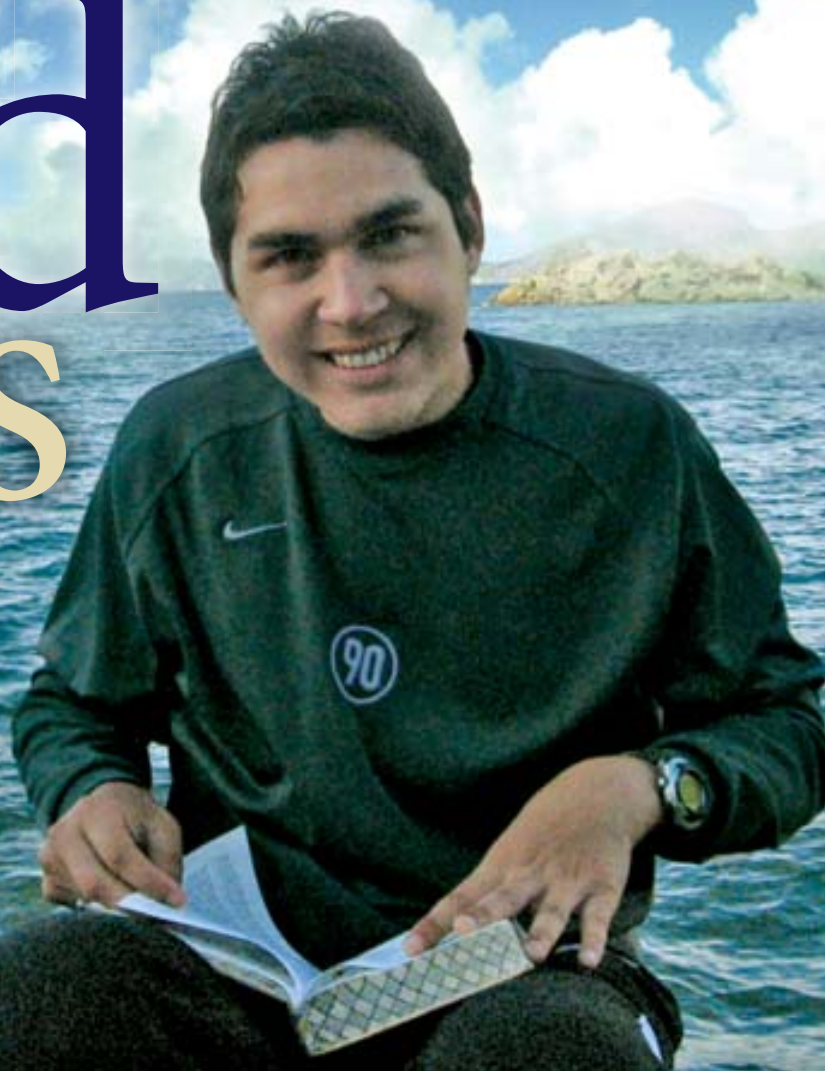


August 2010

ADVENTIST WORLD



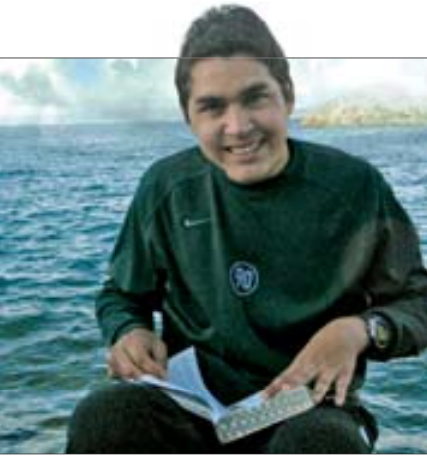
When a Seed Dies



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WORLD VIEW

The Laborers' Reward

They stood patiently in line, waiting to greet me after my camp meeting sermon, smiles and embraces ready. "Nineteen years," they reminded me—19 years since we had last seen each other.

It took several seconds for the memory bank to activate, to recall the laughing eyes, the ready wit, the openheartedness that had always marked this couple. Back then, I had been their pastor, sometimes wondering if there would be lasting results from the challenging round of Bible studies, preaching, and pastoral visits that filled my days.

"He baptized us, and then he performed our wedding a few months later," they beamed to strangers standing nearby. "He was our first pastor." They handed me a midsized envelope, with instructions to open it later. Later they also found me in the cafeteria, and introduced me to their 16-year old daughter, a lovely young woman of whom they are understandably proud.

Back in my hotel room, I stared at the pictures of their 18-year old son, just graduated from high school, planning on attending an Adventist college this September. The boy who smiled back at me from the photograph shared the same laughing eyes, the same easy smile. A news clipping that fell out from among the pictures alerted me that it

is his life's ambition to work for ADRA (the Adventist Development and Relief Agency).

The weariness of the long day washed away as I stared at the pictures and let my mind drift back to events two decades earlier. And had I wondered *if* God could bring results for His kingdom out of my daily work for Him? "Cast your bread upon the waters," the wise man once urged us, "for you will find it after many days" (Eccl. 11:1). Centuries later, Jesus underscored the same truth: "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how" (Mark 4:26-27).

"Nothing is ever wasted in God's economy," someone has observed. Millions of believers around the globe—pastors and pediatricians, evangelists and educators, administrators and auto mechanics—affirm this truth as God allows them the surprising joy of glimpsing what has grown from their witness to Jesus Christ.

Sometime soon, on this earth or in the earth made new, you too will be reminded of the grace that forms each link in the bond of faith. And in the joy of that moment—when you see what God has done with your witness—you will bless each day that you have labored for the Master.

— BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

"Follow the Bible" Volume Reaches U.S. as Journey Ends

■ A world-traveling copy of the Bible, written in 66 languages, arrived in the United States on the final leg of its 20-month odyssey.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's Bible study initiative, "Follow the Bible," entered North America May 31 when a church leader from Southern Africa brought the hardbound 12- by 18-inch Bible to church officers waiting at Washington, D.C.'s, Dulles International Airport.

The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists launched the initiative in 2008 to promote Bible

study in the community and among its members, following studies suggesting that only about 50 percent of members regularly study the Bible. Leaders hope this worldwide Bible traveling campaign increases that figure.

The Bible has been featured in stadium events, rallies, and parades in nearly 130 countries, and held by governors, tribal chiefs, presidents, and kings and queens.

"If we can have more people reading the Bible we'll have a more committed group and a more committed effort of leading people to Jesus," said Don Schneider, president of the Adventist Church's North American Division, after being handed the Bible from Paul Ratsara, president of the church's



AIRPORT HANDOFF: Paul Ratsara, left, president of the Adventist Church's Southern Africa-Indian

Ocean Division, hands off the traveling Bible to Don Schneider, president of the church's North American Division. The two met at Washington Dulles International Airport for the final transfer of the Bible between the church's 13 world regions.

ANSEL OLIVER/ANN

WORLD REPORT

Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division.

The Bible is scheduled for events in churches, hospitals, and camp meetings in the United States and Canada. It was due to complete its journey in Atlanta at the fifty-ninth General Conference session, which began June 23.

Schneider said he was glad to receive the initiative in his territory. "You have to have some pizzazz sometimes to call attention to the things you believe in," he said. "This is another opportunity to remind ourselves what we're all about."

Pictures from the initiative's Web site show the Bible being read in Iceland, displayed at a rally in Fiji, and held in parades in Kenya.

"This has brought Adventists around the world together. They have recommitted themselves to Bible study," said Mark Finley, an Adventist world church vice president.

Finley admitted the Bible had been rebound twice during its journey—once in Europe and another time in South America. The cover was coming off, he said.

"But when you consider this Bible has traveled for 20 months and been in well over 100 countries, it's amazing," Finley said.

The Bible has never been shipped or checked in as airline luggage, initiative organizers said. Ratsara said a church leader in his region upon boarding a flight was initially told by an airline representative that the 18-pound Bible and its accompanying bag was too heavy for carry-on luggage. "We would rather check in our computers than this Bible," Ratsara said.

The Bible had a "huge impact" in his region, Ratsara said. At a stadium event in Zambia recently, people lined up for nearly two hours to see and hold the Bible. In Lesotho, the king was so impressed that he vowed he would read the Bible more, as did a governor in Angola.

"I'm also impressed by the impact this had on young people," Ratsara said. Youth have led parades in his region, while in Botswana, a 15-year-old church member made a near perfect attempt to memorize the New Testament.

At the airport, the North American delegation met Ratsara at his 6:00 a.m. flight arrival from Johannesburg, South Africa, on Memorial Day, a national holiday in the U.S.

"We think most of the other celebrations will take place at a time of day when it's not 6:00 a.m. in the morning," Schneider said.

For more information, visit followthebiblesda.com.

—Reported by Ansel Oliver, Adventist News Network

Adventist Mission DVD Series Aims to Build Friendships

Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders anticipate a set of DVDs delving into the history and impact of world religions and contemporary cultures will build trust and understanding between faith communities.

The four-disc set outlines the tenets of the world's major religions and thought groups: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and postmodernism.

The church's Office of Adventist Mission produced the DVD set *Understanding World Religions*

and *Contemporary Cultures* with a Christian and, specifically, Adventist audience in mind. However, the series is relevant across cultures and religions, producers said.

"The series aims to help equip Christians to better communicate and build bridges with friends and neighbors of other faiths," said Gary Krause, Adventist Mission director.

Ganoune Diop, director of the church's Adventist Mission Study Centers, hosts the series. For each faith group, topics include history, sphere of influence, values and beliefs, as well as areas of commonality anchored in biblical principles.

The series was filmed by Adventist Mission video producer Dan Weber on location in countries ranging from Egypt to Thailand.

"If you really understand a religion, then you know where a person is coming from and what they're searching for," Weber said. "Once you know that, you can identify common denominators you might share to help you relate to them better."

While he noted that outreach is the church's "ultimate" goal, Weber said rather than evangelism, the focus of the series is on encouraging interfaith relationships defined by mutual respect that surmounts judgmental or combative tendencies.

The DVD series is available via online ordering for US\$40 at



WHAT THEY BELIEVE:
Ganoune Diop, right, interviews Richard Elofer, president of the Adventist Church in Israel, for the upcoming DVD series *Understanding World Religions and Contemporary Cultures*.

ADVENTIST MISSION

www.whattheybelieve.org.

—Reported by Elizabeth Lechleitner,
Adventist News Network

Indonesia Publishing House Celebrates Centennial

■ To withstand the challenges of the publishing ministry for 100 years in the largest Muslim country of the world is an accomplishment Seventh-day Adventists worldwide can appreciate. On May 16, 2010, the Indonesia Publishing House (IPH) passed the century mark and, during this time, committed itself to “keeping the vision alive.”

While the present publishing facility was established only in 1954, the publishing work began in 1910 with the arrival of Adventist missionary Ralph Waldo Munson in Sukabumi, Indonesia. A young man named Immanuel Siregar would later assist him.

Several milestones achieved by the IPH were recalled in a video presentation that particularly highlighted the history of the publishing work when it first published in 1910 the *Malayan Truth Messenger (Utusan Kebenaran Melayu)* by the Java Mission Press, IPH’s predecessor.

Five years later, the press was relocated from Sukabumi to Batavia (now Jakarta), then to Singapore, until it was moved back to Bandung in Indonesia in 1929, where the IPH now operates.

From the start of Adventist work in Indonesia, literature played a vital part in expanding the church’s ministries of winning people to God’s kingdom. Rising from the use of hand press machines to more modern printing equipment, IPH managed its resources well. Today, IPH continues to supply the church’s need for literature for its members and for the public.

One highlight of the celebration was the launching of the book *Ketika Sang Pencipta Berkata Ingatlah (When God Said Remember)* written by Mark



WHEN GOD SAID, “REMEMBER”: Adventist pastors Ven Bermudez, SSD publishing director, and Noldy Sakul, East Indonesia Union Conference president, pray during the launch of 110,000 copies of the Indonesian version of Mark Finley’s book on the Sabbath, entitled, *Ketika Sang Pencipta Berkata Ingatlah*.

PHOTO COURTESY SSD

Finley. Its first 110,000 copies are now ready for distribution by church members to their community. At this launching, Ven Bermudez, publishing director for the church in the Southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD), led a special prayer for this publication.

—Reported by Bruce Sumendap,
Southern Asia-Pacific Division

Adventists Baptized 84 in Netherlands in Single Day

■ Sabbath, June 5, was a historic day for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Netherlands when 84 people accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and were baptized. There are now 5,000 members of the church in that nation.

This year’s theme at the Antillean Explosion, formerly known as the Antillean Rally, was “United Until He Comes,” and was conducted by Cherrel Francisca, staff coordinator for the Antillean church plants in the Netherlands Union Conference (NUC). The aim of this event was to emphasize unity and togetherness.

In preparation for the Antillean Explosion, four evangelistic campaigns were held simultaneously

in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Delft, and Tilburg. The aim was to focus on Jesus as Savior, and to promote cooperation and unity among believers. After two weeks of campaigns the Antillean communities were invited to come together to attend a special fellowship program.

An invigorating program filled the day, including praise and worship time, interviews with the lay preachers, video clips on unity, an interview with the evangelist, group interaction, and a presentation of the vision on respect and unity by the president of the NUC, Wim Altink. Later that day, 84 persons were added to the Adventist Church by baptism.

“Together with members, lay evangelists, and ministers, we can do much for Christ in an inspired [mind-set] of cooperation, within the diversity God has given to His church. We praise God for His leadership,” concluded Francisca.

Through this special service and the recent baptismal services in the Ghanaian churches in Amsterdam, Almere, and Eindhoven, the membership of the Adventist Church in the Netherlands has passed the 5,000 mark.

—Reported by the Trans-European Division

WORLD REPORT

NEARLY 100 YEARS LATER, CITY HONORS

Spain's *First* Adventist Missionary

Walter Bond was reportedly poisoned for preaching church's message

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

City officials in Baeza, Andalusia, Spain, have honored the memory of the country's first Adventist missionary, one of several early-twentieth-century religious freedom and democracy martyrs whose graves were later desecrated.

In 1914 Walter Guy Bond, a missionary from the United States, died at age 35, reportedly poisoned for preaching Adventist teachings.

Bond's name was added to Baeza's Wall of Honor in late May 2010, during a ceremony that included the mayor, city officials, and Adventist Church leaders.

"Many freedom of conscience proponents during this time, considered enemies of the state, were similarly dealt with," said Pedro Torres Martinez, communication director for the Adventist Church in Spain.

Sometime between 1943 and 1945, Bond's grave was desecrated and his bones were taken.

"During this period of Spanish history, many graves of the 'enemies of the state'—including democracy advocates or those not of the Catholic faith—were similarly desecrated, the idea being that their memories would be forever erased," Martinez said.

Walter Bond was born in





Above: HONORED MEMORY: Plaque honoring Walter Bond now appearing in the Baeza cemetery.

Top left: A MARTYR REMEMBERED: Plaque honoring Walter Guy Bond, pioneer Seventh-day Adventist missionary to Spain, is unveiled by Roberto Badenas of the Euro-Africa Division on May 23, 2010, in Baeza, where Bond died 96 years earlier.

Left: FAMILY REMEMBERS: Jesús Calvo, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Spain, presents a letter from Walter Bond's descendants to Baeza mayor Leocadio Marín.

California on February 6, 1879, to a strongly religious family. His parents, James and Sara, raised 10 children and an adopted girl. They became Seventh-day Adventists while Walter was a child. After joining the church, Walter's father quit farming and became a physician, later establishing a clinic in California.

Walter graduated in theology at Healdsburg (now Pacific Union) College in 1899. In the summer of 1902 Walter and his brother, Frank, attended a camp meeting in Fresno, California, where A. G. Daniells challenged young people to engage in missionary service. Walter and Frank were among the 30 young people who responded to the call. Walter married Leola Gerow on November 12, 1902. Shortly thereafter, Walter, Leola, and Frank sailed for Spain to work as missionaries. They arrived in Barcelona on June 22, 1903.

In June 1904 they baptized the first three local converts. Many others followed until they created the first Adventist church in Spain. In 1905 Walter became the leader of the Spanish Mission. One of the first local members, Lope San Nicolas, also became a successful missionary. Lope raised considerable interest for the gospel in the little city of Baeza, located about 466 miles (750 kilometers) southwest of Barcelona. Lope invited Walter to present a series of Bible lectures there.

On October 13, 1914, Walter arrived in Baeza. On November 1 a telegraph message was sent to Walter's brother, Frank, stating that Walter was about to die. Frank and Leola rushed to his side. Walter died on November 12 at age 35. He left his pregnant wife and their three children. The doctor later told Leola

that Walter had been poisoned.

While dying, Walter said, "I forgive my murderers." He was buried in the cemetery of Baeza. Two months later, his pregnant widow and the couple's three children returned to the United States.

Walter's tomb was desecrated sometime between 1943 and 1945 and his bones disappeared.

Baeza's mayor, D. Leocadio Marín; Mrs. Marín; and a city officer presided over the May 2010 ceremony. The Adventist Church was represented by the president of the Spanish Union, Jesús Calvo; the director of the historical archives of the Spanish Union and event organizer, Andrés Tejel; and other pastors and numerous church members. The representative of the Adventist Church in the Euro-Africa Division, Roberto Badenas, unveiled a commemorative plaque.

In the past few years Baeza city authorities have restored the monuments in memory of those who once stood against the totalitarian regime or who were considered to be a "disgrace" to Spain.

To conclude the ceremony, the president of the Adventist Church in Spain read a letter from the descendants of Walter Bond now living in the United States, and the assembly sang his favorite hymn "Shall We Gather at the River." Local media gave prominent coverage to the event.

The pioneering work of Walter Bond, which cost him his life, was not without ultimate success. Today, there are more than 15,000 Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Spain, and many officials regard the movement with favor. ●

—With reporting by Pedro Torres Martinez

WORLD VISTA

The following article is excerpted from a sermon preached by James White on March 5, 1870, in Battle Creek, Michigan, during his second period as president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (1869-1871). With his wife, Ellen, and Joseph Bates, White is considered one of the co-founders of the church, and founded both the *Adventist Review* (1849) and the young church's publishing ministry. The typical hallmarks of an oral presentation have been preserved in this article.

—THE EDITORS

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).*

It is our privilege to come to a throne of grace. It is a throne of mercy and of grace, that sinners may approach—to find justice? No, to find grace, to find pardon, to find mercy. Do we go there to obtain our pay for what we have done? No, indeed. After we have done all that we can do, we are but unprofitable servants. We are invited to come where we may find grace, not pay. It is our privilege to find mercy and grace.

Do Not Be Afraid

How does this chapter open? “Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it” (Heb. 4:1). Now fear is an element of our nature. We are exhorted to have fear. Fear of what? We should not fear that the Lord will not hear us when we pray. No, we should not; for we are invited to approach the throne of grace, even with boldness. His ear is always open.

We need not fear on the ground that there is any lack of love in Heaven for sinners. After bestowing the greatest gift that Heaven could give, will He withhold the lesser ones? No. In the gift of the Son of God, we have a pledge of the unbounded love of God toward sinners. There is no lack of love on the part of our gracious God, therefore, there is no ground of fear in that respect.

But yet it is right to fear. It is right to watch ourselves with very jealous care, and with great fear, lest we offend with our tongue. Oh, that unruly member! Fearless, careless talk! That terrible sin among men! It is like a desolating hail, or an uncontrollable fire! We should fear lest our words shall be wrong; lest we have a bad influence over others; lest our words shall have a bad influence over ourselves. Oh, how much gossip, and clack, and gabble, and

The complete sermon of James White, one of the early pioneers of Seventh-day Adventism, can be found in *The Advent Review and Herald of the Sabbath*, August 5, 1873.



talk, there is in the world about little or nothing!

We may fear, dear brethren and friends, lest our love of the world shall overcome us. We may fear that we are not keeping the body under, not controlling the tongue, and keeping the passions in subjection as we should. We may fear in regard to ourselves. We may fear our inability to stand, but never, never fear in regard to the ability of the Lord to save us. And while we may cast ourselves, as it were, into the dust, and our cry may be, Unworthy! at the same time we may sing, “Worthy, worthy is the Lamb.” While our confidence in ourselves is growing weaker, and we are seeing that we are dependent upon God for everything, our confidence in the Lord may grow stronger and stronger every day.

We Have a Mediator

I am struck with the wisdom that I find in the Blessed Book of God, especially in this chapter that I have read to you. Follow me, watch me closely, and see if you can see that beauty in it that I see. The chapter opens with this exhortation, Fear, and tremble, and watch yourselves. But then, the apostle states in this very chapter: “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession” (Heb. 4:14). Hundreds and thousands of Christians have suffered the devil to throw this fear and trembling over them, to pervert this wholesome quality of proper fear which all

The Throne of Grace

By
JAMES WHITE


should have, and to drive them to doubt and despair.

Listen to the apostle. Do not let the devil drive you to despair. We have a great High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He was in all points tempted like as we are, and yet without sin. He is willing and mighty to save. Trembling, desponding ones, Look up! Do you say that you are all unworthiness? I respond, Amen! You are. You may just as well set that down for a fact. But Jesus is worthy. He is able. He is willing and ready to save. Then look up, look up. He is your mediator. He is your intercessor with the Father. He has been touched with the feeling of all your infirmities, and woes, and sorrows, and weaknesses, and He knows just how to help you.

Come Boldly

The conclusion from all this is found in the words of the text: “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace” (Heb. 4:16). You need not come fearing or trembling. In the name of Jesus you may come boldly. Those whom He forgives most He loves most. Those that have been the greatest sinners, and come along with repentance, will find pardon proportionate to their sins. The blessings will be proportionate to the wrongs committed. Are you a great sinner? Then a great repentance is called for, then a great pardon and a great blessing will be bestowed. Let us come boldly to a throne of grace. We must not carelessly come, not pompously, not presumptuously.

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace.” A throne supposes a kingdom. If there is a throne of grace, there is a kingdom of grace. I lament that Adventists have labored so hard, so tenaciously, to maintain the idea that the Scriptures, speaking of the kingdom of God and kingdom of heaven, always, in some way or other, or in some sense or other, refer to the future kingdom of God. I certainly am looking for a future everlasting kingdom of God. I now repeat that which I have spoken here before. [However], there are two arrangements in reference to the people of God, to which the expressions, kingdom of God, and kingdom of heaven, are applied. Sometimes it refers to one of these arrangements, sometimes to the other. These two relations of God and Christ to His people, I shall call, respectively, the kingdom of grace, and the kingdom of glory. The kingdom of grace exists now. The kingdom of glory is future.

This theme is glorious, but I will not introduce more testimony now. Let me exhort you to seek for that fullness, that richness of experience which is represented by Paul to the Colossians, when he speaks of our being “filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:9, 10). Amen! 

*All Scripture quotations in this article have been updated to reflect current language use and have been taken from the New King James Version.

WINDOW

Into Poland

By HANS OLSON

Situated in the middle of Europe, Poland represents in many ways the crossroads of the eastern and western parts of the continent. Poland emerged as a nation around the end of the tenth century A.D. At the time it was the largest nation in Europe. Over the course of the next millennium two of Poland's neighbors, the Kingdom of Prussia (modern-day Germany) and the Russian Empire, developed into two of the world's superpowers. In 1795 these two countries divided Poland between themselves and removed it from the world map. Following World War I, Poland regained its independence as a sovereign nation and became the ninth-largest country in Europe.

Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union both invaded Poland during World War II. Some 6 million Poles—half of whom were Jewish—died during the war. At the close of the war, a Communist government was installed in Poland behind the Soviet iron curtain. In 1989 free elections ushered in a new government, which began the fall of Communism in Europe.

More than half of Poland is agricultural or woodlands. Because so much of the country is undeveloped, Poland is a haven for many animals and plants that long ago disappeared from the rest of Europe. Some of the animals found here include the wisent (European bison), brown bear, gray wolf, and moose. Some 25 percent of European migratory birds breed each summer in Poland's wetlands.

Adventists in Poland

Christianity was rooted in Poland from its very beginning. The first king of Poland, Mieszko I, became a Christian around A.D. 966 and formed Poland as a sovereign Christian state. The Roman Catholic Church is still a powerful force in Poland.

In 1888 two Adventists, J. Laubhan and H. Szkubowicz, moved from the Crimea in western Russia to eastern Poland to start an Adventist congregation. Three years later they opened a church in Zarnówka. The Adventist Church struggled to gain state recognition, but continued to grow. For a while, all church buildings had to be privately held.

During World War II, Germany and the Soviet Union outlawed the Adventist Church. All church properties were taken away and some members were sent to Siberia. Following the war the Adventist Church was reestablished and started to grow again.

The fall of Communism brought full religious freedom for the Adventist Church. While this newfound religious freedom is good, the nation has grown quite secular. The Adventist Church has barely grown in total membership over the past 15 years. To help the local churches reach out into their communities, the Adventist Church decided to provide a place of spiritual growth where its members can strengthen their relationships with God and introduce others to Him. The place is called Camp Zatonie.

Today Camp Zatonie reaches several hundred children each year. But the Polish government is demanding that the camp's buildings be brought up to modern standards. It's a major financial hardship on the some 5,700 Adventist believers in Poland. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help complete the renovations and make the camp even more useful as a way to share God's love.

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



POLAND

Capital	Warsaw
Official language	Polish
Major religions	Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox
Population	38.1 million*
Adventist membership	5,748*
Adventist-to-population ratio	1:6,629*

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



Is Soy Safe?

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES
and PETER N. LANDLESS

From time to time, we hear that soy foods are unsafe. What is your take on this?

Soy foods are varied and range from the whole, cooked bean to highly processed and refined products. Soy has been popularized, especially by Adventists, who find it a suitable source of protein. Amino acids, the building blocks of protein, occur in most of our foods, and the only problem a vegetarian is likely to experience with protein is if one's diet is not varied and balanced.

Vegetable sources of protein often lack an essential amino acid or two, and soy beans are one product that provides a more rounded amino acid profile. The use of animal products provides a good range of amino acids within the single food, but such an advantage does not hold when compared to a mixture of foods. For the vegetarian, mixing grains with legumes and nuts provides a full spectrum of amino acids that is totally satisfying to all kinds of people—athlete, growing adolescent, or even the pregnant mother-to-be. This means that soy products, as good as they are, do not have to be a part of the vegetarian diet for it to be satisfactory.

In all probability, however, there is an advantage to soy that transcends amino acid content. While there is evidence for several advantages to soy, this evidence is not of the most compelling order, because studies on food effects are very difficult to perform. Nevertheless, it's probable that soy

offers protective isoflavones and other such phytochemicals to decrease one's risk of cancer. For men, this appears to be the case for prostate cancer, with a glass of soy milk a day providing a modicum of protection.

The anti-soy lobby brings all kinds of arguments to support their condemnation of soy. Some cite situations in which birds fed an essentially total soy diet developed crooked beaks. Others quote studies that suggest an increase in dementia for those consuming large quantities of soy. The important thing is to recognize that these are inconclusive studies and are being given disproportionate weight by those quoting them.

A few months ago there was a very well-conducted study of sufficient numbers and controls reported in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA, December 9, 2009, vol. 302, no. 22) on soy food intake and breast cancer survival. This study, conducted on women in China, was able to separate soy intake into four quartiles and correlate it with survival from breast cancer. There were more than 5,000 female breast cancer survivors, followed for some five years. Those in the highest quartile of soy intake had some 30 to 40 percent less cancer recurrence. This advantage was experienced regardless of tumor estrogen receptor status, but did not increase where the intake exceeded 11

grams per day of soy protein.

This suggests a benefit to soy up to a limit. One of the difficulties in transferring this advantage to the United States might be that the Chinese tend to consume “whole” soy, not the texturized protein many in the U.S. utilize. Certainly, whole soy products such as soy milk, tofu, the whole bean, or miso (a traditional Japanese seasoning) appear to confer an advantage to female breast cancer survivors. Because this study is of high quality, it has significant meaning for breast cancer survivors and is encouraging to those who utilize soy—particularly whole soy—as part of their diet.

While benefit in this one situation does not necessarily apply across the whole spectrum of potential advantages or disadvantages, it is supportive of our recommendations that moderate amounts of soy be utilized in a balanced vegetarian diet. ●



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As a surgeon, my mission is to repair broken people. Yet even after pouring the majority of my life into the pressure cooker of academia and the indentured servitude of surgical residency, these purportedly talented hands can actually do but little to that end. I cannot heal the spirit. I cannot heal the soul. In fact, I am incapable of healing the body.

Granted, I can skillfully cut



About Hernias and the HOLY

What I learned about salvation as a surgeon

By
MARVIN
ATCHISON

and sew. Yet full healing depends on the body itself joining together, incorporating the prosthetic material, or raising an immune response after the gangrenous appendix, bloated gallbladder, or cancerous mass has been extirpated. All these require the action of what I would call biologic grace, the body's amazing, God-given ability to regenerate and overcome.

None Righteous, No Not One

The quip “physician, heal thyself” (see Luke 4:23) exposes a fundamental fault apparent to all introspective physicians. We work for the healing of others while we ourselves are broken. That brokenness may be in our own bodies, as we are notoriously poor stewards of our own body temples and have a life expectancy that is shorter than that of the average patient. This inner brokenness may be revealed in

an unhappy spirit, ungoverned emotions, and deep relationship failures. Most certainly this applies to the soul and our relationship with God. We need a Healer, and the farther we wander the more broken we become.

In an effort to regain that lost distance, to rediscover and experience anew the reality and blessing of our hope of salvation in Jesus Christ, I have turned again to the treasure of His Word and the light given to Adventists as a people. In this search I have been struck by the surgical nature of the Holy Spirit's work. “The sanctification of the soul by the operation of the Holy Spirit is the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity.”¹

These are surgical terms used here by Ellen White. Contrary to popular usage, surgeons do not perform *surgeries*; they perform *operations*.² Foreign material incorporated into the

body is an *implant*—be that in the form of prosthetic mesh, alloys, donated tissues, etc. This quote is reminiscent of the many hernias that I treat in my practice, and leads me to compare herniorrhaphy (hernia repair) with salvation.

Hernias, like sin, are common to humanity and found in all ages, genders, locales, and peoples of the world. There are myriad subtypes of hernias, yet most occur in rather customary sites—in areas of congenital or acquired weakness, such as the groin, the navel, and surgical scars. Despite their differences, all hernias carry the same potentially fatal risk of incarceration and subsequent strangulation, the involved organ becoming trapped in the hernia and then having its blood supply compromised, respectively.

Being Justified Freely by His Grace ...

For patients presented with this life-threatening condition, treatment involves two separate and critical components: reduction and repair, comparable to salvation's components of justification and sanctification. Survival of the herniated organ depends upon its urgent reduction by pressing it back into its proper anatomic residence.

Hernia reduction is an art, something learned through years of study and practice. Often I am called to the emergency department to evaluate patients with supposedly incarcerated hernias, which have resisted the most determined

does nothing to address the underlying problem—the physical defect that caused the apparent affliction. Were the hernia only reduced, it would again protrude and risk strangulation. So the underlying condition must be treated.

Herniorrhaphy today typically involves an implant of mesh—a woven, porous sheet of polypropylene, polyester, collagen, or other material. This mesh is sutured in place, yet the true strength of the repair is achieved over the ensuing weeks as the body incorporates itself into the interstices of the mesh. Similarly, the work of the Holy Spirit is to operate, implanting not mesh but the nature of Christ. This is no inanimate prosthetic; it is in

cut is a chance to cure.”

I cannot heal myself, no matter what exercises or maneuvers I perform. My greatest efforts are at best but a hernia truss, a mechanical brace that merely presses on the hernia site to minimize discomfort and make the bulge less noticeable. I need the Great Surgeon, who alone can heal me.

There, but for the Grace of Christ, Go I

While all analogies fail eventually, let us in closing extend this one step further, looking beyond our own navels to consider God's lost children. Rather than sitting in judgment and condemnation as the supposedly righteous are

SPIRIT

We are all dying spiritually and eternally, unless we are touched by a pair of qualified hands.

attempts of the emergency personnel.

Why do they call me? I am paged because my hands are more skilled in this regard. They have been through the fires of surgical residency; they have conquered a legion of hernias, reducing them *and* performing their definitive repair. In like manner we are all dying spiritually and eternally, unless we are touched by a pair of qualified hands. Not mine, but Jewish hands bearing scars from previous impalement. He can succor. He can save. He alone can justify the soul.

And This Is the Will of God, Even Your Sanctification ...

Though reduction of the hernia resolves the immediately life-threatening concern by restoring correct anatomic arrangement and blood flow, it

reality a living graft. Like scion on the stock. “Abide in Me, and I in you,” Jesus said (John 15:4). When Jesus' nature is implanted into me, when through the daily (and, at times, painful) process I grow into Him and He grows into me, then I am part of Him and He of me.

Not by Works, Lest Any Man Should Boast ...

Periodically, a patient will ask me what exercises they can perform to fix their hernia. They believe that the problem is a muscle weakness that they can remedy by strength training. In fact, the deficiency is not in the muscle itself, but in the sheetlike connective tissue, termed fascia, which gives the abdominal wall its actual strength. Sadly, once this is torn or incised the body is generally unable to repair itself without the intervention of a surgeon, for whom “a chance to

prone, let us approach sinners as we would our loved ones with hernias. “We must set ourselves against sin, as we do against sickness and diseases, by showing ourselves tender and compassionate to the sick and diseased.”³ Then we can be emissaries of grace to the fallen, not driving them away, but drawing them toward the Great Surgeon. ●

¹ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 198, cf. *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Dec. 4, 1894, and *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Apr. 9, 1895.

² Surgery is what a surgeon practices. An operation is what a surgeon performs. In this context, there is no such word as surgeries. In Great Britain, surgeries are treatment rooms. Neither an operation nor a patient is a case, but that's another commentary.”—C. J. Allen, *Archives of Surgery* 131 (1996): 128.

³ William Law in “A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life” (London: Printed for WILLIAM INNYS, at the West End of St. Paul's, 1729) chapter XX (see www.anglicanlibrary.org/law/serious/).



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The sun had been shining bright and warm over Haiti, the pearl of the Caribbean, on that Tuesday, January 12, 2010. Nothing foretold how the day would end.

The caravan with the “Follow the Bible” project had arrived in Haiti a few days earlier and was now being watched with great interest by the students of Université Adventiste d’Haïti. The program had started at 4:00 that afternoon with hymns, prayers, and a spiritual message. Copies of the Bible had been distributed to some of our non-Adventist students, then, as university chaplain, I closed with a prayer of dedication. With hearts open to the moving of the Spirit and on bended knees, the congregation joined me in prayer. How much I would have liked this peaceful moment to linger. But five minutes later, our world as we knew it came to an end.

The Earthquake Hits

A deathly silence descended on the auditorium. Then, as if a battle tank had broken into the building, I heard a terrible conflagration. I did not understand what was going on. Everyone else fled while I stood there, riveted to the platform. I looked up and saw the ceiling—supported by strong steel beams—open up to reveal a deep-blue sky. Stunned, I watched as it closed again, moved as if by a gentle hand. The 18-foot wall behind the platform looked as if it was made of cardboard, trembling as if ready to crash down on me. But instead of dashing for safety, I stayed where I was, transfixed.

The slats in the windows had been blown away, leaving a trail of whitish smoke behind. The cables connecting the speakers sparked as if to warn me of greater danger still to come.

During the entire 35 seconds of the quake, I couldn’t stop wondering what was going on. As I watched the stupendous scene unfold, I thought how foolish it would be to run down the center aisle toward the exit, only to be hit by a crashing piece of the building. I then noticed two theology students prostrate on their knees praying. They later told me they thought this would be the best position to be in when facing death.

Desolation and Destruction

Once the first shock subsided, I collected the satchel I had left at my seat and calmly walked toward the exit. It was only when I came close to the stairwell supporting the bleachers that I realized it was cracked and soon would collapse. I hurried out.

Once outside, I was met with desolation everywhere: two thirds of the seminary building had been destroyed, as well as a great portion of the men’s and women’s dormitories and the publishing house and its shipping annex. The

By
JERRY JEAN

What Is the Earth Telling Us? A Haiti earthquake su

university bookstore and the wall protecting the campus had collapsed. Students were lying on the ground sobbing, unable to stand on their feet, overwhelmed by their feelings. Praise songs tumbled out of their quivering lips as they thanked a merciful God for sparing their lives. With knees shaking and unable to speak more than a few words, I asked for a cell phone to call my wife, only to discover there was no signal. My mind now racing with anguish, I thought of her and our children. All the students who were inside the auditorium were alive, but what about my family? Thank God, I later learned that He had spared their lives!

Not a New Thing

Earthquakes reduce life to its most basic dimension, sweeping away our comforts and certainties. When the earth shook in Lisbon in 1755, many people were in church celebrating All Saints Day. Prayers and crucifixes did nothing to save them. They were buried alive. Those who managed to escape fled to the marble piers of the harbor, only to be swallowed by a gigantic tsunami unleashed by a tremor off the coast of Portugal. Those who watched this scene in horror were then confronted by a fire that engulfed what was left of the city. Out of the 250,000 inhabitants of Lisbon, between 50,000 and 60,000 perished.



Survivor shares his story.

This event had a profound effect on all of Europe. Depictions of the earthquake were distributed widely and discussed throughout the continent until the late nineteenth century. Ellen White mentioned it in her writings. She quotes Revelation 6:12 (KJV): “There was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood,” then adds: “These signs were witnessed before the opening of the nineteenth century. In fulfillment of this prophecy there occurred, in the year 1755, the most terrible earthquake that has ever been recorded. Though commonly known as the earthquake of Lisbon, it extended to the greater part of Europe, Africa, and America.”¹

An eyewitness recounts that “this extensive and opulent city is now nothing but a vast heap of ruins; that the rich and the poor are at present upon a level; some thousands of families which but the day before had been easy in their circumstances, being now scattered about in the fields, wanting every conveniency of life, and finding none able to relieve them.”² How aptly do these words describe the circumstances we were now facing on our own campus.

Warnings

Jesus warned of coming disasters. He said there would be “famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places” (Matt. 24:7) and added that “all these are the beginning of

birth pains” (verse 8). The twentieth century witnessed its share of them; some earthquakes surpassed the one in Lisbon. And the number and intensity are increasing. According to the U.S. Geological Survey Web site, between 19 and 48 earthquakes registering 6.0 or more on the Richter scale were recorded per decade throughout the last century. The years 2000–2009 witnessed 309 such earthquakes. In the last 10 years, there were almost as many earthquakes registering 6.0 or more than in the 90 years before.³

Get Ready

It’s time to get ready for Jesus’ soon appearance. My experience of the earthquake in Haiti convinced me of that. I’m more aware of how fragile human life is, especially without God. Everything that smacked of pride and arrogance completely lost its value on that fateful day. Everything that separated us from each other—skin color, social standing, education—became meaningless. What a precious lesson to learn as we prepare to face eternity.

How close are we to the coming of our Savior? We don’t know for sure, but those of us who experienced and survived the earthquake realize that we are living on borrowed time. Many lives were spared by God’s mercy. Other lives were not, including hundreds of Adventists. We have the hope that we will one day see our brothers and sisters in Christ again in our heavenly home, but what about those who were not spiritually ready for death?

I believe that the Almighty in His infinite mercy preserved my life so I would fulfill with greater dedication the mandate He entrusted to all His disciples to help prepare a people for His second coming. My ministry likely will find a new direction; I pray that it will be characterized by more tact, sensitivity, and compassion.

As He promised, our Lord is coming back. Let us watch, witness, and pray. Don’t allow the things of this earth to crowd out of the heart our Divine Lover. Soon this world, impressive as it may appear, will vanish in smoke. I’m impatiently waiting for the glorious morning when I again will see these dear ones who are sleeping in Christ and contemplate the face of my Savior. ●

¹ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 304.

² Modern History Sourcebook: Rev. Charles Davy, “The Earthquake at Lisbon, 1755,” quoted at www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1755lisbonquake.html.

³ See the Web site of the U.S. Geological Society: <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/world/historical.php>.



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SONIA KRUMM

Right: FAITH IN ACTION: Leo's parents, Delia and Hipólito Ojeda, opened their hearts and home to Leo's friends of the JAM. **Below: TEAMWORK:** The JAM group, together with the Ojeda family and some Adventist brothers and sisters from surrounding towns in front of the partially constructed church.



SONIA KRUMM

Above: FIRST FRUIT: The builder who continued work on the church was also the first person baptized.



Above: Leo Ojeda.

When a Seed Dies

By SONIA KRUMM
NIKOLAUS



It was a beautiful summer afternoon. The deep-blue lake seemed like a carpet at the feet of the snow-capped range of the Andes. The lower areas of the mountains were covered with different types of evergreens.

Twenty-one-year-old Leo stopped to catch his breath and look around. The water of a running brook reflected his happy expression. The beauty of nature moved him to sing and thank God. How unfortunate that he had left his accordion at home! His beloved instrument was more than 1,500 miles (more than 2,400 km) north, at his parents' home in a small town called Hermoso Campo.

The southern landscape was a world apart from his hometown in the province of Chaco, in the northern part of Argentina, where the plains reached the horizon and the snowy cotton fields surrounded the very few trees that survive the high temperatures of the area.

Leo adjusted his cap and kept walking with his fellow colporteurs. It was a beautiful Sabbath afternoon. No matter how much they had walked and worked, visiting every house and taking the printed word to every corner during the week, there was always time for a Sabbath walk with friends! It was great to sing, share experiences, and pray together. And there was hardly a better place to regain strength for the week to come!

Leo thought of his parents, Delia and Hipólito Ojeda, who had seen him off with high hopes. He was the first son of the Ojedas to study at an Adventist school. How great it would be if his brother Darío could also attend! He also thought of his older sister Blanquita; how wonderful it would be if she could rediscover her Adventist faith from which she had been moving away. And how great if his three younger brothers could at least have a church to meet at every

happily. Only Leo's voice was missing!

On the tiny living room wall were some colorful pictures. Leo had painted and given them to his mom before traveling to the south of Argentina to sell books so that he would be able to pay his school fees for his sophomore year as a communication major at River Plate Adventist University. Leo was his parents' pride and hope, someone who—so they reasoned—could open doors for their younger children to also get an education.

A Time to Cry

On Sabbath, February 16, 2008, the university campus, located in the central region of Argentina, more than a thousand miles (1,600 km) north from the southern spot where Leo was colporteuring, went into shock. The news had been devastating: "As Leo Ojeda was walking by a fast-flowing stream, he slipped and was carried away by the water. He is nowhere to be found,"

How the death of a Christian young man became a blessing for hundreds

Sabbath in their own hometown!

*Thank You, Lord, for the blessings You are pouring down on me! Thank You because my parents taught me to love You! I pray for You to stay with my family at this very moment, and that they may also find the blessing of enjoying a church building, as I do! Oh, Father, I love You so much! I long for the day I can finally meet You and embrace You! It is my greatest dream. But I do not want to be alone when I do. I pray my sister may come back to Your arms, dear God. Thank You for the beautiful landscape; Your works are amazing! I love You, Lord!**

Up north, Delia, Hipólito, and three of their sons were studying the Bible. Every Sabbath, their small home became a home-church. Hipólito played the accordion and Darío played the guitar. Everyone in the family sang

somebody had said on the phone.

Three days later, his friends on the university campus and his family at home cried when they heard the news they most feared: The rescue teams had found Leo's body. A lively and joyful spark had been put out. How to let this dear friend go? How to send him back like that to his family up north? Which words would be appropriate to comfort the grieving parents?



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her husband and their three children are active members of the JAM group. If you want to know more about this project, please write to capellan@uap.edu.ar.

How could one come to terms with the death of a 21-year-old healthy young man who just wanted to get an education to serve God better?

The news also struck Leo's hometown. Even though neighbors did not share the Ojedas' beliefs, everyone in the village really appreciated and respected them. As Hipólito, Leo's father, did maintenance and carpentry work in the houses of his neighbors, he often shared advice, words of encouragement, and even some newly learned vegetarian recipes. The Ojedas' children were known at school for their good behavior, kindness, and outstanding grades. Every time other worried parents asked Delia and Hipólito how their sons managed to stay out of trouble and bad habits, they made the most of those precious opportunities to witness about their faith.

The whole town gathered to mourn the death of young Leo. Everyone listened to the comforting

had embraced their sisters and brothers in Jerusalem, not only in prayer, but by sending them material help. At that moment, he felt that God was telling him: "We need to embrace the Ojedas at Hermoso Campo. We should go and build a church there."

Pastor Arias talked about this idea with Marly Müller, a youth group leader from the university church. Together they started to pray so that the Lord would show them what to do. There was a new spark in their hearts that would not be put out!

They did not need to wait long for an answer. As they talked to other young people about the project, students from various programs and backgrounds began to pray and plan together for one goal: to embrace the Ojedas by providing them with a church building in their hometown.

Secondary school and college students got together under the umbrella of the JAM (Adventist Youth in Mis-

sion) group. They began asking God to provide them with the right people for the project, and to show them something even more difficult: how to get the funds to build the church. They set the starting date for the next winter break, just a few months away. And they kept on praying.

The group became bigger and bigger by the day. Soon some faculty and staff members of the university church joined in. The members got organized and started sharing their dream in the local Adventist churches. They asked for donations. They started knocking on doors in the community. They wrote to people they knew abroad asking for contributions. They also started saving money to pay for the trip and stay at Hermoso Campo.

These young people felt the same motivating force Leo had felt so many

times. Driven by compassion and motivated to serve, they dreamed of giving comfort and answers to a village that did not know Jesus.

A Time to Build

In July 2008, just five months after Leo's death, something big began. Armed with buckets, shovels, bricklayer tools, their Bibles, and their sleeping bags, 25 young men and women and six adults arrived at Hermoso Campo, in a town where visitors were a rarity.

As half of the group began to build the church, the other half started visiting the neighbors, knocking on every door and inviting people to attend special evening meetings and to study the Bible. A common introduction was: "Good morning, we are students from the Adventist university where

TEACHING MOMENT:
Primary education students reached out to the many children of Hermoso Campo.



SONIA KRUMM

Leo studied, and we are visiting this town to share a little bit of what he would have liked to share with his dear neighbors.”

Doors began to open wide everywhere, as people answered: “Please, come in! You were Leo’s classmates! What a wonderful work you are doing here!” But people went on: “How can the Ojedas still live happily after what happened to them?” And: “I feel so depressed; life does not make much sense to me. How can I enjoy the happiness you are showing?” Or: “I am sick of being sick. I see that you really enjoy life. You look healthy and happy. I want to know your secret!”

Every day, before dawn and very late at night, the JAM group members knelt to thank God for His ongoing miracles. A mission fire raced through Hermoso Campo. As soon as the sun set, both visitors and builders were metamorphosed into a “perfect” team of young evangelists. The young people led the meetings themselves, giving lectures on the eight natural remedies and guiding people toward God, a newfound trust in His Word, and the blessed hope and comfort of knowing that Jesus is alive and loves everyone.

The whole town was thrilled. The mayor declared the lectures of municipal interest. JAM members were interviewed by the local radio station and gave talks to both parents and teachers. They promised to come back with professional help to assist in overcoming some of the neighbors’ struggles with drugs, alcohol, and smoking. They received hundreds of applications for Bible studies and distributed many Bibles, religious books, and magazines.

The days, however, went by too fast. As the church walls had only been completed halfway through, a local constructor was hired to keep working on it. Also, the local Adventist

conference decided to send two Bible instructors to care for all the people who were thirsty to know more about God’s Word.

A Time to Thank

The Ojedas are not alone anymore in their hometown. There are hundreds of neighbors who now understand the reason for their strength. The Ojedas receive more calls for help than they are able to take care of. A new mission occupies most of their time. Hipólito finds it difficult to keep working at the carpentry shop, and Delia is busy taking care of the two Bible instructors staying at her home. So many changes in such a little time!

In February 2009, just one year after Leo was buried in Hermoso Campo, many questions have already found an answer. The construction of the main sanctuary, including the roof and restroom facilities, is finished. Twenty-six people have already surrendered their lives to Jesus and given a public witness through baptism. One of the first people to be baptized was the builder hired to finish the church building.

Every Sabbath, many children attend Sabbath school, but they meet outside because there is not enough room for them inside. Many keep studying the Bible, and there are more than 70 requests for Bible studies. Those who were baptized are now becoming Bible instructors for others who want to know more about Scripture. Blanquita, Leo’s older sister, has found God again and has returned to the church. Leo’s brother Darío is now attending River Plate Adventist University.

More than a year later, the young people of JAM hold to their dream: they want to see the church building finished. Every Sabbath, they keep meeting to pray for the town they have come to love with all their hearts. Every day at 7 a.m. they pray for those study-


ing the Bible and for the new converts. Some of them travel from time to time to Hermoso Campo to attend baptismal services and to keep in touch with the Ojedas and their newfound church family. The university group and the people of Hermoso Campo have even managed to worship together in real time at least once, by using a cell phone connected to a speaker!

A Fire That Will Never Die

The members of JAM have managed to put a roof on the church that covers more than 60 people every Sabbath. The church is growing and will be officially dedicated at the end of 2010. Can you imagine the heavenly joy at that moment?

The greatest need right now is to raise sufficient funds to employ a Bible worker that can attend the numerous people of Hermoso Campo who are eager to study God’s Word.

As I write this I long to be present at that moment when Leo wakes from his sleep to find his dear family, the beautiful group of people of the Hermoso Campo church, and the mission-driven young people who went to finish the work the Ojedas had started in such a silent but efficient way! What a great gathering it will be when Jesus will embrace and welcome them into His kingdom, where there will be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying! Finally, there will be answers for our still unanswered questions.

Meanwhile, Delia is always ready: Every time someone asks her how she manages to endure the death of her beloved son, she opens her Bible and reads assertively: “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them” (Rev. 14:13). 

*These ideas are based on the notes taken from a letter Leo addressed to God a few days before his death. It was found on his Bible.

NUMBER 11 *Growing* Pains
And Gains
Well-rounded growth in Christ

By MICHAEL MXOLISI SOKUPA

Children often experience some growing pains as they develop toward adulthood. The Christian life is no exception. Growing in Christ is a process leading to spiritual maturity. It may involve breaking loose from powers of the spiritual world that may hold us captive and the mediums that promise protection and providence. This disengagement may be a painful experience, especially for people who come from high-context cultures in which there are strong communal bonds, but it is followed by a joyful engagement of growing in Christ.

Two Communities in Tension

When a person accepts Christ and embraces the biblical truth and an Adventist lifestyle, there are sometimes tensions between the community of faith to which he or she now belongs and the community into which he or she was born and initiated. Someone who accepted Christ can no longer rely on the spiritual support systems such as diviners, ancestors (the dead), and witch doctors for help against the demons and evil powers. Mediums, such as palm readers or fortune-tellers, are no longer appealing. All ties with mediums and the spirit world have to be severed, and the newly born child of God has to rely only on the mediatory ministry, providence, and protection of Christ.

In 1 Samuel 28:6, 7 a king turned to such mediums in desperation. Saul himself had “cut off the mediums and

spiritists from the land” (verse 9).^{*} Thus, he was going back to former ways of apostasy and rebellion.

Paul challenges the believers in Colossae who were being persuaded to harmonize their former practices with the Christian faith. He states: “Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules ...?” (Col. 2:20). Christian life is not compatible with any spiritual powers that are controlled by evil forces.

Breaking Loose

There are certain threats that an individual faces when they sever ties with the world of spiritualism and its mediums. They may get sick, suffer misfortune. Whatever negative experience they go through will be interpreted as directly related to their neglect or rejection of an important source of help. Breaking loose from these mediums in the context of such a community therefore means also dealing with rites of passage and community life in a new way. How does the individual associate with the community that is immersed in a web of ancestral spirits and mediums?

Paul’s encouragement to the believers of Colossae who faced similar challenges is helpful: “You have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority” (Col. 2:10). This does not mean that these powers and authorities are in harmony with Christ as their head, but they are overpowered by Him. Colossians 2:15 continues: “And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” No Christian needs to be threatened by these powers.

The Transition

The allegiance of a Christian changes from faith in the



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ancestors and spiritual mediums to faith in God only. During this transfer of allegiance, there may be fears on the part of the new believer that things may go wrong. As tensions with family or community mount, faith needs to grow even stronger. This is the most critical time in which the church family needs to give support.

The focus should not be on severing the relationships with the community and family members who believe in these mediums, but on the systems themselves. This means that the Christian will continue to love his community and family and help them acknowledge and appreciate his or her new life in Christ.

Paul encourages believers who were in transition by giving the necessary support: “I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is” (Col. 2:4, 5).

Growth Curve

When a person has made a firm commitment to Christ, the community of believers becomes his or her new family. New relationships are formed and a new way of life emerges. This gradual transformation of a life affects all areas of life. Various images and metaphors are used in Scripture to portray this kind of growth: *like a plant* “the righteous will flourish ... grow ... bear fruit ... stay fresh” (Ps. 92:12-14; see also 144:12). Christian growth is a gradual

The allegiance of a Christian changes from faith in the ancestors and spiritual mediums to faith in God only.

process and requires patience—and divine providence (Mark 4:26). Other images used in Scripture to portray spiritual growth in Christ are taken from *human development*: “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good” (1 Peter 2:2, 3). This growth leads to spiritual maturity—believers will not just rely on “milk” but rather “solid food” that is Scripture-based and Christ-centered (1 Cor. 3:1-3; Heb. 5:11-14).

There are specific areas in which spiritual growth will be evident in the life of a Christian: knowledge of God, unselfish works, faith that is Christ-centered, to mention a few (Col. 1:10; 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Thess. 1:3). This growth is not focusing upon ourselves, but upon Christ, the Head of everything (Eph. 4:15). Growing in Christ therefore means that there is development, change, and growth in the life of an individual who has accepted Christ.

In the process of faith development Christians may experience growing pains. However, the joy of growing in Christ surpasses any apparent loss or painful experience. Growing in Christ means a complete transfer of allegiance from the powers of darkness to Christ and involves spending quality time with the new Master (Bible study and a dynamic prayer life). It also means developing and growing in faith and love (for God and fellow humans), and reaching spiritual maturity in all aspects of life. ●

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

Growing in CHRIST

By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. He who subjugated the demonic spirits during His earthly ministry has broken their power and made certain their ultimate doom. Jesus’ victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love. Now the Holy Spirit dwells within us and empowers us.

Continually committed to Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, we are set free from the burden of our past deeds. No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and on His providence,

singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the church. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience. (Ps. 1:1, 2; 23:4; 77:11, 12; Col. 1:13, 14; 2:6, 14, 15; Luke 10:17-20; Eph. 5:19, 20; 6:12-18; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:17, 18; Phil. 3:7-14; 1 Thess. 5:16-18; Matt. 20:25-28; John 20:21; Gal. 5:22-25; Rom. 8:38, 39; 1 John 4:4; Heb. 10:25.)

The place was a train stop. It was a Sunday afternoon in 1884 when Ellen White, along with a group of companions, found herself at a small train station in the Mojave Desert. The group had recently attended the General Conference session. Together they chartered two railroad cars to transport attendees back to Oakland, California, the then-headquarters of the denominational work on the West Coast of the United States. Since the lay-over was going to last for several hours, the group devised a plan to hold an evangelistic meeting while they waited. The plan was simple. They would disperse across town in a media blitz. Station employees came. The editor of the

Ellen White's Conversion

A school classmate threw a rock that hit young Ellen and precipitated an existential crisis. After she regained consciousness she became convinced that she was dying. "I desired to be a Christian, and prayed for the forgiveness of my sins as well as I could."² This early deathbed surrender to Christ was simple. According to Merlin Burt, director for the Center of Adventist Research, this event was not "complicated by questions of how to live for Jesus and deal with life. When she discovered she was not going to die she was led to the next step in her conversion process."³ Later, Ellen had two dreams, which caused her to question again



ELLEN G. WHITE as Model Evangelist

By
MICHAEL W. CAMPBELL

town paper came. Various people showed up from across town to hear this woman, Ellen White, speak. What did she speak about to this diverse group of people? She based her remarks on Matthew 6:25-34 regarding the counsel of Jesus not to worry.¹

This hastily arranged meeting was not unusual for Ellen White. Throughout her lifetime she spoke to people about Jesus in a variety of unusual circumstances. Although Mrs. White is perhaps best remembered for her prophetic and even public ministries, her passion for evangelism is foundational to everything else she did. It is one of her most enduring qualities that began during her conversion and lasted throughout her lifetime.

her religious experience.⁴ It was after the second dream that she confided her fear to her mother, who brought Levi Stockman, a young Methodist minister, to visit her daughter. During the few minutes she spent with him she had "obtained more knowledge on the subject of God's love and pitying tenderness than from all the sermons and exhortations to which I had ever listened."⁵

Afterward Ellen White became a passionate evangelist. She felt the "assurance of an indwelling Saviour" that allowed her to even "praise God for the misfortune" that had so traumatized her.⁶ By nature a timid person, she dared to pray in public for the first time. Ellen, in an experience shared by other contemporary Americans

during the Second Great Awakening, publicly testified of her experience and desired to share her faith with others. She began to arrange meetings with her friends and prayed with them until “everyone was converted to God.”⁷

A Personal Evangelist

Although Ellen White was certainly one of the most visible evangelists during her lifetime in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, she never lost sight of the importance of sharing Jesus with people one-on-one. The Whites traveled through the wilderness of Michigan in the summer of 1853. The carriage driver supposedly knew the road well but became lost. It was a hot day—Mrs. White fainted twice *en route*. They traveled over rough “logs and fallen trees.” Ellen White was so thirsty that she envisioned herself as a perishing desert traveler. “Cool streams of water,” she later said, “seemed to lie directly before me; but as we passed on they proved to be only an illusion.” What was supposed to be a 15-mile morning jaunt stretched into a daylong event. When they finally reached a clearing they found a frontier cabin. The occupant greeted them, gave them refreshments, and they quickly became friends. Ellen White shared with the woman about her religious convictions including the Sabbath and the soon return of Jesus along with complimentary copies of religious material, including the *Review*. Twenty-two years later Ellen White met this same woman again at a Michigan camp meeting: “She inquired if I remembered calling at a log house in the woods.... She stated that she had lent that little book [*A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White*] to her neighbors, as new families had settled around her, until there was very little left of it.... She said that when I called upon her I talked to her of Jesus and the beauties of heaven, and that the words were spoken with such fervor that she was charmed, and had never forgotten them.” Reflecting back on this Ellen White remarked that for all those years their journey “seemed indeed mysterious to us, but here we met quite a company who are now believers in the truth.”⁸

An Evangelist to Her Own Family

One might think that Ellen White always succeeded in her evangelistic efforts. Some of the most difficult people whom she tried to reach included her own relatives. During the summer of 1872 James and Ellen White visited the mountains of Colorado. With them were several relatives, including a niece, Mary, who was the daughter of Ellen’s older sister. Ellen White described in her diary relaxing nature walks. On one such walk the group sat under some poplar trees as Aunt Ellen read from *Spiritual Gifts*. Mrs. White recorded how Mary was “deeply interested” in

spiritual things. At the end of their time together they had a season of prayer during which Mary prayed.

Mrs. White was so concerned about the spiritual welfare of her niece that she not only allowed her to stay with them, but even employed her as a literary assistant (secretary) to help her with her writing. Five years after the experience in the mountains she wrote Mary a letter asking her to give her heart to Christ: “I have no wish to control you,” wrote Aunt Ellen, “no wish to urge our faith upon you, or to force you to believe. No man or woman will have eternal life unless they choose it.... I hope you will not say as your mother said to me in regard to breaking the Sabbath, she ‘would risk it.’ ... I still have faith that she will accept the truth if you do not hedge up her way. I have written in love and have written because I dare not do otherwise.” Unfortunately, we do not know how Mary responded to her aunt’s letter, and there is no evidence to suggest that she ever accepted the Sabbath.⁹

Conclusion

Ellen White deserves to be recognized with some of the most influential evangelists in Seventh-day Adventist history. While it is certainly true that her prophetic ministry was significant and continues to exert a considerable influence within Adventism, her ministry was firmly rooted in her own personal relationship with Jesus Christ. She passionately wanted to share Jesus Christ with people. At first she resisted attempts to speak in public, but her desire to share Jesus overcame her initial hesitancy. Whether in public or private Ellen White was an effective evangelist because she shared Jesus Christ with those around her. ●

¹ This incident is recorded in James R. Nix, *Advent Preaching* (Silver Spring, Md.: NAD Office of Education, 1989). The text of her message is recorded in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Feb. 24, 1885.

² Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts* (Battle Creek, Mich.: James White, 1860), vol. 2, p. 9.

³ Merlin D. Burt, lecture handout, GSEM 534 (May 12, 1998), p. 3; *idem*, “Ellen G. Harmon’s Three-Step Conversion Between 1836 and 1843, and the Harmon Family Methodist Experience.” Research paper, Andrews University, March 1998.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1948), vol. 1, pp. 23–29.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁶ Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1943), p. 39.

⁷ Ellen G. White, *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1940), p. 33.

⁸ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1946), pp. 448, 449; Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Human Interest Story* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1972), pp. 69–71.

⁹ Ellen G. White, *Diary*, July 27, 1872; Letter 6, 1877; Arthur White, *Ellen G. White: The Human Interest Story*, pp. 68, 69.



Michael W. Campbell is pastor of the Montrose and Gunnison Seventh-day Adventist churches in western Colorado, United States.

“Spiritual Perils” Revisited

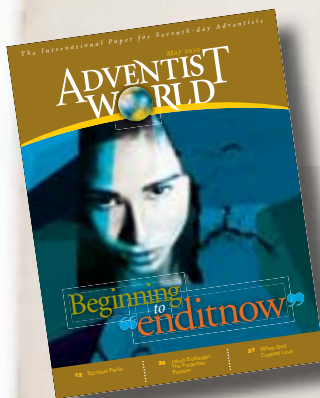


If I write about the creation, I come under attack from some quarters. If I talk about the sacredness of marriage and family in the context of today’s confusing societal signals, I get some flack. If the subject is the Sabbath, someone is sure to take offense. And the list goes on.

I knew all that. Yet I had the temerity to write about *The Shack*,* of all things; and a small tempest descended on my head.

Well, no, it was not all negative; and I probably should begin with that. When I went to church the week after the article came out, *Ministry* magazine editor Nik Satelmajer pulled me aside. “That was a classic!” he said. One of the sharp-eared pastors, overhearing his remarks from inside the vestry, emerged to add her plaudits. She’d recently been picking up some buzz about the book from a nearby Adventist educational institution, and was glad to see someone take on the subject.

Others wrote in their support—among them, Edwin Reynolds of Ooltewah, Tennessee, who expressed his amazement at “the number of Adventists who acclaim *The Shack* and see nothing wrong with it.” Carla Baker of Laurel, Maryland, wrote in to thank me “for having the courage to speak out against practices in some of our churches that strike at the very core of Adventist beliefs.” And Karri Walde from Walla Walla, Washington, offered me her compliments for taking a “stand against the current evil of compromise that is creeping ... into our churches.” Yet she found it “absolutely appalling!!!” (*sic*) that I could turn around and suggest that teachers



Response to Letters

By
ROY ADAMS

might assign the book for outside reading in their classes. “When instructors and those in positions of authority assign something, the assumption is ‘they must think it is OK,’” she said. (Actually, there is, ipso facto, no such assumption. What’s critical here is the supervision provided. We build strong students, not by sheltering them from every unorthodox exposure, but by providing informed, spiritual guidance as they encounter contrarian ideas and influences.)

Nevertheless, Walde’s concern was by way of wishing I’d have been stronger in my position, a far cry from other letters I received. Three samples:

1. Reader A: “As an SDA hospice

chaplain sensitive to issues around death, I have a few serious concerns regarding Roy Adams article.... I feel that sometimes my fellow SDA brothers and sisters have no idea [of] the great spiritual pain, and the possible feelings of repulsion, that can take place from an indiscriminate defense of our state of the dead doctrine. I am surprise[d] that Adams and Cullmann don’t appreciate people’s deep-seated emotional antipathy to the implications of this doctrine.... To a person who has lost ... a beloved child, spouse, or family member, the truth of what we are saying is that their loved one no longer exists! What a hopeless

thought... When you love someone, you desire only their good, and to hear that your friend the SDA believes that there is no soul that God cares for, no place of happiness that they can envision their loved one in can be hurtful and offensive.”

2. Reader B: “Mr. Adams begins his article by criticizing the beautiful music of Ave Maria.... [I did no such thing!] I am a “fourth-generation Seventh-day Adventist—and a descendent of a union conference president. It troubles me to see the narrow-mindedness displayed in Roy Adams’ article.... *I believe the Bible teaches that the soul is immortal*” [italics supplied]. (I couldn’t believe what I was reading here about the soul, coming from a self-described “fourth generation Adventist”! No wonder I come across as narrow-minded!)

3. Reader C: “I find it highly disappointing that Mr. Adams was not able to see past a relatively minor theological difference in order to see the beautiful message in the book.... Having read it, I completely agree with Eugene Patterson’s [sic] thoughts that ‘this book has the potential to do for our generation what John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* did for his.’ And contrary to Roy’s impression, there is no theological agenda other than painting a picture of God that is more approachable and relatable than the typical dry religions tend to make Him out to be....

“Roy gets the entire basis of his argument regarding what *The Shack* is about in a very short scene in which Mack, the main character, sees and holds his dead daughter in a scenario orchestrated by God.... According to the Bible, Moses died and was buried, yet he appeared at the Transfiguration, did he not? According to the Adventist ideology about the state of the dead, how is that explained? ...

“[Roy’s] comment about God being about ‘relationships,’ and then comparing the God of *The Shack* to the God of Jeremiah ... heck, compare

the God of the Old Testament to the God of the New Testament (discounting Revelation) and you have a stark contrast in the very Word of God, so that argument is null and void.... I’m very disappointed, discouraged, and downright angry that this article was printed, as it really does more damage to the Adventist “brand,” to borrow Roy’s word.”

(Incidentally, one wonders: *Does this reader really not know why Adventists have no trouble with Moses appearing at the Transfiguration?* Strange! And he suggests a contrast between “the God of the Old Testament” and “the God of the New Testament (*discounting Revelation*).” Well, leave out the book of Revelation, if you wish; but then, how about Matthew 7:21-23; 18:5, 6; 23:13-36? 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10? Hebrews 10:26-31; 12:18-29? 2 Peter 3:3-13? Jude 3-32? The New Testament is full of these “inconvenient” passages. It’s what Billy Graham once perceptively called “the bad news of the gospel.”)

Three Things I Found in the Letters

1. *Anger.* It was as if I’d violated something utterly sacred to these writers. My article left Reader C “disappointed, discouraged, and downright angry.” And in that knee-jerk mood, these respondents never noticed that the purpose of my article was not, as such, to condemn *The Shack*, but to question its endorsement in front of our students and youth.

2. *Something bordering on embarrassment vis-à-vis our belief about the state of the dead.* Just look at Reader A’s letter again. As early as college, theology students are taught not to foist our belief about the state of the dead upon a grieving non-Adventist family or congregation. It’s so elementary that I shook my head to hear the lecture about it. That aside, I was surprised by the extreme reticence being recommended here—because the biblical teaching on the subject

could be “hurtful and offensive.” Wow! The last funeral service I did, my text was John 10:27-30. Read it and tell me where you can find a more hope-filled message. The preaching of the resurrection should leave mourners yearning for a better world.

3. *A simplistic naïveté.* Perhaps Eugene Peterson would himself chuckle to hear his words—promotional hyperbole on a book jacket—swallowed so enthusiastically by Reader C. Can any literary critic or theologian make a credible case that *The Shack* comes anywhere close to the theological and philosophical depth of John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*? In the article I described *The Shack* as “a dream wrapped up in a coma inside a work of fiction,” with everything “fluid, esoteric, misty.” Yet these respondents see the work as a superb source from which postmodern skeptics can receive clarity about what kind of God we have—the Bible perhaps being too dull? But after we’ve led postmoderns to the amiable God of *The Shack*, then what? Are we then ready to have them meet the God of the whole Bible?

Scripture reveals a God infinitely more merciful and gracious than *The Shack* could ever portray; but also a God who is exceedingly more complex; a God who cannot be reduced to one simple attribute or characteristic. If we’re after making solid Christians, we’d better be completely honest with our audience and not sugarcoat the evidence. To raise *The Shack*, de facto, to the level of sacred text is silly and naive. Imaginative fiction, however well-meaning, can never trump the Word of God. ●

*William Paul Young, *The Shack* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Windblown Media, 2007). See *Adventist World*, May 2010, pp. 30, 31, NAD edition.



Roy Adams is an associate editor of *Adventist World*.

QUESTION: *Don't you think that the killing of animals as Old Testament sacrifices was a type of animal cruelty?*

No, I don't think so. Today the idea of killing animals as a religious act is foreign to most Christians. In fact, we are suspicious of people who kill animals for religious or superstitious reasons. It's true that individuals in Israel occasionally offered animal sacrifices to the Lord, but we should read the biblical text on its own terms. The sacrificial system reveals at least three main objectives for animal sacrifices: devotional, dietary, and theological.

1. Expression of Religious Feelings: Sometimes the Israelites brought sacrifices to express their gratitude and joy to the Lord: "Sacrifice fellowship offerings...rejoicing in the presence of the Lord your God" (Deut. 27:7, NIV). Occasionally, the offerings were from the produce of the earth (Lev. 2:1-10; 23:9-11), but most of the time the person gave a substantial offering, a sacrificial animal. The costliness of the offering was related to the level of gratitude they wanted to express, and to the finances of the person. Some could bring a bull, others only a sheep, a goat, or even a bird (Lev. 1:3, 10, 14). Giving a bull or a female animal would today be the equivalent of writing a substantial check to the church. Remember, for Israelites, their animals were their bank accounts.

2. Dietary Interest: Very often the religious and dietary concerns were both present in animal sacrifices. This is particularly the case with the fellowship offering. It was brought to the Lord for specific religious reasons; but at the same time the flesh of the animal was shared with others in a communion meal (Lev. 7:12-18). During some religious festivities the king offered many sacrifices in order to provide meat to the people during the festivity (1 Chron. 29:21, 22). In such cases, the people benefited from the wealth of the king without having to touch their "bank accounts."

Meat was also accessible through the routine, or secular, slaughtering of animals and hunting clean animals (Deut. 12:15; Lev. 17:13). In these cases the blood, instead of being poured at the base of the altar, was to be poured out on the

ground and covered with dirt. This showed respect for the life of the animal as one of God's creatures.

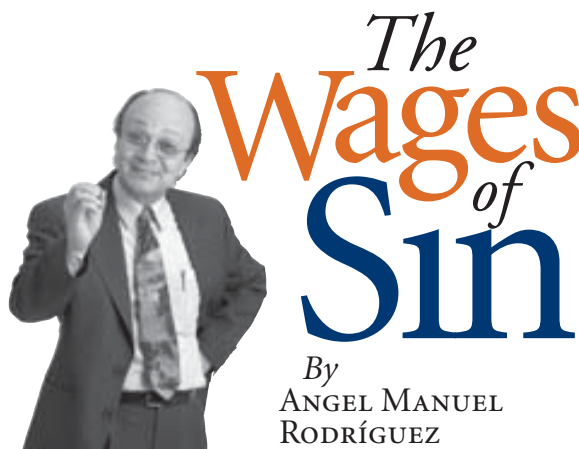
3. Atonement and Sacrifice: From the theological point of view, animal sacrifice had the fundamental purpose of symbolically mediating reconciliation with God through the removal of sin and impurity (Lev. 4). It appears that in most cases atonement was accomplished through a sacrificial victim, whose blood became a vehicle for the removal of sin/impurity from repentant sinners. In this case, the theology of the sanctuary services becomes important, in particular the nature of sin and atonement. The use of a sacrificial victim raises the question of the connection

between sin and death, atonement and life.

Bloody sacrifices ultimately reveal that sin cannot be separated from its immediate result, death. This was best expressed through the ritual death of an animal. The fact that the sacrificial animal was an innocent victim pointed to the costliness of redemption. Yes, repentant sinners could go home forgiven, alive; but only because the life of a sacrifice was given in place of theirs. This theological dimension of sacrificial killing lies at

the heart of the biblical concept of redemption and found its deepest expression in the sacrificial death of the Son of God. I would dare to say, and you do not have to agree with me, that in both cases death caused pain in the heart of God, as well as in the heart of true worshippers.

4. Animal Suffering: The sacrificial killing of animals brought with it pain and suffering. We don't know how animals were slaughtered, but it has been suggested that the Hebrew verb *shachat*, "to slaughter," really means to "slit the throat." In that case the only pain was the cut that drained the blood and soon rendered the animal unconscious. The divine intention was to reduce suffering to a minimum, thus showing God's concern for animals. Later Jewish traditions required that the knife used be sharp and smooth to avoid inflicting unnecessary pain to the victim. ●



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



Truth *or* Consequences

By MARK A. FINLEY

Sin has enormous consequences. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, they opened the floodgates of pain, sickness, and death. God is the source of life. Separated from Him, our first parents were plunged into a life of suffering. Obedience produces joy; disobedience results in sorrow. The psalmist David put it this way, “You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Ps. 16:11). Jesus added: “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

In this lesson we will study the tragic consequences of sin and the amazing plan of our loving heavenly Father to redeem us from the consequences of our mistaken choices.

1. What was Satan’s first lie? Circle the one word that reveals the difference between what God said and what Satan claimed.

“Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die’” (Gen. 3:4).

Satan’s statement directly contradicted God’s warning regarding eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In your own words, describe what this great controversy was all about in the Garden of Eden.

2. How did Adam and Eve’s relationship to God change after they sinned?

“And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden” (Gen. 3:8).

When Adam and Eve sinned they _____ themselves.

3. How does sin affect our relationship with God?

“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear” (Isa. 59:2).

Sin _____ us from God.

One of the tragic consequences of sin is that it breaks our relationship with God. Disobedience to God’s expressed command places a barrier between us and God. The guilt of our sins causes us to hide from God’s glorious presence. Sin creates shame, guilt, and condemnation. It leaves us with emptiness in our souls.

4. Whom did Adam blame for his disobedience? What was the result of sin on the relationship between our first parents?

“Then the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate’” (Gen. 3:12).

How did Adam attempt to justify his behavior?



Sin results in broken relationships, not only with God but also with the people around us. Adam blamed Eve for his own choice. In Genesis 4 Cain lashed out in anger at his brother, Abel, and killed him. Blame, anger, bitterness, and conflict have resulted throughout the centuries because of hearts in rebellion against God.

5. What effect did sin have upon the environment, the natural world?

“Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life” (Gen. 3:17).

“For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now” (Rom. 8:22).

As the result of sin, the earth was _____ and the whole creation _____ and _____.

Sin has affected our entire planet. The consequences of sin are a broken relationship with God, with one another, even with the world around us.

6. Why did Jesus come to this sin-polluted planet?

“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

Jesus came to earth for two primary reasons:

To demonstrate the _____ life

To _____ and _____

those who lost everything through Adam and Eve’s rebellion.

Jesus came to restore all that was lost by sin. He longs to restore our relationship with God and one another. The plan of salvation also includes the restoration of the earth to be even more glorious than it was in Eden.

7. What hopeful promises does God give us in His Word?

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

“Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:13).

“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away” (Rev. 21:1).

God promises to create new _____ and a new _____.

Sin has horrible consequences. But sin will not have the last word—God will. One day sin will be gone forever. We will live in our new Eden home, restored to a new relationship with God, with one another, and with our environment. Love and joy, peace and health, harmony and gladness will fill the earth. That’s something worth living for; something to fill our hearts with hope.



Next month’s Bible study will be
“Love’s Final Appeal.”

LETTERS



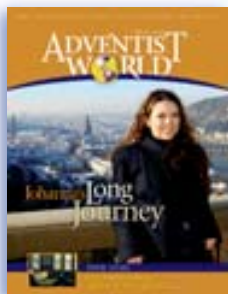
Serving in His Name

Thank you for the enlightening article by Lowell C. Cooper entitled

“In the Name of Jesus” (June 2010). He hit the nail on the head with his insight about the ministry of Christ when He was here on earth, and what our mission should be if we are to continue His work.

It seems all evangelistic activities are measured in terms of church growth, and we place little emphasis on the teaching and serving ministry. This article brought things into correct balance. I wish we could have more articles on humanitarian work.

JUDITH JAMISON-PAYNE
Keene, Texas, United States



Scientific Findings

I’m writing concerning the article “Johanna’s Long Journey,” by Gerhard Padderatz (April 2010). The article states that Profes-

sor Harald zur Hausen got a Nobel Prize for pointing out that cancer of the uterus is caused by a virus.

Did not Ellen G. White mention this scientific finding as a “germ of the cancer” more than 100 years ago? The White Estate might be able to shed some light on the matter. The nearest reference I could recall was “cancerous germs” in *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 313.

Should the White Estate provide a more specific quotation, would not that be both comfort and guidance for Johanna’s scientific research on cancer? Maybe this would introduce her to the writings of Mrs. White read from a scientific perspective.

JALVA DE OLIVEIRA
Bracknell, England

For a Future Magazine

I’m a reader of the *Adventist World* and was impressed with the cover story in the April edition, “Johanna’s Long Journey,” where we see the Holy Spirit working relentlessly to get people to find God.

I also find “The People’s Place” interesting, so we are sending a photo of a youth leadership day. We mobilized our youth with the theme “Generation Hope” that seeks to hasten the return of Jesus!

CARLANI MORAIS SILVA
Espirito Santo, Brazil

Small Change

It is inspiring to read articles like “One Dollar Love Call,” by Jerry Kea (April 2010). We can all contribute a bit in the great work that Christ left us, to bring the gospel to everyone.

I hope other churches take this example and help to see that the love of Christ is proclaimed elsewhere in the world. God continue to bless this project.

PATRICIA
MONDAQUE
Via e-mail

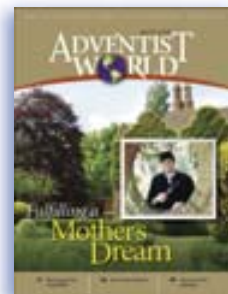


More Than Reading

I am a subscriber of the *Adventist Review* and receive the *Adventist World*—I really like them. The last sermon I preached on Wednesday evening was taken from one of them—the experience of the mother who left her child in the hands of God: “Fulfilling a Mother’s Dream,” by Samuel Neves (April 2008).

I have a friend in Berlin, Germany, who does not believe in God, but I’m trying to change his ideas. If someone who speaks German could study with him it would be wonderful. I do not want to miss this soul. I put everything in God’s hands, but I have to do my part. Can you help me with a contact?

LUCIANA VERDEIRO
Marechal Cândido Rondon,
Paraná State, Brazil



A Life-changer

I was born and brought up in the Presbyterian Church. I watched the 3ABN telecast in my spare time and received some copies of the *Adventist World* magazine from a friend who is a Seventh-day Adventist. I was inspired to know more about the true Sabbath, the commandments of God that show His character, and about the soon coming of Jesus Christ.

Kindly send me monthly copies of *Adventist World*. I am you new brother in Christ.

RONY M. NONGKHLAW
Meghalaya, India

LETTERS



Standing Firm

I was impressed by “Spiritual Perils” by Roy Adams (May 2010). It’s true that we are getting less concerned about the effect our

environment has on our relationship and beliefs in life. This article was a good wake-up call for me.

We have to be balanced and have a concrete relationship between our beliefs and preferences in life. Thank you for this reminder.

GAVIN JOHNS

Yangon, Myanmar

Inspired

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ. I am interested in your ministry and in working with you. I am from the International Pentecostal Church in Malawi. I am happily married and have three children. Together we started serving God seriously in 1999.

I’m writing to express my interest in this wonderful ministry. May I know if you are already working in Malawi so we can easily communicate?

I am looking forward to hearing from you. May the good Lord richly bless you all.

STEVE MASEKO

Malawi

Knowing More—Sharing More

I got your address from an *Adventist World* magazine. I don’t know what

kind of services you give, but could you help me know God more? I became an Adventist a year ago. I am very happy because I always see the love and power of God in my happiness as well as in my sorrow.

I am a university student. I have many friends who do not know the true love of God. I don’t know what to do for them. I really lack learning materials. Please contact me soon.

May God bless you for what you are doing.

KIRUBEL MANYAZEWA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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

I am asking for prayers. My young brother is sick with liver enlargement, difficult breathing, and tiredness. I present him for prayer in Jesus’ name.

AARON, *Zambia*

Please pray for my spiritual life and for my marriage.

MARICÉLIA, *Brazil*

I have been growing cold in the things of God due to some pressure at work and economical hardships. Of late I have been working on Sabbaths, and I know the devil is happy about it. Strongly pray for me to become a victor.

DAVID, *Zambia*

Please pray that my children and grandchildren will come to know Jesus as their Savior and desire to follow His way.

JOAN, *United States*

I want God to touch my family and to give them love toward Him. I am the only Adventist in my family and want that blessing for all of them.

LUCAS, *Argentina*

Please pray for me. I have been praying and searching for a job for the last six months but still have not found one. Please pray that I will not lose faith in God, but that I will continue

to trust Him in this trying time and as long as I have life.

AGATHA, *West Indies*

Please pray for my family—they do not attend church or read spiritual materials. I want them to realize that Jesus is our Savior. Pray for me, too. I am in college and working as a housemaid. It is hard for me to finish my studies.

JENNERY, *Philippines*

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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The *Adventist World*, an international periodical of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The General Conference, Northern Asia-Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists®, is the publisher.

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Adventist World is published monthly and printed simultaneously in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Germany, Indonesia, Korea, and the United States.

Vol. 6, No.8

JOSE LUIS NAVARRO



EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

Palm Trees

This month a reader shares thoughts on being like a date palm.

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree... They will still bear fruit in old age, they stay fresh and green” (Ps. 92:12-14, NIV).

The psalmist, in his poem entitled, “For the Sabbath Day,” tells me what a righteous person will do. Aiming to live a virtuous life, I want to discover what it means to “flourish like a palm tree.”

The date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) is the tree most scholars agree is the species of palm in Scripture. A branchless tree that grows to a height of about 60 to 80 feet (c. 18 to 24 m.), it may live and produce fruit until it is 200 years old.

As a nonagenarian, I don’t expect to produce articles *that* many years, but hope to make it to the century mark and beyond. Here are some interesting facts:

Dates grow in clusters, weighing from 30 to 50 pounds (c. 14 to 23 kg.) and constitute a part of the diet for some Arab tribes. The wood of the trees serves for fences, roofs, and rafts, and the leaves are woven into mats, baskets, and other household utensils.

The date palm has long feather-like, gray-green leaves, 15 to 20 feet (c. 5 to 6 m.) long. The upper leaves (sometimes called branches) stand more or less upright. These contrast with the taller coconut palms, which produce gracefully drooping leaflets.

The date palms provided shade for the Israelites at Elim when they fled from Egypt (Ex. 15:27). Years later the prophetess Deborah judged the people under the shade of a palm tree (Judges 4:5).

The Hebrew people used palm leaves to erect booths for their Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:40). The worshippers in that way recalled the desert wandering of their ancestors. When Solomon built his Temple, the tree was employed in architectural designs (1 Kings 6:29, 32, 35).

In New Testament times, on the occasion of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the people “took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna” (John 12:13, KJV).

Jericho, mentioned frequently in Scripture, was called “the city of palm trees” (Deut. 34:3). In modern-day Palestine, date palms still grow in the region around the city and in the maritime plain of Philistia but, because of neglect, are not as abundant as in Bible times.

Date palms were featured on coins minted in the first century A.D.

The Jewish Revolt of A.D. 66-70 required a massive Roman military force. During the revolt the Jews dared to mint their own coins, considered an imperial privilege by the Romans. These freedom coins contained emblems of the Jewish cult and festivals, such as vine leaves, palm trees, and dates. “To the Redemption of Zion” is inscribed on bronze coins.

When Jerusalem fell, the Romans adopted the date palm as a symbol of Israel. They minted many coins celebrating their victory.

I return to the words of the psalmist. Having learned much about date palms, like them I want to flourish and “bear fruit in old age.”

—ROBERT G. WEARNER, *Collegedale, Tennessee, United States*

The PEOPLE'S PLACE

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



SUBMITTED BY SELVIN INTONG

ADVENTIST LIFE

I took my 3-year-old son, Lucas, with me to the supermarket. While I was getting the groceries and pulling the cart in which he was sitting, we suddenly heard a voice on the store's sound system calling somebody's name.

At that moment, when my son heard the voice, he looked at me with his big dark eyes wide open and said: "Mommy! That is the voice of God, from heaven!" That very morning I had told him the story about God calling little Samuel in the temple.

—Carolina Cavalcanti, São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Our Pathfinder Club had recently gone camping when it started raining and the weather turned cold. On a chilly Sabbath morning we were worshipping outside. The sun broke through the clouds and its rays reached down through the trees and brought us a few moments of warmth. All of a sudden, one mother lifted her arms and hands and shouted, "I love the sun!"

Without missing a beat, her daughter added very matter-of-factly, "and the Father!" Our worship service took a brief pause while we all had a good

laugh and then gathered our composure.

—Kimberly Terry, director, Takoma Park Rangers Pathfinder Club, Takoma Park, Maryland, United States



ANZAAR NABI

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Eve fell because she thought there was something better. Adam fell because he thought there was no one better."

—Jun Cruz, a member of the Mentone Adventist Church in California, United States, during the June 5, 2010, Sabbath school lesson study

ANSWER: In the shallow beach waters of the Island of Jeth, in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, new believers are baptized. There is a small company of believers on this small island that considers Majuro its mainland.