the British Parliament enacted the British North America Act, which created the Dominion of Canada. This officially started Canada's road to independence, which ended with the Canada Act of 1982. Canada is now a fully independent country, although it still recognizes the British monarchy as its head of state, and continues to be a member of the Commonwealth of Nations.

French, English, and aboriginal Inuit—known as “First Nation”—cultures have all heavily influenced Canadian culture. French colonists maintained their identity, and today their descendants make up most of Québec, an eastern province. Some 75 percent of Canadians live within 160 km (100 miles) of its southern border with the United States. The rest of Canada is sparsely populated. In fact, Canada has one of the lowest population-density ratios in the world.

Canada has two national languages, English and French; however, some of the northern territories have additional official First Nation languages. There has also been a move to make French the only language used in Québec's government.

Adventists in Canada

The Adventist Church has two major initiatives to reach into Canada. Montreal, Québec is widely regarded as one of North America's most secular cities. The city's strong Catholic heritage has given way to postmodernism, as its burgeoning urban population of some 3.6 million people

has become increasingly diverse. As part of the worldwide “Hope for Big Cities” initiative, “Project Hope for Montreal” intends to plant two new congregations in this challenging metropolitan area by 2010.

This Thirteenth Sabbath, part of the Sabbath school offering will help build low-power rebroadcast stations in rural communities across Canada. These stations will retransmit programming that originates at VOAR, an Adventist radio station based in Newfoundland. For years Canadian law has essentially prohibited licensing religious radio stations. When Newfoundland became a Canadian province in 1949, VOAR was allowed to keep its religious broadcasting status because it was already an established station. In Canada full-power radio stations are allowed to build low-power rebroadcast sites in smaller communities. In this way VOAR has created a national religious radio network, the only one in Canada. Today 18 of these stations broadcast the Adventist message on both coasts. The hope is to build more sites, including one in Whistler, British Columbia, a venue for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

To learn more about this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering projects and how the VOAR rebroadcast stations came about, see the Mission quarterlies in your local church or visit www.AdventistMission.org.



KURT FATTIC

WORLD VISTA

I recently visited the site of John Harvey Kellogg's Battle Creek Sanitarium¹ in Michigan, northern United States. Established in 1866, it has been rebuilt and expanded over the years. At its peak it catered to some 1,200 patients, many of them well-known figures of the time: businessmen, politicians, scientists, entertainers, writers, and thinkers. They came to experience the revolutionary new health practices set out by Ellen White. She advocated fresh air, pure water, a plant-based diet, and exercise—concepts that were as groundbreaking then as they are conventional now.

As I walked through these massive old buildings I was struck by the sheer audacity of our early pioneers—the enormity of their endeavor. How broad was their vision! How deep was their conviction, which drove them to such an ambitious enterprise! In these historic buildings we can trace the roots of today's international network of Seventh-day Adventist hospitals, medical teaching facilities, and clinics. It was here also that the beginnings of our health food industries were nurtured and our church's medical mission work began to take shape.

It was a powerful reminder to me that deep within Adventism is a concern for the *complete* person. Our faith is grounded in Christ's message of wholeness—in a spiritual transformation that also encompasses the emotional and physical being. No aspect of human life lies beyond Christ's touch; no facet of human activity falls outside the scope of His care.

This is our heritage as Seventh-day Adventists. It has shaped our attitudes and our institutions. It helps explain why we prioritize humanitarian care; why we campaign for religious freedom for all people, regardless of their beliefs; why we continue to invest so heavily in education. This message of "wholeness" has kept us at the forefront of public health issues, speaking against tobacco and alcohol use and other practices that destroy individuals, families, and communities.

Yet as I reflect on our past, I'm also conscious that our task is not static. We have a continuing responsibility to engage with emerging concerns in society; to bring our distinct values and prophetic voice to bear on those things



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

that affect the communities in which we live today.

And today, one issue in particular generates immense media coverage and political discussion in almost every part of the world—the environment. Yet it's a topic that we, as a church, have not yet taken on in a significant way. As I've talked with church members about environmental stewardship I've encountered many different attitudes:

Freed

caution toward some of the political and philosophical rhetoric that so often accompanies the language of environmentalism; *indifference* toward an issue that some see as a sideline to our core mission; and, for some, *frustration* that we have too often stood by, silent, when our voice should have been heard.

Is the environment an "Adventist issue"? Do we have something significant—something unique—to contribute to environmental care? I believe the answer is "Yes."

My hope is that we will move toward a fuller discussion of Adventism and environmental responsibility, and that we'll begin to develop an approach that is true to our values and consistent with our historic calling. And so as we begin this conversation, let me share with you three brief thoughts about environmental stewardship.

1. Removing the political wrappings

Is "environmentalism" the same as caring for the environment? Like so many "isms," environmentalism is sometimes shaped by issues in society that are politically and economically driven, and which carry with them a specific agenda. Environmentalism may sometimes take on a flavor or set of dynamics that is not the same as care for the environment. It's easy for individuals to feel: "I'm being pulled into a political battle—between governments, high finance, industry, scientists, public figures, and lobby groups." The tone is often accusative and confrontational. And so we step back. We say: "I don't want to be caught in that!"



By
JAN PAULSEN

From to Care

But when we peel back the layers that surround “environmentalism,” we find ideas that resonate also with our own deeply held beliefs and values: care for God’s world and care for our fellow human beings.

Let’s tell the world about the Sabbath rest, the one day each week we especially remember God’s creative power. Let’s talk about our advocacy of vegetarianism—a diet that, pound-for-pound, requires fewer resources to produce than a nonvegetarian diet (and, at the same time, let’s also talk about the spiritual convictions that drive our lifestyle choices!). Let’s talk about our concern for the whole person—rather than merely the “spirit” or “soul”—a teaching that gives Adventists a unique perspective within much of Christianity today. Let’s talk also about the groundbreaking link made by our church’s cofounder and prophetess, Ellen White, between a clean environment and optimum health. Let’s talk about the importance Adventists have historically placed on pure water and fresh air.

2. A spiritual responsibility or an optional extra?

When God completed His creative work, He gave humans mastery—dominion—over the earth. But what does it mean to be “master” of our environment? Is it mastery for the purpose of utilization only? Is it an assertion of unaccountable power over nature—the right to use and abuse, extract, and even destroy, irrespective of consequences? It is not. The dominion that God extended to humanity was an act of trust, a special responsibility to administer wisely the resources He has provided.

When God created the physical world—with its incredible variety of life and habitats—He was not engaged in a random, haphazard act. He created something that was complementary and whole. And I believe that a failure to conduct our lives in a manner that preserves the balance between all these things is a failure of stewardship, a breach of the trust between God and humanity.

There are those who say: “But this world will not last.

WORLD VISTA

Our focus should be on the world to come!”

And yet we cannot step out of our world. For today, this is where we are; this is where we are called to demonstrate our obedience to God. This is the world God has entrusted to our care. And it is today, in this world, where we begin to shape lives and hearts for eternity.

Others may ask: “But isn’t this just a distraction from our most important task—sharing Christ with others?”

And I would answer: “We have hardly even embarked on this topic; we have a long way to go before it becomes

hills; a household sustained by honest, self-respecting labor; a life of simplicity; daily conflict with difficulty and hardship; self-sacrifice, economy, and patient ... service.”²

There is another aspect to environmental stewardship that speaks strongly to Adventist values. When we choose a simple lifestyle and exercise restraint in our wants, when we emphasize the spiritual above the material and choose relationships before “things,” we are following in the footsteps of our Lord.

I see a certain circle in this. Seventh-day Adventists have always preached a spiritual message of freedom—freedom from the power of sin, freedom from fear, freedom of conscience and religious expression. Even our work of healing, educating, and providing humanitarian care is driven by a desire to free people from poverty, ignorance, pain, and injustice. And so that same concern for freedom takes us into care for the world in which we live. Being mindful of what I drink, eat, wear, use, how I travel and spend my time—these all yield certain consequences for the environment and, in turn, for each one of God’s children and His created beings. It’s not about living a somber, colorless existence. On the contrary, pulling free from relentless consumerism, focusing more on people and less

This is the world God entrusted to our care.



a distraction!” Let’s not forget also that our mission approach as a church has never been narrow. By this I mean that our mission efforts have always encompassed a wide range of activities—preaching, teaching, evangelism, healing, humanitarian care, community service, religious liberty, and education. And this wholistic approach—modeling the ministry of Christ within our communities—will only be strengthened as we highlight also our care for the physical world.

3. True freedom

“An expensive dwelling, elaborate furnishings, display, luxury, and ease, do not furnish the conditions essential to a happy, useful life,” wrote Ellen White. “Jesus came to this earth to accomplish the greatest work ever accomplished among men.... What were the conditions chosen by the infinite Father for His Son? A secluded home in the Galilean

on acquisitions, building a life that is focused on Christ’s priorities, not the world’s priorities—these are choices that deliver a wonderful sense of freedom, an indescribable feeling of liberation! And these are choices that yield a quality of life that is second to none.

This is a topic with a wealth of ideas yet to be explored; it’s a discussion I hope will take root in our schools, our institutions, our churches, and our homes. As we look more closely at environmental stewardship and consider our response, I believe we will find a bedrock of principle on which to develop a clear, biblically sound, distinctly Adventist approach. I pray that as we do so, we will not be less bold, less farsighted than our early pioneers. And above all, I pray that our response, both in words and actions, will serve to reveal more clearly to the world an image of the Creator. ●

¹ The Kellogg building is now owned and operated by the U.S. government.

² *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 365.

Is Fish Safe to Eat?

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES and PETER N. LANDLESS



I read recently that pregnant women have now been advised to eat fish. I had thought that the mercury content of fish made it dangerous to eat. Do you think fish should now be part of a health-conscious person's diet?

Your question is one that is very topical and of great interest to vegetarians. As you no doubt know, many “vegetarians” include fish as part of their diet. Fish was eaten by Ellen White instead of “flesh meat,” and she considered it a better food than flesh of animals. She cautioned about fish from polluted rivers, and that is very much the situation today where fish from the inland and coastal waters of many countries are polluted with contaminants such as mercury, pesticides, and dioxins. The mercury content of fish was what prompted the withdrawal of fish from the diet of pregnant women. The reversal of this recommendation was based on factors other than the mercury content, which has not changed.

A person's cell walls require Omega-3 fatty acids for their proper function, and two very important types are the eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and the docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). Fish oil is rich in these two important fatty acids, and concerns for the development of the unborn baby's brain led to the reversal of the advice to pregnant mothers. Underlying this recommendation is a belief that Omega-3 fatty acids derived from plant sources are not easily metabolized to the EPA and DHA varieties of Omega-3 fatty acids.

At the Fifth International Congress on Vegetarian Nutrition, Dr. Alexander Leaf, Jackson Professor of Clinical Medicine, Emeritus, at Harvard University, espoused this belief. His position was assailed by Dr. Iqwal Mangat of the University of Toronto and, perhaps most tellingly, by information from the recent Adventist Health Study. This study showed that in fat biopsies taken from vegetarians, the content of DHA was very adequate. This means whatever theories of fat metabolism may be raised, the reality is that vegetarians are able to obtain sufficient DHA. This means we do not see a need at this time to recommend fish be added to the vegetarian's diet.

In the same vein, we also feel a well-balanced and ample vegetarian diet is quite adequate for the pregnant mother and her child.

Lest we fail to be fair to those vegetarians who do consume fish, it is appropriate to recognize there are benefits to fish-eating. These include a decreased risk of heart attack mortality, probably related to the antiarrhythmic effect of fish oils, and apart from the contaminants fish does not have health concerns. Fish taken from unpolluted waters, such as deep oceans, do not have the same level of problems we see with fish that are

farmed or from coastal waters.

In several nations and island populations, fish is a very important part of the diet. Our basis for vegetarianism is the quest for optimal health. Because of geographic differences in availability of foodstuffs, we are loath to recommend a rigid diet, and would caution a careful and well-planned transition from one's usual diet to a vegetarian diet. The biblical record of Jesus eating and serving fish in His glorified state surely allays any questions as to the morality of eating fish. Ellen White's preference for fish over flesh meat also suggests that any problem with fish relates to its contamination. For those with ample choice and quantities of foods available to them, particularly nuts and seeds, we see no reason for them to include fish in their diet. Conversely, we know of no health hazard for the eating of unpolluted fish. ●



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

Selina was not a typical convert in George Whitefield's Great Awakening. She was a countess, the wife of the earl of Huntingdon. By the standards of an eighteenth-century aristocratic woman, she had received an excellent education and, after her conversion, applied it to Bible study. Soon she had a following as someone who was an authority on Scripture.

On one occasion Selina was asked a question by a group of Christian seekers. They asked, "What is the greatest miracle in all the Bible?"

She thought aloud; was it walking on water or feeding 5,000 from a boy's packed lunch? No. It had to have been one of the healing miracles; perhaps the ten lepers?

Then Selina thought of the Bethany valley and "Lazarus, come forth!"

However, following further reflection, Selina once again said no, adding thoughtfully, "The greatest miracle in Scripture is contained in the first 11 verses of the eighth chapter of John's Gospel."

Remember the Story?

Recall how a cast of churchmen thrust a distressed, half-dressed adulteress into the presence of Jesus?

The setting was the outer reaches of the temple compound, in those days still a building site with lots of loose masonry around. Useful, perhaps, in a stoning.

Jesus could not win. The churchmen had all the exits covered. If He was merciful to the woman, they could say He was soft on the law. If He agreed that the woman must be stoned, He was in trouble

with the Roman authorities. A lose-lose situation. Either He condoned adultery or He took on Rome.

Jesus, you will recall, did not rush to a decision. He knew that it was a setup. He was not about to fall in with the agenda of the hypocritical accusers. At the beginning of John 8 they wanted to stone an adulteress. At the end of the chapter they wanted to stone Jesus. And that showed what they had really, really wanted all along.

So Jesus wrote in the dust, a practice not unknown to teachers in the centuries before chalkboards. The Greek verb translated "write," however, is a technical verb suggestive of the fact that what He wrote was hostile to the woman's accusers.

Jesus paused for thought and, maybe, prayer. At the other end of prayer is infinite wisdom. He was

The **Greater** **Mirra**

By DAVID MARSHALL

*The Bible
contains many
miracles.
Which is it?*

Standing
there, she
had thought
that life was
over. Her
story ended
here.

t
cle

showing us what to do when we are invited to condemn.

Jesus, by appearing to ignore the woman's accusers, was also obliging them to restate their case. By contriving the situation, those churchmen were acting disgracefully. Had they not been such hard cases, they might have considered repentance.

The case against the woman should have been brought by her husband, but he was not mentioned. Any sentence on the woman would have to be passed on the party of the second part, too. Was he permitted to escape ... or had he joined the woman's accusers?

Risky Strategy

What was Jesus writing, meanwhile, about those accusers?

He had stooped. The words He wrote would have been at their feet. PRIDE? ARROGANCE? MALICE? LUST? ADULTERY?

Whatever Jesus wrote, He made those hard cases very, very uncomfortable.

After straightening up, Jesus spoke for the first time: "If anyone of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her" (John 8:7, NIV).*

That was a risky strategy, and not just because of the loose masonry in the Temple compound. Those men were on a self-righteous high. Someone might have thrown the stone he was holding. And if *one* had done so ...

Jesus took the risk to show that He takes the law seriously. The finger that had been writing in dust had once written in stone.

Jesus knew the woman was *guilty as charged*. He took her sin seriously. Seriously enough to carry it to Calvary.

For the second time Jesus wrote in the dust.

For the second time He straightened up.

"Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" (verse 10).

"No one, sir" (verse 11).

"One by one, with bowed heads and downcast eyes, they stole away, leaving their victim with the pitying Saviour" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 461).

When Jesus had last spoken, it had been as if He were giving permission for the stoning to begin. *The Desire of Ages* says that the adulteress expected her painful death to begin.

Hence she would have been totally unprepared for the pitying Savior's reply:

"Then neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin" (see verse 11).

Selina Had It Right

Remember Selina? The greatest miracle in Scripture?

"Neither do I condemn you. Go ..." To say those words Jesus had to go to Calvary to buy her pardon. To die the second death.

Standing there, the woman had thought that life was over. Her story ended here.

Not so, Jesus was saying. The story starts here. Start over. Now. Begin afresh.

In that man's world in which the power belonged to the pious, the woman had thought that life was over. She had seen the size of the rocks those men had been gripping menacingly.

When Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you ..." He committed Himself to Calvary. His words encompassed the miracle of grace. "The greatest miracle of all," Selina said. ●

*Bible texts in this article are from the New International Version.



David Marshall is the senior editor at the Stanborough Press in Lincolnshire, England.

For more than 130 years the Adventist Church has been passionate about mission. J. N. Andrews was the first official Seventh-day Adventist missionary, boarding a ship for Europe in 1874. A decade earlier, Sabbathkeeping Adventists Hannah More and Michael Czechowski helped to plant Adventism on the African and European continents, respectively. Thousands would follow in their footsteps, leaving the comforts of home to share God's love in unfamiliar and sometimes dangerous places. Some would even sacrifice their lives.

What about today? Is mission still a priority for the Adventist Church?

By
LAURIE FALVO



Adventist Missionaries—

Do They Still Go?

“From its very beginning the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been a missionary movement,” says Gary Krause, director of the Office of Adventist Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist world headquarters. “Of course, it took the church a few years to realize that ‘going into all the world’ meant more than just North America. But when that realization came, it became a conviction. We started sending missionaries all over the world, a tremendous number for such a small denomination. Mission became our first priority, the very reason our church exists.”

Adventist missionaries today come from numerous regions around the globe and serve wherever there's a need. They originate in different countries, cultures, and career paths, but they're united in a common goal, to share the love and hope of Jesus with a world that desperately needs Him.

From teeming cities to remote jungle villages, missionaries such as Elmer and Angelica Ribeyro are making a difference in the lives of people who have nowhere else to turn.

Elmer and Angelica Ribeyro (Sierra Leone)

Even as a child, Elmer Ribeyro felt God was calling him to be a medical missionary. “I felt a desire to become a doctor and prayed that God would open doors for me to become one,” says Elmer. “I knew I wanted to serve in Africa some day.”

Originally from Peru, Elmer, a skilled surgeon, and his wife, Angelica, a trained pharmacist, work at a small clinic in Sierra Leone, a country recently torn apart by a brutal civil war.

Medical missionaries such as Elmer and Angelica serve a vital role in the outreach of the church. They're often the first point of contact the local community has with Seventh-day Adventists.

The care and compassion the Ribeyros show their patients provide a glimpse of the love that Jesus shows us all.

Samir and Tanya Berbawy (Egypt)

Samir Berbawy was born in Egypt, grew up in Lebanon, and eventually emigrated to the United States, where he became an Adventist educator.

When their children served as student missionaries at Nile Union Academy, Samir and his wife, Tanya, visited the Adventist school. Samir felt compelled by God to return to his homeland to make a difference in the lives of the young people in the church there.

Eventually, Samir was asked to return to Egypt as a missionary, and he now serves as president of the Egypt Field.

Every year scores of Adventist missionaries are trained and sent throughout the world. Through such practical means as education, health care, church planting, and literacy training, they endeavor to reach the unreached and touch the untouchables.

Missionaries have been, and still are, the Holy Spirit's instruments to make the Adventist Church what it is today, a global spiritual family.

Oscar and Eugenia Giordano (Lesotho)

In the small country of Lesotho, two Adventist missionaries are sowing seeds of hope among people infected with HIV.

Veteran missionaries to Africa, Oscar and Eugenia Giordano have served the church in some of the continent's most grueling environments.

Together they founded Adventist HIV-AIDS International Ministry, a church-run organization

Left: PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY: Eugenia Giordano, codirector of the Adventist HIV-AIDS International Ministry in Africa, works with an attendee of a Lesotho sewing workshop, established to help people affected by HIV and/or AIDS.

Below: MISSIONARY DENTIST: Milan Moskala, an Adventist dentist in Bangladesh, poses with students from one of the many schools he established in the slums of Dhaka.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ADVENTIST MISSION

headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa, that combines love, compassion, and education to help victims of HIV and AIDS live meaningful lives.

“We can see how lives are changing,” Eugenia says. “We can see people having hope, people who were dying and sick. Through this ministry they say, ‘Now I have hope.’”

“Jesus would approach these people,” Oscar says. “He would touch them, give them His tangible presence, which means a lot for a person who is completely alone. That touch of love will last a long time.... Care and compassion start the healing process.”

Rick and Marcia McEdward (Southern Asia-Pacific Division)

Rick McEdward is a pastor with a missionary’s heart. Six years ago, he and his wife, Marcia, and their children moved to Asia, one of the most challenging areas for mission in the world. Rick has a burden for sharing God’s love with people of various world religions.

As Adventist Mission coordinator for the Southern Asia-Pacific Division, Rick works with Global Mission pioneers to start new groups of believers in cities and remote jungle areas.

“Recently I visited a small village in the jungle of Indonesia, where we’ve had a Global Mission project for several years,” Rick says. “There is a small group of five families who now meet to worship every week. We have a Global Mission pioneer who goes to the village each week to conduct Bible studies and share God’s love with the people. There’s been some opposition to our work in the past, but as the pioneer and church families keep sharing their love, the community has opened up and accepted God’s Word.”

Milan and Eva Moskala (Bangladesh)

For the past eight years Milan Moskala has served as a medical missionary in Dhaka, Bangladesh, one of the poorest places on earth. Its slums are packed with people who lack the bare essentials of life.

Originally from the Czech Republic, Milan spent years ministering to war refugees in Bosnia.

An accomplished dentist, Milan does a lot more than fix teeth. He often visits schools he has set up deep in the heart of the Dhaka slums.

“Everywhere there are thousands of children without parents, without support, just begging, working, trying to survive picking food out of garbage places, and fighting among themselves,” Milan says. “They are living very miserable lives.”

These schools provide an education to children who would have had no chance to succeed on their own. It also provides them with the only meal they may eat that day.

In the evenings, Milan visits houses in the slums and teaches people about healthful living.

Milan’s acts of kindness reflect the love of a God who otherwise would remain unknown to this community.

Just a Glimpse

These short stories provide only a glimpse into the lives of missionary families. They’re just a handful of the hundreds around the world who often work in dangerous, lonely places without adequate resources—but they’re determined to make a difference.

“It’s wonderful when you see a life changed,” Oscar Giordano says, “when you see the joy of the people who’ve experienced the healing power of Jesus Christ. I urge my brothers and sisters all over the world to get involved and to support through their mission offerings the work that is being done on the front line.”

Every quarter the Office of Adventist Mission produces a DVD that highlights the mission work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church around the world. The videos on the DVD can be used to promote the Thirteenth Sabbath and mission offerings in local churches. This story was adapted from the first quarter 2008 Adventist Mission DVD. To order a DVD subscription or to watch DVD stories online, visit www.AdventistMission.org.



Laurie Falvo is a communication projects manager for the Office of Adventist Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

A Daniel *in*

A Russian Follows God's Call

By ANDREW MCCHESENEY

Timofei does not look like a millionaire. He's short and dark, as chubby-cheeked as a third grader. But behind the merry brown eyes and soft-spoken demeanor there's an uncanny sense for business that has allowed him to build a business empire that stretches across three countries.

The 29-year-old entrepreneur unabashedly shares the secret of his success—a chance encounter with a Seventh-day Adventist who pointed him to God.

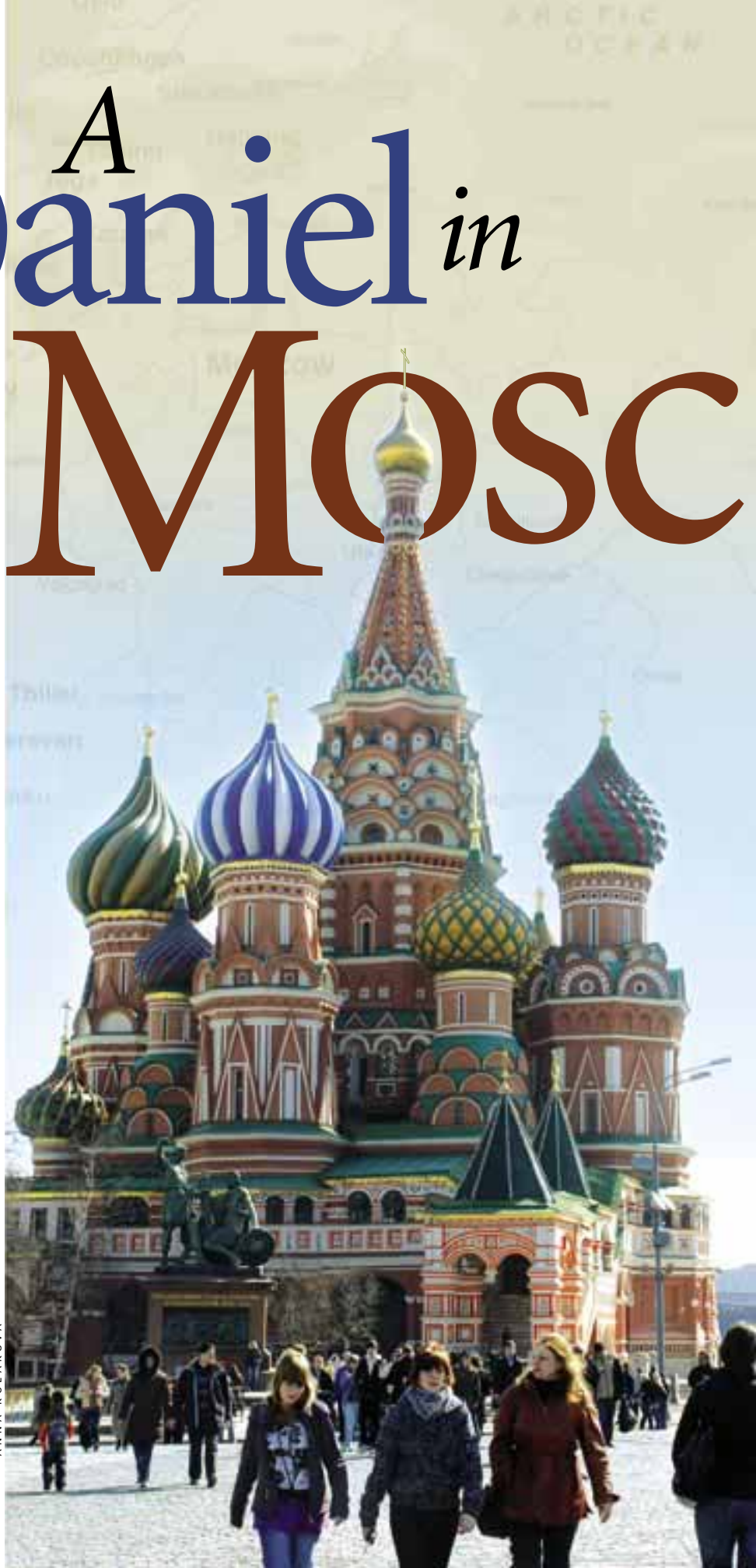
“When I met David I was an ordinary man who had a family business with my father. I was a driver and deliveryman. That was my job,” Timofei said. “Now . . . we do business with almost every big retailer in Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan.”

Timofei is among a group of wealthy Russians whose lives have seen big changes after they started studying English with David Kulakov, perhaps the most unlikely of English teachers. A native Russian speaker, David studied at Zaoksky Adventist University with a desire to reach out to Moscow's more than 10 million residents from behind the pulpit.

But God had other plans.

David, 34, instead became something of a modern-day Daniel,

MOSC



ANNA KULAKOVA



WITNESSING OVER A MEAL: Some of David Kulakov's students from his English language classes, as well as members of the Moscow International Seventh-day Adventist Church, share a Sabbath lunch in David's apartment. David invites his students to his home so they can get to know other Adventists and learn more about their faith.

OW

a friend and adviser to influential people who might otherwise never be challenged to consider God.

"When Nebuchadnezzar started to interact with Daniel, he realized that Daniel did not fear for the future like other people. It's the same with my students," David said. "These people are usually very wise; they can see through you. They see if you have that fear for the future, and they see what troubles you. They see what makes you upset; they see which habits you have that are bad and good.

"You cannot preach to them," he said. "That is why they do not go to church, because some have heard people preaching about eternal life and eternal treasures, but not managing earthly things properly."

David did not set out to attract rich and powerful people when he started teaching English part-time more than a decade ago. But after God miraculously changed his life, he realized that God wanted him to teach.

After a few years, David had so many students that he prayed about the situation and then sharply increased his fees in a bid to regulate demand. The result is that David charges some of the highest prices for private lessons in Russia. His students,

naturally, are wealthy businesspeople and well-connected government officials seeking the best English lessons that money can buy.

For the students who ask—and they inevitably do—David also offers something that money can't buy: advice on managing their businesses and raising their children—straight from the pages of the Bible and the books of Ellen G. White. As the students follow the advice and see their lives improve, they quiz David about the secret of his wisdom. David credits God and presents them with the five books of White's Conflict of the Ages Series, urging them to start with *Patriarchs and Prophets*. He also invites them to his home for Sabbath lunch with other Adventists to see his lifestyle in action.

Several students have accepted Jesus and been baptized; among them are David's own wife, a politician, and a billionaire who was once profiled on the cover of *Forbes* magazine's Russian edition.

"David is very successful with his personal ministry because he knows the Scriptures very well," said Andrey Scheglov, who serves as treasurer of the Moscow Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and has known David for about a decade.

"These people would be hard to reach otherwise, but he brings them to church," he said. "There is no question that the Holy Spirit is working through David."

Timofei's Story

Timofei called David five years ago when he got tired of working as a driver in his family's small business

and concluded that speaking fluent English would jump-start his career. He already had an English teacher, but he felt he could do better, so he scanned the many newspaper advertisements for teachers. David's ad jumped out at him.

It was the only one promising the ability to both speak and think in English, Timofei said. He called and arranged a meeting with David.

"In a short time I realized what kind of man he was," Timofei said, speaking in fluent English. "I realized how great he was as an English teacher because I had experience talking with [previous] teachers and taking lessons from them."

Then, as Timofei and David got to know each other better, Timofei began to confide in him about his aspirations. "I was an ambitious man, and I wanted a more interesting job to realize my potential. I wanted to learn English and enter some big company as an ordinary employee," Timofei said.

David told him to think bigger. "During the lessons from David I learned that he also taught personal effectiveness, and during our lessons he gave me some points from his seminars. It changed something in my psychology, and my life began to change, especially my business life," Timofei said.



Andrew McChesney is a journalist who has lived and worked in Russia for the past 12 years.

Timofei took over the family business and soon earned his first million dollars. Astounded by his success, Timofei said, he asked David about his source of wisdom.

Timofei and his wife are now reading *Patriarchs and Prophets*.

“Without any doubt I can say David has helped me realize what God is in our life,” Timofei said. “God in our life is everything. I think that God is love. Our love to God and our love to people are related. When we start to love God, we start to love ourselves, we start to love other people, and we start to help other people.”

Timofei spoke on condition that his last name not be printed, saying that in Russia’s often-criminal business world, he feared for the safety of his wife and three young children if he drew attention to his wealth. He said he recently turned down an interview request from *Forbes* over the same concerns.

Timofei, however, agreed to talk about David because he wanted to “tell other people what kind of man David is and what he has done in my life.”

Asked how David had helped open his heart to God, Timofei said, “His words are similar to his actions. This really helped me to understand that there are people in our world who really do or try to do everything that we read in the Bible.”

Timofei, a Jew by birth, recently began attending the synagogue on Sabbath and paid his first tithe there. David is continuing to pray as Timofei reads toward *The Desire of Ages*.

How David Started

A difficult youth left David’s mind brimming with thoughts that he desperately wanted to expunge when he rededicated his life to God. A keen student of psychology, David realized that it would be

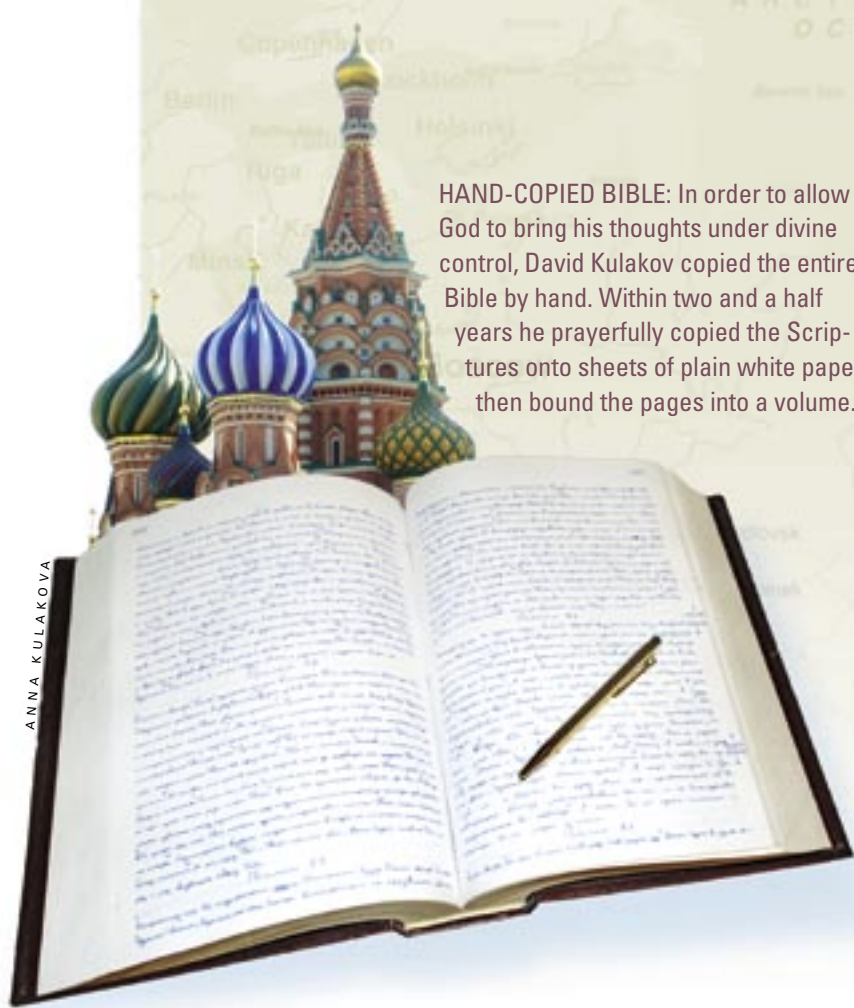
physiologically impossible to switch his impulses overnight because of the fixed pathways between brain cells, formed over years of undisciplined, irreligious thinking.

“In order to build up new connections between the brain cells I needed a real miracle. I knew that our thoughts could not be changed at once. It takes time,” said David, a tall, burly man with silver-rimmed glasses and a booming baritone voice. The smile that always seemed to lurk around his lips vanished for a moment.

David, incidentally, initially expressed a reluctance to share his story, saying if anyone deserved to be profiled it was his mother, a faithful Adventist who witnessed many miracles during Soviet-era repressions. After several days of prayerful soul-searching, David agreed in hope that his experience would further glorify God’s name.

He set two conditions, however:

HAND-COPIED BIBLE: In order to allow God to bring his thoughts under divine control, David Kulakov copied the entire Bible by hand. Within two and a half years he prayerfully copied the Scriptures onto sheets of plain white paper, then bound the pages into a volume.



that his photograph and the identities of his current students, with the exception of Timofei, not be published. He said he didn’t want to inadvertently hinder God’s work in a country where paranoia can be strong about any religious organization not linked to the dominant Russian Orthodox Church, especially if the group is mistakenly labeled a United States sect.

David said he wanted to prove with his work that Seventh-day Adventist Christians can be trusted and, if asked, faithfully serve others in their businesses, families, and the life of the country.

David began studying English in the early 1990s, and he perfected it by working with American missionaries.

Back in 1997 David prayed earnestly that God bring his thoughts under divine control. On November 28, he resolved to copy the entire Bible by hand. During the next two and a half years, he prayerfully copied the

Scriptures onto sheets of plain white paper. At the same time, he reread the Conflict of the Ages Series and the nine volumes of Ellen G. White's *Testimonies for the Church*.

The Bible-copying exercise took a combined 800 hours, and the results were astonishing, David said.

"I foresaw the changes that God would make in my life if I copied the Bible by hand, but I later realized that I had correctly predicted only 3 percent of them. I could not even fathom how global the changes would be," he said.

Among them, he said, was a newfound ability to think in a concentrated form, which he described as having fewer but more potent and useful thoughts. With the Bible imprinted on his mind, he also found it simpler to distinguish between truth and error, particularly in secular writings.

"At that moment, probably, a desire arose deep in my heart to become like Daniel," David said. "I realized that God has always needed men like Daniel, because He needs people who can present His truth to the powerful people in the countries where they live."

David prayed that God would allow him to become an effective witness.

Then he abruptly realized that his students already included a number of prominent people, and several of them had become Adventists, including his wife, Anna, and the billionaire featured in *Forbes*. The billionaire, who accepted Jesus while David was halfway through copying the Bible, currently lives outside Russia.

Ellen White and Self-discipline

With his interest in psychology, David combed through dozens of books on personal effectiveness,

compiling a dossier with passages from authors such as Stephen R. Covey and Jim Collins that conformed to the Bible and Ellen G. White's writings. A common thread that David found in all the writings is the need for self-discipline and diligence—the same skills, incidentally, that students need to learn a foreign language. So David incorporated some materials on self-discipline into his English lessons.

Students began asking David if he had more information about self-discipline and if he could advise them separately from the English lessons. So he developed one-on-one seminars about personal effectiveness and leadership skills. "Little by little God led me into a field that I had not dreamed of before," he said. "I was really amazed that extremely rich people were not ashamed to say that they really desired to have that self-discipline and the discipline of emotions and character that they saw in me that I don't see in myself."

David reads and rereads *The Desire of Ages* for lessons from Jesus on how to interact with prominent people. One of his favorite stories is the banquet at Simon's house, when Mary Magdalene anointed Jesus' feet with expensive perfume and tears. Simon, a wealthy businessman, looked at her in contempt, certain that Jesus would not allow this outpouring of affection if He knew of Mary's sinful past—a past he had played a key role in. At the same banquet sat the disciple Judas Iscariot, criticizing Mary's actions as a waste of money.

Filled with compassion, Jesus told the parable of the two debtors, managing to rebuke both Simon and Judas without humiliating them in front of the others.

"Ellen G. White shows in *The Desire of Ages* how Christ was

confronted with difficult situations, and He always had the great wisdom to touch other people's hearts without offending them and at the same time making the greatest possible impression on their hearts," David said. "She actually uses psychological terms to explain all that. You can find the terms she uses even in modern psychology books."

David said he gains new insights every time he prayerfully reflects on how Jesus treated rich and prominent people and the crowds.

"Rich people are very strong-minded; they know how to influence people and they know how to scare people if they need to," he said. "You have to know how to rebuke them strongly without insulting their self-esteem or personal dignity. This is what *The Desire of Ages* has taught me."

Wealthy businesspeople quickly understand that they cannot rattle David, just as Nebuchadnezzar found Daniel could not be frightened. David said peace despite adversity is a lesson he is learning from Jesus' trial the night before the crucifixion.

"They could rip His skin to shreds, they could spit into His face, they could do anything to Him, but they saw that He had that self-dignity," David said. "That is why they actually killed Him, because they saw they could not insult Him."

David said Jesus' quiet love and compassion during the trial has taught him that it is impossible to upset a person who has a close relationship with God, who has confidence in God's care and leading.

"Rich people are looking for the best lessons for their own survival in this world," he said. "Of course they want to know what gives you self-dignity and self-worth."

When Timofei and other students ask for the secret, David points them to the answer—God. 🍊

By
JONATHAN A.
THOMPSON

Stir Up *the* Gift

“Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:6, 7).

What is it about receiving gifts that ignites such interest, stirs such excitement, and fills us with such overflowing joy? Is it the prospect of having some need met? Is it the idea of being thought of or cared for? Or is it perhaps the feeling of being special? Receiving Christmas, birthday, and anniversary gifts is thrilling enough. What an awesome reality, however, that the Creator God has reconciled and befriended humanity through the incarnation of His Son!

Additionally exciting is the news that He anoints and gifts believers with the indwelling of His Holy Spirit. God has engaged us in a quasi-partnership to extend and expand the ministry of Christ through the endowment of spiritual gifts.

What are these gifts? How do they work in the believer’s life? How do they impact one’s spiritual formation?

Defining Spiritual Gifts?

Spiritual gifts are special endowments from the Holy Spirit to equip believers for service, ministry, and evangelizing a world hostile to Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:12). While they can be aligned with natural talents or cultivated skills, more often than not, spiritual gifts enable a disciple, surrendered to the Holy Spirit, to meet needs and challenges in our spiritual warfare that are greater than what is natural or developed. Barriers without, and timidity or deficiencies within, are surmounted and overcome when the Spirit of God anoints the believer’s life and sends that willing servant on an assignment for Christ.

The apostle Paul instructed the congregation in Corinth on the source and means of spiritual gifts: “But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills” (1 Cor. 12:11). In Romans 12:6 Paul links the gifts to God’s grace and our faith. In 1 Peter

We’ve been promised something powerful beyond our own resources.

4:10, the onetime boastful Peter lets us know the gifts are not given to glorify the individual, but to administer grace and to serve others. If anyone is to be glorified, it is God, the donor—not we, the instruments. “If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever” (1 Peter 4:11).

My Experience With Spiritual Gifts

In more than three decades of ministry, I have repeatedly experienced and seen the work of the Holy Spirit through these special gifts, most convincingly evidenced in evangelism. My first evangelistic campaign was conducted in a little suburban town on Long Island, New York (USA), where two congregations came together in the spirit of unity and missionary zeal. Living in New Jersey, my new bride and I crossed two bridges daily just to get to our district. Returning from church duties one night, we crawled through four hours of metro traffic, an experience that led church officers to see that kind of commute as a threat to their long-awaited public evangelistic effort. They pleaded with us to move temporarily into one of the Sabbath school rooms of a building adjoining the church, and bizarre as the idea was, we accepted. The Holy Spirit gifted our consecrated members during the meetings. We stirred up the gift, and 59 believers were baptized.



Jonathan A. Thompson is the director of the Oakwood branch office of the Ellen G. White Estate in Huntsville, Alabama.

In another New England soul-winning venture, we experienced the Holy Spirit's anointing in the transformation of lives. A member learned that his neighbor was contemplating suicide because alcohol had wrecked his thriving business, broken up his marriage, and destroyed his family. The member, stirring up the gift, convinced his neighbor to come to the meetings and give God a chance. As the Holy Spirit would have it, the message presented that night reminded the desperate visitor of truth he'd heard as a child. Hope was kindled in his heart. He came night after night. The Holy Spirit strengthened him to give up the bottle. Then God reclaimed his wife, family, and business. This man became a faithful deacon and later a productive elder in the church.

Whenever pastors and laypersons have stirred up the gift and worked together, we have seen remarkable results: outreach has energized the community, evangelism has flourished, churches have been planted, Christian schools have been started, buildings have been renovated, and mortgages have been paid off.

How Spiritual Gifts Shaped My Faith

My first encounter with spiritual gifts—early in life—made an indelible and transforming impression on me. It was a combination of three dynamics:

First, my father had a unique way of conducting family worship after work. We sat around the dining room table discussing the Sabbath school lesson and reading from the writings of Ellen G. White. And in order to demonstrate that we were paying attention, each of us had to read a paragraph, and then explain its meaning.

While this time-consuming exercise failed to create an appreciation for those books, it did sow good seed and lay an excellent foundation.

Second, my pastor (J. J. North, Sr.) delivered sermons

from Daniel and Revelation, using fascinating pictures of beasts that looked like comic book creatures, focusing on the “last days.” The coming of Jesus was “at the very door,” his messages said.

Third, at 9, I made a decision to give my heart to the Lord, be baptized, and follow God's leading. Then first lady Sister Ruth North took over. Her baptism and new believer's class indoctrinated me, groomed me for Thirteenth Sabbath presentations, and trained me for Sabbath afternoon and Sunday witnessing experiences. As a shy child, the last thing I wanted to do was knock on apartment building doors in Brooklyn, New York. It was too dangerous! And rejection or embarrassment was certain! Nevertheless, with a sense of the urgency of our message, the power of the Holy Ghost, and the presence of angels, I stirred up the gift and became a little witness for my Lord. To my surprise, there were more “Yes” responses than slammed doors. Soon our mission was organized into a church and moved from storefront buildings to a beautiful worship facility.

What God Is About to Do

The enterprise of sending the gospel to the world started with a dynamic explosion of power. The wind whipped through an upper chamber in old Jerusalem, while fire descended upon a motley crew like an overwhelmingly strange spring shower. They stirred up the gift and thousands were converted in a day.

It will happen again. Said Ellen White: “The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening.... Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven.... Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers ...” (*The Faith I Live By*, p. 332). —

Spiritual Gifts and Ministries

God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts which each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. Given by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who apportions to each member as He wills, the gifts provide all abilities and ministries needed by the church to fulfill its divinely ordained

functions. According to the Scriptures, these gifts include such ministries as faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, reconciliation, compassion, and self-sacrificing service and charity for the help and encouragement of people. Some members are called of God and endowed by the Spirit for functions recognized by the church in pastoral,

evangelistic, apostolic, and teaching ministries particularly needed to equip the members for service, to build up the church to spiritual maturity, and to foster unity of the faith and knowledge of God. When members employ these spiritual gifts as faithful stewards of God's varied grace, the church is protected from the destructive influence of false doctrine, grows with a growth that is from God, and is built up in faith and love. (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:9-11, 27, 28; Eph. 4:8, 11-16; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 1 Peter 4:10, 11.)

He Still Speaks

By
ALBERTO
R. TIMM

How does God communicate over the noise of modern society?

Adventist World magazine has published a selection from the writings of Ellen G. White in each edition since its launch in September 2005. Beginning with this edition and continuing through the next two years, special articles about the biblical gift of prophecy will also appear in this space every other month to help Seventh-day Adventists around the world appreciate and learn more about God's special gift to His remnant people. These "Discovering the Spirit of Prophecy" features will include explorations of Bible teaching about spiritual gifts, practical articles about applying insights to everyday life, and helpful methods to share the richness of this gift with friends and neighbors.



Alberto R. Timm is rector at the Latin-American Adventist Theological Seminary in Brasilia, Brazil.

We live in a world in which communication devices are growing astronomically under the impact of the technological and cybernetic revolutions. Satellites, the "World Wide Web" (www), cell phones, and many other tools have transformed our world into a global community. Busy communicating with each other through those means, we do not spend enough time listening to our loving God. Fascinated with so many sophisticated resources, we are continuously tempted to disregard the simple ways in which God tries to speak to us. With the abundance of information available to us, we risk ignoring the saving knowledge that only God is able to impart to us. We need to retune our minds to the clear communication that comes "from above" (see James 3:13-18).

God Speaks in Nature

God reveals Himself to humankind "in various ways" (Heb. 1:1). One way is through nature, with the uncountable

mysterious forms of life around us and the splendid stellar skies above us. Evidences of God's creative and sustaining power can be seen by lifting up our eyes "on high" (Isa. 40:26), for "the heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands" (Ps. 19:1). God's restoring love is showcased in the endless life-renewal process that permeates the whole creation. Ellen White explains that "through the agencies of nature, God is working, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to keep us alive, to build up and restore us. When any part of the body sustains injury, a healing process is at once begun; nature's agencies are set at work to restore soundness. But the power working through these agencies is the power of God. All life-giving power is from Him. When one recovers from disease, it is God who restores him" (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 112, 113).

The whole healing and renewal process that keeps nature alive also points silently to the ultimate restoration when God will "make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). "The trees cast off their leaves, only to be robed with fresher verdure; the flowers die, to spring forth in new beauty; and in every manifestation of creative power is held out the assurance that we may be created anew in 'righteousness and holiness of truth.' Ephesians 4:24, margin. Thus the very objects and operations of nature that bring so vividly to mind our great loss [after the fall] become to us the messengers of hope" (*Education*, p. 27). Yet, the message of nature is not only unclear, because of the presence of evil, but also incomplete, for it does not speak explicitly about the plan of redemption.

God's Messengers

A clearer form of divine revelation took place through the ministry of genuine prophets, who were chosen by

God to be His special spokespersons to humanity. The relationship between God and His prophets cannot be limited to mere one-sided encounters, for it involved the communication of pointed truths in propositional forms. God stated in Numbers 12:6 (NIV), “When a prophet of the Lord is among you, I reveal myself to him in visions, I speak to him in dreams.” There are many instances in the Bible in which prophets claim the “word of the Lord” came to them and was delivered as such to the people (Jer. 1:4; Eze. 1:3; etc.). Because of their divine origin, the prophetic messages (whether in oral or written form) bear divine credentials and authority (Isa. 8:20; Gal. 1:8, 9; Rev. 22:18, 19). Many Old Testament prophets announced the coming of the Messiah, but it was John the Baptist who actually became His forerunner (Matt. 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-18).

Undoubtedly, the supreme revelation of God to humankind is found in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became also the Son of man. Hebrews 1:1-3 (NIV) explains, “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he spoke to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.”

For this very reason He was called “Immanuel”—which means, ‘God with us’” (Matt. 1:23, NIV). Indeed, “we have only one perfect photograph of God, and this is Jesus Christ” (E. G. White, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 906).

Despite the fact that Jesus Christ is no longer visible in our midst and that, as far as we know, there is no genuine prophet alive in our days, God’s providence generated and

preserved the Scriptures throughout the ages. As our only rule of faith and practice, they bear witness about Christ (John 5:39). The Old Testament messianic prophecies portrayed the forthcoming Messiah in such distinct colors that Jesus of Nazareth could be identified as the true One. The New Testament writers confirmed such identification, presenting Him as the only hope of salvation and eternal life for the sinners. The apostle John says that the Gospel record was written so that we “may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing” we “may have life in his name” (John 20:30, 31, NIV). This implies both a living relationship with the person of Christ and a true commitment to His teachings found in the Scriptures (see Matt. 7:21-27).

The Holy Spirit’s Role

Crucial in the whole revelation process is the work of the Holy Spirit. He inspired the prophets to write the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:19-21), enlightens our minds when we study them (1 Cor 2:10), pours out the love of God “in our hearts” (Rom. 5:5), and tries to guide us “into all truth” (John 16:13). So significant is the work of the Holy Spirit that Ellen White even states that, without His

work, “the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 671) for us, because we would not accept it. Besides leading us to accept the Scriptures as the written Word and Christ as the living Word, the Holy Spirit also tries to guide us in the right path. Isaiah 30:21 (NIV) says, “Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, ‘This is the way; walk in it.’”

God reveals through nature His creative and sustaining power and restoring love. But He spoke more explicitly to humanity through His servants the prophets. The basic prophetic message was incorporated in the Scriptures and preserved by divine providence throughout the ages. The revelation process found its climax in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ, who was actually “God with us.” The same Holy Spirit who inspired the prophets to write the Scriptures also enlightens our minds to understand them properly, to accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and to walk with Him and for Him. The whole process aims to free us from our sinful paths of death and guide us in the way where we find fullness of life in the presence of our loving God. ●

What do you think?

1. In what ways do you see God’s character of love and redemption revealed in nature?
2. God’s prophets often had to present messages of reproof. In what ways have you personally benefited from such messages?
3. How is the Holy Spirit active in your life? What deeper understandings of God’s will for you have become apparent recently?

When he arrived at our front door, he was dressed not in a red Masai blanket, but in well-worn trousers and a jacket, carrying a laptop computer instead of a hunting spear.

"I am Solomon," he said. "You have been inquiring about my work?"

"Come in," we said.

As he placed his computer on the coffee table he explained, "A doctor on a mission trip from North Dakota gave this to me. I thought you'd like to see a few pictures of the members of one of my churches."

And there they were, Masai women sitting in a group under a thorn tree, dressed in brightly colored wraps, wearing traditional beaded necklaces and ear pieces.

"How many members are in your church?" we asked.

"One church has about 300, including children, and the other about 120 members," he replied. "Masai men think religion is only for their wives, so our congregations are made up mostly of women and children. But with God's help this perception will change."

Those of us who worked as missionaries in Kenya and Tanzania in the late 1950s see today's progress as a marked evidence of God's grace, a demonstration of the power of the gospel. People who, until recently, have not been exposed to the gospel are learning to trust the true *Ngai*, the ruler of heaven and earth.

Blazing a Trail

When missionaries first came from England in the early 1900s to establish mission work in East Africa, they found that the colonial government in Kenya was allocating specific areas of the country to various missionary bodies.

Adventists were given the territory around Lake Victoria among the Luo and Kisii tribes. That area became predominantly Adventist. The Gendia Mission, the East African Publishing House, and Kendu Mission Hospital were established among the Luo people; and Nyanchwa Mission and Kamagambo Training School were located in Kisii country. Masai land bordering these two areas was placed out of bounds, to be left untouched by mission outreach.

By the mid-1950s, with many churches now established among the Luo and Kisii people, church leaders were led to share the gospel with their Masai neighbors. However, the government had mandated that this tribe not be evangelized. On several occasions the matter was discussed by the South Nyanza Field (Kisii) committee.

Jean Thomas (pictured on page 25) recently returned from Kenya, where she and her husband, Fred, served nine months as volunteers at Maxwell

GOD'S Spirit at Work in

Today's believers are building on the foundation laid by former generations of missionaries.

By JEAN THOMAS

A

They came up with a plan to open a medical clinic just inside the Masai border and invite Kendu Hospital medical staff to participate. The doctors were enthusiastic, and soon a monthly medical clinic was in operation. For several months the doctors, accompanied by mission personnel from Kisii, worked together providing medical aid to the Masai who came from the surrounding villages.

But one day a letter arrived from the district commissioner in Kilgoris, headquarters for monitoring Masai concerns. "It has been brought to my attention," the letter stated, "that you are entering Masai territory illegally. Therefore, as of this date, you are to cease and desist from crossing their border or interfering with their lifestyle."

That ended the first outreach endeavor to the Masai from its northern border. But by a strange turn of events, a change soon came about.

While on one of his trips from the Kisii mission to Kendu Hospital, the mission president, Fred Thomas (who had helped initiate the medical clinic), was surprised to meet a Masai chief at the hospital.

"What brings you to Kendu Hospital, Mafuta?" Thomas asked.

"I became very sick and went to every hospital I knew of, even as far as Nairobi. But I found no doctor who could cure me, so I came home to die.

"Then my wives, concerned about their future welfare, said, 'There's one hospital you haven't been to.'

"Which one?" I asked.

"You haven't been to the hospital at Kendu Bay,' they said.

"No,' I told them. 'I could never go there. We Masai despise the tribe that lives near that hospital. And in any case, I was the one who had asked the district commissioner



frica

REUNION: Fred Thomas, retired missionary, stands next to Solomon Lenana (in gray coat) and other Adventist Masai who have come to know Jesus and the power of the gospel.

to put a stop to the medical clinic they started in our district.

“My wives just laughed. ‘Go,’ they said. ‘Since you have no hope of living long, you might as well take your life in your hands and go there.’ So, here I am, and these doctors are healing me. I will be going home soon.”

Forward Progress

Back in our living room, lay pastor Solomon Lenana told us his story. He was born to a traditional Masai family and was expected to spend his childhood and youth herding cattle on the hills around his father’s *manayatta* (“hut”). But Solomon had noticed that young men with an education were no longer herding their families’ cattle and goats, but were holding down good paying jobs.

When Solomon told his parents about his desire to get an education, his father objected. His mother, however, used her powers of persuasion. They sold several cattle to enable Solomon to attend a boarding school in Nairobi.

“There was only one other Masai youth in my school,” Solomon said. “The other students were from tribes whose background was different from ours. Their customs and beliefs were very foreign to ours.”

After completing high school in 1989, Solomon went looking for work. Maxwell Adventist Academy, a boarding school for children of missionaries in East Africa, was being relocated out of the city of Nairobi. With a working knowledge of English and other skills he had acquired in school, Solomon applied for a job and was given the responsibility of keeping track of building supplies as they were delivered to the new campus.

The lifestyle of the missionary teachers he worked with so impressed Solomon that he expressed a desire to learn more

about their beliefs. His questions led to Bible studies and eventually baptism. In the excitement of finding such joy and satisfaction with what he had learned, he began sharing his faith with other Masai, some of whom were living on the hill directly behind the new school. Solomon and a missionary named Gwen Edwards began holding classes with these villagers, teaching them how to read the Bible.

In 1994 the first six converts from that group were baptized in the little pool built at the base of the school’s amphitheater. But once the school building projects were complete, Solomon’s employment came to an end.

“Then what happened?” we asked.

“I was sent to the ASI-operated Riverside Training Institute in Zambia, where I was given a six-month course in theology and health studies. Now I work as a self-supporting pastor. I travel around Masai country making friends, interesting them in God’s Word, and teaching them about cleanliness, health, and AIDS prevention.”

With Masai territory mostly rural, and undeveloped areas stretching for hundreds of miles across Kenya and Tanzania, paved roads are few and often impassible except in four-wheel-drive vehicles. This means that Solomon, who has no transportation of his own, travels where he can on buses, then walks long distances to reach interested people. Both of his churches are difficult to reach. He spends many nights away from home holding health seminars and Bible studies. This is all done on a volunteer basis with no remuneration from the church.

The poor roads and lack of communication make it difficult to get an accurate count of how many members and churches are in Masai land today, but lives are being changed by the gospel. ●

QUESTION: *I hear different opinions concerning the final destruction of the wicked. Is it true that God will not destroy them, but that they will self-destruct?*

I tend to avoid answering this question because any answer tends to lead to debates, and I am not interested in debating. But since the question seems to be raised more often, let me begin by saying that only one Person experienced the second death—Jesus Christ. I will approach the topic through His experience, keeping in mind that although His experience was that of the wicked, it was also significantly different.

1. The Problem: Some people believe that sin destroys itself, meaning that sin brings with itself specific results and consequences that destroy the sinner. That is often the case. But the final extinction of sin, sinners, and evil powers is something different. In that case God is described as being directly and personally involved. For some this is a problem because God is described as inflicting death on human beings, some of whom will apparently suffer more than others. For them, it would be better to suggest that sinners destroy themselves. I accept the biblical statement: “fire came down from heaven and devoured them” (Rev. 20:9, NIV). I recognize that I do not comprehend the details of that most strange, divine action.

2. Jesus Died the Death of the Wicked: It would be difficult to deny that God the Father was directly involved in the death of Jesus. The Bible assigns the death of Jesus to the Father, the Son Himself, and to Roman and Jewish authorities.

The fact that the *Father* could have saved Jesus from dying but did not means that the death of Jesus was willed by the Father, that is to say it corresponded to His divine intention for His Son (John 12:27, 28). Jesus drank from the cup of God’s judgment (Matt. 26:39). The Father did not spare Him (Rom. 8:32), but handed Him over to death (chap. 4:25).

Jesus said He would lay down His own life, and that no one had power to take it from Him (John 10:17, 18). Jesus voluntarily gave up His life (Mark 10:45; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 5:25).

Humans were also involved in the death of the Son of God (Luke 18:32; 22:3; Mark 15:15). The Father, the Son, and humans were directly involved in the death of the Son of God. The experience of Jesus was slightly different from what will happen to the wicked. But in both cases the individual and God will be involved.

3. Jesus Suffered: No one questions that Jesus Christ suffered intensely on the cross. The suffering was physical, but above all it was spiritual: He experienced divine

abandonment such as no other human will ever experience (Matt. 27:46). He bore the sins of the world. The wicked will receive their reward according to their personal works (Rev. 20:13). This is not self-inflicted pain or pain inflicted on them by Satan. God will personally give them what they chose as their final destiny in life—eternal death.

4. Jesus Gave up His Life: It was necessary for Jesus to die as the Sin-bearer. He accepted the righteous and just will of the Father

for Him. On the cross, He suffered up to the moment He voluntarily gave up His life to the Father. Since His death was part of the saving plan, He endured suffering for a particular period of time and at the appropriate moment gave up His life while shouting, “It is finished!”

In the case of the wicked, their destruction is preceded by their own recognition that they deserve to die. They will bow down and proclaim that indeed Christ is Lord (Phil. 2:10, 11). Yet, the wicked will struggle to voluntarily give up their lives to the Creator. Let me suggest that the intensity of their suffering may be directly related to their unwillingness to give up their lives, which is in turn related to their selfishness. That attitude may lengthen their suffering and allow each one to experience judgment according to their works. Once they give up their lives, God’s justice is vindicated and their existence is erased forever. Then the conflict between good and evil will be over.

Did that help? (Oops, I ended with a question!).

The End of Sin and Sinners



By
ANGEL MANUEL
RODRÍGUEZ

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

Celebrating the Sabbath

BIBLE STUDY



By MARK A. FINLEY

Have you ever wished you could discover an island of peace in this world of stress? Are there times when your life seems filled with worry? Does the future trouble you?

God has created the very island of peace that our hearts long for. The Sabbath is His eternal symbol of His love for us. His Sabbath rest reminds us each week that He created us and has not forgotten us.

1. What three specific things did God do on the seventh-day Sabbath? Read the text below and list your answers.

“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).

a. God _____

b. God _____

c. God _____

Although it is possible to receive God’s blessing any day we worship, we can receive His Sabbath blessing only if we worship on His Sabbath. He placed a special blessing on the seventh day; it is the day He sanctified.

2. What does God promise to those who keep His Sabbath? Read the text below and fill in the blanks.

“Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on it; who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil” (Isa. 56:2).

God promises a _____ for those who keep the Sabbath.

Write in your own words some of the blessings God gives to those who keep the Sabbath.

3. How did God describe the Sabbath? Read the text below and fill in the blanks.

“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 your dwellings” (Lev. 23:3).

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

On Sabbath we rest from our labors and find peace and joy in God’s holy convocation. Convocation is a “coming together.” The Sabbath is a sacred, or holy, coming together of God’s people for worship.

4. How did Jesus observe the Sabbath? What was His weekly custom? Read the text below and circle the answers.

“So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read” (Luke 4:16).



The Sabbath was special to Jesus. Each Sabbath He spent time worshipping His heavenly Father. Jesus also performed many of His miracles of healing on Sabbath.

5. What do Christ's healing miracles on the Sabbath teach us about celebrating the Sabbath? Read the text below and underline why Jesus healed on the Sabbath.

"But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath. . . . Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath" (Matt. 12:7, 8, 12b).

What does this mean to us today? _____

What do Jesus' compassion, kindness, and good deeds on the Sabbath model for us? _____

6. What does the Lord invite us to do today? Read the text below and fill in the blanks.

"If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth" (Isa. 58:13, 14).

The Lord invites us to:

a. Turn our _____

b. Call the _____

c. Delight _____

The Lord invites us not to:

a. Do _____

b. Find _____

c. Speak _____

"To set your foot" upon something was a symbol of ownership or possession. Isaiah's passage teaches that when we release the seventh-day Sabbath from our control and honor God with our words and activities, He will cause us to ride on the high hills of the earth. In other words, our lives will be blessed with a sense of His presence.

7. How will we spend our Sabbaths in heaven? Read the text below and circle the answer.

"And from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me" says the Lord" (Isa. 66:23).

Imagine: All the heavenly beings and all the redeemed will worship at God's throne on the Sabbath. They will sing anthems of praise and choruses of worship. Our Lord Himself will speak of His intense love for us. He will share His incredible joy that we will be with Him for all eternity.

Would you like to let Jesus know that the desire of your heart is to worship with the angels on that first Sabbath in heaven? Why not bow your head right now and tell Him?

What does the Bible say about health? Join us for next month's Bible study: **"Health Matters."**



LETTERS

My Jordan Stones

When the April 2008 issue of the *Adventist World* arrived, I noticed my last name being used in an article's title, "My Jordan Stones," by Stephen Dunbar. Dunbar likely does not know that hidden in the pages of early Adventism are many "stones" that tell the story of our pioneers and their struggle to tell the story of Jesus' soon coming and to develop a church organization.

One of those pioneers, Joseph Bates of Fairhaven, Massachusetts, United States, began telling this story in 1844. He sold his home and went to Maryland to preach to slaves and slave masters. Later he learned of the seventh-day Sabbath and wrote about it. An interesting title of his third book was *Second Advent Way Marks and High Heaps*. This title, based on Jeremiah 31:21, has the prophet speaking God's word to "Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps"—all this reminiscent of crossing the Jordan.

Adventist history is replete with "Jordan Stones." Adventist Heritage Ministry, makes available heritage sites in Battle Creek, Michigan; in Whitehall and Port Gibson, New York; and in Fairhaven, Massachusetts, for all to see and hear of these "High Heaps." They tell of God's providence and leading in forming our church.

My wife and I volunteer as caretakers at the Joseph Bates home in Fairhaven, Massachusetts. We tell the story of Joseph Bates and how God used him to lift up as "High Heaps" the story of God's love for sinners and of His soon coming.

CHET JORDAN

Massachusetts, United States

The Trinity

The article in the March 2008 *Adventist World* magazine on the Trinity, by Roy Adams, was very inspiring. How we need the Holy Spirit not only in our individual lives but our church as a whole! I really believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is needed as never before.

I agree with R. A. Torrey that besides being baptized and receiving the Holy Spirit at our conversion and baptism, we need the distinct experience of being baptized by the Holy Spirit. This is given to enable God's people to share the gospel with power. It seems to me we as Adventists are so afraid of becoming like the Pentecostals that we have shied away from this experience that we are desperately in need of.

I also want to thank Adams for the Sabbath school lessons he wrote on Jesus. Fantastic!

LILLIAN R. GUILD

California, United States

Grace in Action

I am in full agreement with Jan Paulsen's message in his March 2008 article entitled "Clear Thinking About Military Service." There is nothing I would write in my comment that would detract or disagree with any of his statements.

Having said that, if anything is needed in our churches perhaps even more than (not in place of) the instructions that our young people need regarding these issues, is the emphasis—and reemphasis—of the biblical principle of grace that should be our church's first and foremost foundation. As a church, we are always quick to elaborate, in detailed outline, the moral principles to which we should adhere in most aspects of our

spiritual lives, but we are deficient in applying that same practice of elaboration when it comes to teaching our church the "how to" of grace in practice. It behooves our church leaders to emphasize and educate our church members via articles on practical ways of exercising grace.

I bore witness to a young church member of impeccable moral standing, a leader in his church's youth group, placed under disciplinary action, and eventually removed from the church books, because of his choice to enlist. I am well aware that our church leaders cannot always be privy to the individual actions of our local churches, but are we willing to accept a degree of responsibility over the lack of grace and compassion because of our deficiency in guiding our members on how grace is practiced? What *are* we doing as a church for our enlisted men and women? Are we sending them care packages? Are we supporting their family members as they anxiously wait day after day for the safe return of their loved ones? What is the church doing for those wounded soldiers returning to shattered lives because of the horrors associated with post traumatic stress? If the answer is little, if anything, then therein lies the loud silence of our "I told you so" mentality.

Are we worried about the conflicting message that such support might imply? If we, as a church, are to teach our young people about the dangers and morally conflicting consequences of bearing arms (as we well should), then we must exercise *equal* time and efforts to teaching our church members practical guidelines on exercising grace.

LILLIAN ROSA CORREA

Norway

LETTERS

What Is It Really Like?

I thank you for giving me enough understanding on “What Is It Really Like to Be a Christian?” by Robert K. McIver (*Adventist World*, January 2008). I appreciated this article.

RUTH KWAMBOKA OMBUKI
Nairobi, Kenya

The Foundation of Faith

I was so inspired upon reading the April 2008 Exchange of Ideas story about “The Foundation of Faith” by Tessa Fennell-Swaby from New York, United States. I think we need more life stories or life experiences such as this these days as a reminder that in spite of the trials and temptations we’re facing we should not forget that we still have hope in *Him*.

Though I don’t always receive copies of this magazine I can read it online [at www.adventistworld.org] so I thank God for the media communication that He is using as a

reminder for me to keep on trusting Him whatever the situation may be!

I pray that God will always use *Adventist World* for the glory of *His* name!

WILDA ADRIAN
Via E-mail

Youth in Service

The March 2008 news article “Adventist Youth Storm Taiwan for Service, Spiritual Growth,” about the world youth forum in Taiwan last December, brought a lot of joy to my heart! There was nothing more appropriate than the theme of evangelism and service to challenge our youth worldwide to follow in the footsteps of our master, Jesus Christ. Ellen G. White’s words echoed right and clear: “With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might me carried to the

whole world” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 196). What a climax for the centennial of youth ministry around the world! Let us engage our youth to move shoulder to shoulder with the leadership in search of precious souls for the Kingdom!

LEO RANZOLIN,
*former GC youth director
(1980-85)
Florida, United States*

Keep the Fire Burning

I enjoy reading *Adventist World* magazine, and when I go out canvassing I share it among my customers. They like reading it. I encourage you to keep the fire burning.

EARNEST KUBE
Nigeria

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

THE PLACE OF PRAYER

I am requesting Adventists around the world to pray for my church. It is located in a new area where Adventists are not known. Pray that God will bring people to the church.

HERBERT, *Tanzania*

Please pray for my daughter. She has been sent everywhere to determine how to save her vision. Pray for us both—physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally.

GENEVIEVE, *United States*

I would like to request prayer for my Licensure Examination for Teachers, which I will take in September. I have taken it before and failed. I believe your prayers can help me pass my exams.

JEFFREY, *Philippines*

Please pray for our family to get well financially. We need school fees and a better place to live. With God everything is possible.

DAN, *Uganda*

Thank you for your prayers. I solicit them for many needs: health for my husband, my mother-in-law, my mother, and me; to have children; to find a job to help my husband; and to have our own home.

CASSANDRE, *Haiti*

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.

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

Praying for Your Pastor?



This month, a reader shares a powerful experience with prayer.

By MATUPIT DARIUS

Your church pastor will sleep better tonight and cope more effectively with ministry challenges if he knows that church members are praying for him, mentioning his name morning and evening when they talk to God.

In the late 1990s I worked as the stewardship director for the New Britain New Ireland Mission, Papua New Guinea. We resided in my village because a volcanic eruption a few years earlier had destroyed the town where the mission office was located. My work regularly took me to the oil palm plantations of West New Britain, the carefree villages of New Ireland, and the rugged south coast of East New Britain.

As I would prepare to leave on these trips, Ken ToMiki would hobble with his walking stick to my house. He was an old uncle who had been an Adventist teacher for many years. He would call me aside and make little speeches that varied only with the location where I was heading. The way he spoke and the look in his eyes assured me that he meant every word: "Son, I can't go with you to West New Britain because I am too old. I can't help you preach, but I will do one thing. Each morning and evening I will mention your name to the Father in my prayers."

In 1998 I was invited to join the international team that translated for Dwight Nelson in the evangelistic meetings that were held at Andrews University in Michigan, United States. The campaign was uplinked by satellite to hundreds of locations around the globe. I was fearful of this new experience. The morning I was to leave, old ToMiki hobbled over. "Son, I can't go with you to America. I can't help you translate, but I will approach the throne of heaven and mention your name each morning and each evening." That little speech boosted my morale.

I did badly during the first three nights of the crusade and was very discouraged. However, the thought that an old man on the other side of the planet was praying for me kept me going. As we translated each night, prayer warriors from the local congregation would kneel and pray silently beside each translation booth. Those prayers gave me confidence. More than that, God anointed my lips with new power.

I had translated Pastor Nelson's sermons into Tok Pisin, taking hard copies with me to Andrews University. However, Tok Pisin, the common language of Papua New Guinea, is a spoken language. Like my countrymen, I am fluent in speaking the language, but awkward when writing or reading it. This caused me to fumble and skip large chunks of the first three sermons in order to keep up with Nelson's fast pace. I was dejected and felt that I was wasting the money of those who had paid my way to the meetings, and disappointing the thousands of people who were flooding the downlink sights in Papua New Guinea.

However, something happened during the fourth night. Brushing the printed sermons aside, I concentrated on the voice of Nelson and appropriate words came flowing out of my mouth. That experience continued till the end of the uplink.

"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16, NIV).

—MATUPIT DARIUS is director of communication for the Papua New Guinea Union Mission in the South Pacific Division.

"Behold, I come quickly..."

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

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The PEOPLE'S PLACE

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

“What a privilege, what a joy!” say husband and wife J.K. and Esther Martinez about volunteering at Bangkok Adventist International School in Thailand. Since August 2006, the couple has been keeping busy at the school.

Esther, a native of California, United States, serves as the fifth-grade homeroom teacher, the Tone Chimes Choir director for grades 4-6, and the coordinator for various camps. J.K., originally from Mexico, is the school nurse, as well as the teacher for eleventh-grade Bible and kindergarten science. While they each wear many hats in Thailand, their first and greatest mission is to spread the gospel. “We love our students,” Esther and J.K. say. “We want to see them again in heaven, and so we try every day to bring them closer to Jesus.”

Esther and J.K. are serving in Thailand until the end of July 2008. They recommend the experience of volunteering to others. “We see how much work there is to be done in order for the gospel to be preached to all the world,” they say. “Join God in the work He has given us, and let’s get the job done!”

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



TINOTENDA MUYUTI



ADVENTIST LIFE

The late Edward Heppenstall, from his wide experience teaching senior students, was fully aware there would always be someone who imagined they had fresh light no one else had noticed. He returned to his homeland to teach a class at Newbold College one summer.

Just before we wrote our final test paper, Heppenstall offered a prayer, then remarked: “I wish you every success. I hope I won’t learn too many new things.”

—Pastor K. H. Clothier, Devon, England

QUOTES

“Hope is a product of God’s promises to us.”

—Pastor Charley Kitney, January 5, 2008, at the Kempton Park Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa

ANSWER: At the Mashayamvura Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe, Africa, members fellowship after a church service, outside the church building.