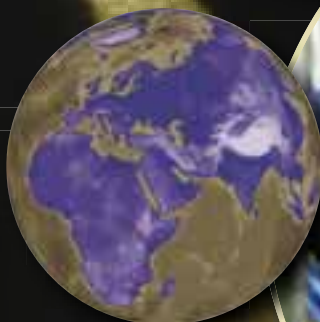
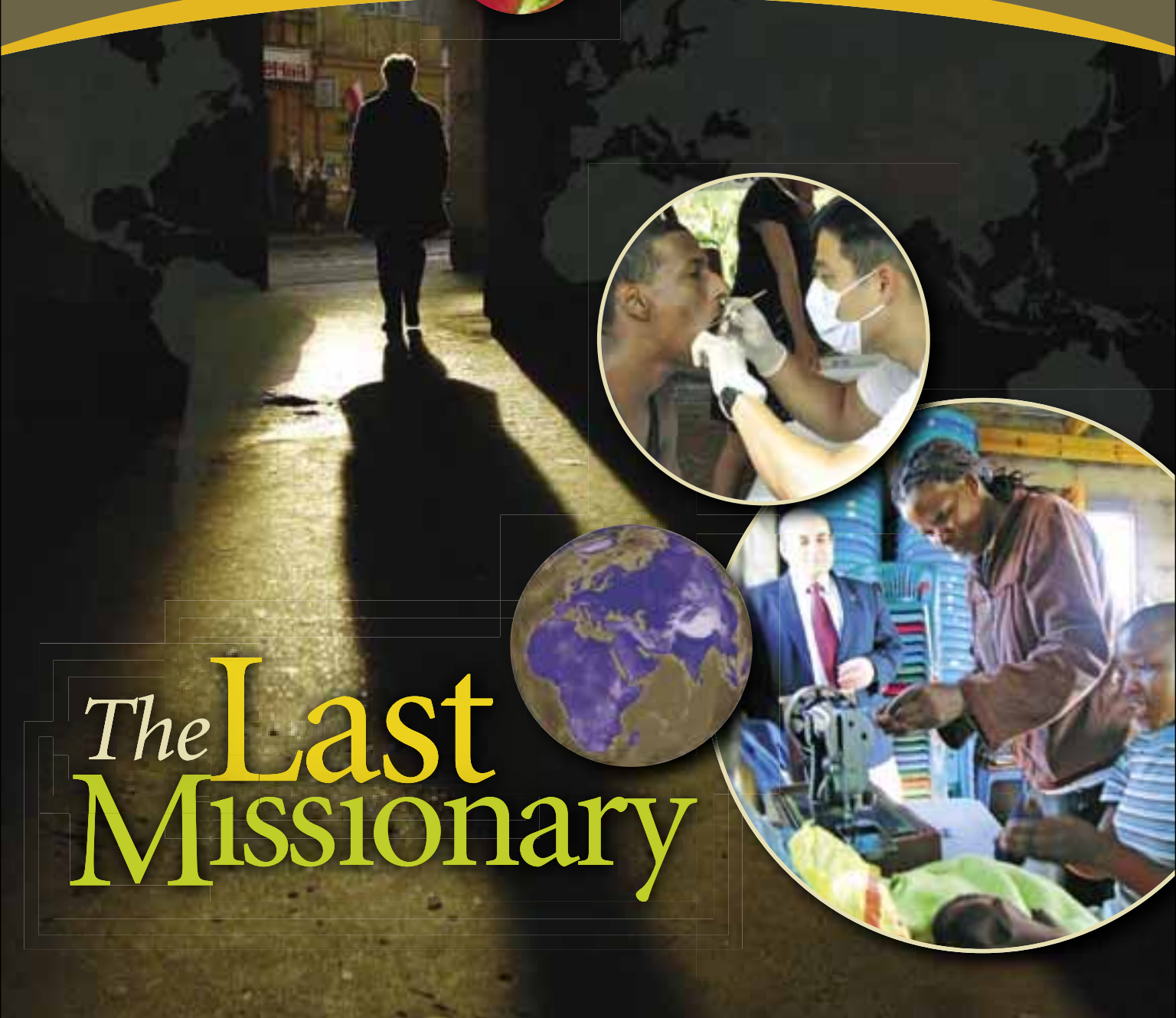
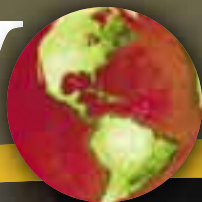


October 2008

ADVENTIST WORLD



The Last Missionary

22 After the Cross



24 Out of the Flames



27 Last-Day
Deceptions

ADVENTIST WORLD

October 2008



GRISZKA NIEWIADOMSKI

COVER STORY

The Last Missionary

By Homer Trecartin 16
Do we still need cross-cultural missionaries?

DEVOTIONAL

Greetings From Paul By Reinder Bruinsma 12
The apostle to the Gentiles can still teach us a thing or two about what it means to be Christian.

ADVENTIST LIFE

No Fault of Their Own By Loren Seibold 14
Their destiny is not necessarily determined by their parents.

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Members of a Royal Family By Ellen G. White 21
We don't have to wait; we can enjoy some of our privileges now.

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS

After the Cross By Roy Adams 22
Christ's ministry in heaven deserves our attention and understanding.

ADVENTIST HERITAGE

Out of the Flames

By Elfriede Raunio as told to Andrew McChesney 24
Taking the Adventist message to Ethiopia involved some unusual challenges.

CHURCH WORKS

World View 3

World Report

3 News & Views

Window

7 Into Angola

World Vista

8 Looking Back at Let's Talk

HEALTH

Osteoarthritis 11

By Allan R. Handysides
and Peter N. Landless

BIBLE QUESTIONS

Faith That Works 26

By Angel Manuel Rodríguez

BIBLE STUDY

Last-Day Deceptions 27

By Mark A. Finley

WORLD EXCHANGE

29 Letters

30 The Place of Prayer

31 Exchange of Ideas

The People's Place 32

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WORLD VIEW

The Coming Joy

For each of us who treasures the Word of God, there is almost certainly one text that captures all or most of what it means to live a life of faith. We write it on the walls and doorposts of our lives; we want to be reminded of its truth and power in moments of distraction and dismay.

I learned mine from my father well before I knew where to find it in the Bible. On Sabbath afternoons as our family gathered in the park for sundown worship, I would notice a faraway gleam in his eye as he read the words that moved him: “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2).

The words he read with sweet solemnity spoke first of Jesus, who gladly suffered the worst indignities because of “the joy set before Him”—the knowledge that through His patient endurance He would yet win many back to the Father’s love. But the words also spoke of my father’s own

guiding vision for his life, and of the way I would learn to see the shape of my own life: we do all that we do as believers “for the joy that is set before us.”

I find myself thinking of those foundational words so often in these turbulent times. All that God’s remnant people are blessed to do in the name of ministry; all that we are called to endure for the sake of that Name above all names; all of our obedience to the Great Commission; all of our wrestling with the evil and sorrow and pain in this world—all of it is possible just because there is a great and everlasting joy set before us. As Jesus once sat down at the right hand of the Father, so in just a little while “He that shall come will come,” and we will share forever in the untarnished joy of His presence.

When you are tempted to grow weary in well-doing, remember that joy. When sin and violence and hatred seem to threaten all you hold dear, do not forget that joy. When you need a better reason to keep on living the life of faith, cling to the joy that Jesus promises to all who patiently wait for His second coming.

— BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

LITHUANIA: Parliament Recognizes Adventist Church

■ The Lithuanian Parliament granted the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s application for state-recognized status in July, qualifying the church for state subsidies and certain tax exemptions, as well as excusing theology students and clergy from military service. The move follows five years of an approval process, and earlier years of persecution for the Adventist group.

Bertold Hibner, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lithuania, noted the significance of this occasion: “State recognition for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lithuania means that its contribution

to public life and culture is recognized and appreciated together with other churches that have deep historical roots. It means that [the] Adventist Church is recognized as a church that has established its own name and identity in society.”

He thanked members of the Lithuanian church for their witness and establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist name in society, and acknowledged the efforts of the leaders of the Trans-European Division, and also the Baltic Union of Seventh-day Adventists and its president, Valdis Zilgalvis.

Hibner said, “Our Lord has



COURTESY, BALTIC UNION CONFERENCE

OFFICIAL RECOGNITION:

Bertold Hibner, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lithuania, stands outside the church’s headquarters in Kaunas, Lithuania. On July 15 the country’s government officially recognized the church as a religious community.

WORLD REPORT

bestowed a great gift upon us. I hope that the church will see it as a strong commission to serve and proclaim to the community the good news of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The Seventh-day Adventist Church took root in Lithuania while it was still part of Prussia.

The East German Union took authority of the work done in Lithuania, beginning in 1920, with churches established and books distributed. After World War II, several German and Latvian members faced persecution and had to flee Lithuania. Since 1995 the church has been registered by the worldwide church and currently retains about 1,000 members.

—Reported by *Baltic Union and Adventist News Network*

LEBANON: Myklebust, Middle East University President, Retires After 11 Years

■ A Seventh-day Adventist missionary couple, Randi and Svein Myklebust, is at home in Norway once again after a 29-year overseas career. Svein Myklebust was for the past 11 years president of Adventist-owned Middle East University (formerly Middle East College) in Beirut, Lebanon, where his wife served as an assistant professor of education.

“This dedicated couple has served as missionaries for the last 29 years and has left a lasting impression in the minds of students, colleagues, and church leaders on three continents,” said Kjell Aune, board chair of the school and president of the Adventist Church’s Middle East Union. “We have enjoyed working with them, and we are certainly going to miss them.”

Prior to his position in Beirut, Svein Myklebust was a lecturer and vice principal at Newbold College, an Adventist school in England, for



MIDDLE EAST UNION

nine years. The Myklebusts had a previous nine-year stint as Adventist missionaries in Africa.

In 2005, speaking with Adventist News Network, Svein Myklebust noted the challenges the school had following decades of civil war in Lebanon. He noted that while the school, granted university status in 2001, first catered to a large number of international students, the recent years of strife have led to a redefinition of its mission. Myklebust not only served as president but also as business manager for the school.

At the time, he said, efforts had taken place to upgrade the aging physical facilities of the university: “A new computer area with two laboratories, a classroom, and three offices [were] completed.... The cafeteria and its surroundings were upgraded ... , and we have just completed the total renovation of the old administration building and the area around it,” he said in the 2005 interview.

According to Milan Bajic, an MEU dean and coordinator of student services, Myklebust was “an upstanding man whose actions spoke louder than words. He was the one who quietly considered the situation before offering the solutions.”

Randi Myklebust, who also served at MEU for 11 years, was recalled as a “tireless, hardworking, and

DEDICATED SERVANTS: Randi and Svein Myklebust have retired from the mission field after 29 years of service. Since 1997 the couple served at Adventist-owned Middle East University, she as an assistant professor and he as president and business manager.

knowledgeable, yet amiable, person,” according to Farid Khoury, MEU librarian. “Her limitless intellectual curiosity inspired all those who worked with her,” Khoury added.

Middle East University is a nonprofit Christian coeducational institution owned and operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Its campus is located on 74 acres of quiet, green hillside, overlooking Beirut and the Mediterranean Sea. —Reported by *Michael Sidawi, Middle East University, with Adventist World Staff*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: Men’s Ministry Stirs Support Online

■ A new monthly e-newsletter is linking Seventh-day Adventist men in Western Australia, church leaders there report.

The Western Australian Conference Men’s E-News (WACMEN) is expected to encourage men to be “partakers” rather than “spectators” in the pews, says Danny Bell, e-newsletter editor.

WACMEN is the first initiative of a men’s ministry network in Western Australia that began meeting last month to address the challenge of interesting and involving men in church activities.

Adventist Church statistics estimate that the 16-million-strong worldwide membership is

WORLD REPORT

Why Adventist MISSION TALES Are Still Needed

Photography ace Weber on the art of storytelling; two teary-eyed translators

By ANSEL OLIVER, assistant director for news,
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

approximately 70 percent women. Protestant church leaders and researchers have suggested that because churches often promote a nurturing and emotion-focused environment, services and activities likely appeal to fewer men than women.

Because WACMEN is e-mail-based, it creates a nonthreatening environment in which many men are more likely to open up, Bell says.

Right now WACMEN is localized, but Bell hopes the idea catches on globally. He says men's groups can run parallel rather than compete with the often well-established women's groups at local churches.

"The church cannot continue to have a mentality that says, 'If [men] don't like church, then that's their problem.' We need to look at ourselves and see if we're doing anything to scare them off," he says.

—Reported by Elizabeth Lechleitner,
Adventist News Network



REIGNING MEN: Members of a new Internet-based men's ministry in Western Australia recently met for a camping trip. Ministry founder Danny Bell says most men are more likely to bond and open up about their spiritual lives outside of emotion-charged church services.

COURTESY WACMEN

Dan Weber will go for a week without showering to get a good story. The video producer travels far and often to update the world church on its mission projects, sometimes to places well off the beaten path.

But whether traveling to urban settings or rural locales, Weber brings back stories that inspire and educate church members about the importance of mission, both for financial support and in understanding the church's world mission. The tales are told in various ways and time lengths on the quarterly Adventist Mission DVD. Some have described it as one of the most well-produced video resources in the denomination.

Though it's mailed free to every church in some countries and to all world church administration offices, many Adventist Church members still don't know about it.

Weber, 40, holds a photography degree from the church's Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, and says he works not only to inspire church members who view the Adventist Mission DVD but also future video producers and other storytellers who will one day work for the church. In the following excerpts from a recent interview he reflects on capturing stories, the church's status in other countries, and promoting his profession within the church.

ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK: How do you explain your job, in a nutshell?

DAN WEBER: I'm a digital anthropologist with an understanding of missiology. Does that make sense? To do this job you have to understand four things: you have to understand storytelling, you have to understand technical aspects of how to tell a good story, you have to try to understand the culture that you are observing, and then you have to understand missions and the role that plays in the church. When you combine all those together, then you have a successful story.

ANN: What was one of your favorite stories to tell?

WEBER: I got to go to a prison in Moldova. There they call it a life detention center—they don't believe in capital punishment there, so

Continued next page

WORLD REPORT



MISSIONS FOCUS: Video producer Dan Weber on location in Cuba last year. He helps to produce the quarterly Adventist Mission DVD, which highlights the church's mission work around the world.

COURTESY OFFICE OF ADVENTIST MISSION

if you are convicted of a heinous crime, you go to jail for the rest of your life. So I went to one of these prisons, and out of the 80 prisoners, several of them have become Adventists. I got to worship with them inside a small cell. You can be kind of skeptical about prisoners that convert because they might be trying to get out early. But these guys aren't getting out at all. They have not converted to Adventism to try to gain favor or to get an early release. In fact, it hasn't benefited them because often they are ostracized for their beliefs. Their faith is very strong.

ANN: You've recently been to Taiwan, Mongolia, Korea, and Japan. What's happening with the church there?

WEBER: Taiwan is a cool place. The offering there is going toward establishing Hope Channel China. They have a small studio set up, and they're creating programming. And Mongolia is a [great] story because the church there is really young—the first person was baptized there in 1993. You go to the churches and it's a lot of young people, and that's kind of nice to see because you go to North America or Japan and you don't see that. But Mongolia is still going through some growing pains. It's still a mission field.

ANN: Are all your travels as inspiring?

WEBER: Unfortunately it's a misconception that [the Adventist Church is] doing well everywhere around the

world. We are in some areas, but there are areas where the church as a whole isn't doing well at all. You know, the 10/40 window [the region stretching from northern Africa to the east coast of Asia], where less than 1 percent of the population is Christian, let alone Adventist. But yet, you see the people that are there working and their dedication and their faith and their commitment. That is inspiring.

ANN: You started out as a still photographer. Is that an important first step before transferring to video?

WEBER: You know, some of the best camera people I have ever met have all started out as still photographers, and I really think it is a natural progression because you start off learning how to compose a shot as a still photographer—you tell a story in one picture. When you move to video you're learning to tell a story through a sequence of pictures.

ANN: What keeps you motivated?

WEBER: Every time I pick up a camera bag and I get on a plane and go someplace it's like I'm right out of school again. I know I'm

going to experience something new. It's the coolest feeling.

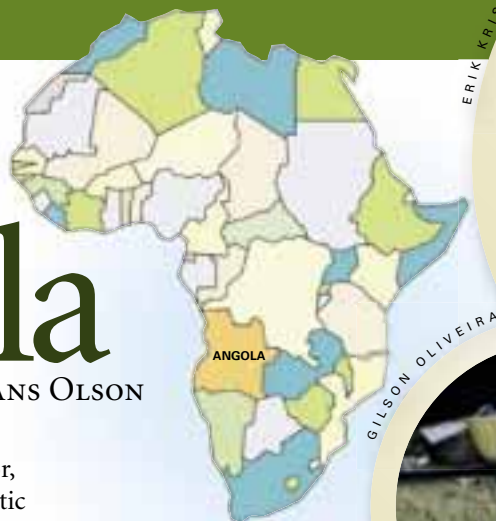
ANN: What was one of the toughest stories to tell?

WEBER: Let's see ... yeah, I was in Phnom Penh [in Cambodia], and one of the small groups the Adventist Church is focusing on is people who are HIV positive. A lot of them are immigrants from Vietnam and they live in slum areas. We met a woman who became an Adventist after she found out she was HIV positive. She had been in the hospital and the doctor sent her home to die. Her mother was converted and started sharing her faith with her. Her health has gotten a lot better, and when I met her you couldn't tell that she was someone who was going to die. What was inspiring to me is the fact that she has opened up her small room and does Bible studies in there and we got to film that. Here is someone who has a life-threatening illness, but she's not letting it affect her life and she is moving on and sharing her faith the best that she can. When we finished the interview I looked over at the [local church president and executive secretary], who were translating for me; tears were running down their faces because they were so moved by this woman's story. That was hard. My challenge is always to take that kind of a story and share it in such a way that emotion is going to come through. ●

WINDOW

Into Angola

By HANS OLSON



Located just south of the equator, along southern Africa's Atlantic Ocean coastline between Namibia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola is rebuilding after enduring more than 25 years of strife.

Angola gained its independence from Portugal in 1975 after 400 years of colonial rule. War soon broke out as different political factions fought for governmental supremacy. Peace was established in 2002 when National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) leader Jonas Savimbi died, leaving opposing faction leader José Eduardo dos Santos of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) as president. A presidential election is scheduled for 2009.

According to some reports, as many as 1.5 million people may have been killed during the 27 years of civil war. Up to 4 million Angolan refugees suffered, left the country, or simply fled to other regions of Angola. Because of widespread health risks, Angola has a relatively low life expectancy of less than 38 years.

Angola's economy has been transformed during the past few years, moving from the disorder of civil war to being the second fastest growing economy in Africa, and one of the fastest growing in the world. The country is the second largest petroleum and diamond producer in sub-Saharan Africa, and recently a member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Some 85 percent of Angola's economy is based on the oil industry.

Postwar reconstruction and displaced people returning home have helped to stimulate the construction and agriculture industries as well.

Adventists in Angola

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Angola struggled during the country's civil war. Even though the church's membership grew to some 300,000 members around the country, much of the church's infrastructure was damaged. In just one region of the country, 145 church buildings were destroyed.

The Bongo Mission Station, where Adventist work began in 1924, was abandoned. In 1986 workers at the mission station were forced to flee as fighting moved into the area. The

station's buildings are still standing but are in urgent need of repair and refurbishment.

Part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the second quarter of 2009 will help rebuild Bongo Adventist Seminary. Before closing its doors Bongo had an average of 300 students and offered courses from elementary school through high school and up to three years of Bible instruction. This project will have a long-lasting impact on the Adventist Church in Angola because it will help educate the country's growing membership and prepare young people to spread God's message of love.

To learn more about the Seventh-day Adventist Church's work in Angola, visit www.AdventistMission.org.

ANGOLA	
Capital:	Luanda
Official language:	Portuguese
Religion:	Indigenous beliefs, 47%; Roman Catholic, 38%; Protestant 15%
Population:	15.8 million*
Adventist membership:	306,569*
Adventist to population ratio:	1:52*

*General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, 144th Annual Statistical Report—2006

WORLD VISTA

In November 1848 Ellen White experienced a vision that had profound consequences for the development of our church. It's sometimes called the "streams of light" vision. She saw that James White should start publishing a "little paper" that would eventually take the Advent message around the world like streams of light.

What is remarkable to me is not just the vision itself, but Ellen White's actions after she received the vision; her determination to see the Lord's plan put into action in spite of those who said it was impractical, if not impossible. She stood firm against the disapproval of other leaders, such as Joseph Bates, who felt that her husband, James, would be more effective as a preacher than a writer. She also withstood the doubts of James, who saw the huge financial difficulties involved in printing and distributing such a paper. She insisted: "He must write, write, write, and walk out by faith."*

It's easy to forget she was just 21 years of age.



Looking Back at *Conversation with the young adults of our church is just the beginning.* By JAN PAULSEN

Let's Talk



ALDEN J. HO

Our Most Valuable Resource

More than five years ago I began a series of conversations with Seventh-day Adventist young people and young professionals around the world. We called the series *Let's Talk*. And as a result of those conversations I am firmly convinced that they, too, have a vision for their church. They are innovative, eager for involvement, and above all, passionately committed to the Lord and to His mission.

These *Let's Talk* conversations have taken place through live television broadcasts and an ongoing Internet correspondence. Through this dialogue I've come to feel a deep and profound trust in our young people. Yes, there have been moments when I've been

skeptical, but it's come back to me in conversation after conversation—from men and women, from 15-year-olds and 25-year-olds—that they love this church. This is where they want to be. This is where they want to serve the Lord. They are ready.

These conversations have been wide-ranging, sometimes driven by local concerns, things specific to a particular context and culture. But there were also a number of questions—overarching themes—that I heard again and again, whether they came to me in Spanish or Swahili, Portuguese or English.

They Care

1. Seeking a place and a voice. At the heart of what young people say is often: “Why can't we be allowed a greater say?” “Why can't we be more involved in leadership?”

These are demanding questions, but they are fair questions. They are not asking: “Why can't more of us be members of the General Conference Executive Committee?” They aren't even really asking why more can't be members of division or union conference committees. They want to be entrusted with a greater share of responsibility for the running of their local congregations.

Why should we be reluctant to let them? Look back to the twelve individuals Christ chose. Look back to our own church pioneers.

We sometimes forget the path we have walked, the mistakes we have made. We forget that we, too, at first walked unsteadily or stumbled. This is

normal until our muscles are stronger, we gain stronger footing, and we know where to step.

We sometimes also overplay the value of experience. Experience is important, but basic personality makeup is more important: how we deal with people, our capacity to love and care for the church, and how to be responsible—these things are more significant. If you put the right man or woman into a certain place, they will gain the experience they need. But put the wrong person in, regardless of age, and they will never do well.

2. Defining boundaries. A whole raft of questions come under this banner: clothes and jewelry, entertainment, music, and relationships.

The young mind can be very “legalistic” in the sense that it sees the world in sharp, distinct lines. It seeks safety in clearly defined borders. Some young people want precise formulas, and they can be very persistent. They are sometimes not comforted with principles; they want specific answers. They are driven by a need to define themselves, to define the boundaries that surround them, to discover “Where do I fit into this? Do I like what contains me? Do I even understand the boundaries and why they are there? How does a life of obedience to God express itself?”

Like many of the young people I spoke with, I also grew up in an Adventist home. I reached the age of 20 and was really quite legalistic in my thinking. I was impatient with those who said: “Well, then, maybe not.” The



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

WORLD VISTA

“maybe not” were problem-makers. But I have learned through my own walk in life that there are situations in which you have to allow others the latitude to grow and develop, to discover God’s will for themselves.

There is trust in this, but also great responsibility. So I remind young people: Don’t take license with your freedom. Don’t take it lightly.

Choice of music was a reoccurring theme. We kept coming back to this because it’s a legitimate concern for

young people. Music is such a large part of their lives (just look at the role music plays in any worship service conducted by young people!), and their questions are serious ones.

How do I know whether certain music has a place in the life of the church? I have to ask, “Is this music worshipful? Does it draw me closer to God and provide spiritual nurture? Or does it remind me of that which is far removed from God, short on content, and full of noise? Is it music that

creates community? Does it bond and blend this family together in worship?”

I know some older people who perhaps listened to these conversations and said: “Why can’t he simply tell it how it should be, down the line, very sharply?” And I can only respond, very simply: “Look, these are your children; talk to them. Your children are seeking a legitimate identity for themselves in the church. Help them find it. Don’t drive them away. Help them understand the trust and

also the responsibility that is theirs.”

3. *Finding a mission.* Young people are also frustrated by the sheer numbers of their peers who are leaving the church. This concern came up again and again.

I often asked: “Tell me, why did they go?”

The answers came back: “Well, the church is so old-fashioned.” “There’s no sense of tolerance.” “There’s too much negativity, too much criticism of how we look and of our choices.”

And I asked: “What about friendship? Did your peers leave because they lost a sense of community? Were you a friend to them?”

Often there was silence, then the answer came back: “Yes, maybe we failed some of them too.”

And I asked: “Well, shouldn’t you go after them?”

Young people should be commissioned to take greater responsibility for ministry to their peers. This is a task for which they are uniquely equipped. Let it be a defined, recognized ministry within the local church, like Sabbath school, or being a deacon or elder. Let’s provide young people with official space, a territory of trust. They will grasp it, and something new and powerful will emerge.

Let’s Trust Them

We are losing too many of our young people—too many people under the age of 25. Exact figures are difficult to find, but it would not surprise me if half of those who grow up in this family lose their way for one reason or another. And even if it’s not that many, the numbers are still much, much too high.

I have always believed that tomorrow is in the hands of our young people, and this reality should be reflected in the church today. This conviction has not been changed by my *Let’s Talk* conversations, but rather it has been sharpened and strengthened. I feel an added sense of urgency, of feeling: *What’s holding us back? Let’s just give them the space and opportunity to grow.*

My message to the church is to trust our young people; talk with them; listen to what they say; show you trust them by giving them opportunities and responsibilities. Will they get it right 100 percent of the time? Maybe not, but then, neither do we.

Trust them and they will still be here tomorrow, and the tomorrow after that. ●



We are losing too many of our young people—too many people under the age of 25.

**Life Sketches*, pp. 125, 126.



Osteoarthritis

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES *and* PETER N. LANDLESS

I am a 68-year-old woman with some pain in my knees when I walk. The doctor told me it is osteoarthritis and that I should take an over-the-counter painkiller and lose weight. Would you please write more about what osteoarthritis is, and what I should do?

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis, and it occurs in people as they age. Arthritis is inflammation of a joint. The joints are the interfaces of bones, where the bone is covered with a smooth cartilage and encapsulated in a fibrous sac. The lining of the sac is called synovium, and it secretes synovial fluid—a joint lubricant.

clear, and mild to moderate inflammation is set up in the joint. The bone underlying the damaged cartilage becomes increasingly dense, and bony outgrowths at the edges of the joint cause nobby-looking joints.

When this process involves joints such as knees or hips, it can cause difficulty in walking. If it causes small joint arthritis, as in the hands, it results

The nonsteroidal antiinflammatories such as Naproxen may be tried in the lowest effective dose in cases in which Tylenol is not helping, but they have side effects on the stomach.

For many, a surgical joint replacement is very helpful, and where we used to delay this as long as possible, some studies suggest earlier replacement may prevent muscle weakness and

Exercise can be damaging to osteoarthritic joints, but aquatic exercise—that is, swimming—has been shown to be very helpful.

In rheumatoid arthritis, the synovium is inflamed because it is targeted by the body's immune system as though it were foreign tissue. This misguided immune response causes inflammation, and the inflammatory secretions damage the cartilage and joint, leading to deformity. Why the body attacks its own membranes has not been fully clarified.

Other forms of arthritis may be associated with infection, tumors, or even gout. In the latter condition, crystals of uric acid precipitate into the joint and cause inflammation.

Osteoarthritis is not associated with infection, tumors, crystals, or autoantibodies, but seems to occur in people who have a family predisposition, persons who have seriously overworked their joints, or even those who have suffered a trauma. In osteoarthritis, the cartilage over the end of the bone degenerates, for reasons that are not completely

clear, and mild to moderate inflammation is set up in the joint.

Exercise can be damaging to osteoarthritic joints, but aquatic exercise that is, swimming—has been shown to be very helpful and is the exercise of choice. It also helps to lose weight, especially if the joints involved are knee or hip joints. Dietary changes are not particularly useful in helping osteoarthritis, though a reduced acid load may help rheumatoid arthritis, hence the benefit of a vegetarian diet in that condition.

Some have touted the use of chondroitin sulfate and glucosamine, but a large controlled study sponsored by the National Institutes of Health found them not superior to placebo* (the proverbial “sugar pill”). Limited data support the use of injected hyaluronic acid into the joint, and much of the treatment revolves around pain relief. Acupuncture has been shown to improve the pain in some, but most use acetaminophen (Tylenol).

debility and actually be associated with a more productive lifestyle.

Clearly, this is scanty coverage of this topic, and your doctors will give you more specific advice for your individualized need.

We hope you can obtain sufficient relief so you may enjoy your life. ●

*Clegg, D. et al., *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 2006, 354, pp. 794-808.



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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 the Health Ministries Department.

Asked what he thought the apostle Paul may have looked like, Martin Luther reportedly suggested he may have resembled Luther's colleague Philip Melancthon.

From historical portraits, we know that Melancthon was a rather scrawny-looking individual, with facial expressions that—to put it mildly—did not express much joy in life. And, somehow, I've also thought of Paul in much the same way. Whereas I had a mental picture of Peter as a rather buoyant individual, whom I might want to invite for a hot drink and an interesting chat, I have imagined Paul as a stern academic who preferred wrestling with difficult theological questions rather than having a good meal with a friend. He did not seem a very social person to me; not a man who would reach out to hug people, take time for small talk, or establish strong ties of friendship.

The final chapter of Romans changed my mind.

A people person

When Paul wrote Romans from Corinth, around A.D. 55, he had not yet visited Rome. His letter to the church in Rome, a church worshipping at that time in the homes of members, turned out to be his most prominent letter, spelling out in more detail than in any of his other letters his theology of redemption in Christ. But in this article I focus on the epilogue of the epistle—on the list of greetings we find in chapter 16.

Phoebe, whom Paul mentions at the beginning of the chapter, probably was the one who carried the letter to



Reinder Bruinsma is director of communication in the Netherlands Union Conference, in Huis ter Heide, the Netherlands.

By
REINDER BRUINSMA

Greetings From Paul

After decades of misunderstanding him, I came to see Paul's tender side.

Rome. She was a prominent female member of the church in Cenchrea, near Corinth. The Greek text seems to indicate that she was a deaconess. The letter she carried contained greetings to no fewer than 29 individuals in Rome.

Priscilla and Aquila, Paul's former colleagues in tent making, are mentioned first (verse 3). The couple had fled Rome during the persecutions by Emperor Claudius (Acts 18:2). Paul met them in Corinth and Ephesus, and here refers to them as "fellow workers in Christ Jesus." Paul then greets Epenetus (verse 5), the first convert to Christ in what is now Turkey. Next he mentions Mary, one of many biblical characters with that name. She "worked very hard" for the church, he says (verse 6). (Let's remember to look for her in the New Jerusalem and find out who she was.)

I cannot comment on all 29 names. But Andronicus and Junias (verse 7) deserve brief mention. They were "outstanding among the apostles," Paul says. This is a remarkable statement, given that there's a considerable chance that Junias was a woman. The

name "Junias" can be either male or female, and for more than 1,000 years, commentaries from theologians referred to this person as female. The fourth-century writer John Chrysostom even expressed his amazement about the fact that there apparently was a woman among the apostles. (However, from the thirteenth century onward it became customary to understand Junias as a masculine name.)

Skipping over Ampliatus, Urbanus, Stachys, and Apelles (since all we have are their names), we come to Aristobulus (verse 10). He may have been a grandson of King Herod. Herodion (verse 11) may also have belonged to the Herod family. Narcissus, too (verse 11), may have been a member of high society—some suggesting he may have been a private secretary at the imperial court.

Further down the list we find the name Rufus (verse 13). His name brings to mind Mark 15:21, where a certain Simon of Cyrene (who carried Jesus' cross) is described as "the father of Alexander and Rufus." Some Bible scholars believe that Mark's Gospel



When we look at Paul from the perspective of Romans 16, a new picture emerges.

initially may have been written for Christians in Rome. And perhaps knowing that Rufus eventually ended up in Rome, Mark made the gesture of inserting that detail in his Gospel.

After the mention of a few additional names, Paul concludes his letter, encouraging his recipients to greet one another with “a holy kiss” (verse 16), a custom he admonished his readers to follow in other places in his Epistles.

A Different Paul

Paul had never yet been to Rome; yet he knew nearly 30 persons there by name! And it’s remarkable that nine of the 29 persons mentioned are women. Could it be that Paul was not the kind of antiwoman person he is often made out to be? Also, while some in the list were people of considerable status—in Roman society as well as in the church, Paul also remembered the names of others—“simple,” hardworking, dependable people—who had no notable pedigree or academic background.

When we look at Paul from the

perspective of Romans 16, a new picture emerges—of someone who was intensely interested in people. And as we keep this aspect in mind while rereading the rest of Romans and the other Epistles, we see clear confirmation of this picture in many places. In between, and behind, the theology and the often stern criticism and admonitions, we see *a man who loved people and who genuinely cared for them*. Where is this more clearly visible than in his letters to Timothy, whom he loves as if he were his own son (2 Tim. 1:1-5)? And his passion for his own nation comes through clearly in Romans 9:2-4: “I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel.”

The Human Face

As a church administrator, I would spend a great deal of my time in meetings, discussing all kinds of organizational and business items—policies, programs, buildings,

money, positions to fill, reports to be evaluated. And that was all part of the job—a major part. But ultimately I would have failed if I did not see the human face behind the issues, if I did not value people above policies. If what I and other church leaders do has no human face, it had better be left undone.

If we want to work for the church at whatever level, in paid employment or as a volunteer, we must love people. It is significant that the letter to the Romans does not culminate in high-sounding doctrinal statements or theology, but rather with people—people with names and faces. And so today, whether we’re discussing theology, doctrines, difficult moral and social issues, developing policies, or whatever else, all perspectives change when we allow those issues to take on a human face.

Romans 16 has transformed my thinking about Paul. He has become more human to me. He knew 29 people in a church he’d never been to! How well do we know the people all around us in the church? ●

No Fault of Their Own

By LOREN SEIBOLD

Our visit to Kolkata coincides with *Holi*, a spring festival celebrated by throwing handfuls of brightly colored chalk dust at your friends. Everywhere we look we see smiling people with red, pink, blue, or green hands, faces, and clothing. A few are stretched out on the warm pavement, sleeping off last night's party.

Social worker Urmi Basu abruptly turns into an unusually long, narrow alley. We follow, stepping around a trickle of sewage. On each side are rough wooden entrances, like stable doors; behind them families in windowless, single-lightbulb rooms. Laughing children are running past us, playing happy games. "This is where the prostitutes live," Urmi says.

We are in the heart of the Kalighat, one of Kolkata's oldest neighborhoods. Its name comes from a famous temple of the goddess Kali here, one of the holiest sites of the Hindu religion. It is a crowded, busy neighborhood.

And it is also the heart of Kolkata's sex district.

There is, though, nothing sexy to see here—none of the splashy false-eroticism of Amsterdam or Soho. Sometimes a high tide sends a foot of water from a nearby canal (mingled with roaches, trash, dead animals, sewage) into streets and homes. The children play in it like a wading pool. This is a place of desperate poverty, and it is no coincidence that Sister Teresa's Home for the Destitute and Dying is here. Customers here are poor men: rickshaw drivers, manual laborers.

The widespread acceptance of illegal prostitution seems out of place in this morally stern, family-oriented culture. Yet we shouldn't be entirely surprised: in all cultures (and our own faith) we observe that in the presence of high moral standards there is great potential for hypocrisy. "Most of these women had no choice about working here," Urmi explains. Some were raped, and once violated (though through no fault of their own), can't return home. Others are widowed in a culture that considers widowhood a disgrace. Many, the youngest, were kidnapped into sexual slavery.

At the end of the alley we thread our way through someone's meagerly furnished kitchen and up a square tower of steps. We emerge onto an unrailed roof, lined with humble dwellings.

Helping the families of prostitutes in Kolkata's red-light district



KURT FATTIC/HOPE FOR HUMANITY



MELANIE BOYD

Top to bottom: GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO EAT: Feeding children of prostitutes in Kolkata while their mothers attend literacy classes is part of a program sponsored jointly by Hope for Humanity, the Southern Asia Division, and Amistad International. A FRIEND IN NEED: Karen Kotoske, an Adventist from California, United States, and founder and director of the nonprofit humanitarian organization Amistad International, poses with some of the girls who live at the Soma Home, a project Amistad helped to found.

We're surprised to also see up here a large, new rooftop building. Through that door we enter another world. Each evening, before they go to work, the prostitutes of the Kalighat bring their children here. We see rows of beautiful, smiling children sitting at long tables, eating a wholesome meal. A physician stops by for the sick, and helpers tutor those who attend school. Those who need baths or haircuts get them, and when their homework and chores are done, they drop down on the floor, like children anywhere, to watch videos.

This is the Kalighat's New Light Center, a refuge for the children of Kolkata's prostitutes.

Journey to Kalighat

How did we find our way here?

In early 2007 I was invited to travel with a group of pastors and church leaders across India to inspect one of Hope for Humanity's most creative ministries: a nationwide network of church-connected adult classes to teach Indian women to read, using the Bible as a textbook. (See the December 2007 *Adventist World*, "Empowering Women in India.")

When I told her I was going to India, our friend Karen Kotoske immediately asked, "Are you by any chance going to Kolkata?"

Karen, a Seventh-day Adventist from Palo Alto, California, United States, is the founder and director of Amistad International, a nonprofit humanitarian organization. For many years Amistad worked exclusively among Mexico's Huichol Indians in partnership with the Inter-American Division.

A few years ago a couple of Karen's acquaintances invited her to meet a visitor from India. Urmi Basu is a stylish, well-educated, upper-class Indian woman who ministers to the families of Kolkata's prostitutes. Over dinner, Urmi told Karen about the New Light Center, as well as an anticipated project called Soma (pronounced SHO-ma) Home, a large house outside the Kalighat district to which she could remove the prostitutes' teen daughters before they were forced into their mothers' soul-destroying work. Although Urmi does not work from a base of any religion, Karen was convicted that Urmi was doing a work of mercy that Jesus wanted done. Amistad quickly raised money to help establish Soma Home.

"So if you go to Kolkata," Karen told me excitedly, "please visit Urmi Basu and her centers for the prostitutes' children!"

And that's how I found myself on the other side of the world, leading a group of Seventh-day Adventist pastors down the street of a red-light district between rows of prostitutes!

It wasn't until I returned home to Ohio (United States) that a plan began taking shape in my mind: I now had friends in India who were teaching women to read, and others who were providing services for the families of prostitutes. *What if we took our reading classes into the Kalighat?*

I wrote Hepzibah Kore, the leader for the literacy schools in India. It might be possible, she said. She hadn't done anything quite like that before, but if we would raise the money, she would try. Hope for Humanity liked the idea, too. Urmi Basu was willing to host the classes in the New Light Center.

Now we needed money.

One Sabbath morning I went up to my church balcony to talk to my audiovisual operators. A Sabbath school class meets there, and as I passed, the teacher, Don Scriven, interrupted his lesson to ask, "Pastor, is there something you need?" I really hadn't thought of mentioning my idea to anyone yet, but God had provided an opening. "What would you think," I asked, "about taking on a class mission project of your own?"

"We're having a class potluck after church today," Don said. "Come and tell us more."

That afternoon, Don's Sabbath school class promised to raise enough money to start a reading school in the Kalighat. Another class joined them a few weeks later. In the following weeks I called several pastor friends who had toured the New Light Center with me, and they promised to pitch the idea in their churches.

Encouraging Results

In our first round of literacy classes, the prostitutes who attended were joined by Urmi's helpers, poor and illiterate women (some of whom have themselves escaped the sex trade) who may be able to serve as teachers for future classes. A second class nearby, also hosted by Urmi, teaches *dalit* women—the so-called "untouchable" caste. Hepzibah Kore has classes in other parts of the city, too.

Our goal for the women of the Kalighat is modest: to help someone without a future find one because she's learned to read. Long ago, when a prostitute was thrown at Jesus' feet, Jesus said to her accusers, "Let the one without sin cast the first stone." It was a reminder that in God's eyes, the distance between the worst of us and the best of us isn't as great as we suppose. We are all sinners—some blessed more, some less. And shouldn't those of us who are blessed more help those who need more blessing? ●

For more information, go to
Hope for Humanity: <http://hope4.com>; 1-888-425-7760.
Amistad International: <http://www.amistadinternational.org>;
1-650-328-1737.
The Worthington Adventist Church: <http://www.worthingtondsda.org>.



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PHOTOS PROVIDED BY OFFICE OF ADVENTIST MISSION



POPULATION PER ADVENTIST MEMBER

Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division

76

South Pacific Division

85

Inter-American Division

100

South American Division

120



The Last MISSIONARY *Could it be you?*

By
HOMER
TRECARTIN

The young Adventist sat in my office and told of being raised in the mission field. He was now working on an advanced degree and helping to teach a missions class at a large university. The professor he was working with wanted him to focus on one of the major modern-day mission movements—that operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The young man had come to me asking for statistics on the history of Adventist missions around the world.

We spoke about the growth of our church since its founding in 1863, and I shared with him statistics on our mission program. At first he was shocked to learn that we now have half the number of full-time missionaries we had a few years ago. But then he said, “Well, maybe that’s OK. I guess we don’t really need many missionaries anymore. Nationals have been trained to do the work. Foreigners can just stay home.”

Does that make you somehow uneasy? It does me. Would it really be a good thing if we could celebrate bringing home the last missionary?

Some have argued for years that the whole concept of Christian missions is a mistake. Why should a tie-wearing, pew-sitting, hymn-singing, Bible-carrying believer invade the pristine beauty of a primitive society? What good can come from disturbing indigenous traditions and customs by introducing other concepts of right and wrong?

Decades ago, well-known anthropologists asserted that Christianity, especially in Asia and Africa, was simply riding on the coattails of colonial governments. They believed that conversion in these world regions was frequently coerced and rarely genuine, and predicted that Christianity would quickly die out in many countries as soon as nationalist movements forced the colonial governments to withdraw.

Isn’t it interesting, though, to see what has actually happened? Christianity now appears to be dying in those former colonial powers while it grows rapidly in regions and countries now firmly controlling their own political and economic destinies.

Perhaps the scholars were focusing on the wrong issue. The question wasn’t—and isn’t—whether or not “primitive” cultures would be changed. Change is inevitable—in any culture. The real question is, Who will be the agents of change? Will they be sailors looking for women, merchants looking for a profit, human traffickers luring the vulnerable? Or will they be disciples of Jesus—missionaries—motivated by a love for Him and a desire to share His love?

A very brief history of missions

“Missionaries” have always been around. Enoch would go down to the cities from his mountain retreats and try to talk with the people.¹ Noah set up an outpost and used

visual aids to attract the attention of the people and bring them to where he could talk to them.² Abraham wandered through the country setting up altars and letting his life be a witness. Jonah took a message to a heathen nation. Jesus sent the disciples out two by two on a short missionary itinerary (Mark 6:7). At the command of Jesus, Paul and the early church scattered to the ends of the then-known world with the gospel. Throughout centuries when His faithful ones were often hunted and persecuted, the Lord has always found believers who were willing to risk danger and disease to share the truths of His Word.

In the early seventeenth century, one missionary organization—the Roman Catholic Society of Jesus—had more than 8,500 foreign missionaries operating in 23 countries at a time when the world population was only 550 million—less than half the current population of India.

In the late eighteenth century, Protestant mission organizations began springing up as the Holy Spirit urged men and women who knew the love of Jesus to move beyond the enclaves of Western Christianity with the gospel. During the 1800s, tens of thousands in Europe and the Americas heard that call and responded with their lives—sometimes at the cost of their lives. By the time of the first World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1910, there were 160 Protestant missionary boards or societies.

The first Adventist missionary

In 1869 the General Conference session of the young Seventh-day Adventist Church voted to form “The Missionary Society of the Seventh-day Adventists” for the purpose of sending the Adventist message “to foreign lands, and to distant parts of our own country, by means of missionaries, papers, books, tracts, etc.”³ But things moved slowly at first. Not everyone, even among the leadership of the church, yet felt the burden to send missionaries to other countries.

“In January 1874 the first issue of the *True Missionary* appeared, a magazine containing articles urging Seventh-day Adventists to send out missionaries to other countries. These appeals and those of the Swiss Sabbathkeepers were effective, for on Sept. 15, 1874, J. N. Andrews, the first official Seventh-day Adventist missionary to be sent to a country outside North America, sailed for Liverpool, en route to Switzerland.”⁴



Homer Trecartin is Planning director for the Office of Adventist Mission at the General Conference. For more information on missions go to www.AdventistMission.org.

Once the first step had been taken, the pace seemed to pick up rapidly—at least for a church whose worldwide membership was only 5,000 at the start of the decade. Missionaries were soon on their way to Germany (1875), France (1876), Italy (1877), Norway (1878), and Sweden (1880). During the 1880s missionaries were sent to begin work in Australia (1885), South America (1885), South Africa (1887), and Asia (1888), as well as to continue to build the programs already begun.

Statistics are sketchy, but it appears the number of inter-division employees (“missionaries” employed by the church to go live for an extended period of time in another country)

reached a high in the 1970s.

In 1979 there were 1,561 active employees plus unemployed spouses and children.

Currently that number has dropped



and propensities to various medical conditions can become pronounced. A robust, healthy community needs new material continually enriching the gene pool.

The same principle applies in the spiritual realm. For individuals or churches to remain healthy, new ideas, insights, and perspectives need to be continually available and accessible. Adventist Christian media—television, radio, magazines, Internet ministries, and books—can certainly help with that. But the greatest impact occurs when human beings come in regular contact with others who bring entirely new perspectives to local issues.

That’s one reason why Paul tells us not to forsake assembling together—especially as the end draws near (Heb.10:25). We need to have our view of the world enriched by others, and our experience can also support them. No one individual, or even a married couple, can really reflect the full image of God. It takes an entire body of believers to do that.

If a region of the world—or the world church—is cut off, if no more “outsiders” arrive to share their experience of faith, walk their streets, teach in their schools, the people

For individuals or churches to remain healthy, new ideas, insights, and perspectives need to be continually available and accessible.

to 919. And even if we add in the unofficial estimates of 4,800 Global Mission and Gospel Outreach Pioneers, 64 Adventist Frontier Missionaries, several hundred student missionaries, and other full-time missionaries being sent out by supporting ministries of the church, we are still well short of the actual numbers sent out by the Roman Catholic order back in 1600!

Do we need them today?

We are at a pivotal point in the history of Adventist missions. Will we continue the slow decline, or maybe even speed it up? Is there really a need for missionaries anymore? Or is it time to bring home the last missionary?

I believe we will always need missionaries—national and cross-cultural. I believe we need to reverse the decline quickly. I believe we need to increase dramatically the numbers of missionaries we are sending out. Here are some of my reasons:

Cross-pollination. The science of genetics has taught us what happens when a group of birds, animals, or human beings is isolated for long periods of time. In the physical realm inbreeding occurs. Facial features, inherited diseases,

of that region will become more and more focused only on themselves. Selfishness will grow. Understanding and support for the church’s mission around the world will decline. The same will happen to any part of the world that cuts itself off and no longer sends its sons and daughters to help others. We need more cross-cultural missionaries from all regions of the world church teaching in Adventist schools in Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa, the South Pacific. We need pastors and administrators. We need to be a church that goes from everywhere to everywhere.

Tribal and ethnic barriers. Even as we work to fulfill Christ’s prayer that we become one in Him, there are times when it seems an almost hopeless goal. Ethnic, tribal, and racial histories make it difficult to understand the experience of others.

In some regions, historic tensions between different groups of believers are best addressed by inviting “outsiders” with no attachment to either group to lead the church’s work, operate its institutions, and move outreach forward.

This insight has proved its worth in regions that historically considered themselves the “sending” homelands



POPULATION PER
ADVENTIST MEMBER

East-Central Africa Division
125

North American Division
325

West-Central Africa Division
405

Southern Asia-Pacific Division
710



of the Adventist message. Such regions often support both large, metropolitan, institution-based churches as well as tiny, scattered, rural congregations. Believers from both kinds of churches can feel that administrators are spending too much time and money on the other group. If a leader is chosen from one or the other group, they are often hampered in their work.

I believe we will always need workers, especially leaders, going from everywhere to everywhere. But there is another need that is even more urgent than that.

No local Adventists

In 1863, this movement began with a ratio of one Seventh-day Adventist for every 373,143 people. In less than 50 years (by 1900) that ratio had dropped to one for every 21,487. By 1950, there was one Adventist for every 3,300. We have experienced phenomenal growth as a worldwide church. Today there are more than 15 million members around the world, and if like most other faiths you count children and regular attendees, nearly 25 million people in the worldwide Adventist family. At the Annual Council meetings in October 2007, it was announced that there is now one Adventist for every 429 people in the world.⁵ Praise God!

This movement started as a small, English-speaking group in the United States. Soon Europe, Africa, Central and South America, and the islands became “mission fields.” But today, more than one third of all Adventists live in Africa, and another third live in Inter- and South America. The final third are divided between Europe, Australia, North America, Asia, and the rest of the world.⁶

Today, more Adventists speak Spanish than English. And in 26 countries, including Belize, Zambia, Rwanda,

and Jamaica, there is one Adventist for every 25 people in the population. In some countries the ratio is as high as one Adventist for every 10 people! In Jamaica there is an Adventist church almost every four miles throughout the nation, and new ones are being strategically placed in the unentered areas in between.

God has blessed, and we have made such amazing progress that I sometimes hear people say, “The day of missions is over. The work is nearly done. In fact, they are doing better ‘over there’ than we are here. Let’s just leave each region of the world to take care of itself.”

And somehow that sounds reasonable—if you look only at part of the data listed throughout this article.

If you look deeper within these numbers, you learn that the Israel Field has one Adventist for every 8,848; Pakistan has one for every 16,669; and the Middle East Union has one for every 15,736. But in the Middle East Union, most of those members live in southern Sudan. Egypt has one Adventist for every 90,838, and Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen are among the most unreached countries in the world with approximately 20 million people each and no official members on the books in any of those countries.

It simply isn’t reasonable to say those areas of the world should take care of themselves. In many places there is no one living there who can show what it means to be a Christian. There are millions who have never heard of Jesus, and untold millions more who have heard His name but have never met someone who knows Him as a Friend and Savior.

While Adventist media—television, Internet ministries, radio, books, and journals—have greatly extended the reach of the gospel, these powerful outreach tools are often most effective in catching the attention of a person upon



whom the Holy Spirit has been working. Those “caught” still need discipling: they still need to see faith lived out in a living, caring Adventist who can show them what it means to be changed by Jesus. Only as they see it lived out in their marketplace can they fully understand and accept the gospel.⁷

Missionaries are still needed—to live and preach and teach the gospel in countries and regions still unreached by the good news of Jesus’ love.

The Right Lessons

Throughout the history of missions mistakes have been made. Even Abraham, David, Jonah, James, and John made mistakes—not just in areas of right and wrong, but in things such as social customs and cultures. Many of the Bible stories are about people with a message who were thrown into cross-cultural situations. Sometimes they didn’t handle things quite right. And sometimes Christian—even Adventist—missionaries haven’t either. History sadly abounds with stories of well-intentioned missionaries who couldn’t or wouldn’t separate the good news of Jesus from the political designs of their own homelands or the cultural traditions of their own people. But God has worked through them anyway: we have learned as we have gone along.

POPULATION PER ADVENTIST MEMBER

Southern Asia Division
1,126

Euro-Asia Division
1,943

Northern Asia-Pacific Division
2,796

Euro-Africa Division
3,361

Trans-European Division
5,960

More than 40 years ago, the Seventh-day Adventist Church established the Institute of World Mission to help train missionaries who are going from everywhere to everywhere. That initial training, along with the general increase in knowledge of other cultures and the growing ease of communication, has greatly helped to avoid or correct many cultural blunders experienced in the early days.

In spite of the inexperience of missionaries, in spite of the mistakes they have made, millions have been changed through the influence of these people who loved Jesus and loved them. For nearly 135 years, dedicated Adventist missionaries have given their lives in an effort to make a difference in many of the difficult places on earth.

Let’s not bring the missionaries home—either by committee action or by gradually drying up the funding for them. Let’s realize that we each are missionaries where God has planted us. We have a work to do right around us. We may be the last “missionary” our neighbor ever encounters.

But our influence and responsibility don’t end there. Some of us will be called by God to go out as short-term, tentmaker, or long-term missionaries. Others He will ask to stay where they are, but to support those who go financially and with their prayers.

Not one of us can reach every person by ourselves. But collectively, as we do the work God gives us and are faithful in our tithes and mission offerings, we will be part of a movement carrying a message to every man, woman, and child on earth—a message designed by our Creator to lift and save humanity through the traumatic events of the last days. ●

¹ White, E. G. (1879, February 20). Seth and Enoch. *The Signs of the Times*, paragraph 6.

² White, E. G. (1870). *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1 (p. 69). Battle Creek, Mich.: Seventh-day Adventist® Publishing Association, 1969 facsimile.

³ Review and Herald (June 15, 1869). Quoted in *Missions*. The Seventh-day Adventist® Encyclopedia (2002). Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Calculated from, Office of Archives and Statistics (2005). *143rd Annual Statistical Report—2005*. Silver Spring, Md.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®.

⁷ White, E. G. (1911), p. 134. Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association.

M E M B E R S

S P I R I T O F P R O P H E C Y

of a
Royal

Heirs to the heavenly kingdom will enjoy its glory forever

Family

By
ELLEN G. WHITE



The sin of Adam and Eve caused a fearful separation between God and man. And here Christ steps in between fallen man and God, and says to man, You may yet come to the Father; there is a plan devised through which God can be reconciled to man, and man to God; and through a mediator you can approach God.... He is the great High Priest who is pleading in your behalf; and it is for you to come and present your case to the Father through Jesus Christ. Thus you can find access to God; ... your case is not hopeless. "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

I thank God that we have a Saviour.... Then let no one think that it is a great humiliation on his part to accept of Jesus Christ; for when we take that step, we take the first step toward true exaltation; we take hold of the golden cord that links finite man with the infinite God, and elevates us that we may be fitted for the society of pure and heavenly angels in the kingdom of glory.

Angels on every side

Be not discouraged; be not faint-hearted. Although you may have temptations; although you may be beset by the wily foe; yet, if you have the fear of God before you, angels that excel in strength will be sent to your help, and you can be more than

a match for the powers of darkness. Jesus lives. He has died to make a way of escape for the fallen race; and he lives today to make intercession for us, that we may be exalted to his own right hand. Have hope in God. The world is traveling the broad way; and as you travel in the narrow way, and have principalities and powers to contend with, and the opposition of foes to meet, remember that there is provision made for you. Help has been laid upon One that is mighty; and through him you can conquer.

Sons and daughters of God

Come out from among them and be separate, says God, ... ye shall be sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. What a promise is this? It is a pledge to you that you shall become members of the royal family, heirs of the heavenly kingdom. If a person is honored by, or becomes connected with, any of the monarchs of earth, how it goes the rounds of the periodicals of the day, and excites the envy of those who do not think themselves so fortunate. But here is One who is king over all, the monarch of the universe, the originator of every good thing; and he says to us, I will make you my sons and daughters; I will unite you to myself; you shall become members of the royal family, and children of the heavenly King.

And then says Paul, "having

therefore these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." Why should we not do this, when we have such an inducement, the privilege of becoming children of the Most High God, the privilege of calling the God of Heaven our father? Is not that enough? And do you call this depriving you of everything that is worth having? Is this the giving up of everything that is worth possessing? Let me be united to God and his holy angels, for this is my highest ambition. You may have all the possessions of this world, but I must have Jesus; I must have a right to the immortal inheritance, the eternal substance. Let me enjoy the beauties of the kingdom of God. Let me delight in the paintings which his own fingers have colored. I may enjoy them. You may enjoy them ... [and] through them we may be directed to Him and behold his glory who has made all these things for our enjoyment. ●

This article is excerpted from one that appeared in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, now the *Adventist Review* (www.adventistreview.org), May 31, 1870. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

After the Cross

Ministering from the nerve

By
ROY ADAMS

The sanctuary lay at the center of Israelite worship—in the Old Testament and the beginning of the New. But the New Testament makes abundantly clear, both symbolically and explicitly, that that ancient system has now been replaced by a heavenly reality.

The major symbolic evidence came as Jesus died. “At that moment,” Matthew says, “the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom” (Matt. 27:51).¹ And the meaning was clear: the old order had just been changed by the One who ripped that massive veil from top to bottom, exposing to full view a place once deadly sacred, but now no longer so.

Henceforth, *the focus would shift from earth to heaven*. The One proclaimed by John the Baptist as “the Lamb of God” (John 1:29) had just been slain, Himself both priest and victim. And now, through His death, He had gained the right to enter “the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man” (Heb. 8:2).

Before he was stoned to death, Stephen in vision saw Jesus in that sacred place, and expressed the sublime revelation in words that made his accusers wild with anger. Stephen said: “Look, I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God” (see Acts 7:56).

The present work of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary does not detract from *His finished work on the cross*. When He died on Calvary, Jesus made a full atonement for us. When Adventists speak of *Christ’s present work*, “they imply no belittling of the centrality of the cross. Rather, they mean to suggest that the cross reaches beyond Calvary, beyond A.D. 31—into the heavenly sanctuary itself, the seat of God’s government, the nerve center of human salvation, where Jesus Christ has entered for us within the veil, having been made High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”²

These two concepts run parallel to each other, and are not in conflict.

Two Common Questions

1. As High Priest, what does Jesus actually do?

We cannot answer this question in a way that makes logical sense to the scientific mind. Ultimately, we simply

have to let the Bible provide its own response. In chapters 1-7 of Hebrews, the writer weaves together an elaborate argument to emphasize the uniqueness of Jesus. Then coming to chapter 8, he summarizes the point he’d been making all along.

He says: “Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man” (Heb. 8:1, 2, NKJV).

In the rest of Hebrews 8 and in chapter 9, he argues that the ancient tabernacle system has been succeeded by a “better” (a superior) heavenly sanctuary ministry. Then in Hebrews 9:12 he clinches the argument: Christ “did not enter [the heavenly sanctuary] by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered . . . once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.”

Two things the author wants his readers to grasp here. One is the theological meaning of these realities and the other is their practical dimension.

The *theological* meaning, already summarized in Hebrews 8:1, 2, is that we now have a superior high priest, the Son of the Living God. Like the ancient high priests, He is human; but unlike them, He is divine and faultless. On the basis of His humanity, He is able to “sympathize with our weaknesses” (Heb. 4:15); and on the basis of His divinity, He is “able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him” (Heb. 7:25, NKJV).

The apostle’s *practical* point has to do with access. In the old system, the ordinary Israelite worshipper stood several barriers removed from the sanctuary’s innermost sanctum, barriers they could never cross. Only the high priest had full access—and even so, just once a year (on the Day of Atonement). But now, through Christ our heavenly Mediator, a door of *unlimited access* has been opened up for us, whoever we are—a door to the heavenly sanctuary



Roy Adams is associate editor of *Adventist World*.

itself, the throne room of the living God. “Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence,” says the sacred writer, “so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

So in answer to the question of what Jesus is doing now, we may say that in His capacity as High Priest He is constantly providing help for “those who are being tempted,” having known from personal experience the peril of temptation (Heb. 2:17, 18). In addition, He intercedes for us (Heb. 7:25); works to solidify our loyalty by inscribing His laws in our minds and hearts (Heb. 8:3-10);

center of the universe

cleanses our “consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!” (Heb. 9:13, 14); and works to bring an end to (what Adventists call) the great controversy (see Heb. 10:11-13).

We cannot know, of course, the exact form of Jesus’ intercession. But Scripture offers us several examples of the general idea—e.g., in the experience of Moses (Ex. 32:9-14, 30-32) and in the supplication of Daniel (Dan. 9). We see it also in Jesus’ great prayer before His passion (John 17). (As a way of understanding what Christ is doing now for us, John 17 is priceless.)

2. A second question: What’s the advantage of knowing Jesus as both Savior and High Priest?

Ultimately, it centers around the question of *loyalty and faithfulness*. As we follow Jesus by faith into the heavenly

sanctuary, we experience His cleansing grace. But we also experience a new appreciation for the everlasting covenant, symbolized by God’s immutable Law nestled, so to speak, under the mercy seat. That holy law becomes an indelible part of our spiritual consciousness (see Heb. 8:10).

This defines part of the difference the sanctuary teaching makes for us. By faith we enter that sacred place where Jesus ministers. And there, against all odds, we cling to the One whose unchangeable promise is symbolized in the ark of the covenant. It was his respect for the sanctuary and what it represented that created and preserved Daniel’s unswerving loyalty and faithfulness to God in the face of deadly peril (see Dan. 6). And Daniel stands today as a symbol of a final remnant that will choose to honor God at the cost of life itself.

Unlike the rest of Christendom ready to jettison any portion of God’s Law they find inconvenient or uncomfortable, that remnant will remain firm in their loyalty to God, at whatever cost. Anchored to a hope that enters “within the veil,” they stand secure against every concept or philosophy (be it evolution, atheism, materialism, or whatever) that seeks to wrest the eternal God from His throne or belittle or downgrade the validity of His eternal law enshrined beneath the mercy seat.

The doctrine of the sanctuary thus becomes a protection for us against rebellion, and secures for God a faithful remnant in a revolted world. ●

¹Unless otherwise indicated, Bible texts in this article are from the New International Version.

²Roy Adams, *The Sanctuary: Understanding the Heart of Adventist Theology* (Review and Herald, 1993), p. 142.

This article is adapted from chapter 12 of the author’s *The Wonder of Jesus* (Review and Herald, 2007).

Christ’s Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary

There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up and not man. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified

by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the

faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent. (Heb. 8:1-5; 4:14-16; 9:11-28; 10:19-22; 1:3; 2:16, 17; Dan. 7:9-27; 8:13, 14; 9:24-27; Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6; Lev. 16; Rev. 14:6, 7; 20:12; 14:12; 22:12.)

*Wilhelm Koelling, father of Elfriede Raunio, built Aira Mission Station in the 1920s in an area of Ethiopia untouched by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Those living there had never seen Caucasians before.**

The steady *thump, thump, thump* of drums filled the night air. The pounding had gone on for nights, but this time something was different. A shrill cry rang out. “Dindele! Dindele! Dindele!”

I jerked upright in my bed. “What’s that?” I screamed.

“What’s the matter, Elfriede?” my father asked, rushing into the bedroom.

“I’m scared,” I said, drawing the blanket closer around me.

Father looked at me and pointed to the black-and-white picture depicting Jesus wearing a crown of thorns. Wherever we lived, this picture always hung over my bed.

“You believe in Jesus and a guardian angel, don’t you?” Father asked.

“Yes.”

“Do you think the angel and Jesus would let something happen to you?”

Father prayed with me, and I fell back to sleep.

The year was 1925, and the nighttime shrieks came from a woman named Dindele. Night after night she jumped up and down in a mad, naked dance outside our mud-brick home, screaming her own name. She had been sent by witch doctors who hoped to scare us away from our small mission station.

Another Outpost for Ethiopia

My father had built the Adventist mission station about a year earlier, partway through our six-year stint as missionaries from Germany. The station, located three weeks by horseback from Addis Ababa, consisted of several houses, a main building that doubled as a church and school, a dormitory, and our home. Thatch roofs

covered all the buildings except our home, which had a corrugated metal roof. Along one side of the station ran a wide river with water for drinking and bathing. Around the compound stood tall elephant grass, growing up to three meters (10 feet) high. Lions and tigers often hid in the grass.

Father taught people from nearby villages how to read and write. He treated their illnesses with modern medicine and shared God’s love. Haile Selassie, Ethiopia’s regent and future emperor, liked the mission outpost because it was self-sufficient and offered medical care. But the witch doctors despised us, fearing we would put them out of business.

Tiny but Trusting

Then Dindele appeared. My mother gave Dindele some clothes, but the next night she returned, naked

By
ELFRIEDE RAUNIO
as told to ANDREW
MCCHESNEY

Fl Out of the Flames

Lighting the darkness with the gospel story



Top: A DIFFERENT TIME: A pet monkey sits on Wilhelm Koelling's lap and plays with Elfriede during a stop on a three-week trip from the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, to the Aira Mission Station. Also pictured is Elfriede's mother, Paula, and older sister, Ilse. **Bottom:** The Koelling family posing along the Elbe River in Germany before traveling to Ethiopia.

again. She refused my family's offer of help and went back to her village.

The third time she showed up, screaming her name, I called for my parents again. "Elfriede, you know what to do, don't you?" my father said.

My father did not hear a peep from me the next time Dindele came. Curiously he peeked into my bedroom and saw me kneeling under my blanket, praying loudly. That is when I learned to depend on Jesus. I was 5 years old.

Suddenly, Dindele stopped visiting. The villagers told my father that one of the witch doctors had worked some magic on her. My father said the witch doctor had used Beelzebub to cast out a devil, the same thing that the Pharisees had falsely accused Jesus of doing. He said the witch doctors were worried about losing the villagers' respect. The witch doctors had good reason to be scared. Seeing the healing power of modern medicine, people flocked to the mission station for help.

Miracle Worker

One day a mother arrived with a badly burned baby girl in her arms. People lit fires inside their huts, and the baby had crawled into the hot coals. "I don't know if we can help," my mother told the weeping woman. But mother rubbed medication on the baby's blistered head and began to pray. She prayed a lot over the next few days. There was not much else we could do. No one expected the

Left: ROUGHING IT: Elfriede Koelling resting at a tent camp with her mother and sister during a three-week trip from Addis Ababa to the Aira Mission Station. The other children are from the Stein missionary family, who replaced the Koellings at Aira when they returned to Germany to answer a call to the Dutch West Indies.

baby to live—but she did.

Some people surprised my parents with their requests. A woman who lost her arm in a milling accident traveled for three weeks to reach the mission station—she handed over the severed arm in a sack. My father had to explain that he could not sew it back on.

One night a man arrived on a mule. He was the son of a witch doctor, and he needed help. He explained that his father had fallen ill and could not cure himself. My father asked about the symptoms and diagnosed the sickness as a simple case of tapeworms.

The day came that the witch doctor was cured. Nobody said much about the remarkable recovery, but everyone knew what had happened. The news traveled fast that my father could cure anybody, even witch doctors. The villagers started kissing my father's feet and calling him a god. My father firmly told them that there was only one God, and he begged them to stop kissing his feet. I remember him telling my mother, "We have to pray to the Lord. We have to do something to convince them that it is *my* God who does these things."

The Fire That Was Quenched Yet Continues to Burn

A short time later my father came down with malaria. It was the time of year when he burned the elephant grass across the river to prevent wild animals from getting too close to the water. Weakened by his sickness, father asked a trusted friend, Haile Mariam, to burn the grass. Haile Mariam followed the instructions, and soon orange-yellow flames began shooting up toward the sky. The elephant grass had knobs like bamboo that popped loudly in the heat of the fire. Suddenly a spark flew across the river and landed on the dry grass. Moments later a wall of roaring flames

surrounded the compound, spreading toward the thatch-roof houses and the teff that was spread on mats to dry in the center of the compound. Teff, a grain used to make injera—a flat, spongy Ethiopian bread—was our main food supply.

My mother had just washed the clothes, so we had some water on hand, but it was far from enough to fight the flames. Students tore down tree branches and tried to beat out the fire.

Seeing the rising smoke, people from nearby villages rushed to the scene. But they quickly saw that they could do nothing. We were helpless. With the fire threatening to destroy the mission, my father gathered us in a circle and prayed that God's will be done.

Abruptly—just as quickly as the fire had started—it vanished. We inspected the damage. The fire had not touched the teff at all. The buildings looked exactly the same as before. Upon closer inspection, the only traces of the towering inferno were the slightly singed edges of the thatch-covered houses.

Astonished, the villagers declared that a Higher Being must have taken care of us. Many learned to believe in God and were baptized in the wide river.

Today the Ethiopian Union Mission has 657 churches with a membership of 157,679. Aira is in the West Ethiopia Field, Guliso district. Mission president Alemu Haile says the district has 1,023 members, more than 10 churches, and a clinic. ●

*Prior to this the Koelling family was in Addis Alam (see entry Akaki SDA School, SDA Encyclopedia [1996], vol. 10, p. 45).



Elfriede Raunio grew up in Ethiopia and Indonesia and served as a missionary with her husband, Leo Raunio, in South Africa and Zimbabwe in the 1970s and early 1980s. She now lives in Cleburne, Texas. Andrew McChesney is her grandson.

QUESTION: *Why did James say “a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone” (James 2:24)?*

James 2:14-26 has often been understood as a corrective to Paul’s one-sided emphasis on justification by faith alone. Fortunately most scholars today disagree with that assessment, as do I. In seeking to understand James’ argument we need to keep in mind the general context and purpose of his letter. Second, we must realize that different biblical writers may at times use the same terminology in a different sense or particular emphasis. This is also determined by the context. You may want to read James 2:14-26 before we continue.

1. James’ Main Concern: James’ message is very practical in nature, addressing the suffering and trials of the community of believers and the potential and real oppressiveness of social stratification. His interest is in the social impact of the Christian faith. He rejects preferential treatment based on wealth or social status (chap. 2:1-7) and condemns social exploitation and abuse of the poor (chap. 5:1-6). For James, Christian faith cannot be socially disengaged while claiming at the same time to be relevant. His theological message is embedded in this concern for a religion that should be part of the very fabric of society. This means that whatever James says in chapter 2:14-26, it must be related to his major concern.

2. Faith and Works: The passage under consideration has to be read in its own terms. We have to determine how James uses the noun “faith.” Contextually, this is not difficult. He doesn’t use it in the traditional salvific way, but as inner knowledge and conviction. In other words, this is not primarily the faith that we place in Jesus, but religious convictions that are not determining conduct. This becomes clear when he writes, “You believe that there is one God. Good! Even demons believe that—and shudder” (verse 19). Faith is being persuaded that our convictions are right; demons can have that type of knowledge. This kind of faith is useless in the Christian life if it leads to an attitude of indifference toward the needs of others (verses 14-16, 20). James argues that faith divorced from works is dead (verse 17).

In fact, to claim that faith exists in the absence of works is tantamount to claiming that the body could

exist independent of the spirit. One cannot exist without the other. Faith and works are an indivisible unity in the Christian life (verse 26); works make visible our faith (verse 18). They are the evidence of the reality of the presence of faith in the believer.

3. Faith and Justification: Under Paul’s influence justification is usually understood as the acquittal of repentant sinners before the divine tribunal at the beginning of the Christian life, independent of works.

James is not denying that belief, but neither is he addressing that particular issue. He writes to church members, individuals who had already been justified by faith in Christ. Their problem is that their faith is not

affecting the way they should live the Christian life. To them James says, “A person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.”

The most important element in this verse is the verb “to be justified.” Since in the context the presence of faith is seen or demonstrated through its works, the verb “to be justified” probably means “to show, demonstrate what it means to be righteous.” The verb carries a demonstrative

meaning, that is to say believers *show/demonstrate* that they have been justified not simply by claiming they have faith, but more particularly by what they do. This was the experience of Abraham and Rahab, who demonstrated their righteousness through their works (verses 21, 25). These are not the works of the law through which some, according to Paul, were seeking to be justified. James is talking about what Paul calls “good works.” They would both agree that, “We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works” (Eph. 2:10).

James’s message is echoed in Revelation 3:15-18, and challenges us to allow our faith, through the power of the Spirit, to express itself in true Christian demeanor and in deep concern for the poor and the oppressed. After all, “what good is it, my brothers, if a man [or a woman] claims to have faith but has no deeds?” (James 2:14). ●

Faith that Works



By
ANGEL MANUEL
RODRÍGUEZ

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

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



Last-Day Deceptions

By MARK A. FINLEY

Millions of people throughout the world turn to astrologers, fortune tellers, and spiritualists to try to discern the future. The mysteries of life trouble them and they seek answers. Still others are dominated by a fear of evil spirits; their lives are consumed with attempts to “please” the spirits. God’s desire is to set us free from these deceptions. He is the great liberator. Our heavenly Father longs for each of His children to live a life of happiness, joy, and peace; and not to be troubled by anxiety, worry, and fear. This month’s lesson will demonstrate how we can be free of the controlling influence of evil spirits in our lives.

1. What promise did Jesus give to His followers? Read the text below and fill in the blanks.

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

The _____ shall make us _____.

Satan would keep us in bondage with dark deceptions and superstitions. But the truth of Jesus liberates us from fear of the unknown.

2. How did God distinguish Himself from the heathen gods of the nations that surrounded Israel? Read the text below and fill in the blanks.

“Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done” (Isa. 46:9, 10).

God said: “I am God, ... declaring the _____ from the _____.”

Only God knows the future. Anyone who claims to foretell the future by any other means is an imposter.

3. Where is the true source of wisdom, and how can we discover it? Read the text below and circle the words that best answer the question.

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given” (James 1:5).

All true wisdom comes from God. We discover it by applying biblical principles to whatever questions we may have. Astrologers, fortune tellers, and spiritualists are filled with falsehoods from below, not truth from above.



4. God condemns false sources of wisdom. Read the text below and circle each false source of wisdom.

“There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead” (Deut. 18:10, 11).

5. What did God call these false prophets? Read the text below and fill in the blank.

“For all these who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you” (Deut. 18:12).

The Bible says: “All who do these things are an _____ to the Lord.”

6. What is the ultimate fate of these deceptive astrologers, spiritualists, and sorcerers? Read the text below and fill in the blank.

“Behold, they shall be as stubble, the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame” (Isa. 47:14).

“Fire shall _____ them.”

7. Rather than looking to the occult for wisdom and strength, where does God encourage us to look? Read the text below and circle the significant words or phrases.

“Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other” (Isa. 45:22).

8. We are promised that in Christ we are able to overcome these evil powers. According to the text below, what is the source of our power? Fill in the blanks below.

“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

The Bible says: “He who is in _____ is greater than he who is in the _____.”

Although we battle against principalities, powers, the rulers of darkness, and the spiritual hosts of wickedness, Jesus is greater and more powerful than all the powers of hell (Eph. 6:12; Matt. 16:18). In Jesus we are secure from the forces of evil. He is our refuge and strength (Ps. 46:1). We need not fear. He has come to give us peace (John 14:27). Opening our hearts to Him, surrendering our lives to Him, we are free from the bondage of fear and superstition.

Next month’s study,
“Hope Beyond the Cross,” will
examine the Bible for evidence about what happens
when a person dies.



LETTERS

God Used a Man

It was indeed the mighty unchanging hand of God that led me to read the article on an outstanding educator, Goodloe Bell, within the Adventist system (see “God Used a Man,” by Allan G. Lindsay, August 2008 *Adventist World*).

As a young educator within the system myself, I was mesmerized by the strong features and flowing beard I saw in my office on the first day of school in August 2003. I was unsure as to what to do with the huge framed picture of Bell. I was advised to “throw it out.” As the frame matched the furniture in my office very well and the authoritative face gave my office “presence,” I held on to the picture and gave it a prominent spot—focal point position in the room. Each student, worker, and visitor would inquire as to the “fame” of this gentleman, but none of us knew. Today, I am happy. I kept the photograph—today, the name Goodloe Bell has been given life and recognition.

Thank you for this article!

CHARLENE SHARPE,
NORTHERN CARIBBEAN
UNIVERSITY FACULTY MEMBER
Mandeville, Jamaica

Proud Member, Proud of Women in Ministry

At one time it was believed that women should be seen but not heard in the East Nigeria Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but thanks to Pastor I. M. Alala, who came to the Uhum district and broke the several years of pressing silence on women, female members are not only seen but are “copreachers” and contributors in everyday activities of the church. In light of the articles and letters on the topic published this year in *Adventist World*, I wanted to share this.

Women [in our area] have conducted open-air preaching programs and won souls for Christ, many of whom are now baptized members and committed Christians today. Thanks immensely for our church leadership that brought our pastor and his wife, a teacher; the Adventist Women’s Ministries leader Joy Njoku and secretary Gift Njoku; and Bola Nwaejike, the conference women’s leader. These women have had tremendous achievements in the district in membership growth, and oneness has been the order of the day.

I was not a member of the church until early June 2006 when I got married to Sample Ajah Onyenmuru of Mbutu Umuezeoche. Today, I

am a proud member of the church, baptized and a Sabbath school teacher in my church. I am proud, too, of the work our church is doing through [both men and women].

CHIOMA SAMPLE AJAH
Nigeria

Lifestyle Issues

I notice that very little or nothing is written now in the Adventist magazines about Christian lifestyle, being a light of the world and a peculiar people. Is the church now being converted by the world?

We need to see articles written which present the Adventist/Bible positions on: style of dress, witchcraft, smoking, drinking alcohol and other practices. People need spiritual guidance to live a godly life. Don’t fall into the trap of thinking any lifestyle is fine as long as one believes in God. Remember Cain and Abel? Both were worshipping God, but one was wrong in the way he worshipped.

LOUIS LAWRENCE
Jamaica

LETTERS

Gratitude

Thank you so much for sending me *Adventist World*. I have received two issues so far, and I want you to know just how your magazine has definitely helped me.

I was overjoyed when I received the July 2008 issue with the cover story "A Daniel in Moscow." The article was something I greatly needed. It told how Dave Kulakov prayed that God would bring his thoughts under divine control. He knew 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. He resolved to copy the entire Bible by hand.

I decided I would do that, too. I began to copy the Bible in a big composition book. I do it every morning, and I find it really does transform one's thoughts. I am so happy for what God is doing for me.

VIRGINIA L. ENANORIA
California, United States

David Marshall's article "The Greatest Miracle," July 2008, brought me some new insights. Thank you. Then "They Still Go" – that is what I say to the Lord in prayer in the early morning.

EMILY GITTINS
Pennsylvania, United States

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

THE PLACE OF PRAYER

We are a small group with plans to construct a new church on land we have already obtained. Please pray for funds so the project can go forward.

ARTURO, *Venezuela*

I am not an Adventist, but I appreciate so much Adventist lessons shared by my SDA officemates. I would like to request prayer for my son.

JOCY, *Philippines*

I am a pastor. I have an orphaned children's center here that needs your prayers. I have a vision to look after orphans and widows. I want to obey God's will. Please pray also for the five locations where we have home Bible meditations.

DANTHAPU, *India*

I am going to finish my bachelor's degree from an Adventist college and seminary. I know God works wonders. Pray that I won't get discouraged and that someone will employ me. I have a great desire to work on the side of God.

PANUEL, *Bangladesh*

Please pray that my daughter is granted a permit to study in Canada. She needs to fulfill requirements that presently seem impossible.

MELTA, *Ireland*

I am requesting prayer for me to get a good job to help my husband and parents and to have our own home. Pray for our financial situation and that we will be in good health and faith.

CYNTHIA, *United States*

Please pray for us so that we may have churches for three new companies we planted last year. All of them still worship outside every Sabbath.

BULAMBA, *Congo*

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

At the
End
of the Tunnel

An AWR student shares his personal account.



One of the unique aspects of AWR's ministry is that the radio programs aired are produced by native speakers from each country or region. These producers are intimately familiar with the culture of their listeners and the challenging issues they face in their day-to-day lives.

This connection is immediately apparent during the training sessions conducted by AWR global training director Ray Allen. He teaches radio newcomers how to create relevant scripts and professional programs with messages that demonstrate to listeners that understanding and kinship.

During training held in Burundi this past year, student Rizinde Lazare wrote the following personal account.

In 1994, I was in the northern part of Bujumbura, which is situated by Lake Tanganyika. I was living in an area that had been destroyed by the war. Many houses around us were empty. There were no people, no domestic animals—nothing.

One day, my father went to visit my mother and sister, who were living elsewhere. I was asleep on my bed, when I heard a big voice calling me. I opened the door, but I felt frightened.

It was an attack by criminals, one of whom was our neighbor. Their goal was to collect all items of value in our house, including money. If they failed to get money, no one in the house would survive....

No one else was at home. You can imagine what happened to me, a little guy with only my brother with me. The criminals were holding guns in their hands; some had knives or swords, and others had sticks. With some branches and grass on their belts, they looked like Bushmen.

The leader of the operation asked me where my parents were. I said, 'Please don't beat me! My father has gone up country to visit my mother, who has been there for a long time.' He said that I was telling lies, and then ordered his soldiers to beat me until I spit blood. For a time I thought I was dead, but finally I reasoned that a dead person cannot think—and I was thinking.

At that moment, I was very far from God, because I kept asking where the lovely God was that I had been taught about from birth. But God can come to you even in a time of despair. At a moment when you don't have any hope, the Lord is there to help you.

I say that because one of those criminals decided to stop and leave me alive. The Lord's power came to him and told him to protect me from death.... He was serving God without knowing it, because he saved me when I was at the end of the tunnel.

What I ask you now is to trust in our God. Be assured that even if you're falling down into a very deep tunnel, the Lord will be there to help you at the right time. He knows you more than you think, and He is ready to help you in one way or another.

"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

ADVENTIST LIFE

It was the Sabbath and the fourth anniversary of the singing group “Seawaves Harmonic Chorale” here in our church. There were several Korean members from the Nanuri School, in Cagayan de Oro City, who played orchestral music. I’m fond of making friends so I sat beside a

Korean kid (about 10 years old) and asked him if he could speak in English since I wanted to chat with him.

He replied, in English, “No, I can’t speak in English.” Hmm, that was a bit funny to me, but I think what he wanted to express is that he can’t speak English fluently.

—Harlen Sande, Mindanao, Philippines

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



CAITLIN POTTS

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“We are a law-abiding people, obedient citizens of any country; but obedience to God takes first priority. It is important that we do not lose sight of that when the values of two different worlds collide.”

—Pastor Jan Paulsen, during his October 13, 2007, sermon at the Annual Council of the Seventh-day Adventist Church



MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

“I love being part of God’s great plan,” says Candy Zook of her volunteer service at the Southern Asian Division headquarters in India, where she is the director for the Adventist Children India program. “Each day we see mountains being moved,” exclaims Zook. “We see everything

from children’s education being sponsored, to hostels and schools being built.”

A native of Nebraska, United States, Zook was first called to do a three-week evangelistic series in India only a few months after the death of her husband in May of 2005. It was after this initial experience in India, says Zook, that, “I struggled and knew God was calling me back to India.”

Now, nearly two years into her volunteer assignment, Zook does

not regret her decision one bit. In fact, she encourages people to become part of God’s plan in India. “Volunteer service is important, and there is something for everyone to do. Please think of the children of India, and know there is something you can do too.”

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.

ANSWER: In Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, a young girl, attending the Spencerville Seventh-day Adventist Church Vacation Bible School in July 2008, works on painting in a “stained-glass” craft during one of the children’s art projects.