

September 2010

ADVENTIST WORLD



The 59th

General Conference Session



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Service With a Twist

ADVENTIST WORLD

September 2010



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PHOTOS BY ALDEN J. HO AND JOEL D. SPRINGER.



WORLD VIEW

Where Faith Lives

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem—Sing for the night is o’er ...”

I wiped the tears from my eyes as the Oakwood University Aeolians punctuated the fifty-ninth General Conference session’s final program with a burst of triumphant confidence. Tens of thousands around me in the darkened Georgia Dome whispered the words that we expect to sing someday, gathered in the City of Light:

“Hosanna in the highest; hosanna forevermore!”

Tomorrow, God willing, we would pack up our belongings, board buses, trains, and airplanes, and return to the thousands of places attendees call “home.” Fortunate ones like me might be there in only a few hours. Others would take days, perhaps even weeks, to complete the circuit that had brought them from halfway ’round the world to Atlanta.

But for tonight—for this last and lingering moment—we stood in our imaginations on that sea that looks like glass, and measured the distance from Atlanta to the New Jerusalem with the short chronology of hope, and with measuring rods marked in meters and yards, not kilometers and miles.

This is what faith does: instructed and assured by the promises of Jesus, it leaps forward to stand—to rejoice—in a reality it does not yet fully see, but which it has already begun to enjoy.

The world outside the Georgia Dome was demonstrably dark: even the headlines of a sunny Sunday morning would tell familiar tales of war and greed, earthquakes and hurricanes, heartbreak in a million private settings. But faith always fixes its eyes on the place where Jesus is, and judges all things—including the massive challenges still facing this remnant people—by the certainty of how it all will end. God’s church needs—requires—moments such as these when our sacred imaginations arc across the interval until Jesus comes, and celebrate the final “It is finished” of our salvation.

In the pages of this edition of *Adventist World*, we bring you some of the experiences and images that strengthened our faith during the recent General Conference session in Atlanta. As you turn these pages, turn your thoughts to the soon-coming reality of a gathering where the chorus will be measured not in dozens but in millions, and where the joy will never end.

— BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

Elected to Serve

New leadership team at the General Conference

BY ANSEL OLIVER AND MARK A. KELLNER, WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CHANTAL J. KLINGBEIL

■ Ted N. C. Wilson, a general vice president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, was elected June 25 to serve as president of the 16.3-million-member global Protestant denomination.

Wilson, 60, was appointed by the church’s 246-member Nominating Committee and confirmed by the General Conference session delegation, an international body of 2,410 appointed members, the highest governing body in the church. He succeeds Jan Paulsen, who had served as president since 1999.

The appointment took place at the church’s fifty-ninth General Conference session, held June 23–July 3 at the Georgia



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Dome, adjacent to the World Congress Center in Atlanta, Georgia, United States.

This new responsibility “brings us to our knees,” Wilson said. “I do not know everything, but I shall seek wisdom from counselors and from the Bible and from the Spirit of Prophecy.”

He added, “The Spirit of Prophecy is one of the great gifts God has given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It applies to the past and to the future. And, we are going home soon.” The church should “fall on our knees and ask for God’s guidance . . . and pray that the Holy Spirit would bring us revival and reformation,” Wilson said.

Reaction in the Georgia Dome was swift and positive. Wilson and his wife, Nancy Louise Vollmer Wilson, were greeted with a standing ovation as they walked out on the platform.

Wilson was elected as a general vice president of the Adventist Church in 2000 during the General Conference session in Toronto. His 36 years of denominational service include administrative and executive posts in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States, Africa, and Russia.

Wilson began his church career as a pastor in 1974 in the church’s Greater New York Conference. He served as an assistant director and then director of Metropolitan Ministries there from 1976 to 1981. He went on to serve in the church’s (then) Africa-Indian Ocean Division, based in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, until 1990. There he served as a departmental director and later as executive secretary, the second-highest officer.

Following his post in West Africa, he served at the church’s world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, as an associate secretary for two

years before accepting the position of president of the church’s Euro-Asia Division in Moscow, Russia, from 1992 to 1996. Wilson then came back to the United States to serve as president of the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, Maryland, until his election as a General Conference vice president in 2000.

An ordained minister, Wilson holds a doctorate degree in religious education from New York University, a Master of Divinity degree from Andrews University, and a master of science degree in public health from Loma Linda University’s School of Public Health.

Wilson is the son of former General Conference president Neal C. Wilson, who served in the post from 1979 to 1990.

Seventh-day Adventist pastor G. T. Ng, a Singaporean who has served as associate secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for three years, was elected executive secretary of the General Conference.

Ng’s passion for mission was kindled when he began his ministry in war-torn Cambodia in the 1970s. He and his wife had to be evacuated shortly before the capital city, Phnom Penh, fell to Khmer Rouge forces. He was later transferred to Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore where he served as a pastor, chaplain, health educator, and union departmental director.

His second missionary pilgrimage began when he served nine years as a professor and dean of the theological seminary at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) in the Philippines, from 1991 to 2000. He was called to be the executive secretary at the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD) from 2000 to 2006.

Ng holds a bachelor’s degree from the Southeast Asia Union College in

Singapore, a master of arts degree from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary (Far East) in the Philippines, and a doctorate from the Theological Seminary at Andrews University. He is married to Ivy. Up to the time of his election, Ng served as the secretariat liaison between the General Conference and three world divisions: Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD), Southern Asia Division (SUD), and Trans-European Division (TED).

Robert E. Lemon, world church treasurer since 2002, was reelected to another term in that office. He has held various finance-related positions in the church for some 40 years. From 1995 to 1998 he worked as associate world church treasurer, and from 1998 to 2002 he was undertreasurer. Lemon spent more than 10 years of his career in Africa, first in Zaire, and later the Ivory Coast.

Lemon commented that the goal of the treasury church work is to change offerings into “the eternal currency of heaven, to change cash for souls.”

GC VPs, Secretariat, and Treasury Leaders Elected

By EDWIN MANUEL GARCIA, ANN

■ On June 27 the fifty-ninth General Conference session voted nine general vice presidents and 12 leaders for the Secretariat and Treasury.

Four vice presidents are new to the position: Delbert Baker, Oakwood University president; Geoffrey G. Mbwana, East-Central Africa Division president; Benjamin D. Schoun, a general field secretary; and Artur A. Stele, president of the Euro-Asia Division.

Baker has headed Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama,



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George O. Egwakhe, Daisy Orion, and Roy E. Ryan. J. Raymond Wahlen II, previously director of the church's SunPlus Accounting Software, was also elected as an associate treasurer. —*With additional reporting by Tim Lale*

New Presidents Elected in North American, East-Central Africa, and Euro-Asia Divisions
Beardsley heads G.C. Education; Olivers to G.C. Family Ministries

BY MARK A. KELLNER, *News Editor*

■ Delegates to the fifty-ninth General Conference session June 27 elected three new executives to head regions of the 17-million member world church.

Dan Jackson, 61, is the new president of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. He replaces Don Schneider, who has served as president since 2000.

Elected as the new president of the East-Central Africa Division (ECD),

since 1996. Mbwana was a church administrator and university president before becoming president in 2002 of the Nairobi-based division. Schoun has served as president of Adventist World Radio since 2001. Stele has been Euro-Asia president since 2000.

The new members replace three vice presidents who are retiring—Mark A. Finley, Eugene Hsu, and Gerry D. Karst. A fourth position was made vacant by Ted N. C. Wilson's election as General Conference president.

Five other vice presidents were reelected to five-year terms: Lowell C. Cooper, Armando Miranda, Pardon K. Mwansa, Michael L. Ryan, and Ella S. Simmons.

Associate Secretary Homer W. Trecartin was named undersecretary.

Two other associate secretaries, Rosa T. Banks and Agustin Galicia were reelected.

Juan R. Prestol was reelected undertreasurer, and the three associate treasurers remain in their positions:



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a region that encompasses 10 nations and 2.5 million members from Eritrea in the north to Tanzania in the south, was Blasious Ruguri. He was formerly the secretary of the ECD, and succeeds Geoffrey G. Mbwana, who was elected a world church general vice president.

The new leader of the Euro-Asia Division (ESD) is Guillermo E. Biaggi. Stretching over the 12 nations that replaced the former Soviet Union, the ESD ministers to more than 135,000 members. Biaggi, the former treasurer of the ESD, will follow Artur A. Stele, who was also elected a general vice president of the church.

Other division presidents were returned to office: Bruno R. Vertallier in the Euro-Africa Division; Israel Leito, Inter-American Division; Jairyong Lee, Northern Asia-Pacific Division; Erton C. Köhler, South American Division; Barry D. Oliver, South Pacific Division; Paul S. Ratsara, Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division; John Rathinaraj, Southern Asia Division; Alberto C. Gulfan, Southern Asia-Pacific Division; Bertil Wiklander, Trans-European Division, and Gilbert Wari, West-Central Africa Division.

The new NAD president reacted to his election: "God never calls us to do things we are capable of, and this thing is so much bigger than me. But He has called, and I accept this with the greatest humility and with extreme gratitude to Don Schneider," Jackson said.

Jackson is a native Canadian and, with the exception of five years of service in the Southern Asia Division, has lived and ministered in Canada.

Separately, Lisa M. Beardsley, who holds a Master of Public Health degree from Loma Linda University, a doctorate in Educational Psychology from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and a Master of Business Administra-

tion from Claremont Graduate University in California, has become the first woman to serve the Adventist Church as Education Director.

Willie and Elaine Oliver, who currently lead Family Ministries for the North American Division, will succeed Ron and Karen Flowers in running the program for the world church. He holds a doctorate in Family Sociology, and master's degrees in Pastoral Counseling and Family Sociology. Elaine holds a graduate degree in Higher Education with concentrations in student development and counseling. She is associate vice president for Enrollment Management at Washington Adventist University and serves with Willie in ministry conducting marriage conferences, retreats, and relationship seminars.

Along with the appointments of Beardsley and Oliver, other departmental directors elected during the fifty-ninth General Conference session include:

Paul H. Douglas, Auditing Service; Linda Koh, Children's Ministries; Williams Costa Jr., Communication; Allan R. Handysides, Health Ministries; Jerry Page, Ministerial Association (secretary); Thomas A. Kapusta, Planned Giving and Trust Services; John Graz, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty; Howard F. Faigao, Publishing; Jonathan Kuntaraf, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries; Erika F. Puni, Stewardship; Heather-Dawn Small, Women's Ministries; Gilbert R. Cangy, Youth.

Page, Kapusta, and Cangy are new appointments to the world headquarters. Page was most recently president of the church's Central California Conference; Kapusta was Trust Services director at Florida Hospital; and Cangy was Youth director in the South Pacific Division.

—With additional reporting by George Johnson, Jr.

Proposed Changes in Election of Departmental Associates Voted Down

Delegates cite representational, practical issues.

By ELIZABETH LECHLEITNER, *Adventist News Network*, with contributions from CHANTAL J. KLINGBEIL

■ Seventh-day Adventist Church delegates June 27 voted down a motion that would have altered the time frame for choosing associate directors of departments at the church's world headquarters.

The action would have shifted appointments from the General Conference session to the first Annual Council, or business meeting, after the session, usually held in October.

Church officials initiated the item to give newly elected department heads more time to shape their respective departments by choosing complementary associates. In the past, some delegates have suggested that, given the volume of elections voted on at session, the process of choosing associates is conducted in a cursory manner, lacking in discussion and adequate consideration.

After lengthy, animated discussion, the two-thirds majority needed to pass a constitutional motion was not achieved.

Many delegates opposing the motion cited representation and logistics. Some were opposed to the perceived threat to the authority of the Nominating Committee to choose associates, while others questioned the practicality of the item.

Several delegates debated whether deferring the decision to the world church's Executive Committee meeting in October really made much



PHOTOS FROM ROBERT EAST/ANN

difference in representation. Kevin Jackson, of the church's South Pacific region, said the "key difference" was the inclusion of the presidents of each of the church's 13 world divisions on the Executive Committee.

"I would suggest that their inclusion actually brings rigor to the process, enhancing the quality of the decisions," Jackson said.

Church officials, moderating the discussion, confirmed that the Executive Committee, with 305 members, is a larger body than a session Nominating Committee, which has slightly more than 200 members.

However, delegates pointed out that approving the motion would effectively block the votes of the approximately

2,400-member delegation. Session delegates can vote to accept or reject any recommendation made by the Nominating Committee, broadening the input, while at Annual Council, there is no body to check or balance the decisions of the Executive Committee.

Session Delegates Strengthen Adventist Church's Creation Focus
Motions affirm creation position, reopen fundamental belief for enhancement

BY MARK A. KELLNER, *news editor*

■ In the face of a society and academic community where challenges to the Seventh-day Adventist fundamental

belief in a "literal, recent, six-day creation" are rampant, delegates to the fifty-ninth General Conference session in Atlanta, Georgia, voted June 30 to reaffirm that belief, and possibly strengthen the church's fundamental belief language on that point.

"The Bible is I believe to be the authoritative word of God," said Pastor Ted N. C. Wilson, General Conference president. "It is God's word to us, and it is critical we accept Scripture as it reads."

Wilson said the first eleven chapters of Genesis "are not an allegory," but are "an authentic, true and literal explanation" of the creation and events following, including a global flood.

"We're facing a critical time," Wilson added, where "the devil is trying to undermine belief." While "our doctrine and our beliefs are centered in Christ and His grace," he added, the seventh-day Sabbath—which creation supports—is "the one sign God is going to use to seal His people at the end of time."

The motion to both affirm the 2004 Annual Council statement reaffirming belief in creation and review the fundamental belief "has my 100 percent support. We must lift up the Word of God ... God our Creator," Wilson said.

Following those comments, the motion, introduced by general vice president Gerry D. Karst, went to the floor:

"Part A, I move that the [fifty-ninth] session of the General Conference endorse the 2004 Annual Council statement, reaffirmation of creation. Part B, further, that the General Conference administration be requested to initiate a process to integrate Fundamental Belief Number 6 and the statement 'A [Response to An Affirmation] of Creation' as provided for in the 2005 General Conference Session protocol for amending a Fundamental Belief."

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Objecting to considering the motion's two parts together, Southern Adventist University president Gordon Bietz moved to divide the resolution. The motion passed, separating the affirmation of the 2004 statement from the reopening of Fundamental Belief 6 for review and rewriting, the latter to incorporate the intent of the 2004 statement.

Both parts of the now-bifurcated measure passed with strong votes.

Another North American Division delegate, Donna Richards, supported the church's historic position on Creation, saying that "teaching anything else is inaccurate." Alberto Timm of the South American Division added his support, noting that "doctrines do not function in isolation," and that belief in Creation is "important for all our doctrinal systems."

Dan Jackson, the new North American Division president, also took to the floor to affirm the importance of Fundamental Belief 6: "My Creator is my Redeemer—the two are linked."

General vice president Ella Smith Simmons said that while academic flexibility is important, it "must come without betraying the Word of God. There are absolutes." She said that while it is important to hold Adventist "schools, colleges, and universities accountable" for what they teach, "we must first provide clarity" to those institutions.

Keith Mattingly, dean of college of arts and sciences at Andrews University, averred that "how we promote the doctrine" is the issue, saying he's had students who've questioned their faith because of how the matter has been handled.

Bill Knott, editor and executive publisher of *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World* magazines, urged delegates to pass both parts of the measure.

"If you support the clarity of part

A before us, you must then also support the endorsement of part B. If you wish for clarity, follow through, and you achieve what this movement has always been about."

Both measures passed by large margins, and the examination and possible revision of Fundamental Belief 6 will proceed during the new quinquennium, with the results being presented to the next session.

International Editorial Conference Held in Atlanta *Adventist World meets with its Korean editorial team*

BY EVAN KNOTT

■ On Wednesday, June 23, *Adventist World* held its semiannual International Editorial Conference with members of its Korean editorial team in Atlanta, Georgia, United States. Since its launch in September 2005, *Adventist World* has enjoyed a special relationship with the church in South Korea, because the major funding source for the internationally distributed magazine is from General Conference funds currently held in South Korea.

The editors from Korea included P. D. Chun, former president of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division and currently international distribution manager for *Adventist World*; J. K. Chun, senior editor of the Korean Publishing House in Seoul; and J. K. Choe, editor of the Korean Union *Compass*, the monthly magazine for the Adventist Church in South Korea.

"Since the magazine is officially registered in Korea, it's very important that we meet at least once a year in that country to document our activities," says Claude Richli, associate publisher of *Adventist World*.

The previous meeting between the two groups was held on October 28,



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2009, in Seoul, South Korea, in conjunction with the centennial celebrations of the Korean Publishing House. *Adventist World's* Silver Spring-based editors expect to meet their counterparts in Seoul in early November 2010.

"We want to strengthen the links between our Korean counterparts and our U.S.-based editors by inviting them to the United States and underlining the important role they play in our overall team," Richli says.

The conferences are an opportunity for *Adventist World* to brief the Korean leaders on major developments with *Adventist World* in the past six months, and to engage in editorial planning for major stories and features in the months ahead. At the June 23 meeting, the combined editorial group was briefed on the expansion of translations for *Adventist World* to 12 online editions and seven print editions. The group also discussed the likely possibility of expanding into even more languages in the near future.

Additionally, the meeting attendees discussed upcoming plans to launch several books to promote *Adventist World*. *28 Ways to Spell Your Faith* will feature fundamental belief articles previously published in *Adventist World*. *Ask the Doctors* will feature a collection of the popular health column. Adventist publishing houses from around the world have already expressed strong interest in publishing both volumes in their regions.

“Go Forward”

Church president affirms foundational Adventist beliefs

Newly elected GC president Ted Wilson's sermon on the second Sabbath of the fifty-ninth General Conference session addressed issues such as the authority of God's Word, belief in the inspiration of Ellen White's writings, creation, music, and unity in diversity. This is a greatly condensed version of his message to the 70,000 attendees in Atlanta's Georgia Dome. To read Wilson's full sermon, go to adventistreview.org/wilsongcsession. —EDITORS.

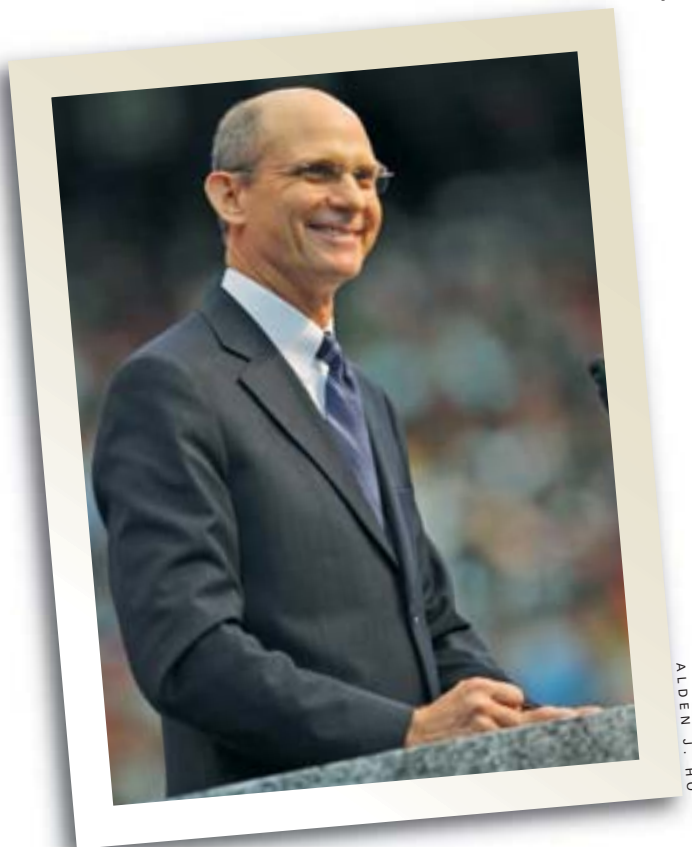
The Seventh-day Adventist Church is on a heaven-directed journey, and we are almost home. I believe with all my heart that Jesus is coming soon.

I appreciate the wonderful spirit and enthusiasm of our worldwide family of faith. And while we are all proud of our respective nations and cultures, I praise the Lord that there is a culture of Christ that binds us together and supersedes all others.

Chaotic World; Solid Word

Signs of Christ's coming are increasing in frequency and intensity. Destructive events in nature, the great confusion of world politics, the pervasive and compromising activities of ecumenism, the dramatic increase and influence of spiritualism, the deterioration of world economies, the disintegration of societal and family values, the disbelief in the absolute authority of God's holy Word and the Ten Commandments, rampant crime and moral decay, wars and rumors of war: all point to the climax of earth's history and the Lord's return.

What a blessing to know that even amid the uncertainty of the world around us, we can rest with absolute confidence in the unchanging Word of God. Throughout the course of human history and against relentless attack, God has preserved His holy Word. The Bible contains an accurate account of our origins, a reliable record of our salvation, and a glorious glimpse of our soon-coming deliverance. As Seventh-day Adventists, we accept the Bible as the foundation for all our beliefs and see in its



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pages our unique prophetic identity and mission.

With the power of His truth, God has carved out of this chaotic world the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We are to be a peculiar people, God's *remnant* people, to lift up Christ, His righteousness, His three angels' messages of Revelation 14, and His soon coming. As God's remnant people, identified in Revelation 12:17 as those "who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ," we have a unique message of hope and a mandate to proclaim God's grace to the world.

One of the identifying characteristics of God's last-day people is that the members of His church accept and believe all ten of God's commandments, including the

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ROBERT EAST/ANN

fourth commandment to remember the Lord's holy Sabbath day. The observance of the Sabbath is not only a sign of His creatorship in the beginning, but will be *the* sign of God's people in the last days.

Salvation

We rely wholly on Jesus and our relationship with Him for our salvation. We do not obtain salvation through works, but through the grace of Christ. Grace is the promise of God's pardon and the provision of God's power—justification and sanctification. You cannot separate what Christ does *for* you (justifying you daily as if you had not sinned) from what He does *in* you (sanctifying you daily as you submit to Him and allow the power of the Holy Spirit to change your life to become more and more like Jesus). It is this marvelous, powerful, redeeming grace we have been called to proclaim to a sin-sick world. "We have no ground for self-exaltation. Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us [justification], and in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us [sanctification] (*Steps to Christ*, p. 63).

The Spirit of Prophecy

Revelation 12:17 tells us that God's remnant people will "have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 19:10 explains that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The same spirit that moved the holy men of old has again, in these last days, raised up a messenger for the Lord. The Lord has given us one of the greatest gifts possible in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. Just as the

Bible is not outdated or irrelevant, neither is the testimony of God's end-time messenger. God used Ellen G. White as a humble servant to provide inspired insight about Scripture, prophecy, health, education, relationships, mission, families, and much more. As God's faithful remnant, may we never make of none effect the precious light given us in the writings of Ellen G. White.

Our Need of Jesus

When we use the term "remnant church," or "remnant people," we must never use it in a self-centered, exclusive manner. We are to be the humblest people on earth, recognizing our complete need of Jesus our Savior and praising Him for calling us into this mighty Advent movement. Through Christ's atoning sacrifice and high priestly ministry we can "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). When we lean completely on the everlasting arms of our Lord, He will work through us in a mighty way to give the final message of mercy to a dying world.

Ellen White makes clear that "a revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs" (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 121). As we connect with Christ daily and allow Him to work through us, we will be used by the Holy Spirit to proclaim His grace and to hasten the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When the Egyptians were pursuing the children of Israel at the time of the Exodus, the Israelites felt trapped by the desert to their right, the mountain ahead of them, the Red Sea to their left, and the approaching army of Egypt behind them. They failed to put their trust in the power of God. All they could see were the barriers.

What barriers are you facing today? Mountains of secular doubt in the Bible? A sea of family and personal conflicts? Forces of negative social change? Regardless of your circumstances, God has a way forward.

Ellen White writes in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 290: "Often the Christian life is beset by dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. The imagination pictures impending ruin before and bondage or death behind. Yet the voice of God speaks clearly, 'Go forward.' We should obey this command, even though our eyes cannot penetrate the darkness, and we feel the cold waves about our feet. The obstacles that hinder our progress will never disappear before a halting, doubting spirit."

So look to the Almighty God, who can take you through anything you will face in the future. Never lose your full confidence and trust in Him. Always obey His command to "Go forward."

Go Forward, Not Backward

Go forward, not backward. Do not succumb to the mistaken idea of accepting worship or evangelistic outreach methods merely because they are new and “trendy.” We must test all things according to the supreme authority of God’s Word and the counsel with which we have been blessed in the writings of Ellen G. White. Don’t reach out to movements that promise you spiritual success based on faulty theology, but look to evangelistic methods and programs that are based on solid biblical principles and the Great Controversy theme.

Go forward, not backward! Use Christ-centered, Bible-based worship and music practices in church services. While we understand that worship services and cultures vary throughout the world, don’t go backward into confusing settings where music and worship become so focused on emotion and experience that you lose the central focus on the Word of God. All worship, however simple or complex, should lift up Christ and put down self.

Go forward, not backward! Don’t succumb to loose theology that wrests God’s Word from the pillars of biblical truth and the landmark beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The historic biblical beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will stand secure to the end of time. *Selected Messages*, book 1, pages 207, 208, reads: “What influence is it that would lead men at this stage of our history to work in an underhand, powerful way to tear down the foundation of our faith—the foundation that was laid at the beginning of our work by prayerful study of the Word and by revelation? ... Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study, and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord. But the waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved.... He calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority.”

Go forward, not backward! Stand firm for God’s Word as it is literally read and understood. We must always humbly recognize that we are finite, fallen creatures observing the works of an infinite, omnipotent God, and there are things in both nature and Scripture that we do not fully comprehend. But that which the Lord in His mercy has given to us in clear language to be taken as fact simply because He said so must not be shrouded in skepticism. Don’t misinterpret the first 11 chapters of Genesis or other areas of Scripture as allegorical or merely symbolic. The Seventh-day Adventist Church teaches and believes in the biblical record of Creation, which took place in six literal, consecutive,

contiguous 24-hour days. If God did not create this world in six literal days and then bless the Sabbath day, why are we worshipping Him on the seventh-day Sabbath as Seventh-day Adventists? To misinterpret this doctrine is to deny God’s Word and the very purpose of the Seventh-day Adventist movement as the remnant church of God. Don’t go backward to atheistic or theistic evolution; go forward to the prophetic understanding that loyalty to God, the Creator and Redeemer, will be seen in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath as the distinguishing characteristic of God’s people in the very end of time.

Again we read in *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 170: “Do not overstrain the meaning of sentences in the Bible in an effort to bring forth something odd in order to please the fancy. Take the Scriptures as they read.”

Go forward, not backward! Let Scripture be its own interpreter. Our church has long held to the historical-biblical, or historical-grammatical, method of understanding Scripture, allowing the Bible to interpret itself. The historical-critical method of explaining the Bible, however, puts a scholar or individual above the plain approach of the Scriptures and gives inappropriate license to decide what he or she perceives as truth based on the resources and education of the critic. This type of approach leads people to distrust God and His Word.

Go forward, not backward! Accept the Spirit of Prophecy as one of the greatest gifts given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, not just for the past but for the future. While the Bible is the ultimate authority and final arbiter of truth, the Spirit of Prophecy provides clear, inspired council to aid our application of Bible truth and is a marvelous blessing to direct God’s church in the last days of this earth’s history.

Coming Again

Jesus is coming soon! Soon we will see in the eastern sky a small, dark cloud about half the size of a man’s fist. It will get larger and larger and brighter and brighter. And there seated in the middle of millions of angels will be the One we have been waiting for: not the humble broken Lamb, not the ministering High Priest, but the King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Christ our Redeemer! We will look up and say, “This is the God we have waited for.” Christ will look down and say, “Well done, good and faithful servants. Enter into the joy of your Lord,” and we will rise to meet the Lord in the air to go home to be with Him forever—the beautiful end of the Advent journey!

Accept Christ’s marvelous grace in your life. “Go forward” by renewing your commitment to Him and proclaiming God’s grace and the three angels’ messages. ●

The following devotional is a condensation of a message presented during the Women's Ministries meetings at the General Conference session in Atlanta, Georgia, United States, on June 30, 2010.—EDITORS.

Two categories of people exist in our communities: those desperately in need of a Savior, and those equipped to proclaim God's message of grace about a Savior. And the problem facing us is that those in the second category typically find all kinds of excuses to avoid sharing what they have.

Bad weather is a frequent excuse. Other obstacles to sharing include tiredness, selfishness, busyness, low self-esteem, the belief that we're unprepared, that it's not our personal calling, etc. The list is endless.

An important consideration for us is that Jesus sacrificed His life that we might obtain eternal life. He endured temptation, rejection, humiliation, insults, betrayal, false accusations, and, finally, the cross. Through it all, however, He remained focused on His mission; and so must we. Salvation is not cheap; someone had to pay the price. And Jesus paid it with His life.

He does not ask us to pay for our salvation with our lives. But He calls on us to sacrifice *our talents, our time, our treasure* (all freely given), in order to continue His mission in the world. Each individual is to give according to what God has given them. When you've had a personal encounter with Jesus, when you've received His grace, when you've recognized His tender, loving care, you will see what other eyes may not: hurting people as the apple of God's eye. The gospel is not just a story; it's an experience that, once we acquire it, does not allow us to rest until we share it. In the sentiments of Paul, the love of Christ compels (see 2 Cor. 5:14, 15).



Proclaiming GOD'S GRACE With Love

By JOY GASHAIJA
Through the gifts that He supplies

Inheritance or Personal Commitment?

A Catholic woman once asked me, "Joy, why are you a Protestant?"

"Because my father is Protestant," I responded honestly.

It was an issue of inheritance, then—an issue of culture, having nothing to do with personal conviction. But the question prompted me to seek God's grace to reveal to me the truth of the gospel; and the knowledge of that truth changed my life completely. It was no longer about my father, about inheritance, about culture; but about Christ, about choice, about commitment.

Today, I pose the same question to you: Why are you a Seventh-day

Adventist Christian? Because of inheritance? Marriage? Because you want to keep your job? Or is it because you believe the words of John 3:16, that "*God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life?*"?

Have we truly, personally, believed? Is our belief strong enough to form the basis for us to proclaim God's grace with love to the community? Do we bear a burden for those who are suffering and perishing without the knowledge of God's grace? Do we consider it our responsibility to proclaim God's grace to our communities, using the spiritual gifts that God has Himself given us?

Left: GATHERED FOR RENEWAL: Adventist Women's Ministries and Shepherdess International sponsored a four-day series of meetings (June 28-July 1) for nondelegate women during the GC session in Atlanta.

If you and I have accepted Christ as our personal Savior, then we have an urgent responsibility of embracing the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19 through the individual use of our spiritual gifts to proclaim God's grace.

In His ministry Jesus focused on people, in all walks of life. But He especially had a soft spot for the poor, the hurting, the victimized. We see this in His parable of the judgment in Matthew 25:31-46. God has blessed most of us women with the gift of reaching the hurting in our communities—widows, the terminally ill, the lonely, the abused, the rejected, the destitute, prostitutes, prisoners, the illiterate, the marginalized, and all others who feel hopeless.

Others in our communities may have all that the world offers, but still feel empty within. While they long for true fulfillment, they have no idea where to find it. They look for joy through drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, and other things that offer only temporal relief. Still others in our communities are daily seeking for truth.

What these all need is the gospel of love and compassion.

Finding Our Spiritual Gift(s)

Someone said that "a true spiritual gift opens doors, changes lives, and builds up the body of Christ." And the first step in identifying our own gift is accepting Christ fully. Only then will He turn our talents into spiritual gifts. The reason we still hold so firmly and selfishly to our own talents, our own time, our own treasures, is that we've

not fully accepted or appreciated God's amazing grace.

When we talk about proclaiming the gospel, we tend to think of it as a job for experts—those who've mastered the art of public speaking, with doctrinal formulas and fundamental beliefs at their fingertips. And yes, this may be right—if we have in mind the few who are gifted in that area of public evangelism. But what about the rest of us? Where do we fall? Does Matthew 28:19 apply only to those who are eloquent in speech? Or does it apply also to those who have no credentials to baptize?

I suggest it does. The Bible mentions a great diversity in the types of gifts God wants to put to use: giving, exhortation, discernment, knowledge, leadership, prophecy, teaching, wisdom, service, mercy, healing, faith (see 1 Cor. 12:8-12). By God's own design, such diversity provides capabilities to believers to serve as powerful tools for the proclamation of the gospel.

What is your gift? So many think they have none.

An old woman, after listening to a touching sermon from her pastor on spiritual gifts, felt that though she'd been a Christian for many years, she'd never discovered her own God-given gift—not even from the list of the 27 the pastor gave in his sermon. Uneducated, she'd all her life been employed as a home cleaner.

But her pastor reassured her that God had, indeed, given her at least one gift, and that all she needed was to begin the process of discovering it. "Just think about the things you do best," the pastor told her, "and pray that God would show you which one of them to use for His glory."

As she prayed it kept coming to her mind—again and again—that she loved to bake bread and that she did it well. *Could this be her gift, even though not mentioned in the list the pastor mentioned?*

An idea came to her. A young couple had just moved in near her home. She could bake something as a welcome present for them! And so she did. "I live next door," she said as the new neighbor answered her door. "Here's a housewarming gift for you." And with that, she turned and ran away.

The new neighbor remained glued to the spot, thinking to herself, *There are some funny people living around here! But it's nice that they should welcome us in this way!* Then as she unfolded the napkins, the smell of good, fresh bread filled the place. At dinner, she told her husband what happened and put the bread on the table, its pleasing aroma filling the room. It also tasted great!

Our sister made a loaf for the neighbors every day that week; but on Sabbath she didn't. The neighbors waited, but no loaf came on Sabbath. Having come to enjoy this special bread, they were disappointed.

On Sunday morning when our sister took over another loaf, the neighbors, delighted to see her again, asked what had happened the previous day—which gave her a chance to talk about her faith and the Sabbath. They wanted to know more about Adventists, so our sister invited her pastor to meet with them. For their part, they invited their own priest to join the meeting.

In the end, to cut the story short, the young couple, together with their priest, accepted the Adventist message. All because our sister used her gift—the gift of baking bread.

What are we doing with what we have? ●



Joy Gashaija is Women's Ministries director for the East-Central Africa Division, with headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

The
59th

General Conference Session

Pulled From Paganism

*Benjamin Hacheked,
president of North Cameroon Conference,
tells his story.* By SANDRA BLACKMER



NORTH CAMEROON CONFERENCE
PRESIDENT: Benjamin Hacheked

AUSTIN R. HO

Benjamin sighed with relief as a slight whitening tinged with gold and blue began to emerge on the African horizon. *It will soon be clear enough to head down the mountain*, he thought.

Morning couldn't come soon enough for Benjamin. His uncle, who had helped care for him after the death of his father, didn't understand his new beliefs. He knew his uncle was worried that the villagers would lose respect for him if they learned his nephew was now a Christian—a Seventh-day Adventist Christian at that. Afraid that this time his uncle would forbid him to attend church, Benjamin decided that Friday night to sleep on the mountainside and then walk the several kilometers to Sabbath school and church.

Benjamin loved his uncle, but his newfound faith and love for Jesus overrode his fear of displeasing him. He was now a follower of Jesus, and even at the young age of 15, his commitment to God led him in a new direction.



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

Today, years later, Benjamin Hacheked serves his church as president of the North Cameroon Conference, headquartered in the West African town of Maroua. The almost 46,000 Adventist Church members who worship in some 400 churches in that arid, rugged region look to him for spiritual leadership. He also oversees the conference's three primary and three secondary schools. Hacheked's uncle, though not yet a Christian, now sometimes attends worship services with his nephew, and Benjamin says he's doing what he can to lead him to Jesus.

"I came to know the Lord and join the Adventist Church through a young man named Mallam, our neighbor's son, who was older than me," Hacheked explains. "He encouraged me."

Adventist education, Hacheked adds, also played a role. His first four years of "reading, writing, and arithmetic" took place within the walls of an Adventist school in the town of Koza, where there is also an Adventist hospital. He spent the remaining elementary and secondary years at public schools, but then looked to the Adventist Seminary of West Africa (now Babcock University) in Nigeria for his higher education. Following graduation, Hacheked became a pastor and then Publishing Ministries director for the North Cameroon Conference. He was elected president there in 2007.



Life in Northern Cameroon

“I feel very privileged to serve the Lord in Cameroon,” Hacheked says. “The people are mission-focused, and their commitment to the Lord is strong. They’re happy, they work hard, they’re faithful. In this world not everything is perfect, but they are doing their best.”

Church members there share their faith with others largely through public evangelism. “Most of the people in the villages have no education; they don’t know how to read,” Hacheked explains. “But when those who do know how to read organize a public evangelism event, everybody comes.”

Hacheked notes that northern Cameroon is a mostly Muslim region and that many villagers have never seen a Bible. He adds, however, that “Muslims respect Adventists. They like our message. They say that Adventists have the truth. But they’re afraid because if they become Christians, their family and community will reject them. It’s not easy.”

“I pray for the day when our people will be allowed to belong to any religion they want to,” Hacheked says. “That will be a happy day.”

Larry Blackmer, vice president of the North American Division for education, visited northern Cameroon last February to speak to the West-Central Africa Division

Above: SCHOOL IN CAMEROON: Principal of the Adventist mission school in Dogba, northern Cameroon, prepares for class. No books or other supplies are available for use by teachers or students there. **Left:** FELLOWSHIP: Adventist women meeting together on a Friday afternoon.

University Council at Adventist University Cosendai. While in Cameroon, Hacheked took him to visit the church’s mission school in remote Dogba.

“We saw heart-rending scenes of abject poverty and malnutrition,” Blackmer says, “and the mission school functions without access to books or other supplies. But the people, especially the children, were wonderful—always smiling and friendly. I loved meeting them. I also found Cameroon to be a very beautiful country with breathtaking views and fantastic wildlife.”

Jostling together for many hours along primitive roads dotted with potholes, Blackmer says he got to know Hacheked well.

“He was a most gracious host and a sincere Christian,” he says. “He’s obviously loved by his people.”

Attending GC Session

For Hacheked, who had never before traveled outside West Africa, touching down at the Atlanta, Georgia, airport to serve as a delegate at the church’s fifty-ninth GC session shattered his preconceptions of life in the United States. The Western world, he says, was “beyond my expectations”—and radically different from life at home.

“There are more than 200 tribes in Cameroon,”

Hacheked explains. “Each tribe or group of tribes has its own traditions and cultures. In the church in northern Cameroon, for example, women sit on one side of the church and men on the other side. The women veil their heads when they pray. Traditionally and culturally speaking, they are not allowed to wear trousers.”

Villagers there live in adobe huts without the luxury of electricity or running water. They shop daily for their food because they have no refrigeration to keep it fresh. So, for Hacheked, Atlanta is a mental paradigm shift.

“I don’t know the right words to describe what I see here in Atlanta,” Hacheked says. Everything is nice and in order—the trains and the roads. All the vehicles seem new and of the best quality.

“The Georgia World Congress Center is another miracle. I wonder how people can build something like this.”

Hacheked’s experience with the people he’s met in Atlanta has also left a good impression. “Everybody you meet—man or woman—they are gentle, they are kind,” he says.

When asked whether he felt the international church gathering was worth the cost, Hacheked said, “Money is made to be spent. God can provide if this brings about something positive. It’s true that it costs a lot of money, but GC sessions strengthen faith, attract special guests, and raise opinions of the Adventist Church. These are very good things.”

Stories to Tell

When he returns home to his wife, Tchived Rachel, and the couple’s 3-year-old son, Nanela Hacheked Samuel—and a second child on the way who, Hacheked says, might be born by the time he returns—he will have stories to tell.

“I will let my friends and coworkers know that God is really leading His church and that He is in control of church business. I’ve learned that this church is truly democratic and has a vision for the future. It’s well organized and follows principles.

“I’m happy to belong to the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” he adds. “I’ve come from paganism to this. I’m grateful that the Lord allowed me to read the truths in the Bible about Him and about worshipping on the Sabbath day. We are truly God’s people.”

Traveli

By
SANDRA BLACKMER

Session offering to sustain health ministries, education, and evangelism in 10/40 window.

He stood transfixed watching the young girl, about 10 years old he guessed, crawl out of the large cardboard box. Two small boys, apparently her younger brothers, followed close behind. Sores covered the boys’ bodies. They were pale and listless. He saw the smallest boy lean against his sister’s chest and quietly begin to sob. He could hear the compassion in the girl’s voice as she spoke softly to him and gently patted his head. She then reached back into the box—their “home”—and pulled out three small bowls.

“That picture still burns in my mind,” said GC vice president Michael L. Ryan during the offering appeal on the first Sabbath of the session. “How I wish I could have done more to change their lives than what the few dollars I gave them would do.”

The goal of the session’s offerings, Ryan said, is to help lighten a path of hope worldwide for millions of people such as this young family.

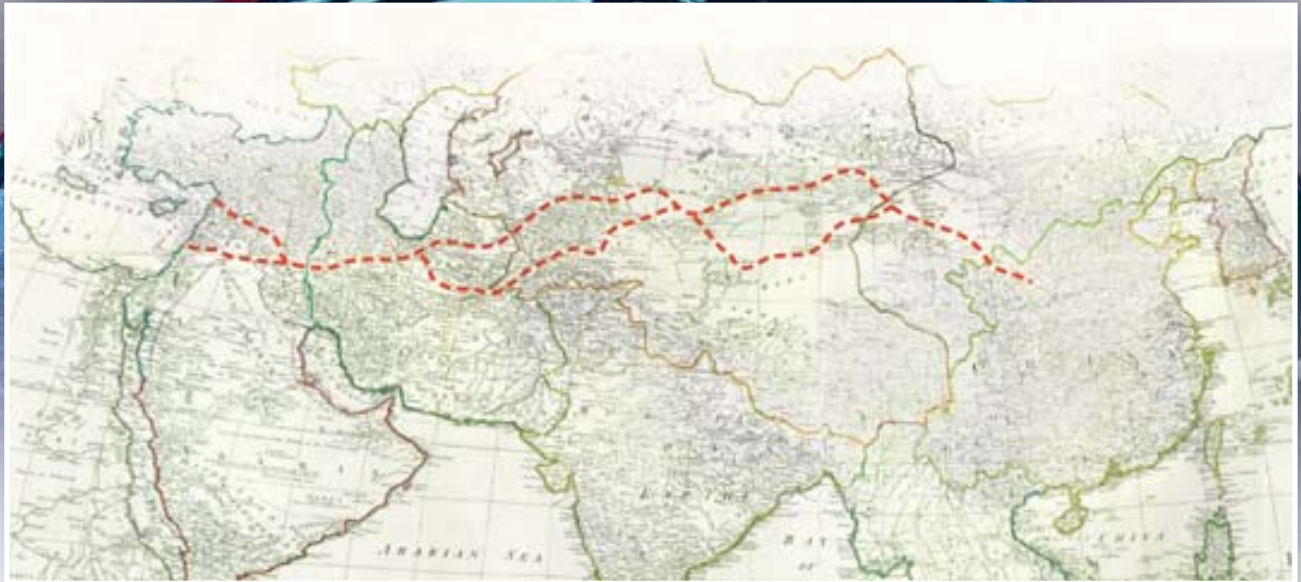
“This church was organized for mission—global mission,” Ryan said. “But the global nature of the Adventist Church was not done in our power, but the power of the Holy Spirit.... We’re a family with a mission.”

This session’s offerings are tagged to support outreach in a region marked by the ancient Silk Road, a route that crosses areas such as China, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Turkey, and the Middle East—all part of the 10/40 window.



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

ng the Silk Road



Describing the 10/40 window as an imaginary rectangle 10 degrees north of the equator at the bottom and 40 degrees north at the top, and extending from northwest Africa through the Middle East and into Asia, Adventist Mission director Gary Krause says, “It’s a symbolic way of directing attention to that area and saying that this is where the majority of the world’s population lives—in that window. It’s also the area where the people are the poorest, where there are the fewest Christians, and where Christians historically have sent the fewest resources.”

Krause told *Adventist World* that the money will be allocated to the appropriate divisions, which will then

select specific projects. They’ll be encouraged, however, “to use a wholistic approach of evangelistic outreach to try to build bridges in these communities” in areas such as health ministries, education, and Global Mission pioneers, he says. “Every cent of it will be going to frontline work, and it will be contextualized to reach people where they are.

“The church chose the Silk Road because we were looking at regions of the world that had the greatest need, places where perhaps the church is the weakest,” Krause says. “We want to reach those who are waiting for the hope of the gospel.”

Ministries *Highlights from the exhibit floor* in the Spotlight

By
EVAN KNOTT

More than 200 exhibits taking up approximately 200,000 square feet dazzled the imaginations of the thousands of Adventists who attended the 2010 General Conference session in Atlanta.

Dean Rogers, exhibit manager for the session, reported a similar number of exhibits at previous sessions. “I think the biggest difference this time is the quality of the exhibits,” he said. “We have some outstanding displays that are very inviting to the people who come through.”

Among the impressive displays was Union College, whose exhibit featured a 25-foot-high climbing wall. The wall was a major attraction for kids and young adults, but according to Union College student and exhibitor Karla Navarrete, it wasn’t just the usual suspects who enjoyed climbing the wall. “We had a lady who was 69 years old!” she laughed. “She was climbing, and the crowd was rooting for her!”

Navarrete says the cheering and encouragement that accompanied persons attempting to climb the wall were representative of the kind of atmosphere one can expect at Union College. “We support our kids; we stick together.”

Also on display was La Voz de la Esperanza, or “Voice of Hope,” a media ministry that aims to spread the gospel to Hispanic people all over the world. Manager and treasurer Charles Garcia said the purpose of the booth was to



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promote awareness of their Spanish television ministries, as well as their more than 1,300 radio stations.

“We’re trying to expose ourselves to the world, let people know who we are, and try to reach out for help—not only financially but also in terms of getting people to know there’s actually a program in Spanish almost everywhere in the world where they can tune in and listen to the Word of God.”

The Trans-European Division (TED) exhibit demonstrated a new Internet ministry called “Life Connect,” an online ministry that essentially works like Facebook. In addition to the HTML format, a 3-D virtual space called “Life Connect World” is launching this September. Life Connect World will allow people to explore a virtual world where they can interact with other users in a variety of ways, ranging from sharing recipes in virtual cafés to



AUSTIN R. HO

previewing Christian media to having Bible studies at the Life Connect University.

“We’re encouraging people to be digital missionaries,” said Jemina da Silva Macedo of tedMEDIA Productions. “We’re not forcing Christianity or Adventism down anybody’s throat. We’re trying to connect to people by finding common interests and then leading them into spiritual concepts.”

Long a fixture at General Conference sessions, the exhibition hall offered a chance for Adventist organizations to bring their message to tens of thousands of visitors and attendees, and to build support for their unique roles in spreading the three angels’ messages. ●

Opposite page: MIRACLE BUILDING: Imagine the miracles in the lives of the many children who will enjoy the blessings of the One-Day School, a project of Maranatha Volunteers International. **Top to bottom:** THREE, TWO, ONE—ACTION: Every day thousands of visitors enjoyed the huge exhibit hall with its hundreds of booths. Who could resist Lidia Abigail Monroy, from Guatemala, enthusiastically sharing information about the Inter-American Division? VIRTUAL MISSION: Jemima da Silva Macedo of the Trans-European Division (TED) demonstrates tedMedia’s virtual reality software to Tihomir Lazic.

Marriage is *hard work!* Standing in the open doorway of a train at Sydney Central Station, I looked at the pile of luggage, and then glanced at my watch. Why was my wife taking so long to purchase a bottle of water? She had been gone for ages and I was becoming anxious about the time of departure. Did I need to offload our luggage and wait for the next train? Had she tripped and fallen? Did she need my help? *Ah* ... there she was. With a sigh of relief we found seats, piled our bags around us, and wished each other happy anniversary—our thirty-fourth—and contemplated our journey.

Following our courtship as penniless college students, Carol taught as a student missionary in Samoa for 12 months (in the days of snail mail). We married the next year with just \$50 between us, and honeymooned in a tent at a national park. We were in love, and when David said to one of his professors at the wedding, “It seems like a dream,” the professor wryly replied, “You’ll wake up one day.”

Maybe this comment reflects the pain experienced by families today. But why should we be surprised? If Satan’s intention has been to malign the character of God, and if family

NUMBER 23 Family

Enjoying the journey together

By CAROL and DAVID TASKER

was God’s idea, then it is understandable that Satan would conduct an all-out attack on the one institution that makes possible “the well-being of society, the success of the church, [and] the prosperity of the nation.”¹

Marriage, Genesis, and Fall

Begun in an ideal setting, with two perfect people, marriage was to be a relationship of mutual companionship, joy, and continuous development—with the Creator as coach and consultant. But Lucifer also saw the tremendous potential of the family. He has relentlessly tried to destroy the effectiveness of families in each successive generation.

With the exit of perfect peace and harmony, family histories have been lived out in combat conditions. The

great cosmic controversy between Christ and Satan, between good and evil, plays out its finale not only in earth’s history but also behind the closed doors of today’s families.

Josh and Sally are casualties in this battle. Their 18-year-old marriage is tired and wearing thin. The “for better or worse” is definitely feeling “worse.” Minor irritations have become major showdowns. Josh is becoming more disillusioned with his job. The promotions have not eventuated, and he feels he is being sucked into a dark tunnel with no escape route.

Sally is looking for a change in pace too. Trying to balance her roles as wife, mother, homemaker, and executive is taking its toll on her midlife years. Meanwhile, teenagers

Marriage *and the* Family

Marriage was divinely established in Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship. For the Christian a marriage commitment is to God as well as to the spouse, and should be entered into only between partners who share a common faith. Mutual love, honor, respect, and responsibility are the fabric of this relationship, which is to reflect the love, sanctity, closeness, and permanence

of the relationship between Christ and His church. Regarding divorce, Jesus taught that the person who divorces a spouse, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery. Although some family relationships may fall short of the ideal, marriage partners who fully commit themselves to each other in Christ may achieve loving unity through the guidance of the Spirit and the nurture of the church. God blesses the family and intends that its

members shall assist each other toward complete maturity. Parents are to bring up their children to love and obey the Lord. By their example and their words they are to teach them that Christ is a loving disciplinarian, ever tender and caring, who wants them to become members of His body, the family of God. Increasing family closeness is one of the earmarks of the final gospel message. (Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 19:3-9; John 2:1-11; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:21-33; Matt. 5:31, 32; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18; 1 Cor. 7:10, 11; Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:1-4; Deut. 6:5-9; Prov. 22:6; Mal. 4:5, 6.)

5 Languages of Apology

Andy and Brett are facing struggles with their peers, frustration at school, uncertainty about their future, pornography addiction, and disinterest in the church. They feel lost and disconnected from their parents.

Marriage Covenant

Not too promising a picture. Yet in the Bible we see God moving remarkably among dysfunctional families. In the midst of family disputes, despair, deception, rape, and murder, we also see the possibilities of restoration, grace, and redemption. Indeed, God's intention was that all the families of the earth might be blessed through Abraham's extended family (Gen. 12:3). It was the covenant agreement between God and His people that became the focus of hope in the most desperate of times.

Covenant is not based on human effort (or failure) but on God's faithfulness. His faithfulness extends to families today. Jesus linked the new covenant to forgiveness at the Last Supper. The cup symbolized His spilled blood providing forgiveness and reconciliation. And in families torn apart by irreconcilable differences, grace and forgiveness become indispensable. Not just from God but from each other.

Parents often ask how children in the same family can be so different. *Vive la difference!* "It is in the order of God that persons of varied temperament should associate together."² Learning to appreciate differences within the family prepares us for getting along with all kinds of people in the wider community.

Because of our unique differences, God shows His love to us in many different ways. He delights to spend *time* with us and gives us His focused attention (Matt. 6:26; Rev. 3:20), He gives good *gifts* (Matt. 7:11; Rom. 6:23; James 1:17), and His *acts of service* include humility and the ultimate sacrifice of His life (Phil. 2:3-11). We

are told that He is "*touched*" with the feelings of our infirmities (Isa. 53; Heb. 4:15), and His *words of affirmation* inspire us (1 Peter 2:9).

Speaking the Right Language

Many have found the five "love languages"³ helpful in discovering the best ways to give and receive love. More recently, Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas have identified *The Five Languages of Apology*,⁴ which relate to communication patterns in families, communities, schools, the workplace, and international politics. When one has been hurt by another, appropriate acknowledgment of that wrong is necessary in order for healing and recovery to begin.

In two years of research they found that different people require different types of apology. Merely saying "sorry" may sound insincere to some people, and insufficient to bind the wounds. Some need to hear a person accept responsibility for their actions; others need to hear how a repetition of this problem will be avoided in the future.

In the Bible we have a classic example of these different languages of apology being used to seek forgiveness and reconciliation. Abigail's strenuous efforts to shower on David a number of different languages of apology certainly resulted in a number of unexpected and far-reaching benefits (see 1 Sam. 25).

Enjoying the Journey—Together

Marriage is hard work. But marriage can also be profoundly satisfying. What if I had acted on my sudden immature impulses of ending our marriage when my own selfish inclinations were challenged in the early years of our marriage? What an unspeakable loss that would have been to us. Two sons, their young families, mission service, and a flood of irreplaceable memories remind us of a

- Expressing REGRET
"I am sorry"
- Accepting RESPONSIBILITY
"I was wrong"
- Making RESTITUTION
"What can I do to make it right?"
- Genuinely REPENTING
"I'll try not to do that again"
- Requesting FORGIVENESS
"Will you please forgive me?"

deeply satisfying journey with the God who is faithful even when we are not.

The journey has been neither static nor predictable. Everything has changed along the way: the road, the vehicle, the landscape, the weather, fellow travelers, and even the determination (and energy levels) to keep going.

In the midst of changing circumstances, surroundings, and neighbors, God's people have always found their source of strength and security in the faithfulness of God. The God who is there, who doesn't change—the same yesterday, today, and forever—is always there for us. ●

¹ Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assn., 1952), p. 15.

² *Ibid.*, p. 427.

³ Gary Chapman, *The Five Love Languages*, www.5lovelanguages.com.

⁴ Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas, *The Five Languages of Apology: How to Experience Healing in All Your Relationships* (Chicago, Ill.: Northfield, 2006).



Carol and David Tasker celebrate a cross-cultural marriage (Carol is from Australia and David hails from New Zealand) and serve as professors at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Philippines.

The following message was presented by Ellen White as a morning devotional at the ministerial conference connected to the 1893 General Conference session in Battle Creek, Michigan. It not only is pertinent to that generation of church workers but challenges each child of God personally.

What a sacred trust God has committed to us, in making us his servants to aid in the work of saving souls! He has intrusted to us great truths, a most solemn, testing message for the world. Our duty is not simply to preach, but to minister, to come close to hearts. We should use our intrusted talents with skill and wisdom, that we may present the precious light of truth in the most pleasing manner, the way best adapted to win souls.

“It is an exalted privilege to be connected may have the consolation of his presence. We

Paul thus speaks of the ministry of the new covenant: “Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.” What a responsibility is this! A work is here brought to view that is more laborious than merely preaching the word; it is to represent Christ in our character, to be living epistles, known and read of all men.

What Drives Us?

“The love of Christ constraineth us.” We must cherish love; and if those for whom we labor do not appreciate our efforts, we must not allow discontent or wrong feelings to rule in our hearts. Murmuring thoughts, jealousies, and evil surmisings embitter the life and mar the labors. It is

Trust *in* GOD

By ELLEN G. WHITE



REACHING OUT: Impact Atlanta involved hundreds of young and young adults, seeking creative ways to reach the people of Atlanta. This image was taken during the Youth on Parade program on Sabbath, July 3.

JOSEF KISSINGER/ANN

the Lord who has called us to this work, and we should have an eye single to his glory. We cannot trust to our own efforts, as though we could do the work of converting souls. God alone can convict and convert. Jesus invites sinners to come to him with all their burdens, and he will give them rest and peace.

Let us never forget that Jesus loves us. He died for us, and now he lives to make intercession in our behalf. And the Father also loves us, and desires our happiness. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” Brethren, you should set an example of faith, confidence, and love, to the churches over which the Lord has made you overseers. Will you do your work with fidelity, in the fear of God? Will you feel that you must avail yourselves of

done-to-day. As we take up our duties one by one, each will come in its proper place; and the faithful discharge of these duties, however small, opens a field where all the powers of the mind can be employed in the service of God. We shall know and obey his will.

Brethren in the faith, express no doubts. Follow closely your Guide. You must dispense with him before you can lose your way; for the Lord has hedged you in on every side. In the darkest hour, Jesus will be our light. “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” It is an exalted privilege to be connected with Jesus. In every condition of trial, we may have the consolation of his presence. We may live in the very atmosphere of heaven. Our enemies may thrust us into prison, but prison walls cannot cut off the commu-

with Jesus. In every condition of trial, we may live in the very atmosphere of heaven.”

every opportunity to obtain grace and power from on high, that you may render to God the very best service possible?

If, as laborers in the cause of God, you feel that you have borne greater cares and trials than have fallen to the lot of others, remember that for you there is a peace unknown to those who shun these burdens. But do not force your trials upon others; do not groan over them. There is comfort and joy in the service of Christ. The Christian gives the Lord his entire affections, but he takes as well as gives; and his language is not that of a murmurer or a constant backslider. He makes no effort to appear righteous, but his life shows that he is led by the Holy Spirit. He can speak with assurance of his hope in Christ; for has he not the promise of God? If he has complied with the conditions upon which these promises are based, God’s word is pledged that he will do for him more than he asks.

Talk Faith—Not Doubt

We honor God most when we trust him most. Anxiety and worryment in his service, talking fears and doubts as to whether we shall be saved, savors of selfishness and unbelief. True faith is more solicitous to know what can be

nication between Christ and our souls. One who sees our every weakness, who is acquainted with every trial, is above all earthly powers; and angels can come to us in lonely cells, bringing light and peace from heaven. The prison will be as a palace, for the rich in faith dwell there; and the gloomy walls will be lighted up with heavenly light, as when Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises at midnight in the Philippian dungeon. Bunyan was confined in Bedford jail; and thence issued a light that has illuminated the pathway to the celestial city.

God is the “Rock of our salvation,” a present help in every time of need. Then let us be no longer babes in Christ, but bold and firm soldiers of the cross, rejoicing in suffering the will of God. ●

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

This article was taken from pages 422 to 425 of the 1892 edition of *Gospel Workers*. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

By KIMBERLY LUSTE MARAN

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Young adults, part of IMPACT Atlanta, build relationships and help others.

With a Twist



AUSTIN R. HO



KIMBERLY LUSTE MARAN



AUSTIN R. HO

Helena Deazle from Wokingham, Berkshire, England, wasn't sure what to expect when she decided to attend IMPACT Atlanta (iATL), a young adult leadership and discipleship event that ran concurrently with the General Conference (GC) session held June 23 through July 3, 2010. A friend had told her about IMPACT St. Louis, the young adult event held during the 2005 GC session, so when the time came to register for the 2010 event, Deazle eagerly signed up.

"My friend thought I'd really enjoy it ... and it was fantastic," says Deazle. "It's really good to help out in the community and to even just be more aware of people's needs. It is quite good to take time out, support the church, and just do community work."

Deazle was one of more than 100 young adult church leaders and laypeople from around the world who converged on Atlanta, Georgia, United States, to, according to coordinator A. Allan Martin, "actively engage in the Great

Commission and great commandment¹ through training, ministering, and worship."² Martin hopes that delegates, who met with Atlanta humanitarian agencies and community residents, involved in projects took a "humanitarian gift of grace to their communities." Martin says that these delegates shouldn't wait five years to become involved again. "We wanted to impact the city of Atlanta. But beyond this, ... we want to be able to say, 'God was there when we were there—and our lives were transformed.'"

Transformation in Process

Several of the community service events and discipleship training sessions made lasting impressions upon LaToya Wolfe. From Chicago, Illinois, United States, Wolfe participated in the four main community service activities that were part of the iATL experience.³ Excited to be here with people who are invested in youth, Wolfe says: "I really wanted to pick up some tools from youth ministry leaders from other

parts of the globe.... Studying at Andrews University⁴ you get caught up in the academics of ministry...; we sometimes miss the daily growth. We get the content but can miss the process.... Watching all the things that happened down [in Atlanta] that were unscripted was just amazing.”

While delegates have been cooking, serving meals, packing clothes for the homeless, carting dirt and mulch to a community garden, and doing all sorts of tasks to help people in various neighborhoods in Atlanta, they’ve been learning also how to reach out and how to work together. Says Wolfe: “We need to be in touch with people who haven’t made that step yet into reaching out to ministry to people. Even just right across the street there are people who don’t even know we exist, don’t even know Jesus exists. As Adventists, we are very comfortable in our own pockets ...; being here we are forced to step out of

Left to right: CLEAN UP: Camille R. Merced, from Puerto Rico, and Sahana Richard Injety, from India, now living in South Africa, spend the afternoon organizing the bedroom of the 9-year-old son of “Miss Edith,” a neighbor of Rustin and Stacy Sweeney, a couple who moved their family into a low-income apartment complex in order to live the gospel and build up the community from within. WORSHIP: LaToya Wolfe (center) from Chicago, Illinois, and fellow delegates sing during an “encounters café” worship service at iATL. A WOMAN IN THE PARK: An iATL delegate helps mixed media artist and youth pastor Milton Coronado finish a mural in Centennial Olympic Park depicting a woman and the words “End It Now.”

our comfort zone and see some of the same people Jesus walked up to, talked to, hung out with. We need to follow Jesus and remember what He commanded us to do.”

Fidi Mwero, Redlands, California, United States, appreciated the concept of discipleship training in the morning, visiting the community in the afternoon, and building relationships during the evening worship meetings. Mwero, the new Calimesa church⁵ associate pastor for youth and media, explained as follows: “You can put the morning training to good use immediately. And in going to the places we have, I’ve realized that ... mission isn’t me going there and trying to make them me, make them Adventist, to try to fix them or fix what we see is wrong. It is just going in and forming relationships and building bridges, and trying to show them God’s love. In some cases maybe all we shared was our age group; but we learned, we bonded, we changed lives together. Hopefully, we go back to where we’re from and become the spark in our community.”

In This Together

From sorting crayons to washing dishes; from babysitting to pulling up weeds; from listening to testimonies of recovering drug addicts to encouraging people to sign a petition to end violence against women and girls,⁶ iATL gave delegates the tools to discover opportunities for servant leadership in their own communities while ministering to the needs of Atlanta residents.

Janelle Cuthbert, from Melbourne, Australia, attended IMPACT St. Louis in 2005 and believes she learned something important at both events: “It’s not difficult to do; you just need to look for people to help. We all need help at different times. We don’t always need to help people who will give their appreciation back. I was at Hosea and we sorted crayons and I helped fold T-shirts; ... when we go and serve we get to know people.”

Delegates spent 10 days getting to know God, their community, and one another. And while service was the main component of the experience, it was not the only focus. According to Martin, worshipping God and building relationships were just as vital. “We have tried to show delegates that a Christo-centric relational component to service is crucial—that gentle relational touches are more important than being ‘trained.’ God will give us what we need; we just need to answer His call.”

“IMPACT was a catalyst in my life to get back to knowing who God is, how important it is to reach out to people in the community, and how to share my faith,” Cuthbert says. “I have so much more courage to do some of those things and I’m now able to serve in my local church in certain capacities.... You need to become friends with people to share Jesus with them.”

¹ Matthew 28:19, 20; and Luke 10:27.

² Tracks and events included The Discipleship Adventure, Habitudes, “encounters café,” and GODencounters worship services.

³ Atlanta Union Mission—My Sister’s House, The Salvation Army—Metro Atlanta Red Shield Services, Hosea Feed the Hungry, and the Sweeney family home community project.

⁴ Andrews University is located in Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States.

⁵ The Calimesa Seventh-day Adventist Church in Calimesa, California, United States.

⁶ “enditnow” is a global campaign launched in October 2009 in a partnership between the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and the General Conference Women’s Ministries Department, and endorsed by the Annual Council at the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This campaign seeks to unite millions of supporters who will work together to help bring an end to violence against women and girls. The campaign partnered with iATL for a petition signing in downtown Atlanta, Georgia. These collected signatures will be part of many petitions that will be presented at the United Nations to encourage new policies and laws that protect and empower women and girls.



Kimberly Luste Maran is an assistant editor of *Adventist World*.

This question, phrased in different ways, is often asked. And I'm always reluctant to deal with it because it is an invitation to speculate on matters about which we know nothing. What's surprising is that some take their speculations so seriously that they become dogmatic about them. Humility should be a fundamental characteristic of any Bible student.

In this particular case my reluctance is determined by what we do know. We know that Jesus did not sin. That should be enough. But those interested in the question press the issue: Could He have sinned? Had He sinned, what would have been the consequences of His sin? In order to avoid dealing with this question again, let me make some comments that you may or may not find helpful.

1. Jesus and Sin: Could Jesus have sinned? My unambiguous answer: Yes! This is something the Bible supports. Jesus was absolutely human and was subject to temptations such as the ones we confront, as well as to others that we will never have to face (Heb. 4:15). Every day Jesus struggled against sin and was victorious over it. This was a real conflict; not because He had a nature corrupted by sin, but because He, like each one of us, had free will. It is free will that allows us to choose God's side in the cosmic conflict. Rebellion is the rejection of that freedom or, more specifically, giving it up and choosing death.

The typical example of Jesus' potential for sinning is His experience in Gethsemane, when His will would have urged Him to preserve His personal life, while His duty to the Father and the salvation of humanity called Him to self-sacrifice and death (Matt. 26:39). The power and reality of this temptation was predicated on the possibility of not doing God's will. Otherwise the whole struggle would have been a pantomime, a self-deceptive exercise, or an illusion.

2. Jesus' Uniqueness: The fact that Jesus overcame every temptation is incomprehensible to us because we are all sinners. The sinlessness of Jesus creates theological

problems for those who would make Him very much like us. It is at this point that His uniqueness is manifested with great power. Whether we want it or not—and I personally want it—He is different from all of us! He never committed a sin in any form, type, action, or thought. He is the only and exclusive human being who has ever lived without sinning. It is this uniqueness that seems to prompt people to ask, What if He had sinned? We seem to feel uncomfortable with His sinlessness. But we shouldn't be, because it is the prerequisite for the atonement.

3. Jesus' Future: We can also affirm that the future of Jesus and our future are one, because He was victorious over evil and reconciled us to His Father. Could we postulate that there was an alternative future for Jesus in case He sinned?

Here's where the speculation comes in the form of a theological argument. Let me put it as bluntly as I can: Had Jesus failed, the God we now know would not be our God. In other words, with respect to us, He would have ceased to exist. The failure of Jesus would have meant that God was

unable to overcome the forces of evil and that Satan was powerful enough to overcome Him by derailing His plan of salvation, thus forcing God to abandon us.

As you can see, in my speculations the stakes are very high. The defeat of our biblical God at the moment of His greatest manifestation of power on the cross of Christ is something we can hardly begin to imagine, much less take seriously.

Since the biblical God is by definition unbeatable, our question remains almost unanswered. Had the human nature of the Son of God failed, God Himself would have failed. But He did not.

Amen! ●

What If?

QUESTION:

Had Jesus sinned, what would have happened to Him?



By
ANGEL MANUEL
RODRÍGUEZ

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

Love's Final Appeal

By MARK A. FINLEY

BIBLE STUDY



Our journey through Genesis has revealed a great deal about the character of God. A loving God created our first parents, Adam and Eve, to live life to its fullest potential. He longed for them to experience His joy, happiness, and peace forever. When our first parents rebelled against Him, God provided for their eternal salvation through Jesus Christ. Throughout the Old Testament, God constantly revealed His love. In Exodus He is the God who is “gracious” (Ex. 33:19). Jeremiah pictures Him as the God who loves His people with “an everlasting love” (Jer. 31:3). Micah describes Him as “pardoning iniquity,” delighting in “mercy” and “compassion” (Micah 7:18, 19).

Even God’s judgments reveal His compassion. The story of the Flood reveals His everlasting love for His people.

1. How did God attempt to save the human race, despite its rebellion against Him? Read the text below and write your answer in the space provided.

“And the Lord said, ‘My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years’” (Gen. 6:3).

God appealed to humanity through Noah for 120 years. In the midst of its rebellion against Him, He powerfully appealed through His Spirit of love.

2. What ultimately led God to destroy the earth with the Flood?

“Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5). “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth” (verses 11, 12).

The wickedness of man was _____ in the earth.

The thoughts of his heart were only _____.

The earth was _____ and filled with _____.

All flesh had _____ their way.

3. How does the Bible describe Noah?

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.... Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God” (Gen. 6:8, 9).

List Noah’s characteristics on the lines below.

Noah found _____ in the eyes of the Lord.

Noah was a _____ man, _____ in his generation.

Noah _____ with God.



Grace is God’s love poured out to us when we don’t deserve it. Although Noah was a sinner, he committed his life totally to God. He dedicated his life to doing whatever God said, whether he fully understood it or not. The word “perfect” in this passage means “spiritually mature” or “completely trusting.” Noah knew God’s voice and obeyed God’s will.

4. Of what was the ark a symbol?

“Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch.... But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you” (Gen. 6:14, 18).

The ark was a symbol of God’s _____.

The covenant reveals God’s amazing grace. Just as it was impossible for Noah to save himself from the coming flood, it’s impossible for us to save ourselves from sin. We are saved as we flee to the ark of safety found in the grace of Jesus Christ.

5. What other symbol of grace do we find in the flood story?

“And God said: ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth’” (Gen. 9:12, 13).

The _____ is a sign of God’s covenant.

The Bible’s last book, Revelation, pictures a rainbow around God’s throne. Just as a rainbow is a blend of colors, God mingles His justice with mercy. He is a God of both love and law.

6. How did Jesus describe the last days?

“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matt. 24:37).

The last days of earth’s history will be as the _____ of _____.

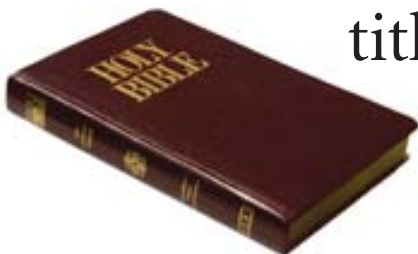
7. What earnest appeal does Jesus make to each one of us?

“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (Matt. 24:44).

Jesus appeals for us to be _____.

In Noah’s day the flood burst upon the world as an overwhelming surprise. Multitudes who could have been saved if they had heeded God’s warning were swept away by the floodwaters. Jesus’ appeal to us is similar to Noah’s appeal. Our Lord urges us to readjust our priorities, to seek Him in prayer, to recommit our lives to Him, and prepare for His soon return. Will you open your heart to Him and give Him full control of your life just now?

“**Preserving Faith**” is the title of next month’s Bible study.



LETTERS



More History in Rome

I read with enthusiasm “Adventist Outreach Takes Rome by Storm” (July 2010), which I consider to be a real miracle, a modern miracle

that God allows to happen. Praise His name! I’ll be praying that those people in Rome who are anxious to know the truth will be confirmed in the truth of Jesus’ gospel and soon join His church through baptism.

I also pray that the ministry of It Is Written will continue to receive approval from heaven.

FERNANDO SALAZAR
Medellín, Colombia

Quiet Traveler—Hardly Silent

I had the joy to touch and read the beautiful traveling Bible described in the “Follow the Bible” article (July 2010).

DIANA MACHADO
Setúbal, Portugal

A Reason to Read

Thank you for sending *Adventist World* to Yangon Attached District (YAD). We receive 200 copies every month. Members around YAD are very happy and inspired by this magazine, especially as they read stories about the gospel work around the world. I am also inspired by this



“Members around YAD are very happy and inspired by this magazine, especially as they read stories about the gospel work around the world. I am also inspired by this message in articles and stories. These become an example for members to participate in church work and missionary activities.”

—MAUNG MAUNG HTAY, Yangon, Myanmar.

message in articles and stories. These become an example for members to participate in church work and missionary activities. Some cannot read English, but when I mention the messages from the magazines, it also benefits them.

I am very grateful. Sometime I wonder if it can be translated into Myanmar language, so that members may read the interesting stories and articles themselves. We are blessed.

MAUNG MAUNG HTAY
Yangon, Myanmar

Common Ground

I am writing about a feature by William G. Johnsson, “Adventists and Muslims: Five Convictions” (February 2010). For so long I have been trying to find out what we share or have in common, but never found it clearly until Sabbath when I had the chance to read it in *Adventist World*. I’m willing to understand more and more, and even be able to reach out to my friends.

We do not receive the magazine on time here—for instance, it’s June,

and we are receiving the February issue.

Keep doing God’s work.
DOLPH
Nairobi,
Kenya



I’m an Adventist of Jewish origins. I just read “Adventists and Muslims: Five Convictions,” by William G. Johnsson (February 2010). I’m very glad God is working to dispel prejudices that are unbiblical. I hope another article will deal with Jewish-Adventists.

May God bless you a lot for work led by the Spirit of God.

LEANDRO DE ARAÚJO
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

I sent a copy of the February 2010 *Adventist World* to my son who has a Muslim housemate with whom he is on friendly terms. This Muslim gentleman found the article “Adventists

LETTERS

and Muslims: Five Convictions” very interesting and put it straight into his computer. He is going to show it to his friends. I have since received mail from him. This is another way of making friends with people of other faiths.

Since then I have given copies to two other Muslims, who also found this a very good piece of work. All three people have a better knowledge of our Bible than many Westerners. I am looking forward to more contact with all of them.

To be on good terms and be friends with Muslims is seen by them as an

honor. We have to nurture these plants.

JOHN AND NELLY
SCHWEINSBERG
Moonta, South Australia

Watching the World Church Grow

We get Adventist World in our church, but not every issue. With a shrinking world, I feel Adventist World is essential to my growth in Jesus.

I’m retired for the past six years and am awed by the growth of the world church. Pennsylvania Conference is beginning a community work

in an old factory used by artists for their studios, and a space was available. For a variety of reasons my wife and I have not been involved, but we desire to keep abreast of movements of the Lord in the world among His people.

THOMAS F. HINRICHS
*Lancaster, Pennsylvania,
United States*

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 father of four children, and they need to go to school. So pray for me to get the school fees. Thank You, God.

ROBERT, *Tanzania*

Please pray that my husband will believe and join the Seventh-day Adventist Church; and the depression I suffer will be lifted.

PAT, *United States*

Please pray for an organization in Congo that is attempting to raise funds for a large number of orphans.

JEAN MARIE, *Democratic Republic of the Congo*

I ask prayer for my health and my family.

MIGUEL, *Colombia*

I thank God for answering my/your prayers. God has provided full employment at the company where I was doing my attachments. This is through your prayers. May God greatly bless you as you continue blessing others in the same way.

JINKS, *Zambia*

I know some very difficult times these days. During an earthquake in January the last building I lived in collapsed. I lost everything, and my daughter who was my only companion died that day. I am alone and clinging to the promise of eternal life that Jesus has given us. Pray for me, please.

DORCAS, *Haiti*

Please pray for me. I have a serious headache problem which started last year. It is disturbing me in my studies and at work. Doctors have recommended a variety of pills, but they are not helping me. I believe God is the only one who can heal me. Thank you.

LEONARD, *Zimbabwe*

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

“Behold, I come quickly...”

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Vol. 6, No.9

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

Meet Your Neighbors

These young adults represent Adventists from nine different countries. With ages ranging from 23 to 34, they also represent some of the delegates to the 2010 General Conference session in Atlanta, Georgia, United States. Each was chosen for strong leadership skills, ability to communicate, dedication to their church, and their passion for spreading the gospel. Here are their names (left to right):

Thuy Tien le Tran, Vietnam; Sray Neang, Cambodia; Blessings Gonbwe, Malawi; Justin McNeilus, United States; Alice Danla, India; Emilia Rouhe, Finland; Samia Henriette, Seychelles; Deepak Boro, India; Rochael Shemali Perera, Singapore; and Tshwanele Bryan Sekwababe, Botswana (pictured on left).



A Feeling of Family

Here's what impressed three young delegates to the 2010 GC session.

Now that the session has come to an end I feel that I have learned a lot of things. It's also very sad because I am leaving all of my new friends—this also makes me think that relationship, friendship, and communication are very important when you want all to become one in one place and belief. Young or old, we are always part of one another.

—SREY NEANG, *Cambodia*

Business sessions, long lines, mystery food ... it's all worth it! To fellowship and worship (and yes, work) literally with the world like this is a precursor to heaven—I can't wait! This was not simply a business meeting; it was a testimony to the power of the gospel. How could people separated by geography, language, and culture be united as one family? It's only the blood of Jesus!

—TUESDA ROBERTS, *United States*

I feel so privileged to have had the opportunity to see the church family and participate in the future organization. It gave me a sense of belonging, a sense that my thoughts and my thinking do matter to our church. As issues were discussed, you couldn't help feeling a strong sense of family, and like any family there was a bit of disappointment and frustration, but in the end, love was still found—love for God and love for each other.

—TSHWANELE BRYAN SEKWABABE, *Botswana*



The PEOPLE'S PLACE

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



AUSTIN R. HO

IN THE COMMUNITY

IN THE GARDEN: Rebecca Turk works and chats with a neighbor boy in a community garden planted by Rustin and Stacy Sweeney.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Satan cannot penetrate a family that has strong family ties.”

—Sang Lae Kim, pastor and professor in the Department of Theology, Sahmyook University, Seoul, South Korea, during the General Conference session evening devotional on June 28, 2010.

ADVENTIST LIFE — GC SESSION MEMORIES

The evening meeting was over (St. Louis, Missouri, 2005), and thousands of Adventists were making their way outside and down the stairway to the transit trains. As we reached the bottom of the stairs, we were wall-to-wall people right up to the edge of the platform—no barriers between us and the tracks several feet below. One lonely platform guard was on duty to maintain order among the surging crowd. He anxiously looked this way and that, concerned about what might happen. One inadvertent push or shove and we would witness a terrible disaster. The tension in his face was clearly visible, though he tried to maintain his official composure.

Just then, my wife and I decided to start singing “We Have This Hope.” Soon it spread to those around us, eventually swelling to the entire crowd in that cavernous environment and on both sides of the tracks. It was a very special and moving moment as we continued with “Amazing Grace” and other songs until the train appeared. The effect on all, including the guard, was palpable. I often wonder what impression he took home from that experience. Perhaps he thought, Who are these people? (see Rev. 7:13).

—Jim Hoffer, Smithsburg, Maryland, United States



AUSTIN R. HO

ANSWER: In Atlanta, Georgia, United States, a 9-year-old boy shows off the butterfly that landed on his hand while working in a community garden planted in his neighborhood by residents Rustin and Stacy Sweeney. The photo was taken during a community service project held by IMPACT Atlanta, a 10-day young adult event held concurrently with the General Conference session.