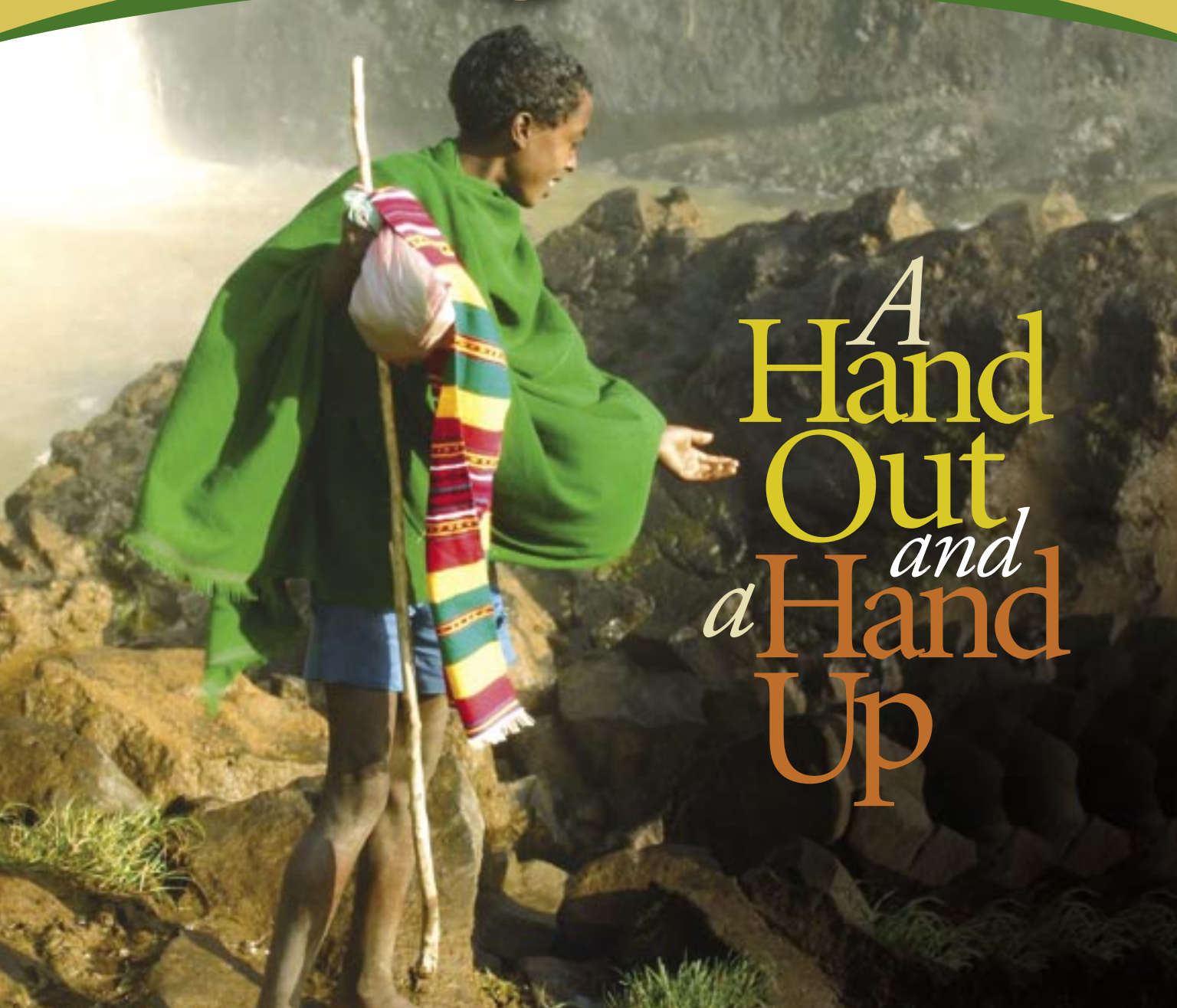


May 2011

# ADVENTIST WORLD



## A Hand Out *and* a Hand Up

**8** Freedom to Choose



**14** A House of God and  
a House of Loss



**27** End-time Symbols  
of the Holy Spirit



NIALL CROTTY

**COVER STORY**

## A Hand Out and a Hand Up

*By Adugnaw Worku* ..... 16  
God's providence put him in places he couldn't have imagined.

**DEVOTIONAL**

## Rough Edges

*By Gerald A. Klingbeil* ..... 12  
He knows how to polish His treasures.

**ADVENTIST LIFE**

## A House of God and a House of Loss

*By Kim Papaioannou* ..... 14  
Spiritual lessons from a church and a casino

**FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS**

## "Oh, How I Love Your Law!"

*By A. Rahel Schafer* ..... 20  
Some chafe at God's law. Others know better.

**DISCOVERING THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY**

## Adapting the Writings of Ellen White

*By William Fagal* ..... 22  
Times, situations, and languages change—but not principles.

**ADVENTIST SERVICE**

## Building Churches and Children

*By Laurie Falvo* ..... 24  
Taking the gospel where the territory is vast and the challenges are daunting

**CHURCH WORKS**

**World View** ..... 3

## World Report

3 News & Views

## World Vista

8 Freedom to Choose

**WORLD HEALTH**

**Hypertension** ..... 11

*By Allan R. Handysides and Peter N. Landless*

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

**Free to Choose** ..... 26

*By Angel Manuel Rodríguez*

**BIBLE STUDY**

**End-time Symbols of the Holy Spirit** ..... 27

*By Mark A. Finley*

**WORLD EXCHANGE**

29 Letters

30 The Place of Prayer

31 Exchange of Ideas

**The People's Place** ..... 32



## WORLD VIEW

### Who Holds Us Together

The daffodils are exquisitely yellow in my backyard just now, and I am tempted to rhapsodize about the joys of bursting buds and surging sap. But half a world away, those who share my Adventist faith are gathering fuel for the coming winter, harvesting crops, and finding warmer clothing.

I speak and write in English, a hybrid language owing much to French, German, Latin, and a dozen other tongues. But millions who read these words will gather what meaning is conveyed in at least 14 languages I neither read nor understand. In Heaven's plan, their faith is not dependent on the eccentricities of my mother tongue.

I drive a car to church each Sabbath, and voice complaints about the rising costs of gasoline. But for millions of my brothers and sisters in Christ, the miles between their homes and their places of worship are measured one step at a time across savannahs, through jungles, down crowded urban streets. The fuel they need is found in the fellowship meal they share after the worship service.

I hail from peoples with long roots in England, Italy, and America. But for millions of Seventh-day Adventists, it is difficult to think of these nations without also remembering the follies and the conflicts that have marred their own homeland's peace and joy.

When we survey the things that could divide us—languages, cultures, national histories, even the cycle of the seasons—it is a wonder from a human point of view that this remnant church exists at all. Many other faiths have not attempted what our Adventism calls us to: they celebrate instead all that is local, unique, particular, or ethnic. But the organizing principle of this movement has never been nor ever will be the commonality of our life experiences. A world-circling faith will find its sole and satisfying center in the Lord who is not known in just one language, in one culture, or in one national identity.

“He himself is before all things,” the apostle Paul wrote centuries ago, “and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything” (Col. 1:17, 18, NRSV\*).

When you pray, invite God's blessing on fellow believers around this globe who do not look like you, speak like you, eat what you eat, or sing as you sing. Intercede for their faithfulness to the Lord, who is the great One we have in common.

— BILL KNOTT

\*Bible texts credited to NRSV are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

## WORLD REPORT

### Wilson Opens Rebuilt British Adventist Headquarters

Just two years and four months following a devastating fire at the British Union Conference (BUC) offices in Watford, England, General Conference president Pastor Ted N. C. Wilson was able to stand outside the doors of the rebuilt office and cut the ribbon—to the applause of several hundred guests who had gathered from as far away as Scotland and Ireland for the occasion.

Wilson reflected on the experience of the 12 spies exploring the Promised Land, the negativism of 10 balanced by the positive nature of Caleb and Joshua. It would have been easy to be

discouraged by the burnt-out shell of a building, but using the “glass half full” principle, he exhorted the congregation, which included those who work in the office, to look to the positive as they use the resources of the office to share the Adventist message more fully in the British Isles.

Architects, builders, and planners all had their part of the story to tell, but Alan Burtenshaw, Watford town councilor, summed it up in commenting that the new building had blended the best of the old with a new modern style that, as BUC treasurer Victor



**RIBBON CUTTING:** Pastor Ted N. C. Wilson (third from left) prepares to cut ribbon at opening of rebuilt British Union Conference office in Watford, England.

VICTOR HULBERT/BUC

## WORLD REPORT

Pilmoor stated, demonstrated “the roundedness of the Adventist faith, drew one’s eyes up toward heaven, and opened up the vista of the ‘Eden’ that is the Stanborough Park estate.”

“It was a perfect day,” reflected Audrey Balderstone, an active member of the Watford community. She was not referring to the weather, which at times was wet and overcast, but to the exhortation from Wilson, the uplifting music of the Adventist Vocal Ensemble, the history of the work of the church in the British Isles, and the rededication of the BUC office.

BUC president Don McFarlane stated his delight that the rebuilding process had produced an office fit to serve the needs of a twenty-first-century church. “The challenge for us who work in the office is now to make it, not merely a pleasant workplace,” he said, “but a place where God is impacting the lives of church leaders, and where we allow the Holy Spirit to take plans and ideas and make them into living experiences for God’s glory.”

—reported by Victor Hulbert, British Union Conference communication director

### Adventist Channel Draws Wide-ranging Audience in Middle East

■ A Seventh-day Adventist television channel based in Beirut, Lebanon, is drawing extraordinary attention. Shortly after its launch the Al Waad Media Center’s Audience Relations Department witnessed a surge in the number of received e-mails and visits to the Al Waad (Promise Channel) Web site ([www.al-waad.tv](http://www.al-waad.tv)).

As viewers began watching the broadcast of Al Waad, they got excited about this new Christian channel. So excited that many of them started promoting Al Waad Channel on their own Web sites.



VICTOR J. HULBERT, BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE

**AL-WAAD TEAM:** Employees of the new Al Waad (Promise Channel) television network station in Beirut, Lebanon, are introduced at an opening ceremony.

“To my utter surprise, I found so many other Web sites that have watched Al Waad on TV and are promoting it on their own Web sites. They’ve put pictures of the broadcast, made links to our Web site, posted the frequency of how to find Al Waad, and written recommendations about the content of this channel,” said Tawfik Megally, audio relations manager at the Al Waad Media Center.

The Web sites that are encouraging people to watch Al Waad are non-Adventist; some of them are Coptic Orthodox, but most are hosted by Muslims.

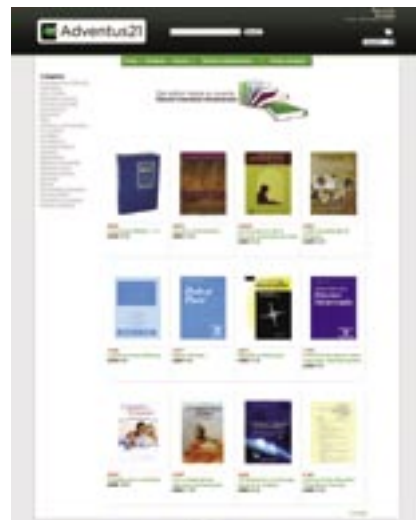
“I was amazed that the launch of Al Waad has made such an impact here in the Middle East. Al Waad is being shared by word of mouth, by various Web sites, by church members, by e-mail, and more,” said Megally.

—reported by Amir Ghali, tedNEWS

### Adventus 21 Web Site Brings Adventist Books to Wide Audience

■ Finding scholarly and other Seventh-day Adventist books, particularly in Spanish, is easier for international customers, thanks to [www.Adventus21.com](http://www.Adventus21.com), a new Web site devoted to the sale and distribution of such titles.

“Editorial Adventus represents an interuniversity partnership created to promote, distribute, and publish academic books, magazines, and research and educational videos framed in [the] biblical-Christian worldview, for the benefit of educators, libraries, students, professionals, and other readers,” the site indicates in a statement. “Our goal is to stimulate the mind and



Adventus 21 Web Site

nurture the spirit of an international clientele with readings and videos in various languages. The electronic catalog, organized into categories, makes it easy to buy quality products at affordable prices.”

The venture is the brainchild of Humberto M. Rasi, a retired director of education for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. He said another goal of the project is “to create a consortium of Adventist universities in Latin America in order to obtain funds with which to publish textbooks and monographs needed in our educational institutions.”

—Adventist World staff

### Neal Wilson—“Mentor,” “Man of Vision,” and “Daddy”—Remembered at World Headquarters Service

By MARK A. KELLNER, *News Editor*

■ Neal Clayton Wilson, an 11-year president of the General Conference (GC) of Seventh-day Adventists, was remembered at a January 19, 2011 memorial service as one whose “magnificent obsession” was “the blessed hope of Jesus’ return for His children.”

Wilson, who served as GC president from 1979 to 1990 and was instrumental in the expansion of Adventist World Radio, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), and of the church in the former Soviet Union, died December 14, 2010, at the age of 90, following a long illness. His wife, Elinor, survives, as do two sisters, a brother, a son, a daughter, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

A total of 14 Adventist leaders or Wilson family members paid tribute to Neal Wilson in front of a live congregation of more than 500 at the world headquarters. Hope Church



**Above:** FAMILY TRIBUTE: Shirley Wilson Anderson, left, a professor at Walla Walla University, and Pastor Ted N.C. Wilson, right, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, speak at a January 19, 2011, memorial service for their father, former GC president Neal C. Wilson, who passed away December 14, 2010. **Left:** Adventist Review Cover

Channel, one of the Hope Channel networks, carried the service, which could also be viewed on the Internet.

“This is not a time when we give death an opportunity to reign over us,” declared Charles D. Bradford, who followed Wilson as a president of the North American Division. “Neal Wilson has conquered all through his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

Throughout the two and a half hour event, speaker after speaker noted Wilson’s dedication to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, one that dominated his decades of service to the movement. As a child of missionaries, a missionary himself, and as a conference, union conference, division, and world church leader, Wilson’s focus on the proclamation of the Three Angels’ Messages—the texts in Revelation 14 that presage Jesus’ return—was paramount.

He “stood as a tower of righteousness in a desert of despair and he brought hope to our hearts,” said C. D. Brooks, whom Wilson called to be a union conference evangelist. Brooks said Wilson was loved in the African-American community for his stand against racism and for reconciliation within the Adventist movement.

“Our parents were wonderful parents, and we were blessed to grow up in a Christian home,” said Pastor Ted

N.C. Wilson, Neal Wilson’s son and current General Conference president. Noting the strong faith he and his father shared in the biblical teaching about the resurrection of the righteous at the Second Coming of Jesus, Wilson said confidently, “I will see my father again.”

### Adventist World Radio Holds Asia-Pacific Advisory

■ Fifteen countries in the Asia-Pacific region were represented at the quinquennial advisory of the Adventist World Radio (AWR), February 22 and 23, on the island of Batam, Indonesia.

The Asia-Pacific region comprises three world divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church: Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD), with headquarters in the Philippines; Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD), South Korea; and Southern Asia Division (SUD), India.

Attendees at this two-day event were communication directors, AWR studio directors, and program producers. Presenters at the advisory included Dowell Chow, AWR world president; Greg Scott, AWR vice president; Kent Sharpe, AWR vice president for finance; Claude Richli, director for marketing and associate publisher of *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World* magazines; and two AWR board members, Dyane Pergerson

*Continued from page 5*

and Don Martin.

Jonathan Wagiran, AWR Asia-Pacific director; and Anniston Mathews, AWR program director, coordinated the event and made presentations.

AWR uses shortwave radio as its medium, and engages other media, such as the Internet, podcasts, iTunes, and social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter.

Greg Scott emphasized the importance of adherence to copyright laws. On this topic Don Martin emphasized that “broadcast producers must be extra careful by using copyrighted materials only with proper permission and credits.”

Information about the availability of funds was given by Kent Sharpe, to establish new projects for the advancement of the AWR ministry.

Wagiran gave an extensive report on the progress of AWR in the Asia-Pacific region and outlined his plans for the future. During the session it was announced that Indonesia was rated second to the United States in the use of social networks such as Facebook, which can be engaged into distributing AWR programs that are easily accessible through mobile phones.

—reported by Samuel Simorangkir, Southern Asia-Pacific Division



**AWR SEMINAR:** Delegates from 15 countries attended an Adventist World Radio seminar in Indonesia.

SSD PHOTO

## WORLD REPORT

Propelled by the focus on improving education throughout the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Inter-America, presidents and vice presidents of higher education institutions, as well as presidents of their governing boards, met for a special summit to review governing functions, management, and evaluation procedures for universities across the 13 universities in the territory.

More than 70 education leaders met to renew their commitment to Christian education as they gathered on the

# In Inter-America, Administrators Focus *Special summit reviews functions*

By LIBNA STEVENS,

campus of the Central American Adventist University in Alajuela, Costa Rica, March 2 and 3, 2011.

“This meeting was the first step to establishing good management practices as identified by the administrators of our institutions,” said Gamaliel Florez, education director for the church in Inter-America.

University administrators were able to see clearly the role and duty of each governing board or entity and the functions as managers of such institutions, explained Florez, who was joined by a team of speakers from the Inter-American Division (IAD) headquarters office as well as the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

“The boards should know that their role is to govern and not to manage closely,” added Florez. “In the same way, administrators were reminded that their function is to exercise their administrative duties without touching the areas established for the governing boards to act.”

Each of the Adventist institutions in the IAD is governed by the board or governing body of its respective union conference. The only exception is Montemorelos University in northern Mexico, which is operated by the division.

University leaders also established parameters for evalu-



**ADMINISTRATORS MEET:** University administrators from throughout Inter-America met during a summit to focus on improving management practices of institutions of higher education. The summit took place at Central American Adventist University in Alajuela, Costa Rica, March 2 and 3, 2011.

## on Improving Educational Institutions *and procedures for 13 universities.*

*assistant communication director, Inter-American Division, reporting from Alajuela, Costa Rica*

ating institutions by identifying the most efficient administrative practices at work in their institutions.

It was all part of a process to improve Adventist education for the nearly 17,000 students enrolled in the 13 Adventist universities and one junior college in Inter-America, said Florez of the meeting.

Improving the management of institutions was not only a focus of the summit but an opportunity for leaders to recommit to shape young people to grow spiritually, so they can fulfill the plan God has for them.

“You are not called to question the philosophy of Adventist Christian education,” said Florez, “but to guarantee that the institution you have been called to manage can continue fulfilling its mission. Our institutions should safeguard against any negative influence that can undermine students’ beliefs or distract them from being saved.”

It’s about providing an education that shapes the kind of professionals suitable to perform in their field of knowledge, explained Florez. “Are our universities centers of education for this world and for eternity? Are we helping our students cultivate a closer communion with God? These are the kinds of questions that will be part of a

thorough evaluation of our institutions,” he added.

Leaders voted on a statement of commitment “to promote reform and spiritual revival in all our universities, placing in first place the sacred Scriptures, the perfect norm of truth, as a source of all knowledge, and prayer as an instrument of spiritual strengthening,” among other declarations.

Spiritual strengthening is what university leaders focused on as they led their institutions on a special days of spiritual revival activities across their campuses in April.

The summit concluded with a ceremony honoring university leaders for their years of service in Adventist Christian education.

Speakers who led during the special summit included Lowell Cooper, general vice president of the Adventist world church, and from the Inter-American Division: Israel Leito, president; Elie Henry, executive secretary; Filiberto Verduzco, treasurer; Myrna Costa, vice president; Gamaliel Florez, education director; Efrain Velasquez, academic dean of the theological seminary; and Ekel Collins, vice president of student affairs at Montemorelos University. ●

# Freedom *to* Choose

*Jesus died to defend our right to choose.*

By TED N. C. WILSON

One of the most foundational of our distinctive Seventh-day Adventist beliefs, based directly on Scripture, is the belief in freedom of choice. Freedom of choice is really the central theme of the great controversy between good and evil. It reaches far back to before the beginning of time. God's system of government has always been based on His character; after all, "God is love" (1 John 4:8). Any obedience that stems from force or fear is contrary to God's principles. The devil attacked the foundation of God's system of government by claiming that no one worships God out of love, only out of fear. So God put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden, providing human beings freedom of choice—the choice to obey Him or not.

After our first parents were enticed into choosing Satan's rulership, they, in effect, lost their power of choice. There was no way back to the perfect state of loving obedience to God. The initiative had to come from outside. God had a solution. Before the creation of the earth God the Father, God the Son, and

God the Holy Spirit had formulated the plan of salvation, in which Jesus would take our place. So Christ came to this earth and lived a life of loving obedience to His Father, refuting Satan's claim that God's law of love could not be obeyed. He then died for us and paid the price for our sins that we may once again have the power of choice.

Christ's work for our salvation did not end with His death on the cross. He is interceding for us now in the Most Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary. The investigative judgment begun in 1844 (Dan. 8:14) revolves largely around choices, as the records of each individual's choice for or against God is being made public.

### **The Heart Must Be in It**

This is why Seventh-day Adventists vigorously promote the protection of the religious rights of any person. We want to protect the right of every person to make a decision for God. Of course, we do not want to protect inappropriate things that are completely against God's law, but we want everyone to be able to have the choice of believing in a loving and powerful God who has provided salvation for each of us. While we wish everyone would know and love the God of Scripture, we don't force this on anyone. Forcing someone to do even right things goes against God's will and

plays into Satan's lie about God. God must be obeyed out of love. This is the essence of religious liberty.

In most places people generally think that freedom to worship is a good thing. Most would say that they believe in religious liberty. When visiting various countries in which freedom of conscience is allowed, I thank government officials for the religious freedom provided to their citizens, indicating that this principle is the foundation of a strong society and nation. But the application of this principle is often very different.

In some places where no religious emphasis was allowed in the past, the political scene has changed, only to be replaced by a dominant religion that may be hostile to other religions. It appears that some people want religious liberty for themselves but not for others. This selective application of religious freedom is something that Seventh-day Adventists must guard against and never be guilty of, even as we grow numerically and in influence.

As we look back in history, we can see that whenever religion and politics are closely united, there is a potential for abuse. Often when predominant religious organizations have access to social and political leverage, there is the potential for diminishing personal freedoms for those who may not be in the majority. This is why it's impor-



**Ted N. C. Wilson** is president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.





tant that Seventh-day Adventists worldwide constantly take the initiative to familiarize local and national governments, civic leaders, other religious organizations, and business leaders with the beliefs we have and the need for religious liberty.

This must go further than just a list of beliefs, and must include our approach to life as advocates of freedom of conscience. When people get a better picture of *who* Seventh-day Adventists are, governments, other religious organizations, and leaders in various areas of activity will be able to see that Seventh-day Adventists are not some strange, dissonant group, but are people who have the welfare of humanity at heart, and that we are committed to building up society and the nation. In this way our plea for religious freedom will be far better understood and received.

### **Knowing Who We Are**

The Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department (PARL) of the

General Conference produces excellent materials and works diligently to raise awareness of the issue of religious freedom worldwide by influencing thought leaders. However, this is not enough. We need every Seventh-day Adventist to understand, become involved in, and promote the issue of religious liberty and freedom of conscience. We all have to communicate our understanding that life is an all-encompassing gift, created by God, involving the physical, mental, social, and spiritual facets of our lives.

Of all people on this earth, Seventh-day Adventists should be the friendliest and most proactive in demonstrating who we are, what we are, what we stand for, and how we can help build positive societies. Wherever we are we must look for opportunities to associate with people while not giving up our distinctive beliefs in any way. While we don't believe in ecumenism, we must look for opportunities to work with people in helping them make good choices. As we make

friends we will be asked to explain our distinctive beliefs and lifestyle choices. This will provide us with opportunities to explain ourselves, and help people to know who we are and why we are such advocates of religious liberty.

We will have the opportunity to share our faith personally and to share Christian literature, including the wonderful book *The Great Controversy*, which its author, Ellen White, indi-

cated she wished to have more widely circulated than any of her other books. This particular book dramatically shows the importance of religious liberty and the need to make right choices in following God. Why not reread this book this year in preparation for a wonderful worldwide distribution program in 2012 and 2013?

Even in places where religious freedom is practiced there is always the threat of losing what is not valued and appreciated. This is why constant vigilance is the price of religious freedom. Religious liberty is not just peculiar to Seventh-day Adventists—it is something that Seventh-day Adventists are uniquely qualified to champion for the world at large.

### **Showing Who We Are**

A friend of mine had a sign that stated, "Preach the Gospel Always—When Necessary, Use Words." Being a Seventh-day Adventist goes so much further than just a set of beliefs or a chosen lifestyle. Ultimately it is about

## WORLD VISTA

our personal relationship with God and our treatment of others. It is about the choices we make that ultimately place us completely in God's hands as we allow Him to work in us through the Holy Spirit. We must clearly understand that we are saved by grace, and are completely dependent and indebted to a loving and powerful God who not only created us but redeemed us. When this happens, our lives will not take on a mechanistic, legalistic approach to our faith. Rather, our lives will take on a dynamic that is Spirit-filled because of our gratefulness and complete surrender to God.

There's a saying: "There is more religion in a loaf of bread than one might think." When we share a loaf of bread with a neighbor, or help someone with some basic needs, someone in prison, someone who is having trouble in their own home or marriage—wherever it might be, when we are actually helping people, that is where we are powerfully telling the world who Seventh-day Adventists are.

### Championing Freedom

Even while we champion religious freedom we know from prophecy that at some time in the future a number of factors will come together that will begin to curtail freedom of conscience all over the world. However, we should still be optimistic about the future, because we know the *end* of the story. The Bible assures us of the prophetic destiny for God's people. When I read books like *The Great Controversy*, I know that God's church will go through to the end, and that God has His hand over His church.

As we guard and champion the precious gift of religious liberty let us use the freedom to point people to the Originator of choice, a loving and wonderful God. ●



# A One Day Church

In a small community just outside Choluteca, Honduras, a One Day Church made of bare steel posts, steel beams, and steel roofing stands atop a simple concrete floor. The congregation is too poor to add walls, but that didn't stop them from using the church as the center for children's ministry over the Christmas holidays last year.

Maranatha's 2010 Christmas Family Project team was there to help build a new 900-student school.

Despite the building activities going on around them, a group of Vacation Bible School specialists spent most of each day holding a Christmas VBS adventure series for children from the local community.

Seventy-five children walked to the One Day Church on the first afternoon. They must have spread the "good news," as attendance quickly grew to more than 200 children in the days that followed.

Local families joined with volunteers from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States to present "live" Bible stories, teach basic health practices, and help the children build a prayer chain to wind through the steel beams of the church.

On the last afternoon the church was packed with children who sang so loudly that the whole town came to listen. The children cut out paper angels, gave them bright crowns, and sang about heaven with an eagerness that brought tears to everyone's eyes.

The team had prepared gifts for only 200 children, but more than 230 children showed up for the last meeting. The teenage volunteers asked what they should do, and one of the adult volunteers said, "Remember how Jesus blessed the fish and bread? Let's ask Him to bless the gift bags!"

When all 200 bags had been distributed, two additional sacks filled with more gift bags suddenly appeared—some marked "boy," and others marked "girl." All 230 children received gift bags that day, with a handful left over.

And the prayer chain? The completed chain trailed nearly two times around the church, each link containing a special prayer:

"God, help my mama get well."

"Thank You for bringing new friends to my town."

"Jesus, please take me home soon—like today!"

*The One Day Church program is a collaborative effort between the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries (ASI), and Maranatha Volunteers International. The One Day Church initiative was originally created and developed by Minnesota businessman and ASI member Garwin McNeilus. These stories come to you each month from Maranatha's "storyteller," Dick Duerksen.*





# Hypertension

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES and PETER N. LANDLESS

**I have been diagnosed with high blood pressure, and my doctor has placed me on medication. My blood pressure seems to be improving and better controlled. One of my neighbors had lunch with me recently and was concerned about my diet. Surely I can eat whatever I want to if I am on medications and the blood pressure is improved?**

Your neighbor is well informed; medications alone are not the only aspect of high blood pressure treatment. It's very important to apply lifestyle changes that include a healthful diet, maintaining ideal body weight, regular exercise, and no tobacco or alcohol.

High blood pressure is a common problem. Approximately 1 billion people worldwide have high blood pressure, and this number is projected to increase to almost 1.6 billion by the year 2025. This shows a relentless progression of this dangerous condition. High blood pressure is responsible worldwide for 7.6 million deaths from heart and vascular disease every year.

Blood pressure is produced by the interaction of the heart pumping blood through the blood vessels and the various phases of this process, as well as by the wonderfully created arteries and veins. There are two numbers that are used to record blood pressure: an upper number, or systolic reading, and a lower number, or diastolic reading. The systolic pressure is produced by the pumping action of the heart (ventricular contraction), which pushes blood into all the blood vessels of the body. This is a reflection of the work the heart does to sustain life. The diastolic pressure reflects the drop in pressure when the heart relaxes during diastole (rest phase) and fills again with blood in between each heartbeat. This pressure is dependent on the muscle structure, especially of the smaller arteries (arterioles or resistance vessels), which assist in the

maintenance of blood flow.

It's important to review and know the numbers that define normal blood pressure and when intervention is needed for rising blood pressure readings. There are four categories of numbers:

1. Normal—under 120/80
2. Prehypertension—systolic 120-139, or diastolic 80-89
3. Stage 1 hypertension—systolic 140-159, or diastolic 90-99
4. Stage 2 hypertension—systolic 160 or higher, or diastolic 100 or higher

It's important to know your numbers because each category has recommendations for steps that need to be taken regarding treatment, starting with lifestyle changes for prehypertension and medications as needed.

High blood pressure is known as the “silent killer” because often there are no symptoms. Therefore it's vital to know your numbers.

## Diet and Hypertension

Your question about diet is pertinent and important. As noted earlier, high blood pressure is becoming more common. In populations of most industrialized countries, high blood pressure increases dramatically with age. Some groups, however, including strict vegetarians whose diet consists mainly of vegetable products and have a low salt (sodium) intake, show no increase in the incidence of high blood pressure with aging.

The association of improved outcomes of hypertension and diet have now been extensively studied. The

dietary patterns that have been proven to lower blood pressure place emphasis on fruits and vegetables and low-fat dairy. In addition, they include whole grains, nuts, and unsaturated vegetable oils. The best results are obtained when the salt intake is limited as well (1.2 grams or 1,200 milligrams per day). In the classic studies dietary approaches to stop hypertension (DASH) included poultry and fish, although these can safely be eliminated. Sweets and sugar-containing beverages are discouraged.

Patients following the DASH and other similar diets have better control of blood pressure, and where medications are needed—as they often are—they are more effective and doses may even be lowered.

The take-home message is that medication alone is not adequate treatment for hypertension without lifestyle interventions, and dietary measures are very important in the overall approach.

Reference: *New England Journal of Medicine*, June 3, 2010, pp. 2102-2112.



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



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

They looked unattractive, rough, and ugly—nothing to write home about.

An employee of the industrial plant we were visiting scooped them up into a huge drum. Then he added sand, sawdust, and water, and closed the drum hermetically. He pressed a button, and the dance of the barrel began. It shook, it twisted, it turned and rotated. The noise was deafening yet intriguing. Dozens of barrels moved and shook in

### Tumbled Gemstones and the Church

Seeing the transformation of an ugly rock into a polished gemstone reminded me visually of the church. Not a building, not an organization, but a community of believers from all walks of life with different ethnic and racial backgrounds. There are rough edges on everyone, and they all find themselves tumbled together—in church.

Growing up in the Black Forest of Germany, which was blessed with

### Polishing the Rough Edges

Does your brother or your sister, sitting next to you in church, irritate you at times? Do you find yourself sighing when you see a certain name in the bulletin (“not him again!”)? Does the theological hobbyhorse of somebody in church cause you to take a *deeeeeeep* breath? I’m sure most of us have felt these emotions, even though we are glad to be part of God’s end-time church and feel committed to the mission of the Seventh-day



# Rough Edges

By GERALD A. KLINGBEIL

*God's surprising tools*

the plant, and as we looked on from a high vantage point nothing gave away the precious content of these drums. Yes, the rocks looked unattractive, rough, and ugly when they entered the drums, but as we saw another drum being opened after weeks of constant motion, the transformation was astounding. Covered by dust and mud, the most amazing semiprecious stones appeared. Tigereye, rose quartz, amethyst, agate, jasper, and dozens more, their rough edges gone, rounded and shiny, were carefully sorted according to size and quality. Pinks, dark blues, whites, reds, greens suddenly seemed to lighten the room.<sup>1</sup>

large snowfalls, as a teenager I loved cross-country skiing and joined a club. Everyone in the club cherished cross-country skiing and was willing to train hard in order to run good races. Church, however, is not like a club. Rather—and Scripture uses this metaphor (Eph. 1:5, 17; 2:18, 19)—it is like a family. Just imagine cross-country skiers who do not like the trainer or some of their corunners. They could just quit the club and find another club more to their liking. In a family (as well as in church) we do not have this option. We are part of something bigger that is not built around our likes and dislikes.



Adventist Church. Conflict, minor and major irritations, however, seem to be part of families (and churches) all over the world. We are not naturally God-directed, but self-centered—and human.

The New Testament contains a number of stories that reflect conflict in the early church. In some cases these tensions may have been the result of conflicting personalities or the feeling of having been let down by somebody (see Acts 15:37-40; 13:13 regarding John Mark). At other times conflict resulted from theological differences. Acts 15 suggests that the first Jerusalem council included lots of (noisy and contrary) discussion and arguments.<sup>2</sup> There is, however, one story that highlights a bit of the polishing process that is part of being church.

Remember Peter in Antioch and his confrontation with Paul? Scripture provides only a brief glimpse into this unhappy episode of conflict in Galatians 2:11-14. Its inclusion in the sacred record reminds us that nobody is infallible—not Peter, not Paul, not you or me. Ellen White's comments on this story highlight a common thread in church conflicts, where leadership positions (at all levels) may lead to inflated egos and warped perspectives: "The history of this [Peter's] departure from right principles stands as a solemn warning to men in positions of trust in the cause of God, that they may not fail in integrity, but firmly adhere to principle."<sup>3</sup>

When Peter changes his practice of eating with Gentile believers because of the pressure of brothers from Jeru-

salem, Paul cannot keep quiet and "opposes" (see verse 11, NIV)<sup>4</sup> Peter. The Greek term used here is strong: James 4:7 employs the same term exhorting Christians to "resist the devil." How did Peter take it? Galatians does not tell the full story. Paul uses this opportunity to, again, exalt the gospel, the good news of salvation by grace. I imagine that Peter understood—and repented. He was ready to accept critique. He was part of the big "drum" called church containing "semiprecious stones" with hard and rough edges.

### God's Polishing Work

As I've pondered God's work of polishing rough edges in my life (and in His church), I have gleaned a number of lessons from Scripture that may also be helpful to Adventists in the twenty-first century.

1. Humility is a key ingredient for the church "drum." Jesus Himself invites us to learn from Him who is gentle and "lowly in heart" (Matt. 11:29).<sup>5</sup> Peter himself calls us to "be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility" (1 Peter 5:5). Humility is like a healing salve when sharp edges cause injury, and is an excellent way to communicate even direct criticism.

2. Recognition of error and repentance does not come easily, but needs to be part of our church life. When the criticism is brought forward in humility and according to scriptural principles, it is time to say, "I was wrong; please forgive me." Tension between brothers and sisters may hurt at times, but should ultimately bring us closer together.

3. According to Jesus' guidelines in Matthew 18:15-20, conflict and sin in church require a multistep solution approach. Approaching a brother directly will often give better results than a public showdown. There is, however, another principle that

requires attention: public sin also requires public rebuke and resolution. Paul confronted Peter "before them all" (Gal. 2:14), as this concerned a theologically significant issue that pertained to the entire church.

4. In line with the drum illustration, it is important to remember that behind the rough edges, the hard corners, the often upsetting mannerisms, and the many other minor and major irritants lies something precious—a brother or sister, made in the image of God and redeemed by the blood of Jesus, someone who far exceeds the beauty and value of a semiprecious stone. Fearless Paul, who seldom minced words when he saw the need for decisive action, reminds us of an important principle in Philippians 2:3: "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself."

That's good advice for the ever-moving and ever-grinding church "drum." ●

<sup>1</sup> The Mineral World, owned by Topstones, in Simonstown, close to Capetown, South Africa, is definitely worth a visit. Stop by online at [www.scratchpatch.co.za/index.html](http://www.scratchpatch.co.za/index.html) and [www.topstones.co.za/index.html](http://www.topstones.co.za/index.html) and read about the amazing process of tumbled gemstones.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek term in Acts 15:2 that the NKJV translates as "dispute" can also be translated as "controversy, debate, discussion."

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 189.

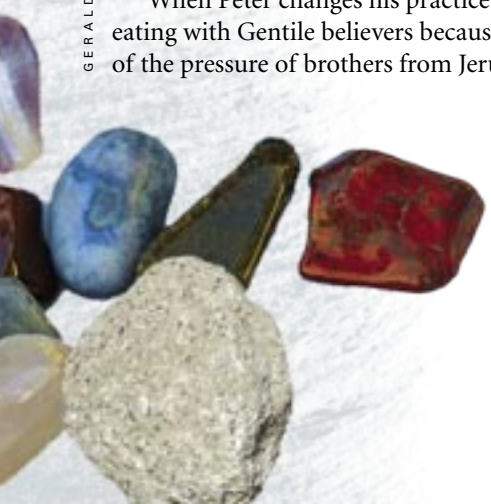
<sup>4</sup> Texts credited to NIV are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

<sup>5</sup> Other versions translate here "humble" (NIV, NASB, NRSV). Scripture quotations marked NASB are from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. Bible texts credited to NRSV are from the *New Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.



Gerald A. Klingbeil is an associate editor of the *Adventist World* magazine and lives with his wife,

Chantal, and their three daughters in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.



Not long ago my work responsibilities took me to Hong Kong for three weeks. I'm a theology professor, and I was invited to teach a class on the four Gospels to a group of Chinese pastors. Two experiences from that visit brought into sharp focus deeper realities of the great battle between good and evil taking place around us.

### A House of God

On my last Sabbath in Hong Kong I was invited to preach in the Filipino Adventist church. Hong Kong is affluent, so I anticipated an attractive church building with adequate, functional facilities. The reality was quite different. The street we entered was an unassuming apartment block on which the meeting hall—hardly bigger than my living room—was located. About 70 people, mostly women, sat closely together. Sabbath school had just begun.

As I took my seat, I was welcomed with warm smiles and handshakes. The lesson study was ably led by a lay leader. The congregants had studied well, and the discussion was lively and personal. I noticed that several people had tears in their eyes. Life is not always easy for them. Many had left families behind in villages in order to find work—which was often grueling—so they could earn money to send back home. As I looked around the room at these dear people, I was nearly moved to tears myself.

After the service we had lunch together. The meal was simple but tasty. I was then free to return to my guest room to rest, but several people asked me to stay for the afternoon program. Though a rest sounded inviting, I decided to stay.

The time was 1:57 p.m., and soon the afternoon program would begin. Suddenly I realized that as the guest speaker, I might be asked to preach again. In my mind I began to reformulate one of my recent sermons—and I was just in time. At 2:00 the program started with prayer and a song; the leader then announced that the time would be given to me.

I preached from Matthew's Gospel about the love of God, and I again saw people in tears. We then had a Bible study on the life of Christ.

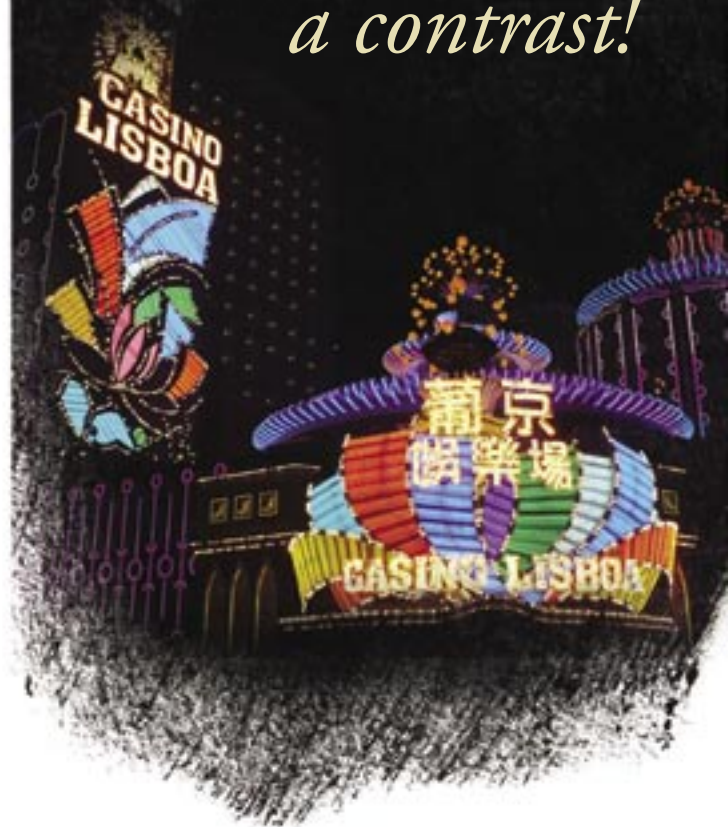
*The program is probably over now*, I thought, but once more the program leader announced that the time would be given over to me. I was completely unprepared. I offered a silent prayer and said that we would have a question-and-answer session. This was followed by a sermon on prophecy. We then sang, prayed, and closed the meeting.

It was now evening, and one of the members traveled with me to my guest room, more than an hour away.

# A House of GOD and a House of LOSS

By KIM PAPAIOANNOU

*What a contrast!*



“Will you be going home?” I asked when we reached our destination. “No,” he answered. “I will go back to the church.”

Suddenly I realized that to these people, church is not something they do out of habit once a week. Church is a haven for them. They live difficult lives, often in challenging circumstances. Church is their home—the place where they are accepted and loved, where they feel part of the large, beautiful family of God. They come tired, sometimes broken, but leave spiritually renewed with fresh courage to face another week.

I looked back on my day. I had preached three sermons. In a sense I felt tired, yet I also felt refreshed—spiritually refreshed and invigorated. I had felt the presence of God in the love, the kindness, and the deep spiritual experience of those brothers and sisters in Christ whom I had met for the first time. This church visit truly had been a house-of-God experience.

### **A House of Loss**

The next morning a local pastor took me to visit Macau, known for beautiful Portuguese colonial architecture and its many casinos. When we first arrived, hawkers inundated us with leaflets and vouchers for the casinos. We then noticed a row of buses offering free rides into the city. A free ride sounded good, so we hopped on a bus and a few minutes later were dropped off in front of a casino. We decided to go in just to see what it was like and to find a place to eat.

My pastor friend and I had already been given two vouchers worth a total of US\$30. Soon after we entered the place, a woman approached and said that we had been randomly chosen to receive a gift. She gave us two envelopes. Inside was the equivalent of US\$150 in additional vouchers. Between the two of us we now had vouchers worth \$180. They obviously wanted us to stay and gamble. Instead, we used the vouchers to purchase a vegetarian meal in the casino’s Japanese restaurant. We also took the opportunity to visit with the chef and shared the gospel message with him.

Back in the hotel lobby, everything shone in opulence—the floor, the decorations, the walls, the sheer abundance of space. A group of singers wandered the corridors serenading the guests with Asian-Latino music. We noticed a large golden calf surrounded with gifts and brilliant light. My mind immediately went to the golden calf of Exodus 32. This calf was not displayed in memory of Exodus; the Chinese New Year was fast approaching, and it was to be the

Year of the Ox. Yet the parallel with Exodus 32 was too strong to discount.

The people gambling at the casino seemed to be enjoying themselves. Alcohol and soft drinks are offered free. But despite some laughter and excitement, my pastor friend and I noticed several individuals apparently experiencing deep and painful financial losses. Some, it seemed, had just wasted away all their savings. *Despondency is never far away in a casino, nor is the potential for violence*, I thought to myself as I noted the metal detectors by the doors.

### **What a Contrast!**

It was then that the irony hit me. All these trappings—the vouchers, the free meals and drinks, the beautiful music, the decadence—are but a hook to grab prospective victims. The entire setup was not to entertain but to separate people from their money. Just the day before, on Sabbath, in the humble environment of a small hall in an unassuming apartment building, I sensed the presence of God. People went into that building wounded but left healed. In the opulence and magnificence of the casino, however, many people go in whole but leave wounded and despondent.

What a glaring contrast between the ways in which God and Satan work. God—ever loving, ever true—will work in any environment, whether it is humble or rich, to heal, bless, and offer a peace that surpasses all understanding. By contrast, Satan is the ultimate loser. Having nothing of substance to offer, he focuses on gratifying the senses and then destroys peace and wholeness. He leads his unsuspecting victims to ruin. His houses are but places of loss and pain. And they abound.

Thank God for the opposite reality: for places of worship such as the Filipino Adventist church in Hong Kong and the thousands of similar facilities throughout the world for those dear members who love the Lord and the people around them. As long as there are people and places of worship such as these, there is hope for this world.

May every Adventist church be a house of God in which wounded people can become whole. ●



**Kim Papaioannou** is a New Testament professor at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) in the Philippines.



*Adugnaw Worku, made the following presentation (abridged here) to the graduates of Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, Texas, United States, on December 17, 2009.*

—EDITORS.

**W**hat a difference education makes—especially Christian education! Most college graduates begin their education in first grade when they are 6 or 7 years old. They complete elementary school at about 13 or 14, and high school by age 18. By about age 22 or 23 they graduate from college. My own experience during those early formative years, however, was much different.

#### **Childhood in Ethiopia**

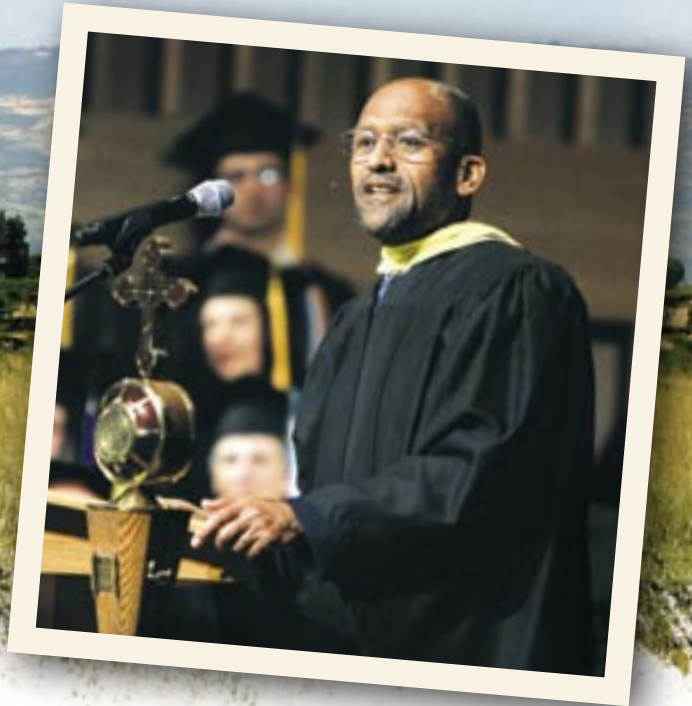
At age 7 I became a shepherd. I roamed the vast meadows and rolling hills of rural northwest Ethiopia together with goats, sheep, cows, and a few donkeys. This was my daily chore from dawn to dusk until I was 12 years old. I then handed over the shepherding assignment to my

# A Hand Out and a Hand Up

*Adventist education made the difference.*

By ADUGNAW WORKU





younger brother and moved on to the family farm. There I learned to plow the field with a pair of oxen and to plant, weed, and harvest. I discovered the dignity of work very early in life and assumed progressively greater responsibilities with each passing year.

My family and I were subsistence farmers. We grew everything we needed to live on. The work was backbreaking, and we literally lived by the sweat of our brows. This was not a matter of choice, but rather of survival. My career as a country farmer lasted until I was 15 years old.

**A Life-changing Event**

At age 15 I had a devastating accident that left me blind and disfigured in my left eye. The best medicine men and women of my village tried to help me with traditional remedies, but nothing worked. So my family decided to send me to a modern hospital. I walked with a group of merchants to the nearest hospital, a journey that took two days. That hospital happened to be a Seventh-day Adventist mission hospital in the middle of “nowhere.” My family and I were not Adventists, but many of my mother’s relatives were. I therefore knew a little bit about that faith.

When I arrived at the mission compound, I found three things: a church, a school, and a hospital. The philosophy and practice of building a church, a school, and a health center have long been characteristic of Seventh-day Adventists worldwide. That is how the Adventist Church began its work in the 1860s and 1870s—it built a church, a sanitarium, and a college in Battle Creek, Michigan, United States. This practice is deeply rooted in the Adventist philosophy of achieving a harmonious development of the spiritual, physical, and mental powers. It wasn’t unusual, therefore,

that I found these three facilities in that mission compound in northwest Ethiopia some 50 years ago.

While I was there seeking treatment, I closely observed the students at the school. I watched what they were doing, how they dressed, and how they conducted themselves. I sensed immediately that they had something special that I didn’t have. I knew instinctively that education is inherently useful. I noticed 7- and 8-year-olds reading and writing. And there I was at 15 years of age unable to even sign my name. I was an illiterate peasant, and I knew it.

The desire to go to school became overwhelming, and I decided to find a way to attend. But I had two big problems: I didn’t have permission from my parents, and I didn’t have any money at all. I had only the clothes on my back. In my rural culture, parental permission is very important. Parents in rural Ethiopia wield considerable power and influence over their children. They choose their children’s careers, their spouses, their religion, and their place of residence. But even though the idea of going against my parents’ wishes weighed heavily on me, my intense desire to attend school was greater.

**God Answers a Young Man’s Prayer**

The lack of parental permission and money seemed to be insurmountable problems, and in those days I didn’t know how to pray formally. But I do remember offering a very short prayer again and again: “God, please help me.” “Dear God, please help me.” The Lord heard that simple

**Adugnaw Worku** is head librarian at Pacific Union College in Angwin, California, United States.



prayer and answered it miraculously. At age 15 I became a proud first grader in the middle of the school year. I was exceedingly happy and grateful, and I still consider that day to be the time of my second birth.

I was 20 when I came to know an ever-loving and ever-forgiving personal God and joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church through baptism. I learned in my Bible classes and in Sabbath school and church that this personal God has very high standards and expectations, but He never casts out a repentant sinner from His presence. He forgives and says, “Go, and sin no more,” but He never says, “Go away.” Never! That discovery has given my life direction, meaning, purpose, peace, and stability.

### **Help From Missionaries**

At age 22 I graduated from the eighth grade—first in my class and in the state after taking the national examination. That wasn’t too bad for a peasant boy! That same year I met a wonderful American missionary family from southern California in that mission compound, and they took me into their home as one of their own. Dr. Harvey Heidinger was the medical doctor in the hospital. His sister-in-law, Carolyn Stuyvesant, was a nurse. Elizabeth Heidinger, Dr. Heidinger’s wife, was our “mama” at home.

This missionary family left the comforts and conveniences of southern California and traveled to that remote mission outpost in northwest Ethiopia where there were few modern amenities. I am so thankful that they did, because they changed my life. They financed my education, as well as that of my siblings, all the way through college. And what a difference education in general—and Christian education in particular—has made in our lives! Like most people, I measure my success in life by the heights to which

I have climbed. But I have never forgotten the depths from which I have come. This dichotomy makes my gratitude to God and to godly people even deeper and greater.

Thanks to those generous missionaries, I attended an Adventist boarding academy for all four years, and graduated first in my class and as class president at age 25. After high school I enrolled at Avondale College in Australia. I graduated from there at age 30, and then went to Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States, for graduate school. So I’m a product of Adventist education through and through. And not only am I grateful for it, I’m also proud of it. It may appear that I was late for everything, but I got it all done eventually. I was married at 36 and became a father at 40. Well, what can I say? Call me a late bloomer.

### **The Benefits of Adventist Education**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church commits enormous amounts of financial, human, and material resources to educate its youth. It provides young people with an opportunity to find a personal God in a safe and supportive environment, where they can ask about and explore the fundamental issues of life. The purpose of Christian education is to help young people discover a loving, forgiving, personal God and to develop an unshakable faith in Him. It’s also to help our youth develop their God-given talents in a distinctly Adventist Christian way, and then serve God and humanity.

In her book *Education* Ellen G. White clearly states the mission of Adventist schools. She writes: “True education means more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious develop-



ment of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.”<sup>1</sup> Just pages later she adds: “It is the work of true education ... to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men’s thought.”<sup>2</sup> Summarized in these statements are well-rounded thoughts and reflections on education, love to God and our fellow humans, and service to both. This is the reason Adventist schools exist and why the church expends a great deal of resources to run them.

### **Uncompromising Integrity**

Again in the book *Education* Ellen White describes another vital objective of Adventist schools: “The greatest want of the world is the want of [men and women] ... who will not be bought or sold, [men and women] who in their inmost souls are true and honest, ... [men and women] whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, [men and women] who will stand for the right though the heavens fall. But such a character is not the result of accident.... A noble character is the result of self-discipline ... [and] the surrender of self for the service of love to God and [humanity].”<sup>3</sup>

Do you have uncompromising personal integrity? If you do, make sure you include it on your résumé. Potential employers and graduate school admission committees will take you seriously and will, in all likelihood, decide in your favor. The world desperately needs men and women with uncompromising personal integrity. The current economic crisis in the United States that has left millions of people jobless and homeless was caused by well-educated men and women who hold degrees from prestigious educational institutions but have little integrity.

Studies of retail business fraud in the United States reveal billions of dollars in losses every year through theft.<sup>4</sup> And 60 percent of those thefts are committed by employees.<sup>5</sup> More than 30 percent of new businesses fail because of employee dishonesty.<sup>6</sup> Tragically, these are not isolated incidents.

### **All God’s Children**

Adventist schools teach that we are all God’s children. If we accept God as our Father, we cannot pick and choose who our brothers and sisters are. You are my brother and my sister, and I am your brother, no matter who we are or where we come from. We don’t always live up to this lofty ideal, but it is our ideal. That’s why missionaries cross the ocean and help people on the other side of the world. I’m a living example of such brotherly and sisterly love.

Many scientists, as well as the Bible, tell us that there is only one human race, not many. We Adventists take that a step further and assert that we are all God’s children, and therefore brothers and sisters. And as such, we are our brothers’ and our sisters’ keeper. God will always ask us, “Where is your brother? Where is your sister?” Whatever we do to the “least” of His children, He will consider as done to Him.

I have translated 102 children’s songs from English into Ethiopian, and I have three favorites. They are “Jesus Loves Me,” “Jesus Loves the Little Children,” and “This Little Light of Mine.” These personal and inclusive songs are not just for children; their message is for all time and for people of all ages and races. That is what we teach in our schools.

### **Learning Never Ends**

Learning does not end at graduation from college, or even from graduate school. It’s a lifelong process. As Adventist Christians, we believe that this life is a rehearsal for the life to come, and common to both is learning. Throughout this life—and eternity—we learn about God, His vast and complex universe, and ourselves. Lifelong learners believe that gaining new knowledge and acquiring new skills are inherently worthwhile. Besides, this has practical value. Studies indicate that workers between the ages of 18 and 38 will change jobs an average of 10 times.<sup>7</sup>

So never stop learning. Lifelong learners will be well served in an ever-changing world. ●

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> <http://ezinearticles.com/?Employee-Theft-Higher-in-the-United-States&id=5406092>.

<sup>5</sup> [www.lpinnovations.com/page/16-incident\\_resolution/?utm\\_campaign=Employee-Theft-Incidents-PPC&utm\\_source=adwords&gclid=CLrfrprwkacCFYnd4AodZCxMbg](http://www.lpinnovations.com/page/16-incident_resolution/?utm_campaign=Employee-Theft-Incidents-PPC&utm_source=adwords&gclid=CLrfrprwkacCFYnd4AodZCxMbg).

<sup>6</sup> [www.quickbackgroundchecks.com/blog/tag/employee-background-checks](http://www.quickbackgroundchecks.com/blog/tag/employee-background-checks).

<sup>7</sup> <http://careerplanning.about.com/b/2006/07/28/how-often-do-people-change-careers.htm>.

Many Christians today think of the law only in terms of judgment and the punishment that results from disobedience. Unfortunately, we have forgotten to love the law!

As the longest psalm in the Bible, Psalm 119 is not about God’s love or even His holiness, but is dedicated to delighting in God’s law. This rejoicing reflects the result of meditation on the introduction to the Ten Commandments: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (Ex. 20:2). Though often skipped over, this introductory verse sets the tone for this most well-known set of God’s laws. The purpose of the law is not obedience to a strict tyrant, or the appeasement of a capricious deity. Instead, God Himself gives the main reason for keeping His law: personal gratitude for His redemption.

The book of Deuteronomy expands and expounds upon the Ten Commandments in sermon form. The word “Deuteronomy” means “second law,” but in Hebrew, the book is actually referred to as “instruction” (or Torah). Every seven years, the people of Israel read the entire book together (Deut. 31:10-13). Even more important, Deuteronomy 17:14-20 instructs each king, as a representative of/example for the people, to write out for himself an entire copy of the law at the beginning of his reign. This passage showcases four of the main reasons for the importance of God’s law.

# Oh, How I Love

By A. RAHEL SCHAFER

**1.** *Obedience is a response of gratitude for deliverance*—“When you come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you, . . . you shall surely have a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses. . . . When [the king] sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book” (Deut. 17:14-18). The provision by God continues to form the foundation for obedience; the land and the kingdom itself come only through the work of God. The law represents a covenant between God and His people. Indeed, the entire book of Deuteronomy is structured like many political treaties of that time, beginning by recounting all the favors the Suzerain (God) has wrought for the vassals (Israel) in delivering them (from Egypt), and then laying out the stipulations of the covenant as a response of gratitude. In the New Testament as well, Jesus reminds His disciples that obedience to God’s law is closely tied to love for Him; He urges, “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15).

**2.** *Through meditation on God’s Word, God enables us to obey*—“And [the copy of the law that he wrote] shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law” (Deut. 17:19). Meditation on God’s instructions comes before obedience. Through time spent in God’s Word, God enables the king to keep the law. From the beginning, God’s people have always been those who keep His commandments while in a heart relationship with Him. God Himself promises to circumcise their hearts, so that they will be able to follow His statutes (Deut. 30:6). Thus, the Ten Commandments can be read as 10 promises (e.g., “[I promise,] you shall have no other gods before Me”). Jesus reiterates this principle in the New Testament by calling Himself the vine and His followers the branches, who will bear fruit only as they abide in Him, and He molds them into His image (John 15:1-8).




**A. Rahel Schafer** is a Ph.D. student in biblical and theological studies at Wheaton College. She and her husband, Kirk, love to backpack, climb mountains, and lead church youth groups.

**3.** *The law provides protection—* “That his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left” (Deut. 17:20). The law also functions to reveal the sinfulness of sin. Without the law, people would not know when they had

were known before Sinai (e.g., Gen. 2:2, 3; 4:8-12; 26:7; 39:7-9). Although Paul rejoices that he is free in Christ from bondage to the law, he equates this freedom in Christ with slavery to God (Rom. 6:15-22). The bondage Paul refers to is the bondage of sin that prevents us from keeping the law, but

people. The surrounding nations valued deities based on their perception of the god’s ability to protect and bless their people and land. Thus, for the sake of His name that His people had profaned before the world, God promises to give new hearts to His people, and to cause them to walk in His ways (Eze. 36:22). In the same way, our perspective on God’s law should encompass the cosmic significance of our obedience. When we obey God’s law, which is a reflection of His character, we are a witness to the universe that our God is faithful, just, and true (Matt. 5:16; Rom. 7:12; Heb. 8:8-10; 1 John 5:2, 3).

Christians ought not to be focusing on the difficulties of obedience to God’s law, but eagerly looking for every way possible to show our gratitude to our Savior. We have no hope of keeping the law on our own, but we have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and are being transformed into the image of Christ by the Holy Spirit. The law protects us from slavery to sin, and even provides many opportunities to witness and bring honor to God’s name. Rather than viewing the law as a burdensome requirement for salvation, we can joyfully share how God has delivered us from sin, and that it is our privilege to serve Him.

“Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day” (Ps. 119:97). 

# Your Law!

fallen off the straight and narrow path of conformity to the image of God. And yet, unlike the requirements of other deities, God’s law is not confusing or arbitrary (Deut. 30:11-16). Written in the interests of others, the law protects life and dignity, relationships and property. Thus, the law is not so much a barrier that keeps us from enjoying the world and its pleasures, but a fence that protects us from the world and its dangers.

Indeed, God’s law is everlasting and unchanging. The Ten Commandments

which is broken by accepting the perfect obedience of Christ in our behalf (Rom 8:3, 4). John the revelator reiterates that those who follow God at the end of time will keep His commandments (Rev. 14:12).

**4.** *God’s reputation is at stake—* “And that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel” (Deut. 17:20). Ultimately, keeping the law is about exonerating God’s name and character that have been dragged through the mud by the sins of His

## Law of GOD

The great principles of God’s law are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God’s love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age. These precepts are the basis of God’s covenant with His people and the standard in God’s judgment. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit they point out sin and awaken a sense of need for a Saviour. Salvation is all of grace and not of works, but its fruitage is obedience to the Commandments. This obedience develops Christian character and results in a sense of well-being. It is an evidence of our love for the Lord and our concern for our fellow men. The obedience of faith demonstrates the power of Christ to transform lives, and therefore strengthens Christian witness. (Ex. 20:1-17; Ps. 40:7, 8; Matt. 22:36-40; Deut. 28:1-14; Matt. 5:17-20; Heb. 8:8-10; John 15:7-10; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 John 5:3; Rom. 8:3, 4; Ps. 19:7-14.)

In 1895 James Edson White contacted his mother, Ellen G. White, about a special need. In America's Deep South were many freed slaves and their descendants, living in poverty and ignorance. At great peril Edson journeyed south to bring American Blacks not just spiritual instruction and hope but also the beginnings of an education. He produced a book to use in teaching reading, and then searched for religious material to practice their newfound skill. His mother's books had wonderful spiritual messages, but they were not easy reading, so Edson asked her for permission to adapt her writings for such a use. She wrote:

"Edson, you are at liberty to select from my writings the matter that is needed for the proposed simple tracts and

ten *Messiah* (2002) and *Blessings* (2008), paraphrases of *The Desire of Ages* and *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*. These have drawn a wide and appreciative readership, but this is not the only approach to the issue.

### Recent Adaptations

In attempting to introduce new readers to Ellen White's inspired insights, over the past decade the White Estate has produced a number of adaptations of her books at the request of various departments of the church. As the hundredth anniversary of the book *Education* approached, the North American Division Department of Education asked the White Estate to issue a new edition, updating the

# ADAPTING the WRITINGS of Ellen

By WILLIAM FAGAL

booklets for the Southern field.... You may be able, yourself, to simplify in a way that will suit you better" (*The Publishing Ministry*, p. 209). In response, the following year Edson brought out *Christ Our Saviour* under Ellen White's name, in which he simplified some of her materials on the life of Christ in order to reach a readership, including children, that could not easily have read *The Desire of Ages*.

Today we also see a special need. Though many people read the standard writings of Ellen G. White comfortably in their original English expressions, others stumble over some of the words and wrestle with lengthy sentences or complex nineteenth-century literary expressions. The percentage of Adventists, particularly young Adventists, in North America who read Ellen White's writings regularly has been declining for decades, partly because, some believe, of the difficulty some people have in reading these writings.

### Modern Paraphrases

One response to this problem has been to paraphrase Ellen White's writings to convey her concepts without necessarily following her wording. The White Estate has produced *A Call to Stand Apart* (2002), a paraphrased new compilation for young adults, and Jerry Thomas has writ-

language to some extent. The result was *True Education*, published in 2000. Its cover notes that it is an adaptation of *Education*, by Ellen G. White. Similarly, at the request of the General Conference Health Ministries Department, in 2005 the White Estate brought out an adaptation called *The Ministry of Health and Healing* for the hundredth anniversary of *The Ministry of Healing*.

These two titles reveal their connection to the original works, but like all adaptation titles, they differ from the original to make a clear distinction. They follow a precedent set nearly 30 years ago with the publication of *Steps to Jesus*, an adaptation of *Steps to Christ* for young people and those with limited English skills.

### Adaptations Are Not Paraphrases

These books are not paraphrases. For the most part, they follow the original work sentence by sentence and use much of Ellen G. White's original wording, though sometimes with a different word order. They will sound familiar to those who know the original books, but they may read more smoothly to some. Bible texts are quoted from the New King James Version.

### New Conflict Series for Teens

The White Estate is also developing an adaptation of the five-volume Conflict of the Ages Series—Ellen White's presentation of the great controversy theme. Those books are arguably her greatest literary and theological contribution to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. About five years ago the General Conference Sabbath School Department leaders approached the White Estate with a request to update the



**William Fagal** is an associate director of the Ellen G. White Estate at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.



**OLD AND NEW:** An early adaptation of *The Desire of Ages* along with the new adaptation especially for teens.

*Hero* (2009) tells Jesus' story from *The Desire of Ages*; and *Unlikely Leaders* (2010) parallels *The Acts of the Apostles*. The final volume, based on *The Great Controversy*, is in preparation.

### **Benefits of Adaptations**

The White Estate trustees hope that these five volumes will introduce more teens to the eye-opening concepts and insights found in Ellen White's writings, and that this will encourage them to make the effort to read Ellen White in the original. Using much of Ellen White's own vocabulary and the New King James Version, these volumes provide a kind of "step up" toward the original writings, making the transition to those originals a bit easier.

An additional benefit is that these books are proving attractive to more than teens. Adults of various reading abili-

# White *Is there a need?*

vocabulary of the Conflict Series. They were developing a new curriculum for the teen Sabbath school lessons, and they wanted to include suggested readings from Ellen White's books. "Can you give us something that is easier to read?" they asked. "We hear from young people who say they have a hard time understanding Ellen White's original vocabulary and struggle with the sentence structure."

The White Estate trustees decided to prepare editions of these volumes adapted for teens. The starting point for the newly proposed set was the condensed Conflict Series produced in the early 1980s, which had reduced each chapter by about 40 percent. So the adapted volumes are smaller than Ellen White's original books, making them more inviting to young readers.

Four of the five volumes are already in print (available at [www.adventistbookcenter.com](http://www.adventistbookcenter.com)): *The Beginning of the End* (2007), which corresponds to *Patriarchs and Prophets*; *Royalty and Ruin* (2008), representing *Prophets and Kings*; *Humble*

ties have responded well to them. Further, there is interest in them from countries in which English is a second language and an easier version would be welcome. In various places church leaders would like to translate these adaptations because people could buy these shorter volumes more economically, and the language is simpler and more direct.

### **Adaptations Filling a Need**

Adaptations will never take the place of the original, full volumes. The richness and power of Ellen White's writings comes through best in her original writings, and the church has no intention of replacing those with other editions. But adaptations are filling a need that will supplement and draw attention to the original works. They remind us that in these writings there is great value that we should not miss. They will help a new generation come to know and appreciate these writings that have already greatly blessed millions. ●

## **CATCH** *the* **VISION:** *In Your Own Language*

The Ellen G. White Estate has recently launched a new interactive, user-friendly Web site ([egwwritings.org](http://egwwritings.org)) featuring the writings of Ellen White in the original English, modern English adaptations, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Chinese, and Romanian. Material is available in a variety of formats including e-books, audiobooks, PDF files, and more. Devices supported by the site include the Amazon Kindle, iPad, and Barnes

and Noble Nook. The site also offers a free downloadable app for the iPhone and iPad. Social media options such as Facebook and Twitter are available for sharing.

To obtain hard-copy translations in languages not yet supported by the new site, visit [http://publishing.gc.adventist.org/publ\\_houses.html](http://publishing.gc.adventist.org/publ_houses.html) for a full listing of the 62 publishing houses operated worldwide by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Euro-Asia Division is geographically the largest Seventh-day Adventist territory in the world. It stretches across nearly half the globe, from eastern Europe to the Pacific Ocean, and from above the Arctic Circle to central Asia. If you were to travel the width of this division, you'd have to adjust your watch for 11 different time zones!

Euro-Asia consists of 12 countries, including the predominantly Christian nations of Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine; and the predominantly Muslim nations of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Each of these countries is highly diverse, with its own mix of ethnic groups, religions, and languages. But they share a common past: they were all once part of the former Soviet Union.

The rise of Communism in 1917 led to a loss of religious freedom in this region. By 1929 many Seventh-day Adventist churches had been confiscated or closed. Adventist publications were banned and religious meetings in private homes were strictly forbidden.

Hundreds of Seventh-day Adventists were arrested, imprisoned, or sent to labor camps for sharing their faith. Some even lost their lives. By 1938 no congregational worship services existed anywhere in Russia. Yet church members remained faithful to God.

When Communism fell in 1991, Soviet citizens experienced many new freedoms. Thousands were hungry for God, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church grew rapidly. But this surge in religious interest soon waned as people began to adopt the secular lifestyle of the West.

Today the church continues to grow, but progress is slow. Of the 280 million people in the Euro-Asia Division, fewer than 140,000 are Seventh-day Adventists.

Because religion was largely forbidden during Soviet times, many



Olesia



Margeurita

# Building Churches AND Children

By LAURIE FALVO

*Where the territory is vast and the challenge is daunting*

Christian believers are nominal followers of their faiths. Few read the Bible. Atheism and agnosticism are strong. Political chaos, inflation, and unemployment have left millions disillusioned and indifferent to religion. Yet many search for something spiritual that won't let them down.

Adventists in the Euro-Asia Division are reaching out to these seekers with something special. Through evangelism and one-on-one outreach they are touching hearts for Jesus.

## Siberia

Covered with virgin forests and waving grasslands, Siberia is the vast empty part of Russia to the east of the Ural Mountains. Life can be harsh there, with bitterly cold winters. But Adventist churches are drawing people into the warmth of God's love.

Krasnoyarsk is a city of about 1 million people with only five Adventist congregations. One of these meets in a simple house church.

Olesia was looking for a way to





Alexander

share Jesus with her friends and neighbors and felt impressed to start a small group Bible study. She invited Margeurita, who has been attending now for a year and a half.

“This is my family,” says Margeurita. “They are the closest people to me.... [Because of them] I know Jesus loves me and is always with me.”

Today Margeurita is a Seventh-day Adventist and is sharing her faith with others.

Evangelistic meetings and small groups such as the one Olesia helped start are winning hearts to Jesus. But as membership grows, there are no permanent church homes for new members to join.

Guillermo Biaggi, president of the Euro-Asia Division, underscores the lack of church buildings: “Our greatest challenge is to have more chapels here in this great division territory, so that church members and their guests can worship the true God and be prepared for heaven.”

The believers in Krasnoyarsk have purchased land and have laid plans to build a church.

Another area in Siberia where small groups and evangelism are helping to grow the church is Tomsk, a university city with a population of about 500,000. But only one house church, hidden away on a back street, represents the Seventh-day Adventist Church there. Some 180 Adventists live and worship in Tomsk. While the little house church seats only about 90 people, many more often squeeze in. There simply

isn't any room for new members!

Alexander is now a local elder at the house church in Tomsk. But a few years ago he planned to stir up trouble for the congregation in Tomsk. Convinced it was a sect, he went to the church determined to “rescue” a relative. But things didn't turn out as he planned.

“I came as an enemy to this place; I came to create a war between me and the church,” says Alexander. “But I decided I had to follow this lifestyle, because God showed me through those brothers and sisters His love, His smiles. I was just amazed by those relationships I developed.”

The Adventists in Tomsk have purchased land and are working toward building a new church large enough to accommodate two congregations. “We really need a new, nice building for worship that will become a witness in this city so others can join with us,” said Alexander.

### Azerbaijan

The Republic of Azerbaijan lies along the Caspian Sea south of Russia. Some 8 million people live in this country, but fewer than 5 percent are Christians, and only about 700 are Adventists. The Adventists worship in small groups and a few scattered churches across the country.

Sharing one's faith in Azerbaijan is difficult. Religious freedom is restricted, and those who belong to minority religions, or change their faith, are often persecuted.

In one city about 300 Adventist believers have purchased a building they hope to turn into a center to help people in their community. Currently they operate the Good News Café and hold training seminars for members. Future plans include an English-language school and a small clinic where they can present the health message. They hope soon to have a second Adventist congregation meeting in their city.

### Something for Children

The countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia make up one region of the Adventist Church called the Trans-Caucasus Union Mission. More than 16 million people live in these three countries, but only 2,000 of them are Adventists. Entire villages have no Adventist believers.

The children in these countries don't have access to Sabbath school materials in their own language. “It is very important to have materials for children, because new generations are forming right now,” says Sergo Namoradze, pastor of the Adventist church in Tbilisi, Georgia. “I belong to the generation that in the Soviet Union had nothing religious to read. If I had, maybe I would've been converted earlier. This new generation has to have these materials about the Bible and Jesus, as many materials as possible.”

The church in Euro-Asia faces many challenges to mission. But one-on-one sharing and evangelism are winning hearts to Jesus. Thousands are coming to Him and are eager to share their faith. But they need church homes in which to worship, and Sabbath school materials suited to their languages and comprehension levels. We can help provide these resources so that more and more people can know of Jesus' love.

*Your prayers and generous support of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering can make an eternal difference in the Euro-Asia Division. Please give generously. For more information about the challenges of reaching others for Christ, visit [www.AdventistMission.org](http://www.AdventistMission.org).*



Laurie Falvo is communications project manager for the Office of Adventist Mission.

**QUESTION:** *Has sin totally corrupted us? What about our free will? Are we not able to choose between good and evil?*

I cannot answer your three questions in this short column. In fact, the topics of the effect of sin on us and the nature of free will have been studied and discussed for centuries, with no unanimity of thinking. I will share some thoughts to stimulate your thinking. Let me begin with a paradox: *The Bible assumes that we have free will but teaches that we are enslaved by sin.* Hold on to that paradox and think about it.

**1. Enslaved by Sin:** The fall of Adam and Eve into sin radically altered human nature. The very rational and volitional center of the human being, the heart, was corrupted: “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” (Jer. 17:9, NIV).\*

The damage is irreparable; humans are not only incapable of understanding themselves, they also deceive themselves. No dimension of human nature is untouched by sin; therefore no one is righteous (Rom. 3:10) or by nature seeks God (Ps. 53:2, 3; Eph. 2:1-3). Sin is a human condition. Isaiah wrote: “All of us have become like one who is unclean [this is our natural condition], and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags [our actions]” (64:6, NIV); even the best of them are contaminated by our sinful condition. There is a natural enmity in the human heart against God that incapacitates us from seeking and doing good, or submitting to His will (Rom. 8:7). We are controlled by the selfish sinful desires of our fallen nature (verses 6-8). The situation is desperate because there’s nothing we can do to change it (Jer. 13:23). Humans exist under the lordship of sin, ruled by a despot and unable to do what, perhaps, they would like to do (Rom. 6:16; cf. 7:18-23). Free will?

**2. Condition of the Free Will:** Let me give you a working definition of free will (don’t take it to the bank!): Free will is the power to choose, independent of internal or external forces or conditions, that which we cannot control. If it’s true that we are enslaved by sin, then it’s difficult to


speaking about freedom of the will. But if that’s truly the case, it would be impossible to speak about our accountability for our actions. *Yet the biblical doctrine of judgment and retribution assumes that we have free will.*

We can argue that sin did not obliterate the image of God in us and that, therefore, we do have free will (Rom 3:23). If it’s part of God’s image and of our humanness, then we still have it. But this has to be properly understood. We have free will in a damaged or corrupted condition. The question is How damaged is it?

Let me make a suggestion: Sin redirected the function of the free will from selfless decisions that would benefit others to self-preservation. The situation is such that there is nothing we can do about it. Free will is still under the power of sin!

**3. God With Us:** If free will is a tool to actualize my selfishness, my corruption, then it’s not free at all, and therefore the question of our accountability has not been resolved. How do we get out of this dilemma? “Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Rom. 7:25, NIV).

After the Fall, the Son of God did not abandon us (Rev. 13:8). From that moment God has been working in the human heart, calling every individual to true freedom from the power of sin. Through the work of the Spirit, God has been creating in human hearts the desire and willingness to choose the good. This divine common grace engulfs the planet, takes the initiative, touches every individual (John 1:9), and awakens free will, enabling humans to choose Christ or to persist in their enslavement to sin, which is their natural condition. This silent work of the Spirit makes us responsible for our decisions.

There is true freedom only in Christ. 

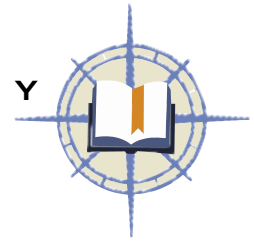


By  
ANGEL MANUEL  
RODRÍGUEZ

# Free to Choose

\*Texts credited to NIV are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

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



# END-TIME SYMBOLS

## *of the* Holy Spirit By MARK A. FINLEY

The Holy Spirit is a mystery to many Christians. They are confused about who He is and about how He works in our lives. But the Bible is extremely clear on the identity of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the divine, eternal third person of the Godhead. He is just as much part of the heavenly trio as the Father and the Son (see Matt. 28:19, 20; Eph. 2:18; 2 Cor. 13:14). In this lesson we will discover three symbols of the Holy Spirit that are used throughout the Bible.

### 1. What symbol of the Holy Spirit did Jesus share with His disciples?

*“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive” (John 7:37-39).*

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is symbolized as rivers of \_\_\_\_\_.

### 2. Why did Jesus choose water as a symbol of the Holy Spirit? What spiritual lessons can we find in this symbol?

*“For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring” (Isa. 44:3).*  
*“Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols” (Eze. 36:25).*

Water satisfies our \_\_\_\_\_ and cleanses us from our \_\_\_\_\_.

Nothing satisfies a thirsty individual like water. Water quenches that inner, raging thirst. As the Holy Spirit enters our lives, revealing Jesus’ love and truth, He satisfies our deepest longings and quiets our restless anxieties. The Holy Spirit quenches our thirst for the eternal.

Water also cleanses. When the Holy Spirit fills our life, He begins a process of cleansing us from our rebellious attitudes. Habits that defile our lives are cleansed through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Water also brings growth. When the showers of God’s Spirit fall upon us, we are filled with spiritual life and grow daily in Jesus’ grace (see Ps. 1:3).

### 3. What symbol of the mighty working of the Holy Spirit did Jesus use in His night visit with Nicodemus?

*“The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8).*

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is like the \_\_\_\_\_.



Wind is powerful. In this passage it represents the life-changing power of God through the Holy Spirit that is beyond our finite comprehension. His divine working is miraculous. In Ezekiel's vision of the "valley of dry bones" (Eze. 37), when the Holy Spirit breathed new life into dead bones they came to life. Through the Holy Spirit we become alive to spiritual life in Christ.

#### **4. Oil is used throughout the Bible as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. What aspect of the Holy Spirit's work does it represent?**

*"And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and sanctify them, that they may minister to Me as priests. And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'This shall be holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations'" (Ex. 30:30, 31).*

*"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil" (Acts 10:38).*

Oil was used to \_\_\_\_\_ Aaron and his sons for service in the earthly sanctuary.

God the Father anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit, empowering Him to do \_\_\_\_\_

and \_\_\_\_\_ those oppressed by the devil.

Oil represents the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It sets us apart as consecrated servants of Christ. Just as oil was used to consecrate the priests and the earthly sanctuary for God's service, the Holy Spirit sanctifies us to witness for our Lord.

#### **5. What was the great lack of the foolish virgins in Jesus' parable of the 10 virgins? What significance does this have for God's end-time church?**

*"And the foolish [virgins] said to the wise [virgins], 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves'" (Matt. 25:8, 9).*

The foolish virgins were unprepared for the Bridegroom's delay and ran out of \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **6. How did Jesus identify the spiritual problem of these foolish virgins?**

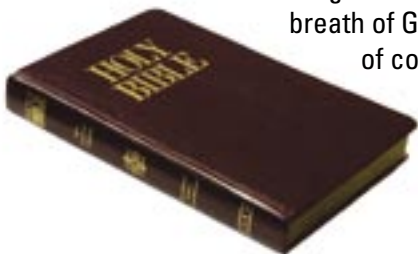
*"But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming" (Matt. 25:12, 13).*

The foolish virgins didn't know the \_\_\_\_\_ of their Lord's return,

and they were \_\_\_\_\_ when it happened.

The oil of the Holy Spirit sets apart, it consecrates, it sanctifies, it heals. The foolish virgins accepted a superficial religious experience. They didn't have an abiding, intimate experience with Jesus. That's why Jesus said, "I do not know you."

These symbols of the Holy Spirit speak to our hearts today. The symbol of water calls us to an inner cleansing of anything that may clog the channels of the mind to keep us from knowing Jesus intimately. The symbolism of wind invites us to open our minds to the breath of God to receive new life. And the symbolism of oil appeals to us to live lives of consecrated, intimate communion with God.



## LETTERS



### Motivator

I've been an Adventist for almost five years now, and reading church papers like *Adventist World* has never ceased to strengthen my

faith in God and His Word. My mom, brother, and I are the only Adventists in our family in a city where the Seventh-day Adventist Church is still growing. It has always been encouraging for me to read about others who have found the same faith I have, and how they cherish it above all else.

"The Little Diamond," by Chantal Klingbeil (December 2010), was such an inspiration to me as a young person to continue aspiring to greater heights for God's glory and the advancement of His kingdom. I love reading about the lives of the pioneers, as it gives me hope for my own trials and challenges me to be all for God that I can be.

I thank the staff and writers for making a difference in my life. You are God's voice and love letter to many people. May God continue to bless you.

ROCHELLE STANDER  
Nelspruit, South Africa

### Call for Prayer

I am so grateful for the publication of *Adventist World*. In these last days when people are running to and fro for some consolation and hope, when people are losing their faith in God, this magazine with living stories of how God is still in control is a blessing.

The December 2010 issue encouraged and inspired me. The article by

Charlotte Ishkanian entitled "One Man and His God" touched my heart. The preacher, Golden Lapani, is doing a great job for God in Malawi. He reminds me of the apostle Paul with his passion, dedication, and determination to spread the goodness of salvation through the power of Jesus Christ. There is no doubt that the God we serve is a miracle-performing God.

I urge people all over the world to pray for Brother Lapani and others who are risking their lives to serve God. Let's be on fire for saving souls, for healing the wounds of the brokenhearted, and for leading lost ones to Jesus.

LITTON PROSAD MOWALIE  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

### Power Unlimited

I enjoy every article in *Adventist World*, but there are unique feature articles that serve as a bridge to fill the gap of our emptiness. "The 'Invisible' Piano," by Wilhelmina Dunbar (December 2010), strengthened my



faith in the power of the Almighty. When people pray, God responds to their need from His abundant source of wealth. As long as we stop limiting the power of God, we can be thankful that He is always there to listen to our cries in times of need.

More power to *Adventist World*.  
LARRY R. VALOROZO  
Taguig City, Metro Manila,  
Philippines

### Impact Atlanta

I love *Adventist World*. The article "Community Service With a Twist," by Kimberly Luste Maran (September 2010), really impressed me. I thank God for the ministry that unites the Adventist world.

JEAN MARIE SADIO  
Cosendai, Cameroon

*"In these last days when people are running to and fro for some consolation and hope, when people are losing their faith in God, this magazine with living stories of how God is still in control is a blessing."*

—LITTON PROSAD MOWALIE  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

## LETTERS

### Appreciation Around the World

I am an Adventist, 19 years old, and an avid reader of *Adventist World*. I am delighted to know about my brothers and sisters around the world and proud of the missionary work. The Lord be with all of His children and guide us.

ELOM TAGBEDE  
*Lomé, Togo*

I am a regular reader of *Adventist World*. It is very interesting to know what happens in our church in other parts of the world.

REBECA RUIZ LAGUARDIA  
*Zaragoza, Spain*

Greetings to the leadership of *Adventist World*, which I found and read in Spanish on the Internet. The articles and testimonies from many people around the world are an encouragement to move forward on the path our Lord Jesus Christ has given us through being part of the remnant.

I have been a member of the church since my early childhood in the city of Guadalajara, Mexico. I asked the Lord what more could be done by the church, and I agree we have a special job in this work of reform and revival of the church. I feel an urgent need within the church to prepare for what lies ahead. I welcome the initiative of the church for revival and reformation.

ENRIQUE MARTIN DEL CAMPO  
*Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico*

*Adventist World* is one of my favorite papers. It gives me lots of knowledge and spiritual strength. The articles have changed the lives of many to believe in the Lord Jesus. As it is issued monthly, it never stops renewing our spiritual minds. Whenever I read the paper I am inspired to work more for the church in soul winning.

NAW MOO KAPAW  
*Taungngu, Myanmar*

Thank you for *Adventist World*. It assists whenever I feel discouraged. Just think how many people are benefiting from your efforts. I am one of your regular readers, and I will be reading and waiting for the next issue till Jesus comes.

The magazines are of comfort and encouragement since I am in a maximum security prison.

BOXTEN T. KUDZIWE  
*Malawi*

Greetings from Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Uganda. Thank you for the good work you are doing. God bless those who contribute to the magazine. Pray that one day I will come and visit you in Maryland!

EVA NAMUGERE  
*Uganda*

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



## THE PLACE OF PRAYER

Please pray for revival in our province among our Seventh-day Adventist youth. The number in our youth fellowship is decreasing. May God bless and let our church grow stronger. Pray for the work of the gospel in China and that God's purposes will be fulfilled in China and beyond.

JIN, *China*

Please pray that the land issue affecting our church will be settled. We are on the brink of losing our church. We do not have funds to pay the legal expenses.

ANN, *Philippines*

We have been asked to make the Jewish Heritage Scripture Study lessons available to prisoners. We expected a few requests a month. In December and January alone we received close to 70 requests for Bible studies. We appreciate your prayers for this new function of our ministry, Jewish Heritage.

JEFF, *United States*

Just over a week ago I was diagnosed with glaucoma. I am requesting your prayers. Please pray that the Lord will perform a miracle with my vision. Thanks for "standing in the gap" on behalf of me and others.

NAOMI, *Virgin Islands*

I am a Zimbabwean living in South Africa. For the past year I've been waiting on a temporary work permit. Please pray that God will make a way for me to get this document.

SHARON, *South Africa*

Kindly pray for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Myanmar.

GIN, *Myanmar*

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

*“Behold, I come quickly...”*

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

**Publisher**

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

**Executive Publisher**

Bill Knott

**Associate Publisher**

Claude Richli

**International Publishing Manager**

Chun, Pyung Duk

**Publishing Board**

Ted N. C. Wilson, chair; Benjamin D. Schoun, vice chair; Bill Knott, secretary; Lisa Beardsley; Daniel R. Jackson; Robert Lemon; Geoffrey Mbwana; G. T. Ng; Daisy Orion; Juan Prestol; Michael Ryan; Ella Simmons; Mark Thomas; Kamik Doukmetzian, legal advisor

**Adventist World Coordinating Committee**

Lee, Jaiyong, chair; Akeri Suzuki; Kenneth Osborn; Guimo Sung; Chun, Pyung Duk; Han, Suk Hee

**Editor in Chief**

Bill Knott

**Editors based in Silver Spring, Maryland**

Gerald A. Klingbeil (associate editor), Sandra Blackmer, Stephen Chavez, Mark A. Kellner, Kimberly Luste Maran, Gina Wahlen

**Editors based in Seoul, Korea**

Chun, Pyung Duk; Chun, Jung Kwon; Choe, Jeong-Kwan

**Online Editor**

Carlos Medley

**Technical Coordinator**

Merle Poirier

**Editor-at-large**

Mark A. Finley

**Senior Advisor**

E. Edward Zinke

**Executive Assistant to the Editor**

Rachel J. Child

**Editorial Assistants**

Marvene Thorpe-Baptiste  
Alfredo Garcia-Marenko

**Reader Services**

Merle Poirier

**Art Direction and Design**

Jeff Dever, Fatima Ameen

**Consultants**

Ted N. C. Wilson, Robert E. Lemon, G. T. Ng, Guillermo E. Biaggi, Lowell C. Cooper, Daniel R. Jackson, Geoffrey Mbwana, Armando Miranda, Pardon K. Mwansa, Michael L. Ryan, Blasious M. Ruguri, Benjamin D. Schoun, Ella S. Simmons, Alberto C. Gulfan, Jr., Erton Köhler, Jaiyong Lee, Israel Leito, John Rathinaraj, Paul S. Ratsara, Barry Oliver, Bruno Vertallier, Gilbert Wari, Bertil A. Wiklander

**To Writers:** We welcome unsolicited manuscripts. Address all editorial correspondence to 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, U.S.A. Editorial office fax number: (301) 680-6638

E-mail: [worldeditor@gc.adventist.org](mailto:worldeditor@gc.adventist.org)

Web site: [www.adventistworld.org](http://www.adventistworld.org)

Unless otherwise indicated, all Bible references are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Texts credited to NIV are from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

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

Vol. 7, No.5

## EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

# Beyond Human Comprehension



LAWRENCE DOMINGO

*This month a reader shares how God triumphed over disaster.*

**I**t was April 19, 2010. I had just come back from an annual Adventist revival meeting in the Falam

area.\* I arrived back to the campus of Upper Myanmar Adventist Seminary, where I serve as principal. As usual, we had dinner at 7:00 that evening. Unexpectedly, the rain started with a wild wind. We ran here and there, closing windows and doors. The storm was so strong that we weren't able to finish eating.

While we were busy drying floors, Thang Sawm Tung, dean of boys, came back from visiting members. Tung said that we would be very busy tomorrow. "What happened?" I asked him. Tung explained that the main building on campus, used for classrooms and a library, no longer had a roof.

We checked out the building. Sure enough, no roof—everything inside was exposed. We quickly worked to lay library books in one place, blanketed with a rainproof cover. After this I gathered volunteers in one place and prayed to God, saying, "Lord, we are sad for this devastation, but at the same time, we are glad because You will turn this curse into a blessing."

In fact, words could not express how sad we were. The rainstorm had destroyed not only the building but also our plan to buy an inexpensive, locally made Jeep—a decision the school board had made on April 12, 2010.

I reported news of the devastation to the Upper Myanmar Mission and the Myanmar Union Mission (MYUM). Suak Khaw Ngin, MYUM education director, indicated that we should contact the division to file an insurance claim. I was sent an insurance claim form immediately, which we returned right away. However, the processing of the claim took months.

The rebuilding began on April 26, 2010. We had to finish it before May 25, 2010, because school enrollment was to begin on May 26.

We now had no budget for the Jeep, but the rebuilding was still under way. God blessed us as donations came in from alumni and church members. The reconstruction continued, and was completed with the additional income from the 2010-2011 school year.

Finally the insurance money came in on October 4, 2010. It recovered the budget for the Jeep—and more.

The school had planned to buy a Jeep, but God changed the way and enabled us to buy a light truck that can be used in multiple ways for His ministry. Beyond my human comprehension, God did indeed turn devastation into blessing.

—KAP LIAN THANG, *Myanmar*

\* Falam is a small town in the northern Chin state of Myanmar.

# The PEOPLE'S PLACE

## WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



SUBMITTED BY JUNE COOMBS

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*“When the Lord is in control, people rejoice, but when Satan bears rule, people mourn. So let us give God a chance with our lives.”*

—Zvikomborero Zihanzu, during a Sabbath school class in early 2011, at the Chitungwiza Federation Youth Camp in Chipinge, Zimbabwe

## ADVENTIST LIFE

For many years I was a hospital chaplain for the Florida Hospital System. At some of the facilities I served as director for volunteer chaplains and for the volunteer auxiliaries. Some hospitals had as many as 500 volunteers serving the many needs of the patients and assisting the regular employees.

The hospital couldn't do without our faithful volunteers. So one day in 1989 I felt inspired to sit down and write these words in gratitude:

“Viva volunteers! It is on the

shoulders of willing volunteers that the greatest progress in human history has been made.”

I still believe this to be true.  
—Chet Damron, North Carolina, United States

My 7-year-old granddaughter and I were watching a wildlife TV show together. We were both upset to see a lion chasing after a small impala antelope. I remarked to her that in heaven there would be no killing and that the lions would eat grass.

“Yes, Granny,” she replied, “and the doggies will get pel-



JONATHAN BYDENDYK

lets.” What a lovely response from a child, who thinks creatively about heaven!

—Wilhelmina Dunbar, Heidelberg, Gauteng, South Africa

**ANSWER:** In England, at the Stanborough Park Seventh-day Adventist Church, church elder Neilson Roberts inspects the hot water that will be used to make hot drinks and instant soup to help feed London's homeless population. Church volunteers take hot water, cold drinks, sufficient food to feed 40 people, clothing, toiletries, blankets and sleeping bags to the streets.