

March 2012

# ADVENTIST WORLD



## *The* Witch Doctor *and the* Preacher

11 *Something's  
Fishy*



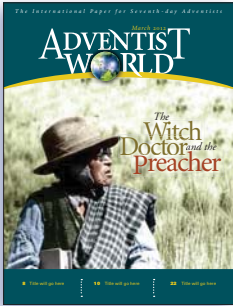
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# ADVENTIST WORLD

March 2012



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## The Story Connection

Mission stories,” we call them, and for more than 150 years, Seventh-day Adventists around the globe have eagerly gathered around the one who knew the tales of God’s power at work in places exotic or far away. Dense tropical jungles bloom in the imagination; shining angels protect believers from wild animals or fierce warriors; and obstacles bigger than the Iron Curtain fall to the steady advance of the gospel. One common thread unites 10,000 stories: the mustard seed grows; the kingdom expands; the Day approaches.

You will find another fascinating mission story in this month’s cover feature, “The Witch Doctor and the Preacher.” Told by a longtime missionary, it reaches back into the revered history of Adventist mission in South America and brings the tale powerfully to the present.

As with every good story, this one will remind you of another tale—one that you know better than anyone else—a story of how the kingdom is growing because your life is surrendered to the Lord of mission. For mission stories are no longer measured by how far away they happened or how many oceans the storyteller has crossed. Mission stories—at least the ones that heaven pays attention to—begin on your street, in your village, in your apartment complex. The “tweet” you send, the simple tract you give a neighbor, or the conversation you have at the local market becomes the stuff of heaven’s most engaging stories. The Lord who taught so much in stories loves nothing better than taking your faithfulness and connecting it with the stories of others in your church or community who are yielding their hearts and hands to Him. I can imagine that there exists somewhere in heaven a great wall of stories on which all the connections we don’t yet see—but will someday know—are written, cherished, and applauded.

“We are each a tale of mercy; We are each an act of grace,” the hymnwriter reminded us. This month, as you read a heartwarming mission story, resolve to also be the mission story that heaven will one day eagerly tell about your service.



*Bill Knott*

## WORLD REPORT

# World Church Budget Has Global, Mission Focus

■ The 2012 budget for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will fund mission work and administrative support outside of North America, as well as the operation of the world church’s headquarters.

The denomination’s nearly US\$167 million world budget for 2012 allocates \$38.7 million in appropriations to the 12 world divisions other than North America, with an additional \$27.4 million for missionaries and employees serving in other divisions.

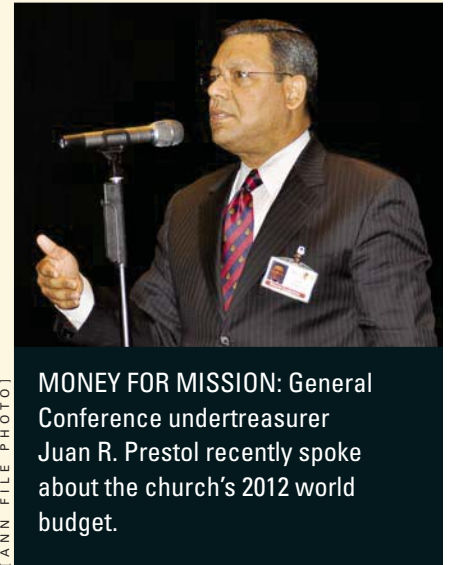
Operating costs for the denomination’s headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, is limited to 2 percent of world tithe, which is set this year for \$40.9 million. Finance officers said headquarters consistently operates more than \$2 million under that cap.

The world budget includes only items relating to the denomination’s world headquarters and does not include the reported incomes or budgets for its 13 world divisions or their respective local administrative units and congregations. The world budget includes headquarters operations, interdivisional employees, departmental work worldwide, and appropriations to world divisions.

“It’s the faithfulness of the members who provide support for all of these programs,” says Juan R. Prestol, undertreasurer for the Adventist world church. “Most of the givers are not wealthy but live with other heavy financial obligations. The church is being rewarded by their faithfulness.”

Receiving divisions are allocated appropriations between \$1.7 million and \$4.6 million. The 2012 budget also includes a 3 percent increase over 2010 appropriations levels. In previous years that amount was given at the end of the year with supplemental budget funds. This year the 3 percent is offered at the beginning of the year as a budgeted item.

Prestol said about 65 percent of the denomination’s funding is paid in the U.S. dollar, Brazilian real, euro, Canadian dollar, Australian dollar, Mexican peso, and Korean won.



**MONEY FOR MISSION:** General Conference undertreasurer Juan R. Prestol recently spoke about the church’s 2012 world budget.

IANN FILE PHOTO

Continued on next page ▶



Tithe income from North America has remained steady, with an upswing in tithe and mission offerings from overseas divisions. It's estimated that 30 to 40 percent of that is affected by currency exchange rates, Prestol said.

North America remains the largest giver of mission offerings. In 2010 North America gave about \$23.6 million in mission offerings, or about one third of the total \$70.9 million in mission offerings. — *Adventist News Network*

## Hungarian Law May Challenge Church Registrations

■ The saga of securing official church status in Hungary continues, despite what religious liberty advocates called encouraging news late last year when the Constitutional Court struck down the country's controversial Law of Churches.

Prior to that ruling, more than 300 minority faiths—among them the Seventh-day Adventist Church—were set to lose official legal status in Hungary on January 1, after which they would undergo a reapplication process.

With the new year those churches are facing a similar situation.

The country's Constitutional Court overturned the Law of Churches purely on technical grounds, and on December 30 Hungary's majority conservative party "easily" reintroduced and passed essentially the same law, effective January 1, said Dwayne Leslie, the Adventist world church's legislative representative in Washington, D.C.

Hungary's Parliament claims the law is necessary to weed out businesses or individuals posing as churches just to gain the accompanying rights and privileges. Furthermore, the majority government maintains that the law

doesn't infringe on religious liberty. It doesn't "forbid" worship according to any faith tradition, Hungary's minister of state for government communication, Zoltan Kovacs, wrote in a recent *Wall Street Journal* opinion piece.

Kovacs said the law merely outlines how churches can gain official recognition "if they show themselves to be popular enough." One condition requires a church to prove a decades-long history in the country and count more than 1,000 members.

The Hungarian government is "making efforts to explain to the international community that this is not a human-rights issue," said Ganoune Diop, the Adventist world church's representative to the United Nations.

"The situation in Hungary is very complex, and there are several issues at play, from economic to judicial and legislative—and in front of these issues, religion. The government sees the deregistration of churches as a response, in part, to the tremendous challenges the country is facing," Diop said.

Many members of the international religious liberty community maintain that regardless of the country's internal struggles, the law poses undue challenges for legitimate religious organizations.

"Now we not only have an objective standard of what constitutes a church, but we also need a two-thirds vote of Parliament just to become an official religion, and we think that's problematic," Leslie said.

Currently, 82 of the some 300 minority religions deregistered under the latest law have reapplied for official status, among them the Seventh-day Adventist Church, denomination officials in Hungary said.

Religious liberty analysts said provisions of the new law indicate that those churches that have already



**CHURH REGISTRATION:** John Graz, director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, monitors the status of church registration in Hungary from the movement's headquarters.

ANSEL OLIVER

applied for status will not experience a gap in official recognition. They'll maintain previous recognition while a decision regarding their ultimate status is pending in Parliament.

Church leaders in Hungary report that "communication with the government" suggests that the Seventh-day Adventist Church will regain official church status.

"One positive improvement in the new law is that it does not prohibit denominations to use the term 'church,' even if they are not accepted by Parliament," said Tamas Ocsai, president of the church's Hungarian Union Conference. Churches to which Parliament does not grant official recognition will receive a "religious association" status, he said.

"Hopefully some churches in Hungary—including the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which has been operating in the country for more than a century—will have a positive answer [next month]," said John Graz, director of public affairs and religious liberty for the Adventist world church. —*Adventist News Network*

## Adventists Help Educate India's Orphans

■ Less than half of India's children get an education. Many are orphans who live in extreme poverty in the country's slums. One Seventh-day Adventist supporting ministry in the region is investing in these children's futures.

Asian Aid is building a new orphanage for 70 orphans now living in a cramped home on the outskirts of Bobbili, India. Sunrise Orphanage, slated to open early 2012, can house more than twice as many underprivileged children.

Sunrise's 12-acre plot means the orphanage can grow some of its own food and sell crops for income. Each child will plant a vegetable plot to learn gardening skills and the value of industry, a press release from the ministry said.

Established in Australia 40 years ago, Asian Aid now operates an American office, based out of Collegedale, Tennessee, in addition to its headquarters in Wauchope, New South Wales. The ministry operates more than 100 schools and orphanages in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Through sponsorships, Asian Aid sends 8,500 children to Adventist schools in the region.

"We're not only giving them an education, but introducing them to Jesus," says Asian Aid CEO Jim Rennie. "Sponsorship is really a daily missionary activity. If someone wants to know that they're making a difference in the mission field every day, they can."

Basic sponsorships cover a child's tuition at a local Adventist school, with higher sponsorship levels providing shelter and food as well.

Orphans in India are often abandoned and ostracized by society, Rennie says. In one recent instance, current Sunrise Orphanage staff awoke to

find a child tied to a post in the yard.

"She went from being a little girl who was petrified to another of the bright, cheerful kids at Sunrise who've got a very loving, spiritual couple to look after them. To see the difference in that little girl was very exciting," Rennie says.

Asian Aid's ministry is not limited to sponsorships. The ministry also oversees numerous development projects, such as providing clean water sources, literacy, and vocational training for adults and medical care for underserved populations, including Nepalese women and leper communities. Asian Aid also provides shelter for women who have escaped human trafficking.

—*Adventist News Network*



To learn more about the ministry, visit [AsianAid.org](http://AsianAid.org)

## British Adventists Prepare for Olympic Witness

■ Ten thousand tickets may have been oversold for synchronized swimming at the 2012 London Olympics, but the more than 10,000 members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the London area are gearing themselves up to synchronize their witnessing and community activities to coincide with the greatest sporting event that Britain will have ever seen.

Among the Adventists already committed to volunteer during the Olympics is Richard Daly, pastor of the Croydon church. As part of the chaplaincy team his role will involve

*Continued on next page ▶*



PHOTOS COURTESY ASIAN AID

**Top to bottom:** NEW ORPHANAGE: The site of the new Sunrise Orphanage near Bobbili, India. It will house more than 100 children. HELPING CHILDREN: Orphans sponsored through Asian Aid receive food, shelter, and values-based education at nearby Adventist schools.

working with the athletes, stewards, and other volunteers of a Christian faith to provide worship services, prayer, and Bible study in the Olympic Village and other venues in the Olympic Arena. He said, “As a former athlete, and one who competed at national level, it is a privilege to combine my joy of sports and my calling as a minister. Above all it is a privilege to represent my church.” He adds that he is delighted to know that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is represented along with the usual mainstream churches of the UK in this position.

Colin Stewart is the Adventist representative on the “Going for Gold” organizing committee. He states that there are many ways that churches and individuals can get involved.

Sam Davis, South England Conference president, said, “We cannot go through 2012 and miss the largest cultural party right on our doorstep—the 2012 London Olympics.”

—Victor Hulbert



**READY TO WITNESS:** Members of the “Live London” team of Seventh-day Adventists pose outside the Olympic Stadium in May 2011. More than 10,000 Adventists in and around London are preparing to witness during what is expected to be Britain’s largest-ever sporting event.

PAUL TOMPKINS

# Adventist Credits Copying Bible Text *With* Spiritual Growth

*Nine-year project has changed*

By SUK HEE HAN, communication director, Northern Asia-Pacific Division

A 72-year-old organic farmer from South Korea spends six hours a day tending a very different kind of crop: He copies out, by hand, the text of the Bible, as well as the texts of several Spirit of Prophecy books authored by Seventh-day Adventist Church cofounder Ellen G. White.

Nam Yong Han, a local elder at the Chilbo church in the Southwest Korean Conference, operates an organic farm, raising many kinds of fruits and vegetables. His agricultural techniques have been taught in many countries, including the Republic of Korea, China, North Korea, the Philippines, and Bangladesh.

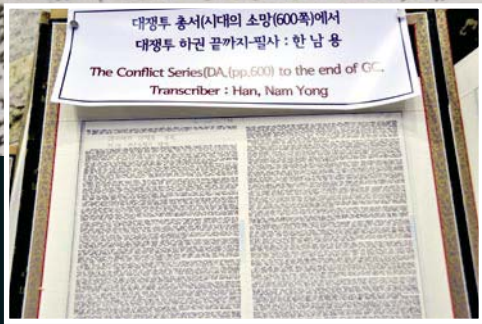
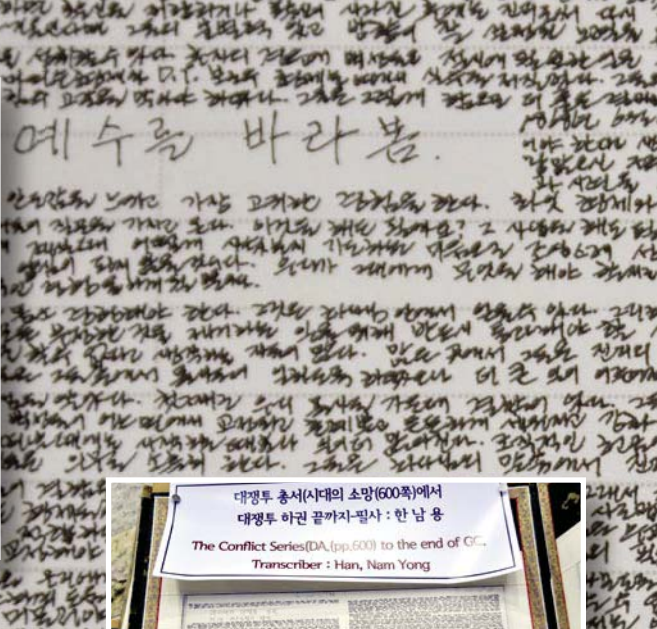
Nine years ago, in January 2003, while serving as a missionary in Beijing, China, Han began copying out these texts, a process he calls “transcription.” As of October 2011 he has copied the text of the Bible seven times, as well as a series of the Conflict of the Ages books and *Testimonies for the Church*. Han said the hours he spends transcribing are the most joyful moments in his life.

He recently sat down for an interview:

## What made you begin transcribing the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy?

It has been 50 years since I decided to walk by faith. As I tasted the pleasures and bitterness of life, it was my desire to fully depend on my Lord and be more like Him. In 2000 I had a chance to live in Beijing, China, and to do some gospel work there. The Lord gave me numerous joys and blessings, together with sufferings and hardships. I had been arrested and investigated by the Public Security Bureau in China for religious activities. I then thought of the need to be closer to God even in troubling times, so I began Bible transcription on January 7, 2003, in Beijing. Moreover, I used to give lectures to government officers and farmers in China; to do this, I had to





# life for Nam Yong Han

**Left: COPYING BY HAND:** Korean farmer and Seventh-day Adventist Nam Yong Han has copied the entire text of the Holy Bible by hand a total of seven times in the past nine years, including one copy in Chinese. **Top right: HOLINESS IN HANDWRITING:** Han says his copying work, which he calls transcribing, has brought him closer to God and softened his attitudes. **Right: CONFLICT SERIES:** Along with the Bible, Han has copied the Conflict of the Ages Series by Ellen G. White, a pioneering cofounder of the Seventh-day Adventist movement.

SUK HEE HAN

internalize and memorize God’s Word as much as I could, so that I could remember it at any time and place.

**What have you transcribed and how many times?**

Up to now, I have transcribed the Bible seven times, including once in Chinese. I also finished transcribing a series of the Conflict of the Ages books, and a series of *Testimonies for the Church*. I made folding screens with the transcribed papers. This is still an ongoing thing and has become an important part of my life, so I cannot help doing it every day. As I transcribe the Bible, I realize that one time of writing is far better than 10 times of reading if one wants to remember and understand the Word. The more I transcribe it, the more I appreciate God for His deep love and wonderful plan for me.

**Tell me more about Bible transcription.**

Since I started transcription, I have done it steadily for six hours a day. While I transcribe, I feel as if I am talking with the Lord face to face and becoming familiar with Him; I have experienced how sweet His Word is. But I encountered suffering at the same time. Because I am a wounded veteran, I cannot sit for a long time on account of my painful leg and back. Continuous transcription also gave me blurred vision, as well as severe pain in my wrist, arm, and shoulder. However, His Word is as sweet as a

honeycomb, and it helps me overcome these physical weaknesses.

**What are the results, benefits, and blessings of transcription?**

I was an impetuous and aggressive person by nature. But I was able to realize how much of a hopeless sinner I am through transcription. While I was transcribing the Bible I definitely felt my heart soften and my aggressive tendencies disappear. Besides, the pain in my eyes, back, and legs also went away so I can actually transcribe for more than 10 hours. I give God the praise for removing from me these infirmities and for blessing me with His Word. Among countless benefits and blessings, the most amazing one is that I can partake of God’s Word and have spiritual communion with Him by walking and talking with Him. So I believe that I am becoming more and more like Jesus.

**What is your heart’s desire?**

I want to be a person who is ready for the coming kingdom through transcription as long as the Lord allows me to do it. I also want to faithfully practice my responsibility as a Christian. Another desire is to transcribe the Bible 10 times, so that spiritual revival and reformation can be accomplished in my life. I hope Adventists in the world can experience the same spiritual benefit and blessing through [their own] transcription. ■

One Sabbath not long ago I had the privilege of worshipping with 67,000 people in the Citadel Stadium of Luanda, Angola. During the program we watched thousands and thousands of youth in Pathfinder and Youth Ministries uniforms marching for the Lord. It was magnificent. A few days later we were again encouraged as we met with thousands of Seventh-day Adventist young people in Bongo, Angola, and Cape Town, South Africa.

As I travel to various places around the world, one of the greatest joys I have is meeting so many youth and young adults, and I praise the Lord that there are so many who are committed to Christ and the Seventh-day Adventist message.

As a worldwide church family, we have a great and special obligation to these youth—to help them see Jesus in all His beauty, to accept Him and His righteousness, to engage them in the mission of the church, and above all, to point them to His soon coming.

#### Youth Priorities

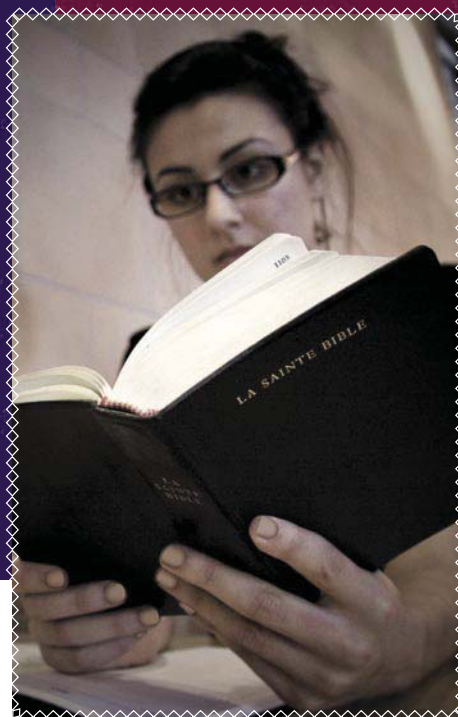
Priorities and methods for youth ministry have been widely discussed. One of the more controversial subjects has been that of worship, particularly worship styles and music choices. Some believe that the way to reach and retain the youth is to provide a more “contemporary” worship experience featuring “Christian rock” bands, mystical forms of prayer, and theological approaches drawn from the emerging church movement. Sometimes very articulate non-Adventist speakers are invited to give presentations during the worship hour. But is this really what Seventh-day Adventist youth and young adults are looking for?

During the 2010 General Conference session in Atlanta, an informal survey was conducted by the General Conference’s Office of Assessment and Program Effectiveness. Attendees were

asked, “What would you like to tell your church?” They were invited to share their thoughts in writing. The 253 survey respondents were almost equally divided between men and women, many of whom were under the age of 35.

One of the most popular topics addressed was how to keep youth and young adults in the church, and many of the solutions offered came from the youth themselves. The results were revealing. If we want to retain them, they said the church should:

- (1) teach Bible principles and the substance of Christianity early, often, and as much as possible.
- (2) package this presentation of the truth attractively but without worldliness.
- (3) integrate youth into the daily responsibilities and activities of the church.



# Following *the* Way *of the* Word *A great obligation*

By TED N. C. WILSON



(4) provide social outlets at which youth can associate together in a Christian atmosphere rather than seeking entertainment from the world.

(5) listen to the ideas and perspectives of the youth.

(6) get to know and be friendly with youth and young adults.

Interestingly, a quick perusal of Christian research and literature today will show that Seventh-day Adventist youth are not the only ones longing for more than entertainment in their worship experience. They are looking for substance—biblical substance.

If we can engage youth and young adults in real Bible study and service, making them feel very much a part of the church family, we don't have to entertain them. We can engage them in the mission of the church, and they will be inoculated against the temptations of slipping into something else.

### **Ministry Resonating With Youth**

This type of ministry is resonating with young people. Last year I had the privilege of visiting the Baden-Wuerttemberg Conference (Germany) in the Euro-Africa Division. While there I had the privilege of attending the conference-sponsored Youth in Mission youth congress. The music was superb, and the presentations were biblically focused with an emphasis on service to God and humanity. It was a wonderful example of a biblical and Spirit of Prophecy approach to youth ministry.

Each year in North America thousands of young people attend youth conferences organized by Generation of Youth for Christ (GYC), a Seventh-day Adventist supporting ministry whose leaders are young professionals living across the United States and Canada. During GYC conferences attendees enjoy uplifting music and in-depth biblical presentations and training seminars by a variety of Seventh-day Adventist leaders, listen to inspiring testimonies from their peers,

lead out in small-group discussions, and participate in community outreach and service opportunities. Obviously, other youth events try to focus on the Word of God and downplay the “entertainment” factor. Pray for them and encourage our youth leaders as they focus on presentations of the Word of God, prayer, and witnessing.

### **Differences in Taste and Culture**

Having lived in four different cultures on various continents, I understand and appreciate the rich diversity of cultures encompassed by our worldwide family of believers. And as we address issues, particularly controversial ones such as worship and music, there are cultural preferences that we have to understand.

However, there are basic biblical principles that should govern worship and music anywhere in the world, such as that found in Philippians 4:8: “Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”

When you get down to the basics of life, people are much the same, and the principles of God apply to all of us. We are to treat each other and other cultures with respect, and usually we will receive the same level of respect in return. However, we should clearly understand that there is a worldly culture and that there is a biblical/heavenly culture that is applicable around the world.

### **Being Transformed**

Unfortunately, there is a trend within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in some places around the world to accept worldly cultural influences in the church that are inappropriate. One of our great problems as part of twenty-first-century society is that of allowing the world to gradually change our perceptions of

what is right and appropriate—whatever is the standard for society tends to become normative.

We are strongly counseled by Paul in Romans 12:2 not to “be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” The J. B. Phillips translation says: “Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould.”\*

### **The Way of the Word**

I am totally convinced that we have a great obligation to do all we can to encourage Seventh-day Adventist youth to follow the way of the Word and not the way of the world. Concern about worldly influences is not a legalistic emphasis intent on warping the church in its thinking; it has to do with the devil doing his best to neutralize the church by bringing the “world” into the church. This is what I believe Paul is counseling against.

Actually, this is what the three angels' messages of Revelation 14 are about: lifting up Jesus and His righteousness and turning people back to the true worship of God and away from the confusion of Babylon in all of its areas of emphases. I have no doubt that the Holy Spirit will work in His church to keep it from being neutralized.

This is what revival and reformation is all about as we humbly submit to the power of the Holy Spirit working in us and pointing us to Christ and His Word. We are to carry out our work and activities under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the setting of Micah 6:8: doing that which is right but at the same time loving mercy and walking humbly with our God—which means submitting to His leading.

### **Youth Are Vital**

Youth and young adults are fulfilling a vital role in revival and reformation, and I have full confidence that

they will continue to be very much a part of the organized church activities to lift up Christ, His righteousness, His soon coming, and His three angels' messages. As I spoke about in "One Year to Change the World" (see *Adventist World*, November 2011), I believe in the present and future evangelistic and Christian service involvement of Seventh-day Adventist youth and young adults. They do, and will, make up a most powerful force under God's guidance.

Let's always remember: "We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged. We want our children to believe the truth. We want them to be blessed of God. We want them to act a part in well-organized plans for helping other youth. Let all be so trained that they may rightly represent the truth, giving the reason of the hope that is within them, and honoring God in any branch of the work where they are qualified to labor" (Ellen G. White, in *General Conference Bulletin*, Jan. 29, 1893, p. 24).

I invite you, especially if you are a youth member or young adult, to share your thoughts on these important subjects. How are you involved in the life of the church? What do you especially appreciate, and what would you like to see changed in your local area? Share your thoughts via

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 [letters@adventistworld.org](mailto:letters@adventistworld.org)

\* Bible texts credited to Phillips are from J. B. Phillips: *The New Testament in Modern English*, Revised Edition. © J. B. Phillips 1958, 1960, 1972. Used by permission of Macmillan Publishing Co.



**Ted N. C. Wilson** is president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.



# A One-Day Church

## Namulenga, Malawi

They said the church would be "just up through the tea plantations over there beyond the big baobab, down beside the creek, then up the sunrise draw. About 20 minutes."

A couple hours later, after fording a sea of red chickens, we arrived at a collection of brick dwellings divided by two seldom-used red dirt roads. Our driver was lost, but he had an idea.

"We're close, I think. Let's look for a woman who looks like a Seventh-day Adventist. She'll know where the church is."

Everyone in the truck laughed, including our Maranatha driver. Then we began driving slowly through the village, looking into the heart of every person we saw.

"There she is!" exulted Richard, our driver, pointing toward a woman pounding clothes on her "washing stone."

"She is obviously an Adventist. Who else could smile like that?"

Richard waved to her, asked a few questions, and five minutes later we were at the church where she serves as a choir member and Dorcas leader.

The heart of the building is a One-Day steel church, but carefully laid red bricks have turned it into a worship center with cathedral windows and a warmly lit foyer.

She sang a loud invitation into the hot afternoon wind, and the church quickly filled with members who live nearby, the proud and rapidly growing congregation of Namulenga, Malawi.

*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. These stories come to you each month from Maranatha assistant to the president and storyteller Dick Duerksen.*





# Something's Fishy

By  
ALLAN R.  
HANDYSIDES  
and PETER N.  
LANDLESS

**I'm noticing that an increasing number of my "vegetarian" friends are claiming to be "pesco-vegetarians." I even have one who claims to be a vegan, but eats fish twice weekly. What do you recommend? Fish or not?**

A vegetarian diet is one that does not include "flesh" foods. Some argue that fish was not included in the term "flesh" in the late nineteenth century; even today many who consider themselves vegetarians include fish as a part of their diet. Our Lord both ate and served fish in His glorified body, which would logically lead to an understanding that fish, *intrinsically*, is a useful article of diet.

Even Ellen White ate fish during a period in which she claimed she had not eaten any "flesh" foods. This has led some researchers to believe that she did not include fish under the terminology of "flesh," which usually connoted red meats. She did, however, caution about fish taken from polluted waters.

Since her time the rise in concentrations of mercury, cadmium, PCBs, and dioxin in natural waters has been of many multiples, and we do not feel comfortable recommending fish as a regular article of diet. Of course, we recognize that there are places where the waters are not polluted, and that there's some evidence of benefits from consuming fish.

Several studies show that the consumption of fish two to three times per week lowers the risk of a nonfatal heart attack by 21 percent, of death from coronary heart disease by 38 percent, and of stroke by 31 percent.<sup>1</sup> These studies have been done on individuals "at risk" for cardiac problems,

and there have not been conclusive large-scale randomized trials on the protective effects of omega-3 fatty acids in the general population.<sup>2</sup>

Vegetarians can obtain omega-3 fatty acids from oils such as canola, soybean, olive, and flaxseed, as well as from avocados and walnuts.

There's a difference between vegetable-based omega-3s (or the alpha-linolenic acid [ALA]) and the marine omega-3s (eicosapentaenoic acid [EPA] and docosahexaenoic acid [DHA]). The marine omegas have been studied more fully than vegetable omegas, and consequently data is not as plentiful for the latter.

The Adventist Health Study II can be expected to shed light on more detailed health-related differences for those consuming vegetarian diets. Preliminary trends from this study are as yet statistically inadequate to make firm recommendations. What is undisputable is that there's a large difference between meat eaters and all types of vegetarians, and that includes the fish-eating vegetarians. When it comes to showing a difference between a total plant-based diet (vegan), the plant-based diet (lacto-ovo-vegetarian), and the pesco-vegetarian diet (no meat except fish), the data so far is inconclusive because not enough time for follow-up has occurred. It would appear that for all-cause mortality, lacto-ovo-vegetarians currently enjoy a slight

lead. For cardiovascular cholesterol levels and body weight advantages, the total plant-based diet has a small lead. The pesco-vegetarians, while doing better than the meat eaters, trail a little behind those who espouse the other two types of diet.

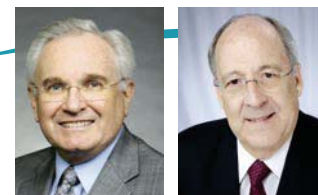
It might be possible to obtain some of the benefits of marine omega-3s from fish oil capsules, thereby avoiding the risks of pollutants such as mercury. The *Consumer Reports* team did not find significant amounts of mercury, PCBs, or dioxin in some 16 fish oil capsules they tested.<sup>3</sup>

The real question, however, is whether consumption of fish oil capsules—or even fish, for that matter—adds any benefit above that conferred by a well-balanced vegetarian diet. We will not know the definitive answer for a couple of years, but to date, the answer appears to be that it does not. ■

<sup>1</sup> Ka He, Yiqing Song, Martha L. Daviglius, Kiang Liu, Linda Van Horn, Alan R. Dyer, and Philip Greenland, "Accumulated Evidence on Fish Consumption and Coronary Heart Disease Mortality: A Meta-Analysis of Cohort Studies," *Circulation* 109 (2004): 2704-2711.

<sup>2</sup> JoAnn E. Manson, Shari S. Bassuk, "Marine Omega-3 Fatty Acids and Cardiovascular Disease."

<sup>3</sup> "Omega-3 Oil: Fish or Pills," *Consumer Reports* 68, no. 7 (2003): 30-32; *The Female Patient* 36, no. 11 (November 2011): 12.



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# *The* Truth *That Leads to* Eternity

By RAMANI KURIAN

I was traveling to my hometown by train. Another female passenger, sitting quite far from me, gave me a broad smile, which I returned in the same measure. She was a stranger to me. I guessed the reason she showed such an interest in me. I wore no jewelry—neither did she. Most likely she took me for a Pentecostal, as only Pentecostals normally do not wear any kind of ornaments in my native state. When she found that the seat close to me was vacant, she came and sat with me. She started her conversation by asking me, “Are you a believer? Are you saved? Did you receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the tongue?” She kept asking question after question without giving me a chance to answer her. At the end of her “talk” I said, “Yes, I am a believer; I am a Seventh-day Adventist believer.” All her enthusiasm and excitement seemed to fade away.

I began to wonder, *What would have been the first question she would have asked if she were a Seventh-day Adventist?* I still remember the days after my conversion from

Hinduism. Many of my Adventist friends would ask, “When did you accept the ‘truth?’” or “How long have you been in the ‘truth?’” Yes as Seventh-day Adventists we hold “truth” very dear, but I wonder what place “truth” has in our daily living and deliberations.

## **Truth That Justifies**

Jesus says in John 14:6, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” When we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, we accept the *truth* and promise to live by the truth. We make a covenant with God that we will live in that truth for the rest of our lives. “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32) is Jesus’ promise. In spite of our sinful nature, in spite of *us*, Jesus was willing to carry our iniquities and die for our sins on the cross. When we believe and accept His sacrifice for us, He justifies us. We are forgiven. We get a fresh start—but this does not mean that we won’t fall again. We can stray from the truth we accepted. So we need to understand that it is not our

We need to  
understand  
that it is not  
our own  
strength that  
gains the  
victory.

own strength that gains the victory. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that will keep us connected to the *I Am* of John 14:6 and will help us discern the difference between truth and lie.

### Truth Versus Lie

God's children love *the* Truth and will live *in* the truth. There will be no place for lies in our lives. Yes, we often deviate from the truth for selfish reasons. We lose sight of the Master and put our trust in something else. We become too self-assured and forget that the enemy is constantly at work to drive God's children away from Him. Our selfish focus can cause us to tell lies, to be disconnected from *the* Truth. Jesus made some somber comments about truth and lies in John 8:44 when speaking to the Jewish leadership of His time: "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him.... He is a liar and the father of it." By tell-

ing lies, we shift our allegiance from Jesus to the devil. Living a lie will ultimately result in destruction and ruin, instead of the abundant life Jesus is willing to give us.

### Sanctifying Truth

After we have been set free by the truth, Jesus doesn't leave us to struggle on. He prays to His Father, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth" (John 17:17). Sanctification is taking place when we continue *in* the truth. The close link between God's Word and Jesus, the living truth, helps us understand that Bible study and prayer are not optional—they are the only ways to find refuge against Satan's attacks. We should ask the Holy Spirit to guide us to learn from the Bible so that the truth will get established in our lives. Daily we get sanctified by its power. Peter reminds us that allegiance to the truth will fill our hearts with love for our fellow beings (1 Peter 1:22). This love is a key characteristic of sanctifying truth. Growth will take place, and we will become more and more like Jesus. Paul must have had this in mind when he encouraged the Ephesians: "Speaking the truth in love, ... [we will] grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ" (Eph. 4:15).

### Truth and Glorification

Psalm 15:1, 2 paints a wonderful canvas of the quality of those who are ready to live in God's presence: "Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart." The commitment to truth (both the incarnate and the revealed) is the preparation to finally enjoy God's presence forever. What a privilege to experience justification, sanctification, and one day also glorification, as we commit to *the* Truth! "Blessed is that man who makes the Lord his trust and does not respect the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies" (Ps. 40:4), exclaims the psalmist. Lies, hypocrisy, good connections—these are nothing in God's sight. He looks for those who are faithful to His truth, or, as Ellen White put it, who are "as true to duty as the needle to the pole."\* ■

\* Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 57.



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# Equally Yoked?

By  
KAREN HOLFORD

*What does the concept really mean?*

Cara sat at her friend's kitchen table. "Laura," she said, hesitantly, "Mike's asked me out. But I feel confused. He's a wonderful person and a great Christian, and we've known each other for months. We've got so much in common, and I'd like to get to know him at a deeper level." She looked up at Laura. "It's just for lunch ..."

Laura put her hand on Cara's. "Mike sounds lovely, Cara. But be careful. You know he goes to church on Sunday. You don't want to find yourself unequally yoked, do you?"

Most Adventists, like Cara's friend, wisely understand Paul's advice not to be "unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14) to mean that Adventists should avoid marrying non-Adventists. But being "equally yoked" with another Adventist is also not a guaranteed recipe for marital success. God's intention for marriage was for two different people to become one flesh (Gen. 2:24)—united spiritually, but also in body, heart, and mind.

## Successful Yoking

Paul uses the expression "unequally yoked" as a metaphor for human relationships. He refers to the wooden yoke that's shaped to fit comfortably across the necks of two animals. Together they can pull a heavy load or drag a cumbersome plow. Successful yoking needs both animals to be matched in strength, speed,

stamina, and height. If they walked at different speeds, they could find themselves going around in circles. If one animal were stronger, the other animal might become worn out, distressed, or injured by the effort of trying to keep up.

God was so concerned about the distress to animals when unequally yoked that He issued a law against it: "You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together" (Deut. 22:10). So it is natural that God is even more concerned that humans avoid the distress of being yoked to someone very different to themselves.

Through Paul's counsel on not being unequally yoked, we know he was concerned about Christians *choosing* to commit themselves to significant relationships with unbelievers. Just as yoking two animals of different

strengths would cause the weaker one to experience pain and fear, he knew that the misuse of strength in any relationship could damage people too. He urged those with responsibility and leadership to be loving, humble, and understanding.

Paul saw that when only one spouse became a Christian they often experienced pain, tension, conflict, loneliness, distress, rejection, and divided loyalties. Many Christian spouses face very difficult choices between their commitment to God and their responsibility to their non-Christian spouse. He wanted to protect believers from making major life choices that might compromise their desire to follow God. Paul recommended that widows wanting to remarry should choose husbands who are "in the Lord" (1 Cor. 7:39). Mar-

## Striving for Equally Yoked Relationships

- Pray carefully and seek wise counsel before starting any close or interdependent relationship with someone who is spiritually different from you.
- Choose a marriage partner who will encourage your continual spiritual growth as they develop theirs.

- Be aware of the natural differences each of you bring to your marriage.
- Check that the balance of power in your relationship is equal and mutual so that neither person is dominating the other.
- Ensure that any inequalities that are present from the start, or arise later in the

relationship, are openly discussed so that you have a shared and agreed plan for managing them.

- Inequalities that arise later in the relationship are an opportunity for the "stronger" person to develop their Christian character by patiently and humbly serving the other with kindness and compassion.



ried life is challenging enough without consciously adding to its complexity.

### Unequal Exceptions

The Bible contains interesting stories of unequally yoked couples. There are Esther and King Ahasuerus, who were unequally yoked in the dimensions of faith, culture, ethnicity, class, education, age, and finances. Yet God used this relationship to save His chosen people.

Ruth, a Moabite, married one of the sons of Naomi. After he died, Naomi's faith and love inspired Ruth to love and trust God. Even though she was young, poor, and from an idolatrous background, she married Boaz, a wealthy Jewish farmer. Through this union Ruth became an ancestor of Jesus.

These stories give hope to those who find themselves spiritually unequally yoked. Clearly God had a very special purpose for Esther that required her to be in such an unusual relationship. And Ruth's story illustrates how positive, loving Christians can be used to draw an unbelieving family member to God. In both stories there is a strong emphasis on faith, prayer, love, and total trust in God.

### Unequal Dilemmas

Adventists face special challenges regarding this issue. When Paul counseled against being unequally yoked with unbelievers, all Christians were Christians—with no denominations. But Adventists who believe in the seventh-day Sabbath usually interpret the verse to mean we should marry only other Adventists. This is wise, as it can be confusing and ultimately detrimental for children to be raised in a home in which each parent worships on a different day and has different ideas about healthy food, alcohol use, what happens when you die, etc.

Abraham's only child, Lydia, had married an Adventist young man. But

a war broke out in their country. Afraid that he would be shot or imprisoned for being an Adventist, he ran away and abandoned her. Now the family was in a difficult predicament. Their small church community had no other young men. But Abraham's culture required that he find his daughter a new husband who would give her children, a home, and protection. Understandably, he worried that Lydia's only option was to marry a non-Adventist Christian.

When Becky married Thomas, she felt she found her spiritual soul mate. He was just starting his ministerial internship in a large and active church, and Becky was passionate about sharing in his ministry. They seemed to be a perfect match in every way. But five years into ministry, Thomas' mother, sister, and niece were killed in a car accident. Struggling with grief and doubt, Thomas lost his faith in God and left the ministry. Although she had married a committed Adventist, Becky found herself spiritually alone.

### Exploring Other Unequal Yokes

Once we begin to explore the issue of being unequally yoked, other inequalities in our relationships become apparent. As a marriage and family therapist, I've seen various differences—not just religious—pull couples apart. Social class, culture, education, expectations about roles, financial background, age, health, and the pressure of extended family expectations can all create unequal and uncomfortable yokes. Some people have the extra burden of responsibilities to previous relationships as well.

New couples often believe that their love is strong enough to conquer every challenge. But when the rosy glow fades and the reality of married life becomes more apparent, they often discover that bridging gaps can be much harder than they imagined.

### The Love Challenge

However much we pray, seek the wisdom of others, and undergo premarital counseling, there are times within most marriages that we find ourselves unequally yoked because one person is spiritually or emotionally in a different place than the other. This is a natural fact of family life in a fallen, broken world. So how do we manage this? Peter encourages Christian wives to stay with their unbelieving husbands and to find every possible way to channel God's love to their families. He advises them to try to persuade their husbands, not by their conversation, but by their kind, caring, and generous actions (1 Peter 3:1-3). It is possible to continue our own spiritual development and maintain our integrity, but also walk tenderly with those who are "weaker" than us—just as Jesus did (Isa. 42:3).

In addressing healthy relationships, Paul encourages us to honor one another above ourselves (Rom. 12:10), and in the "love chapter" his first description of love is patience (1 Cor. 13:4). In other words, don't use your strength to drag a weaker person across your field, but slow your pace to walk alongside them, taking some of the burden off their shoulders, until they grow strong enough to share an equal load. As we do so, we will understand more of the loving sacrifice that Jesus made for us (Phil. 2:1-8). ■

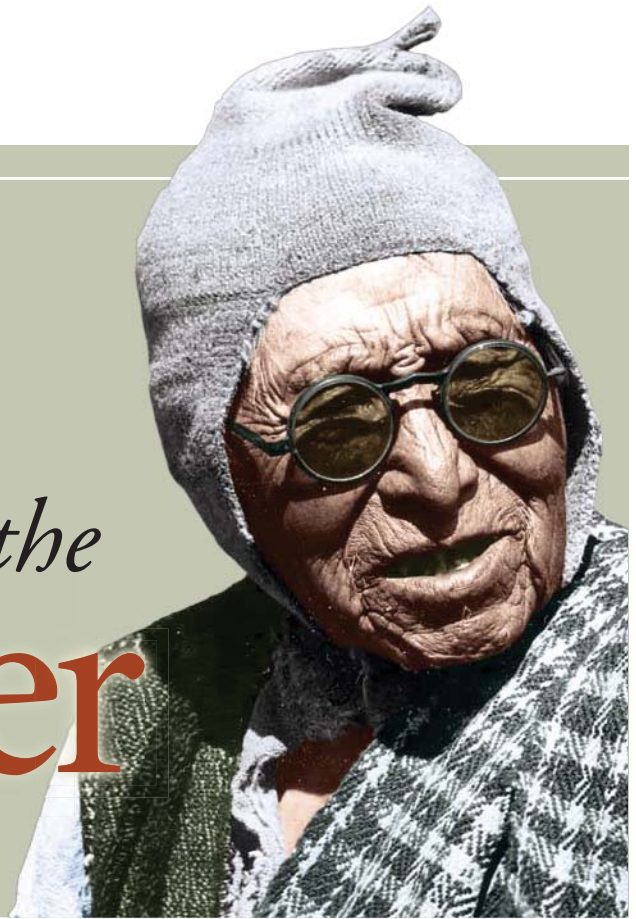


**Karen Holford** is a freelance writer, author, and family therapist living in Auchtermuchty, Scotland, where her husband is the president of the Scottish Mission and pastor of the Crieff Seventh-day Adventist Church, on the very edge of the Highlands.

By  
WELLESLEY  
MUIR

# The Witch Doctor *and the* Preacher

*Would the preacher  
share his magic?*



Lino Chaiña, living in the city of Juli overlooking Peru's Lake Titicaca, supported his family by practicing witchcraft. Although the city boasts four colonial cathedrals built in the days of the Spanish conquistadores, the Aymara Indians lived in fear and superstition. As a witch doctor, Chaiña exploited this fear by practicing magic.

Hearing that the biggest book of magic ever published was for sale in Puno, he thought, *It will take me two days to walk there, but I'll make any sacrifice to get this book. Eighty kilometers [50 miles] is a long way to walk, but it'll be worth it.*

In those days there was no highway to Puno, just a trail traveled by animals and people. Leaving as the first rays of morning light burst over the giant lake, he walked past the Santa Cruz church, a cathedral originally built by Jesuits. Indian stonemasons had carved a huge sun, the Inca god, on the front of the church. The fact that the sun, bringing warmth to his body and breaking the chill of the crisp morning air, had been created by a loving God never entered Chaiña's mind.

A flock of magnificent flamingos took flight as he walked along the lakeshore north of Juli. *Their red and white wings remind me of the Peruvian flag,* he thought. Occasionally he met young children herding their family's sheep as he trudged on toward Ilave. By midafternoon a stranger joined him when he passed the village of Acora.

"We'll arrive at Plateria soon," the man said. "There's a

house back against the hill where a *gringo* [White foreigner] lives. They say he's a man in the daytime and turns into an animal at night."

"Really?" Chaiña questioned.

"Yes! People say it happens all the time."

*Amazing!* A new idea burst into Chaiña's mind. *If I learned to do this, I could frighten people at night. Then as a witch doctor I could charge to protect folks from wild animals. I'd earn a lot of money.*

Approaching Plateria late in the afternoon, the stranger pointed to the only house in the area with a metal roof. It stood alone back against a hill. "That's where the *gringo* lives," he said. "His name is Ferdinand [Fernando] Stahl."

Obsessed with the idea of being able to become an animal at night, Chaiña decided to leave the trail and investigate for himself. He followed a stony path to the Stahl home. Trembling, he knocked on the big wooden door. The door opened, and a tall, strong man greeted him in his native Aymara.

### **Not Just a Book—the Book**

"*Kamisaraki hermano!* Why are you here?" Pastor Stahl questioned.

"I'm on my way to Puno to buy the biggest and best book of magic ever published," Chaiña said.

Stahl smiled: "You don't have to go to Puno. I have the



**PIONEER MISSIONARIES:** Ferdinand and Ana Stahl spent 10 years serving people in Bolivia and Peru. Altogether they served as missionaries for almost 30 years.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

best book of magic ever published right here,” he exclaimed. “Come in, I’ll show it to you.”

Stahl reached out with a big *abrazo* [hug] and pulled the witch doctor into his home. “Please, have a seat at the table. What’s your name?”

“I’m Lino Chaiña, from Juli.”

Stahl walked to a bookcase and pulled out a huge family Bible with lots of illustrations. “Señor Chaiña,” he said, “this is the best book of magic ever published. It changes people’s lives.”

Chaiña gulped. *Does he mean it tells how to change from a man to an animal?*

Stahl sat down beside Lino Chaiña and began turning pages in the big Bible. When they got to the book of Daniel, he saw pictures of all kinds of strange animals.

*It must be true*, Chaiña thought. *This man must know how to turn himself into an animal at night*. When they got to the book of Revelation, Chaiña became totally convinced. Here were pictures of outlandish beasts he never imagined existed.

The two men talked for a long time. Finally Stahl said, “It’s late. You can’t go to Puno tonight. Let’s eat together, and you can spend the night with me. My wife, Ana, is away on a trip, but she left me with a lot of good bread, and we can have soup.”

Later Stahl suggested: “Since my wife is gone, you can

stay in our room. I’ll sleep in the big bed, and you can have a cot over against the wall.”

Lino Chaiña, the witch doctor from Juli, watched as Stahl got on his knees beside his bed and stayed there for a long time. *He must be asking the spirits to turn him into an animal*, Chaiña imagined. Instead of going to sleep, Chaiña stayed awake all night waiting to see missionary Stahl turn into an animal. When Stahl jumped out of bed in the morning, Chaiña moaned, *What they told me isn’t true. He’s still a man*.

Disappointed at first, but fascinated with the “best book of magic” and all the strange animal pictures, he stayed all day studying the Bible with missionary Stahl. He stayed the next day, and the next. He studied with Stahl every day for three weeks. Stahl gave Chaiña a Bible, and instead of going to Puno to buy the big book of magic, he went back to Juli and burned all his books of magic.

After continuing to study for almost a year, Chaiña returned to Plateria and asked to be baptized by Pastor Stahl. Soon his wife and children were baptized too. A dictionary definition hardly justifies calling the Bible a book of magic, but Stahl was right. The Bible worked like magic on the hearts of the Chaiña family and thousands of other Aymara Indians living around Lake Titicaca.

The transforming power of God’s Word to change human lives is amazing. I like the way Ellen G. White put it:



“The whole Bible is a revelation of the glory of God in Christ. Received, believed, obeyed, it is the great instrumentality in the transformation of character. It is the grand stimulus, the constraining force, that quickens the physical, mental, and spiritual powers, and directs the life into right channels” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 458).

### **A Link to the Past**

My family lived at the headquarters of the Lake Titicaca Mission for five years, but I never heard of Lino Chaiña. Soon after I transferred to Lima, the mission asked me to visit mission stations on the Perené River.

At a Campas village one evening, an Adventist teacher and his wife invited me to join them for supper of papaya, mango, bananas, and delicious bread prepared by his wife over an open fire. While eating in the light of a flickering candle, I asked the teacher where he was from and how he became an Adventist.

“My father was a witch doctor in Juli,” he said. Then he told me the story you’ve just read. He added, “We were about the only Adventists in the area, and my parents sacrificed a great deal to send me to the Lake Titicaca Training College, where I studied to become a teacher. I thank God for the Stahls, who brought God’s Word to the Lake Titicaca area.”

Chaiña’s son continued, “When the Stahls had health problems because of the high altitude, instead of going home they moved to the Perené in the Upper Amazon jungle and pioneered gospel work among the Campas. It’s a privilege for me to be able to work here where they worked.”

“Is your father still alive?” I asked.

“Yes. My mother died, but my father lives alone high on the mountain above the city of Juli. He cares for his sheep and lives by selling wool.”

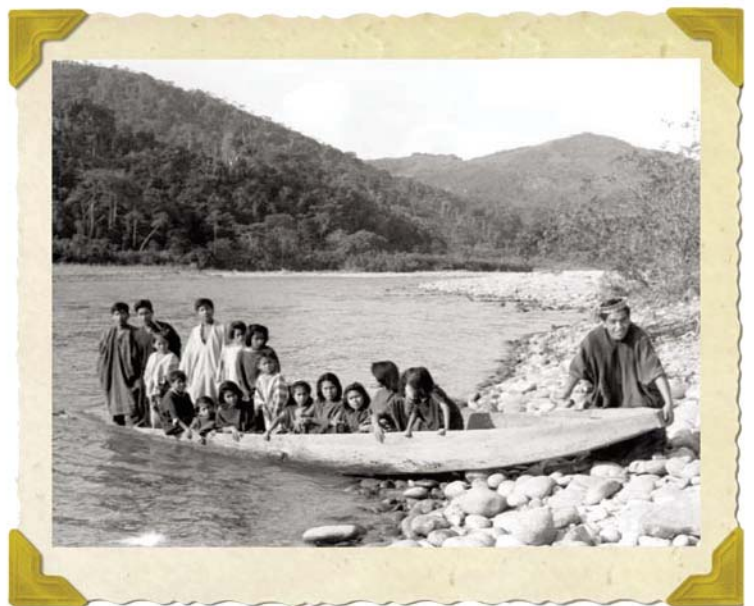
Then I made a decision: *If I ever get a chance, I will visit Lino Chaiña.*

### **Just a Little Farther**

After nine years in Lima we moved back to the Lake Titicaca Mission. We’d been in Peru almost 16 years, and still I had not met Lino Chaiña. We spent a long weekend at a mission station near the border of Bolivia. Traveling home, we passed through Juli. I turned to my wife, Evelyn, and said, “If we’re ever going to see Brother Chaiña, we’d better do it now.”

There was a problem. It had been more than 10 years since I had visited his son, and all I knew was that his father lived up the mountain above Juli. “He could be dead by now,” I told my wife.

We started asking for directions. Some said they didn’t know, but most people simply pointed up the mountain.

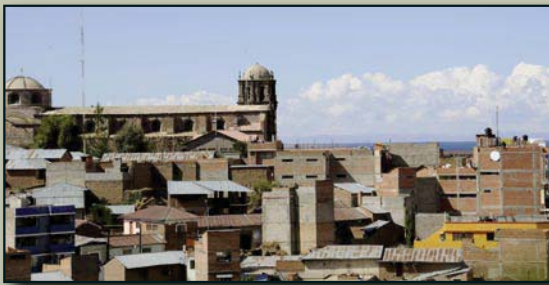
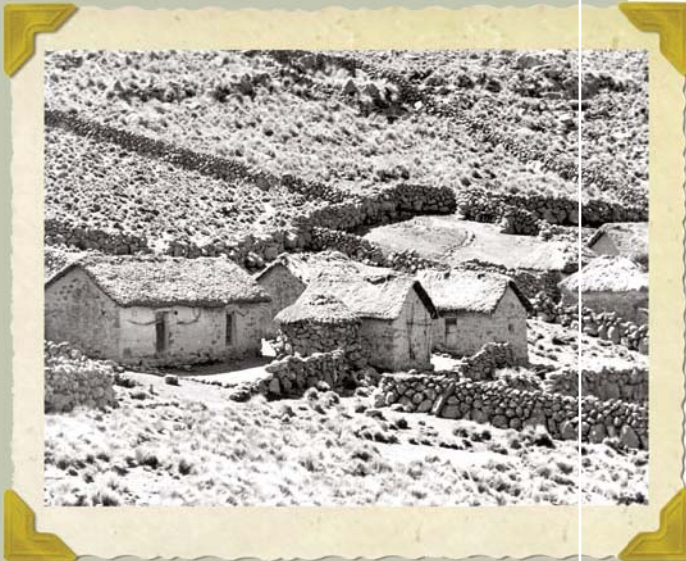


## 110 Years Ago

Ana and Ferdinand Stahl became Seventh-day Adventists in 1902. After taking the nursing course at Battle Creek Sanitarium, they served at clinics and sanitariums in Ohio, United States.

At the 1909 General Conference session they volunteered to be missionaries, and paid their own way to their first assignment in La Paz, Bolivia. Two years later they were “temporarily” assigned to the Peruvian side of Lake Titicaca, with the understanding that they would serve the native population in both Peru and Bolivia. Their temporary service lasted 10 years, until poor health forced them to leave the high altitude of the Andes in 1921.

They continued serving as missionaries in South America until 1939, when they returned to the United States after 29 years of mission service.



**SCENES FROM A MISSION FIELD (clockwise from top)** MOUNTAIN LAKE: Lake Titicaca, one of the highest navigable lakes in the world, has been home to many Adventist missionaries over the years. MOUNTAIN HOME: Lino Chaiña's home at 15,000 feet elevation fits right into its sparse environment. JULI TODAY: This photo, with Lake Titicaca in the background, is taken from land purchased on which a new Adventist church for Juli will be built. FAMILY RESEMBLANCE: Lino Chaiña's son (right) is a teacher in the upper Amazon jungle where the Stahls once served as missionaries.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

We found an animal trail and followed it, stopping occasionally to ask for the home of Lino Chaiña. The answer was always the same. "He lives farther up the mountain."

When the trail we were trying to drive on became impassable, we left our car and started walking. Breathing became more difficult at more than 14,000 feet elevation, but each time we stopped to catch our breath we turned around for magnificent views of Lake Titicaca.

We'd walked for more than an hour when we met a man on the trail who said Chaiña's adobe home was just a little farther. We walked another hour without seeing any homes at all. We stopped and talked with some women. One woman pointed in the distance. "That's Chaiña's home," she said.

We kept walking, and at 15,000 feet elevation reached the thatched adobe house. No one was around; everything was locked up. I looked at my wife. "Have we come all the way up here in vain?"

Two men came by. "Have you seen Lino Chaiña?" I asked.

"Yes," they said. "He's with his sheep a little farther up the mountain. Follow the trail we just came down."

After walking another half hour, we were getting discouraged. "Look, Evelyn," I said to my wife, "there's a flock of sheep." We walked closer. I could see an old man sitting on the ground. He had something in his hand—a book. Engrossed in reading, he didn't see us as we walked closer. *He's reading the best book of magic!* I wanted to shout.

"*Buenas tardes, hermano Chaiña!*" Startled, he looked up. We couldn't help rejoicing. Former witch doctor Lino Chaiña, 90 years old, sitting on the mountainside reading the book of "magic"—his Bible—and still faithful to his Savior 60 years after meeting Pastor Stahl.

We sat with him and talked for a long time. I told him about meeting his son, a teacher on the Perené in the jungle. He responded, "My wife is resting now, but we were grateful to God when our son chose to become a missionary teacher. We were excited when he started teaching where the Stahls worked in the Amazon jungle. I thank the Lord that Pastor Stahl taught me to love God and His great book of 'magic.'"

It proved difficult to hold back tears of joy when we prayed with this dear old man and turned to leave. "I've been reviewing Bible teaching about Christ's coming," he said. "I pray He will come soon. I want to be with you, the Stahls, and all God's people in His kingdom." ■



**Wellesley Muir**, retired missionary and pastor, lives in Oakhurst, California, U.S.A.

# NUMBER 26 Waking Up to Eternity

By  
PHILIP  
RODONIOFF

The first funeral I attended was my grandmother's. I was just a child, and what remained in my memory was the sadness, the cloudy emotions, and the "grayness" of it all. Later, as a medical doctor, I encountered death more frequently, but I never became accustomed to it. As author Susan Cheever wrote: "Death is terrifying because it is so ordinary. It happens all the time."<sup>1</sup> Death is perhaps "ordinary" in this world of sin, but it was never God's original intention.

Death is tragic, and the questions are always the same. What happens when you die? Where do you go? Is there life after death, or is this all there is? The good news is that the Bible provides answers to these important questions.

**1. God alone is immortal:** The Bible teaches that only God is immortal (1 Tim. 6:16). All other life, including human life, is derived from God. We have life only because God gives us life. Immortality is not innate to humans, but is "conditional" on our connection with God (Acts 17:25, 28; James 4:14; Ps. 78:39).

**2. Humans die because of sin:** The Bible is clear that every person has sinned (Rom. 5:12) and that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23; see also Eze. 18:4).<sup>2</sup> The first inhabitants of earth chose to disobey God by eating of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 2:17; 3:6). In choosing disobedience, they separated themselves from the Source of life. As a consequence, death entered into this world even though it was not part of God's original plan for His people.

**3. Death is an unconscious state (a "sleep"):** In order to understand what happens when we die, it is helpful to understand how God created the first inhabitants of this earth. At Creation, God breathed the "breath of life" into "the dust of the ground" (nonliving matter), and "man became a living being" (Gen. 2:7). Note that there is a formula here: Dust + Breath of Life = Living Being (soul). The word "soul" (used in some translations) refers simply to a living person. Similarly, when a person dies they "return to the ground," for as Scripture explains, "dust you are and to dust you will return" (Gen. 3:19). The "breath of life," also known as the "spirit," returns to God (Eccl. 12:7; Ps. 146:3, 4). The Bible does not teach that people have a separate conscious immortal part of their being that continues to exist after death.

At death, all consciousness ends. The dead person does not know anything and does not do anything (Eccl. 9:5, 6, 10). Jesus and the apostles (as well as writers in the Old Testament) frequently referred to death as sleep (e.g., Matt. 9:24; Mark 5:39; John 11:11-14; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; 2 Peter 3:4; Dan. 12:2; Job 14:10-12; Ps. 13:3). The image of sleep emphasizes that death is not the end, but is rather an unconscious state prior to the resurrection (note in this regard the resurrection of Lazarus in John 11:11-14, 23-25, 43).

**4. The saved will be resurrected at Jesus' second coming:** At Jesus' second coming those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will be resurrected to life. We are told: "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven . . . , and the dead in Christ will rise first" (1 Thess. 4:16). Then those believers



who are still alive will be “caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air” (verse 17). These words were written to encourage every believer.

Jesus’ resurrection is of crucial importance for the Christian. The apostle Paul tells us that if Jesus has not been raised from the dead “our preaching is useless” (1 Cor. 15:14) and our “faith is futile” (verse 17). But Jesus “has indeed been raised from the dead” (verse 20). Moreover, “by his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also” (1 Cor. 6:14). We can have confidence in our own resurrection because Jesus Himself rose from the dead.

**5.** *God gives eternal life to the saved:* God offers the gift of eternal life to all who believe in Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Rom. 6:23). At the second coming of Jesus the saved will be transformed and will “put on” immortality. “For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality” (1 Cor. 15:52, 53).

**6.** *The unrepentant will be resurrected after the millennium to face judgment:* The unrepentant are not resurrected at the second coming of Jesus. They remain “sleeping” in an unconscious state until the end of the millennium, at which time they are resurrected (see Rev. 20:5). This resurrection occurs before the final judgment (verses 12, 13). It seems only fitting that those who are to be judged will be present when the final verdict is given. Jesus speaks of this time: “For a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned” (John 5:28, 29).

**7.** *The punishment of the unrepentant is called the second death:* After the final judgment the unrepentant receive their punishment. This punishment is called the second death. “Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose

name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:14, 15; see also 21:8). The Bible also uses words such as “perishing” and “destruction” in speaking of the ultimate fate of the unrepentant (e.g., 2 Peter 3:7, 9; John 3:16; Heb. 10:28; Mal. 4:1). These descriptions confirm that the second death refers to annihilation (or extinction) of the unrepentant, rather than a continual and eternal conscious torment.

**8.** *Death itself will be destroyed in the end:* Death is a cruel and bitter enemy. However, it will be overcome. As 1 Corinthians 15:26 clearly states: “The last enemy to be destroyed is death” (see also Rev. 20:14). The book of Revelation describes what eternity will be like for the saved: “There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Rev. 21:4).

### Victory

Many people think that they will be defeated by death. A famous Roman epitaph fatalistically states: “I was not. I was. I am not. I don’t care.” But the wonderful news of the Word of God is that it is death itself that has been defeated by Jesus Christ. *Death, the great enemy, will die.* The believer has no need to fear death. Jesus Christ offers the certainty of resurrection to eternal life for all who accept His wonderful gift of salvation. ■

<sup>1</sup> Susan Cheever, *Home Before Dark: A Personal Memoir of John Cheever by His Daughter* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2001), p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> All Scripture quotations in this article have been taken from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.



**Philip Rodoniuff** lives on the Gold Coast in Australia. He is a medical doctor who has a master’s degree in religion from Andrews University and enjoys conducting seminars on evidences for the Christian faith.

# Death and Resurrection

The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When

Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, the resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later. (Rom. 6:23; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Eccl. 9:5, 6; Ps. 146:3, 4; John 11:11-14; Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; John 5:28, 29; Rev. 20:1-10.)

The pioneers who officially launched Adventist education in 1872 would be truly amazed if they could see the international reach of that initiative some 138 years later. From a one-room school that met above the living quarters of the teacher in Battle Creek, Michigan, that tentative project has truly become a global enterprise.

# The Vision Lives On

By HUBERTO M. RASI

## *Ellen White and Adventist Education*

What was originally conceived of as a sheltered setting to teach the basics to children of Adventist families soon became the first training center for future Adventist ministers. As time went on, other college programs were added to prepare teachers, health-care personnel, managers, and missionaries for the Adventist Church in North America and to become trailblazers abroad.

As the educational network expanded rapidly at all academic levels during subsequent decades, it became clear that denominational schools at mission outposts were an effective method of attracting students of other faiths to Adventist beliefs. More adjustments followed. By the second half of the twentieth century our colleges and universities began providing professional education to a growing number of Adventists who did not plan to be employed by the church, but intended to find work in various organizations or establish their own business.

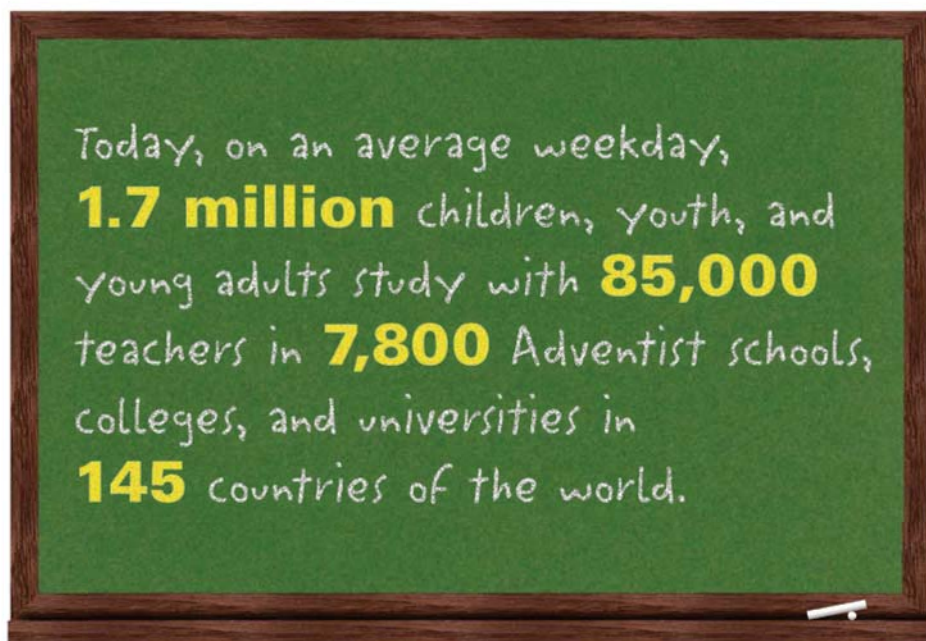
### **Ellen White's vision for Adventist education**

From the very beginning of this global initiative, the leading voice in providing the conceptual foundation and projecting the vision of Adventist

education was a woman who did not have extensive formal schooling but who was well read—Ellen Harmon White. In her 30-page essay “Proper Education” (1872-1873)—later expanded in her books *Education* (1903) and *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (1913)—she outlined a visionary yet practical philosophy and mission for Adventist education that continues to guide and challenge our teachers, administrators, parents, and students.

What were the major features of her vision for this special type of education? Its key characteristics could be summarized as follows:

1. The Christian formation of children and youth is part of a cooperative process that involves home/parents, school/teachers, and church/religious leaders. Students learn that they belong to a special people with a history, a mission, and a glorious future, in which they can play an important role.



**2.** The Bible constitutes the basis and reference point of school endeavors. The entire curricular and cocurricular program reflects the worldview and principles revealed in the Scriptures. Teachers and students believe that the same Holy Spirit who inspired the Bible writers will guide those who approach it with a teachable attitude.

**3.** Jesus Christ's life and His teachings are accorded a position of privilege on campus. Youth are encouraged to accept Him as Creator, Savior, Lord, and coming King, and to commit their lives to Him. Maintaining a friendly relationship with Him brings meaning, purpose, and hope to our lives.

**4.** Educators are assigned the task of fostering each student's balanced development in every dimension of life—mind, body, spirit, and relationships. Students are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle and to manage wisely their time and resources. Our ultimate goal is harmony with God, ourselves, others, and nature.

**5.** The main objective of Adventist education is to help students develop a solid Christian character, realize their individual worth as God's children, embrace biblical values, and learn to make principled choices. This goal is best reached in a context of responsible freedom and redemptive discipline.

**6.** Teachers and students recognize that all truth is God's truth, and that every field of study can broaden and deepen their understanding of truth as revealed in Jesus, the Bible, and nature. The curriculum favors interdisciplinary and practical learning. Creativity and scholarship are fostered.

**7.** Service to fellow human beings, motivated by Christ's love and example, is the highest purpose of life. Priority is given to the qualities of honest work, active compassion, generosity, and justice. School outreach programs promote activities that alleviate human needs and communicate the good news of salvation.

**8.** Students are motivated toward informed, independent, and responsible thought. Instead of letting themselves be molded by the surrounding culture, they learn to approach it with critical discernment from God's perspective, and to choose the true, the good, and the beautiful.

**9.** Youth learn by experience to take an active part in God's plan of redemption. Acknowledging their roles as salt and leaven, regardless of their occupation or profession, they seek to bring this world into closer harmony with His ideal.

**10.** Students are encouraged to discover their talents and vocation, and prepare themselves for a useful life of self-directed learning. The ultimate objective is to help each of them become citizens of Christ's kingdom, where their education will continue through eternity with God Himself.

#### **The Vision Lives On**

More than a century has passed since Ellen White communicated her inspired guidance for a different kind of education. Since then substantial changes have taken place in our society as we moved from agricultural to industrial to technological economic frameworks. Yet the essential principles and objectives she recommended maintain their value and continue to transform hundreds of thousands of lives.

Today, on an average weekday, 1.7 million children, youth, and young

adults study with 85,000 teachers in 7,800 Adventist schools, colleges, and universities in 145 countries of the world.

The Adventist brand of education attracts increasing recognition by government authorities in many countries and the support of numerous families of other faiths. In fact, more than half of the students currently enrolled come from non-Adventist homes who highly value what we offer.

Unfortunately, the global ratio of baptized members to students in our schools continues to decline to the point that in 2008 there were only nine students per 100 members—an ominous trend in a growing, youthful church such as ours. Denominational leaders and members must address this challenge and reverse the stagnation or retrenchment so that more Adventist students can develop their God-given talents nurtured by dedicated Adventist teachers and mentors.

One thing is clear: Without Adventist educational institutions and teachers committed to Ellen White's vision, this world would not see a dynamic, unified, and mission-oriented church moving forward to prepare a people for Christ's kingdom.

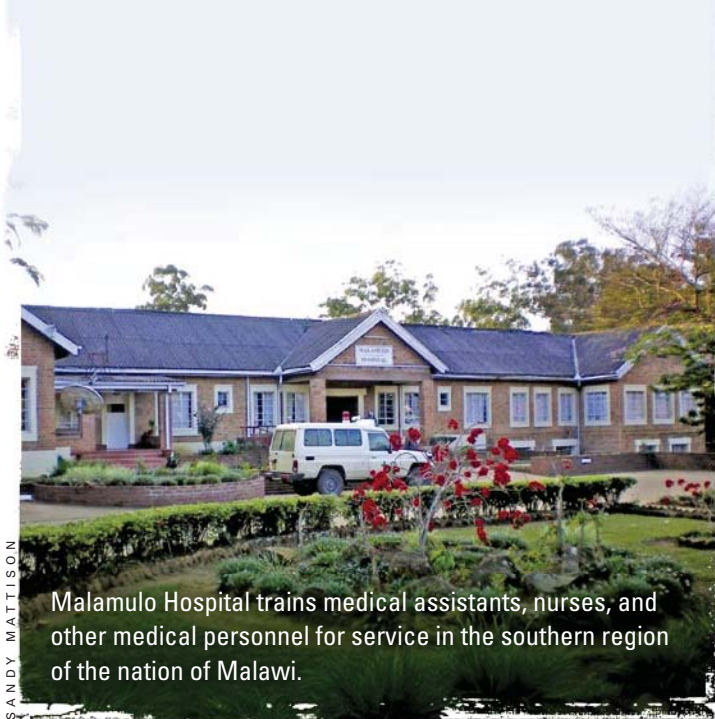
As long as we remain faithful to the educational principles she outlined and apply them in practice, our schools, academies, and universities will prepare leaders of character and conviction that will transform the world as part of God's great plan. ■



**Humberto M. Rasi, Ph.D.,** served as teacher, editor, and administrator, as well as director of the General Conference Department of Education (1990-2002). Now retired, he continues to lecture, write, and support educational projects.



**M**alamulo Hospital was founded in 1908 by the Seventh-day Adventist Church and is located in the rural southern area of Malawi known for its many tea estates. Some patients work as tea field workers making only \$1.15 for each day of labor. Because of its location and the indigent population that Malamulo Hospital serves, it is difficult for the facility to remain self-sustaining. Serving approximately 6,000 individuals per month through the 220-bed main hospital and clinics, Malamulo Hospital also provides care to surrounding rural villages by sending out health-care workers who conduct health education, satellite clinics, and childhood vaccinations. It also has an associated clinical officer school. Recently the two of us, longtime friends, made a short-term mission trip to the hospital.



SANDY MATTISON

Malamulo Hospital trains medical assistants, nurses, and other medical personnel for service in the southern region of the nation of Malawi.

# *Malamulo: GOD'S Outpost*

By  
ADRIENNE JAMES and  
SANDY MATTISON

*News From Malamulo Hospital*

## **Drs. James and Mattison**

“Our trip was about a journey that began 12 years ago when we left our childhood homes in Nebraska and Connecticut for college at Andrews University. There we shared four memorable years as roommates in Lamson Hall, the women’s residence quarters. Later, with our biology degrees in hand, we headed off to medical schools in different regions of the country. Now, eight years later, we are reminded why we started our own journey to medical ministry many years ago.

“We could not know, however, that even as we were flying into Lilongwe, Malawi’s usually peaceful capital, the city was being battered by protests that had overrun the nation. We arrived to meet closed stores and no public transportation. There would be no bus to take us on the five-hour trip to Malamulo Hospital. But God had alternative plans for us. In His perfect timing, an Adventist man in Lilongwe on business was heading back to Malamulo the following day. Our expected five-hour bus ride introduction to the local community instead became a smooth, private ride to our destination, in company of our new Adventist friend, Elde Paladar. God is so good.”

## **At the Hospital With Dr. James**

“The day begins with hospital morning worship. I welcome the change from work routines back home. I particularly enjoy songs in the native language of Chichewa. After our departmental meeting, our medicine rounds begin. Every room in the ward has rows of beds, each covered by mosquito nets. The floors are frequently mopped to remove the persistent red dust tracked in from the dirt roads, likely because many patients are barefoot. I am especially blessed by the inquisitive nature and excitement of my clinical officer students. They are eager to learn, which is wonderfully refreshing to me and fuels my passion for our patients.

The resilience of these patients and their families inspires me. Many of them walk for miles to seek medical care. In most cases devoted family members or guardians remain at the bedside of their loved ones and assist with basic care. With a life expectancy of only 41 years in Malawi, many patients suffer from a host of tropical illnesses, such as tuberculosis, meningitis, and malaria. My work in Washington, D.C., with one of the highest U.S. rates of HIV, makes me all too familiar with the complications of HIV that many here exhibit. Because of the challenges to

health-care access, patients seem that much more grateful for the care provided at Malamulo.”

#### **With Dr. Mattison**

“I am spending most of my time on the maternity ward. While the rest of the hospital’s patient population swells with malaria season and lessens with the dry season, the maternity ward is nearly full year-round, serving 25-40 patients at any given time. The maternity ward averages four to seven births per day. Staff includes two nurse-midwives, sometimes with the help of a clinical officer (U.S. equivalent of physician’s assistant) and an on-call physician. In the maternity ward there is care for all antepartum (prior to birth), labor, delivery, and postpartum patients and their babies. The two nurse-midwives are also responsible for the care of a special room dedicated to premature infants and their mothers. In a maternity ward in the U.S. at least a half dozen nurses and an equal number of nursing assistants (in addition to midwives, residents, and physicians) would be doing this work.

“Pregnant patients who experience lower abdominal pain and backache are invited to stay in the hospital for hours, days, or weeks, awaiting labor, as many have walked great distances to reach this haven. The delivery suites are made up of three tall beds covered in black vinyl separated by cloth curtains. Wheelchairs aren’t available, and women in labor are required to climb stairs to lie down where they labor. Once they give birth, they descend the stairs, shower themselves, and shuffle down to the postpartum ward. Their strength and resilience is amazing. We lose six premature infants during our short stay. At least two in six women have HIV. Thankfully, medications to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV are available to the patients through a special clinic and governmental program. I learn too that all postpartum tubal ligations are done here under local anes-

thetic instead of using spinal anesthesia, as is done in the U.S. This lowers the price and encourages family planning.”

#### **Dr. James**

“At Malamulo we are blessed with wonderful weather until one day prior to our departure, when it rains for two days, with only shy appearances from the sun. On the evening of our departure the rains clear as we start our bus ride across the Malawi countryside. The sun bursts through, and I am surprised to discover vast mountains and foothills previously hidden by dust and biomass fuel smoke. Before the rains I saw a beautiful countryside with foothills here and there, but the rains unveil a crisp, expansive, mountainous landscape. It’s a memory that I never would have experienced without the prelude of rain. I think to myself: *That’s how it is with our Savior, taking us through the downpours of life only to bless us with expansive landscapes we hadn’t even imagined were there, previously hidden from view.*”

#### **Dr. Mattison**

“Malamulo is doing great things on an incredibly small budget, caring for patients who are unable to pay for the services they receive. I praise God for the national and foreign medical personnel that give freely and sacrificially of themselves to these patients’ care.” ■



**Dr. Adrienne James** practices internal medicine in the Washington, D.C., area. **Dr. Sandy Mattison** is an ob/gyn in Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

## Private Bag 2, *Makwasa, Malawi*

Malamulo Adventist Hospital is one of three health-care institutions owned and operated by the Malawi Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, home to almost 340,000 Adventist believers. The institution has been recognized as the best hospital in Malawi, and the third-best in Africa, for its treatment of HIV/AIDS.\* Its campus regularly welcomes visiting medical personnel, and includes a Students for International Missionary Service (SIMS) hostel, constructed largely with funds from the organization itself, based in Loma Linda, California. Most of this training and volunteer assistance is through the initiatives of Adventist Health International (AHI), whose Web site facilitates volunteer personnel, financial, and other services to the hospital. AHI provides management expertise, personnel, technical assistance, and other resources to sustain, enhance, and restore quality operations at approximately 70 Adventist hospitals around the world.

\* See the Giving Children Hope Web site at [www.gchope.org/malamulo-hospital-in-need-of-medical-supplies.html](http://www.gchope.org/malamulo-hospital-in-need-of-medical-supplies.html).

# The Ark of the Covenant

What is the significance of the ark of the covenant?

The ark of the covenant was the most important piece of furniture in the Israelite tabernacle/Temple. It was a wooden box, plated with gold, about four feet two inches long and 30" x 30". It originally contained only the tablets of the Ten Commandments.

The box was covered by a slab of gold on which two cherubim were carved as one piece with the cover. The ark was a symbol of the presence and power of the Lord. Since it represented the presence of the Lord, the ark came to express several important ideas about the Lord.

**1. Place of Revelation:** God's residence among the Israelites was a place from which He communicated with and manifested Himself to His people. He said to Moses, "Above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the covenant law, I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites" (Ex. 25:22, NIV; cf. Num. 7:89).<sup>\*</sup> In one case the Israelites went to where the ark was located to consult the Lord before going to war, and He answered them (Judges 20:27). It is amazing that our God would make Himself available to His people at a particular space—in this case the tabernacle, and within it the space between the two cherubim on the ark of the covenant.

**2. Place of Worship:** Since the ark, located in the Most Holy Place of the Temple, was a symbol of the Lord, people worshipped Him in the direction of the tabernacle/Temple: "I lift up my hands toward your Most Holy Place" (Ps. 28:2; cf. 138:2). Joshua fell and prayed before the ark, and the Lord answered him (Joshua 7:6-11). The Israelites did not worship the ark, but they sought the Lord there as the place where He would meet with them, and where they could offer Him their prayers and praises.

**3. Place of the King:** The Lord was the king of His people, and the ark represented Him as such. The psalmist refers to God as the "Shepherd [King] of Israel" who sits "enthroned between the cherubim" (Ps. 80:1). Hezekiah used the same expression and added, "You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth" (2 Kings 19:15; cf. 2 Sam. 6:2). This does not mean that the ark was the throne of God,

but that it represented Him as king of the earth. As king, the Lord led His people from the ark in military campaigns. When they moved as an army, the ark/Lord led the way (Num. 10:33, 35); when they walked into the Jordan River carrying the ark, the river stopped flowing (Joshua 3:13); and in Jericho the presence of the Lord, represented by the ark, led the people to victory (Joshua 6).

The ark was a symbol, not the Lord Himself. The presence of the ark in war did not necessarily mean that the Lord was present among His people. His presence was directly connected to covenant faithfulness. When the covenant was violated, the presence of the ark was useless, and God's people were defeated (1 Sam. 4:1-11).

**4. Place of Judgment and Mercy:** The ark is often called the "ark of the testimony" because the covenant law—the Ten Commandments—was placed inside it as a testimony to the covenant relationship between God and Israel. The law was the rule of life; its violation was a serious matter that had to be addressed by the Covenant Lord. The sacrificial system dealt in different ways with the sin of the people and their need for atonement. But the law inside the ark was covered with the mercy seat, or "atonement cover" (Ex. 25:17), the place of atonement—suggesting that God's last word for us is mercy in the form of atonement through blood.

The New Testament would identify this blood with the blood of the Son of God. He now intercedes for us before the ark of the Lord in the heavenly temple, in the presence of the King of the universe, leading His people in the final conflict, mediating our worship, and assuring us forgiveness and acquittal in the final judgment during the eschatological day of atonement. ■

<sup>\*</sup> Scripture quotations credited to NIV are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.



Before his recent retirement, **Angel Manuel Rodríguez** was director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference.



By  
MARK A. FINLEY

# The Power of Hope



MARIAH GRAY

Someone wisely said, “You can live weeks without food, days without water, minutes without air, but hardly at all without hope.” Hope lifts our spirits and encourages our hearts. It gets us through life’s tough times by pointing us to a brighter tomorrow. It lifts our eyes from the earth below to the heavens above. It focuses on God’s promises rather than our problems. This lesson explores the power of hope.

**1** Throughout the Old Testament God’s people were often unfaithful to Him, drifting into sinful idolatry. Yet our Lord reached out to them. Read Jeremiah 29:11. What marvelous promise did the prophet Jeremiah give to the Israelites who were captive in Babylon?

In spite of Israel’s rebellion, God still had a destiny for them; their future was still in His hands. God promised to give them “a future and a hope.” No matter what challenges we face in our lives, God promises to give us a new future. We have the hope that He has a plan for our lives and that His future is better than our past.

**2** As Hosea’s wife, Gomer, was unfaithful to him, so Israel was unfaithful to the Lord. Gomer left her husband for other lovers and wandered in despair. In Hosea 2 the Valley of Achor represents all the hopelessness and despair that Gomer faced in her desperate situation. What encouraging words did Hosea speak to Gomer in Hosea 2:15?

Even in the midst of her hopelessness, God would open up a door of hope. What does a “door of hope” symbolize to you?

**3** Read Zechariah 9:11, 12. What urgent appeal does God give to those who have wandered from Him? What does He call His rebellious children? Why are these words so encouraging?

**4** In a very real sense each one of us is trapped in the prison house of sin. We are in bondage to the evil one. We are both sinners by nature and sinners by choice. We are prisoners, but “prisoners of hope.” Read Romans 5:1, 2, 5. What has Jesus Christ done to remedy our desperate situation? How has this changed our lives?

Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus we can hope again. We are “justified” through Christ’s death on the cross. We have peace with God and can rejoice in the hope of a glorious future today, tomorrow, and forever in His eternal kingdom. As the result of everything Jesus has done for us, is now doing for us, and will yet do for us, we can rejoice in hope.

**5** Where is our only source of hope? Is it in our ability to solve problems, or our wisdom to sort out difficult situations? Read the following passages about where genuine hope comes from: Colossians 1:27; 1 Timothy 1:1; Hebrews 6:18.

To know Christ is to know hope. As we develop an authentic relationship with Jesus, hope floods into our lives. Hope and Jesus cannot be separated. If we want more hope, we need more Jesus.

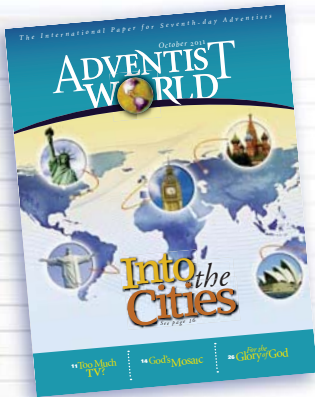
**6** What did the apostle Paul call the second coming of Jesus Christ in Titus 2:13?

The return of our Lord is the “blessed hope” for a world riddled with disease, disaster, and death. He is the only hope for our confused, chaotic planet. On a planet in rebellion against God, where wars wage, children starve, and the innocent suffer, the only real hope for this world’s overwhelming, seemingly unsolvable problems is the coming of Jesus.

**7** Until the vicious cycle of death is broken, death is inevitable for every human being. What will interrupt the march of death throughout history? Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and reflect upon the glorious hope of the return of our Lord and the grand reunion day when our loved ones are resurrected and together we ascend to meet Jesus in the air.

The Bible is a book filled with hope. Jesus created us. He has a plan for our lives. Even when we fail Him, He still cares and will open a “door of hope” in our valley of despair. Christ died for us. He lives for us. He is coming again for us. He has prepared a place in heaven especially for us and longs for us to be there.

If that doesn’t fill us with hope, what will? ■



# Letters

## Into the Cities

In the October 2011 *Adventist World* my attention was drawn to the issue's central theme "Into the Cities." Several items related to the evangelism of the cities: "With Loving Arms," by Gary Krause, and "Jesus' Heart Cry," by Mark A. Finley.

I was impressed with the emphasis given to the thoughts of Ellen White in "To Make Him Known": "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with [men and women] as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence.

Then He bade them, 'Follow Me'" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143).

Thank you for emphasizing what we must address, and we are addressing.

S. EZEKIEL WHEEL  
North Colombian Union,  
Medellin, Colombia

## Sharing God's Power

I am sharing with a friend Ryoko Suzuki's August 2011 article "The Hiroshima Miracle." The friend, who lives in Holland, needs some evidences of God's power through the ages.

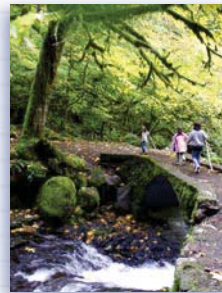
May the Lord continue blessing your wonderful work around the world. We receive so much inspiration from the articles we read every month in *Adventist World*.

YOLY MANGOLD  
Argentina

*This article—and all our Adventist World articles—can be found in our archives at [www.adventistworld.org](http://www.adventistworld.org).*  
—EDITORS.

“Sabbath should be one of the happiest experiences we have.”

—TASSIA BIANCA JANSEN BUENO, Curitiba, Brazil



## Days of Delight

I found Ted N. C. Wilson's article "Day of Delight" (July 2011) very interesting. It is important to remind

people that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment should not become a burden because, as we always say: "The Sabbath is a day of rest and worship."

It is quite common to see people who do not keep the Sabbath, or to see people talk about it in a way that makes it seem as just another part of the Mosaic law—just a day of "restrictions" in which you cannot do anything.

I agree with Wilson that the Sabbath should be one of the happiest experiences we have, and that preparation for it not begin Friday just minutes before sunset. Our homes, minds, and hearts must be prepared for this



The 2010 Global Cities Index ranks the world's greatest cities in terms of business, culture, politics, information, and human capital. According to those

rankings, the top five cities in the world are:

- New York City
- London
- Tokyo
- Paris
- Hong Kong

Source: *National Geographic*, December 2011.

day as a special covenant with God throughout the week by daily communion with Him, starting in the first hours of the morning.

*Adventist World* provides important information for the Christian on life, temperance, stories about missionaries, and even ways of communion with God. It's great that the church has good stuff like this.

*Adventist World* is an important tool to convey messages about God; His love; His Son, Jesus; and salvation through His death.

It would be great if *Adventist World* was also distributed in Adventist schools as a gift for parents, who, as well as non-Christians, could receive the gospel through this magazine.

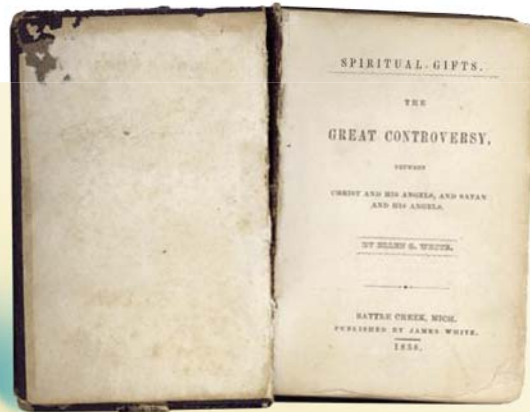
TASSIA BIANCA JANSEN BUENO  
Curitiba, Brazil

#### Have More Hope

I am really happy to read the *Adventist World* magazine. I am in a difficult financial situation—this magazine has helped me have more hope. Please pray for me!

JOHNNY QKHUNTTENBERG  
Uganda

**Letters Policy:** Please send to: [letters@adventistworld.org](mailto:letters@adventistworld.org). Letters must be clearly written, 100-word maximum. Include the name of the article and the date of publication 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.



## 154 Years Ago

On March 14, 1858, Ellen White had a vision in Lovett's Grove (now Bowling Green), Ohio, U.S.A., that has become known as her great controversy vision.

Ellen White soon began writing out the vision, completing most of the manuscript by June. In September *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 1, was published, with the subtitle *The Great Controversy Between Christ and His Angels and Satan and His Angels*. It was later expanded into *The Great Controversy*, part of the Conflict of the Ages Series, which includes *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Prophets and Kings*, *The Desire of Ages*, and *The Acts of the Apostles*.

**Source:** James R. Nix, *Memorable Dates From Our Adventist Past*.

#### FOR YOUR HEALTH

A daily serving of leafy green vegetables may lower the risk of type 2 diabetes by 14 percent. Cabbage and spinach contain polyphenols that may prevent oxidative stress that leads to diabetes and other chronic diseases.

**Source:** *Men's Health*.





**50** WORDS OR LESS

*My Favorite...*  
**Book of the Bible**

■ My favorite book is the book of Psalms. Whenever I need a spiritual pick-me-up, I read the Psalms. They seem to reflect every aspect of the human experience—joy, grief, security, worship, doubt, forgiveness. I couldn't survive without the Psalms.

—INGA, Oslo, Norway

■ I like to read Revelation. I don't understand many of the images and figures of speech, but I understand enough to know that Christ and His followers will eventually triumph over "that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan" (Rev. 12:9).

—FRANCISCO, Lima, Peru

■ My favorite book of the Bible is 1 Corinthians, probably because my favorite chapter in the Bible is 1 Corinthians 13. I read it at least once a week. When we understand how much God loves us, how can we not love others?

—SIENNA, Christchurch, New Zealand

Next time, tell us in 50 words or less about your favorite Bible promise. Send it to [letters@AdventistWorld.org](mailto:letters@AdventistWorld.org). Put in the subject line "50 Words or Less."

BY THE NUMBERS

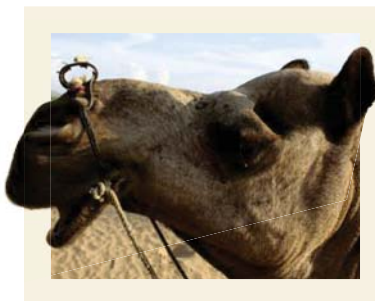
**1.1** billion

The number of people in the world who live on **US\$1** a day or less.

Source: A Dollar a Day; <http://library.thinkquest.org/05aug/00282/home.htm>

ADVENTIST LIFE

One afternoon during our Adventist Youth program we played "hunting animals in the Bible." Two groups competed in citing as many Bible verses that mentioned a particular animal as possible.



THOMAS VAN DEN BERG

By the fifth round on the word "camel," our group ran out of passages. But before the time limit expired, 6-year-old Er stood up for our group.

With an eager voice he said, "That camel was the one me and Grandpa encountered somewhere in Kings. I just can't recall the chapter."

Then turning toward his grandfather, who was on the other team, Er asked, "Grandpa, will you cite it, please, now? The one that carried spices for the queen of Sheba. We'll divide the points."

—ROLDAN H. BACUS, Pagadian, Philippines.

Prayer &  
**PRAISE**

I was injured in 2005 by a land mine blast in Afghanistan. I am still waiting to be compensated. I need your prayers.

GEORGE, via e-mail

Please pray for me. I face difficulty paying my university fees.

EMELDA, Zimbabwe

*“Behold, I come quickly...”*

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

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## Where in the World Is This?



**ANSWER:** In Loma Linda, California, United States, LLU Children's Hospital patient Sandra Cisneros plays pilot in one of the four law enforcement helicopters that landed on the Loma Linda University north lawn at the Thirtieth annual Cops for Kids Fly-In on October 26, 2011. Her copilot, Richard Estes, from Riverside Police Department, demonstrates how the helicopter works.

“Discipline is **teaching** us to do what is not natural to us.”

—PASTOR ANDRES PORTES

My rent is due, and I have no money. Please pray for God to provide the money and build my faith.

CAROL, *Canada*

Please pray for my sister to pass her nursing board examination and find a job.

HARVEY, *Philippines*

I work with God in hospitals, prisons, and open markets. Please pray that I will be able to secure necessary items such as Bibles, clothing, food, and shoes, and at the same time be instrumental in God's work in touching people's lives.

JOSHUA, *Kenya*





Every month  
**Adventist World**  
ends up in  
“gifted hands”

**Dr. Ben Carson\*** reads the *Adventist World* to stay in touch with his Seventh-day Adventist family around the world.

You can stay connected with your church family in the same way. Contact your communication department if the free *Adventist World* is not regularly distributed in your church.

\*Dr. Carson is the first surgeon in the world to successfully separate Siamese twins conjoined at the back of the head.

One Family.  
One World.  
**Adventist World.**