

July 2010

ADVENTIST WORLD



“Follow
the
Bible”



FEATURE

KEEPING GIRLS SAFE

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ADVENTIST WORLD

July 2010



GENERAL CONFERENCE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

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WORLD VIEW

Those on the Shore

It was the first baptism of my first pastoral district, and I was both happy and nervous all at once. I had been studying with Steven for months, carefully reviewing the Bible truths in which he had been raised, calling him on to deeper faith in Christ.

Now we stood waist-deep in the cool water of a summer lake, looking back at the shore. Almost all the members of our small congregation had turned out to witness Steven's baptism that Sabbath afternoon. Standing slightly forward of the rest was his mother, who had herself been baptized when she was expecting Steven. (We smiled that this was actually his "rebaptism"—13 years later.) Next to her were the young man's brother and sisters, followed closely by all the "aunts" and "uncles" in the faith who had watched him grow up in their midst. Some 30 saints had gathered on the sand to sing and pray and bear witness to this most important moment in his young life.

And though on some official record I would be counted as the one who led Steven to Christ, I knew better. There stood his mother, who had told and read him countless Bible stories. There stood his siblings, who had themselves made the same choice, modeling maturity in Christ.

Smiling at me from the shoreline were the dear men and women who had taught him lessons during 600 Sabbath schools. Others there had prayed with him and listened to him and built him into the fine young man he was.

This was, in every sense, the church's celebration, not the pastor's. I was just the fortunate one standing beside Steven in the water on a brilliant summer day, saying the same words under which millions of God's saints have been baptized through the centuries.

So it is, I believe, with almost every baptism and every candidate. We think we can trace the one or ones responsible for a decision to follow Jesus, but only Heaven really knows the multitude of the righteous who stand behind each choice to join God's remnant church. Their prayers and songs, their love and counsel, have formed a heart now eager to be given to the Master.

I salute you—all of you—who stand on the shore with tears and smiles, waiting to enfold the newly baptized one with your embrace. You have done exceedingly well. Enter into the joy of your Lord.

— BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

Norwegian Ambassador Visits Adventist World Headquarters

■ Wegger Christian Strommen, Norway's ambassador to the United States, praised Seventh-day Adventists for their worldwide humanitarian work and denominational unity during an April 2010 visit to the Seventh-day Adventist Church headquarters.

Pastor Jan Paulsen, General Conference president and a fellow Norwegian, hosted Ambassador Strommen, along with a group of church leaders, during the April 26 protocol visit.



PROTOCOL VISIT: Norwegian ambassador to the United States Wegger Christian Strommen addresses Adventist Church leaders during an April 26 visit to the church's world headquarters.

GEORGE JOHNSON

WORLD REPORT

Strommen was appointed ambassador to the U.S. in 2007, after serving as ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations in Geneva. His wife, Cecilie Joergensen Strommen, an ordained Lutheran minister, accompanied him during the visit.

“The world needs more religion aimed at doing something about the human condition,” Strommen said, noting the Adventist Church’s emphasis on healthful living and humanitarian work. “You do your humanitarian work, but don’t need to make front-page news. Others would do well to take from the Adventist tradition of looking after their part of the world.”

During the visit, his first to the church’s headquarters, Strommen commended the Adventist Church’s global church structure.

“You have a fascinating way of organizing yourselves,” he said. “Your structure keeps you together.”

Paulsen, whose first pastoral assignment was in southern Norway, thanked the ambassador and his wife for taking the time to visit the church’s headquarters.

“As a church involved in promoting peace and human rights, we appreciate the role of Norway and its role of conflict resolution and promoting humanitarian work around the world,” Paulsen said.

Though Norway has a state religion, Evangelical Lutheran, the northern European nation has a commitment to religious freedom and human rights, said the Adventist Church’s public affairs director John Graz.

Of the 4.8 million people living in Norway, nearly 80 percent belong to the Church of Norway. There are about 4,600 Seventh-day Adventists in Norway.

—Reported by Judy Thomsen/Adventist News Network



DUTCH TREAT: Dimitri Triantos and Magda Trianto-van Kooij on April 30 after receiving the Order of Orange-Nassau

PHOTO COURTESY TED NEWS

Netherlands Queen Honors Three Adventists for Community Service

Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands honored three Seventh-day Adventists for their community service along with other national award recipients during an annual ceremony on April 30.

Pastoral worker Jan Kerksen was knighted into the Order of Orange-Nassau in the town hall in Groningen by its mayor Peter Rehwinkel. Kerksen was awarded for his commitment to smoking-cessation programs and for his involvement in setting up an inner-city drop-in center, The Oasis, in conjunction with other Protestant churches in Groningen.

Husband and wife Dimitri Triantos and Magda Trianto-van Kooij of the Dordecht Adventist Church were also awarded Members of the Order of Orange-Nassau for their work with the charity International Children’s Care.

The Order of Orange-Nassau is a national civil and military honor typically awarded during an annual ceremony on the queen’s birthday, April 30.

Wim Altink, president of the Adventist Church in the Netherlands,

commended the award recipients for their community involvement.

“An involved community church is a relevant church,” Altink said. “It is great to see that the tireless efforts of Jan Kerksen, Dimitri and Magda Triantos are appreciated in this way.”

—Reported by Adventist News Network

Adventists Begin Mission Work in Three Lands, Unnamed for Security Reasons

The Seventh-day Adventist Church will establish outreach programs in three countries where the movement previously had no established work.

The Adventist Mission Committee recently approved \$1.9 million in matching funds from the Adventist Church’s world headquarters for local mission projects totaling \$7.9 million. The action included work in three new countries. Committee members, however, declined to name the countries because of political sensitivity.

The Adventist Church currently operates in 203 of the 232 countries recognized by the United Nations. In some countries it’s difficult to

establish work, church leaders said, while in other countries it's illegal to operate a Christian church.

The committee's plan is to establish a community center in an urban area of each of these three countries. The centers will offer health programs, literacy and computer classes, family life programs, counseling for women, youth recreation, an Internet café, and a bookstore.

"We're wanting to meet the needs of those communities," said Mike Ryan, committee chair and a world church vice president.

The April 2010 approval of the next round of monthly budget proposals for mission projects also highlights a trend: local areas are increasingly contributing a higher percentage of funds to their regional mission projects.

The church's world headquarters now contributes about 25 percent of funds to local mission projects, down from as high as a 90-percent contribution rate when the committee was established in 1990.

ANSEL OLIVER/ANN



WORLD FOCUS: Mike Ryan, Adventist Mission Committee chair and a General Conference vice president, said the movement will establish work in three previously unentered territories.



BUSINESS SCHOOL: Artist's rendering of a proposed business school for Solusi University in Zimbabwe.

"That's a very healthy change," Ryan said. "This creates more local ownership for projects locally."

Still, the percentage varies widely. The matching rate is as high as 80 percent in some regions, such as Northern Asia, and lower in others—as little as 10 percent for projects in the Americas.

The mission committee approves about \$3.5 million of matching funds from the world headquarters each year. Projects are designed to increase outreach in areas with little Adventist work. Since 1990 the committee has offered matching funds totaling more than \$100 million, Ryan said.

—Reported by *Adventist News Network*

Adventist University in Zimbabwe to Build Business School

■ Solusi University, an Adventist-owned university in the African nation of Zimbabwe, supplemented its 2010 graduation program with the launch of a US\$4.35 million Faculty of Business building project at a

ceremonial groundbreaking for the first stage on its expansive campus near Bulawayo.

Concept plans have been drawn up for a two-story structure that will house five business departments, the faculty and administration office, a postgraduate school, a postgraduate library, student classrooms, and a lecture theater. The first stage of the project is a US\$1.05 million building consisting of 10 classrooms and four computer labs. The faculty offices and lecture theater will follow in stages.

Solusi University is a multicultural institution in the heart of sub-Saharan Africa, with almost 2,000 students and staff from at least 10 countries, serving the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division.

Founded as a mission station in 1894, Solusi grew into a high school then college, with university status conferred in 1994. It is located some 31 miles (50 kilometers) southwest of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second-largest

Continued next page

Continued from page 5

city and its early colonial administrative center.

Funding for the building program will come from a committed coalition of Zimbabwean and international donors, among them alumni and Zimbabwean businesspersons, and politicians. Dr. John Jeremic, an Australian evangelist, is among those supporting the building project.

First-stage development funding was raised at a donors conference, which was attended by Zimbabwean dignitaries and businesspersons, including Zimbabwe's vice president Dr. John Landa Nkomo, in Bulawayo on graduation eve. Some US\$1.3 million was raised.

Speaking to the more than 350 guests at the dinner, Dr. Nkomo told how his father had been born behind an outcrop of rocks on the campus in the same year it was established (1894), and how he had inherited his father's fondness for the institution. He said Solusi had shaped his own life perspectives and that he was pleased to see that Solusi was producing graduates who continued to shape the country.

Speaking of the initiative, Dr. Norman Maphosa, Solusi University's vice chancellor, said, "We were pleased that the fund-raising program was attended by politicians from across the political divide, and that Solusi played a part in its coordination. We are building in partnership with local donors to build a world-class Christian university."

The building itself has been conceived as a series of courtyards and atria, which function as a natural climate-control in the relatively torrid African summer, with temperature and humidity influenced by a self-shading design and treed landscaping. The plans have been drawn, and contractors identified who will be invited to bid.

—Reported by Lee Dunstan

WORLD REPORT

Hundreds of Seventh-day Adventists in South America took to the streets May 15 in the latest continent-wide outreach campaign, registering bone marrow donors, distributing malaria-control kits, and promoting health initiatives to community members.

into a vehicle for spreading the church's message of hope and information about the Sabbath.

The message was carried Saturday: by airplane in Brazil and Argentina, via balloons in the Brazilian state of Santa Catarina, by boat in the Amazon, and the message rode into

In South. Americ

Special Sabbath Takes

Parades, airplanes—even a hearse—herald campaign across eight countries.

By FELIPE LEMOS, South American Division, and Adventist News Network Staff

Church leaders said the event and the accompanying distribution of 30 million evangelistic magazines were to highlight the seventh-day Sabbath as a day of hope for families, for physical and mental health, and for better contact with God.

The initiative spurred streetwide marches in big cities and small towns. Many featured loudspeakers mounted on trucks, cars, and motorcycles. In the Brazilian city of Campos dos Goytacazes in the state of Rio de Janeiro, even a hearse was transformed

town on a horse in Augustinópolis, in the Brazilian state of Tocantins.

"The message of Sabbath, for the current population, which lives frantically and is full of activities, is important because it is necessary to stop and reflect on a life in relationship with God and our neighbors," said Erton Köhler, South American Division president.

Previous initiatives of the Adventist Church in South America include a Day of Hope in 2008, with 20 million magazines distributed,

and 2009's Homes of Hope, in which church members invited community friends home for lunch. Church officials say the large, one-day campaigns promote church unity across the continent and channel the energy of members for months leading up to the initiative.

The church is a "practical" force in people's lives, Fortunati said, citing the church's global "enditnow" campaign against violence toward women and children.

On a street corner in Buenos Aires, Argentina, youth dramatized for passers-by the pressures of the

Young Edvan Snow gained attention during the magazine delivery in the Jardim Planalto neighborhood of Cuiaba, Mato Grosso. The boy charmed residents with his charisma and simplicity.

The story of Edvan is interesting: he had his first contact with the Adventist Church when he was alone at the church during the completion of the course "How to Quit Smoking." Later, he received an invitation to Holy Week 2010 services. He began to attend meetings and started Bible studies.

According to Amarilho Jardel, who is giving the young man those Bible studies, Edvan's determination is impressive: "On the eve of the Impact Hope, he came to me and said: 'I've talked to my mother and she allowed me to participate in the Hope Impact'" project.

"It was great to deliver the magazines. I continue to believe in God," Edvan said. He added: "Jesus will come back again, and I want to go to heaven."

Along with spiritual outreach, church members in various regions held community blood drives, registered hundreds of potential bone marrow donors, and offered health screenings and counseling on healthful living.

Members also followed the initiative through church communication channels—church journalists and Webmasters in Brasília covered the event all day Saturday, posting pictures, stories, and videos on a Spanish and Portuguese blog.

There are approximately 2.1 million Adventists in the church's South America region, comprising Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. —*Marcio Tonetti and Ellen Ribeiro contributed to this story.*



a,

Message to Community

hope in coordinated

PARADE OF HOPE: Church members in Feira de Santana, Bahia, Brazil, march to promote the Day of Hope initiative.

"For us [in South America] it's not just one day; it's a lifestyle," Köhler told Adventist News Network during a March 2010 interview.

Local organizers said the campaign caught the attention of motorists, pedestrians, tourists, and shoppers. Even politicians took notice. Jose Fortunati, mayor of Porto Alegre in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul, commended the church's emphasis not only on spirituality but also on social impact.

week and the relief of Sabbath. In Chile young jugglers entertained drivers, while others handed out the Day of Hope magazine. In Peru the church tasked a female minister with delivering copies of the magazine to political authorities. She even got a copy delivered to the Peruvian president, Alan García Pérez.

Even youngsters who are not yet church members got involved. In Brazil's Mato Grosso state, a 12-year-old boy helped out by distributing 500 copies of the Day of Hope magazine.

WORLD VISTA FEATURE

Over the course of one month, a Seventh-day Adventist ministry made history in Rome, Italy. It Is Written, a pioneering television outreach of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, sponsored an evangelistic campaign in “the eternal city,” with an estimated 150 preparing for baptism as a result. In addition, many of those who came to the four-week series in February and March are now attending one of 140 study groups meeting across Rome.

It Is Written speaker/director Shawn Boonstra presented the series in the heart of Rome, the ministry reported.

“Western Europe has traditionally been one of the hardest places on earth to conduct evangelistic meetings,” said Pastor Boonstra. “And yet I firmly believe that God has not made a mistake in the message and the method He has given the church. If it can happen in Rome, it can happen anywhere.”

In an effort to kick off a major evangelistic thrust in this region, the It Is Written team and church leadership in Italy—under the leadership of then Italian Union Conference president Daniele Benini—joined forces to rein-vigorate Adventist witness in Rome.

Going into this venture, the team was well aware of the challenges they would inevitably face. The Seventh-day Adventist Church had not held a citywide evangelistic series in Rome for more than 45 years. “Obviously, our enemy, Satan, was not going to let this happen without a fight,” said It Is Written’s Rome evangelism coordinator, Pastor Yves Monnier.

In the year before the meetings began, the team secured a centrally located school auditorium in which to hold the meetings. After the (seemingly) ironclad contract was signed, the team was given the green light to announce the location for *È L’Apocalisse Mica la Fine del Mondo?*

Adventist Outreach Takes Rome by

Right: ETERNAL CITY: Ruins of ancient Rome are seen in this photo; “the eternal city,” so named for its lengthy heritage, was host to the first Seventh-day Adventist Church-led citywide evangelistic campaign there in 45 years during February.



Left: FASCINATING AND ENGAGING: “The presentation of the message was joyous, fascinating, Christ-centered, and engaging,” said then Italian Union Conference president Daniele Benini, right, to Boonstra, as translator Pastor Gianfranco Irrera looks on.

(as part of the overall series, *Revelation Speaks Peace*).

Bible study invitations were delivered throughout the city, and in the weeks preceding the meetings, radio stations ran ads, while buses and subways were plastered with information about the series.

In the days before the meetings, Boonstra was invited to appear on a number of national TV and radio programs. This was an incredible opportunity, and even though a couple of them initially wanted to engage in debate, by the end of the interview, their curiosity had been genuinely piqued.

One unexpected factor that helped Boonstra broach the subject of Bible prophecy was the recent release of the film *2012* in Italian theaters. As a result of this movie being in the news, the question of How will the world end? was a hot topic.

Just five days before the meetings began, however, a crushing blow struck. Despite the fact that everything was in order with the venue, high-ranking officials in Rome abruptly forced the cancellation of the contract.

The team decided to relocate the meetings to the Romanian Adventist Church—a building that used to be a theater—with seats available in the

150 preparing for baptism, and 140 study groups now meeting

Storm

Below: PACKED HALL: The Romanian Seventh-day Adventist Church, a former theater, was the venue for *Revelation Speaks Peace*, and crowds packed the hall every night.



main auditorium as well as a video feed in the fellowship hall.

The team blanketed the media with information about the venue change, but there was no doubt that many potential attendees would miss this new information. Thus, provision was made for bus transportation to be on hand to shuttle people to the church on opening night.

As soon as the doors opened, people began streaming into the church. A short concert took place from 8:00 to 8:30 p.m. to give everyone enough time to arrive. By the time Boonstra and his translator, Pastor Gianfranco Irrera, began preaching from Daniel 2,

the auditorium capacity was standing room only.

Not only did people attend the first evening, but they also kept attending, night after night. On a regular basis, 700-800 people packed the house. And for Rome, that is remarkable.

On average, it took attendees at least an hour to make it to the meeting location. Even though most of them didn't get home until 11:00 p.m., they kept coming—five nights a week for four weeks.

Prior to the start of the meetings, the team had been warned that if people *did* come to the series, the audience would comprise mostly foreigners living in Rome, because the nationals would not come. This proved to be false; while there was an wide spectrum of ethnicities every night, and the meetings were also translated into Spanish and Romanian, most attendees were Italian nationals.

"I was also astounded by the diverse belief group that came," said Boonstra. "It was a true religious melting pot." This included Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Jews, Pentecostals, Muslims, atheists, New Agers, agnostics, people delving in the occult, one of the top-ranking UFO experts in the country, and even some Roman Catholic priests.

A physicist attended every night, and traveled 100 miles each way. Throughout the meetings, he would hold up a cell phone so a group of more than 40 people gathered back home could hear the messages. The meetings ended at 9:30, so he never got home before midnight.

The Adventist radio station in Rome—which until now had not ventured into prophetic territory and had tackled only family and community

issues—decided to broadcast the meetings. They were suddenly swamped with calls from people requesting Bible studies and wanting to know where they could hear the messages live.

The high-ranking UFO expert kept coming back night after night. He was struggling with the historical reality of Jesus. He wondered, "Did He really exist as portrayed in the Bible?" One day Boonstra asked him, "If Jesus did not exist, would this be good news for you?" He realized he wanted to believe. He kept coming, joined the seminar to stop smoking, and made the decision to quit smoking. He is now in follow-up Bible studies and is keeping in touch with Boonstra.

Sergio, a barber, when confronted with the Sabbath truth, decided he would close his shop . . . in about a year, because he had debts to pay and Saturday was his busiest day. Boonstra asked him, "If I paid your debt, would you close the shop?" He agreed that he would. Then Boonstra asked him, "Does that mean you trust me more than God?" The next Sabbath, his shop was closed and he was in church.

Toward the end of the meetings, there were baptisms every night: 30 people have already been baptized, and, as this issue of *Adventist World* went to press, more than 150 individuals were preparing for a baptism scheduled for June.

There are now 140 functioning study groups throughout the city, and these will provide support to new church members as well as those still making decisions.

"Rome was the opening wedge to restore our members' confidence in the work and message of the Adventist Church," said Boonstra. "We are working hard to turn the tide of opinion in favor of public evangelism." —Reported by *It Is Written* staff, with editing by *Adventist World* staff

WINDOW

Into Finland

By HANS OLSON



For nearly 10 weeks each summer the sun doesn't set in the far north of Finland. This Scandinavian country at the top of the world is home to nearly 5.5 million people, with just over 5,000 of them Adventist. With 17 percent of the general population claiming no religious affiliation, Finland is one of the most secular countries in the world.

Finland is sandwiched between Norway, Sweden, and Russia. The area of the Scandinavian Peninsula that makes up today's Finland was part of the Kingdom of Sweden from the thirteenth century to 1809, when it became part of the Russian Empire as the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland.

Finland declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1917. This independence was challenged three times from 1939 to 1945—first, against the Soviet Union alone; second, with Nazi Germany against the Soviet Union; and last, against Nazi Germany. As a result of the first two wars Finland lost 10 percent of its territory to the USSR, and Finland had to pay reparations to the Soviets. The collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s ended these payments, as well as Finland's ties with what is now Russia.

It wasn't until the 1950s that Finland moved from an agrarian-based economy to one based on industrialization. Finland today places a strong emphasis on education, research, and innovation, giving Finland one of the most educated workforces in the world. According to the 2009 *Legatum Prosperity Index*, Finland is the most prosperous country in the world.

Adventists in Finland

The Adventist Church's work in Finland started among Swedish-speaking Finns. A. F. Lundqvist, a Finnish sea captain whose mother tongue was Swedish, purchased several Adventist books while his ship was docked in Liverpool, England, in 1885. Upon reading them, he was convinced about the seventh-day Sabbath and became an Adventist. When he returned to Finland he wrote to *Sanningens Harold* (*Truth Herald*), an Adventist periodical based in Sweden, asking for someone to come to Finland and sell literature in Swedish. In 1891 Emil Lind, literature evangelism director in Sweden, visited Finland to investigate the possibilities of selling books there. The next year the General Conference asked the president of the Adventist Church in Sweden, Olaf Johnson, to take two Bible workers, Augusta Larsson and Matilda Lindgren, and start a con-

gregation in Finland. In 1894 the first church was established with 24 charter members—all native Swedish-speakers.

The Adventist Church turned to translating literature into Finnish—the first book being *Christ and His Righteousness* by E. J. Waggoner. By 1894, 14 literature evangelists were selling books and handing out literature in various parts of the country. Because of issues caused by bringing literature into Finland from Sweden, the Finland Publishing House opened in 1897.

The Finland Conference was officially organized as part of the Scandinavian Union in 1909. From there the Adventist Church grew quickly. In 1917 a "Missionary School" opened in Hämeenlinna. In 1918 Finnish Junior College was established near the Missionary School. In 1926 a physical therapy center opened. In 1929 the Finland Conference was divided into the Swedish and Finnish conferences to better serve the two language groups. A special mission was later started in the northern part of Finland in 1982 to better serve the remote Lapland region.

Finland is part of the Trans-European Division. This quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will go to this division. Part of the offering will help renovate a historic building in Nummela into a church.

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

FINLAND

Capital: Helsinki

Official languages: Finnish and Swedish

Major religions: Lutheran Church of Finland, 81%; Finnish Orthodox, 1%; none, 17%.

Population: 5.3 million*

Adventist membership: 5,064*

Adventist-to-population ratio: 1:1,043*

*General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, 146th Annual Statistical Report—2008

Combating Rabies

By
ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES
and PETER N. LANDLESS



There have been some reports of rabid raccoons in the area where we live. I'm thinking about getting my children immunized against rabies. What do you recommend?

Rabies is caused by a virus that invades nervous tissues, and in the absence of treatment is invariably fatal—with only a single exception known in the medical literature, at least to us.

Rabies is totally preventable when the correct steps are taken. It can affect almost any wild or domestic mammal. Domestic mammals include dogs and cats. In the wild, rabies can affect foxes, raccoons, and—in places such as Africa—jackals, hyenas, and even the large cats. One of the animals most likely to transmit rabies is the bat.

Prevention begins with the vaccination of one's susceptible pets. Many jurisdictions subsidize the cost of immunizing pets as a public health measure. Any family pets such as dogs, cats, or other mammals should be immunized. Fish, birds, and reptiles do not get rabies.

Children should be taught to be careful of animals they do not know, particularly wild animals. The image of a rabid “crazy” animal generated the name “mad dog”—typifying one that runs amok biting people. Sometimes this type of behavior is seen; but more often, the behavior of an animal with rabies is merely atypical and, at times, even friendly. A wild animal that does not run away or appears friendly is very suspicious,

and children must be taught to avoid animals exhibiting this behavior. A nocturnal animal, such as a fox, that walks around in broad daylight without any apparent fear should alert one to the possible danger of rabies. Farmers with dairy cows should be aware that cows can be bitten on their heels by rabid animals and come down with the disease; their saliva then poses a danger to the farmers.

The average incubation time from a bite to onset of symptoms is between 30 and 60 days, but it can occur in as short a period as 10 days or be as long as a year or more. Bites on the face and neck seem to progress to symptomatic rabies more rapidly than bites on other areas of the body.

People who sustain an animal bite should receive medical attention immediately. The bite should be thoroughly cleansed with soap and water for several minutes to wash out as much contaminating material as possible. It's not advisable to use antiseptics, which may cause more tissue damage. Bites can become infected or transmit tetanus as well as rabies.

Fever, swelling, redness, and discharge of pus are all indications for repeat medical assessment and treatment.

People who are bitten by an animal that is not their own need to have the

animal located and placed in quarantine. Wild animals should be hunted down by experienced hunters—not family members—and evaluated for rabies. Immunization for rabies should be commenced unless one can be *certain* that the animal was not rabid (i.e., an immunized family pet). All animal bites require a tetanus injection if the victim has not been immunized against tetanus within the previous five years.

Parents should teach their children not to tease or surprise a resting or eating animal. Wild animals do not make good pets. People should not make strange gestures or threaten animals, and if confronted, back up slowly and calmly.

Do not touch sick animals, and always wash hands before eating, even after touching the family pet. 🍊



Allan R. Handysides, M.B., Ch.B., FRCPC, FRCSC, FACOG, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.



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.

*The answer is
sometimes in the
silence*

“Do You Love Me?”

By MIKULAS PAVLIK

One day as a pastor I became involved in an argument at a hot church board meeting.

The majority of board members were agitated and speaking in raised voices. But one man was just sitting there quiet, making no response to the issue under discussion. “Why are you so silent?” I turned and asked him. “We would like to hear your opinion about this problem.” “Well,” he replied, “silence can also be a reply and an opinion.”

Is that true? Can silence sometimes be an opinion or a reply?

When I read the story of Jesus’ encounter with His disciples and other people after His resurrection, I am struck by the fact of how little is said.

As a boy I used to listen to Gospel readings in church. And I can remember thinking: *Why did Jesus not make some kind of a festive speech after His resurrection? Why did nobody ask Him about the other world? How did it happen that He was resurrected from His grave?*

If I were interested in these details, surely the disciples must have been much more so. But we find no such questions from them. If something was said, it was usually Jesus who spoke. But even that is very rare.

A Time for Silence

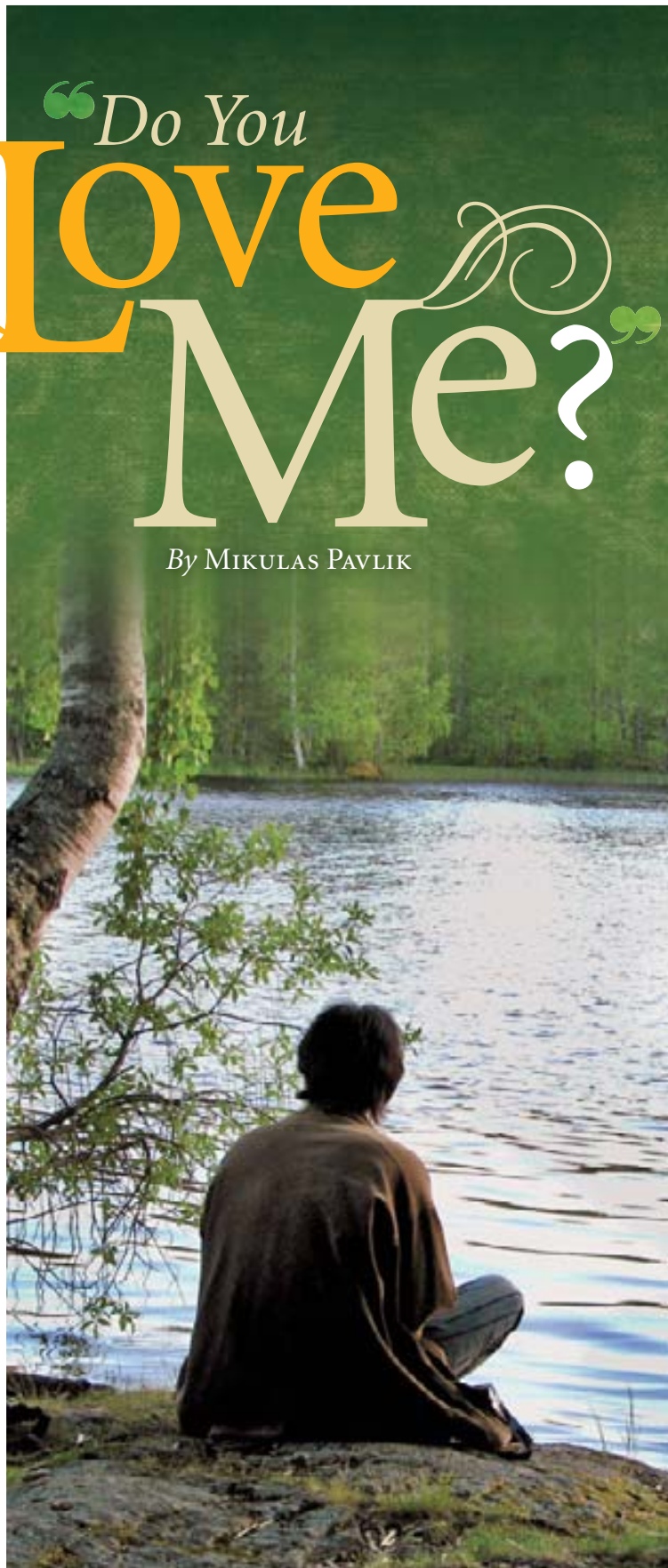
In John 21 we read about an important meeting by the Sea of Tiberias. The disciples, shivering from the night’s cold, tired and discouraged, noticed Jesus standing on the shore, and swiftly went to Him.

“Bring some of the fish you have just caught,” Jesus said (verse 10).^{*} But “none of the disciples dared ask him, ‘Who are you?’ They knew it was the Lord” (verse 12).

Can you imagine that we would meet with Jesus and be as silent as they? My impression is that we are more accustomed to talking than to being silent. Isn’t it easier for us to do something, say something, than just spend quiet time with Jesus?

This meeting by the sea is so strange! The apostles rush to Jesus, warm themselves by the fire, and . . . *are silent!* It is enough that they are with Jesus. Nobody asked anything.

It was the same on the Mount of Transfiguration; nobody asked anything. Neither of Moses nor of Elijah. All were silent, simply enjoying their time with Jesus. “Lord, it is good



for us to be here” (Matt. 17:4). It seemed as though what they were experiencing ruled out any questions, any need to talk. As if what they were feeling could not be put into words. To be with Jesus was itself an answer for everything.

Doesn't this also happen between people who are in love? Isn't silence sometimes the art of love for a couple? As preachers, part of our job is to work with words—preaching, giving Bible studies. We learn rhetoric. Yet nobody taught me how to be silent.

Have you ever tried to be alone with Jesus and be silent in quiet realization of His presence? Just to experience that you are loved, that He is with you, and that He knows everything about you? No need to prove anything, no need to say anything. Didn't you feel that words would only spoil the atmosphere? That words would only take something away from it?

at the shore of the Sea of Tiberias. He has prepared fish and bread for us. And He invites us to the quiet moment with Him. “Come and have breakfast.’ None of the disciples dared ask him, ‘Who are you?’ They knew it was the Lord” (verse 12).

We also know that Jesus is the Lord, otherwise we wouldn't be doing what we do. But that is not enough. Jesus asks one more question: “Miki Pavlik, do you love Me?”

This is such a confusing, embarrassing question. For me, as for Peter. I would prefer if Jesus said: “Mikulas Pavlik, do you go to church? How many people do you prepare for baptism? How many committees are you a member of?” I would love to show Jesus my work sheet. Something I am good at, something that can be measured. I want to tell Him what I have achieved.

But Jesus does not seem to listen to me: “That's not what I am asking. I ask you another question: Do you love Me?”

I would prefer if Jesus said: “Mikulas Pavlik, do you go to church? How many people do you prepare for baptism?”

If our relationship with God does not have this intimate dimension, then something important is missing. I would love to experience a morning like this with Jesus. To experience His silent presence, when silence speaks louder than the most eloquent words. It's about time to reintroduce this intimate dimension into our relationship with God. So that our prayers, our sermons, our whole ministry might become a genuine, live meeting with Christ.

A Time for Words

The breakfast that morning did not end in silence, however. Into the silence Jesus asked one question: “Do you love Me?” (see John 21:15).

He asks Peter, but the echo reaches me as well: “Do you love Me?” Peter's heart stops beating! He expected anything but an intimate and disturbing question. Jesus asks, “Do you love Me?” And the answer to this question is the most important prerequisite of our ministry, and the most important prerequisite of Christianity.

Why?

Jesus asked Peter, “Do you love Me?” And we should notice that it's only when He is assured of Peter's love that He commissions him into ministry: “Feed my lambs” (verse 15).

The order is crucial. If you do not love, you cannot serve. If you serve without love, you may fulfill your personal ambitions, maybe your desire for power, but not Christ's mission. Too often in history, a ministry without love becomes a “sanctified” form of oppression and autocracy.

Today we are symbolically invited by Jesus to join Him

“Lord, I am a pastor; editor-in-chief; departmental director; union president; division secretary; seminary principal; I conduct successful evangelistic campaigns; I work with the youth; I planted a new church . . .”

“I appreciate that, but that is not what I'm asking. My question is: Do you love Me?”

The Question That Keeps Me Awake

Do I love Jesus? That's the question that wakes me up at night. I do not have the courage to say yes. I feel like Peter. I am speechless. I understand that this question is too serious, too important to answer casually, in an impromptu manner.

How can we love God? Since early childhood I have been taught to obey God, respect Him, fear Him. But to love Him? Only very few have taught me that.

But Jesus is persistent in asking this question—again and again: “Do you love Me?” It's not easy for me to answer it, just as it was not for Peter. And if I did not have the assurance that Jesus loves me, that He loved me first, I would never be able to say, “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.”

*All Scripture quotations in this article are from the New International Version (NIV).



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Most people would probably agree that unity is important. Unity has become a well-used motto in politics and religion. There are the United States of America and the United Kingdom. Germans sing in their national anthem about unity. Political parties stress unity. We

Unity in Scripture

In Scripture the topic “unity” is often expressed by the term “one.” It is used in a positive and a negative sense.

1. Unity and Creation: In the Creation account God said, “Let Us make man in Our image” (Gen. 1:26).^{*} The next verse states: “God created man in

marriage (Gen. 2:24; see Matt. 19:5, 6). The unity expressed in marriage is supposed to be a reflection of the unity in the Trinity. Unity is more than a union of two or more persons of the same kind. Unity does not deny diversity. The miracle of divinely ordained unity is that people with vast

NUMBER 14 •
Pressing Together
Unity in the body of Christ
 By EKKEHARDT MUELLER

are familiar with the slogan “United We Stand.” We hear about the United Church of Christ, the United Church of Canada, the United Methodist Church, and the Uniting Church in Australia, to name just a few. We use illustrations to show how important unity is. Take, for instance, a match and break it. This is easily done, even by a small child. Tie 10 or 20 matches together and try to break them. It is very hard, if not impossible.

Unity is also important for Adventists. In the following we will look at unity in Scripture and, based on what we learn there, will try to apply these key concepts to the Adventist Church.

His own image.” There is one God, but in this one God is found a plurality of persons. The unity of the Godhead is clearly stressed in Deuteronomy 6:4: “Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!” Verse 5 continues: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” When Jesus was asked, “What commandment is the foremost of all?” (Mark 12:28), He quoted Deuteronomy 6:4, 5, the Jewish confession of faith. Jesus and His followers also believed in the one God only, however, manifested in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Interestingly enough, Jesus based His call to love God and neighbor on the unity of God. Because God is one in three persons, our love toward Him and each other must be undivided. Love of the members of Jesus’ church leads to fellowship and unity. Thus, the source and foundation of unity is found in the Trinity.

God’s unity is reflected in the creation of marriage. Two persons, different in gender, become one in

differences are joined together and form a new “organism” in which they are considered equals.

2. Unity and the Fall: With the Fall a negative type of unity came about, discussed more extensively in Paul’s writings. After the Fall of Adam and Eve humanity became united in their opposition to God (Rom. 1, 2). All became sinners (Rom. 3). They are united in the foolish wisdom of the world (1 Cor. 1:20, 21). As a result of their sin there is unity in death (Rom. 6:23). All sinners must die. Adam has become the unifying figure of humanity.

3. Unity in Christ: It was through Jesus’ death on the cross and His resurrection that humans regained the option of being freed from the power of sin and from death. In other words, the unity in sin and death has been and will be destroyed for those who believe in Christ and are in Him, the new head of humanity, the second Adam. Through baptism they are added to Christ’s church and flock (Matt. 16:18; Luke 12:32). This unity



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Diversity is important, but unity surpasses diversity.

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is primarily a unity with the Lord, but it is also—and it must be—a unity with other believers. “I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd” (John 10:16). In His high priestly prayer Jesus then prayed for the unity of His followers (John 17:11).

These followers of Christ have come and are still coming from various backgrounds. They are different.

Diversity must not be denied. But they have been made one through Jesus who has broken down all barriers of gender, nationality, race, status, learning, and what other barriers there may be (Eph. 2:11-22; Gal. 3:26-29). Diversity is important, but unity surpasses diversity. Now believers form one body, Christ’s body, where He is the head (Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:4; Col. 1:18). They use their various gifts for the building up of the church and for its mission (Eph. 4:11, 12; 1 Cor. 12). Although their functions may vary, they are equal before God who shows no partiality. “There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all” (Eph. 4:4-6).


Unity for Adventists

Scripture clearly presents the ideal, but churches may be plagued by factions as the church in Corinth was (1 Cor. 1-3). Adventists are confronted by cultural, societal, philosophical, political, and other forces that threaten the unity of the church. What can be done to remain united?

When addressing the Corinthians, Paul points out that unity must be found in the crucified Lord “who became to us wisdom from God, and

righteousness and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30). It is Christ, it is the Godhead that guarantees unity, and on Jesus we must concentrate. But faith in Jesus cannot be a theoretical construct only. It must include a common message, namely, “truth” (John 17:17) and the sharing of the “one hope” and “one faith” (Eph. 4:4, 5). Unity without truth is sentimentalism, lacking a solid foundation.

Second, following the example of Jesus, who is one with the Father, includes care for believers and various entities of the church, for example, through practical acts of neighborly love and through financial support (1 John 3:13-18; 2 Cor. 8:1-5). Furthermore, it includes working together for the common mission entrusted to this church (Matt. 28:19, 20; Rev. 14:6-12). A common task can help us to soar above our (often) petty misunderstandings, grievances, and differences of opinions.

Unity will not come automatically. We have to be intentional about it (Eph. 4:3). Drawing closer to the One who loves us immeasurably will draw us closer to each other. It reduces distance. 

*All Scripture quotations in this article are from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Unity in the Body of Christ

The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In Christ we are a new creation; distinctions of race, culture, learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures we share the same faith and hope, and reach out in one witness to all. This unity has its source in the oneness of the triune God, who has adopted us as His children. (Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; Matt. 28:19, 20; Ps. 133:1; 2 Cor. 5:16, 17; Acts 17:26, 27; Gal. 3:27, 29; Col. 3:10-15; Eph. 4:14-16; 4:1-6; John 17:20-23.)

“Follow the Bible”

Draws Adventists Closer to Scripture



Mongolia

It's an ambitious journey, especially for so quiet a passenger: a Bible, with each of its 66 books printed in a different language, going around the world in the space of 20 months.

And, it's an ambitious reason: to get members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church more engaged with the text of the Holy Bible. Once thought of as “people of the Book,” Adventist engagement with Scripture has fallen off dramatically in recent years, during which time church leaders felt it was important to reverse the trend.

This “traveler” was impressive in other ways: this Bible is approximately 18 inches long and 12 inches wide. It consists of nearly 1,500 pages and was bound—twice, in fact—with a padded, leather cover.

After some 621 days, or nearly 89 weeks, of travel and activity, it's just about time to say, “Mission accomplished.” The “traveling Bible,” as it's come to be known, arrived at the fifty-ninth General Conference session in Atlanta, Georgia, United States, as the quinquennial meeting opened June 23.

“The Seventh-day Adventist Church must rediscover the value of reading this book,” Jan Paulsen, General Conference president, told some 12,000 people during October 11, 2008, Sabbath worship at Araneta Coliseum in Manila, Philippines.

“Too many of our own people do not spend time on a regular basis with this word, and we suffer for it,” Paulsen said. “This is a commitment that we will make the Word of God more central in our lives.”

“This will possibly be the most traveled Bible in the history of the world,” added Mark Finley, Adventist Church

vice president for evangelism and personal witness. Finley told the crowd that the special copy of the Bible features Genesis written in Spanish, Psalms in Chinese, and Revelation in Korean. He said the book of Nehemiah is written in Tagalog, news that was received with applause from the Filipino audience.

Here are a few highlights from the Book's 20-month itinerary:

Euro-Asia

Adventists in the church's Middle Asian region welcomed “Follow the Bible” to Kazakhstan July 12, 2009, making the country the seventy-fourth stop on the Bible's worldwide tour. Kazakhstan, along with Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, make up the church's Southern Union Conference of the Euro-Asia Division.

More than 450 people awaited the Bible at a camp meeting near Lake Karaungur, where heavy rain, thick clouds, and strong winds threatened to interrupt the meeting. But as soon as the Bible arrived, the rain stopped, clouds disappeared, and the program started. Local church president Rubin Ott flew with the Bible to Uzbekistan. The traveling Bible united members in reading and studying Scripture in the country's capital, Tashkent. Church leaders were invited to a committee on religious liberty in Uzbekistan with the country's government. Leaders reported the talk was cordial and the government officially allowed the Bible to cross the border into Uzbekistan.

When the traveling Bible arrived in the Republic of Belarus on July 5, 2009, the church's administrators took it to the National Library, where it was put on display

Russia



for the public alongside ancient manuscripts of Holy Scripture. Later that evening a special program was held to commemorate “Follow the Bible” in one of the Adventist churches in Minsk, the capital of Belarus.

Northern Europe

As the globetrotting volume continued its path, other Seventh-day Adventists responded in other ways: Scottish Seventh-day Adventists decided to have their own personalized, handwritten Bible. Members from all the churches in Scotland submitted handwritten passages of Scripture to the mission office, where they were compiled into the “Scottish Adventist Bible.”

Writing out the Bible by hand can bring new insights and meaning, participants said. “In the same way students write out revision notes, handwriting the Bible makes passages stand out for you,” said Carole Peacock, secretary to the president.

Geography proved little challenge to the Bible’s journey: after a 3,107-mile (5,000-kilometer), 18-hour journey, the traveling Bible arrived in Kirkenes, Norway, the country’s northernmost region with a Seventh-day Adventist presence. The city of Kirkenes is located within the Arctic Circle, 1,553 miles (2,500 kilometers) from both the nation’s capital (Oslo) and the North Pole. Norway was the seventy-ninth country “Follow the Bible” visited.

The Norwegian Union Conference prepared environmentally friendly bags with the “Follow the Bible” logo for locals who visited the Bible, displayed in the local library the next day, an event covered by the local media. Each bag contained a copy of the Gospel of John, ads for the Norwe-



The Philippines



gian Bible Correspondence School, and a guide to some of the most important and interesting messages in the Bible. Regional church leaders estimate about 10 percent of the city’s population received a bag. In Kirkenes, Adventists joined other Christians in a Bible-related program held at the local Salvation Army hall.

“It is so good to see our meeting hall filled to capacity,” a Salvation Army representative said. “The Bible unites all Christians.”

The Middle East

From Europe, the Bible went to the Middle East, the region where so much of Scripture is set. After an hour or so of questions and security verification by the Israeli Defense Force at the airport of Athens, Greece, Adventist pastor Janos Kovacs-Biro and the Bible flew to Tel Aviv on September 18, 2009.

At the start of the Sabbath, the Bible traveled to Ashdod, where 60 people waited to see it. Adventists and non-Adventists gathered with joy and anticipation to witness the traveling Bible. The book of Esther was written in Hebrew. According to Kovacs-Biro, Israel was the ninety-fifth country this Bible visited. One man approached the church pastor and asked when he could be baptized and join the Adventist church.

On September 23, 2009, at 3:45 a.m., the Bible arrived in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Church members held meetings and shared the meaning behind this worldwide project with friends and coworkers. Members of Dubai Seventh-day Adventist Church did this in hopes of resurrecting interest in creation of new Bible studies with people from



Fiji



Haiti



other denominations. These multinational Seventh-day Adventists proudly read passages from the Bible in Tagalog, Hindi, Tamil, and Arabic, and made plans to form groups to read the Scriptures together in its entirety.

Southern Exposure

In the fall of 2009 the Bible went to the church's South American and Inter-American divisions.

"This Bible has traveled through eight countries of our church in South America," said Bolivar Alana, then executive secretary of the South American Division, when he presented the volume to Inter-American Division (IAD) president Israel Leito. "Now I hand it over to you, and may God bless you immensely in the Inter-American Division."

The Bible, sporting a new cover because of its wear and tear throughout the first year of its journey, arrived in Miami, Florida, to travel throughout the 10 countries of the IAD.

"We not only wanted to be part of this world event but we want every home where possible in our territory to have a Bible, calling out to people on the Word of God," said Leito. Hundreds of thousands of Bibles were printed in English, Spanish, and French to be distributed throughout the territory of the church in Inter-America.

In the Mexican region of Yucatan, the traveling Bible was particularly well received: during a special ceremony at Las Americas Park in Merida, November 22, 2009, Marco Antonio Gonzalez of the Yucatan Office of Social Development and Religious Affairs read and transcribed the first portion of the Bible. He spoke to Seventh-day Adventist leaders on how the church can better the quality of life for Yucatan's citizens.

"This church should continue participating in events such as this," Gonzalez said. "It is very important to educate our children and young people in the values which unfortunately have taken a detour in our modern times. I believe that the church, together with each family, can make a better society."

To Africa

The traveling Bible attracted thousands of people to each venue. On March 23, 2010, in Kisii, in the South Kenya Conference, thousands of people joined a procession that began at Nyanchwa Teachers College. The procession that featured the Bible went through several roads of Kisii, where business came to a standstill as local residents rushed from their businesses to have a look at the Bible. Led by South Kenya executive director Obed Nyamache, church members, following a Salvation Army band, sang choruses.

On arrival at the Kisii Central church compound, more than 2,000 people met the procession. Several religious leaders from Sundaykeeping churches expressed their joy for having been invited. Each of them urged church members to read God's Word. Choirs from various churches sang the event's theme song, "Give Me the Bible."

The full impact of this event has yet to be realized. But already, it seems, that by sending a special Bible around the globe, the attention of many Seventh-day Adventists, as well as others, has been centered on a book unlike any other ever written.

—Compiled from numerous Adventist media reports by Mark A. Kellner, Adventist World news editor.

Keep Girls Safe

Combating human trafficking in Thailand

Lin's life was at risk before she turned 14. She was a member of the Akha hill tribe living in the tranquil hill region of Thailand's Chiang Rai district, in the Golden Triangle area of Thailand, where the borders of Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand meet. It's an area known for its drug trade as well as human trafficking. Despite living among her peaceful people, the afflictions of poverty, prejudice, and a lack of education left Lin and other young Akha girls at great risk.

One day Lin's good friend returned from a working stint at a large karaoke bar in Chiang Rai. She invited Lin to work with her and her "boyfriend" at a "restaurant." Having lived a sheltered life in the hills, Lin did not realize that the restaurants and karaoke bars were places where adult men go in hopes of meeting young girls, who often end up victims of sexual exploitation.

"My friend dressed so nicely, and she told me she bought many nice things with the money she earned at the 'restaurant,'" Lin recalls. "I only wanted to help my family. They really needed the money. And besides, it would be nice to buy some nice clothes and makeup."

Lin was torn between the lure of money and staying home with her family. Fortunately, however, unbeknownst to her, Lin's future already had been planned.

Lin's father had decided to take Lin to a center for young hill tribe girls. He knew that if he did not place Lin in this center where she would be taught



By
LILYA WAGNER*

GIRLS AT RISK: Many young girls in Thailand are at risk because their families are poor and they're not as valued as male children.

a trade, she could easily fall victim to the sex trade. With only a kindergarten education, she had been told she was not suitable for government schools. Now, at age 14, she spoke only her Akha dialect and didn't understand Thai. With the help of a nontraditional education program, she would now learn Thai, continue her primary education, and be taught a trade.

"If I had not been accepted [at the center] my life would be so different," Lin said. "I really don't know what would have happened to me. I don't know if I would still be alive."

Putting a Face to Human Trafficking

Imagine someone you love being sold, abandoned, abused, and probably left to die at an early age. It's hard to wrap our minds around such horror. For approximately 600,000 to 800,000 persons each year—80 per-

cent of them girls and women—this horror is a reality.

Human trafficking is a major international problem. It's one of the three top revenue earners for organized crime—a US\$9-billion business worldwide. Human trafficking has existed for ages and in recent decades has proliferated; yet, it's mostly ignored by mainstream populations. It's easy to overlook and dismiss something we feel we can't "fix."

Put a face on this dilemma. Women and girls who are victims of sexual violence are among the most



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disadvantaged of this world, mainly because their suffering is not acknowledged. Most survivors of trafficking in persons have no legal redress or reparation. They are humiliated and subjugated and suffer the physical and psychological consequences of the violence. Victims need medical care and counseling, especially if they are living with HIV and/or AIDS. But they face formidable obstacles in obtaining these services, the understanding

sex slaves for approximately US\$450. Northern Thailand has an exceptional problem because rural families are poor and many girls can't attend school. The hill tribes are even worse off, as in Lin's case, and girls may be sold for as little as US\$100.

These mind-boggling facts raise two questions: (1) What can we do in the face of such overwhelming statistics? and (2) What is our responsibility to make a difference?

trafficking. The program increases the opportunities for the girls to find employment by facilitating skills training and small-enterprise development activities, as well as raises awareness of human trafficking within the community.

Keep Girls Safe is headquartered in Chiang Rai in an old, former office building that is home to approximately 30 girls at a time. These girls are usually at risk for several reasons:



LILYA WAGNER

Left: KEEPING GIRLS SAFE: ADRA currently is providing educational scholarships for almost 60 girls in Thailand through its Keep Girls Safe program. Two staff members (one on each end) and four students are shown here.



COURTESY OF ADRA

that they are truly the victims, and the respect they deserve. It's essential that these women, like any woman, be ensured their fundamental rights.

Preying on Poverty

Poverty is forcing many young girls in Thailand to enter a thriving sex industry, often against their own will or as a last resort. The effect on families has been devastating. Many girls have traveled to urban centers, never to be seen again, or returned home only to find they are dying of AIDS. A United Nations source has described the trafficking of girls and women across Asia as “the largest slave trade in history.” Sex traffickers purchase girls as young as 10, and poor Thai families sell their daughters as

What to Do?

The Gospels tell us that Jesus had “compassion” on the multitudes; He cared deeply for them. Can we then—as Christians—ignore the plight of others because their situations are so horrifying that we question whether we can make a difference, either individually or as a church?

Here is one excellent example of positive intervention:

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) began a program called “Keep Girls Safe” in 2005 not only to provide shelter for at-risk girls but also to make it possible for a significant number of these children and youth to become educated, thus lessening their vulnerability to sex

their families are poor; they're not as valued as male children; there's a danger of, or actual, sexual abuse; a stepparent may not wish to have extra children to care for; or perhaps the girl is an orphan. Education is a major component of the Keep Girls Safe program. Often, vulnerable girls will drop out of school because the family cannot afford to educate them, or they are needed for their earning potential.

Seeing Results

This year, Keep Girls Safe objectives have been reached in several ways. Since 2005, 90 girls have been helped through educational support. Currently, 59 girls are receiving scholarships. As I visited with them

at two schools last September I was touched and pleased by their statements of what they hope to achieve for their future. “I want to be a musician,” “I’m going to be a doctor,” and “I’m going to help others become successful” were a few of the responses they offered when I asked them the usual adult question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?”

The shelter started out with seven

child prostitution. Even more important, the girls themselves understand their rights, the consequences of working in the sex trade, and where to turn for help.

Looking to the Future

What does the future hold for Keep Girls Safe and for the girls of northeast Thailand? There are plans to expand the outreach, increase the number of girls being educated, build

The Rest of the Story

Lin is one of the lucky ones. She not only was able to finish her primary education but went on to vocational school, where she trained in accounting. Now 22, Lin is an office assistant with ADRA Thailand’s Keep Girls Safe project.

“I’m so happy that I can now work with ADRA to help the young girls of Thailand avoid the sad life many of my friends had,” Lin says. “The center

Right: SCHOOL BUILDING: The Keep Girls Safe program makes education a priority. In this facility, the girls learn skills that will help them find useful employment.

Left: MODERN-DAY SLAVERY: Sex traffickers purchase girls as young as 10, and poor hill tribe families sell their daughters as sex slaves for approximately \$100.



LILYA WAGNER

girls. Since then, 49 girls have been assisted, and 29 girls currently live there. Most exemplify success stories; only a few of the girls drop out and return home to an uncertain future. The girls are educated; taken to church, where they participate with enthusiasm; involved in their own upkeep by such endeavors as growing rice and mushrooms; and engage in family-style living that leads to positive self-concepts and confidence to face the future.

Those who receive educational assistance are empowered to find employment outside of the sex industry. In time, they will be the strongest voices for other at-risk girls. Through this program, communities are also becoming aware of the dangers of

a permanent and more adequate residence in a rural area where girls can engage in more self-sufficient activities, and educate families and communities. Resources are limited, but vision, determination, and commitment are present on the part of the program staff, ADRA personnel, and donors who help to accomplish these dreams.

Keep Girls Safe is just one small example of how each of us can improve the life of at least one other person in our world. Is this our responsibility? Should we intervene? The answer is “Yes!”—in every way possible. Jesus Himself saw the suffering of His time and had compassion. How can we excuse ourselves from similar action?

ADRA has started is so very important for these girls. They are lucky to be in this place. If not for Keeping Girls Safe, I don’t even want to tell you where these girls would be.”

Jesus’ love compels us to end cruelty of all kinds and promote the worth and dignity of every individual. The numbers are great, but if even one girl or young woman like Lin is helped to escape the horrors of trafficking and can live a productive and happy life, it’s well worth the effort. Let’s do all we can to help keep girls safe. 🍎

To learn more, go to www.adrathailand.org/keep-girls-safe.

*Hearly Mayr, ADRA’s director for public awareness, and Julio Muñoz, ADRA’s bureau chief for marketing and development, also contributed to this article.

Those who desire to know the truth have nothing to fear from the investigation of the word of God. But upon the threshold of investigation of the word of God, inquirers after truth should lay aside all prejudice, and hold in abeyance all preconceived opinion, and open the ear to hear the voice of God from His messenger. Cherished opinions, long-practiced customs and habits, are to be brought to the test of the Scriptures; and if the word of God opposes your views, then, for your soul's sake, do not wrest the Scriptures, as many do to their soul's destruction in order to make them seem to bear a testimony in favor of their



Let the Word Shape You

By
ELLEN G.
WHITE

errors. Let your inquiry be, What is truth? not, What have I hitherto believed to be truth? Do not interpret the Scriptures in the light of your former belief, and assert that some doctrine of finite man is truth. Let your inquiry be, What saith the Scriptures? Let God speak to you from His living oracles, and open your heart to receive the word of God.

Follow the Original—Not Tradition

Many are following the traditions of men; but as the traditions of men are erroneous, and no error has sanctifying power, their souls are not sanctified to God. Yet they hold on to the doctrines of men with firm tenacity, and will not be moved by the testimony of Scripture. They have been educated to believe falsehood, and they use every ingenious

method to make it appear that the Bible supports them in their position of error, making falsehood appear to be truth. But the first work to be done by those who would know the truth, is to open the Bible with a determined purpose to conform to the requirements of the word of God, establishing their faith upon "It is written." Make up your mind that your former theories must change if they are not in harmony with the doctrines of the Bible. You are called upon to put forth diligent effort to discover what is truth. This should not be thought a hard requirement; for men are called upon to toil for their temporal and earthly blessings, and it is not to be expected that we shall find the heavenly treasure unless we are willing to dig in the mines of truth, and exercise all our powers of mind and heart to understand....

How to Read God's Word

Beware lest you read the word of God in the light of erroneous teaching. It was on this very ground that the Jews made their fatal mistake. They declared that there must be no different interpretation placed upon the Scriptures than that which had been given by the rabbis in former years; and as they had multiplied their traditions and maxims, and had clothed them with sacredness, the word of God was made of no effect through their traditions; and if Jesus Christ, the Word of God, had not come into the world, men would have lost all knowledge of the true God. Christ was the light of the world. . . .

He told them that they made the commandments of God of no effect through their tradition. The requirements of men were placed where the requirements of God should have been, and Jesus charged them with being ignorant both of the Scriptures and of the power of God. It is Satan's studied plan to pervert the Scriptures, and to lead men to put a false construction on the words of God. He has led the Roman Church to take a position that the Bible is to be read in the light of the interpretation of the Fathers and of the Church, and therefore the Lord cannot penetrate the minds of the members of this Church until they read the Bible as the word of the infinite God. All articles of faith, all doctrines and creeds, however sacred they have been regarded, are to be rejected if they contradict the plain statements of the word of God. If the Bible supports the doctrine we have held in the past, we are justified in retaining it; for the word of God gives us foundation for our faith....

Experience Is Not the Standard

There are many who claim that they have been sanctified to God, and yet when the great standard of righteousness is presented to them, they become greatly excited, and manifest a spirit which proves that they know nothing of what it means to be sanctified. They have not the mind of Christ; for those who are truly sanctified will reverence and obey the word of God as fast as it is opened to them, and they will express a strong desire to know what is truth on every point of doctrine. An exultant feeling is no evidence of sanctification. The assertion, "I am saved, I am saved," does not prove that the soul is saved or sanctified. Many who are greatly excited are told that they are sanctified, when they have no intelligent idea of what the term means; for they know not the Scriptures nor the power of God. They flatter themselves that they are in conformity to the will of God, because they feel happy; but when they are tested, when the word of God is brought to bear upon their experience, they stop their ears from hearing the

truth, saying, "I am sanctified," and that puts an end to the controversy.

They will have nothing to do with searching the Scriptures to know what is truth, and prove that they are fearfully self-deceived. Sanctification means very much more than a flight of feeling. Excitement is not sanctification. Entire conformity to the will of our Father which is in heaven is alone sanctification, and the will of God is expressed in His holy law. The keeping of all the commandments of God is sanctification. Proving yourselves obedient children to God's word is sanctification. The word of God is to be our guide, not the opinions or ideas of men. Let those who would be truly sanctified search the word of God with patience, with prayer, and with humble contrition of soul. Let them remember that Jesus prayed. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

Christianity is simply living by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. We are to believe in, and live in, Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. We have faith in God when we believe His word; we trust and obey God when we keep His commandments; and we love God when we love His law. Believing a lie will not put any one of us in the way of being sanctified. Should all the ministers in the world tell us that we were safe in disobeying a single precept of the holy standard of righteousness, it would not lessen our obligations, nor make our guilt less, if we reject a plain "Thou shalt" or "Thou shalt not." We need not think that because our fathers did a certain way, and died happy, we may follow in their footsteps, and be accepted in rendering the same service, and doing the same works, that they did. We have had more light than they had in their day; and if we would be accepted of God, we must be as faithful in obeying the light and walking in it as they were in receiving and obeying the light that God sent to them. We must accept and improve the light that shines upon our pathway, as faithfully as they accepted and improved the light that fell upon their pathway in their generation. We shall be judged according to the light that shines into the soul-temple in our day; and if we follow the light, we shall be free men and women in Christ Jesus. ●

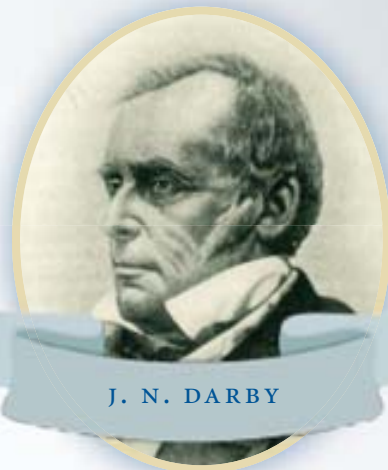
Scripture quotations in this article are from the King James Version.

This article was first published in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 25, 1902. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

Reaching Far

How the Advent awakening changed the religious world

By
AECIO E.
CAIRUS



J. N. DARBY

More than 16 million members strong, Seventh-day Adventism is no longer a small, marginal Christian group. If we were a nation, we would top the combined population of Austria plus Norway and Mongolia. But Seventh-day Adventism is only the tip of an iceberg—a movement that captivated the Christian world since the nineteenth century, branching out in various ways. It is called the *great international Advent awakening*, and it spawned not only Millerism and the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but also dispensationalism and Pentecostalism—hundreds of millions sharing with us the conviction of a literal, near Second Coming, taking place 1,000 years before the final judgment.

The Second Coming in History

Most other Christian groups disagree. Premillennialism—placing the Second Coming before the millennium (Rev. 19:11–20:15)—was the position of ancient Christendom, but starting with Augustine (A.D. 354–430) this was replaced by postmillennialism. The first general resurrection of the dead, which opens the millennium (Rev. 20:4–6), was spiritualized as the new birth that follows conversion to Christ. The whole Christian era was then seen as the prophesied millennium. Bishops (such as Augustine) were thought to have the authority to judge during this period (Rev. 20:4), causing Christ’s rule (the stone kingdom of Daniel 2) to grow and fill

the entire earth through the union of church and state so that Jesus can return for the final judgment. This, of course, bars any hope of a soon Second Coming—one has only to think of the size and number of non-Christian nations. This was not only traditional Roman Catholic doctrine, but also the conviction of many traditional Protestant denominations.

Different Models of Prophetic Interpretation

If we were now living in the millennium, the apocalyptic beast or antichrist would have to be past (Rev. 19:20), and was therefore identified with pagan Rome, which opposed Christianity in its origins (the “Preterist” interpretation). This was in fact taught uniformly during the Middle Ages, except for an obscure abbot, Joachim of Floris (1130–1202), who placed the Christian era before the stone kingdom and believed it would last 1,260 years from the birth of Christ. Living so near the end of that period, under the looming power of the papacy, he thought that the antichrist would be a future false pope who would persecute those humble Christians seeking, as himself, the guidance of the Holy Spirit. His followers, the Fraticelli or “spiritual” Franciscans, criticized papal power and were in fact persecuted by it, almost being exterminated in 1466.

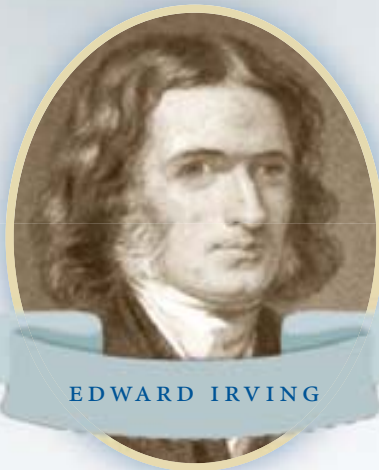
Persecuted Christians in Western Europe would since that time overtly identify the pope with the antichrist, including also early Protestants, who, however, did not follow through this

papal antichrist concept to its logical conclusion, premillennialism. By the end of the eighteenth century the whole Christian world, Catholic or Protestant, was postmillennialist (or had given up any thought of a millennium).

Manuel Lacunza

A renewed interest in premillennialism was brought about by an unlikely source—the work of a Jesuit priest in Italy. Manuel Lacunza (1731–1801), born from Spanish stock and ordained in Chile, was exiled together with all other Jesuits in 1767 by the Spanish king. The papal territory of central Italy received many of these Jesuits, and Lacunza was assigned to Imola, where he had time to write a multivolume work, *The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty*. This work carefully deconstructed the rationale for postmillennialism and, reasoning in a strictly biblical fashion, proved the truth of premillennialism.

This made a hope in a soon Second Coming possible. For Lacunza the antichrist was “a moral body,” existing alongside the true church of God throughout the Christian dispensation, and related to the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The title page set the tone for its strictly biblical method by using the pen name “Ben Ezra, a Hebrew Christian,” but he never hid his true identity and he submitted his work to the Spanish government for inspection. Drafts of the book circulated in manuscript form in Spanish-speaking lands from the 1790s on. Beginning



EDWARD IRVING



MANUEL LACUNZA

in 1812, the book was printed in Europe in several languages, “stirred two continents” (L. E. Froom), and cut across confessional barriers.

Translated in 1826 into English by Presbyterian minister Edward Irving (1792-1834), it was discussed in the Albury Park meetings on prophecy (1826-1830). These meetings were held on the estate of the wealthy banker Henry Drummond and favored a literal interpretation of the Old Testament prophecies regarding the bright future of Israel. When in 1831 Turkey lost control of Palestine there was a wide expectation among the British people that Israel would be reconstituted as a nation and related prophecies would be fulfilled. This enthusiasm spread to the North American press, giving for the first time an opportunity for an unknown Baptist farmer, William Miller (1872-1849), to get an audience in the U.S.A.

The North American Connection

Miller had been very much interested in the prophecies at the time of his conversion from deism to Christianity in 1816. Europe had just experienced the devastation of the Napoleonic Wars and monarchies were restored. Miller was bewildered by divergent Christian views and theories about the events of the last days. As a consequence, he decided to take those issues directly to the Bible, which he studied daily with no other aid than a concordance for two years. In contrast to Lacunza or Irving, he could find no evidence for an end-

time role for literal Israel. Nor could he find any millennium that starts without a visible Second Coming or its attendant literal resurrection of the dead, as in the almost universal opinion of Christendom. He did find a time prophecy in Daniel 8 that he estimated would end in 1843-1844 with the Second Coming. He shared his views with pastors who visited his local Baptist church, but they paid little attention.

The Awakening

However, just as he was feeling an inner need to share his conviction with a wider circle, the British Awakening papers and ideas took off in New England. They, too, expected the end of the 2300-year prophecy about 1843 (as *The Jewish Expositor*, a British Advent awakening paper, had published in October 1820). In this climate of news from Palestine and theories about Israel and the end of history, Miller received his first invitation to present his interpretations to the public in August 1831. This triggered a North American Advent movement, which soon sold daily papers in all major cities and held meetings in their great halls as well as in the largest camp meeting tents seen so far, attended by crowds for which special railroad services had to be scheduled. J. Litch, Miller’s closest associate, felt that Lacunza and Irving “produced the same resonance in England which Miller obtained years later in our country.”

Even though the British Awakening preceded and empowered the North American one, it soon took a different

road. Irving developed a presentation on a topic today familiar to Seventh-day Adventists, “the latter rain,” which precedes the Second Coming. Under his preaching, charismatic phenomena began to take place, such as “speaking in tongues” (meaningless syllables, actually), supernatural healings, and visions, including those of teenager Margaret McDonald in Scotland (1830). This charisma no doubt helped the North American branch of the movement to look with some sympathy toward their own manifestations of the gift of prophecy and healings, but it also gave start to the modern Pentecostal movement.

Another feature of the British Awakening, the role for literal Israel (which Miller noted as the main point of difference in their respective movements), was systematized by J. N. Darby, an Anglican priest involved in the prophecy study meetings in the early 1830s and a friend of Irving. He believed that the Second Coming would produce a “secret rapture” of the church, with unbelievers “left behind” to be tutored by literal Israel. Today, dispensationalism is popular among conservative and fundamentalist Evangelicals. Seen from this perspective, Seventh-day Adventism is a vigorous shoot of the nondispensational, noncharismatic branch of the great international Advent awakening. Differences with the other branches should not make us forget that we belong to a powerful movement that changed the religious world forever in the nineteenth century and has a huge and pervasive influence even in today’s religious panorama. ●



Aecio E. Cairus, Ph.D., is professor of systematic theology and church history in the Theological Seminary of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Philippines.

The question of vegetarianism in the Bible is a bit complex. The Bible addresses it from the point of view of creation to re-creation. Yet at the same time it allows for humans to eat certain meats. Thus we cannot *require* vegetarianism as part of a Christian lifestyle. But let's examine some of the biblical evidence that speaks to your question.

1. Vegetarianism in the Bible: It is well known that the original diet God gave to humans was vegetarian (Gen. 1:29), and that it remained as such after sin entered the world (3:18). This diet was given in the context of God's command to exercise dominion over the animals (1:28), thus setting a limit to humanity's power over the animal kingdom. In the context of the Creation account, the vegetarian diet pointed to the absence of violence and death within the created order and to God's intention to preserve that order. But the diet also revealed God's wisdom and love in providing for humans the type of food that would make it possible for them to work with the Creator in preserving their lives in optimal conditions. Meat was unnecessary to sustain life.

Interestingly, the Bible suggests that at the end, after the eradication of sin from God's creation, humans will again be vegetarians. This is particularly implied by the prophetic description of the transformation of the animal world and the absence of violence within it: "They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord" (Isa. 11:9, NIV; see also Isa. 11:6-9; 65:25). The absence of violence in the animal world presupposes its absence among humans.

2. Restricted Meat Consumption: After the global flood, and in the context of the absence of flora, God allowed humans to eat animal flesh (Gen. 9:3). This was based in the divine distinction between clean and unclean animals (Gen. 7:2; Lev. 11). This restrictive use of animal flesh had two main purposes:

First, since it was a dietary law, it identified the flesh of animals that could best contribute to the preservation of human life in a world of sin and death. Second, it served to set limits on human violence against animal life by

restricting the consumption of flesh to a particular number of them. The animals would fear humans and literally run for their lives when seeing one (Gen. 9:2).

The divine ideal of a meat-free diet was not totally forgotten later in the Bible. When Israel was in the wilderness in need of food, God provided manna. When they insisted on eating meat, the Lord gave them quail; but the result was sickness (Num. 11:4-23, 31-33). According to the Bible the Lord rarely provided flesh to His people (cf. 1 Kings 17:6). In fact, the regular diet of the Israelites was basically

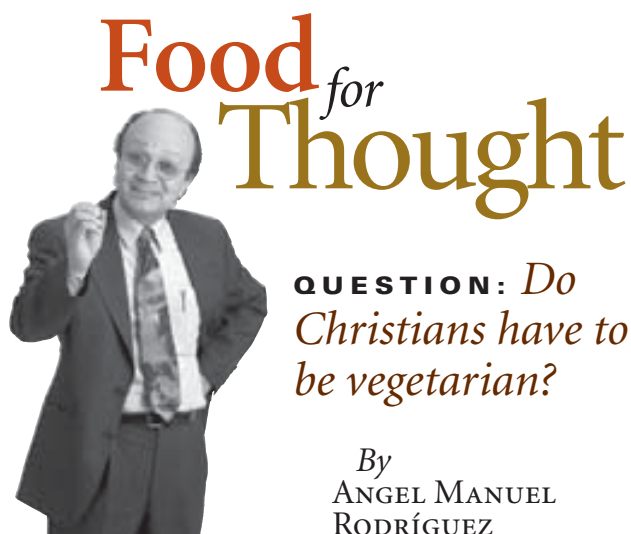
vegetarian. Only under special circumstances did they eat meat (e.g. sacrifices, Lev. 3:1-9). Their domestic animals constituted their "bank accounts" and were the source of milk, curds, and cheese (Deut. 32:14; Judges 5:25; 2 Sam. 17:29).

3. God's Ideal for His People: Adventists have taken seriously the law of clean and unclean animals as representing the minimum the Lord requires from us concerning proper diet. We submit to it in grateful obedience to His will because it expresses His loving interest in our physical and spiritual well-being.

By taking proper care of our bodies, which are temples of the Holy Spirit, we glorify God. Biblical evidence has led Adventists to conclude that vegetarianism is God's ideal for His people. Such an ideal is very relevant in a world that is slowly realizing the tremendous benefits of such a diet.

Vegetarianism is on the rise around the world for a variety of reasons: ethical, ecological, religious, even narcissistic. This may be the proper time to reaffirm that ideal and avoid the use of meat in official meetings of the church (potlucks, workers' meetings, etc.) and, whenever possible, by excluding it from our kitchens.

This I write to you that "you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well" (3 John 2, NIV).



QUESTION: Do Christians have to be vegetarian?

By
ANGEL MANUEL
RODRÍGUEZ

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

Hope *in the* Garden

By MARK A. FINLEY

BIBLE STUDY



When Adam and Eve were deceived by Satan in the splendor of Eden's garden, God's love would not let them go. Although there was no excuse for their sin, God couldn't bear the thought of being separated from His children forever. They sinned through their own deliberate choice, but God provided salvation through His own deliberate choice. In this lesson we will discover love's divine plan to redeem a wayward planet.

1. What fatal choice did Eve make?

"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate" (Gen. 3:6).

In your own words describe what Eve did, and why it was so offensive to God.

2. What were the consequences of our first parents' choice to disobey God?

"To the woman [God] said: 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you'" (Gen. 3:16).

The consequences to Eve were:

"I will greatly multiply your _____."

"In _____ you shall bring forth children"

"Then to Adam [God] said, 'Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, "You shall not eat of it": Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return'" (Gen. 3:17-19).

The consequences to Adam were:

"In _____ you shall eat of it."

"_____ and _____ shall [the ground] bring forth."

"For _____ you are, and to _____ you shall return."

Sin has consequences. Although a gracious God would make provision for Adam's and Eve's salvation, the entire human race would experience the tragic and painful consequences of their disobedience.

3. How did Adam and Eve attempt to deal with their sin?

"Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings" (Gen. 3:7).

"[They] made themselves _____."

Our first parents attempted to hide their guilt and embarrassment by covering themselves with garments made from leaves. But substitutes don't satisfy the demands of a righteous God.



4. Notice how Adam and Eve tried to shift responsibility to someone else. What excuses did our first parents offer?

“Then the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’ And the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’” (Gen. 3:12, 13).

Adam blamed _____ . Eve blamed _____ .

It’s a human tendency to blame someone else for our failures. But excuses for our disobedience never satisfy God (or anyone else). The only way to change is to take responsibility for our actions and repent before God.

5. How did a loving God give Adam and Eve hope? What judgment message did He make against the serpent, who represented Satan?

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Gen. 3:15).

The Seed of the woman, Jesus, our Savior, would _____ the head of Satan.

A blow to the head is a deadly blow. Jesus’ death on the cross crushed the evil one, making Satan a defeated foe. A bruise to the heel is not fatal. Although Jesus was crucified, He rose from the grave victorious.

6. What symbol of His sacrifice did Jesus give Adam and Eve and their children?

“Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them” (Gen. 3:21). “Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering” (Gen. 4:4).

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul” (Lev. 17:11).

When Adam and Eve sinned the Lord provided tunics of _____ .

These garments required the death of an innocent victim. As soon as sin entered the human experience, God provided animal sacrifices that pointed forward to the death of Christ on the cross.

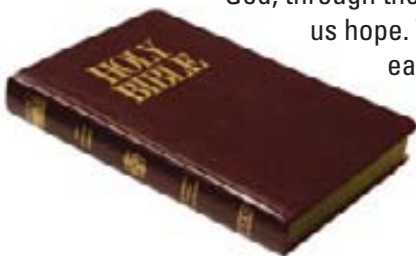
“The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). Since all have sinned, all deserve eternal death (Rom. 3:23). The shed blood of animal sacrifices pointed forward to the shed blood of Christ. When Jesus died, His life was poured out for us.

7. If death came upon the entire human race through Adam, what do we receive through Jesus?

“For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many” (Rom. 5:15).

Through Jesus we have the _____ of God.

Adam and Eve’s sin made us all sinners, both by nature and by our own choices. But, praise God, through the death of Jesus we receive His grace. When we were hopeless, He gave us hope. The garden promise given by a loving God in Eden speaks powerfully to each of us. We are too precious for God to let us go.



Don’t miss next month’s Bible study,
“Truth or Consequences.”

LETTERS



Story of Encouragement

I thank God for the tremendous magazine we have. Each month the magazine gets better.

“Johanna’s Long Journey” (April

2010) impressed me because I identify with it, as I was looking for the truth about these issues also. It was not easy for me to change churches because of what my parents and the church I belonged to had taught me. But I decided to make the decision to follow Christ.

We need to pray for Johanna and her family, for the Holy Spirit to continue to guide; and also for others who are going through the same experience in understanding what God says in His Word. We’ll meet Johanna when we see Christ Jesus in the air, and live with Him forever.

MANUAL LATORRE
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Personal Preparation

I read “Adventists and Muslims: Five Convictions,” by William Johnsson (February 2010). I have been studying the Bible looking for what the Lord says about Muslim people.

Surely God has people scattered in other denominations. In Isaiah I found how much God wants people to know the truth about Jesus. I also want to know about prophecy. Please, can you write more articles about Revelation? No doubt we are living in the final phase of this world. I believe Jesus is coming soon—I need to start looking for Him today, studying His Word and the prophecies of Ellen White as well.

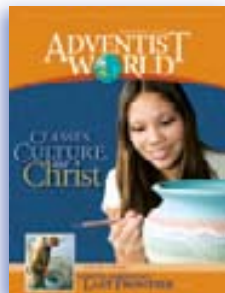
You can do a lot to reach the minds of people with light from the Lord about the last days and His very soon return.

PATRICIA CORAL
Ciudad del Carmen,
Campeche, Mexico

For a Clearer Understanding

The article about translation, “Babel Undone,” by Marcos Paseggi (January 2010), is brilliant! It shows the growing importance of the work of interpreters and translators for the world church. Why not consider creating an international network of Adventist translators? I’d love to write to my colleagues from other countries and continents to support us and learn together.

JÚLIO LEAL
Salvador City, Bahia, Brazil



Crossing Denominational Lines

I’m a born-again Christian of the Four-square Gospel Church here in Nigeria.

I read in your magazine “Classes, Culture, and Christ,” by Sandra Blackmer (September 2009). Since then my life hasn’t been the same, especially because of the lesson of loving others and the story of Krystal. I now understand what Christ meant by faith being like a mustard seed.

Keep up the good work. May the good Lord supply all your needs. I would like to know how to get a copy every month here in Nigeria.

EMMANUEL SEUN
Nigeria

“I am a passionate reader of this magazine, doing my missionary work, giving the magazine to people in buses, malls, banks, etc. Thank God for this ministry that unites Adventists around the world.”

—ADA FRECH, Managua, Nicaragua.

Evangelism Tool

I enjoy reading *Adventist World*, especially the edition for June 2009 and the article “A Unique Prophetic Movement,” by James R. Nix.

I am a passionate reader of this magazine, doing my missionary work, giving the magazine to people in buses, malls, banks, etc. Thank God for this ministry that unites Adventists around the world.

ADA FRECH
MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

Joined With a Journal

Greetings to you in the name of Jesus. I read your international paper for Seventh-day Adventists for November 2008, with “And There Was Light,” by Bill Knott. I was very much impressed about what I discovered and learned. Please send me some of

LETTERS

your latest magazines.

ALEX WAPATICHONGO
SIMUNTALA
Lusaka, Zambia

Please Give Me More

I urge Seventh-day Adventists to continue to walk with God and be obedient to His Word. Never stop spreading good news despite challenges.

The world is in need of salvation, and you are the instrument God uses to save humankind. I have some of your articles. Please send me some copies of *Adventist World* and other articles.

HARRY CHIRWA
Nkhata Bay, Malawi

Hope for the World

Thank you for the wonderful work you have been doing by giving us a message of peace and inspiration. *Adventist World* has really brought

more hope to many Adventists and non-Adventists.

May God richly bless you for your efforts.
DANIEL YEBOAH
Sunyani, Ghana

I receive your magazine, which is truly a blessing to me and my family. I love the section Where in the World Is This? We can see the work of other Adventists in the world.

MONTSE HUERTA
*Bellflower, California,
United States*

God keeps us safe, and His work is progressing well in Burundi. *Adventist World* arrives without problems with distribution to our local schools and churches first, then the rest of the community. Thank you very much for this great work.

DAN HARELIMANA
Bujumbura, Burundi

I find *Adventist World* very interesting. It's a blessing to find it online for free. I love the sections Bible Questions and Bible Study. Thank you very much for this material.

Please receive my warm greeting. May the Lord continue to provide blessings for your readers.

ALEYDA BÁEZ ALVAREZ
Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico

I am very glad for *Adventist World*, and that our church members have the possibility now of reading it in German. God bless you as you work for Him. Greetings from Germany.

MARTIN WANITSCHKEK
Germany

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 me. I would like to go to university, but have no way.

GABRIEL, *Haiti*

I am having a difficult time in my school and in my family. Please pray for me.

LUIS, *Mexico*

Thank you for your prayers for my mother. She had cancer and has passed away. Please pray for my family. I just lost my grandma at the beginning of the month, and we are not over that loss yet.

MICHELE, *United States*

Pray for my son James. He has an undiagnosed condition. More testing has to be done. It isn't believed to be

cancer, but it still sounds very serious.

IRENE, *Australia*

Since my wife was baptized she has turned her back on the church. With your prayers to the Almighty she will come back. I am looking for employment with a trucking company. Pray that the director will hire me.

PASCAL, *Cameroon*

I am a university student. I am working, but my wage is too low to support my program at school. Please pray that the Lord of a thousand ways will work His miracles.

FUNGAYI, *South Africa*

You prayed for me to get a job. I was told to come for an interview in one

of the local colleges. Thanks to God I passed the interview and got a job that does not force me to work on the Sabbath!

THANDIWE, *Botswana*

Pray for God to open ways for caring for the orphans we have. We would also like to have a church building—we worship under a tree. I hope God will hear our cry to Him.

GLADYS, *Kenya*

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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FLAVIO TAKEMOTO



EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

In Pursuit of Happiness

This month, a reader writes about the antidote to loneliness.

Have you ever reached a crossroads in your life and wondered what would make you happy? All too often, what we thought would make us happy hasn't, so we've found ourselves on a never-ending quest to grab the carrot that bobs along just beyond reach. Do we really know? Does that promised happiness really pan out in the end? You are married 7, 10, 20 years, and at one moment you look around and see your spouse and children and all that you've achieved, and you find out that you are still lonely.

Your best friends are throwing a party for you. Everyone is happy with you. Everyone compliments you. But in a blink of a moment you lean against the wall, look around, and you find out that despite all your good friends and their best wishes you are still lonely.

Loneliness is the main ingredient that pushes us in our pursuit of happiness. Loneliness, the absence of meaningful human connection, drains the joy and the sense of purpose from our lives.

None of this should come as much of a surprise to a reader of the New Testament, since Jesus and His followers had a lot to say on this subject. They marked a pretty clear path that leads to happiness where the promises of perfect human relationships, material possessions, and utopian circumstances fail. If material possessions and human bliss become a person's endeavors, one is likely to discover that fear and greed crack through the window. Seeking true happiness doesn't require that we sacrifice all worldly goods—just that we get our priorities straight.

True religion offers to redeem us from loneliness, not by answering our prayers and sending us the man or woman of our dreams, but by teaching us to see our neighbors as ourselves, to be aware of their humanity, their fears and feelings, instead of being aware of only our own.

True religion teaches us not how to *win* friends but how to *be* a friend, to be concerned with alleviating the loneliness of others, learning to hear their cry instead of wondering why no one hears ours.

Religion offers the lonely soul community. Our place of worship offers us a refuge, an island of caring in the midst of a hostile, competitive world.

The world may have our hands, but our souls belong to Someone else. In the world of the Master, we must seek “first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you,” as we read in Matthew 6:33.

Finding happiness in pleasing others can deteriorate into a loss of our own identity. Happiness is spiritual, born of truth and love. It is unselfish; therefore, it cannot exist alone, but requires all humankind to share it.

This kind of happiness is not superficial. It wells up from deep within our innermost selves, bringing with it lovely serenity.

—ISRAEL RAFALOVICH, *Brussels, Belgium*

The PEOPLE'S PLACE

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“It is often said in derision that ‘love is blind.’ But there is some truth in the saying—if it is said as follows: ‘Love should be all intelligent—all eyes, ears, and mind before marriage, but should be blind after marriage, overlooking some of the faults that appear.’”

—Heard at a wedding reception in 2010, submitted by K. A. P. (Paulsen) Yesudian, from Sutton Coldfield, United Kingdom

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?

SUBMITTED BY GODOB O. MATTHEW



ASE MEISTAD SKJELLEVIK

ADVENTIST LIFE

Nervous and insecure at his first baptism after being ordained, a young pastor took the hand of the person to be baptized and said, “I baptize you in the name of the father of the child and the spirit of prophecy.”

That same pastor, after officiating at his first wedding ceremony, told the audience, “Now I present you the youngest couple in this church. Let’s give them a warm greeting.”

—José Carlos Ebling, Brazil

DID YOU KNOW?

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has selected the Trans-European Division for this year’s third quarter Thirteenth Sabbath Offering (July-September). The Trans-European Division includes countries in Europe, Asia, and northern Africa. It is home to more than 616 million people, of which 111,000 are Seventh-day Adventists. That’s a ratio of one Adventist for every 5,555 people.

The offering is designated to help:

- Plant an English-speaking church in Copenhagen, Denmark.
- Renovate a historic building to be used as a church in Nummela, Finland.
- Renovate Camp Zatonie in Poland.

To learn more about this and other mission work the church is doing around the world, visit www.AdventistMission.org.