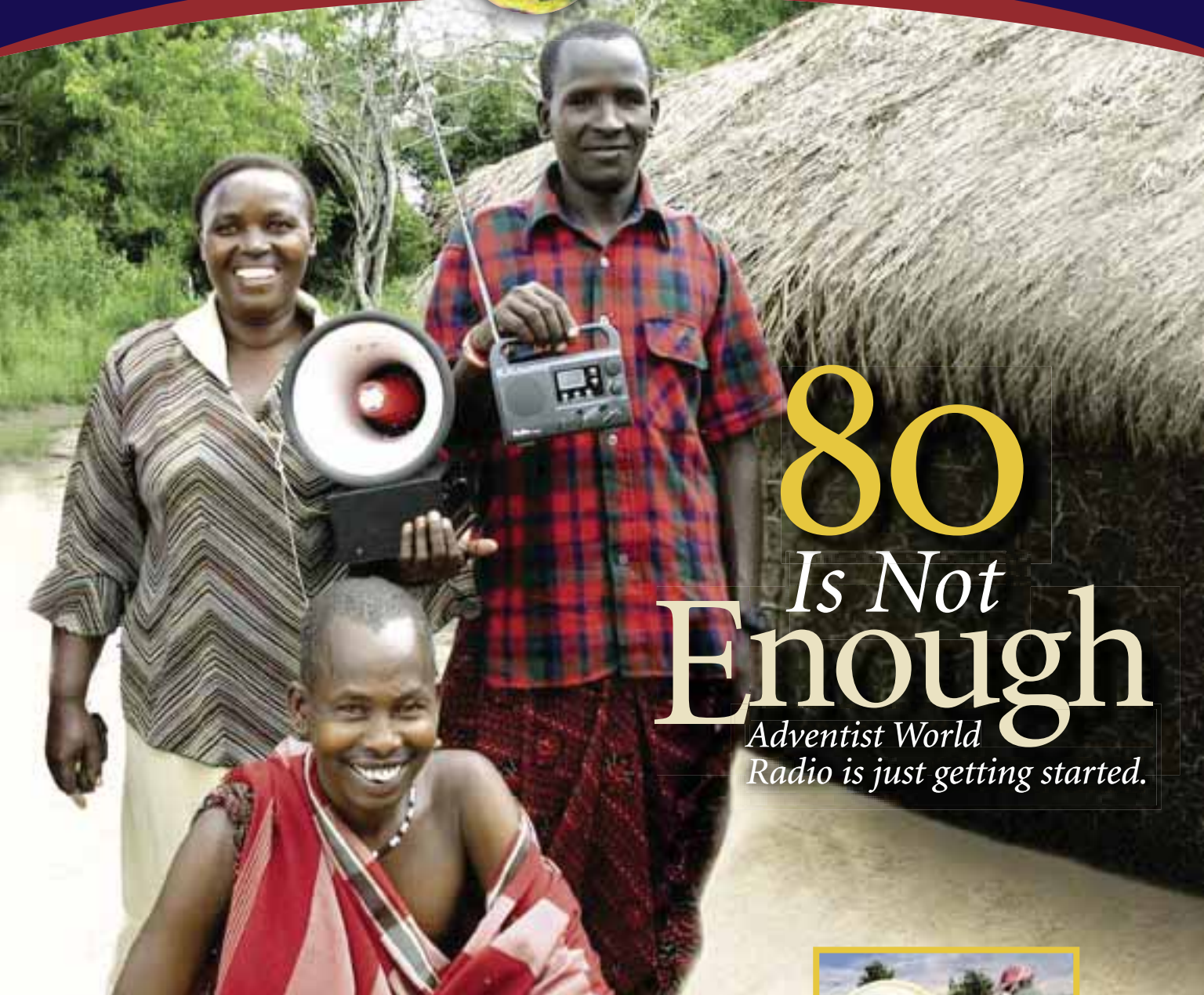


December 2009

ADVENTIST WORLD



80
Is Not
Enough
*Adventist World
Radio is just getting started.*

SPECIAL FEATURE

HELPING *the* HELPLESS

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December 2009



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WORLD VIEW

Openhearted Listening

“Believe nothing of what you hear, and only half of what you see.”

The cautionary folk wisdom powerfully reminds us of just how much deception there is in our world. We listen to the daily news, assuming we are being told “the facts,” only to discover that the facts have sometimes been rearranged to promote a political agenda. We hold our hearts in check, not certain we should believe even promising reports for fear that we might again be disappointed. We learn to discount many things as gossip, unworthy of our time and trust. We do not want to be naïve.

But then we hear the Scriptures calling us to a kind of trust within our community of faith that at first seems hard to do: *“Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine”* (1 Tim. 5:17). The “double honor” Paul invites us to bestow on those who minister the Word to us begins with paying special attention to them as they work within their God-appointed role of opening the Scriptures. They may know little or nothing about the tasks

on which we spend our lives—farming, manufacturing, fishing, or editing—and on those topics they have no special authority. But our faith reminds us that if they are opening God’s Word with integrity and humble hearts, their words to us—from the pulpit, in the classroom, in the Bible study—may be trusted like few other sources of information in our world.

So I listen to my pastor’s sermon in a manner different from how I listen to the news, or a political leader, or even to a scholar. I pray each Sabbath for the grace to set aside the distrust I have learned in a deceptive world, and instead to listen with a kind of openheartedness that will allow his words about the Word to settle deeply in my life, where they may call me to repentance and renewal. The double honor I should show is known in listening closely, expectantly, for what God may say to me through the ministry of a dedicated servant.

Pray for the ones who handle God’s Word on your behalf—for their surrender to the truth they preach, and for their effectiveness in bringing it home to you.

— BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

Adventists Add 1 Million New Members, Again

Increase marks sixth year of seven-figure church growth

More than 1 million people joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church during the year ending June 30, 2009, marking the sixth consecutive year of million-member gains, church officials said.

Church leaders said an average of 2,818 people joined the church daily, bringing the world membership total to 16,049,101 baptized believers.

Church leaders initially projected a world church membership of 17 million by 2009. However, partially

because of corrected membership reports from several church regions, the membership total stayed around 16 million, world church secretary Matthew Bediako said.

Bediako said a recently completed audit in the South American Division resulted in a decrease of more than 300,000 members.

During his report, Bediako encouraged the two or three divisions that have yet to do audits to “gather courage and do it.”

“I know something good will come out, when you know that the membership [total] on your record is accurate,” he said.

Bert Haloviak, director for the



COUNTING MEMBERS: Adventist world church secretary Matthew Bediako, front, and Bert Haloviak, director of the church’s Office of Archives and Statistics, give a report on church membership statistics for 2008 through 2009 during the church’s annual year-end business meeting October 11.

RAJMUND DABROWSKI/ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK

WORLD REPORT

church's Office of Archives and Statistics, said an audit is sometimes followed by a period of quick growth.

Haloviak cited membership growth in the Southern Asia-Pacific Division, which increased more than 6 percent during the past four quarters. That region underwent membership audits from 2006 to 2007 and has since increased its membership more than at any time during its history, Haloviak said.

While South America reported significant losses on account of membership audits, the region also recorded total accessions of more than 200,000, reported Bolivar Alana, secretary for the church in South America.

Bediako and Haloviak presented their findings during a report to the world church's Annual Council business session in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, on October 11, 2009.

Church growth patterns indicate most church growth took place in non-Western societies. About 71 percent of church growth occurred in five of the church's 13 world regions—South America, Inter-America, East-Central Africa, Southern Africa-Indian Ocean, and Southern Asia.
—Reported by Megan Brauner, Adventist News Network

Conservative Investing Helps Adventists Weather Downturn, Treasurer Says

■ Seventh-day Adventist world church financial leaders will continue what they call a cautious and conservative approach to managing church funds in the wake of the global recession.

While a market recovery beginning in March and some economic indicators suggest the financial system is finally trending upward, the church should not base its budget on the assumption that the pattern will continue uninterrupted, world church



COUNTING CASH: Adventist world church treasurer Robert E. Lemon delivers the church's financial report to delegates gathered at church headquarters for annual autumn business meetings on October 12, 2009.

RAJMUND DABROWSKI/ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK

treasurer Robert E. Lemon told Annual Council delegates on October 12, 2009.

Mission offerings have held steady since dropping early in the year, but tithes returns from North America—which account for 45 percent of the world church's budget—continue to decrease, reflecting rising unemployment figures.

Because church financial officers are uncertain when tithes and offering rates might rise in United States dollar terms, the budget delegates approved for 2010 does not factor in assumed increases in tithes and offerings, as is typically the case, Lemon told delegates. It reflects a US\$1.6 million decrease in tithes and offerings when compared to the 2009 budget, he said.

Church officers also voted to use \$2.79 million from the church's working capital to balance the 2010 appropriations budget.

Tithe to the world church's headquarters for 2009, when compared to last year, dropped 3 percent, or \$1.4 million, for North America and 9.7 percent, or \$1.1 million, for the church's other

world regions as of August and July, respectively, Lemon reported. Tithes and offering rates are actually up in most of the church's other regions in local currencies, but when converted to a stronger United States dollar, they show a decrease, he added.

Similarly, mission offerings for North America are down by 4.6 percent, or \$700,000, with other church regions reflecting a \$2 million, or 8.6 percent, decrease.

Much of the October 12 financial report focused on how the church's investments—both in equity markets and in less volatile fixed income holdings—fared during the recent global downturn.

Most of the world church headquarters' investments sustained the global financial downturn "fairly well," Lemon said. For the period of January 1, 2008, through August 31 of 2009, church headquarters earned a net return of \$2.8 million on its approximately \$290 million in investments.

Had all the church headquarters-owned funds been placed in a savings account earning the typical interest

rate of one half of a percent during the same period, rather than invested in the market, “we would be at the same place as we are now,” Lemon said.

By transferring more of its investments to fixed-income holdings, the church reduced its exposure to drastic market fluctuations, said associate treasurer Roy E. Ryan. Even if it means earning less interest, the church’s immediate goal is to protect its capital, he said.

While current market indicators are encouraging, the church should still exercise caution in budgeting and appropriating funds, Lemon said. If interest rates—currently at historic lows—increase, the church should expect to see short-term negative effects on the value of its fixed-income investments, he explained.

Despite the current economic situation, the world church’s headquarters is operating at \$2 million below its \$37-million budget due to continued cutbacks, including wage and hiring freezes and travel restrictions, Lemon said. Such “judicial” use of funds positions the church to maintain its appropriations to world regions and avoid layoffs even amid a “turbulent” economy, he said.

During the financial report, delegates also heard an update on the so-called “extraordinary tithe,” a one-time donation of about \$102 million to the Adventist Church two years ago. Investment activity during the past two years added almost \$5 million to the principal, financial officers said. Of the almost \$80 million allocated, less than half is distributed, said church undertreasurer Juan Prestol, stressing that the church is applying the funds “cautiously.” Leaders said \$14.7 million is reserved for future allocations.

World church associate treasurer George Egwakhe updated delegates on progress made on a new extension to

the world church headquarters that will house a studio and office and storage space for the church’s official television network, Hope Channel. Of the \$5.1 million budgeted for the project, \$2.6 million has been spent to complete 52 percent of the project. Leaders said they expect production in the new building to begin in January 2010.

Also on October 12, delegates reviewed church appropriations, agreeing to distribute more funds during the next five years to unentered areas and church institutions that support outreach.

Delegates also added to the budget several increases in appropriations for various church entities and institutions around the world. Delegates agreed to use \$350,000 to help finance Global Mission employees’ salaries. They also voted to approve a one-time appropriation of \$150,000 to aid the Adventist University of Africa in meeting requirements for its charter.

Responding to the report, delegates seemed to echo Lemon and other church financial officers’ attitude of cautious optimism.

—Reported by Elizabeth Lechleitner, Adventist News Network

Session Theme Song, Offering, New Study Bible Are Presented

■ Church unity and commitment to outreach were instrumental in decisions on a theme song and offering for 2010’s General Conference session, Seventh-day Adventist world church leaders said.

Meeting at church headquarters for annual business meetings, delegates moved to accept a new theme song for next summer’s General Conference session. Titled “Proclaim His Grace” and composed by Bruce Ashton, the song dovetails with the session theme: “Proclaiming God’s Grace.”

“Music is an instrument of unity,” said Williams Costa, Jr., a member of the music committee and an associate



COUNTING NOTES: 2009 Annual Council delegates were among the first to hear the theme song chosen for next summer’s General Conference session.

RAJ MUND DABROWSKI/ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK

Continued from page 5

director of communication for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. “It’s a way to have everybody on the same page, praising God.”

Delegates also voted on an offering for next year’s session. To be collected in Adventist churches worldwide on January 30 and May 29, the offering will fund education, media, and literature outreach in a region historically known as the Silk Road. Because traditional evangelism is difficult in the region—which includes China, Central Asia, and the Middle East—the offering will help support Global Mission pioneers, family and health ministries, and humanitarian outreach.

Decisions about the session were among a variety of agenda items voted during Annual Council. Delegates also accepted rewording of the mission statement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to better focus on the discipleship of members.

They added the phrase “make disciples of all people” and instruction on “discipling,” or “affirming the continued spiritual growth and development of all members,” to the statement.

Also on the docket was a presentation on the forthcoming *Andrews Study Bible*, which delegates moved to accept. Published at Andrews University Press, the Bible is designed to “enrich the serious, thoughtful study” of Scripture, said Niels-Erik Andreasen, president of Adventist-owned Andrews University.

An international team of Seventh-day Adventist Bible scholars worked to make the study Bible “academically credible, theologically sound, and practically useful,” Andreasen told delegates.

Expected to be available next year, the *Andrews Study Bible* will include a reference system linking many of the Bible’s themes, such as Sabbath observance and the Second Coming.

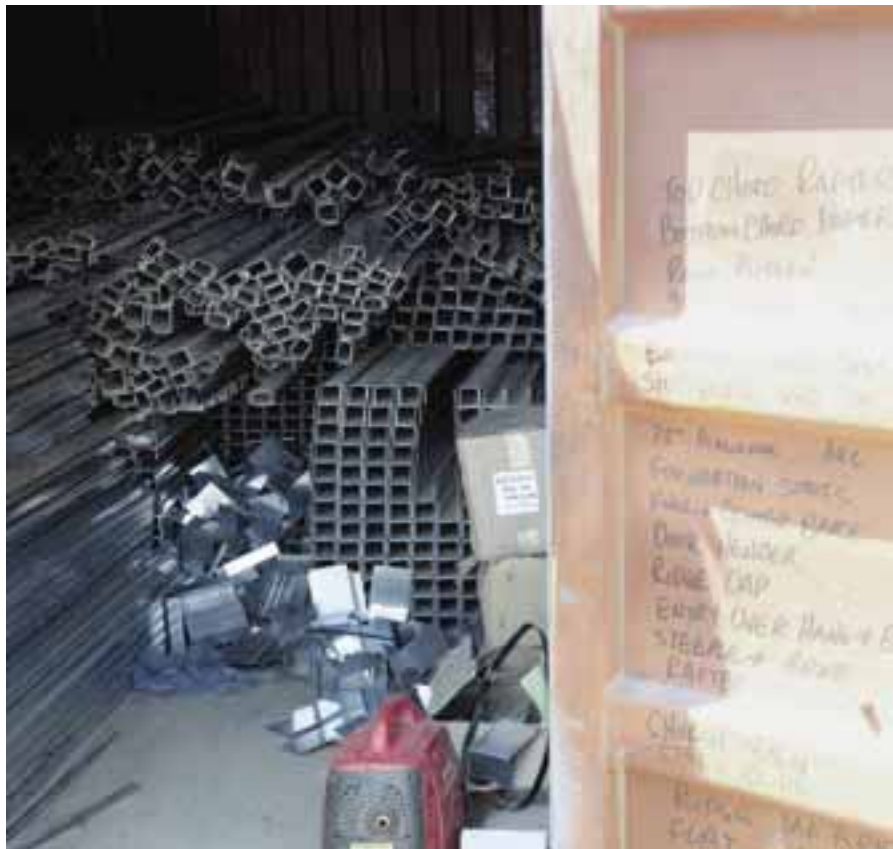
WORLD REPORT

ONE-DAY CHURCH PRODUCTION

Meets Demand

Rises to
Requests for more

By ELIZABETH LECHLEITNER, *Adventist News Network*



PHOTOS BY DICK DUERKSEN/MARANATHA VOLUNTEERS INTERNATIONAL

The production of church-assembly kits is accelerating to help church infrastructure match membership in regions with soaring church growth, a Seventh-day Adventist businessman told Annual Council delegates during their October 2009 meeting in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

The One-Day Church initiative is one of the tools Maranatha aims to tackle the more than 100,000 pending requests for permanent church structures around the world, said Garwin McNeilus, who helped develop the concept.

A joint venture of Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries and Maranatha Volunteers International, supporting ministries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the One-Day Church project is responsible for manufacturing some 3,000 church kits and shipping well

over 1,000 to locations worldwide since its launch last year, said Maranatha president Don Noble.

But with 4,000 new Adventist congregations formed each year, according to the church's Office of Adventist Mission, McNeilus and his production team are stepping up output.

The recent purchase of a steel-bending machine allows the team to complete more than seven times as many church kits per day than previously possible. The \$650,000 form roller—acquired at a fraction of its worth at \$38,000—can bend pieces of steel at 100 feet per minute to form beams for the structures.

As the name suggests, church kits—which fit in the back of a pickup truck—can be constructed in less than a day. The basic building is easily adjusted to suit a variety of culture and geographic areas, and the galvanized

than 100,000 structures are pending.

steel frame withstands termites, rust, heat, and Class-3 hurricanes, church leaders said at the project's launch.

One-Day Church kits have been adapted for use as schools, dormitories, and housing for faculty and staff, McNeilus said, in some cases providing an entire campus. Citing the church's membership gains of 1 million this year, he said such versatility would be vital in supporting education for new members' children.

"Building these churches and schools is an endowment for the future," he told delegates. "When I look at one of these buildings, I don't see bricks and mortar, and I don't see steel—I see people."

Reflecting on the project's impact, Paul S. Ratsara, president of the church's Southern Africa-Indian Ocean region, called it a "godsend" for new membership. Mozambique, a country within the region, has received 250 church kits.

"Our region is growing so fast, and housing new believers has long been a challenge," Ratsara said. "The timing for the One-Day Church project was ideal for us."

Some of the new One-Day Churches will be constructed in and around Livingstone, Zambia, where 1,700 new members were baptized in a single day in August 2009. At one church site outside the city, land has already been graded for a new building that will replace the thatched-roof, open-sided structure currently employed.

According to an Internet Web site, www.onedaychurch.org, an estimated 200,000 Seventh-day Adventist congregations worldwide lack permanent meeting structures. The Web site contains information on the project and a way to make online donations in support of the effort.

—With additional reporting by Adventist World Staff.



Left: ASSEMBLY REQUIRED: An interior view of a container holding components for a One-Day Church. This container arrived at a site near Livingstone, Zambia. In August 2009, 1,700 new Seventh-day Adventists were baptized in a single day there.

Above: COMING TOGETHER: A worker assembles part of a One-Day Church near Livingstone, Zambia.

WORLD VISTA

The status quo can be a wonderfully comfortable “place” to occupy. It has security of routine, the safety of the familiar, the ease of recycled thinking and well-worn methods.

In Scripture, though, I see a faith that is fundamentally at odds with “what is.” I see men and women dissatisfied with the familiar—people who pushed into the deep waters of faith because they were not content with what was merely “routine.” I see a Savior who calls us to faithfulness—a



Things We Can't Afford to Ign

Embracing the future means embracing these challenges.

faithfulness that does not necessarily lead toward comfortable or predictable paths.

A few thoughts have crystallized in my mind in recent weeks as we prepare to leave 2009 behind and step into a new year. It's a list that's naturally subjective, and by no means definitive. But it represents areas of our spiritual journey that, if left untended, will naturally succumb to the pull of the status quo.

Seventh-day Adventists can't afford to ignore:

1.

Choices

Are we consciously taking charge of the choices that shape our daily lives? Do we have a clear sense of our own values? Do we live

deliberately? Do we own our choices?

Every decision we make contributes to the shape of our character and the direction of our lives. It's a process that happens slowly, incrementally, often unconsciously. But it does happen.

We can't sidestep ownership of our choices. If we try, we begin to find ourselves at the mercy of circumstances; we feel trapped; we find other people making choices on our behalf. In the spiritual realm it may lead to unhealthy discipleship—we become dependent on another person, rather than our Lord, to define our beliefs and nurture our spirituality.

When I look back at my own life, I see choices that were certainly far from perfect—choices that at best were foolish. It's a tribute to God's

patience and compassion that He brought me through in spite of myself. We don't have to make perfect choices, but we must acknowledge that they're ours to make.

We can't afford to ignore the power of our choices.

2. The Clock

Time is passing. We are inexorably moving toward the climax of history—the return of our Lord. But time has a habit of slipping quietly by. We become desensitized. We pacify ourselves with the thought that “this is how it's been for ever so long; tomorrow will continue on just as today” (see 2 Peter 3:4). We slide into complacency. “I'm well-intentioned, I come from a good Adventist home,

my culture and behavior are those of a ‘good Adventist.’”

The stark reality is this: if we aren’t serious about the passing of time, if the second coming of Christ isn’t a living reality for us, then we’ll fall asleep. We’ll slide into a spiritual coma.

Does this mean we have to live in a state of anxiety or paranoia? No. It simply means being alert to the passage of time and the closeness of Christ’s return. It means allowing this reality to shape our daily choices—large and small.

We can’t afford to ignore the rapidly closing door of history.

By JAN PAULSEN

Ore

3. Selfless Thinking

We are a community of believers—not a loose collection of individuals or congregations who each do “what seems right in their own eyes.” We hold together. We support one another. We give personnel and finances to one another. We pray for one another. We defer to one another. When one part of the body struggles with a problem, we talk it over as members of the same family (1 Cor. 12:26).

But if we don’t deliberately cultivate an attitude of “concern for the other,” we’ll drift instead into “concern for me first.” Whether it’s individuals, congregations, or church leaders, some are more open to what they can receive from the larger church than what they can give back.

There are others who say, “You have nothing to teach us.”

We can’t afford to let go of the sacred bonds of family. We can’t afford to give up our vision for mission, which looks to the world beyond our own community.

We can’t afford to ignore our immense need for one another.

4. A Culture of Inclusion

We can’t afford to walk into the future with segments of our faith community—whether young people, women, cultural or ethnic groups—feeling that they don’t have a meaningful or representative role in the life of the church. We need to attend to this. Why does the reality, or even the impression, of exclusion exist? Are we affirming and nurturing the gifts of all our members? Do some lack a proper representative role because somewhere in the election processes they were left out? If we fail to address this we’ll undermine our credibility, stunt our capacity for mission, and check our growth.

We can’t afford to ignore the abilities and spiritual gifts God gives all His children.

5. Change

Some continually look back with nostalgia; they see all that belongs to yesterday as inviolable, and the past becomes sacred for its own sake.

But the world we live in refuses to stand still. Life, both inside and outside the church, is dynamic. It’s in constant motion. As a church, we can’t afford to live inside a comfortable cocoon of “what was.” We can’t afford to be “one-idea” people, stereotyped in our manner of working (see *Gospel Workers*, p. 119).

Let me be clear. I’m not suggesting

we change who we are. Far from it! Our history and heritage hold tremendous meaning for us—we see God’s hand at each turn of the way. Our doctrines and shared values provide us a powerful anchor and global identity.

Think for a moment about yourself as an individual. You have your own history, personality, and values. You wake up each morning in the same house, eat the same breakfast, and head out the same door. But each day is different; new challenges stretch you in unexpected ways and demand creative responses. But your basic personality—your core identity—isn’t altered.

So it is with the church. We need to be able to react, to adjust our structure, our procedures, and our methods of relating to society. Just repeating what we’ve always done, simply because that’s the way we’ve always done it, is a one-way road to ineffectiveness.

We can’t afford to ignore change.

A Meaningful Life

How should we face the coming year? I hope we’ll live deliberately—choosing our path with integrity and with an eye to the passing of time. I hope we’ll choose community over individualism, affirming what each of us brings to the body of Christ. Above all, I hope, as individuals and as a church, we’ll refuse to be satisfied with the status quo.



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

WINDOW

Into Costa Rica

By HANS OLSON

Called by some “the Switzerland of Central America,” Costa Rica is a beautiful nation sandwiched between Nicaragua to the north and Panama to the south. This nation has two coastlines, with the Pacific Ocean on the west and the Caribbean on the east.

Costa Rica’s comparisons with Switzerland stem from the country’s rugged central mountains, its thriving tourism industry, relatively stable government and economy, low crime rate, and highly developed welfare system. In 1949 Costa Rica’s president abolished its military. Costa Rica still has no standing armed forces. The country has one of the highest life expectancy rates in the Western Hemisphere.

Spanish explorers were initially unsuccessful when they tried to colonize Costa Rica during the early 1500s because of local resistance, pirates, and unexpected environmental challenges. In 1563 they established the permanent settlement of Cartago in the central highlands. For the next 258 years Costa Rica was one of Spain’s many “new world” colonies in the Caribbean and Central and South America. In 1821 Costa Rica, along with several other colonies, jointly declared their independence. They formed a federation that lasted 17 years. In 1838 Costa Rica declared its unilateral independence, which it has maintained ever since.

Historically, Costa Rica’s rich natural resources and agricultural industry—predominantly coffee, bananas, beef, pineapple, and ornamental plants—have driven the country’s economy. While farming is still important to Costa Rica, a burgeoning tourist industry and technology manufacturing give this country a high standard of living.

The country’s sandy beaches and tropical forests with immense flora and fauna draw crowds of tourists each year.

Adventists in Costa Rica

Adventism first came to Costa Rica around the turn of the last century when pioneer missionary F. J. Hutchins made frequent visits to Limón on Costa Rica’s eastern coast in his missionary schooner, the *Herald*. The first regular missionaries, a group of literature evangelists, arrived in 1902. A year later one of them, I. G. Knight, reported 10 baptisms in the *Review and Herald* and the organization of a church of 26 in a town just outside Limón. By 1928 the Adventist Church consisted of four churches and 148 members.

In 1921 the first primary school opened its doors in Limón. Six years later a secondary school started, which later became Central American Adventist University. Today there are two secondary schools in Costa Rica, one in Limón and one in San José, in addition to the university. The church in Costa Rica continues to be strong. In the last 10 years the church’s membership has more than doubled.

Costa Rica is one of the many countries that make up the Inter-American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This division is hosting “Follow the Bible” this month. “Follow the Bible” is an initiative sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church around the world to stimulate a deeper interest in reading the Bible. The journey will climax at the opening session of the General Conference Session in Atlanta in June 2010.

To learn more about the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s worldwide mission work please visit: www.AdventistMission.org.



COSTA RICA	
Capital:	San José
Major languages:	Spanish (official) and English
Religion:	Roman Catholic, 70%; Protestant, 14%; other, 4%; none, 12%.
Population:	4.48 million*
Adventist membership:	57,647*
Adventist-to-population ratio:	1:78*

*General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, 145th Annual Statistical Report

JOSH ROSENBLUM

MELISSA BRETZKE



TEAM WORK: Local workers were hired to help construct the school.

served as the school library. Kindergarten students met in an abandoned warehouse on the other side of the campus.

“The needs are so great there that when the NAD [North American Division] union education directors and I visited the hospital and school campus in Lesotho, we knew we had to do something to help,” says Larry Blackmer, NAD’s vice president for education. “We couldn’t just walk away and say, ‘How sad! We must pray for them.’ We believed God wanted us to combine action with prayer.”

What to Do?

Some 6,000 Adventists worship in 31 churches in the small African country of Lesotho. A region in southern Africa that never surrendered to the British, Lesotho became an independent country in 1966 and is surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. The 2.1 million residents of this mountainous and landlocked territory earn their living through agriculture, livestock, and manufacturing

By SANDRA BLACKMER

HELPING *the* HELPLESS

NAD feeds orphans, constructs school in Maluti

The children’s smiles were dazzling—and contagious—as they playfully teased one another and greeted their teacher, “Good morning.” After initial instructions, the young students started pulling books off shelves, then sat at desks, brows furrowed, deep in concentration, as they began studying their lessons for the day.

Although an ordinary scene in classrooms in most countries throughout the world, in many ways this one was distinctive: very few books lined the walls, pages missing from and covers barely clinging to those that were there. Nine students with little “elbow room” squeezed into the 8-by-15-foot metal shipping container that instead of holding cargo served as a classroom. Oblivious to the atypical surroundings, the Lesotho youth began another school day just grateful for the opportunity to obtain an education.

Also situated on the Maluti Adventist Hospital campus was a more conventional building that comprised two additional classrooms. Another steel shipping container

commodities such as electric power and apparel. Poverty is rampant—as is HIV/AIDS. Estimates indicate that in 2007 18,000 people died there as a result of AIDS.*

NAD educators visited the region on a Hope for Humanity mission trip in September 2007. They were to observe firsthand the HFH feeding program for orphans whose parents had died as a result of AIDS in Nhlengelo, South Africa, as well as the Adventist hospital and school in Mapoteng, Lesotho. They left determined to raise awareness of the children’s plight and to solicit funds not only to help feed the orphans but also to build a new school building on the hospital campus.

During the 2007-2008 school year, NAD educators and



Sandra Blackmer is an assistant editor of *Adventist World*.

Eager Participants

Hope for Humanity (HFH) is the force behind millions of dollars collected annually by church members in North America to support humanitarian work in local communities and abroad. Headquartered at the North American Division (NAD) office in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, and run by department director Maitland DiPinto, HFH has been actively involved with meeting needs at Maluti Hospital.

“Maluti hospital serves a very underprivileged area with a high HIV/AIDS rate. They are doing a tremendous job there under very difficult circumstances,” DiPinto says.

One of the difficulties faced by the hospital staff, according to DiPinto, was being able to provide a quality education for their children.

“We felt that in order to give the kids a good education they needed a better school—better facilities,” he says. “So [the new school] was to give the kids a better education, but also a way to greatly enhance the ability of the hospital to carry out its mission by retaining well-qualified staff.”

NAD educators voted in December 2007 to attempt to raise enough money through Adventist K-12 schools division-wide to build a six-classroom building on the hospital campus. The incorporation of volunteer student and adult labor to help construct the facility greatly lowered the projected cost of the project, but the estimated total still came in at a staggering \$250,000. This would cover not only the cost of the construction materials and local laborers’ wages but also would provide desks, books, computers, and playground equipment. The division education leaders pressed ahead by sending information and a DVD about the project to every NAD school and asking each of them to set a fund-raising goal of \$5.00 per student—and

although there are still more funds to be raised, the teachers and students responded.

In September 2009—in partnership with HFH and Maranatha International, and coordinated by Pacific Union education director Kelly Bock and contractor Robert Jackson from Washington State—40 students, sponsors, and other adult volunteers, the first of three groups scheduled consecutively to make the arduous journey by air to Lesotho, began work on the school.

“The interactions we enjoyed with the local workers and the spirit of cooperation and enthusiasm made it clear that God was our leader throughout the project,” Bock says. This school will enable the administration and staff to recruit more students from the surrounding area and to share the love of Jesus in a wonderful new facility.”

Maranatha International storyteller Richard Duerksen sees the organizational partnership as an asset to the project. Describing the cooperative endeavor among Maranatha team members, NAD educators, and HFH



CHRIS MAKWERO



KELLY BOCK

Top to bottom: THE NEW SCHOOL: Construction of the school on the Maluti Hospital is almost completed. STUDENT VOLUNTEERS: Students from Adventist schools throughout the NAD traveled to Lesotho to help construct the new school.

students throughout the division’s kindergarten through twelfth-grade (K-12) system raised more than \$120,000 for Hope for Humanity’s feeding program for the orphans. Then they turned their attention to the needs of Maluti.

Blackmer concedes that building a new school is “a very ambitious undertaking that involves the costs of not only the building materials but also of the construction itself.” He and other educators determined, however, that if they could recruit volunteer labor—academy students as well as adults—to help augment wages that would be paid to locally hired workers, “with the Lord’s blessing, we believed the project was doable.”

“We just resolved to step out in faith,” Blackmer says.

leaders as “a real pleasure,” Duerksen notes, “Our team included the Ecuador steel crew who fabricated the school’s steel structure as well as cement and steel workers from Mexico and Mozambique. This project truly represents the miracles that can be accomplished when international groups work together to accomplish the impossible.”

River Plate Adventist University sophomore and Spanish major Melissa Breetzke served as translator between Maranatha-sponsored construction engineers from South America and project organizers throughout much of the venture. Describing Lesotho as “a land of big mountains, noisy farm animals, and enchanting souls,” Breetzke says she had a “phenomenal time” there.

“It seemed like this trip was custom-designed for me,” Breetzke says. “Even though it was some of the hardest work I’ve ever done, I was happier than ever.”

The people, she says, impressed her the most.

“They taught me Lesotho words and called me their sister and daughter,” Breetzke notes. “They laughed merrily at my attempts to make the clicking noises they use in their language, and they cheered when I remembered the phrases they taught me.”

She concedes, though, that the work turned out to be more strenuous than she anticipated. Because the heater in the room she was staying in didn’t always work, the nights, she says, “were freezing cold, and we woke up early some mornings to work for 10 hours hauling some of the

heaviest pieces of metal I’ve ever encountered.”

Breetzke is convinced that the Maluti school project was “all God’s doing.” She says in Africa she found “the real stuff—the pure, concentrated bliss of a life well lived. This, to me, is a nearer taste of heaven than anything you find in books.... It was one of the best times of my life.”

The Role of Adventist Education

Blackmer notes, “One of the roles of Adventist education is to help students understand that they are part of a global community and that they have a responsibility to that community. The Maluti Mission project and the hundreds of other local community and international mission projects conducted by Adventist education every year allow our youth to share their time, talents, and resources with those in need.”

He adds, “I believe that children and youth from places such as Lesotho have lessons to teach our students. Many of these young people live with disease, hunger, and violence as part of their daily lives, yet they eagerly share what they have, and their smiles come from the heart. There is much that we can learn from them.

“The NAD is committed to finding ways for every student, every year—if they so desire—to become involved with a mission project.”

For more information and to view additional pictures, go to www.nadeducation.org/maluti or www.hope4.com/maluti.

*www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/lt.html.

STUDENTS *and* TEACHERS *Respond*

Schools throughout the North American Division (NAD) have been involved with fund-raising for the Maluti school mission project. Here is a story from one of those schools:

Appalachian Christian Academy, Manchester, Kentucky, U.S.A.

When ACA teacher Debbie Brock opened the information package the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference education department had sent to her regarding the Maluti Mission fund-raising project, she wondered how much of a contribution her school would be able to make. After all, she reminded the Lord, “we are a very small school of merely seven students located in the poorest county in Kentucky.” But after sharing the project information with her students and showing them the DVD about

Maluti, they felt compelled to help.

Brock and the students thought the \$5.00 per student goal that the NAD Education Department had set was too low, because that would amount to only \$35 for ACA. So after brainstorming about possible fund-raising events they set an ambitious goal of \$1,500. Ideas they generated for raising funds and wrote on the classroom board included:

- Radio ad
- Readathon
- Talent program, including the school’s puppet ministry team
- Yard sale

Donations began trickling in throughout November and December 2008 after the DVD was shown in area churches. The readathon, held the following February, brought in an additional \$400. The talent

show resulted in about \$500 for the project. Then the yard sale raised the total substantially with another \$1,000.

“By this time we had raised approximately \$3,000,” Brock says. “When school ended on May 21, 2009, the total had increased to \$4,500. But there were a few more individuals to contact, now that [the students and I] had done all that we could do.”

Brock personally called a few more individuals who had pledged to help, raising the amount collected to \$7,000. Soon after, an Adventist couple showed up at her house and presented an envelope containing \$4,500, bringing the total to \$11,500.

“I feel like Moses at the burning bush when he realized that he was standing in the presence of God and that God wanted him to help with His work here on earth,” Brock says. “I feel both honored and humbled to have had a small part in this adventure.... This mission was God’s all along.”

Our mental picture of Jesus seems to lean toward the human side. After all, Jesus was a man. We have thousands of paintings—artists’ conceptions—of Jesus, showing Him playing with children, talking to medical professionals, or merely looking at the “camera” or off into space.

But the men who documented His earthly ministry in the Gospels also made it clear that within the human Jesus who dwelt among us walked God in human flesh! And the idea of the divinity of Jesus brings up many startling concepts that boggle the mind. They lead us back to the beginning of our planet, when “God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).^{*} Wouldn’t Jesus’ divinity demand that He played a part in bringing the earth into existence?



What Have We Done?

By
THURMAN C.
PETTY, JR.

Talking about Jesus—about who He is and what He’s done for us

There’s no doubt about it. Paul emphatically proclaims that Jesus was “in very nature God, [and] did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped” (Phil. 2:6). John the disciple agreed, saying that Jesus “was God” and that “through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made” (John 1:1-3).

That would have included the entire universe, wouldn’t it? Wow! Imagine reading Genesis like this: “In the beginning [Jesus] created the heavens and the earth.” And “[Jesus] also made the stars” (see Gen. 1:16).¹

This cannot help changing our image of the baby born to Mary—the one and only God-man. And yet ... the apostles lead us to the inescapable truth that the One who created the universe, including our planet with all its human inhabitants, suffered and died on a cross outside Jerusalem to save us from our sins.²

What *sacrifice!* What *love!* It brings us to our knees in utter humiliation at *what we’ve done.*

Look What He Did

Going back to the general idea of creation once more—to the fact that Jesus created the entire universe—let’s look a bit closer at His marvelous works. To help us grasp this concept, let’s use one of the tricks of science fiction. We’ll imagine that we’ve become astronauts and have the privilege of exploring the universe that Jesus made.

Our space shuttle blasts into the earth’s orbit, and we soon transfer to a giant starship for an intergalactic journey. Once aboard we strap ourselves into reclining couches and soon zoom into outer space at the speed of light—11 million miles per minute (18 million km/min).

At this fantastic speed we’d zip past our sun in less than nine minutes, and fly by the distant Pluto in only five and a half hours. Continuing on into deep space, we’d have to travel four and a half years before we’d pass Alpha Centauri—the nearest fixed star. One hundred thousand years would slip by, however, before we’d cross our Milky

Way Galaxy, and another 2 million years would become history before we'd even approach the great galaxy of Andromeda, known to contain 100 billion suns. And then we'd have only begun. For beyond Andromeda lie at least 2 billion other galaxies—each containing billions of suns!

And, according to Scripture, the One we know as Jesus of Nazareth created all these vast systems!

No wonder the ancient psalmist exclaimed: “When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and stars, which you have set in place, *what is man* ... that you care for him?” (Ps. 8:3, 4).

Why would the Creator of all those magnificent star systems care to notice a race of micron human rebels living on a speck of dust called Earth in a far corner of His universe? The Bible says it's because of *LOVE*, divine love, that's vaster—and yet more specific—than our finite minds can comprehend.

Myriads of gigantic suns,
Racing through the trackless void
On courses known but to an omniscient mind.
Splendor beyond description!
Each flaming mass screams with a silent voice,
“God is my maker.”

Men on one tiny orb declare:
“There is *no* God!”

Yet the God whom they say does not exist,
Went to that dejected world,
And *DIED*—for me!³

And Look What We Did!

Perhaps the idea we find most startling is the fact that God created planet Earth, knowing all the time that the human race would eventually murder Him.⁴ The selfish nature of every human being clearly reveals how deeply we have become involved. In fact, every time we act in an unloving way toward an animal or another person, we show God that if we had been in Adam's place, we would have joined him in his open revolt against the Creator!⁵

To help us understand this terrible truth, let's travel backward through time, again in imagination, to three gardens: Eden, Gethsemane, and Golgotha. When we superimpose over the others the events that happened in each, we get a unique understanding of *what we have done*:

God smiles as He shows us the magnificent Garden of Eden—fresh from His creative hands. And we show our gratitude by threatening Him to the point that He sweats great drops of blood while in agony He cries out to His Father for release. Then we grab Him by the wrist and spit in His face. We thrust a crown of thorns onto His head,

striking it again and again in order to drive the needle-sharp spikes deep into His noble brow. Yet He continues to love us, willing to die to save us.

We tear off His clothes, and scourge His back until blood flows freely. We grasp those gentle power-filled hands that formed us out of clay, slam them down against splintery timbers, and hammer giant spikes through His sensitive palms, stringing Him up like a criminal.

And Jesus—who spoke unnumbered worlds into being, whose command could instantly mobilize billions of angels, and whose terrible gaze could vaporize us—cries out, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34, KJV).

We hanged our God between earth and sky, with nails through hands and feet. And here we stand, still clutching the hammer that drove those nails! Here we stand, knowing that *we* should be hanging on that cross!

We must bear the blame, for our daily sins still nail Jesus to the cross as surely as did the cruel hands of those leaders 2,000 years ago. As it was with Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel, we still want to do things our own way, rather than submit our lives to God's will. And this selfishness still crowns Him with jagged thorns, and drives spears into His side. We should bear the terrible guilt ourselves, not He.

But there He is ... hanging on the cross, instead of us. Hanging on the cross for our sins—no—for *my* sins! *He's dying for ME!* The realization of my crime brings me to despair, to deep sorrow for what I've done, to *repentance*.

And God forgives me. He smiles at me as He once smiled at Adam.

Yes, He took upon Himself the penalty that I should pay for my rebellion. He hung between earth and sky. He took my place. He bore my sins (1 Peter 2:24). And now He forgives me (1 John 1:9).

What have we done? That's not even a relevant question. Instead it should be: *What has GOD done?* And here's the answer: “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). ●

*All Scripture references are from the NIV, unless otherwise indicated.

¹The same might be said, of course, about each member of the Trinity.

²Philippians 2:5-8; compare John 3:16.

³“The Silent Voice,” by the author.

⁴Compare Revelation 13:8; 1 Peter 1:18-20.

⁵Compare Isaiah 53:4-6.



Thurman C. Petty, a retired Adventist pastor and author, writes from Burleson, Texas.



Adventist World executive publisher Bill Knott sat down with Adventist World Radio (AWR) president Ben Schoun to discover why radio continues to be an effective means of sharing the gospel in the farthest corners of the world.

Some people estimate that AWR's worldwide reach actually exceeds that of all other Adventist media put together. Would that be a fair assessment?

It's very likely the case. We generally estimate that we're covering at least 70 percent of the world's population, not counting our Internet broadcasts. We don't concentrate on the very-well-developed parts of the world, but rather on the high-population and less-evangelized areas, such as Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and other regions. Those are the places where people are able to receive our broadcasts.

We reach large, large numbers of people in these isolated places of the world, and we have the potential to do that for one reason: because we use shortwave radio. Shortwave isn't used much here in the United States or in other developed places because people like to use local FM radio, as the quality of the sound is much higher. But as far as reaching large numbers of listeners around the world, shortwave is highly effective.

AWR's roots began in shortwave, nearly 40 years ago, but today you also broadcast through other media, am I correct?

Indeed. As peoples' listening habits change in various areas, we shift our broadcasting methods as well. In South America, we were active in shortwave for many years, but today that region uses local radio (AM and FM) almost exclusively. Likewise, Africa is in the midst of a transition, as more and more countries are making local radio

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Is Not

Enough

Why Adventist World Radio believes its work has just begun



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licenses available—and offering those licenses specifically to AWR. We are preparing for a major initiative in Internet broadcasting, where *all* our programs, in *all* our languages, will be available as podcasts, which will be a huge resource for the church around the world. And we have done pilot projects in a number of countries where we distributed self-contained digital audio players, with great response.

If you think of the kinds of people to whom this article will go—*Adventist World* readers—who live in AWR's target regions, what would you want to say to those people? What does AWR need from them?

First of all, in these places around the world, we need people who, when they learn of a person who is accepting Christ by listening to the radio, will take them in, befriend them, introduce them to the church, and do whatever they can to make them part of the family of God. That's a very important thing.

Also, where people are able, we need financial support, because the more money we have, the more broadcasts we can put out. It's a simple equation.

Do you have an average cost per language?

Looking at just airtime costs, a half-hour broadcast ranges from US\$20,000 to US\$35,000 over a year's time.

That gives people a sense of what their support could mean. How many languages do you currently broadcast in?

We have programs available in nearly 80 languages, but 80 is not enough! There are about 6,000 languages in the world. Many of them are very small, isolated languages, and most of those people know other languages besides. But there are generally considered to be about 200 critically-important languages spoken in the world. So you can see that our work has just begun.

If I lived in the 10/40 window, and I encountered an AWR broadcast, what would make it distinctive from other kinds of content?

I'll tell you a story. A fellow in Ethiopia traveling among the Afar people, who are Muslims in the eastern part of the country and rather fearsome. A big, tall Afar guy said to the traveler, "I know what you're listening to!" Our traveler was a little intimidated because this man was accusing him of listening to a Christian program. But as they talked through a translator, the Afar man finally said, "I know what you're listening to because it has the same beginning and ending music as the program I listen to!" The theme music identified our broadcasts in two different languages.

But so often people will comment that our programs are different from anything they've heard.

What makes them so different?

Of course, we have a Christian orientation, so there is a different type of music. We use a magazine format, which is made up of a health segment, often a family life segment, and then a Bible study or spiritual segment. And those topics deal with better living and improving community life—things that catch people's attention. Some of our studios even give training in agricultural principles, or they may have some children's stories or educational programming.

You typically lead in with these more broadly based kinds of things?

That's right. And when people hear that, they say, "I've never heard this on the radio before!" It's a wonderful way to attract listeners in other cultures, such as Muslims. In the Afar area I was talking about, there are Muslim leaders who have recommended our programs to their people because of the health information that is in them.

Given the reach of AWR, how many employed staff do you count as part of the AWR ministry? And collaterally,



AWR *in Brief*

Mission: To carry the Adventist hope in Christ to the hardest-to-reach people groups of the world in their own languages

Types of media: Shortwave radio, local AM/FM radio, Internet podcasts, self-contained audio devices with preloaded content

Target audiences: Non-Christian listeners around the world—particularly in Africa, Asia/Pacific, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe

Current number of languages: Nearly 80

Goal: To broadcast in the more than 200 essential languages of the world

Unique programming: Original programs created by native speakers of local languages, which address all aspects of people's lives, from spiritual and physical health to family life, Adventist beliefs, and more

To learn more or to become a supporter, please contact:

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Top to bottom: UNDER CONSTRUCTION: One country in Africa has a list of 35 cities and towns where it is willing to grant licenses to AWR for FM stations. SUN-POWERED: AWR president Ben Schoun demonstrates a multi-powered solar radio to villagers in the region of Fianarantsoa, Madagascar. CASTING A WIDER NET: When Nepal declared itself a secular state, AWR seized the opportunity to do much more broadcasting. In addition to its shortwave broadcasts, AWR will be on 10 FM stations throughout the country by the end of the year.

how much depends on volunteers?

Working directly for and paid by AWR, we have about 35 people around the world.

To reach 70 percent of the world's population?

Yes. However, you must remember that the actual producers in the studios are not directly paid by AWR. We work with and through the local church organizations, whether it be

the division, or the union conference, or a local mission conference. We ask them to hire the staff for the studios, because they know the language.

So the majority of people actually sitting in a studio or assisting technically with a production are individuals who are employed in some way by the wider Adventist Church?

Yes. But we also have many volunteers in addition. I think of a studio in

Madagascar. They have two full-time people in the studio. But they have about 15 volunteers—people who come in and spend a few hours every day to produce a segment, or help put together a program, or help in the office. So there is a large team. I'm proud to say that there are a large number of volunteers around the world working for AWR. In fact, a few years ago in one North African Muslim country, where there is only a

handful of Adventists, there was one period of time in which every single Adventist in that country was working in some way for AWR!

In that collaboration between AWR employees, regionally employed church members, and volunteers, how do listeners know whom to contact to respond to something they hear?

Since follow-up is necessary in local languages, we try to have each of our studios be a means of providing additional literature or information to follow up with these individuals. Because the program speaker already has a connection with the listeners, he or she can write them a letter that's meaningful to them, or can send some material in the local language.

Traditionally, this communication took place through mail services. However, we didn't hear from many, many listeners, and of course we still don't. The main reason is that many listeners are very poor. They can't afford to buy postage. Many of them are illiterate and cannot write. Many of them are afraid because a letter might be intercepted, and in some countries that might mean their life. So there are a number of reasons why we do not have as much mail, perhaps, as an ordinary radio station.

In recent years more and more people have been sending e-mail to us. In Hong Kong, we have a full-time Internet evangelist who spends every day on his computer, sending and receiving e-mail messages. He has been remarkably successful in preparing people for baptism in these far-off places, people he's never met.

Phone calls are a third means, especially in certain parts of Africa, where everybody uses a cell phone. In our studio in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for instance, they probably get more phone calls than any other means of communication.

I'm intrigued by the fact that your model for ministry differs

significantly from other major media ministries. One thinks of a Christian broadcaster in North America, in which listeners write to the broadcaster's headquarters in Oklahoma, for example. You seem to have a very diffuse model.

Yes. It's decentralized, and that's largely driven because AWR is broadcasting in so many languages. We are strong believers in using local languages to reach the hearts of the people, and we find much more success when we use people's mother tongue to bring them to a willingness to read the Bible or understand the concept of salvation.

That means you have to measure success somewhat differently than a typical Christian broadcaster would. Your success is really the successes of 80 language ministries.

Yes, very true. And even then we can't judge entirely by how many responses we get through the mail. Some years ago we began broadcasting to the Maasai people in East Africa. Most of those people don't read or write. And if you went by listener responses, you'd think nobody was listening! But when you travel among the Maasai, it is amazing how many of those people are listening to the radio and also have made the decision to become Seventh-day Adventist Christians.

It suggests, in fact, that the diffuse, decentralized model you're describing is one that is really about building up indigenous churches; is that it?

Yes. In fact, we have a phenomenon that we call "AWR churches." We have, in various countries, people who begin to learn and share with each other how they like our radio program, and pretty soon they are meeting together, listening to the radio together, and then worshipping on a regular basis. And nobody in the church organization knows anything about them.

Your story sounds remarkably like some of the earliest experiences with

Adventism in the 1870s. There were individuals who weren't cognizant that there were other formed groups or a central denomination, even in Battle Creek.

That's true. And those groups are popping up in a number of different countries. Before John Ash retired as secretary of the China Union Mission, he would tell me every so often about traveling in China and running across a group of people who were keeping the Sabbath and believed almost the same as we did. He would ask them, "How did you learn these things?" They said, "Oh, we've been listening to the radio." And that's how these groups form. Of course, eventually we try to lead and integrate them into the fellowship of the church, but I know that we're reaching many people whom we know nothing about.

So when you ask people to support this ministry, it's based on the unknown premise that God is going to do something with the preached word?

We call ourselves "mission radio" because we are out to reach people in places where they don't have a strong Adventist membership or even an Adventist organization. So we have to have resources and gifts from people in the stronger areas of the world. That's truly mission radio! I often talk with people and they say, "Well, I can't hear your radio! Why should I give to you?" I say, "Because you have an interest in the salvation of those people. Because Jesus is not going to come for *you* until everyone has had a chance to hear the message of salvation!"

You're really appealing to people's mission commitment, their altruism, if you will.

That's all it is. We tell people stories, and the reward is to hear the miracle of how people's lives are changed, and how people who've never seen a Bible in their lives are now loving Jesus Christ. ●

Perfection

By
ROBERT J. ROSS

Ground straight and polished smooth

As a volunteer night chaplain, I watched an emergency room doctor tying the last knot of the many stitches that pulled the flesh together of what had been, just a few moments earlier, a gaping hole. He straightened his back and with eyes still focused on the repaired wound, spoke—as if to himself—the words, “perfect, just perfect.” I later thought, *What did he really mean by that? Was it the stitching itself? Or the wound now perfectly closed? Was it the great job he did, or all of the above?*

Jesus’ prominent Sermon on the Mount covers three chapters (Matt. 5–7) and focuses initially on the attitudes we should foster, being blessed or happy, regardless of circumstances. We know this first section as the beatitudes. Christ then shifts the attention to our motivations as to why we do what we do. It is our motives, our attitude, what we think,



Robert J. Ross, a native of South Africa, is pastoring the Meadow Vista church in the

Northern California Conference, U.S.A. He enjoys woodcarving and drawing and his ever-growing family, including six grandchildren.

that shapes our actions that ultimately count. Halfway through His sermon, Jesus makes this startling statement in Matt. 5:48: “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”¹

What Does “Perfect” Mean?

“Perfect,” in the Bible, is expressed in many ways by many translations. Perfect can be blameless, loyal, complete, mature, knowledgeable, patient, loving, and following Him. Perfect describes things such as the law of liberty (James 1:25), sacrifices (Lev. 22:21), or God’s will (Rom. 12:2). Perfection is also often linked to action: the church of Sardis is rebuked because Christ had “not found [their] works perfect” (Rev. 3:2). To the rich young ruler Jesus counsels, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have ... and ... follow Me” (Matt. 19:21).

With all these uses, what then is “perfect,” or put more colloquially, “how white must the color white be, for perfect whiteness?” Ellen White’s famous quote “As God is perfect in His sphere, so we are to be perfect in ours,”² may be helpful here and alludes to two different levels of perfection, God’s and humans’.

We know for sure that God at His level is perfect. “He is the Rock, His work is perfect” (Deut. 32:4). We also

know that Jesus is perfect, “having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation” (Heb. 5:9). We definitely recognize that we are not perfect, for our “righteousnesses are like filthy rags” in God’s sight (Isa. 64:6). What “perfection in our sphere” must we then have? Jesus gives us a hint in His high-priestly prayer of John 17:23, “I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one.” Perfection, then, has two levels, God’s perfect Oneness within the Godhead, and humans’ perfect oneness with Christ.

Objective Perfection: God’s Perfect Oneness

Only Divinity can ever stake claim to this perfect oneness. It is the ultimate perfection. Even though God’s Son clothed Himself with frail humanity, tempted when His human body was at its weakest, still Satan could not place the tiniest wedge between Father and Son. Only Divinity can change rocks into bread. Through obedience to His Father, Jesus refused to use His own Divinity independently of His Father. “In Christ, divinity and humanity were combined. Divinity was not degraded to humanity; divinity held its place, but humanity by being united to divinity, withstood the fiercest test of temptation in the wilderness.”³ “He...

suffered being tempted,' suffered in proportion to the perfection of His holiness. But the prince of darkness found nothing in Him; not a single thought or feeling responded to temptation."⁴ Jesus had the perfect attitude and oneness toward His Father that motivated Him to resist all temptations.

Subjective Perfection: Our Oneness With Christ

I like the way Ellen White describes our need of atonement. "Man could not atone for man. His sinful, fallen condition would constitute him an imperfect offering, an atoning sacrifice of less value than Adam before his fall. God made man perfect and upright, and after his transgression there could be no sacrifice acceptable to God for him, unless the offering made should in value be superior to man as He was in his state of perfection and innocence."⁵

Christ's pure attitude motivated absolute obedience resulting in a complete Oneness with the Father. That is true perfection. It is that imputed perfection that becomes the only means of our salvation. "This sacrifice was offered for the purpose of restoring man to his original perfection: yea more ... to give him an entire transformation of character."⁶

The imparted righteousness of Christ is the work He does in us, of changing us into His image, a oneness with Him. This is what being perfect in our sphere truly means. It is to be perfectly one with Him. Our attitudes are changed, motivating obedience in us to reflect Him fully. The image He originally created us to be is reflected by our oneness with Him (see Heb. 5:8, 9). Oneness is not found by subtracting wrongs out of ourselves, for that will leave a vacuum. Rather, by addition we grab everything of Christ we can get a hold of, denying

that which shadows His glory. By beholding we become like Him and are changed into His glory. We will not only be His image but will be one with Him.

Perfect Union

Scientists have recently discovered a way to make the first 100 percent completely flat and smooth surface on machined and highly polished glass. It is so flat and smooth that when two of these thick sheets of glass are slid one over the other, displacing all the air, the bond between the molecules becomes so great that it is near impossible to separate the two sheets of glass. They are truly one. Jesus' perfect oneness with the Father through His obedience here on earth becomes our robe of (His) righteousness imputed to us for all of

eternity. The righteousness that He wants to impart to us is the perfect oneness we can have through His Spirit's leading. Obedience motivated by genuine love allows Him daily to grind and polish us until we are so absolutely bonded as one in Him that we will be nearly impossible to separate.

I think that captures something of what the emergency room doctor meant as he finished his stitching job. The wound was closed. The flesh was back together again as it should be. No more tearing apart. No more bleeding. Healing could begin. Perhaps there would not even be a scar—perfect. ●

¹All Scripture references have been taken from the NKJV.

²Ellen G. White, *Christian Education*, p. 217.

³Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, Feb. 18, 1890.

⁴Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 422.

⁵Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 9.

⁶Ellen G. White, Manuscript 49, 1898.

Experience of Salvation

In infinite love and mercy God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might be made the righteousness of God. Led by the Holy Spirit we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions, and exercise faith in Jesus as Lord and Christ, as Substitute and Example. This faith that receives salvation comes through the divine power of the Word and is the gift of God's grace. Through Christ we are justified, adopted as God's sons and daughters, and delivered from the lordship of sin. Through the Spirit we are born again and sanctified; the Spirit renews our minds, writes God's law of love in our hearts, and we are given the power to live a holy life. Abiding in Him we become partakers of the divine nature and have the assurance of salvation now and in the judgment. (2 Cor. 5:17-21; John 3:16; Gal. 1:4; 4:4-7; Titus 3:3-7; John 16:8; Gal. 3:13, 14; 1 Peter 2:21, 22; Rom. 10:17; Luke 17:5; Mark 9:23, 24; Eph. 2:5-10; Rom. 3:21-26; Col. 1:13, 14; Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 3:26; John 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:23; Rom. 12:2; Heb. 8:7-12; Eze. 36:25-27; 2 Peter 1:3, 4; Rom. 8:1-4; 5:6-10.)

If more tact and discretion were used in the presentation of the truth, by ministers in their discourses and by the canvassers in their work, much more would be accomplished than we now see. Because of a neglect in this direction, many have a misconception of our faith and doctrine which they would never have formed if their first impressions had been more favorable.

Ministry to All Classes

It is our duty to get as close to the people in high places as we can by personal efforts. Such labor will not exclude the poorer and lower classes, but both high and low will have an opportunity to be benefited by the truths of the Bible. If our own words and lives show the refining influence of the truth of God upon the heart, those who become acquainted with us will see that the religion of the Bible never degrades the receiver, and as they accept the truth they will perceive the duties and responsibilities resting upon them in their turn to

be representatives of Jesus Christ upon the earth.

The truth of God, obeyed from the heart, is constantly elevating, refining, and ennobling the receiver. It is not worldly wisdom, but God-given wisdom that reaches us to present the truth in such a manner that it will reach the higher classes, who will when converted to the truth exert an influence in its favor, and who will help to sustain it with their intrusted [sic] talents of influence and means.

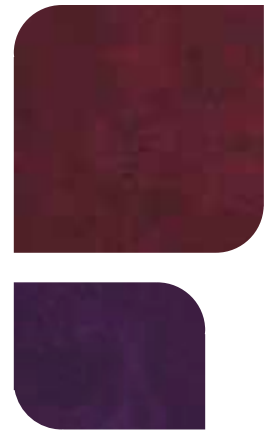
The duty we owe to our fellowmen places us under obligations to put out our talents, in the light of truth which we have received, as well as the talents of means to the exchangers. By winning souls to Jesus Christ—souls who are in responsible positions, and whose influence can be a power to reach men and women of the higher classes whom God has seen fit to intrust [sic] with large capacity for doing good—talents will be doubled. The influence of our work, even though it be through but one soul gained, is far-reaching; our talent is out to the exchanger, and is constantly increasing.

By
ELLEN G.
WHITE

Creativity, Tact, and

Faithfulness

Reaching out to everyone





Find the Right Gospel Dose and Approach

The workers in the cause should not feel that the only way they can work is to make known all points of doctrine as held by Seventh-day Adventists, at once, and in every place. Such a course would close the ears of the people at the outset, and frustrate the end sought. God would have His workers be as lambs among wolves, wise as serpents, but harmless as doves. Their own ideas must be laid aside, and they must follow the direction of the Spirit of God. They should not feel that all the truth of God is to be spoken to unbelievers on any and every occasion, but should plan carefully what to say and what to leave unsaid.

This is not practicing deception; it is working as Paul worked. He says, “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” He did not approach the Jews in a way to stir up their prejudice. He did not run the risk of making them his enemies by telling them the first thing that they must believe on Jesus of Nazareth; but he dwelt on the promises of the Old Testament Scriptures, which testified of Christ, of His mission, and of His work. Thus he led them along step by step, showing them the importance of honoring the law of God.

He also gave due honor to the ceremonial law, showing that Christ was the one that instituted the whole Jewish economy of sacrificial service. After dwelling upon these things, evincing that he had a clear understanding of them himself, he brought them down to the first advent of Christ, and proved that in the crucified Jesus every specification had been fulfilled.

This was the wisdom that Paul exercised. He approached the Gentiles, not by exalting the law at first, but by exalting Christ, and then showing the binding claims of the law. He showed them plainly how the light that was reflected from the cross of Calvary gave significance and glory to the whole Jewish system. Thus he varied his manner of labor, always shaping his message to the circumstances under which he was placed; and, yet, though after patient labor he was successful to a large degree, many would not be convinced.

There are some who will not be convinced by any method of presenting the truth. The laborer for God should, nevertheless, study carefully the best method, in order that he may not arouse prejudice or stir up

The laborer for God should, nevertheless, study carefully the best method, in order that he may not arouse prejudice or stir up combativeness unnecessarily.

combativeness unnecessarily. Let him give the people evidence that he is a true Christian, conscientious, desiring peace and not strife, and that he has a love for their souls. Thus the confidence of the people will be gained.

Christ said to his disciples, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” There were many things He did not say to them because their education and ideas were of such a character that His instruction would have confused their minds, and raised questioning and unbelief that it would have been difficult to remove.

Be Creative in Your Mission

God’s workmen must be many-sided men; that is, they must have breadth of character. They must not be one-sided men, stereotyped in their manner of working, getting into a groove where they are unable to see that their words and manner of labor must vary to suit the class of people they are with, and the circumstances they have to meet. All should be constantly seeking to subdue their own prominent characteristics and educate their weaker powers, so that the mind may be evenly balanced. This is necessary, if they make useful, successful laborers. God would have His servants, old and young, continually improving, learning better how to reach the people. They should not settle down contented, thinking that their ways are perfect, and that others must work just as they work. All our methods and plans should bear the divine mold. ●

This article was first published in *The Atlantic Canvasser*, December 11, 1890. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.



A Team Effort

As editors and staff of *Adventist World* we do most of our work behind the scenes. Sure, you see our names on the masthead (page 31), but you may not know our faces, or what we do for the magazine. The photograph on these two pages will help you put names to faces and give you a glimpse of our responsibilities at the church's world headquarters.

Still unsung and unnoticed are the copy editors, graphic designers, translators, press and bindery workers, and delivery people around the world who make sure your copy of *Adventist World* arrives in your home or church. We honor all our partners who make this global ministry possible.—EDITORS AND STAFF.

Left to right:

Kimberly Luste Maran, assistant editor, coordinates the World Exchange portion of *Adventist World*, including The People's Place, and writes or edits occasional feature articles.

Roy Adams, associate editor, is responsible for devotionals, prepares the occasional cover story, and, with other senior editors, supervises the prepress materials for the various issues.

Merle Poirier, operations manager, coordinates production deadlines; communicates with translators, publishing houses, and vendors; and tracks shipping around the world.

Left to right:

Gerald A. Klingbeil, associate editor, coordinates articles dealing with biblical studies, archaeology, fundamental beliefs, Adventist heritage, and the Spirit of Prophecy. Originally from Germany, he has lived and served in four different countries (South Africa, Peru, Argentina, and the Philippines).

Marvene Thorpe-Baptiste, editorial assistant, processes manuscripts for evaluation, informing authors as to their progress. She assists editors in editing/preparing manuscripts for publication, processes honoraria, mails checks and complimentary copies of the magazine.

Carlos Medley is online editor for *Adventist World* and *Adventist Review* magazines. He oversees the department's eight Web sites, searches for supplementary Web materials, and works with authors.

Sandra Blackmer, assistant editor, coordinates the Adventist Life and World Health sections of the magazine as well as edits and writes feature articles.



Left to right:

Bill Knott is executive publisher and editor-in-chief of *Adventist World* and *Adventist Review* magazines.

Wilona Karimabadi is editorial and marketing director for *KidsView*, *Adventist Review's* magazine for children. She works on *Adventist World* Web sites for English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese, and writes occasional features.

Claude Richli, associate publisher, develops new international opportunities for *Adventist World* by working with regional church leaders to create and finance new print and Web editions in more languages and territories. He has served the church in Africa, Europe, and North America.

Rachel Child, executive assistant to the editor, coordinates administrative operations and invoicing to assure an efficient financial system.



Left to right:

Judy Thomsen, correspondence editor, responds to all e-mails, letters, and prayer requests, and coordinates Letters and The Place of Prayer in the magazine. She also assists the associate publisher.

Mark Kellner has served as news editor since 2007. In that role he coordinates news coverage and produces news features, such as the July and November 2009 cover stories.

Alfredo Garcia-Marenko, editorial assistant, records minutes from cover committee and production meetings, makes corrections to manuscripts, and transmits digital files to designers and printers. He speaks both Spanish and Portuguese and has a rich background of leadership in youth ministry.

Stephen Chavez, managing editor, edits columns, serves as liaison with the North American Division, and oversees the flow of material from our editorial office, through the process of graphic design, and on to the publishing house.

Allow me to deal with the contextual issue present in Daniel 1:3-21, and in the process I'll answer your specific question.

The fall of the kingdom of Judah and the expatriation of many Israelites to Babylon exposed their faith to new challenges. They were in a land with a different culture and with radically different religious convictions, making it difficult for them to practice their religious faith.

1. Cultural Assimilation: The Babylonian king's intent was to slowly shift the loyalty of the young Hebrews from their God to his gods, from Jerusalem to Babylon. That was the goal of the professional and psychological components of their training program.

First, their sense of self-worth was enhanced by taking them to the royal palace, where they were part of the intellectual elite. This could easily have created in them a sense of acceptance in a foreign land and gratitude to the king for trusting them.

Second, they were to be trained in the languages and literature of Babylon. Daniel may already have spoken several languages, but he would have had to learn at least Aramaic and Akkadian in order to communicate with others and read the literature that dealt with matters of science (e.g., mathematics, astronomy), music, and religion (e.g., mythology, divination, astrology), and be indoctrinated into the Babylonian worldview. The rest of the book of Daniel demonstrates that the indoctrination failed.

Third, cultural assimilation began with changing their identity by giving them names that included the names of Babylonian deities (Dan. 1:7). Their personal commitment to the Lord was threatened. Interestingly, the Hebrew spelling of the Babylonian names appears to have intentionally corrupted the original names, thus showing their resistance to cultural and religious assimilation.

2. Food Provision: The king determined the diet of Daniel and his friends. This would've been considered a privilege and part of the benefits of studying at the University of Babylon. The food was supplied by the king. We know that Babylonian kings not only provided daily rations to some of their officers but also housing facilities. The biblical text seems to suggest that the food given to

Daniel and his friends was a portion of the food prepared for the king himself, the best Babylon had to offer. The king's main interest would have been to assure that they looked well and excelled in their training.

But looking at this decision from a cultural point of view, we realize that the king's intention was deeper: food determines identity; what we eat reveals our culture, even our religious convictions. The emphasis on food was part of the cultural and religious attempt to assimilate the Hebrews into Babylonian religion and culture.

3. Rejecting Cultural Transformation: Daniel "resolved

not to defile himself with the royal food and wine" (verse 8, NIV). "Resolved" is the translation of the Hebrew phrase "place in his heart." Daniel's will and rationality were involved in this decision, probably based on the fact that the king's food was offered to his gods before being brought to Daniel's table. Most probably, this food was not prepared according to the biblical mandate (Lev. 17:10) and would have included unclean meats. These by themselves would have been valid reasons to reject the king's food. But the fact that Daniel elected

on this occasion to practice a vegetarian diet suggests a deeper issue. The king had taken upon himself to "assign" [*yeman*] them their food. The verbal form used here is employed in the Old Testament only for the activity of God (e.g., Ps. 16:5; 61:8; Jonah 2:1), suggesting that the king was taking upon himself a divine prerogative. For Daniel only the Lord could determine what he would eat. In that setting he went back to the original diet that excluded meat (Gen. 1:29; 3:18) and helped him be obedient to the Lord. And the Lord blessed his effort to serve Him. When he was in charge of his own diet he followed the levitical regulations (Dan. 10:3).

The threat of cultural assimilation is still with us. Like Daniel, we should resist it and stand by the values, principles, and teachings of God's Word. ●

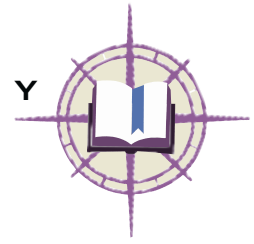
To Eat, Or Not to Eat?



By
ANGEL MANUEL RODRÍGUEZ

QUESTION:
*Was Daniel a
vegetarian?*

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



REVELATION'S Seal of God

By MARK A. FINLEY

The Bible's last book, Revelation, reveals earth's final battle between good and evil. Worship is at the heart of this last conflict. Ultimately, there are only two sides in this war—those loyal to God and those who rebel against Him (Rev. 22:11, 12). These two groups are brought to the forefront in earth's last war under the symbols of the seal of God and the mark of the beast. This month's lesson will focus on the seal of God, a matter of no light importance. It is absolutely vital that we understand the significance of God's eternal seal, and how to receive it.

1. What specific instruction did God give to Revelation's sealing angels?

"Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, 'Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads'" (Rev. 7:2, 3).

Before God's judgments fall on this rebellious planet, God instructs the sealing angel to _____

the _____ of God in their _____.

This passage tells us three important facts about the seal of God: First, God holds back His final judgments until the sealing process is complete. Second, God's servants, those totally loyal and faithful to Him, are the ones sealed. Third, the seal of God is placed in the forehead, a symbol of the mind.

2. Who accomplishes this important work of sealing?

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).

The divine Being who accomplishes the sealing in our lives is the _____ of God.

The seal of God is not a visible seal placed on the forehead as a sign that we belong to God; it has to do with the Holy Spirit deepening our loyalty to Jesus so that we are so settled into His love and truth that nothing can move us.

3. How did the apostle Paul describe the function of God's seal?

"Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are His,' and, 'Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity'" (2 Tim. 2:19).

God's foundation of truth will stand in the final crisis and, "The _____

knows those who are _____."

Today, as in ancient times, a legal seal authenticates a document. Seals identify who the document belongs to and whose authority stands behind it. God's people are identified as standing totally committed to Him, "departing from iniquity" and lovingly obeying Him as a testimony of His saving grace to the world.



4. Where is this seal of obedience to God found?

“Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples” (Isa. 8:16).

God’s seal is found in His _____.

A Christian’s love for God is always revealed in loving obedience to God’s law.

5. What is another name for a seal?

“And [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe” (Rom. 4:11).

Abraham received the _____ of circumcision by

which he demonstrated his loyalty to God. In the Bible a seal and a sign describe the same thing.

6. Does God have an eternal sign of worship that sets His people apart?

“Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them” (Eze. 20:12).

God’s eternal sign of loyalty is the seventh-day Sabbath. Ancient seals contained three major elements: the name, title, and territory of the one placing the official, legal seal upon the document. God’s Sabbath is the only one of the Ten Commandments that contains His name, “the Lord your God”; His title, Creator, “for in six days the Lord made”; and His territory, “the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them” (see Exodus 20:8-11). The seventh-day Sabbath is God’s eternal sign of last-day loyalty. It is the outward symbol of an inner, living faith. At a time of enormous crises and persecution, the Holy Spirit will strengthen God’s faithful children to live lives of godly obedience.

7. What final appeal does God make to all just before His return?

“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. 14:7).

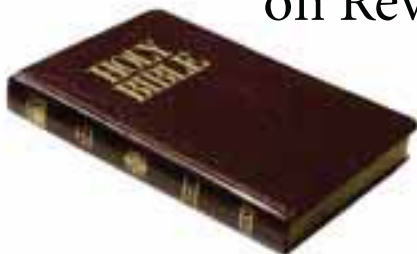
God’s final appeal is a call to worship God as the _____.

“of heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

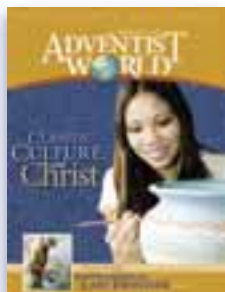
The seventh-day Sabbath is God’s eternal seal of His creative authority. In earth’s last hour it will become the visible sign of our loyalty to Him. Worshiping the Creator on Sabbath at a time of economic boycott and persecution will reveal our dedication to our Lord and to His truth. It will demonstrate that the Holy Spirit has sealed His truth in our hearts and our love for Jesus Christ is so deep, nothing will move us.

Next month we will complete this series
on Revelation with the Bible study,

**“Revelation’s Eternal
Reward.”**



LETTERS



Partnering

After reading in the *Adventist World* about the enthusiasm to join hands with the World Health Organization (“Paulsen Says Church’s Health

Focus Can Help Heal the World,” Sept. 2009), I wondered about what’s happening “on the ground.” Many of our churches are still very effectively meeting community health needs all over the world, and doing it perhaps more effectively than any other group. Vegetarian cooking classes are growing in my country. Many lasting friendships grow out of the CHIP program (Coronary Health Improvement Project), as do baptisms.

I wonder if partnerships with United Nations institutions will achieve what our leaders are anticipating. Please give us some idea of what an official partnership with the WHO would involve. Could it minimize the effectiveness of church programs?

JOHN WALLACE
Kaikohe, New Zealand

Inspiration and Challenge

Thank you for collecting and publishing such inspirational and informational messages in our papers.

Jan Paulsen’s challenge in his presentation at Geneva (“Christ’s

“To read of other people’s challenges and experiences encourages me to live for Christ daily, knowing even the smallest things we take for granted can be used by God in very big ways.”

—JOSEPH KONGORO,
Kenya

Healing in a Changing World,” Sept. 2009) is good for us all, especially the statement “But for Seventh-day Adventists the renewal of all things is not just a future event in history; it’s a process of renewal that begins now. Awaiting the ‘blessed hope’ is not a passive exercise, but something that demands action in the present.” That challenge is not only for those present at his lecture, but one that every Seventh-day Adventist everywhere needs to heed. Every day must begin with a renewal of our Christian walk and our Christian duty.

VIRGINIA MOYER
*Chestertown, Maryland,
United States*



Give Me More

Praise the Lord! I am sending this lesson I saw and completed on Revelation, “Revelation’s End-time Conflict” (Sept. 2009). In my personal study I’ve been in this book. Please forward me any future studies, especially on Revelation.

CHARLES LIVINGSTON, JR.
*Memphis, Tennessee,
United States*



Giving Back

I was touched by the Adopt a Minister International articles (“From Revenge and Grenades to Saving Grace,” Aug. 2009),

especially Marilyn Peek’s “Giving Back” about Reva Lachica Moore. The article was great! My husband and I are trying to give back to others the blessings we have.

Thank you for the *Adventist World* magazine. We normally receive copies in the library of Adventist University Zurcher. We are praying for the continued publication of this magazine.

EVELYN PELAYO
Antsirabe, Madagascar

LETTERS

Reaching Out

I was born in Ethiopia to a Jewish family. All my family are still Jewish, me too. I found your magazine *Adventist World* at an eye clinic in Ethiopia. I read some articles—really interesting, but I need some help. In our religion I read only the Old Testament. I have no idea about the New Testament. Let me know if you wish to teach me about it. If it is possible I will write many questions for you.

DANIEL TEFERA MAMO
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Gratitude and Thanks

I am so glad that it is now possible to read *Adventist World* in German on the Internet! What Adventist wouldn't be interested in what is happening within our church worldwide? We have always received a few English

copies for our church. However, most of our members do not know enough English, yet they would still like to know what's going on.

Along with many others from my church I am looking forward to the upcoming issues.

HANNES SCHINAGL
Vienna, Austria

To access *Adventist World* online in seven languages, go to www.adventistworld.org. To go directly to *Adventist World* in German, go to <http://de.adventistworld.org>.

—EDITORS.

I derive much pleasure from reading your articles because they remind me that I am a member of a larger community of faith. To read of other people's challenges and experiences encourages me to live for Christ daily,

knowing even the smallest things we take for granted can be used by God in very big ways.

I wish we could share your articles not just through e-mail, but through Facebook links.

JOSEPH KONGORO
From Kenya via e-mail

Links to Adventist World articles may be shared on Facebook.—EDITORS.

I express my gratitude that you publish a monthly magazine with a panorama of Adventist work in the world.

BASIL ZAWADZKI
Misiones, Argentina

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



THE PLACE OF PRAYER

Please pray that God may help me to find money to pay for my four years of study. I count on your prayers, brothers and sisters.

EMOL, *Haiti*

There will be a fiftieth anniversary where I work. I have been nominated to give an opening prayer. Please pray for me that God gives me the right prayer.

JUDITH, *Zimbabwe*

Please pray for my spiritual life. I am going through financial problems, and that brings problems at home.

BRIAN, *South Africa*

Please remember the victims of the Samoa tsunami, Sumatra earthquake, Philippine typhoon. It is sad to

see thousands of people homeless, without food, water, and family.

JOHNSON, *India*

I lost my court appeal and remain in prison. This is hard for me, but I am not shaken or disturbed in my faith as an Adventist. God is in control, and I believe He will allow me to continue preaching in prison. Pray for me as I am writing a petition to the president for pardon.

BERNARD, *Zambia*

I have applied for the Etihad Cadet Pilot Program, and within a month they will do the assessment. I want to be an international pilot to help spread the Good News. I am really counting on your prayers for me to be a part of this training.

ROBERT, *Vanuatu*

I want to thank you for all the prayers for the requests I sent. Please pray for my daughter who is not in the church. She has a lot of health problems. I am worried about her.

VIRGINIA, *United States*

Please pray for our family to stand firm in the faith. And pray that God will provide the economic means for my son to complete his theology course.

MALENA, *Mexico*

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

“Behold, I come quickly...”

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

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Vol. 5, No. 12

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

CÍNTIA MARTINS



This month a reader shares what she learned in Sabbath school.

A Word about Prophetic Gifts

One can always look forward to a vibrant Sabbath school discussion at the Northern Caribbean University church in Mandeville, Jamaica. January 31, 2009, was no exception as each class gathered together to discuss lesson 5, “The Inspiration of the Prophets.” The high point came toward the end of the lesson study when D. L. Ebenezer, a professor of the college of business, poignantly summed up 2 Timothy 3:16. Here are a few of his points:

- All Scripture is given by inspiration. Not some, not a few selected passages, not what you think is right or wrong, but *all of it*.
- In higher education we critique a lot. We grow up criticizing anything and everything.
- We go to the altar and then alter. We go to pray and then we prey.
- Moses and Paul were highly qualified, but they had to unlearn everything and follow God all the way. Peter questioned Jesus when asked to cast the nets. Peter did obey, although his faith was somewhat feeble and he cast only one net.
- A little learning is a dangerous thing. We think we know it all. We don’t seem to want to be connected to Christ. We want to do it our way.
- “Early in mathematics I was taught parallel lines meet at infinity. What is infinity? We don’t know. But we believe this basic principle without questioning it all the time. And we go on in faith learning more and more of math. So must it be with believing the prophetic gift—the Bible and Ellen G. White’s writings. Someday, we will get a clearer picture to most things and we will eventually begin to see things the way God intended them to be.”
- Summarizing Walla Walla University’s Alden Thompson’s thoughts on critiquing,* Ebenezer said that we dissect anything and everything until the object we dissect dies and we get contaminated in the process.

Through his summation to the lesson, Ebenezer gave us a new perspective on prophetic gifts.

—REPORTED BY TAMEKA MCPHERSON, student, Northern Caribbean University, Mandeville, Jamaica

*Walla Walla University is in College Place, Washington, United States.

The PEOPLE'S PLACE

SUBMITTED BY HELEN ROSE GALERA

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



ADVENTIST LIFE

I like the name *Seventh-day Adventist*. It speaks to me of “going home” once a week, then “going home” forever.

—Renee Ford, Charlotte, North Carolina

John Carroll lost his rubber shoe when he was baptized in the Ocala Seventh-day Adventist Church baptismal pool. Officiating pastor Dave Swinyar picked it up and made a saving comment about the retrieved shoe. In a half-aloud comment one member said it was better than losing his soul!

—Herb Pritchard, Ocala, Florida

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“The new year is just before us, and plans should be laid for earnest, persevering effort in the Master’s service. There is much to be done to advance the work of God.”

—Ellen G. White, *Colporteur Ministry*, p. 18

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

When husband and wife Salvador Cena and Luciana Talquenca were finishing their degrees at River Plate Adventist University in Argentina, they dreamed of being able to volunteer together in a foreign country. Now they are doing just that!

From January 2008 to December 2009, Salvador and Luciana have been serving at Helderberg College in South Africa. There they serve as assistant deans in the dormitories and help out during worship and other programs. They are enjoying their time of volunteer service, and through it they feel God has helped them grow in many ways. “Our experience here,” says Luciana, “has confirmed for me that I want to serve God for the rest of my life.”

After almost two years of service in South Africa, the couple heartily encourages others to

try volunteering too. “You must have a volunteer experience,” Luciana says. “Your spiritual life will grow, and you will enjoy meeting new people and learning about a new culture. Just go! God can use you!”

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

—Courtesy of Adventist Volunteer Service



ANSWER: This photo was taken in the Philippines during the April 24-26, 2009, Adventist Youth camping event of the Nambuongan Seventh-day Adventist Church at Pozorrubio, Pangasinan.