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WORLD VIEW

Doorway to a New Year

Three years ago I stood with friends on the excavated hilltop of ancient Laodicea, famed city of the “lukewarm” church. Archaeologists have marked where streets once crisscrossed, where major public buildings rose. But almost nothing today stands above waist high. Laodicea is now mostly a collection of broken pieces of broken pieces—chunks of marble, fragments of columns, bits of timeworn building blocks.

I wandered away from the rest of the tour group, glad for a moment of serenity. But then I turned a corner and felt my breath catch quickly, like when you see something old and familiar in an unexpected place. For there, rising to a height of nearly eight feet, archaeologists had reconstructed an ancient doorway in Laodicea, just where it had fallen centuries ago. All the marble was intact—a giant portal framing brilliant-blue sky.

And I heard the words of Jesus in my heart that day as clearly as if I had been with that long-ago church to which they were once read: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Rev. 3:20).

Welling up in my heart that day came a response to the Lord of change that I have prayed often in the months since then, and that I repeat as I stand on the threshold of a new year: “Yes, Lord, I open the door. Do come in—again and again. No longer stand at the door and knock, like someone uncertain of a welcome. Come in; be at home. Find Your rest. Take charge of the place. Make this heart—make this life—Your dwelling. I open the door. I choose to change.”

As you step into 2010, find words of your own with which to greet the Lord of change. It is His joy to dwell wherever He is welcomed, wherever He is loved, wherever He is obeyed. In this new year, may you discover the “joy of every loving heart”—“Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

— BILL KNOTT



WORLD REPORT

Lay Adventist Group Marks 40 Years of Building Churches—Literally

Not-for-profit construction company Maranatha Volunteers International marked its fortieth anniversary of volunteer-driven school, church, clinic, orphanage, and hospital projects in the fall of 2009.

Maranatha, a supporting ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, has worked with more than 60,000 volunteers and completed projects in 63 countries since the organization began in 1969.

The biggest change in 40 years has been the ability of the organization to respond to the world church needs, said Kyle Fiess, Maranatha vice president for marketing and projects.

“For 20 years the organization would respond to several projects per year,” Fiess said. “Now Maranatha operates in multiple countries around the world.”

And the projects keep pouring in, Fiess said.

Currently Maranatha has received more than 100,000 church building requests, a number the organization can better handle with recent equipment purchases, leadership said.

Ongoing Maranatha projects include the One-Day Church, a project providing quick construction solutions for thousands of Adventists around the world, and Ultimate Workouts, construction projects targeted at high school-aged volunteers.

“[Ultimate Workouts] started with a handful of teenagers, but now the project accommodates nearly 200



FORTY YEARS: Don Noble, president of Maranatha Volunteers International, and wife, Laura, attend the 2009 annual business meetings of the Seventh-day Adventist world church. Maranatha celebrated its fortieth anniversary in 2009, marking decades of completed construction projects around the world.

RAJMUND DABROWSKI/ANN

WORLD REPORT

participants each summer,” Fiess said.

This summer will be the twentieth Ultimate Workout.

While the number of volunteers has steadily increased, the organization has still been affected by the economic downturn, Fiess said.

“The recession has affected Maranatha financially as giving levels have shifted,” he said, adding that the organization had to make “spending cuts in a number of areas, including a reduction of our office staff.”

Cutbacks aside, most Maranatha volunteer projects are “filled to capacity,” Fiess said.

New construction methods, careful planning, and “God’s leading” will move the organization’s work ahead in the next decade, said Don Noble, president of Maranatha.

“We plan to increase our capacity to construct more churches and schools that will meet the needs of church growth and to involve more volunteers in both construction and wider outreach opportunities connected with these projects.”
—Megan Brauner, *Adventist News Network*

North American Church Finances Hold in Spite of Tithe Decline

■ Seventh-day Adventists in North America returned \$893.1 million in tithe during the economically challenged year of 2008, \$3.4 million less than was received in the previous year, division officials reported November 6, 2009. An additional \$23.6



NAD REPORT: G. Thomas Evans, North American Division treasurer, reports on the Adventist Church region’s finances during year-end meetings.

MARK A. KELLNER/ADVENTIST WORLD

million in mission offerings were furnished by parishioners, a drop of \$405,000 from 2008.

G. Thomas Evans, North American Division treasurer, told delegates to the NAD year-end meetings that a variety of economic circumstances are affecting donations to Seventh-day Adventist congregations, among them being the state of the overall economy; downward adjustments in housing prices; the banking collapse; and continued volatility in the stock market.

Reacting to the division’s overall financial position, Evans said that some of 2008’s investment losses were being recovered and that he was hopeful markets would continue to advance in 2010. No increases in payroll were anticipated for the NAD, a move that suggests employees of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which takes its cues from NAD remuneration policy, also will

not get pay increases next year.

Discussing the division’s financial situation, Evans quoted Ellen G. White, a pioneering cofounder of the movement: “If I should look at the dark clouds—the troubles and perplexities that come to me in my work—I should have time to do nothing else. But I know that there is light and glory beyond the clouds. By faith I reach through the darkness to the glory.”
—Mark A. Kellner, *news editor*

Adventist-led Anti-gender Violence Campaign in Line With New UN Initiative

■ About a month after the Seventh-day Adventist Church launched EndItNow, a national campaign to end violence against women and girls, the United Nations announced a similar global initiative.

On November 6, 2009, the United Nations Development Fund for Women

General Conference Session

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

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

(UNIFEM), launched a Web site to encourage individual efforts aimed at eradicating violence against women.

The Say No—Unite to End Violence Against Women initiative's Web site addresses the widespread problem—and demonstrates support by tracking efforts to combat the issue. Estimates say about 70 percent of all women have been victim to some kind of violence.

"We know that violence against women is a problem with solutions," said UNIFEM executive director Inés Alberdi during a visit with patients at a health clinic for women victims of sexual violence in Nairobi, Kenya.

"What I have seen firsthand today in Kenya is the impact of effective work at the grassroots level, yet there is an urgent need for governments to make this issue a top priority and take decisive action," Alberdi said.

Counting efforts by individuals, governments, and civil society groups, the campaign has set a goal of 100,000 efforts against violence by March 2010 and 1 million by the end of 2010.

For more information about what the Adventist Church is doing to end violence against women and to sign the petition, visit enditnow.org. For more information about Say No, visit unifem.org.

—*Adventist News Network*

South African Court Ruling Favors Adventist Church

■ The Seventh-day Adventist Church's South Africa branch can reorganize its conferences, or administrative units of local congregations, the High Court of the Orange Free State, a South African province, has ruled.

While Justice J. Van Der Merwe had ruled that the congregations could bring an action against the

union, he also found that the union had acted properly and dismissed the plaintiffs' action.

Initially, members of six congregations in the Transvaal Conference and two congregations in the Cape Conference, respectively, commenced litigation against the Southern Africa Union Conference (SAU) and Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID). Their action sought to overturn the business session decision of the SAU to restructure and realign conference territories, in line with a new working policy adopted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the world church's governing organization. The Cape Conference congregations subsequently withdrew from the lawsuit.

The reorganization, which opponents had asked the court to declare invalid, was undertaken in line with Seventh-day Adventist Church policy, adopted in 2005, and means that the former Transvaal Conference and Trans-Orange Conference units can be merged into a new Northern Conference. It also brings an end to the litigation, according to Francois Louw, president of the church's

Southern Africa Union.

"The judgment supports the decisions of the church in Southern Africa as well as that of the worldwide organization in its intentions toward restructuring the organization," Louw said. "These decisions aim to unite the church administratively, creating an environment for church unity, improved growth, and more efficient operations. As such, any real or perceived structure of discrimination that may be a barrier toward church unity could be removed."

"It is (and has been) the intention of leadership to discuss and negotiate with the church community as a whole, in a continued spirit of reconciliation, Christian fellowship, and unity, ways whereby we could affect the implementation of these decisions. We are eagerly looking forward to moving forward, united, in accomplishing the mission of the church."

Almost one third of the 112,000 Seventh-day Adventists in South Africa are members of churches in the Cape Conference and the Trans-Orange Conference, according to 2007 statistics on file at the world headquarters.

RAJ MUND DABROWSKI/ANN

MOVING FORWARD: Francois Louw, president of the Southern Africa Union of Seventh-day Adventists, speaks during the 2009 Annual Council in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A. The union recently won an important legal battle over reorganizing local conferences.



WORLD REPORT

Leaders Encourage Financial Self-sufficiency

In West-Central Africa major challenges remain

By ANSEL OLIVER, *assistant director for news, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, reporting from Abidjan, Ivory Coast*

George Egwakhe is fighting the poverty mind-set.

The son of farmers in rural Nigeria, Egwakhe now encourages Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders in West-Central Africa to abandon the phrase “I’m poor.”

“I disagree with that mentality; I don’t accept it,” said Egwakhe, an associate treasurer at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in the United States.

His comments came during an interview over lunch at the church’s West-Central Africa divisional headquarters, where church leaders held 2009 year-end business meetings.

Following the morning’s treasurer’s report, several delegates asked for an increase in appropriations for their regions. Both Egwakhe and the division president turned down that idea.

“Don’t tell me about poverty,” Egwakhe told some 30 delegates during an animated response to the floor discussion. “If you do not believe in self-support you are in the wrong place.”

Later, over lunch, Egwakhe said that most foreign church leaders wouldn’t be able to respond the way he did that morning. He grew up in the division and had to work as a farmer for five years following elementary school to earn his way to high school.

The West-Central Africa Division, or WAD, home to more than 830,000 Adventists, faces some of the most daunting challenges in the denomination, local church leaders say. In addition to being a malaria zone, it’s a volatile region, politically and economically. Currencies can fluctuate wildly—the region this year lost nearly 30 percent of its appropriation from the world headquarters because of varying currency rates. Also, transportation in the area is expensive—it can be cheaper to fly to Europe or the United States than to travel across the division’s territory.

Still, the biggest challenge, Egwakhe said, is fighting against a mind-set that thinks money will always come from other world church regions.

Many in West-Central Africa are subsistence farmers who live on the equivalent of a few U.S. dollars a day. But, as Egwakhe pointed out to delegates, it was the rural eastern region of Nigeria that was the first area of that country to become self-reliant more than 30 years ago.



Top: SELF-RELIANCE STRESSED: George Egwakhe, an associate treasurer for the Adventist world church, addresses church leaders in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, Monday, November 9, 2009. He and other church leaders are urging a more deliberate focus on local church regions becoming self-reliant.

Left: KEYNOTE ADDRESS: West-Central Africa Division president Gilbert Wari delivers his keynote address at the 2009 year-end meeting in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, November 8, 2009.

ANSEL OLIVER/ANN

“They were farmers, and I see some of them here today,” Egwakhe told delegates. It’s not the amount of wealth that matters but how that wealth is managed, he said.

Early in 2009 the division held its first stewardship summit, which drew nearly 300 delegates to Ghana.

Similar conferences are scheduled around the division next year to emphasize responsible living and wealth management.

In his response to delegates, WAD president Gilbert Wari put his index finger to his temple, saying, “Development starts here, prepare your mind for development.”

WINDOW

Into the United States of America

By HANS OLSON

CRISTIANO GALBIATI



The United States of America is the third largest country in the world, both in geography and population. This North American country lies mostly within the center of the continent between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Other parts of the United States are not connected to the mainland, such as the country's largest state, Alaska, on the northwest tip of North America, and Hawaii, an archipelago state in the Pacific Ocean a couple of thousand miles off the mainland's southwest coast.

The first documented European explorer to set foot in what would become the United States was Spaniard Juan Ponce de León, who arrived in Florida in 1513. Native Americans lived throughout the country at the time, having arrived on the continent thousands of years earlier. The Spanish were followed by French fur traders in the Great Lakes region who arrived by way of what is now Canada. The British arrived next, setting up several colonies along the Atlantic coastline. By the mid-1700s 13 distinct British colonies had been established.

Unhappy with British rule, the colonists declared independence from the English on July 4, 1776. Over the next 183 years the United States expanded from the 13 original colonies to the 50-state nation it is today. Parts of the United States were originally ruled by the British, French, Mexican, Russian, Spanish, and independent republics.

The United States is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the

THE UNITED STATES

Capital:	Washington, District of Columbia
Official language:	English
Religion:	Protestant, 52%; Roman Catholic, 24%; Jewish, 2%; other, 22%.
Population:	302.2 million*
Adventist membership:	1 million*
Adventist-to-population ratio:	1:302*

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

world, due in part to liberal immigration policies throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The United States also has the world's largest economy. The sheer size of the country, its immense natural resources, and the industrial revolution of the 1800s turned it into a manufacturing powerhouse.

Adventists in the United States

The Adventist Church started in the United States as a result of the nineteenth century Great Awakening movement by people looking for Christ's second coming. Many Adventists were former followers of a movement led by William Miller, who believed Christ would return on October 22, 1844. When Christ didn't return, many turned away from the movement. James and Ellen White, Joseph Bates, and many others believed that Christ would still return at a date unknown.

The Adventist Church started to spread across the United States. In Battle Creek, Michigan, a variety of institutions sprang up—the Review and Herald Publishing Association, Battle Creek Sanitarium, and Battle Creek College. The first General Conference headquarters was established there as well.



Today the Adventist Church in the United States has 15 colleges and universities, 59 hospitals, and more than 100 secondary schools. Even though the Adventist Church in the United States makes up less than 10 percent of the denominational membership worldwide, members donate nearly half of the total mission offerings collected each year.

The United States is just one of the three countries that make up the North American Division. 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 began in the fall of 2008 and climaxes at the General Conference session in Atlanta, Georgia (USA), in June.

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

WORLD VISTA

On a recent Friday evening I sat in the General Conference auditorium listening to reports of frontline mission work around the world—church planters, Global Mission pioneers, and missionaries. I heard stories of vibrant small-group ministries, where friendship evangelism is strengthening and growing the church in ways that go far beyond simply adding numbers to membership rolls.

As I watched, my mind was inexorably drawn far away to another place and another time, and I felt again the warmth and fellowship of a small group of believers that, for me, represents a pivotal moment in my life—the “make or break” of my own spiritual journey.

A Sympathetic Circle

The place was Norway, in a small country church. We met in rented rooms—the kitchen and living room of a young widow’s home. The congregation of about 30 was made up of laborers, small-time farmers, and homemakers. To a casual observer these were not people of any particular note. The surroundings were certainly not luxurious. The services and programs were simple.

But for a troubled 15-year-old girl this group was a safe haven of warmth and acceptance; a place where I could grow in my understanding of this strange new faith I’d found; a place where I first came to feel a strong connection with my spiritual family—a bond that has withstood the test of

What Happens to the Wander

An entire life is shaped by just a few.

By KARI PAULSEN

many years and many challenges.

Finding this group was the culmination of a search I’d begun four years earlier. As an 11-year-old, I underwent heart surgery, and in the weeks of pain and fear that followed I prayed to whomever was “up there,” that if He allowed me to live I would become a Christian. Everyone in Norway belonged to the state church and religion was taught in school, but my family didn’t go to church. I really had no idea what being a Christian meant in practice. Should I simply say the Lord’s prayer before bedtime and grace before my meals?

In confirmation preparation class we were given a Bible and taught the catechism, but this deepened my confusion. “Why,” I asked the minister, “the Ten Commandments in the Bible have a long section about keeping the seventh day holy, but the catechism only says to remember the day of rest? And in the New Testament, why was Jesus baptized as an older man? There’s no mention of christening or sprinkling.”

“Don’t worry about it.” I was told. “Do you know Greek and Hebrew? Just accept what we tell you.”

But I continued to wonder, and I didn’t forget my promise to God.

When chance brought me to this small group of Seventh-day Adventists they “adopted” me. They didn’t ask too many questions. They didn’t criticize or tell me what I was doing wrong.

Personal Touches

Two women in particular became the first of what I think of as my five “mothers in Israel”—compassionate, dedicated women who, in my early years as a believer, profoundly shaped my spiritual journey and helped deepen the roots of my faith.

The first was the schoolteacher’s wife. Our living room “church” was used during the week as a church school, and the schoolteacher and his wife, Maj Britt, became my strongholds. They loaned me books, such as *Steps to Christ*, which made a deep impression on me, and other devotional and doctrinal works. They enrolled me in a Voice of Prophecy Bible study course. Maj Britt, a Swedish woman, sang beautifully and played the guitar. She had a motherly touch and dispensed warmth and good advice in equal measures.

A second woman, Tulla, was also a spiritual inspiration to me. She had grown up with the stigma of il-



Kari and Jan Paulsen

have served the church as partners in ministry in Africa, Europe, and North America.

ers?



SNAPSHOTS OF SERVICE: (Clockwise from top) Kari and Jan

Paulsen pose with their two oldest children on the occasion of Pastor Paulsen's ordination to the gospel minister. The Paulsens as husband and wife, couldn't have imagined that one day he would serve as president of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist church. Hultafors Sanitarium, where the author worked before attending college.

legitimacy—a terrible burden in those days. But she exuded a sense of such peace and joy. She would recite long portions of Scripture, sing hymns, and recall passages from the writings of Ellen White.

I'd taken my first steps toward faith without my family's support—in fact, my parents strongly disapproved. I was an embarrassment to them. I stopped eating pork, gave up dancing, which I loved, and began keeping the Sabbath. After I was baptized at 17 I felt, for my parents' sake as well as mine, I needed some independence.

The schoolteacher and his wife arranged for me to go to work at the church's Hultafors Sanitarium in Sweden, a day's journey away by train. I changed trains in Oslo and Gottenberg, and by the time I arrived at 8:00 in the evening the station was closed. The person from the sanitarium who was meant to meet me was not there. I spoke a very obscure Norwegian dialect and the only other person nearby—a railway signalman—spoke Swedish, which may as well have been Chinese to my ears. Finally he understood where I wanted to go and pointed me in the right direction. The sanitarium was located on a high hill, and as I walked up the steep, zigzagged road, carrying my suitcase, I felt lonely and lost.

To my great relief I was met by a young girl who spoke Norwegian. She found out where my room was, helped settle me in, and invited me to a party that evening to meet some of the other young people. "It's way back in the woods," she said. "Just walk back as far as you can and there's a house. You'll find it."

And I did. I knocked on the door and as it opened it became clear that this was a dancing party—and my heart just fell. This wasn't what I'd expected from my new church family.

WORLD VISTA

I went back to my room and cried myself to sleep.

Maj Britt's final words to me before I left home for Sweden were, "Remember, Kari, you will find very few people in the church with wings." It's a truth about human nature that has helped me through many hurts along the way, and I often say to myself, also: "Well, Kari, you're not exactly sprouting wings either!"

The Lord in His goodness didn't leave me without support. I went to prayer meeting later that week and met a woman who also became a "mother in Israel" to me—a 60-year-old physiotherapist called Sister Elsa. Her friendship got me through the winter until I left Hultafors to attend college. There I found another mentor, a teacher named Esther, who was unstinting in her encouragement. Later, after I had married and my husband, Jan, was working as a pastor in Norway, the conference president's wife became another of my spiritual teachers. She modeled for me what it meant to be a pastor's wife—unfailingly gracious and hospitable, showing Christian kindness of the highest quality.

Our Duty to Others

Through the years I've thought much about the small country church that nurtured me as I took my first, unsteady spiritual steps, and my sense of gratitude has grown. We sat together with open Bibles in a rented living room singing hymns to the accompaniment of a lone guitar. I may

have forgotten the words to the songs we sang, but I still feel the incredible sense of acceptance that enveloped me, the feeling of being connected to a spiritual family. It's as vivid to me today as it was when I sat among them. Without their acceptance, without their interest in me, without the feeling of love that surrounded



me, I wouldn't have made it.

I've come to recognize, also, what I owe these five women of faith who gave me the gift of their time and their attention. They didn't, for the most part, have much in common, but they are inextricably linked in my mind by one characteristic they shared—a genuine compassion that made them willing to "put themselves out" for someone else. They taught me that simple kindness is a spiritual act of the highest order—it's a sacred gift that can make the difference between whether someone stays or goes.


They taught me never to under-

estimate the power of hospitality, be it ever so simple. And they taught me the power of a no-strings-attached friendship, a friendship that says, "I want to know about you—your struggles and your dreams. I'll listen to you and make time for you."

The prophet Isaiah's description of the type of fasting that the Lord finds acceptable strikes an especially personal chord for me: "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: . . . is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter?" (Isa. 58:6, 7, NIV).

It's so easy to invite our friends for Sabbath lunch—it feels comfortable. Or to invite the "important" ones of the congregations, those who are "successful" or hold positions in the church. But it's the wanderers, the stray cats like me, who really need it. By adopting a wanderer—a young person who's come to

a new city to study; a young family struggling without close relatives nearby; a new believer who's having trouble adapting to what for them is an alien environment—we can keep so many people from simply drifting out the back door.

I could have been one who left. But I was anchored by cords of friendship and love that kept me secure until I had a chance to grow and become strong in my faith. I was a wanderer who was sheltered and embraced. And I pray every day that God will give me the courage and selflessness to search out other wanderers as well. 

Can a Hiatal Hernia End in Cancer?

End in Cancer?

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES
and PETER N. LANDLESS

I have a small hiatal hernia, and if I eat late at night I find that I have nasty heartburn and acid reflux. My wife tells me I can get esophageal cancer if I am not careful. What do you advise?

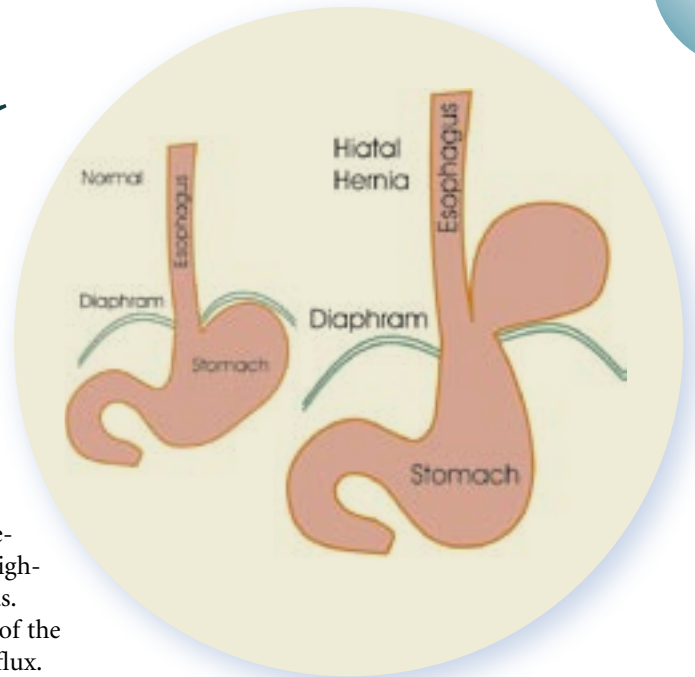
Gastroesophageal reflux disease, sometimes called GERD, is very common, affecting between 14 to 20 percent of adults. The disease is a little vague in its defini-

tion, because diagnosis is based on self-reported chronic heartburn. routine endoscopic procedure, and your doctor will advise you about this.

It makes sense to reduce fatty foods and highly spicy, irritating foods.

Elevating the head of the bed may reduce the reflux.

You mention eating late at night.



Surgery has not proved to be an unqualified success, and its utilization has decreased markedly since 1999.

tion, because diagnosis is based on self-reported chronic heartburn.

What happens is that acid from the stomach, which is hydrochloric acid, washes back up the esophagus, or gullet. This takes place especially in the lying-down position, and more so if one is overweight or if the stomach is full.

The condition is seen most frequently in those with a hiatal hernia, where the stomach pushes through the diaphragm into the thorax.

Interestingly, endoscopic findings—that is, what is seen internally using a narrow tube called an endoscope—do not always show the most serious findings in those complaining of severe symptoms. Reflux of acid can cause chest pains that mimic a heart attack or gall bladder disease. The acid can lead to scarring and narrowing, as well as a condition called Barrett's metaplasia, which can lead to cancer of the esophagus. The esophagus can be checked and biopsied in a

An early and light evening meal, taken at least four hours before retiring, is a wise adaptation.

Weight loss could also help.

There is considerable evidence to show that the blocking of acid production by the stomach results in reduction of symptoms. There are two groups of medications used to help with this. One group is called proton pump inhibitors; the other, histamine receptor antagonists. Proton pump inhibitors result in a clearance of esophagitis better than the histamine receptor blockers, but both are effective in most patients. The problem is that this is a chronic condition, and prolonged use of medication may be required. If one can decrease weight, sleep with the head of the bed up three to four inches, and eat early in the evening, medication might be avoided.

Surgery has not proved to be an unqualified success, and its utilization

has decreased markedly since 1999.

In summary, evening consumption of citrus fruit, tomatoes, onions, carbonated drinks, or spicy foods is discouraged. Fatty foods, coffee, tea, and caffeinated beverages, along with chocolate and mint, tend to cause gastric reflux.

Smoking cessation, weight reduction, and alcohol cessation all help reduce this problem. ●



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

Can We Always Count on GOD'S Protection?

What I learned from personal tragedies

By J. STANLEY McCLUSKEY



We often think of wonderful Bible promises, such as Psalm 91—especially verses 11 and 12: “For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.” But have you ever had to wonder: WHERE ARE THOSE ANGELS?

Five Personal Tragedies

My dear wife, Betty, and I have been in five major auto accidents, all causing severe injuries:

1. The first happened as I was kneeling down in the dark one night, trying to install chains to the wheels

of our vehicle, with Betty holding the light. Suddenly, a car slid across the road and sent me flying over the back of our car and down a bank. I was banged up pretty bad in the hit-and-run accident. And while I was laid up in the hospital, I couldn't help wondering: *Why didn't the angels protect me in that situation?*

2. On the Alaska Highway, then just a seldom-traveled gravel road, our car rolled over and over, before landing on a bed of rocks. Betty and I were injured and our car totaled; but we worried most about our children. Three-year-old Ronald made no complaints; but 1-year-old Harvey was badly injured, and just wouldn't

stop crying. No medical help was available within 200 miles, and no one was able to take us there for two days.

Talk about stress and worry! Where were our angels?

3. We were driving along a main road, when a car suddenly came from a side street and hit the door right where Betty was sitting. You can just imagine the injuries! And our car was a total wreck. The driver of the other vehicle said the sun had blinded him. But why didn't the angels protect us?

4. We were driving home over a mountain pass when it started to snow—the first snowfall of the season. As we reached a narrow area, with a hill on one side and a sharp drop-

off on the other, a car slid across the highway and hit us head-on. Betty was very seriously injured; but I was able to hobble over and check on the people in the other car. The two elderly women in it said we were an answer to their prayers, because we had kept them from going over the bank.

But why hadn't the angels also protected us?

5. In this final incident, a big pickup truck hit us on the driver's side, injuring both Betty and me severely, and leaving me unable to work. Making things worse, the other driver had only minimal insurance, so we had to use up most of our own reserves to cover expenses.

Why was this happening to us?
WHERE WERE THOSE ANGELS?

Understanding the Promises

We hear great stories in which it is certain that God has provided pro-

tection. But as we review our own lives,

We hear great stories in which it is certain that God has provided protection. But as we review our own lives, that protection often seems missing.

tection. But as we review our own lives, that protection often seems missing. Do angels help some of God's people more than they do others? Do they just help at certain times and places?

What about David—who probably wrote the Psalm before us? He spent many years running for his life, didn't he? And how about Christ, who after His baptism was led out into the wilderness, remaining without food or water for 40 days? Ironically, the devil himself quoted from Psalm 91 to Him: "If You are the Son of God," he said to Jesus, "throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash

your foot against a stone'" (Matt. 4:6). But notice that something was missing from what the devil said.

"When Satan quoted the promise, 'He shall give His angels charge over thee,' he omitted the words, 'to keep thee in all thy ways'; that is, in all the ways of God's choosing" (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 125). "In all your ways acknowledge Him," the Bible says, "and He shall direct your paths" (Prov. 3:6).

God's Permission

This way "of God's choosing" does not assure us an easy life, but it does assure His protecting care.

Consider these encouraging words: "The Father's presence encircled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and it is for us. He who is imbued with the Spirit of Christ abides in Christ.... Nothing can touch

him except by our Lord's permission, and 'all things' that are permitted 'work together for good to them that love God.' Romans 8:28" (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 71).

This permission by God is evident in the experience of Job. When Satan wanted to tempt him with trials, God set the limits. And as with Christ when He pleaded in the Garden of Gethsemane for relief, God deals with us in terms of both time and eternity. Satan is always seeking our destruction; and Christ warned us to expect difficulties. But God will use every trial for the building of our characters.

Paul explains this in Romans 5:1-5. Not only should we appreciate the peace

and assurance that come in a faith relationship with Christ, but we should also rejoice in tribulations, "knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

Ellen White put it this way: "The fact that we are called upon to endure trial shows that the Lord Jesus sees in us something precious which He desires to develop" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 471).

And yes, the angel of the Lord does encamp round about those who fear Him, and does deliver us from any lasting harm, according to the plan of our loving God (see Ps. 34:7; Jer. 29:11). The eternal God surely is our refuge "and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27).

So let's take heart. His promises of both protection and care are sure.

Hear the words of that last passage (Jer. 29:11): "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." "Fear not," God says in Isaiah, "for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand" (Isa. 41:10).



J. Stanley McCluskey

is a retired pharmacist and health care administrator. He writes from

Naches, Washington, U.S.A.

“AMA, AMA!” A faint but urgent call came over Captain Norton’s radio. In a remote jungle village a native man had been bitten by a poisonous snake. “Please, will you come?” the voice pleaded. Robert (Bob) Elwin Norton, mission pilot of Adventist Medical Aviation (AMA) in Venezuela, was winging his way toward Ciudad Bolivar for routine maintenance on the plane when the call came. Other pilots were advising that it was too risky to land at this particular site, but Bob decided to trust God and attempt a rescue. As he approached the airstrip and it came into view, he thought, *Wow, it’s worse than I thought.*

“I can’t land there!” Bob told God.

“Yes, you can,” a Voice seemed to say to him. “Didn’t I send you here to help these people?”

“OK, Lord, but You have to be here with me, not just one of Your angels.”

“I am right here with you,” the quiet Voice assured the nervous pilot.

A peaceful calm settled over Bob, and he landed the plane safely on the 600-meter (0.37 mile) airstrip. Bob then flew the man to a medical facility where he received the help he needed.

Because of that flight, word reached many villages that AMA’s plane would come to help anyone in need, even in less-than-ideal conditions. Many of the indigenous people began claiming the plane as their own, calling it their “angel of mercy.”

A Call to Service

In 2001 Bob and Neiba Norton heard the call of God: “Will you go and give your lives in service for Me?” They sold their United States-based business and home, stepped out in faith trusting that God would supply their needs, and made their home in the Gran Sabana region of Venezuela. Although they confronted many daily challenges and did not receive a salary, they never questioned their decision. Bob made countless flights in his small plane—a Cessna 182 purchased with donations given for that purpose—providing emergency assistance and saving many lives.

When Needed, AMA Will Come

Before Bob began flying into villages many people died who might have survived with medical assistance. But Bob believed that God was the real pilot of his plane, giving him wisdom and skill to maneuver the short, rough airstrips.



Barbara Ann Norton Kay, the sister of Robert Norton, enjoys resting on Sabbath from her farming and greenhouse work and finds renewal in nature and communion with God.

She writes from Bryant, Alabama, U.S.A.

MISSIONARY PILOT: Neiba and Robert Norton stand next to their Cessna 182.



Living GOD’S

Missionary pilot gives ultimate sacrifice to help others.

God’s Love in Action

As Bob flew his plane in and out of jungle airstrips carrying pregnant mothers in trouble, ill children, accident victims, those needing emergency surgery, and others, the indigenous people learned of a God who loved them. Bob never preached a sermon in words, but He lived as Jesus did, mingling with the people as one who desired their good.

“We want to know more about your Jesus,” they often told Bob. “Please bring us a teacher.” So Bob flew lay workers to these villages to study the Bible with them. Then he flew pastors in to baptize those who committed their lives to Jesus.

Another Rescue

One of the thousands of emergency flights Bob made involved a baby fighting for its life. The following is the story in Bob’s own words:

I was on a return flight from dropping off a medical team in a village when I received an urgent call from our radio operator: “Can you fly straight to Wonken for a baby ill with pneumonia?”

I quickly changed headings while checking time and fuel, then picked up the mic. "I'll be to Wonken in 20 minutes. Tell the parents to be waiting for me at the runway."

Upon landing I found the baby to be worse than I had imagined. When she would quit breathing, her mother would pat her firmly on the back to stimulate her to breathe. I needed oxygen and someone to ventilate her, but I had neither. Quickly I loaded the family into the plane and prayed all the way to Santa Elena for God to spare this baby's life....

After a 30-minute flight we landed, but the ambulance I'd requested was not at the airport. Jumping out, I went looking for someone willing to transport the desperate family to the hospital in their car.

Over the next few days I upheld this baby girl in prayer, yet I was afraid to ask if she had lived. On Thanksgiving Day

[2006] I got a call from our radio operator asking when I could take this family back home.

"How is the baby?" I asked.

"She is doing fine—well enough to return home tomorrow," he replied.

The next morning the joy on the mother's face as she thanked me for helping them warmed my heart. I give thanks to God for healing one of His little ones and for giving me the opportunity to help Him.

God Keeps It Going

In 2006 other mission aviation organizations in Venezuela were closed by the government. A number of attempts were made to shut down the AMA program, as well, but in every instance it seemed that God softened the hearts of the government officials who came to investigate, because they always ended up endorsing the aviation work. When people asked Bob how he was still able to keep flying, he would tell them, "It's because this is God's program, not mine. As long as He wants it to keep going, no one can stop it."


Final Flight

On February 16, 2009, Bob made his final flight. Those on board with him were his wife and companion in service, Neiba; a friend of the couple, Gladys; a child and his mother returning home; and a young girl in need of emergency surgery for appendicitis, and her mother. Tragically, however, it seems that the jungle just swallowed them up—plane, pilot, and passengers. A prolonged search has been in vain. The last radio transmission from Bob to the flight coordinator and radio operator was not understood. All that is known is that they are missing, but mechanical failure is suspected. A joint effort between Civil Protection in Venezuela and a volunteer search team to find the wreckage continues.

Only God knows what happened. Many times God performed miracles for Bob—my brother—opening a path in the clouds, stopping the rain, providing resources, and protecting him. But this time He didn't. Nevertheless, I trust God is in control.

A Continuing Need

My heart goes out to the people in the jungles of Venezuela, who again have no one to help them. I mourn for the loss where the need is so great. Nothing, however, can stop the advancement of God's work. The gospel seeds of love that Bob and Neiba have sown are bearing fruit among the indigenous people there.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.... They will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them" (Rev. 14:13, NIV). Our family is clinging to the blessed hope.  To read more about Norton's flying ministry, go to www.medicalaviation.org and click on "AMA Venezuela."



Love

By BARBARA ANN NORTON KAY



REMOTE RESCUES: Missionary pilot Robert Norton transported many people from remote areas of Venezuela to health care facilities, where they were able to get the medical help they needed.



Babel

By
MARCOS PASEGGI

UNDONE

How Adventist translators help to advance the mission of the church

At first the phrase did not seem to pose a great challenge. “Jesus is the greatest magnet,” it said in English. I knew the words, and I knew very well how to mirror them into Spanish: *Jesús es el más grande imán*, I wrote on my laptop. And then it flashed through my mind. In Spanish, *imán* is both a magnet and an imam, the Muslim director of ritual prayer. For all my respect for that religious occupation in particular and for Muslims in general, I understood at once that a phrase like that would not work within the context provided. Humbled in my translation abilities, I just color-highlighted the phrase and went on, hoping to eventually come up with an acceptable alternative.

Unnoticed and often underestimated, Seventh-day Adventist translators accomplish a vital task for the fulfillment of the Great Commission, which requires taking the message “to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Rev. 14:6). Though a few are professionals, most are volunteers who—often as a side job or even for free—share a passion for delivering the message in languages that can be understood by target audiences. As the Adventist Church moves well into the twenty-first century, it is very difficult to know how many men and women actually work—other than the ones hired at the church publishing houses—in translation projects for the church in more or less formal working arrangements. Translators, however, have accompanied the Adventist publishing enterprise since the very beginning of the church.

The First Adventist Translators

The founders of the church understood very soon the importance of translators for the advancement of the gospel commission. In the 1870s James White, who

was of one mind about spreading the gospel in faraway lands, used some of the translators already working at the Review and Herald to teach foreign language classes at Battle Creek College, in the hope of training more young people for writing and publishing. Of course, as most monolinguals often do, White underestimated the time and effort needed to master a second language, and classes floundered.¹ By that time Ellen White had already written in support of the training of young people for the craft of translation, though as her husband, she did not seem to fully comprehend how difficult it was for English native speakers to render church materials into other languages at publishing proficiency level.²

A great breakthrough came in 1874, when John Andrews sailed to Switzerland as the first official missionary of the church. Andrews, who knew Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, devoted himself to learning French and German. Untiringly, he studied the French grammar in a way that eventually allowed him to determine whether articles for *Les Signes des Temps* (the French edition of *Signs of the Times*) were ready for publication. He also translated articles from English into French, though he usually resorted to native French speakers as proofreaders.³

Over the years Ellen White understood better the service of translators. She defined as two essential characteristics of church translators that they be “educated” and have “a fear of God.”⁴ But she also admitted that to translate at publishing level, non-English-speaking translators must learn to print in their own languages, and then render her writings from English into their native languages.⁵ What she said then is still considered the best practice in the translation business.

Without doubt Ellen White’s time in Europe was a



DIOS ES AMOR

life-changing experience. When she reached Basel, she discovered that there was a great interest in translating *The Great Controversy* into French and German. There had been two attempts at French translations and three different versions in German, translated by willing contributors; though, in Willie White's words, "it was difficult to find more than two persons who would speak a good word for either one."⁶ The two basic problems resulted from Ellen White's figures of speech, which "were in some cases imperfectly understood by the translators, and ... where they were understood, the translators did not know the religious phraseology of their own language well enough to give a correct translation."⁷ How did they solve it? Well, Ellen White, the translators, editors, and proofreaders began to meet every day to read and to discuss a chapter, to make sure, in White's words, "the translators would get the spirit of the work and would translate better."⁸ This was, as far as we know, the first actual Seventh-day Adventist translation team.⁹

Nowadays, and thanks to the Internet, translators do not necessarily need to work on-site. In fact, they can work anywhere, anytime, and easily network as the Basel team did long ago, this time using cyberspace as their only office. The challenges of dealing with language, however, are still the same.

All in a Day's Work

Translators frequently have to struggle with issues that are not easily understood by others. Often, people take for granted that anyone, having a fairly good knowledge of two languages, is able to work as a translator. But that is not the case. In fact, translation is much more than turning a word or a phrase into another language.

First of all, every language is a world in itself, involving

its own grammatical rules and a particular system of punctuation, wording, and phrasing. In most cases there is no way a literal rendering can match up to a similar phrase in the target language. Translation implies looking for a "dynamic equivalence," where the original meaning is both kept and "re-created" into a new phrase that somehow communicates what the original said in the first place. This often implies a change in word order, sentence or paragraph structure, or even leaving aside the first and second choices and starting to rewrite from scratch. It requires mastering the target language so as to "process" the use of idioms, figures of speech, and metaphors.

Finally, in every language there are some "untranslatable" terms and cultural references that must be somehow explained or "interpreted" in order to be correctly understood by the target audience. As Lars Hoem, English-Norwegian translator for the Adventist Norwegian Publishing House, puts it: "If an average American reads 'to be dressed like Don King,' he or she is very likely to know you are referring to that well-known boxing manager who is fond of fancy clothes, but for an average Norwegian it just doesn't make sense. On the other hand, to Norwegian readers the term 'Kollenbrølet' is immediately recognized as the cry of the public [that is] heard as the first cross-country skier appears a few



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upendo

Translation is much more than turning a word or a phrase into another language.



hundred meters before the finish line. This may be slightly more incomprehensible to readers in another culture.”¹⁰

When working with biblical concepts, the challenge is similar. Once more Hoem provides an example: “How would you explain the concept ‘Lamb of God’ to an Inuit who has never seen a lamb in his entire life? What is the best conceivable equivalent for ‘innocence’ to an Inuit? Perhaps a baby seal?”

In spite of all these linguistic and cultural barriers, for those Adventists interested in languages and written communication there is hardly a better activity than applying their skills to the art and craft of translation; and what is more, doing it with the conviction that this job is advancing the mission of the church not only by sharing the gospel but also by strengthening new and old believers. Monique Lemay, an Adventist English-French translator living in Quebec, Canada (pictured at the top of page 17), says: “What I like about translation is its rigor, precision, and preoccupation with details, which make a world of difference in the end product. Needless to say, translating for the church has brought me wonderful spiritual blessings. . . . I do believe that translating books and magazines for the French-speaking believers around the world is, in fact, a mission.”¹¹

Translating the Word

From John Wycliffe to Martin Luther to Casiodoro de Reina, Bible scholars with language knowledge have sought throughout the centuries to bring the Scriptures closer to the ears and hearts of common people by providing translations in their native tongues.

In recent years conscientious Adventist Bible scholars have also made a contribution to new versions of the

Bible, which aim at bringing the message of God’s Word to a new generation. Tasks such as this not only involve a great proficiency in the original languages of the Bible but also the ability of being precise but creative, and being willing to work in groups of scholars from various religious backgrounds during extended periods of time.

One of these scholars is Victor Armenteros, an Adventist linguist and scholar from Spain who worked for several years as part of the editorial committee that recently published the *Biblia Traducción Interconfesional*, an interchurch contemporary Spanish version of the Bible. Remembering the experience, which he describes as “amazing,” Armenteros states: “At the beginning I was rather apprehensive about contributing to an activity which seemed somehow ecumenical. But then I understood that ‘interchurch’ does not mean ecumenical, but being able to work and share together, unearthing and giving contemporary meaning to the revealed and hidden treasures of the Word of God.” He concludes: “I learned that in any format, the Word of God is alive, and I thank God for it.”¹²

Another Adventist young scholar who worked in Bible translation is Laurentiu Ionescu from Romania, who was part of a team producing an interchurch contemporary translation of the New Testament in Romanian. While he concedes that doctrinal differences sometimes implied “arguing for hours over a single word or preposition,” he also admits that it was a life-changing experience that offered him pleasant surprises. For instance, when arguing about which word to use for the Sabbath rest (as in many other languages, in Romanian there are two options—one for a general rest day and one specific for the seventh day of the week), Ionescu was amazed when the Catholic translators, among others,

Translation and the GC Session in Atlanta

Odette Ferreira is the calm beacon in the frantic rush of helping people to understand each other during the upcoming General Conference session in Atlanta. Working for the Education Department of the North American Division, she has been tasked (for the second time) with organizing a major behind-the-scenes effort to translate the proceedings into 15 different languages:

Spanish, French, Portuguese, German, Russian, Romanian, Czech, Japanese, Korean, Serbian/Croatian, Italian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Indonesian, and American Sign Language. An estimated 200 volunteer translators will cover daily nine hours of meetings for 10 days. Because of the strenuous nature of simultaneous translation, each volunteer will translate only small blocks and be

part of a constant rotation.

The wireless technology utilized for the translation will be provided by Adventist World Radio, using radio frequencies and small transistor radios (and headsets). For the first time, there will also be translators on the floor available to delegates wishing to contribute to the discussion, but who may not feel that their English is adequate. Most of the translators will pay their own way to Atlanta and will cover their own accommodation costs. What an army of volunteers, ready to give unselfishly of their time, talents, and means—the world church appreciates you!

would support him in choosing the Romanian term that best describes the specific seventh day of the week.¹³

Where Do We Go From Here?

Around the world translators working outside the church are reaching ever higher levels of professionalism. Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, however, translators are still more artisans than professionals. Many of them got into the job by a strange set of circumstances, and usually are self-made professionals who are not always supported by a due process of quality editing and proofreading. Svitlana Krushenytska, an Adventist translator living in Ukraine, seems to summarize the general feeling when she states: “I wish our job would be more appreciated.”¹⁴

At times underpaid, Adventist translators must often struggle with the ignorance of both bosses and colleagues about their job and the neglect of some church institutions. Sometimes church events with five-figure budgets do not include translation costs. Thus, more than once organizers are forced to resort to willing volunteers who often lack the knowledge and proficiency for such a task while translators have to work long hours to make ends meet. Ellen G. White understood this problem very well when, advocating for balance in the job of translators, she wrote: “Our work is much more important than is supposed, and requires much more thought. The translators should have less hours to devote to close and absorbing intellectual labor, lest the brain become too weary, and the force of penetration being relaxed, the labor accomplished shall be imperfect.”¹⁵

Things are changing, however. Seventh-day Adventist translators are becoming more aware that even a solitary job such as translation is in need of team efforts. And

church leaders are also grasping that the God-given assignment of the church requires understanding that in fulfilling its mission, perhaps one of the best investments is to increasingly support some of the ones who make the gospel transmission possible.

I do not recall what I finally did with the “Jesus-magnet-imam” translation problem. I may have settled for the Spanish equivalent of something like “Jesus is the greatest attraction in the world,” or something of the sort. What I do know, however, is that such a phrase deserves and has to be read and understood by every human being on earth. Because no matter the language, Jesus is in fact the greatest attraction in this world. And if the mission of the church is to take that message to every tribe and people, maybe there is no better way of accomplishing it than by resorting to committed translators who feel so deeply about sharing the story of Jesus as the ones who will keep voicing it in their native tongues to the last corners of the earth. ●

¹Emmett K. Vandevere, *The Wisdom Seekers* (Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publishing Association, 1972), pp. 31, 32; quoted in Floyd Greenleaf, *In Passion for the World: A History of Seventh-day Adventist Education* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 2005), pp. 105, 106.

²See, for instance, her remarks to young women in *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 204.

³For a complete description of this point, see Pietro Copiz, “The Linguist,” in *J. N. Andrews: The Man and the Mission*, ed. Harry Leonard (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1985), pp. 164-184.

⁴See Ellen G. White, Letter 140 (1907), p. 2, in *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, p. 103.

⁵*Australasian Union Conference Record*, July 28, 1899. A similar idea is set forth in *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 169.

⁶Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 464. This section belongs to appendix C and represents a letter written in 1934 by Willie C. White in response to questions raised by L. E. Froom.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸William C. White letter file, vol. 2, p. 245, quoted in Arthur White, *Ellen G. White*, vol. 3, “The Lonely Years (1876-1891),” p. 436.

⁹For a description of the whole experience, see *ibid.*, pp. 436-438.

¹⁰Personal communication.

¹¹Personal communication.

¹²Personal communication.

¹³Personal communication.

¹⁴Personal communication.

¹⁵Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, p. 328.

About 35 years ago, after I had just been converted, coming from a Catholic and secular background, I found the following singular quotation from the Spirit of Prophecy: “The 12th and 13th chapters of 1st Corinthians should be committed to memory, written in the mind and heart.”¹ Although I knew that 1 Corinthians 13 was the “love” chapter, I did not know much about its much longer sibling preceding it.

As I began to slowly commit the lessons to “mind and heart,” a precious theology of the relationship between the gifts of the Spirit (as outlined in 1 Corinthians 12) and the fruit of the Spirit (as described in 1 Corinthians 13) began to emerge. This article briefly explores the Adventist fundamental doctrinal belief number 17, which deals with Spiritual Gifts and Ministries. It will first outline the relationship between the gifts and the fruit of the Spirit, give a brief overview of the biblical foundation of the doctrinal belief, and then provide further resources that will help put the teaching into practice.

Gifts and Fruit: How Do They Relate?

Scripture teaches us that the fruit of the Spirit, the “more excellent way” that Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 12:31, instills our actions with high value before God (1 Cor. 13:1-3). After all, Jesus told His disciples in the Sermon on the Mount, “You will know them by their fruits” (Matt. 7:16). Those workers who have exhibited various gifts of the Spirit, such as prophecy and miracles, without “knowing” Him are labeled as “evildoers” (Matt. 7:22, 23). Ellen White herself states that “the object of the Christian life is fruit-bearing,”² thus underlining the foundational importance of *being* rather than *doing*.



A pastor and teacher, **James Park** ministered in the Los Angeles area for 25 years before accepting a call to teach at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the Philippines. He is currently chairing the Applied Theology Department and focuses his ministry and research upon discipleship and mission.

GOD'S Gift List

NUMBER 17

By JAMES PARK

All members included

In our hyperkinetic world, we have the privilege every day, like Mary, to sit at the feet of Jesus, which was “better” than Martha’s desire to be hospitable (Luke 10:42), which had led her to become critical of her sister. In Buddhist countries such as Thailand I often told church members that unless we take time to deepen our spiritual lives and become like a “monk,” the stresses of everyday life will turn us into “monkeys.”

Biblical Foundation of Spiritual Gifts

There are several key biblical texts that provide foundational understanding of the fundamental belief on spiritual gifts. First of all, it tells us in 1 Corinthians 12:11 that the Holy Spirit determines which gift(s) are given to each of the members. In practical terms, it can be said that every member of the church has at least one gift, but nobody has all the gifts. Paul uses the interdependence of the body to stress both the diversity and the unity that must exist if the organism is to function well. The biblical teaching of spiritual gifts avoids the twin extremes of expecting everybody to do the same thing (as, for example, to go out and give Bible studies) or that only a few are called upon to do the work of the church.

There are 20 specific gifts mentioned in Scripture, with some of the gifts mentioned more than once. Romans 12:6-8 lists the seven gifts of prophecy, service, teaching,

exhortation, giving, leadership, and mercy. In addition to these seven gifts, 1 Corinthians 12:7-10 and 12:28-30 add the 11 gifts of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, discernment, tongues, interpretation of tongues, apostle, helper, and administration. Finally, Ephesians 4:11 adds the two gifts of evangelist and pastor. While some commentators would limit the list to those that are specifically mentioned in these texts, others have postulated that more gifts were demonstrated in the New Testament church, such as hospitality, intercession, and mission, and that these should also be included.

The gifts given to an individual are not static but, as in the case of Paul, can be given by the Spirit as the need for healing (Acts 14:9, 10) or prophecy (Acts 27:23-25) arises. I feel it would be in harmony with Scripture that if an individual or group of believers is lacking a certain gift, they could pray that the Lord would either give the gift to those present or send a person who had that specific gift, in order to minister more effectively. Gifts need to be cherished and developed. Paul urged Timothy to “fan into flame” the gift that had been given to him through the laying on of hands (2 Tim. 1:6, NIV).

Spiritual Gifts: Practical Applications

As far as resources go, Peter Wagner’s easy-to-read and very popular *Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* is still a classic in the field.³ Although there are a number of spiritual gifts tests that can be taken and graded online, many of them favor a charismatic theology, biased toward certain gifts, such as healing, speaking in tongues, and prophecy and do not provide much of a background on

how the gifts should be understood or used within the local church or ministry context. A very excellent and well-documented approach to the whole area of spiritual gifts, called *Connections*, was produced by Seventh-day Adventist pastors and leaders and can be accessed via the Internet.⁴

Several years ago I wanted to start the dishwasher but discovered we had run out of dishwashing soap. Thinking that all soap was the same, I put some laundry detergent in the dispenser and went merrily on my way. When I returned a short time later I discovered the dishwasher had been turned into a bubble maker and the kitchen floor was receiving the offering of suds!

The doctrine of spiritual gifts teaches the importance of putting people in the right place in the church. At times, a very successful deacon has been made a head elder and difficulties have arisen. Like the detergent in my trusted dishwasher, the member is not “bad” but has been placed in the wrong responsibility. After encouraging us to memorize 1 Corinthians 12 and 13, Ellen White suggested that “Through His servant Paul, the Lord has placed before us these subjects for our consideration, and those who have the privilege of being brought together in church capacity will be united, understandingly and intelligently.”⁵ A biblical understanding of spiritual gifts will unite us both in understanding and creativity as we reflect more the servant spirit of Jesus and fulfill God’s mission for His church. ●

¹Ellen G. White, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed. F. D. Nichol (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1965), vol. 6, p. 1090.

²Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1941), p. 67.

³C. Peter Wagner, *Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1979).

⁴Go to www.creativeministry.org/article.php?id=985 to get more information about the project and ways to obtain the material.

⁵White, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, pp. 1090, 1091.

SPIRITUAL Gifts and Ministries



God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. Given by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who apportions to each member as He wills, the gifts provide all abilities and ministries needed by the church to fulfill its divinely ordained functions. According to the Scriptures, these gifts include such ministries as faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, reconciliation, compassion, and self-sacrificing service and charity for the help and encouragement of people. Some members

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

Making ELLEN WHITE'S WRITINGS



By
CINDY
TUTSCH

They can't be appreciated if kids don't read them.

"I asked my Bible class how they felt about Ellen White, and all I heard were groans and *arghhhhhs!*"

Kameron DeVasher was describing the reaction of the teens at his school to the name Ellen White. "So," Kameron continued, "I asked my students to unpack their response. 'Why do you feel this way about Ellen White? What experience have you had with her writings that has given you these negative feelings?'"

Kameron said there was a lot of humming and hawing, plus a few comments like, "She's so strict, she's rigid and legalistic and boring."

"OK," Kameron said. "Let's make a list of all the characteristics you can think of about Ellen White and her writings and list them on the board."

After everyone had had an oppor-

tunity to contribute, Kameron asked, "On what basis did you make that assessment?" He pressed further. "What Ellen White books have you read?"

Ultimately, the class admitted that their perceptions were based largely on what they had heard others say about Ellen White, and not on their own personal experience reading her writings. At this point, Kameron suggested that the class begin studying together Ellen White's book *The Desire of Ages* in order to make an informed evaluation based on their own experience.

The outcome? Students discovered that Ellen White's book on the life of Christ had immediate relevance in their spiritual life. Many students began marking and underlining their copies and were eager to discuss their favorite citations in class discussion.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church holds that the writings of Ellen White pass the biblical tests of confession in Christ and are in harmony with Scripture.¹ Adventists believe Ellen White communicates messages from God through her writings for the edification, encouragement, and consolation of the church. Thus, it is

important that teens and even young children understand that her writings are a gift from God that can help Christians know Jesus and experience His love, obeying His teachings out of a response to God's wonderful grace.

Ellen G. White's Writings for Young Readers

So, how do we introduce children to the writings of Ellen White? First, don't underestimate kids' ability to appreciate Ellen White's writings, when presented in a way that allows them to participate. Recently, I brought a group of children ages 10 to 13 together to read and discuss Ellen White's first vision, found on pages 13 to 20 of *Early Writings*. I gave each child their own beautiful copy of the book and invited them by turn to read a paragraph aloud.

During the reading, anyone could raise a question or make a comment about what they were hearing. There was so much discussion I ultimately had to limit the group to one comment per paragraph so we could finish the six pages in one afternoon!²

Resources, Resources

Some children and even teens really struggle to read and understand the nineteenth-century language that Ellen White uses. To help communicate successfully with youthful readers, the Ellen G. White Estate has worked with selected authors and editors to publish a number of Ellen White books in contemporary language. Sentences and paragraphs have been condensed and language modernized. But every effort has been made to be faithful to the content, ideas, and principles set forth by Ellen White. In no case has the thought been changed. These adaptations are not intended to take the place of the original publications. But by introducing children to Ellen White in language that they can understand, it is hoped that young readers will find her writings so compelling, interesting, and inspiring that they will ultimately



Cindy Tutsch is an associate director of the Ellen G. White Estate at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, who enjoys working with young and inquisitive minds.

explore the deep spiritual treasures found in her standard writings.

Children ages 8 to 14 who have access to the Internet may enjoy the online magazine about Ellen White found at www.whiteestate.org/vez. Through stories, adapted citations, puzzles, games, Q & A, Bible search, and even through the kids' own posted contributions, the writings of Ellen White become alive and relevant for children. The White Estate is preparing to post audio versions of Ellen White's standard and adapted books that children and youth can download free to their MP3 players. These audiobooks can be accessed soon at www.whiteestate.org.

The Power of Stories

I enjoy telling stories about Ellen White to children, sometimes providing them with opportunities to act out the stories. If you need resources for stories about Ellen White and Adventist heritage, check out the plethora of offerings at the Adventist Book Center, either in-store or online. If you're invited to share a children's story at your church's worship service, consider making it a story from Ellen White's extraordinary life! Chances are, many adults in your congregation will never have heard or will have forgotten the story and may also be benefited by the reminder of God's care for His chosen messenger. Did you know, for instance, that Ellen White allowed the students living in her home to have a weekly pillow fight? Or that her shortest vision concerned the whereabouts of a hairnet stolen by one of her boarders? Or that the last of Ellen White's 2,000 visions focused on God's great love for the youth and His desire that they be saved in His kingdom?

The Ellen G. White Research Centers, found in all the divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, have artifacts, pictures, and memorabilia about Ellen White, her writings, and her contribution to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Consider organizing a field trip to one of those centers with

the children and youth of your family or your church. If you live in North America, perhaps you could plan a family vacation that includes a visit to the White Estate at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, where your children can see a Bible that Ellen White held in vision, a large wall mural of her first vision, and other artifacts about her life. Or visit Elmhaven, Ellen White's northern California home near Pacific Union College, or Historic Adventist Village in Battle Creek, Michigan, or take a podcast tour to Adventist heritage sites in the northeastern United States, hosted by 11-year-old Kaili Kimbrow.³

Back Into the Classroom

Back to Kameron DeVasher's class of students who were initially reluctant to read anything Ellen White wrote. What was your own response when you read that he allowed—yes, encouraged!—the students to state their feelings, positive and negative, about Ellen White? Before your “adult hackles” rise too high, consider this instructive citation from the pen of Ellen White: “The youth should have a chance to give expression to their feelings.”⁴

But note that Kameron didn't stop teaching after he allowed his students “to give expression to their feelings.” He led them on to “test and see” for themselves, to evaluate Ellen White's personal spiritual benefit to them, not on the basis of others' opinions, but from their own experience. By encouraging the students to read, journal, underline, and discuss the spiritual concepts found in Ellen White's writings, many of his students underwent a complete transformation of attitudes toward the gift of prophecy.

Teaching our children to appreciate God's prophetic word takes effort, creativity, persistence, gentleness, patience, and tenacity. But it will be worth it all when parents, teachers, and caregivers see “the crown, the robe, the harp, given to their children. The days of hope and fear are ended. The seed sown with tears and prayers may have seemed to be sown in vain, but their harvest is reaped with joy at last. Their children have been redeemed.”⁵

³*Seventh-day Adventists Believe* (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press, 2005), p. 247.

⁴You can find the entire discussion at www.whiteestate.org/vez/jul08/podcast/podcast.html or the shortened version at www.youtube.com/watch?v=UbP4M2DAaCo.

⁵See www.whiteestate.org/vez/apr09/podcast/podcast.htm.

⁶Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1938), pp. 69, 70.

⁷Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1954), p. 569.

Ellen G. White Books in English Suitable for Young Readers

- *Messiah* by Jerry Thomas (an adaptation of *The Desire of Ages*)
- *A Call to Stand Apart* (a footnoted adaptation of selected EGW writings on the topics of salvation, relationships, wellness, social justice, careers, and the authority of Scripture)
- *The Beginning of the End* (an adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets*. It is the first volume in a five-book series known traditionally as the Conflict of the Ages Series)
- *Royalty and Ruin* (an adaptation of *Prophets and Kings*, with biblical texts from the NKJV)
- *Humble Hero* (an adaption of *The Desire of Ages*, the third volume of the condensed Conflict of the Ages Series).

Minneapolis, By GERHARD PFANDL An Adventist watershed 1888



For more than 100 years Seventh-day Adventists have looked back at the 1888 General Conference session as a milestone in their history, a major turning point in their theological development. It is considered the most important theological conference in the church's history. Though lasting less than a month, both the Minneapolis session (Oct. 17-Nov. 4) and the ministerial institute that preceded it (Oct. 10-16) changed the shape of Adventism.

Events Leading Up to Minneapolis

After the great disappointment in 1844 our pioneers concentrated their preaching on the proclamation of important truths, the so-called landmark truths: the sanctuary, the spirit of prophecy, the three angels' messages, conditional immortality, the Second Advent, and the Sabbath. Salvation and righteousness by faith were kept in the background, because these truths were taught by most other churches. Why teach a Baptist or Methodist about salvation, with which they were familiar anyway? What they did not know was the Sabbath, the state of the dead, the sanctuary truth, etc. Thus our pioneers majored in those doctrines that set us apart—especially the Sabbath and the Ten Commandments.

Unfortunately, because of the heavy emphasis on the law, spirituality waned and not a few became decidedly legalistic. Pride, self-assurance, and complacency entered our ranks.

What was missing was a living experience with Christ—the joy and peace that comes from a relationship with Christ. The law and keeping the law became all-important. Ellen White, looking at the situation, wrote, “As a people we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law.”¹

The Ministerial Institute, October 10-16, 1888

When we think of Minneapolis 1888, two names come to mind—A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner. They were close friends and both were editors for *Signs of the Times* in California. Alonzo T. Jones (38) had served in the U.S. Army and was largely self-taught. Elliot J. Waggoner (33), by contrast, had had a classical education, had trained to be a medical doctor, and had worked at Battle Creek Sanitarium for a time, but his heart was in evangelism, so he switched careers and became a minister.

In the week-long workers' meeting that preceded the General Conference one issue that divided the ministerial workforce was the conflict over the law in Galatians 3:24. The question was: Which law is the schoolmaster, the moral or the ceremonial law? In 1886 O. A. Johnson had published an article in the *Review and Herald* entitled “The Two Laws,” in which he stated “that the law in Galatians is the ceremonial law.”² A few months later E. J. Waggoner ran a

series of nine articles in the *Signs*, in which he claimed that the law in Galatians is the moral law. Ellen White, living in Basel, Switzerland, at the time, wrote a letter of rebuke to the two editors in California for publishing articles that revealed to the world that our two church papers were at variance on certain teachings. She did not take sides; she simply did not like the way things were done.

Who was right? The answer is, of course, both. Both laws lead to Christ. Eight years later, in 1896, Ellen White wrote, “In this scripture [Gal. 3:24], the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee to Him for pardon and peace.”²³ In 1888, however, she refused to give an answer—probably because she herself didn’t know at the time.

The Minneapolis Conference

The conference convened Wednesday, October 17. About 90 delegates represented 27,000 church members. The progress of new mission fields, the distribution of labor, city evangelism, a new ship for the South Pacific (Pitcairn), and many other items were taken up. But today, all the ordinary business of the conference is largely forgotten. What we still remember is that “the Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones.... It presented justification through faith in the Surety [Christ]; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.”²⁴

Waggoner was asked to present a series of lectures on righteousness by faith. We do not know exactly what Waggoner said, because beginning only in 1891 were all Bible studies at General Conference sessions recorded, but from what he wrote before and after Minneapolis we know approximately what he taught.

Until 1888 it was largely thought that righteousness acceptable to God could be achieved (with the help of the Holy Spirit, of course) by obedience to the commandments. In other words, sanctification was seen as the basis of salvation.

The work of Christ in justification was seen primarily in regard to our sins of the past. An unsigned article in an early *Signs of the Times* stated, “As all have violated God’s law and cannot of themselves render obedience to His just requirements, we are dependent on Christ, first for justification from our past offenses, and, secondly, for grace whereby to render acceptable obedience to His holy law in time to come.”²⁵

Now, Waggoner came along and said: (1) man’s obedience can never satisfy God’s law; (2) Christ’s imputed righteousness alone is the basis of our acceptance by God; and (3) we constantly need the covering of Christ’s righteousness, not just for our past sins.

What was the reaction of his listeners? Some accepted the message and supported Waggoner (E. G. White, W. C. White, S. N. Haskell, etc.); others rejected the message (U. Smith, J. H. Morrison, L. R. Conradi, etc.); but the majority was undecided; they did not know what to believe. Those who opposed the message were quite vocal. At one stage Ellen White was so discouraged she wanted to leave, but the angel of the Lord told her, “Not so; God has a work for you to do in this place. The people are acting over the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.”²⁶

Eventually most of those who opposed the message changed their attitude and accepted the message of righteousness by faith, though some left the church.

After the Minneapolis session Mrs. White joined A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner in carrying the message of righteousness by faith to the churches. From coast to coast they visited camp meetings, workers’ meetings, and Bible schools. In 1889 she could write: “I have never seen a revival work go forward with such thoroughness, and yet remain so free from all undue excitement.”²⁷ Following Minneapolis many books dealing with righteousness by faith were produced, for example, *Steps to Christ* and *The Desire of Ages*.

To understand what happened at Minneapolis is important because some people today claim that the church rejected the message of Minneapolis and call for corporate repentance. Others claim that the nature of Christ was the main point of Waggoner’s message. Since in his book *Christ and His Righteousness* (1890) Waggoner suggested that Christ took sinful flesh with sinful tendencies, it is claimed the church has rejected the message because it has never officially accepted that Christ had sinful tendencies. However, there is no evidence that Waggoner dealt with the nature of Christ in Minneapolis. His emphasis was on the relationship of Christ’s righteousness to the law.

Minneapolis 1888 was a turning point in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Through Waggoner and Jones, supported by Ellen White, the church was saved from an incomplete understanding of the gospel. ●

²³“Christ Prayed for Unity Among the Disciples,” *Review and Herald* (March 11, 1890).

²⁴“The Two Laws,” *Review and Herald* (March 16, 1886).

²⁵*Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 234.

²⁶*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 91, 92.

²⁷“Fundamental Principles,” *Signs of the Times* (June 4, 1874).

²⁸Letter 2a, 1892.

²⁹*Review and Herald* (March 5, 1889).



Gerhard Pfandl, a native of Austria, is an associate director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.

QUESTION: *I've heard people talk about apostasy. What is it?*

The word “apostasy” comes from the Greek *apostasía*, which means “rebellion.” In Scripture it has a religious content worth exploring. In Christian theology the reformers used it to describe the condition of the church during the Middle Ages. But it has also become important among those who promote double predestination, the notion that some have been chosen by God for salvation and others for destruction. It is argued that those elected for salvation will never fall from grace; they will not apostatize. I cannot deal here with the details of those claims, but I will describe some aspect of the concept of apostasy in Scripture.

1. Apostasy and Heresy: It is important to distinguish between apostasy and heresy as religious terms. Heresy is commonly understood as a deviation from, or falsification of, biblical truth. It presupposes that a biblical body of truth is valid for all and that no one has the right or authority to alter it. It also assumes that there is a criterion to distinguish truth from its falsification or deviation.

In Christian history two specific instruments have been credited with that authority. The first was the teaching ministry of the Christian church. That is to say, the church through its religious leaders interpreted and defined truth for believers. This understanding was rejected by the reformers.

The second instrument is Scripture. The Bible is the only and exclusive instrument by which truth is defined and falsehood identified. Adventists have embraced this last position. Apostasy incorporates the view of heresy just summarized, but points to the moment when the presence of heresy is so abundant and radical that individuals are considered to be fully separated from biblical truth, and from Christ as the truth. In that case there is a falling away from the truth and from God’s saving grace. Apostasy is the result of a slow process of spiritual defection from biblical truth.

2. Terminology Associated With Apostasy: The Bible uses many verbs to express the idea of apostasy. Among them, “turn away” (Matt. 24:10), “go out” (1 John 2:19), “forsake” (Deut. 31:16), and “rebel” (Eze. 2:3). The Hebrew term closest to our term “apostasy” is *m^oshûbah*. It is

based on the verb *shûb*, which means “to turn.” This verb is used, on one hand, to express the idea of repentance as a “turning” or “re-turning” to the Lord. On the other hand a person who “turns away” from the Lord commits *m^oshûbah*, apostasy. Apostasy could be the result of accepting the spurious beliefs of false teachers (1 Tim. 4:1) or going back to the corrupting lifestyle of the world (2 Peter 2:20-22). It could also be the result of persecution (Matt. 24:9, 10), an unbelieving heart (Heb. 3:12), superficial commitment to Christ (1 John 2:19), and not paying attention to God’s Word (Heb. 2:1).

3. Manifestations of Apostasy: When associated with heresy, apostasy is a visible rejection of truth. The Bible emphasizes two of its most common expressions. The first is the practice of false worship (Jer. 3:6). The true God is rejected or worshipped in the style of a pagan god. This was a common expression of apostasy in the Old Testament and was considered a violation of the covenant. The prevailing Canaanite religion exerted a powerful influence upon many Israelites, and this led to separation from the Lord. For the Lord this was a case of spiritual marital

unfaithfulness resulting in permanent separation (Jer. 3:6-8).

The second expression of apostasy was relying for preservation on the political power of other nations, thus, denying the power of God for salvation (e.g., Hosea 8:9). In doing this, the nation was “forsaking the Lord,” acting wickedly, going back to the slavery of Egypt, and turning against Him (Jer. 2:17-19). In both cases God was abandoned and new powers were embraced by His people. Surprisingly, most probably through self-deception, they still believed they were being loyal to the Lord (e.g., Jer. 3:23, 24). These are probably two of the most deceptive and disastrous expressions of apostasy. It promotes falsehood in the name of the Lord, and consequently many are deceived.

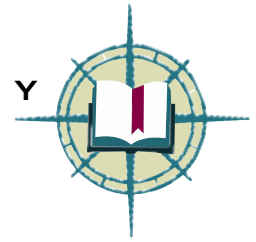
Although apostasy will increase in the Christian world (2 Thess. 2:3), through the power of the Lamb we can remain loyal to Him. ●



What Is Apostasy?

By
ANGEL MANUEL
RODRÍGUEZ

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



REVELATION'S **Eternal** **Reward**

By
MARK A. FINLEY

The Bible begins with a perfect world. Before sin entered in Genesis 1 and 2 our first parents, Adam and Eve, enjoyed direct communion with God. After sin their fellowship with God was broken. Sickness, suffering, heartache, and death entered our world. In Revelation 21 and 22 the Bible ends where it began. One day as the result of Jesus' victory over Satan in His life, death, and resurrection, the domain of sin will be broken. Sin and death will be no more. This month's lesson will review "Revelation's Eternal Reward."

1. What did John see in prophetic vision?

"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea" (Rev. 21:1).

John saw a new _____ and a new _____.

God gave Bible prophets glimpses of eternity. Along with John, both Isaiah and Peter had visions of new heavens and a new earth (see 2 Peter 3:13; Isa. 65:17).

2. As John saw the holy city descending from heaven to the earth made new, what three things did a loud voice from heaven say?

"And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God'" (Rev. 21:3).

a. Behold the _____ of _____ is with men.

b. He will _____ with them.

c. God Himself will be _____ them and be _____ God.

What does Revelation 21:3 mean to you? What will it be like to see Jesus? Write your thoughts on the lines below.

3. As a result of sin, our world is filled with sorrow, pain, and death. What promise does God give regarding the new heavens and the new earth?

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Rev. 21:4).

God will wipe _____ from their eyes. There shall be no more _____,

for the _____ things have passed _____.

Think what it will be like to live in the earth made new! All fear will be gone. Suffering will be a thing of the past. Death will be banished forever.



4. Will we be subject to painful memories in the earth made new?

“Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new’” (Rev. 21:5).

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create” (Isa. 65:17, 18).

God will make all things _____.

The _____ shall not be remembered or come to mind.

5. What two qualifications does Revelation 21 list to enter the new heavens and new earth?

“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son” (Rev. 21:7).

“But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life” (Rev. 21:27).

The essentials for eternity listed here are:

He who _____ shall inherit all things.

Only those who are written in the _____ Book of _____.

To overcome is to allow Jesus to live in our lives and daily commune with Him. To have our names written in the Lamb’s Book of Life is to accept Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior. When we come to Jesus and abide in Him, we will one day be with Him eternally.

6. Of all heaven’s joys, which one is the greatest?

“And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads” (Rev. 22:3, 4).

They shall see His _____, and His name shall be on their _____.

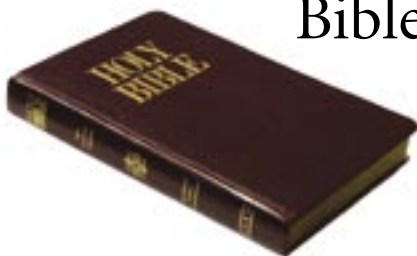
7. What eternal promise does God give to each of His faithful believers?

“There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever” (Rev. 22:5).

God’s followers will _____ with Him forever.

Heaven will be a wonderful place. The greatest of all our joys will be to live with Jesus and spend eternity in His presence. Nothing is more rewarding than to meet Jesus, who redeemed us, and praise Him forever. Why not renew your commitment to Him, thank Him for His promise to eliminate sin and sorrow, and announce your intention to live with Him forever?

Next month will begin a new series of Bible studies with **“A Journey Through Genesis.”**



LETTERS



Ideas

Congratulations for the article from Pastor Jan Paulsen about teenagers and young people, “Why Do They Walk Away?” (October 2009).

He could write more about this, even prepare a seminar about the theme with discussion and strategies for church, parents, and professors.

From Claude Richli’s interview with Sylvain Romain, “Adventism in Post-Communist Albania,” could come a little book about faith and martyrs from the Adventist Church (we have many). I am talking about the story of the young Albanian who became an Adventist and decided to return to his country to spread the good news about Jesus, knowing he would face persecution.

May God bless the magazine and the people who prepare it.

SILEIDE FRANCE

TURAN SALVADOR

Curituba, Paraná, Brazil

Comment

Thank you for a timely article, “Why Do They Walk Away?” As I look back on the years I have been blessed to work in youth ministry, I am sad to say there are many young people I have encountered who chose that church is not for them. On my Facebook friends list I can see several former students who used to perform music that lifted the spirit to God, who composed songs, who took part in the church life through

creative ministries. It seems it is often the musically inclined people who leave our church.

I have a song imprinted on my mind, “Take Me to the Cross,” sung by one of the girls in my Bible class. The song came so strongly from her heart—she sang as though it described her own story. Tears came down the cheeks of the church members, as if this was a moment of truth, honesty, and deep conviction.

Now all I can do is try to keep in touch and pray that the message in that song will come back to her, and many other young adults’ hearts. God wants them to come back. My prayer is for the church to have open arms and warm, loving hearts to keep seeking those who no longer see themselves in the church.

MARIANNE KOLKMANN

Trondheim, Norway

Don’t Forget Us

There is a lot of work being done in Ethiopia, but I haven’t read a single article about it. There are many untold stories which could make an

amazing article in *Adventist World*. God is everywhere and works in mysterious ways.

I want to wish you well on behalf of all the Adventist brothers and sisters in Ethiopia. I personally want to add my gratitude because your magazine gives me the motivation to read the Bible more and more.

EYOB AGA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



Youth at Work

I was happy to read about the Elijah Project (*Adventist World*, March 2009). It is wonderful to know that the youth of our church are

talking about Jesus in the world. I would like you to know that here in the northeast of Brazil there is a similar initiative. It is Mission Caleb.

During the holidays in January and June the youth are fully dedicated to evangelism, leaving their homes and going to places near and far, obeying

“My prayer is for the church to have open arms and warm, loving hearts.”

—MARIANNE KOLKMANN,

Trondheim, Norway

LETTERS

the order of the Master, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel.” The results are many baptisms and young people with a renewed spirit to await the return of Jesus.

KARLLA TATHIANA
Fires, Paraíba, Brazil



Like the Leaves of Autumn

It gives me pleasure to write this letter to you for the first time since the Lord called me to His service.

We are preaching the gospel to our friends to know the real Jesus and His

salvation to this lost world. We are preaching here in Malawi and also in Mozambique. People are receiving Jesus as their Lord. We want this gospel to be preached in all areas.

We prayed to the Lord to give us guidelines. We did this for three days. On the fourth day we saw a paper lying on the road—it was *Adventist World*, pages 29 and 30 from June 2006.

Our prayer was to ask the Lord to give us friends to help us in preaching the gospel. That is how the Lord opened our eyes to you (Ps. 143:8). We request you to pray for us for the door to be opened. We also request *Adventist World* magazine. Include us on your mailing list. We need to hear from you.

CHARLES PENGANI
Mulomga, Phalombe, Malawi

Appreciation

A cordial greeting in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thanks for *Adventist World* magazine, for the message of peace and inspiration for our brotherhood. It is a journal that is used much.

I am enclosing photographs of a missionary activity done by our union called Puerto Rican Day Goodness.

HECTOR MATÍAS
Río Piedras, Puerto Rico

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



THE PLACE OF PRAYER

Please pray for my father, who is addicted to alcohol. He agreed to study the Bible and attend a series of conferences. Pray that God will strengthen this desire being born in his heart, and that he will accept our faith.

ANA, *Brazil*

Please pray for me so that I might be able to move out of this refugee life. I'm sure someday God will listen to my prayer. Nobody can stop me from going where God wants me to go.

DAWIT, *Ethiopia*

Thank you for all your prayers; and thank God for answering prayers. You have prayed for my mother numerous times. She had an MRI the other day

and the doctor said her cancer has not come back. In fact, she is improving. Glory to God.

MICHELE, *United States*

My brothers and sisters and I are living a desperate life with nowhere to sleep, nothing to wear, and little to eat. We live by a prison and sometimes get the remains of prisoners' food. I am praying for God to help us.

DOREEN, *Uganda*

I asked for prayer for my sister who was taking the CPA exam. She e-mailed me that she passed the board exam. We thank you and your group for the prayers sent above.

NATHANIEL, *United Arab Emirates*

I was baptized two years ago, then became friends with someone who drew me into drinking and smoking. I want to change, but I am finding it very difficult to quit. I have such a guilty conscience. Pray for me.

PHUMZILE, *South Africa*

You prayed for my sister who was having a baby. She had a perfect delivery and everything is fine by God's grace. Thank you.

MALCOLM, *Grenada*

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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UPDATE: AWR



Olympic Medalist Is Winning Souls for CHRIST

Eugenia Tovstogan was a professional handball player who once performed for the Soviet Union national team. With her club Spartak, based in Kiev, Ukraine, she won many titles. Today Tovstogan is retired from this professional sport. She lives in Israel and works as a volunteer to produce radio health programs for AWR's FM broadcasts.

Tovstogan was born in Moscow, Russia. A very promising young athlete, she was moved to Kiev to study with the best Soviet handball colony and train to become one of the top players. When she was 16, she started playing for Spartak, the most famous Soviet handball club of all time. With them, she won six championship titles for USSR, five Euro Cups, and many more awards.

Playing for the USSR national handball team, Tovstogan competed in the 1986 world championships in Holland, where her team won the gold medal. Two years later, feeling very confident, they went to the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games. Everybody respected Spartak and expected the Soviet Union to win the gold in handball. They ended up with the bronze.

The Olympic bronze, which would normally have been a success for any competitor, turned into the biggest disappointment of their lives. The Seoul Olympics was the last chance for the Soviet team, since the country fell apart just a few years later. Like most of her teammates, Tovstogan was left on her own to find her existence and a new club, if possible.

In 1991 she moved to Berlin, Germany, where she played for three years. What a surprise she received when her mother came to Berlin to spend two months with her! Her mother had become a Seventh-day Adventist, and during those two months she shared her new findings with her daughter.

Tovstogan relocated to France in 1993. During that move she decided to change her lifestyle. She started reading the Bible every day and soon resolved not to attend training sessions on Sabbath. This cost her greatly—she had to leave the club. Tovstogan realized that the only place she could play handball professionally and also observe the Sabbath was Israel. Thanks to the contacts she made with some of her friends, she moved to Israel. A few weeks before moving, in 1996, Tovstogan was baptized in Kiev. In Israel she played handball until the end of her career in 2000.

Today Tovstogan says, “I believe through radio I can help people to understand the Adventist health message, which can give them a happier life. Then I want to tell everyone about the prize they can win. There is a first prize, but not for one only. This one is for everybody; all can win it, and I know there is no other prize on earth that can match it. I am dreaming of the day when I can stand as a winner under the flag, together with thousands of others, to sing the anthem which we don't know yet, but which we will all know when gathered there, as the Bible says.”

—BY TIHOMIR ZESTIC, *AWR Europe Region director*

The PEOPLE'S PLACE

QUOTE

“You are here because God wants you here. And if you believe that, God will equip you to accomplish what He wants you to do.”

—Pastor Dave Sanner, on August 8, 2009, at the Blue Mountain Academy Seventh-day Adventist Church, Hamburg, Pennsylvania, United States

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



GABRIELA BUCHHAMER

ADVENTIST LIFE

I used to make deposits and withdrawals the “old fashioned way”—through a human teller in a rural bank. It didn’t come to mind to use an automated teller machine (ATM) until I moved to the city.

A funny thing happened when I first used the plastic debit card. The machine was fully automated, complete with a mechanical voice telling me to punch in the four-digit PIN code. I had written the number on a piece of paper and at the machine I punched in 9068.

“Your code is incorrect. Please try again,” the mechanical voice said. I punched the numbers again—no success.

Frustrated, I was about to give up when I noticed the paper was upside down. I tried again, this time using 8906. It worked!

All I did was change my perspective and look at it from a different angle. When a problem comes my way, I don’t give up at once. Instead, I find a solution. I thank God for showing me that failures can be turned into successes if we’re willing to take a new look. So often solutions are just there waiting.

—L. Yap, Quezon City, Philippines

POEM

Serenity

To sleep in quiet peacefulness,
To rest with conscience clear,
To tremble not when darkness falls,
To know that God is near.

What more could charm the human heart
While traveling earth’s way,
Than walking hand in hand with Him,
Anticipating day.

—Sandra A. Haynes, Roseburg, Oregon,
United States



ANSWER: In Vidma, Rio Negro, Argentina, Kenneth Lavoy and Martin Mazzeo are enjoying a day of fishing on the banks of the Rio Negro (Black River).