

November 2009

ADVENTIST WORLD



One Family, Two Legacies

14 The Freedom
of Forgiveness

20 Church, Anyone?

26 God's Intractable
Love



GENERAL CONFERENCE ARCHIVES

COVER STORY

One Family, Two Legacies

By Mark A. Kellner 16

It began as the Adventist College of West Africa. Fifty years later Babcock University is one of Nigeria's premier private educational institutions.

DEVOTIONAL

Mightier Than the Waves By Dick Rentfro..... 12

The adventure of knowing Christ is the greatest thrill of all.

ADVENTIST LIFE

The Freedom of Forgiveness

By Abidemi Oyinloye 14

Living without keeping score

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS

Church, Anyone? By Chantal J. Klingbeil 20

It's more than an organization, much more.

DISCOVERING THE
SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Reading Ellen White in the 21st Century

By George R. Knight 22

Have her principles changed with the culture?

ADVENTIST HERITAGE

The Story of Annie Smith By Erica Richards 24

Her bright light was too soon darkened.

CHURCH WORKS

World View 3

World Report

3 News & Views

Window

7 Into Liberia

World Vista

8 Ambassadors of the Gospel

HEALTH

Beating the Flu 11

By Allan R. Handysides and
Peter N. Landless

BIBLE QUESTIONS

God's Intractable

Love 26

By Angel Manuel Rodríguez

BIBLE STUDY

Revelation's

Final Appeal 27

By Mark A. Finley

WORLD EXCHANGE

29 Letters

30 The Place of Prayer

31 Exchange of Ideas

The People's Place 32

ON THE COVER: The David Babcock Family and Babcock University. Photos: General Conference Archives, Lisa Beardsley



WORLD VIEW

An Audience of One

She stood in the bank queue, leaning heavily on one crutch.

Clasped in her free hand was a white envelope around which her fingers curled repeatedly.

A payroll check, I mused to myself as I reviewed the reasons a middle-aged woman might wait for a bank teller on a quiet afternoon. *Maybe she's here to cash her paycheck so she can pay the rent or buy her weekly groceries.*

But at the counter she spoke in a voice too loud: "I need a counter check," she informed the teller. She turned slightly to see if I had heard her announcement, her eyes alight with mystery.

"I'm here to get a counter check so I can go and buy my daughter's wedding dress," she said as though she was speaking to a hundred people instead of only the teller and me. She pulled well-wrinkled bills out of the curled envelope. "I've saved \$200 to buy my daughter her wedding dress."

She glanced around the empty bank, clearly wishing for a bigger audience for this moment she had spent weeks imagining and working toward. One more quick glance my direction identified me as the designated hearer of this tiny moment of human drama.

Her business done at the window, she stepped toward the door, a little straighter in her stride, her crutch not quite so necessary.

I smiled at the teller as he waited on me, searching his face to see if he had also been a witness to this fleeting bit of joy and pride. But no, he seemed wrapped in the numbness of his counting tasks—hearing everything, but actually hearing little.

Was this the reason for my day? I wondered as I drove slowly home. Was this the chief thing God intended me to accomplish on this day—to be a witness to the joy of just one human being? And on how many other days has this perhaps also been God's plan for me—to attend to the quiet joys and hidden sorrows of those unheard and unesteemed?

For all our righteous focus on proclamation and presentation, let's also come to cherish the days when we are audience and listeners instead of speakers only. The ear we tune to hear a neighbor's joy or pain will often be more useful than either our tongues or hands can ever be. This day, this week, this month, be an audience of one, and so fulfill the law of One who always listens when we speak. ●

— BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

KOREA: Asian Adventist Theologians Come Together for First Time

■ August 9-13, 2009, marked a historic moment in the young history of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD), the Seventh-day Adventist Church administrative region covering the territories of China (including Hong Kong and Macao), Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Taiwan. Theologians, Bible teachers, college chaplains, and administrators from the NSD and beyond came together for the first time to think together and interact about important issues affecting ministerial and theological education



CHINESE DELEGATES: Seventeen Chinese-speaking delegates were among the many attendees at a first-ever regional Seventh-day Adventist Church conference on ministerial and theological education, held in August in Seoul, South Korea.

NSD PHOTO

in that part of the world, including also a significant delegation from mainland China. Supported by division leadership, the team, led by Miguel Luna, divisional Ministerial Association

director, organized a well-designed program focusing upon issues of biblical interpretation, the integration of faith and learning, and the cultural adaptation of theological education to

WORLD REPORT

an Asian context. The event was hosted on the campus of Sahmyook University, located in Seoul, South Korea.

The conference was cosponsored by the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference, evidenced by the presence of three members of that team, including its director, Angel Rodríguez, and two associate directors, Kwabena Donkor and Clinton Wahlen. Other invitees to this event included Raquel Korniejczuk, academic dean of Montemorelos University in Mexico; Willie Hucks, associate editor of *Ministry* magazine; David and Carol Tasker from the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Philippines; Gerald A. Klingbeil, an associate editor of the *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World* magazines; as well as Chek Yat Phoon and Sally-Lam Phoon from the NSD.

During the four-day event participants listened to and interacted with numerous papers that were read by invited international Adventist scholars as well as scholars and professors from within the territory of the NSD. Critical issues of biblical interpretation, envisioning the ideal Seventh-day Adventist seminary (or religion department) of the future, the deliberate and systematic integration of faith and learning, as well as more contextualized theological position papers presented by professors from the four tertiary level educational institutions located in the NSD territory (Hong Kong Adventist College, Sahmyook University, Saniku Gakuin College in Japan, and Taiwan Adventist College).

One of the important actions of the conference was the unanimous request to recommend to the NSD executive committee the establishment of a regional biblical research committee that could begin to systematically discuss emerging theological questions and prepare

helpful theological material for the growing church in that part of Asia.

—Reported by AW Staff.

UNITED NATIONS: Standish, Religious Liberty Advocate, to Represent Adventists

■ A veteran Seventh-day Adventist religious freedom advocate will return to employment at church headquarters to serve as the worldwide denomination's liaison to the United Nations, the church's Executive Committee announced in August.

James D. Standish, Esq., formerly director of legislative affairs for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, spent the past year as executive director of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, an independent nonpartisan federal agency advising the White House and Congress.

Working with the commission gave him a broader understanding of the “inner workings” of government and what can be accomplished through cooperation and a candid exchange of ideas, Standish said.

“It’s a real privilege to come back to work for the Adventist Church,” he said. “I think that the church has so much to offer, from its understanding of religious freedom to its emphasis on education and health care and its thorough understanding of the gospel.”

Standish, 45, will work out of the church's Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) in Silver

Spring, Maryland, with frequent trips to New York City to attend meetings at U.N. headquarters as the church's representative.

“We welcome the opportunity to have James back after his time at the commission,” said John Graz, PARL director. “James brings great experience, broad knowledge of religious liberty issues, and credibility among religious freedom experts and government officials.”

Standish is widely published, has discussed religious freedom concerns on nationally broadcast television and radio, and has testified on religious freedom matters before the U.S. House of Representatives.

Executive Committee members approved Standish's appointment despite an ongoing hiring freeze at world church headquarters, explaining that filling “essential positions” is vital to the church's mission. Standish fills a position that has been vacant for more than a year.

Ensuring that the church is an “integral part” of discussions on human rights and freedoms of religion at the U.N. is his primary objective, Standish said.

Making the effort to collaborate with “key players” at the U.N. and promote

MARK A. KELLNER/ADVENTIST WORLD



UNITED NATIONS REPRESENTATIVE: James Standish, a veteran attorney and former executive director of the U.S. Council for International Religious Freedom, has returned to serving the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists as the church's United Nations liaison.

the church's views "systematically" will help make such a position "doable," Standish said. Working for the commission for the past year, he added, reinforced the level of influence nongovernmental organizations can have on decision-making. "I come back with a greater respect for the sort of impact that entities like the Adventist Church can have," he said.

—Elizabeth Lechleitner, *Adventist News Network*.

SOUTH AMERICA: Austral Church Region Moves Toward Self-administration

■ The Austral region of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, covering the countries of Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay, is moving to split into three individual sections of church leadership.

The proposed arrangement would allow each of the three countries to better reach their full potential for growth, church leaders said.

"When you have three different countries under one administration, although you may try to be equally supportive to all three, it is difficult to do it because of customs and distance," said Magdiel Perez Schulz, assistant to the president of the church in South America.

Adventist church membership in Argentina is more than 60,000, Paraguay has a little more than 14,000 members, and Uruguay has nearly 7,000.

Uruguay has the highest percentage of non-Catholic religions between the three countries at just over 50 percent. Both Argentina and Paraguay are roughly 90 percent Catholic. Argentina is the largest country, followed by Paraguay. Uruguay is the second-smallest country on the continent, just ahead of Suriname and slightly smaller than the U.S. state of Washington.

The Austral Union is currently the



VIDEO MISSIONARIES: Adventist-run Hope Channel and Southern Adventist University are teaming up to send video student missionaries to the African country of Lesotho to film a documentary for one year. The student missionaries, from left: Derek Taylor, Carolyn Taylor, and Xavier Hazen.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HOPE CHANNEL

only church region in South America not organized by countries.

The official reorganization was expected to be voted on during year-end world church business meetings in October, authorizing the South American region to launch the two additional sections, called union conferences, in January 2010.

Delegates at the world church business meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, will take a final vote to approve the new organizational structure in June 2010.

—Megan Brauner, *Adventist News Network*.

LESOTHO: Video Missionaries to Film Reality Show

■ Three students from Southern Adventist University (SAU), located in Collegedale, Tennessee, are heading to Lesotho—a landlocked nation in southern Africa—to spend a year documenting the lives of medical missionaries.

The video project features the lives of two medical missionary families, plus the experiences of the videographers themselves.

The new reality series is sponsored

by the Hope Channel, the Seventh-day Adventist Church's television network, and will run for 13 episodes.

"I'd like to bring to the screen the things God is doing in Lesotho, and put a face on the reality of medical missionary work through the families we're filming," said Derek Taylor, a junior film production major at SAU and current video student missionary.

The video student missionary program is a collaborative effort of Hope Channel and SAU. During their assignment students will shadow medical personnel working at Maluti Adventist Hospital in Lesotho.

Taylor and two fellow students, Carolyn Taylor and Xavier Hazen, left for Lesotho in July. Carolyn Taylor is a biology major whose tasks, she said, include creating storylines for the episodes and appearing on camera. Hazen, a graphic design major, said he plans to help with production as well as design.

The three-person crew plans to wrap up the series in summer 2010.

—Scott Steward, *Hope Channel*; and Megan Brauner, *Adventist News Network*.

WORLD REPORT

Vietnamese M.B.A. Students Graduate From Adventist University

Program brings Griggs University curriculum to Vietnam National University in Hanoi

By MARK A. KELLNER, news editor



CONGRATULATIONS: Vietnam National University student Le Hong Quang (right) accepts her Master of Business Administration degree from

Donald R. Sahly, Griggs University/Griggs International Academy president during a September 14, 2009 ceremony in Silver Spring, Maryland. Griggs and the VNU teamed up to offer an MBA program in 2008; Le was one of the first graduates, and part of a delegation of 28 who came to the U.S. for their diplomas.

RAJMUND DABROWSKI/ANN

The atrium of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's world headquarters became an academic sanctuary on September 14 when 28 Vietnamese graduates from the Southeast Asian nation traveled to Silver Spring, Maryland, to collect their Master of Business Administration degrees in person at Griggs University/Griggs International Academy, the church-owned school formerly known as Home Study International (HSI).

"In this memorable moment, [my] sincere wish is [that] we would apply the results of our studies daily," said Nguyen Van Hung, an M.B.A. graduate and one of two class representatives who spoke at the event. A total of 90 students completed the program and graduated; nearly a third were present at the Maryland ceremony to receive their diplomas.

Hung, a branch manager at a large corporation in Hanoi, said he hoped his fellow graduates would "contribute to our country's development and further

cooperation between the United States and Vietnam."

Le Duc Anh, the other representative speaker, said he was "very happy today" and wished to "express our thanks and gratitude to Griggs University."

Begun in early 2008, the class of 90 M.B.A. students at Vietnam National University in Hanoi took their classes in English, taught by local instructors and using distance education materials prepared by Griggs. More than 50 percent of the coursework was done online through the Griggs Web site at the National University in Hanoi.

Griggs president Donald Sahly and his staff supply the curriculum and approve the contract teaching staff, which include the head of a consulting company who spent six years on the New York Stock Exchange, as well as an Australian lawyer and lecturer who freelances for three colleges. The host university provides classroom space and hires the approved professors.

Although the teachers are not Adventist and Griggs' M.B.A. classes aren't taught in a distinctly Christian environment, Sahly said that through the Griggs curriculum and periodic lectures by the Griggs staff, students are exposed to the philosophy that drives Christian education. Sahly said students also learn to be motivated by service.

For students "raised on evolution and atheism," he says, such concepts stir questions. The students may not be signing up in droves for Bible classes, but every question they ask is a wedge to a new worldview, Sahly said at the time.

The graduates who attended the Silver Spring ceremony heard a reinforcement of that message from Ella Smith Simmons, a veteran U.S. educator who is now a general vice president of the Seventh-day Adventist world church and who also chairs the Griggs board.

"Knowledge becomes relevant only when it is translated into wise actions," Simmons said. ●

General Conference Session

Official notice is hereby given that the fifty-ninth Session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held June 23 to July 3, 2010, in Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Georgia. The first meeting will begin at 14:30 hours, June 23, 2010. All duly accredited delegates are urged to be present at that time.

—JAN PAULSEN, *General Conference president*;
MATTHEW A BEDIAKO, *General Conference secretary*.

WINDOW

Into Liberia

By ERKKI O. HAAPASALO,
president, West Africa Union Mission



LIBERIA

Capital:	Monrovia
Official language:	English
Religion:	Christian, 40%; Muslim, 20%; indigenous beliefs, 40%
Population:	3,441,790
Adventist membership:	23,484
Adventist to population ratio:	1:147
Church growth in the last year:	2.53%

Liberia was founded by freed slaves from the United States in 1822. The oldest republic in Africa, it was declared an independent country in 1847. For decades, Liberia was known as one of the most well-to-do countries in the subcontinent due to natural resources that contributed to the economic development of the country.

However, from 1980 to 2003 23 years of intermittent civil war devastated the infrastructure and impoverished the nation. Despite these hindrances, Liberia is slowly recovering and has of late experienced economic growth.

With the inauguration of the first democratically elected president in decades a new chapter is being written. Since 2006, when President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the first woman president in Africa, took office, many reforms initiated by her government have started to bear fruit. However, outside the capital city of Monrovia most of the country still lacks electricity and running water. The unemployment rate has been as high as 85 percent.

Adventists in Liberia

The first Seventh-day Adventist in Liberia was the American missionary Hannah More, whose 1863 letters to the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* document that she had also taught others the faith. Adventist pioneer Stephen Haskell confirmed that she helped to found several Sabbathkeeping Adventist groups on the west coast of Africa between 1863 and 1866, when she returned to America. What became of these early groups of believers is unclear, though some contact was sustained for a while. In 1926 the European Division sent missionaries to Liberia who established the first formal mission, consisting of a school, church, and dispensary.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Liberia now has a membership of nearly 24,500, worshipping in 103 churches and companies. In the capital, Monrovia, 13 organized churches and eight companies meet weekly for services. The Liberia Mission operates six secondary schools. One of them, Konola Academy, is a boarding school with about 350 students. In addition,

21 primary schools educate more than 8,000 students.

The church also operates Cooper Memorial Hospital in Monrovia. Before the political upheaval of the 1980s and 1990s it was one of the flagship hospitals in the country. In an audience with a Seventh-day Adventist delegation soon after her inauguration in 2006, President Johnson-Sirleaf appealed to the church to upgrade the hospital to the standard of its former days. This year the hospital was incorporated into the Adventist Health International (AHI) network and with this new development improvement in the services and facilities is expected. The eye clinic connected with the hospital opened in 2004 and provides some of the best ophthalmologic services in the country, including cataract and other surgeries.

Hard economic times in the country have affected the life of the church. Many members are without work. However, things are improving and we are of good courage. Our Lord has promised to be with us until the end of time.

WORLD VISTA



General Conference president Pastor Jan Paulsen Church preached the Sabbath sermon October 10 to a congregation of church leaders from around the world attending Annual Council meetings at the Adventist world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States. Following is an adaptation of his message.

“For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

*“So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God” (2 Cor. 5:14-20).**

promise, without hope” “have been brought near through the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:12, 13). He “reconciled us to himself through Christ.” The barriers are gone. The ticket for our homeward journey has been bought. We can come home!

Therefore, says Paul, because God has repaired the relationship between heaven and humanity, this also impacts our relationship with other people. Salvation *always* affects relationships. We see people differently. We relate to them differently. In God’s family, we don’t value people on the basis of wealth, position, status, education, race, gender, color of skin, language, culture, or dietary habits. The cross of Christ is the great equalizer that levels all of us. Regardless of who we are, or where we come from, we each have the same value in God’s eyes, and this overriding reality shapes all our relationships.

We are here together as church leaders from around the world and so it is right that we take a few moments to consider how this new reality—this reconciliation reality—plays out in the various regions we represent.

How does your reconciled community relate to the reality of a shrinking world, where people by the millions are on the move? They leave their homelands carrying with them as much of their culture as is portable. How do

Ambassadors of the GOSPEL

Fulfilling Christ’s commission means taking

A Defining Act

The cross of Christ always loomed large in Paul’s thinking; whenever he spoke of salvation, the cross was the centerpiece. So Paul starts his presentation here in 2 Corinthians 5 by stating that *in Christ’s death on the cross the sin problem is essentially fixed*. Through the cross, God has done everything He can for our redemption. (I say “everything He can,” for there is also the matter of our acceptance of His offer; that is a decision only we can make.)

With this one act, this defining moment in history, God bridged the gulf of alienation that sin had created. We were “dead in our trespasses and sins,” but now we are “alive in Christ.” We, who “were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the

we receive them? Are we uncomfortable with the style and content of their worship? Do we see them as intruders? Or is the culture of our local churches warm and accepting, with doors wide open to all who would come?

How does your reconciled community use the gifts of its women and its young people? Are we entrusting them with leadership responsibilities? I appeal to you as leaders to look at this again. We have large segments of our spiritual family that need to be “brought in from the cold.” I am sensitive to the fact that culture and local conventions must be respected, and there are great differences in this around the world, but do we have it right? I think not.

How does your reconciled community relate to the scholars in our institutions of higher learning? They teach and counsel

our youth. They seek to discover and clarify truth, and in their quest for truth they will sometimes articulate positions and findings that as a church we think are misguided; and we will address that. But we will not walk away from them, nor do I want them to walk away from the church. If there are aspects of our identity that should be adjusted—fine; we'll talk about that. We will test them by Scripture and the writings of our prophet. But we must talk—openly, respectfully, and caringly. Then we must journey forward together, bonded by the ministry of reconciliation in which we share.

The cross of Christ is the catalyst that transforms relationships, that helps us see each other differently, that removes barriers that divide believers and are obstacles on our journey. Salvation always affects relationships!

Our Assignment

It is against this backdrop, this new reality, that God says: “Therefore, since I have made this arrangement, I have an assignment for you. I want you to be *ambassadors of reconciliation* for Me!” (see 2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 6:20).

What does Paul mean by describing himself as an *ambassador*?

He chooses a word (*presbeuein*) whose Latin counterpart (*legatus*) was well known in the Roman world. This person was the Roman emperor's personal representative in the Eastern Provinces, directly commissioned by the emperor. But he carried another interesting function. When a territory was conquered, the ambassador accompanied the victorious general and arranged the terms of peace for the vanquished people,

himself—a foreigner, whose true home was in another place; an ambassador, with the honor of Christ on his shoulders.

Compelled to Preach ... What?

The compulsion Paul had to preach the gospel—to be obedient to this ambassadorial assignment—cannot be overstated. Listen to his own words: “Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the message of the cross ... is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:17, 18). “I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (2:2); and “When I preach the gospel ... I am compelled to preach. *Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!*” (1 Cor. 9:16).

What thoughts pass through Paul's mind as he reflects on this assignment, as he considers his role as “ambassador,” sent out to communicate a message of reconciliation? What is the gospel he must proclaim? What elements must come out forcefully in his preaching?

The answers to these questions have importance for us as a church. What are the values and messages that we, as ambassadors of God, must preach?

Let me be absolutely clear: Seventh-day Adventists have been entrusted with a broad range of truth-filled messages we will proclaim. We will preach the biblical prophecies of Daniel and Revelation; we will preach the sanctity of the Sabbath; we will preach the health message; we will preach and present the moral and ethical values that define the Christian life; and, yes, we will preach about Creation.

But I am led back to Paul's description of his assignment—his keen awareness that God had committed to him a sacred message of reconciliation.

As true and loyal ambassadors, the first thing we must tell the world of unbelief is that *God has reconciled humanity to Himself by the death of Jesus Christ!* Without this, our ambassadorial assignment has lost its meaning and we have failed.

There are four core elements to this message of reconciliation—the “gospel”—with which we've been entrusted.

1. There's Only One Way

Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the One promised by the Old Testament prophets, the One for whom they “searched intently and with the greatest care” (1 Peter 1:10). He is the one man “accredited by God” (Acts. 2:22), and when it comes to salvation, He is the only way. Apart from Jesus Christ, God has no other way of saving us. In a world of many religions, is that exclusive? Arrogant? Maybe, but it is the truth.

This is the beginning of the gospel. It means that without Jesus Christ there is no future. Today, this is what

seriously our responsibilities.

determined boundaries, and drew up the constitutional provisions. In a sense, the ambassador was responsible for bringing people into the family of the Roman Empire. So Paul thinks of himself as a representative of God, who presents the terms by which people may become citizens of God's kingdom and members of the royal family of God.

The implications of this are breathtaking: *God is making His appeal through us!* Preaching the gospel is not talking about God; it is God talking through us, saying, “Come, be reconciled to Me. Come home!” Preaching the gospel is about letting people hear this invitation clearly, unambiguously.


A Christian, like an ambassador, functions away from home—in a sense, in a foreign land. The honor of his country is in the ambassador's hands. That is also how Paul saw

WORLD VISTA

the unbeliever needs to know. Our own youth must hear this preached strongly in our churches and our schools. They can study, choose a profession, marry, and start a family, but, alas, without Jesus Christ, there is no future for them. “It is all chasing the wind.”

The first point of the gospel is simply this: The alienation between God and humanity has been resolved by the death of God’s Son. He died for us so that we might live with Him (1 Thess. 5:10).

What place does the gospel have on your personal agenda?



2. Death to Death

Christ did not stay in the grave as we do. His death signaled “death to death” (see 1 Cor. 15:26). Do we realize the significance of this? Without Christ’s resurrection our faith is meaningless and our preaching is useless (1 Cor. 15:14). Paul writes: “I want to know Christ, and I mean by that to know the power of His resurrection” (see Phil. 3:10). The knowledge of which Paul is speaking is not merely an intellectual knowledge. He is talking about something very personal. The word he uses for “to know” indicates the closest and most intimate knowledge of another person. And, to Paul, the first and foremost expression of this personal knowledge of Christ is to “know the power of His resurrection.”

Without the resurrection of Jesus, death would have been, for each one of us, a never-ending darkness. His resurrection is the light at the end of the tunnel. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is so much a part of the gospel that without it there is no gospel.

3. A Reconciling Ministry

Furthermore, the gospel says, consider what happened to Christ after He rose from death. Listen to Peter again: We are saved by the “resurrection of Jesus Christ who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand” (1 Peter 3:21, 22). Again, in Peter’s powerful sermon on the day of Pentecost: “We are all witnesses to the fact that God has raised Him to life, and now He is exalted to the right hand of God” (see Acts 2:32, 33); and there He is involved in an ongoing ministry of reconciliation. This is the point of the letter to the Hebrews. Without this ministry we cannot effectively be set free from our past, our present, or the impending destruction of the future. This ministry of reconciliation

gives us access to the “power of His resurrection.”

This is not speculation, it is simply the truth! The doctrine of the intercessory ministry of Christ, with all that that entails, is very much at the heart of the gospel and should be held high and asserted boldly by all who believe.

4. The Certainty of His Return

We cannot be believers in the New Testament sense of the term without believing in the second coming of Christ. “Men of Galilee: Why do you stand gazing into empty space? He will come again” (see Acts 1:11). Without the doctrine of the second coming, we are all left standing there gazing into empty space.

The words in 2 Peter 3 are familiar to us, but also ominous. The apostle says that belief in the Second Coming is something that, since the first generation of believers, has been the object of mockery by the cynics. The cynics are here, among us. Every generation has them.

Every element of the gospel belongs to the world of miracles—they’re displays of God’s unfathomable creative power: Christ’s resurrection and ascension, His intercessory ministry in heaven today, His return, our own resurrection, the earth made new.

But miracles have no place in the world of cynics and scoffers. The only reality they accept is that which can be tested, and for which there is a history. Scoffers come into the church and cause uneasiness among believers by appearing to be intellectuals, well-read, and ever so clever. Peter says that the problem with these scoffers is that they “deliberately forget”—in fact, they choose to deny—the almightiness of the Creator who caused the earth to be formed. But, says Peter, you my dear friends “are not to forget” (2 Peter 3:5, 8).

Faith cannot be suspended until it has gained respectability. Faith accepts the truth as it comes to us from Scripture. Faith disappears the moment it has to qualify itself by that which is purely intellectual.

Christ’s Ambassadors

This is the gospel of Christ! This is the message of reconciliation we’ve been called to preach. Communicating this gospel must be the first priority of every Seventh-day Adventist congregation and every believer.

What place does the gospel have on your personal agenda? Is it still important to you? Is it the heartbeat of your Christian life?

I don’t care what accolade or honor they bestow on me, “Woe unto me if I do not preach the gospel,” for that is my ambassadorial assignment. ●

*Unless otherwise noted, all Bible texts in this article are from the New International Version (NIV).



Beating the Flu

Can you give an update on the swine flu situation?

Things are moving so quickly with this situation that by the time our response gets to press, some aspects may have changed. But here is our update as of press time.

The H1N1 flu virus is a form of influenza that infected pigs, but underwent a slight change, making it capable of infecting humans. The letters H and N are codes for antigenic markers on the virus, and H1N1 indicates subcategories. Some previous epidemics have had either an H or an N component, so older people are more likely to have met these markers before and have some elements of immunity. The current strain seems to have caused more problems for younger people, and especially pregnant women.

The severity of the disease caused by H1N1 appears to be less than that of the 1918 pandemic, and more of the order of the 1957 outbreak.

The major factor in controlling a pandemic is the development of a vaccine. The methodology utilized will likely be the same as that in producing seasonal influenza vaccines, though newer technologies are being studied. The World Health Organization (WHO) noted that a vaccine will probably not be ready for general distribution until sometime this fall.

We have seen a proliferation in the emotional rhetoric of the antivaccine lobby, even one paper suggesting the WHO was going to make the vaccine mandatory in 194 countries at “gunpoint.” Such talk is ridiculous.

The availability may be such that it will be difficult to obtain the vaccination, even should you wish to get it.

In the meantime, we would do well to follow basic preventive measures, such as:

1. Stay home if you have a respiratory infection.
2. Wash your hands frequently, especially after sneezing or coughing into them.
3. Carefully dispose of tissues used to smother a sneeze or cough.
4. Reduce kissing, hugging, and close contact with others in crowded settings. And again, use hand sanitation frequently.

These simple measures will help to protect you and reduce the risks of transmission. ●



Eat Your Vegetables

My daughter-in-law doesn't seem to recognize the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables for herself or her family. How can I get her to use them?

MELIHA GOJAK
Many factors influence the use of different foodstuffs. Such factors transcend mere statements as to relative benefits. The determinants of health extend into an individual's background, the community and region where they live, and perceptions.

An interesting study in North Carolina, United States, that surveyed more than 2,479 adults—many of whom were overweight—found a complex web of underpinning beliefs and behaviors. Barriers to eating fruits and vegetables include food preferences perhaps built up in childhood, fatigue of taste buds for certain foods, stress, and a lack

of meal planning. A person's health status, age, or financial capability also may affect the daily ideal consumption of five or more fruits and vegetables a day.

It helps if home gardens or low-cost foods at farm stands are available, and childhood exposure to fruits and vegetables is very important.

If you find it difficult to influence your daughter-in-law, be aware that the resistance also could be a result of your efforts to change her habits or a perception of “interference.” Instead, when the grandchildren come to your house, make “fantastic” fruit delights in order to entice them to eat delicious

berries, fruits, and veggies. Always buy good quality produce, and make the dishes *palatable*. Example rather than promotion is more persuasive. ●



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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 General Conference Health Ministries Department.

*“The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea” (Ps. 93:4).**

“Maybe no one should be out there in surge that is as high as an eight-story building and breaks every 20 seconds with a force of a Union Pacific train.... Big-wave surfing is not about playing safe. It’s about the thrill of taming that killer wave.”

This statement from Terry McCarthy, a surfer in Waikiki, Hawaii,

(U.S.A.) reminds me of my long and happy career as an evangelist, when my wife and I held more than 100 campaigns and saw many baptized, pledging to embark on the thrilling adventure of “taming that killer wave” of sin to follow Christ.

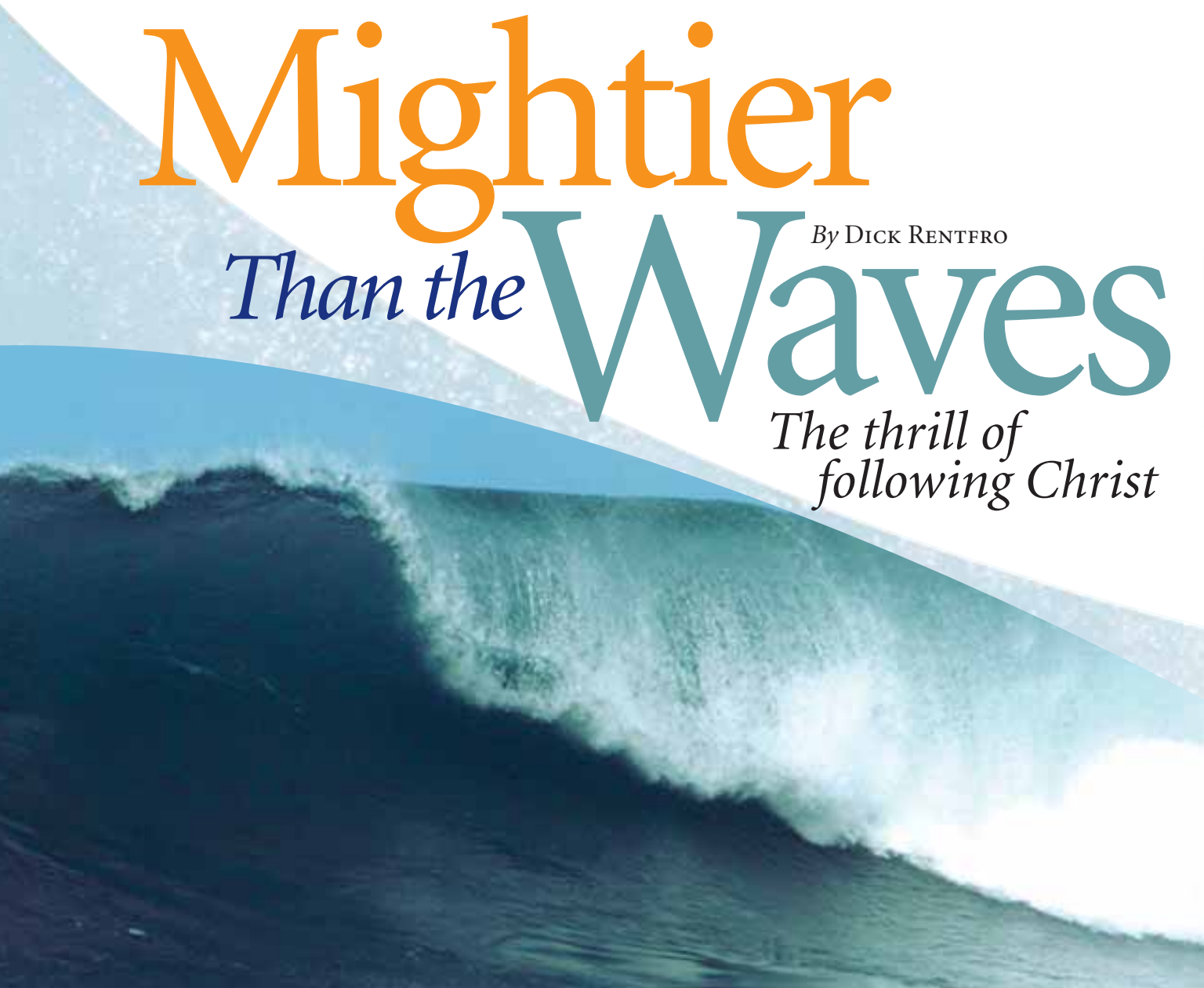
A commitment to Jesus Christ involves the constant threat of danger, but believers embrace the challenge, knowing that they are never beyond the care of a loving heavenly Father. The waves will not overwhelm life’s surfer.

Pete Cabrinha, a 42-year-old experienced surfer, had ridden killer waves before, but this time, as he surfed down the face of a giant swell rolling in over the notorious Jaws Reef off Maui that January day, he couldn’t find the bottom. The wave “was growing in front of me and growing behind me, so it felt like I wasn’t getting anywhere,” he recalls. He had already seen 10 horrific wipeouts that morning. Then, as Cabrinha gained speed going down

Mightier Than the Waves

By DICK RENTFRO

*The thrill of
following Christ*



the wave, its breaking lip closed in fast from behind. People watched from the shore and shouted, “Go, Pete, go!” as he sped ahead of the white water.

When he reached calm water, another surfer told him it was the biggest wave he had ever seen. After the photos of the ride became available, they showed a wave of 70 feet, the highest ever measured. I am told surfers have set a goal to find and ride a 100-foot wave.

Living on the Edge

In 2001 Billabong, an Australian surfing company, set up the Billabong Odyssey, a fund to pay for surfers to travel anywhere in the world in pursuit of a 100-foot wave. Billabong will award \$250,000 to the first surfer who conquers one. “Generated by a perfect storm far out to sea,” says McCarthy, “traveling faster than 40 mph and breaking with

I was a first-year ministerial intern, my wife Rose let me borrow the \$70 needed for the lessons. My first solo trip was the nearest thing in my life to “living on the edge.”

Years later, I took up downhill skiing at the age of 63, conquered the bunny hill and later more challenging slopes. From time to time I experienced spills. Every fall taught me a lesson about how to ski better. I skied for 10 years until my doctor suggested I stop for health reasons. Sadly this ended another era of adventure. There is a rush descending the mountain with snow flying and the wind in your face.

The Christian life, too, is filled with adventure and the lure to experience “more of Thee, O God.” There is a thrilling excitement in a daily commitment to Jesus Christ, a daily renewal of the new birth and lifetime work of sanctification. We all

life also includes spills. In my youth I went over “fool’s hill,” and later, while a pastor in my early thirties, my past troubled me on occasion. I went so far as to request a quiet rebaptism in a lake by my associate. As I look back, I wonder if that was the right thing to do, as rebaptism can become like a door swinging on a pair of hinges. I’m sure I will take more spills before I reach heaven. We all will.

The world challenges our faith with its version of the 100-foot wave as we live on the edge with Christ. We can expect to face unprecedented waves as we near the shores of glory. Situations will arise to challenge our trust commitment, but with Jesus and His Holy Spirit working in us, we will stay on top.

The close of probation? Bring on that mighty wave! Why? Then we shall be safe in Christ. The close of probation is not something made up to frighten

A commitment to Jesus Christ involves the constant threat of danger, but believers embrace the challenge knowing that they are never beyond the care of a loving heavenly Father.

an earthshaking force that would be heard several miles back from the beach, a 100-foot wave would probably kill anyone who fell off it.”

It amazes me that people would attack such a ponderous goal for the sport of it. How is this like the Christian life? I’m not encouraging God’s children to take up dangerous sports, but I can understand the attraction for adventurous hobbies. Even former U.S. president George H. W. Bush celebrated his 85th birthday by jumping out of an airplane.

I remember my mother would not permit me to take flying lessons that I wanted so much. Then later, when

go through faith adventures where we think we are living on the edge and have the thrill of knowing Jesus is there to help and keep us safe.

Thrills and Spills

I have found the Christian life, with a heaven to gain and hell to shun, the greatest adventure known to humans. But defeat was never in my thinking, because with Jesus we are winners every time. After being out of the limelight of public evangelism for more than 25 years, I still hear from people who were part of that adventure.

The adventure of the Christian

naughty children. Yes, God’s people will be tested, but then translated and reunited with loved ones. God says, “They shall be mine . . . in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him” (Mal. 3:17).

Bless that day! 

*Bible texts in this article are taken from the King James Version.



Dick Rentfro is a retired pastor living in Thorp, Washington, U.S.A.



The FREE of FOR

She looked into my eyes, and with that slight smile she usually had on her face, even while talking, she said, “I’m dying; please take care of my children.”

None of us believed her. We didn’t want to believe her. It was impossible. Such a thing had never happened among us. We were a gathering of pastors’ wives. We had just ended a weekend retreat that was spiritually enriching. God’s presence had been so obvious. This couldn’t be happening.

Late Sunday morning we were driving back home in the bus a local Adventist church had graciously loaned to us. We all saw the oncoming car, swerving a little out of its lane. But it had returned to its lane. *No big deal*, I thought. But just as I was commenting to the person next to me, “I wonder why that car is swaying like that?”—unexpectedly it came almost alongside our bus, lost control completely, and headed straight for us. Our own driver tried to swerve off the road to avoid it, but it was too late. The seemingly impossible happened.

When the dust settled, everything had changed. Cuts, bruises, and broken bones were everywhere. And there was Dele, lying there looking at me. About 15 minutes earlier

she had reminded me to fasten my seatbelt. I was sitting at the front of the bus, next to the driver. There were no seatbelts where the others were sitting. I had done as Dele suggested. Because of that thoughtful reminder, instead of almost certainly being killed because of where I was sitting, I escaped any serious injury. Apart from a couple of minor bruises, the only mark I had was on my neck; it was the mark of the seatbelt, which had stopped me from flying through the window.

I touched Dele’s hand; she said she didn’t feel a thing. “There’s no life in me,” she said. We told her to stop talking like that. “Be positive,” we chorused. “You shall not die but live—that’s what the Bible says.” She believed us, and started praying. She asked God to spare her life. “Lord, my children are so young,” she prayed. But by Monday morning, she was dead.

Mercies of God

My mind did a quick flashback. I recalled the testimony of that Friday night—the first prayer session at the retreat, which she and another woman were coordinating. I can still see her standing before us. She felt inspired to talk to us about forgiveness. She made her own confession and used it to admonish us. She admitted that she had an uncle whom she had never been able to forgive because of the terrible things he had done to her father. She said she even had vowed not to attend his funeral. But the Lord convicted her heart, and as she was standing before us, she forgave him. Her testimony touched us. Two or three other



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EDOM GIVENESS

*It was offering
forgiveness that
gave her peace.*

By ABIDEMI OYINLOYE

women, one after the other, stood up and made their own confessions.

“Because of what you have said, we too will forgive; we will let go,” the women declared.

I did not fully realize then the significance of what God had done that Friday evening until the following Monday night, when, while trying to comfort Dele’s husband, I recounted to him the events of that testimony service.

“Praise the Lord,” he said, and explained that this issue had been weighing heavily on his heart. It was the main cause of his regret for not being at Dele’s bedside before she died. He knew about the uncle. Yes, he was truly a wicked man, her husband admitted, but he had been begging her for years to just let go of her anger. She told him she couldn’t. The last time she and her husband had talked about it was six months before, and she was still bitter then. *Maybe if I had been there at her bedside, he thought, I could have tried again to persuade her to forgive the man. Dele was such a wonderful woman. So many people—both family and friends—had benefited from her warm heart and generosity. Would this one thing stand between her and God?*

No, God said. That Friday night He prepared her for what was going to happen. Without any coercion—and not when she was on her deathbed—she confessed that she had given the situation to God and had forgiven her uncle. Our wonderful Lord granted her this opportunity to forgive. Then He said, “Come, rest awhile.”

What is God telling you to do right now? Listen, and obey. He could be preparing you for eternity. ●

Promises to Claim*

“No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord. ‘For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more’” (Jer. 31:34).

“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you” (Matt. 6:14).

“Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven” (Luke 6:37).

“Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do” (Col. 3:12, 13).

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

*Taken from the New King James Version of the Bible

LISA BEARDSLEY



GC ARCHIVES



One Family, Two Legacies

By
MARK A.
KELLNER

David Caldwell Babcock and Babcock University



LISA BEARDSLEY

Opposite page: Barbara Babcock.
COMMUNITY LEADERS: Jan Paulsen, Adventist world president, stands with several chiefs of Ilishan-Renao, where Babcock University is located.

The entry in the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* is, of necessity, concise:

“BABCOCK, DAVID CALDWELL (1854-1932). Conference administrator and missionary. He was educated at Battle Creek College and was president of the West Virginia Conference (1892-1895) and the Virginia Conference (1897-1899). He directed the British Guiana Mission (1900-1905) and the British West African Mission (1905-1914); he opened up Seventh-day Adventist work in Nigeria (1914-1917).

Babcock, who had worked in Sierra Leone since 1905, arrived in Lagos. He was accompanied by two Sierra Leone workers, R. P. Dauphin and S. Morgue. Leaving his family at Lagos, he made a tour northward as far as Jebba, on the Niger River about 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) from the coast. Babcock selected a mission site at Erunmu, 20 kilometers (12 miles) north of Ibadan, capital of the Western Region. One of the young men who had come with Babcock from Sierra Leone learned the Yoruba language so quickly that within five months he

includes a son, also named David Caldwell Babcock, who as an infant survived that infamous boat trip, and also grew up to be a renowned organist and musician, a successful insurance executive, and a faithful Seventh-day Adventist throughout his life. One of the younger David Babcock’s daughters, Barbara, has served in children’s ministries for the North American Division, and today is the Pacific Union coordinator for Adventist Single Adult Ministries, reaching one of the church’s largest-



BARBARA BABCOCK

RAY DABROWSKI



In 1917, while en route to England seeking treatment for sleeping sickness, he was rescued [after] the ship was torpedoed. In 1919 he was sent to the Virgin Islands for ministerial work, and again to British Guiana as president of the conference (1925). Two years later ill health forced his return to America.”¹

Of course, the 105 words don’t tell the whole story; probing further within the *Encyclopedia’s* depths, one finds this about Babcock’s pioneering work in Nigeria:

“Seventh-day Adventist missions in Nigeria began in 1914, when D. C.

opened a school near Lalupon. The missionaries’ language instructor, son of a local chief, soon began to keep the Sabbath. Before the end of 1914 three schools were in operation and seven converts were reported.

“In 1917 Babcock, stricken with ill health, was compelled to leave for England with his family. On the way they narrowly escaped death when their ship was torpedoed and sunk.”²

Leaving a Legacy

But, still, not even this tells the complete story: Babcock’s legacy

growing membership segments.

Oh, and there’s the matter of this church-owned tertiary institution: Nigeria’s Babcock University, founded in 1959 as Adventist College of West Africa (ACWA), later dubbed the Adventist Seminary of West Africa. The school boasts some famous alumni: world



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church executive secretary Matthew Bediako is a graduate, and Jan Paulsen, the General Conference's president, was a onetime principal there.

According to Barbara Babcock, Adventist Church leaders in Nigeria formed a committee to ponder the name for the newly recognized university.

Local leaders "formed a committee about 11 years ago when they were becoming a university," Barbara Babcock, who lives in Loma Linda, California, said in an interview. "They all sat around, looked at each other, and said, 'Why are we even discussing

in 1914,'" Makinde explained in an interview with *Adventist World* during a recent visit to Silver Spring, Maryland.

According to Makinde, "1914 was very significant for Nigeria, because 1914 was the very year that the name *Nigeria* came into existence. There was no country called Nigeria before 1914. That is when the British brought two different territories that they ruled together and formed Nigeria, so we always tell the story that if you want to know what will happen to Nigeria, then comes Babcock. Because in 1914 David Babcock arrived, and Nigeria was born."

did things like Christ did; he made a difference in people's lives."

Making a Difference

And, making a difference in the lives of people seems to be a hallmark for the namesake of David Caldwell Babcock; the 6,000-student school is having an impact in West Africa. (Babcock University is one of the larger Seventh-day Adventist campuses in the world, rivaling similar large enrollments at Sahmyook University in Korea, and Northern Caribbean University in Jamaica. The



Left to right: GRADUATION EXERCISES: Pastor Jan Paulsen speaks at the 2009 baccalaureate service at Babcock University. University administrators and their guests process to commencement exercises.



PHOTOS BY RAY DABROWSKI

this?' One person was pivotal, and that was David Caldwell Babcock."

J. A. Kayode Makinde, current president and vice chancellor of Babcock University, confirms the family's account.

"The church leaders were searching to capture a title, a name for the university which would actually personify the spirit of adventure, the spirit of self-sacrifice, the spirit of total commitment to mission, and almost unanimously everyone said, 'Look here, David Caldwell Babcock was the missionary that came to West Africa

Ironically, Barbara Babcock said, it's not likely her grandfather would have welcomed the attention! Barbara never met him—her grandfather died when her late father was only 15 years old—but she and her older sister did talk with her grandmother, Babcock's third wife (his previous wives had passed away in the mission field). And, from what she heard, the elder Babcock was not one who sought attention.

"He would not want to have his name associated with all these things, but he was just dedicated to making a difference for God," Babcock said. "He

Central Adventist University of São Paulo, Brazil, has approximately 6,900 students in its college-level programs, and another 4,200 in elementary and academy schools, spread across three regional campuses; Babcock has an additional 1,000 students in precollege classrooms, Makinde said.)

"I don't know how to describe it except to say this is God at work," Makinde said. "The mission of Babcock University is really not just to set a standard; it is to be the standard. Someone else can [claim] the standard, but [we aim] to become

the standard by which excellence is defined in every sphere of humankind development that we engage in. And that is not just an empty slogan. Right now, in every area in which the country has given up in failure, Babcock has established a record.”

Makinde added: “At the last graduation, which was the tenth of the university itself, we had Pastor Paulsen in attendance and we had to invite the president of the country, the past president of the country, our own chairman of the federal reserve, the central bank governor was there, and the immediate past president of the central bank, and minister of health was there, and we had our [General Conference] president visit with the presidency in Nigeria.” (To read about Paulsen’s visit, see “NIGERIA: Paulsen Returns to Former Appointment, Observes School Growth,” *Adventist World*, August 2009.)

The university president noted: “Even the past president of Nigeria had his son come to Babcock. That’s the level: the rich, the poor, the powerful, the peasants—everybody meets at Babcock. It’s actually a melting pot. We try as much as possible to prevent it from being a boiling pot.”

Along with national recognition, Babcock University is drawing thousands of non-Adventist students, some of whom leave the school with more than a degree. In this way, Babcock is in sync with a similar outreach program at church-owned Sahmyook University in Seoul, Republic of Korea, where non-Adventist students are also ministered to and many are evangelized (see “Fishing for Souls,” *Adventist World*, March 2009).

“We don’t require you to be a Seventh-day Adventist to be admitted into Babcock University, but when you come in you need to be comfortable with the environment on campus, with the standards and policies and qualities and everything that is in there,” Makinde explained. “You need to show that you will benefit from what we have to offer.”

Makinde added: “At the end of this

[past] school year we baptized about 1,000 students . . . our strategy goal is to come in with 30 percent enrolled Adventists and 70 percent non-Adventists and to graduate 70 percent Adventists as opposed to 30 percent.”

Such evangelism strategies—recently, Adventist televangelist Mark Finley conducted a campaign on the Babcock campus—might lead to issues with the non-Adventist parents of students who are newly minted church members. Do problems arise from these baptisms?

“Yes,” Makinde replied. “The major issue that it creates is that most of the time the parents notice a transformation in the behavior of their children—their character and everything. Parents come calling, ‘What have you done to my child? How did you get him to do this? I have tried and tried. There isn’t anything I haven’t tried. It just never worked. How did you do it?’”

He continued: “Some of the parents are coming in to be baptized. So does it create issues? Yes, it creates issues, but not negative issues. We have never had a single instance of a parent coming to the campus to protest. Not one.”

An International Reputation

But the business of Babcock remains education; its impact, like that of its missionary namesake, is being felt throughout Nigeria.

Jan Paulsen, a onetime principal, took note of the school’s accomplishments during an August 15, 2009, forum with educators at church-owned Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan.


“Babcock University has gone through a phenomenal growth over the last 10 years, from a few hundred to . . . 6,000-plus, and it’s become, if you have not been on the campus in the last year or two, it’s almost a city by itself,” Paulsen noted.

This, in turn, has led to expectations from the national government, the community, and area Adventists that the school will grow and expand its programs.

“They built a new hospital on campus with about 100 beds, and that is to be expanded because they have approached both the government and the General Conference about setting up a new school of health sciences on the campus, the centerpiece of which will be a new school of medicine to train doctors,” Paulsen said. “Both the government and the General Conference have said yes, OK, that is a worthy objective.” The proposal is expected to undergo the regular review process of the world church’s International Board of Education and the Adventist Accrediting Association before those objectives are realized.

According to Makinde, Babcock “is going to take off with three schools: a school of medicine, a school of nursing, and a school of public and allied health. And then as we are developing more we will add a pharmacy and dentistry. We last year launched a \$250 million [capital] campaign and we are doing very well. We have already gotten more than 25 percent. In terms of grants and donations and commitments and over a four-year period, which is to really fund this project and create an endowment for us, that will make this project sustainable.”

He added: “Jesus went teaching, preaching, and healing, and if ever there is a continent, Africa is a continent that needs a lot of healing. The gospel commission is not effective unless it comes with the healing balm from Gilead, here for the church.”

In a way, Makinde’s comments bring the story of David Caldwell Babcock full circle: a man who came to help, serve, and, yes, heal those in need. Though his time in Africa was short, Pastor Babcock’s work made an impression that resonated more than 80 years later when the university was named in his honor. From one family’s determination to serve, a nation—and an entire region—is being reached. 

¹“Babcock, David Caldwell,” *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1996).

²See under “Nigeria,” *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*.



NUMBER 12

Church, Anyone?

By CHANTAL J. KLINGBEIL *Why busy moderns (and postmoderns) still need the church*

Church was a good place for me as a child, maybe a little boring at times, but essentially good. Then my greatly admired junior Sabbath school teacher ran off with another man, after having taught all that good stuff about happy marriages. Over the years I became cynical. The church was not what it should be. The church was full of hypocrites. The church—wait a minute. Who or what is this nameless church? The Seventh-day Adventist Church consists of millions of individual faces. The church consists of bored, active, loving, selfish, sincere, hypocritical, giving, hurting, confused, wise, worn-out, fragile, insensitive, lazy, hardworking, tactful, hopeful, abused, critical, humble individuals. People, every bit as human as I am. Every bit as human as you are. We are the church.

God’s Miracle Throughout History

So what holds together millions of individuals, with different skin colors, different life expectations, different languages, different ideas, different cultures? Nothing short of a miracle! The miracle has a name—Jesus. The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

God has always specialized in the impossible (Matt. 19:26). We can trace our spiritual roots back to an impossible promise given to a childless old man (Gen.

12:1-3). God made the impossible possible and gave Abraham plenty of descendents. He then brought the whole motley bunch out of slavery. The “church in the wilderness” (Acts 7:38) had the Sea of Red open for them, breakfast arrive in front of their tents, water fountains come from rocks. They weren’t perfect: they had moaners, idolaters, thieves, gluttons, and leader-bashers among them. But God quietly set about purifying and cleansing—individually and corporately. God was calling His church to experience His salvation personally and extend the invitation to others (Isa. 56:7). Some responded positively. Some were always talking back to God. God had the final Word—He was called Jesus (John 1:1-3).

In Jesus God began another impossible task. Jesus began training a handful of bickering disciples. Twelve men turned the then-known world upside down for God. Satan tried to stamp out the fledgling church with persecution. God did the impossible. The church went global. Next Satan tried smothering Christ’s vital lifeblood within the church by introducing human teachings. The wildfire of the Reformation called the church back to her true Head. But complacency soon resurfaced. And once again God did the impossible. He called a small group of young people (practically all under the age of 30). He helped them rediscover special truths and gave them gifts and a big job. And that’s where you and I and millions of other Seventh-day Adventists come in. We are part of the miracle God performed through our pioneers.



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Metaphor 1: The Body

God has always had His ideals for His church. The Old and New Testaments paint these ideals in metaphoric

language. Here are four of my favorites, just to whet our spiritual appetites. The first is the rather obvious metaphor of the church as a body (1 Cor. 12:12-27). I find it particularly relevant, seeing that each of us has invariably caught a finger in a door and felt our stomachs knot as we held the injured finger close and howled in pain. As part of the body of Christ, I am intricately connected to you. Your pain and loss is directly or indirectly my pain and loss. I need to be more sensitive toward you. We need to stick together; for without you I won't be going anywhere.

Metaphor 2: The Building

I've often thought of churches as being fairly static, stationary buildings, which perhaps get refurbished every 10 years. Paul, however, speaks of the church as being a temple made up of living stones (1 Cor. 3:9-17). In some parts of the world I've caught a glimpse of "living" temples. Here the membership greatly outgrows the buildings or the available funds. On first visiting a church you may find 40 members worshipping on a dirt floor with wooden planks for pews and reed mats for walls and roof. Within six months the foundations have been dug and the membership has grown to 60. Three months later, two walls are up and a cement floor has been laid and the membership is up to 70. Six months later the baptistery is in, the other two walls are up and the membership is up to 100. A year later the roof is on, there are wooden benches, and membership has reached 150. Finer finishings will have to wait, however, as the church has by now started a company that worships on a dirt floor with reed mats for walls and extra building funds will have to go into helping the new company. I think Paul is referring to these temples on the move, each wall supporting the other. You and I, as living stones in this church, can become a dynamic landmark for Christ.

Metaphor 3: The Bride

The third metaphor involves a personal confession. I love weddings. There is just something so appealing about all those beautiful flower arrangements. Then there is the

bride (2 Cor 11:2); any plain Jane becomes a beauty, arrayed in white, and glowing with happiness. In God's eyes this church, with all its faults is no plain Jane. You and I become radiantly beautiful as we fall in love with Jesus and get wrapped up in the purity of what He has done for us.

Metaphor 4: The Family

I don't think I could class being a family as a metaphor. The church isn't *like* a family to me; it *is* my family. Over the past two decades most of my blood family has always been far away; but I have always had family. People who motivated me. People who were excited with me over my little girl's first words. People who mourned with us over the loss of our first child—not crowds of people, just a few—just my family.

Some years ago my parents had a short layover in Rome, and it being Sabbath, decided to go to church. A woman who spoke English came and translated the service and then insisted on taking my parents home for lunch and showing them around in the afternoon. The hospitality didn't end there. The woman and her husband vacated their bedroom so my parents could have their bed. At the airport my mother, overwhelmed by the kindness, tried to express her thanks. The woman said with a smile, "It is the least one can do for family." Family? Yes, you and I are probably complete strangers and yet family (Eph. 3:15).

As I look at the enormous mission this church faces in taking this gospel of the kingdom to all the world, I could feel overwhelmed. As I look into the church, I see us often pulling in different directions. I could feel disillusioned. As I look into my own life, I see broken promises and twisting contradictions. I could feel hopeless. But Jesus has promised "to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind ... holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27, NRSV).* I want to stay a part of God's church. I want to be a part of God's miracle. ●

*Bible texts credited to NRSV are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

The Church

The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world; and we join together for worship, for

fellowship, for instruction in the Word, for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, for service to all mankind, and for the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. The church derives its authority from Christ, who is the incarnate Word, and from the Scriptures, which are the written Word. The church is God's family; adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant. The church is the body of Christ, a community of faith

of which Christ Himself is the Head. The church is the bride for whom Christ died that He might sanctify and cleanse her. At His return in triumph, He will present her to Himself a glorious church, the faithful of all the ages, the purchase of His blood, not having spot or wrinkle, but holy and without blemish. (Gen. 12:3; Acts 7:38; Eph. 4:11-15; 3:8-11; Matt. 28:19, 20; 16:13-20; 18:18; Eph. 2:19-22; 1:22, 23; 5:23-27; Col. 1:17, 18.)

What are we to make of a writer who advised women to shorten their dresses eight inches in a world in which many wear them too short already, or who counseled that Adventist schools should teach girls to harness and drive a horse when most of them will never need that information? Part of the problem is that the world has radically changed since Ellen White's lifetime. But that is not the only issue that twenty-first-century readers need to consider when they read and seek to apply the counsels of a prophet living in a different time and place. Below are 10 guidelines that will make our reading of Ellen White more profitable and balanced.¹

1. Focus on the central issues. A person can read Ellen White's writings in at least two ways. One is to look for her central themes; the other is to search for those things that are new and different. The first way leads toward an accurate understanding, while the second leads toward distortion of the author's meaning and often toward extremes that Ellen White detested. She herself advocated in Bible study that readers seek to "gain a knowledge" of the Bible's "grand central theme." For her that theme was the plan of redemption and the great controversy between good and evil. "Viewed in the light" of the great central theme of the Bible "every topic has a new significance" (*Education*, pp. 190, 125).

In short, her counsel was to read for an understanding of the big picture. The big picture then provides the context for interpreting all other issues in terms of both meaning and importance. That principle applies equally to the Bible and Ellen White's writings.

2. Emphasize the important. In the early twentieth century when some church leaders were using her writings combatively to substantiate

certain prophetic points that she believed were of minor importance, Ellen White wrote that "the enemy of our work is pleased when a subject of minor importance can be used to divert the minds of our brethren from the great questions that should be the burden of our message" (*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 164, 165).

3. Study all available information on a topic. Ellen White's grandson and biographer Arthur White highlighted

this issue when he wrote that "many have erred in interpreting the meaning of the testimonies by taking isolated statements or statements out of their context as a basis for belief. Some do this even though there are other passages, which, if carefully considered, would show the position taken on the basis of the isolated statement to be untenable."²

4. Avoid extreme interpretations. By not following the advice Ellen

Reading Ellen White in the 21st Century

*Ten important principles
to keep in mind*



White gave during her lifetime, some individuals re-create her in their own extremist image. In her own life she tended toward a moderation that is sadly lacking in some who claim to be her faithful followers. For example, some utilize a statement where Ellen White frowned upon ball playing to condemn all such games, whereas she herself wrote that “I do not condemn the simple exercise of playing ball; but this, even in its simplicity, may be overdone” (*Adventist Home*, p. 499). As in so many situations, Ellen White was a moderate rather than an extremist.

5. Take time and place into consideration. Because of change across time and space, it is important to understand the historical context of many of Ellen White’s counsels. One only has to think of her counsel to mid-nineteenth-century women to shorten their dresses eight inches. One could hardly use that quotation as if she had written it in the era of the miniskirt. “Regarding the testimonies,” Ellen White wrote, “nothing is ignored; nothing is cast aside; but time and place must be considered” (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 57). She would repeatedly offer that counsel throughout her ministry.

6. Study each statement in its literary context. People have too often based their understandings of Ellen White’s teachings upon a fragment of a paragraph or an isolated statement entirely removed from its setting. Speaking of the misuse of her writings by some, she wrote that “they quote half a sentence,” they leave “out the other half, which, if quoted, would show their reasoning to be false” (*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 82). Again she comments about those who by “separating . . . statements from their connection and placing them beside human reasonings, make it appear that my writings uphold that which they condemn” (Letter 208, 1906).

7. Recognize Ellen White’s understandings of the ideal and the real. Ellen White often provided counsel on the same topic on two levels. The first can be thought of as the ideal. At this level we find statements that allow for no exceptions. An example of this first level is her counsel relating to the ideal that parents should be the “only teachers of their children until they have reached eight or ten years of age” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 137).

On the other hand, when she dealt with situations in the everyday world she often moderated her counsel to fit the needs of real people with real limitations. Thus she moderated her counsel on parents being the “only” teachers by noting that that ideal could hold “if” parents were both able and willing to do the job. If not, young children should be sent to school (*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 215-217).

Ellen White never lost her sense of the ideal, but she was ready to moderate her counsel to meet situations in the real world. One of the plagues of her life were those who collected only the ideal statements and then sought to “drive them upon every one, and disgust rather than win souls” (*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 284-288).

8. Use common sense. Quotations from Ellen White do not solve every problem. Sometimes they just don’t fit. When problems came up because some people pushed her statement about parents being the only teachers of their children until 8 or 10 years of age, she responded by claiming that “God desires us to deal with these problems sensibly.” She went on to note that she was stirred up by those who took the attitude that “‘Sister White has said so and so, and Sister White has said so and so; and therefore we are going right up to it.’” Her response to such people was that “God wants us all to have common sense, and He wants us to reason from common sense.

Circumstances alter conditions. Circumstances change the relation of things” (*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 215, 217). Her advice was that her readers needed to use common sense even though they might have a quotation from her on the topic.

9. Discover the underlying principles. At the turn of the twentieth century Ellen White wrote that it would be well “if girls . . . could learn to harness and drive a horse” (*Education*, pp. 216, 217). That was practiced in her day, but is of not much use today. However, the principle undergirding that counsel is very important today. That is, young women should be sufficient in transportation. Thus in our day they should be able to drive a car and change a tire. The exact specification of a counsel may change, but the underlying principles have lasting value.

10. Make sure Ellen White said it. Many statements are attributed to Ellen White that she never made. The only safe course is to utilize those statements that can be found in her published works or statements from her unpublished writings that can be validated through one of the Ellen White research offices. Many have been led astray by statements attributed to her that she never made.

Ellen White’s writings have been a blessing to readers around the world. They will be even more fruitful if they are read with the above guidelines in mind. ●

¹A more detailed discussion of this topic can be found in George R. Knight, *Reading Ellen White: How to Understand and Apply Her Writings* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1997).

²Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: Messenger to the Remnant* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1969), p. 88.



George R. Knight taught at Andrews University for 30 years. He is currently retired and living in Rogue River, Oregon.

The
Story
of
ANNIE
SMITH
*Fortified faith, heavenly
 hope, life of love*

By
 ERICA
 RICHARDS



*Oh! Shed not a tear o'er the spot where I sleep;
 For the living and not for the dead ye may weep;
 They mourn for the weary who sweetly repose,
 Free in the grave from life's burden and woes?
 I long now to rest in the lone, quiet tomb,
 For the footsteps of Jesus have lightened the gloom;
 I die in the hope of soon meeting again
 The friends that I love, with Him ever to reign.**

These words, powerful and brave, were written by a dying young woman in 1855. Her short life was a testimony of sacrifice for faith, and her creative and artistic abilities have had an enduring influence in our church as words of hope. Annie Rebekah Smith was a pioneer of the Adventist faith.

Early Promise

Born in 1828 in West Wilton, New Hampshire, Annie was baptized into the Baptist church at age 10. Annie and



Erica Richards is a senior at Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, Tennessee, U.S.A. She worked as a summer intern at the *Adventist World* when she wrote this article.

her family left the Baptist faith, however, to join the Millerite movement in 1844. When disappointment struck on October 22 of that year, Annie decided to pour her energies into a literary and artistic career.

Annie spent six years attending seven different district schools. Six terms were spent at the Charlestown Seminary in Massachusetts. Nondenominational in nature, the seminary held weekly Bible lessons and the students were required to attend church twice each Sunday.

During these years Annie's mother became worried for her and shared her concerns with pioneer Joseph Bates when he visited the Smith home. Bates urged Mrs. Smith to tell Annie he would be speaking in Boston, and to ask her to attend.

That same night, Annie Smith and Joseph Bates had a similar dream: every seat in the room Bates was to preach in, every single seat was filled—but one. Just as he was opening his Bible to preach, the door opened and a girl (Annie) took the last seat.

The following night on her way to the meeting, Annie got lost along the way, and the dream became a reality as she took the last seat in the room. When the dreams were recounted, she found herself deeply moved by the event. Shortly after, Annie committed to the Advent faith.

On September 16, 1851, just weeks after Bates's meetings, Annie's poem, "Fear Not Little Flock" was published in the *Review and Herald*. Impressed, editor

James White insisted that Annie come to New York and work for the *Review* in copyediting.

Annie hesitated to accept the offer, explaining to White that her eye trouble prevented her from doing such work. While in seminary studying art, Annie had strained her eyes, and for eight months after working on a sketch of Boston reported that she could barely see. Eventually though, she decided to give up her dream of artistic success, accepted White's offer, and moved to Rochester.

A New Reality

The work was not always easy. The economic times were hard, and the Advent movement was often ridiculed and criticized. For the next three years Annie worked diligently for the *Review* and was eventually given full responsibility for the paper while the Whites were away. She continued to use her creative abilities to publish 45 pieces consisting of hymns and poems, three of which remain in our hymnal today: "How Far From Home," "I Saw One Weary," and "Long Upon the Mountains."

Some pieces of Annie Smith's story are still sketchy, and while probable, not entirely clear. While her dedication to the Advent movement was strong, Annie's personal devotion to John Nevins Andrews ended in bitter disappointment. Andrews lived in Rochester during the time that Annie was working for the *Review* and some indicators suggest that there were hopes of a future together. Unexplainably, Andrews turned his affections toward Angeline Stevens instead and left Annie with a broken heart.

"Annie's disappointment cost her her life," wrote Ellen G. White in a letter to Andrews. In November 1854 Annie returned home suffering from tuberculosis. Hope came in the form of water treatment in a nearby health resort, but was soon lost when her symptoms worsened.

When it became clear that life was not to last long, Annie set her sights on a final goal: to compile a book of her poetry. Her brother, Uriah Smith, by then also a *Review and Herald* editor, returned home to help her with publication. She lived 10 more days following the completion of the work. As a tribute to his sister, Uriah sketched and engraved her favorite flower, a peony, on the title page of the book.

Annie's mother related her daughter's death in a journal, describing the peaceful Annie as she bravely looked death in the eye, unafraid. "Heaven is opened," Annie exclaimed. "I shall come forth at the first resurrection."

Lasting Impressions

At 27 Annie Smith had lived a life of quiet but genuine dedication to her faith. Her poems and hymns have endured through the years and provide us with a window

into the past of a movement that was driven by mostly young people: days of hardship, sacrifice, and commitment to a cause greater than self. Even in her sorrow over a broken heart, she continued to work for good. Her life is a shining example of one who went before in service, paving the way so that we could carry on the mission: to tell others about Christ and prepare to journey home.

*Not far from home! O blessed thought!
The traveler's lonely heart to cheer;
Which oft a healing balm has brought,
And dried the mourner's tear.
Then weep no more, since we shall meet
Where weary footsteps never roam—
Our trials past, our joys complete,
Safe in our Father's home.* 🍊

*The following studies contributed greatly to the production of this article: Ronald Graybill, "Annie Smith, Her Life and Love," *Review and Herald*, vol. 153 (Apr. 1, 1976), pp. 4-7; Judith P. Nembhard, "Annie Smith's Hymns of the Blessed Hope," *Review and Herald*, vol. 163 (Aug. 28, 1986), pp. 12-14; and James R. Nix, "Annie Smith: Pioneer Poet," *Review and Herald*, vol. 164 (Dec. 17, 1987), p. 17.



**Opposite page: SELF EX-
PRESSION:** Annie Smith's painting of Hamlet's Ophelia, believed to be a self-portrait. **Left:** The cover of the collection of poems that was posthumously published by Annie's mother.

The marriage of Hosea is problematic for some who find it difficult to accept that God would order Hosea to marry a prostitute. Whether that was the case or not remains to be seen, but the truth is that his experience as a prophet was rather unusual. We need to place Hosea within his time and context in order to gain a better understanding of his ministry.

1. Historical Background: Hosea ministered primarily to the northern kingdom toward the end of the divided monarchy. The superscription of the book provides the time for his ministry: during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel (785-745 B.C.). Hosea was active until shortly before the destruction of Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. In order to preserve the political unity of the northern kingdom, two sanctuaries were built, one in Bethel and another in Dan. At the center of worship were two golden images in the form of calves, perhaps as substitutes for the cherubs on the ark of the covenant located in the temple of Jerusalem in the southern kingdom of Judah. Such action contributed to the spiritual deterioration of the people of Israel.

By the time of Hosea Israel was going through a difficult political and religious period. Political intrigue was intense. During the last 24 years of the kingdom six different kings had taken the throne by force. Worship of the Lord was corrupted and the people worshipped Him using the worship of Baal as their model. Baal became the god of Israel, the god of fertility, worshipped on high places and in forests in an attempt to manipulate him and ensure the fertility of the land, the animals, and the family. Social, political, and religious degradation prevailed throughout the land (4:2, 13).

2. Marriage and Experience of Hosea: The Lord said to the prophet, “Go, take to yourself an adulterous wife” (1:2).^{*} The most natural reading of the story indicates we are dealing with a real, not symbolic, event in the life of the prophet. The phrase “adulterous wife/woman” could refer either to what she would later become or to a description of her ancestry. A literal translation of the phrase is “wife of promiscuity,” that is to say a woman with lax moral

values (the Hebrew noun *zonah*, could refer to adultery, fornication, or prostitution).

Hosea married Gomer, and had three children with her (two of which may not have been his; 2:4, 5). The children’s names illustrated God’s plans for His people (1:4-8). At some point in the marriage, Gomer committed adultery and abandoned her family. The prophet’s anguish is vividly portrayed in chapter 2. He threatened her with divorce, went through feelings of rejection projected on his children, and finally reconciled himself with the rejection. Then the Lord ordered him to go and show his love to his wife and bring her home (3:1). He did.

3. Experience of the Lord: The deep pain in God’s heart due to the spiritual adultery of His people, as well as to the moral depravation of their new syncretistic religion, was incarnated in the experience of the prophet. God was in pain and He wanted His people to know it! After ordering Hosea to bring back his adulterous wife, He added, “Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites,

though they turn to other gods” (3:1). The love triangle present in the life of the prophet is also a reality in the experience of God with Israel.

God portrays Himself as a loving, rejected husband in deep emotional pain. Since He wants His wife back, the Lord will cut off her way to the idols (2:6), and take her back to the desert (2:14). There, God will enamor her again (2:14): “I will heal their waywardness and love them freely” (14:4). The inner divine struggle is beautifully expressed in chapter 11:8, 9. God was ready to divorce His people, but then He exclaims: “How can I give you up?” The conversion awaited from Israel (11:7a) now takes place in Yahweh. The judgment against His wife is overthrown in the divine heart. There is a future for His people. This is divine love, illustrated in the experience of the prophet. ●

^{*}Bible texts in this article are taken from the New International Version (NIV).

God's Intractable Love



QUESTION:

Why did God order Hosea to marry a prostitute?

By
ANGEL MANUEL
RODRÍGUEZ

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



REVELATION'S **Final Appeal**

By MARK A. FINLEY

The Bible's last book, Revelation, is the story of a colossal struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. The main characters in this drama are Christ and Satan. There are only two sides in earth's final battle; there is no middle ground. Revelation is heaven's final appeal to every person on planet earth to commit fully to Jesus in this end-time conflict. In this month's lesson we will discover the central issues in this great controversy between good and evil. We will also learn how we can be solidly on God's side.

1. Who does Revelation call us to worship in this final crisis?

"Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water'" (Rev. 14:6, 7).

Revelation's final appeal is a call to worship _____ who made _____ and _____.

2. What dire warning did God give His people in the same chapter?

"Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, 'If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation'" (Rev. 14:9, 10).

God warns His people against worshipping the _____ and his _____.

The central issue in the great controversy between good and evil is worship. God calls us to worship Him as the Creator. The beast offers a false worship experience. God is worthy of our highest worship. He is the all-wise, all-powerful Being who created us. He is also worthy of our worship because He is the loving God who redeemed us. We are His twice: once through Creation and once through redemption. Satan has attempted to distort God's character and counterfeit true worship.

3. How are God's people distinguished from those who worship the beast?

"Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12).

God's last-day people are identified by the following two characteristics.

a. They _____ the _____ of God.

b. They have the _____ of _____.

Those who worship the Creator are obedient to the commandments of God. Saved by grace through faith they willingly obey God's commands. Those who receive the mark of the beast turn their back on God's commands in rebellious disobedience.



4. In Revelation “Babylon” is a symbol of religious confusion or rebellion against the true God. How does Revelation 14:8 describe the condition of Babylon?

“And another angel followed, saying, ‘Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.’”

Babylon is _____ is _____.

5. What appeal does God make to His people who have been misled by the false doctrines of Babylon, the symbol of religious confusion?

“And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues’” (Rev. 18:4).

God’s urgent appeal to those in Babylon is to _____

of her my _____.

God does not ask His people to *reform* Babylon. He urges them to *come out* of all false systems of religion and become part of His true, last-day movement. The text says, “Come out . . . lest you share in her sins.” Sin is lawlessness or the breaking of God’s law. God has scores of sincere, honest people who have been misled by false doctrines and are in the confusion of Babylon. Their only safety is to come out immediately and become part of God’s commandment-keeping people.

6. According to Jesus, where are many of His true followers? What does He invite them to do?

“And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd” (John 10:16).

a. Many of Jesus’ true followers are not of this _____.

b. They will hear his _____.

c. There will be one _____ and one _____.

7. What did our Lord promise those who faithfully keep His commandments?

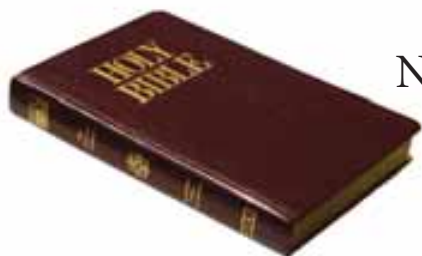
“Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city” (Rev. 22:14).

They will have right to the _____ of _____, and may _____

through the _____ into the _____.

Love for Jesus always leads to obedience. In the great controversy between good and evil Satan has declared that God is unfair and unjust. He distorts God’s character by declaring that God’s law is not designed for our happiness but rather restricts our freedom. God’s last-day people reveal through their willing obedience a deep love for Christ, who redeemed them.

Why not declare your love for Jesus by committing your life in loyal obedience to the One who has given His life for you? Why not do it now?



Next month’s study will examine
“Revelation’s Seal of God.”

LETTERS



Evangelism and Life Changes

I feel truly blessed after reading the article “One Soul for Christ” written by Dragan Stojanovic (July

2009). It is very inspiring and can be adapted in our ministry here.

There are about 20,000 inmates in the Muntinlupa City prison. I am one of them and am waiting for my release in May 2010. There are around 15 churches inside the prison. An Adventist has evangelized the inmates for the last 32 years! These are the outcasts of society, forsaken by their families, with the possibility of committing crimes again once they are released if unreached by our church workers.

Stojanovic intelligently discussed the 11 procedures, especially step 5, the Bible month; and step 6 on personal witnessing. Good personal testimonies can be heard here from those who have accepted our Lord Jesus Christ—how He helped them endure their long sentences that may bring suffering and despair.

YONAH PERLAS

Muntinlupa, Philippines

Comments on Questions

I am enjoying the comments regarding Angel Rodríguez’s February 2009 column, “Raised Hands in Worship.” Regarding a suggestion that raising hands in worship and swaying are inherently self-centered, I must

“Glory be to God for the technology we have—we can read this rich magazine on our computers.”

—AARON RICHMORE DONDOFEMA,
Zimbabwe

add my comments. My experience in the Seventh-day Adventist Church with raising hands is that it has always been done reverently and apparently as an act of “reaching up” to God in gratitude, praise, and surrender to Him. And if some sway a bit, it seems pretty staid compared to the worship called for in Psalms 149 and 150. The picture I see there is an invitation to rejoice enthusiastically before the Lord, not just with our brains, but our whole selves delighting in Him.

CAROLYN MILLARD

Lolo, Montana, United States

The column “The Gospel According to Mary,” by Angel Manuel Rodríguez, in the January 2009 issue of *Adventist World* got my interest.

I believe Mary Magdalene of Magdala is the same Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus of Bethany, and the same Mary Jesus addressed at His resurrection, and whom He “commissioned” to tell His disciples that He had risen.

But I was disappointed when Rodríguez failed to show whether Jesus “ordained” her “by the laying of hands” in that commissioning ceremony in order for us to make full room for women to proclaim the everlasting gospel.

MIGUEL MAYOR, SR.

San Diego, California, United States



“Yesterday’s” Magazine—Today’s Inspiration

I was so delighted when I read the article “A Little Child Shall Lead Them,” by

Wilona Karimabadi (January 2008). It made me feel as if I should have lived differently—thanks for that article. It really inspired my dream of living to serve the Lord. My advice to all youth—please, let’s not be carried by the waves of the world like fashion

LETTERS

and drugs. Instead, let us distribute the word and love of God.

MARTIN MSWALI

Via e-mail

Question

I am an Adventist teenager from Mozambique. I like your magazine. Is it possible to receive it by e-mail?

NARCISO DJEDJE

Maputo, Mozambique

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The Adventist World magazines from 2006 to 2009 are available online at www.AdventistWorld.com and can be read anytime. The magazine is also available in PDF format and can be downloaded and printed, or saved. It can also be attached to an e-mail.*

Gratitude and Thanks

I am a 20-year-old student. Due to hardships in our country we receive the *Adventist World* late. But glory be to God for the technology we have—we can read this rich magazine on our computers.

A message to other youth: Jesus is coming soon and whatever our hands find to do, let it be done to glorify God.

AARON RICHMORE DONDOFEMA
Zimbabwe

I've been reading *Adventist World* for two years. I'm joyful because this magazine has good lessons. I have hope because it tells me that Jesus is coming again very soon. Indeed, we are in the last days. Everyone must pray that God

will give him hope for eternity.

THEOGENE NIYONAMAMAZA
Kigali, Rwanda

I have been an Adventist for 8 years. About three years ago I began receiving the *Adventist World*. Thank you for your excellent work. The material helps us be closer to our brothers around the world.

May God continue to richly bless this ministry and through it shorten the time till the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

TANIA SOUZA
São Paulo, Brazil

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

Thanks for praying for me. I believe God answers our prayers and that is why I requested you to pray for me. Right now I have started seeing some hope, though the realization may still be a bit far away.

THEMBO, *Uganda*

I am a fourth-year student with a mountain of financial problems. Please pray for me that the Lord could help me.

NIONY, *Madagascar*

I was in court for my judgment and lost my appeal. This is hard for me, but I am not shaken or disturbed in my faith—God is in control, and I believe He allowed me to continue preaching in prison. Please pray for me.

BERNARD, *Zambia*

Please continue to pray for our broadcasting project—if the Lord leads us to have the opportunity to broadcast the good news, how can we miss it? We need prayers for all kinds of support. We need the Lord to lead us to the right people—skilled, trained, and willing to serve Him in this field.

MANUELA, *Italy*

My siblings and I are orphans due to HIV/AIDS. I had to drop out of university due to lack of funds. In short, we are suffering. There is no money to buy food or to pay my siblings' fees.

JOHN, *Kenya*

I am asking for special prayer. I will start studying theology in order to work for the Lord as an Adventist

pastor. Pray that God will help me achieve this goal.

JOSIAH, *Martinique*

We are preaching the power of the gospel of Christ in our language to our people. Our important vision is to take care of the children of HIV couples and children of people suffering from leprosy. By the grace of God and your regular prayers my coworkers and I are continuing God's work very happily.

JOHN, *India*

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

“Behold, I come quickly...”

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UPDATE: AWR

Finding a Sabbathkeeping Church

Nho was a 12-year-old boy living near Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam. One day, while listening to his radio, he discovered a program he had never heard before. It examined Bible texts closely and showed truths that the Bible taught—things the Christian church his family attended on Sundays did not do.

Nho was intrigued and began listening regularly. He was at an age when religious things were becoming very meaningful. The program, *Peace and Happiness*, was broadcast by Adventist World Radio.

In one program, he heard a subject that directly contradicted the practice of his present church. It showed how the Bible indicated that God wanted people to keep the seventh day as the Sabbath, not Sunday, the first day of the week. He told his mother about it, but they had never heard of a Christian church worshipping on Saturday.

Nho started asking people if they knew of such a church. One day, as he walked down the street, he overheard some women talking about the Sabbath. He stopped and asked them where there was a Sabbathkeeping church, and they gave him directions.

Excitedly, Nho rushed home and told his mother. She was hesitant, but he finally convinced her to go with him to find this church. When they arrived, they discovered it was a Seventh-day Adventist Church. They began attending regularly and studying more deeply the things the Adventists were able to show from the Bible. After one year they decided to be baptized—not only Nho and his mother, but also his father, brothers, and sisters.

Nho continued to study and be faithful to the Lord. A little later, he was invited to take a two-year training course to be a church worker. Today he is a deacon in one of the Adventist churches near Ho Chi Minh City. He lives at the church, takes care of the grounds, assists with the services, and helps people with their needs. Nho is now 24 years old and is preparing to be a full-time worker for the Lord. He wants to help others find the good news of Bible truth that he discovered through AWR.

—BENJAMIN D. SCHOUN,
AWR president

BIBLE WORKER: Nho holds his Bible outside the Adventist church where he lives in Vietnam.



ADVENTIST WORLD RADIO

The PEOPLE'S PLACE

ADVENTIST LIFE

In 2002 Papua New Guinea's 27 new cabinet ministers were featured in a national newspaper. Under each photo was a 30- or 40-word summary of career highlights. However, for Yawa Silupa, new minister for internal security (think of the FBI), the paper used only four words, "Committed Seventh-day Adventist," to say it all.

—Richard Worley, Pacific Adventist University, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"You are the tallest Christian when you go down on your knees to pray."

—Uchenna U. Chidi-Ezeama, chaplain of the Adventist Students Fellowship, Umudike, while delivering a revival sermon at the School of Nursing, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Umuahia, Nigeria

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



SUBMITTED BY PASTOR ARNOLD ZWAHLEN

SHARE WITH US!

The People's Place is a cornucopia of items from across the world; these are short slices of life that will make readers think, laugh, and enjoy their Adventist family more. We are looking for brief submissions in these categories:

QUOTES (profound or spontaneous)

ADVENTIST LIFE (anecdotes, humorous or profound)

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR (high-quality photos *with* short biographical profiles of newly baptized members, Adventists engaged in active community service, or small groups undertaking new efforts in sharing the gospel; maximum words: 75).

E-mail to marank@gc.adventist.org; fax to 301-680-6638; or send to World Exchange, *Adventist World*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-6600, U.S.A.

ANSWER: At the church of Retnach (German Swiss Conference), members in Aarau, Switzerland, pose on the church's outside steps. The 40 members of this very active church are developing and building a family and community center for their community, trying to reach families in the area.