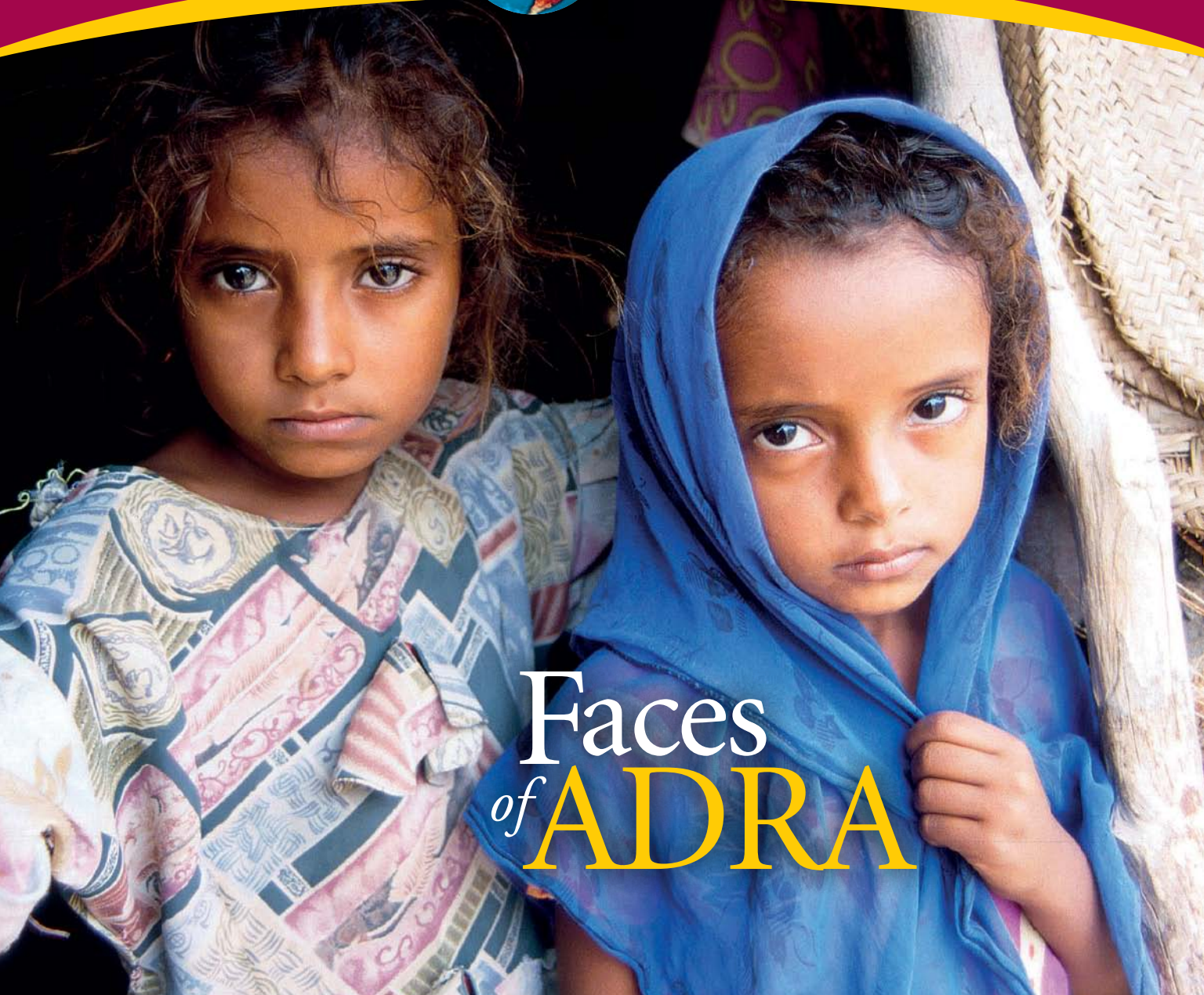


January 2013

ADVENTIST WORLD



Faces of ADRA

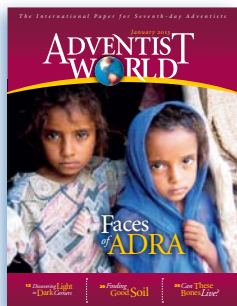
12 *Discovering Light
in Dark Corners*

20 *Finding
Good Soil*

26 *Can These
Bones Live?*

ADVENTIST WORLD

January 2013



COVER STORY

16 **Faces of ADRA** *By Sandra Blackmer*

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency has stories to tell; and we tell them.

8 **WORLD VISTA** **Never Doubt: God Is in Control, Part 1**

By Ted N. C. Wilson

Going forward is easy when we trust the One who's leading us.

12 **DEVOTIONAL** **Discovering Light in Dark Corners**

By Michael Doernbrack

Lessons about God from Genesis 3

14 **FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS** **Inscribed Into Our Hearts**

By Clifford Owusu-Gyamfi

The difference between knowing God's law and obeying God's law

20 **SPECIAL FEATURE** **Finding Good Soil**

By James Park

How do we identify those who are receptive to the gospel?

24 **ADVENTIST HERITAGE** **Rekindling Revival Flames**

By Alejo Aguilar

What our Adventist forebears learned from a terrible catastrophe

DEPARTMENTS

3 **WORLD REPORT**

- 3 News Briefs
- 6 News Feature

23 **SPIRIT OF PROPHECY**

Ministering to Soul and Body

27 **BIBLE STUDY**

Refreshing Your Faith

11 **WORLD HEALTH** **Vitamin B₁₂ Revisited**

26 **BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED** **Can These Bones Live?**

28 **IDEA EXCHANGE**



www.adventistworld.org
Available in 13 languages online

On the cover: These beautiful children live in a refugee camp managed by ADRA in Yemen.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ADRA

Practicing Compassion

“The longest journey of the Christian life is the distance from the head to the hand.”

We are, by definition, men and women of good intentions and goodwill. Our covenant with Jesus as Lord and with His end-time church testifies to our sincere desire to believe the truths of the Bible and live the lifestyle of the Savior. We made these commitments first at baptism, and through the promptings of the Holy Spirit, many times since then.

But how do good intentions become good deeds? How does my belief in the truth of the seventh-day Sabbath become a life renewed by the joy and rest of the seventh-day Sabbath? How does my belief that God hears all sincere prayer become a daily habit of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication?

The answer, of course, is *practice*. Every time we hear and obey the command of Christ, our confidence in Him is strengthened, and our grasp of His Word is deepened. There are months—maybe even years—during which our practice is imperfect, sporadic, or halfhearted. We fall short of our intention to live as Jesus lived and care as Jesus cared. But this does not mean that incomplete deeds of kindness have no value, or that God cannot use our half-baked bread.

In heaven’s economy, no act of kindness is ever wasted. The cup of cold water offered in Jesus’ name still serves the kingdom, even when we could do more. The children we clothe, the widows we feed, and the wells we dig are real enough; and the practicing we do confirms in us our pledge to “be like Jesus” for His little ones.

As you read this month’s cover feature about the international ministry of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), pray for the chance to practice the kindness once shown to you. Let God’s gift of grace to you become God’s gift of graciousness *through you*.

Bill Kautz



WORLD REPORT



TED NEWS PHOTO

STOP SMOKING: Participants in an anti-smoking training program in Belgrade, Serbia, sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Adventists Bring Stop-smoking Message to Belgrade

■ The Health Ministries Department of the South-East European Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SEEUC), together with nongovernmental organization Life and Health, held a two-day seminar for pastors and health club leaders in Belgrade, Serbia, on September 30 and October 1, 2012.

Smoking is a major public health problem in Serbia. The government and the Ministry of Health have organized successful campaigns since 2003, and the number of smokers decreased 7 percent from 2000 to 2006. But figures are still high, especially among women.

The seminar’s aim was to teach every Seventh-day Adventist church how to become a place where smokers who want to quit can get advice, support, and assistance. Each church that has a health club can organize smoking-cessation seminars based on the Quit Now! 7 Steps to Freedom program.

The seminar, with 150 participants present, was opened by Đorđe Trajkovski, SEEUC president. Guest speaker was Richard Willis, executive director of the United Kingdom National Committee for the Prevention of Alcohol and Drug Dependency and a member of the executive committee and associate director of the International Committee for the Prevention of Alcohol and Drug Dependence, based in Washington, D.C. He shared his knowledge and experience with implementation of smoking-cessation programs. Willis also challenged and inspired participants, even if they are not physicians, medical technicians, or nurses, to work with smokers. During the workshops he gave practical advice about how to cope with stress and withdrawal crises.

Among other presenters were: Dr. Zorica Plavšić, who had a presentation about smoking pandemics, the situation in Serbia, and

Continued on next page ▶

WORLD REPORT

tobacco smoking as a risk factor for health disorders; Dr. Branislav Hačko, who talked about the partnership between health clubs and local community; and Dr. Petar Borović, who held a presentation about positive effects after smoking cessation.

Vlado Havran, health ministries director at the SEEUC, presented up-to-date experiences with the work of health clubs.

During the workshops participants got practical instructions about how to implement the Quit Now! program in their churches and health clubs. Each participant received a CD with educational materials and the book *Enjoy Without Tobacco Smoke*, written by Plavšić. —reported by tedNews

In Brazil, Major Suburb Gets New Church

■ The 2013 emphasis of evangelizing big cities took an important step in South America on October 27, 2012. In the presence of more than 120 Adventist leaders from eight South American countries, the first stone was laid for a future Adventist congregation in the area known as Lago Sul, in Brazil's federal capital, Brasília.

According to the 2011 Human Development Index from the United Nations, about 30,000 people live in the neighborhood, which has a human development index (HDI) of 0.945, the highest in the world. To put this number in context, Norway leads the world's ranking with an HDI of 0.943. Brazil is eighty-fifth on the list, with an HDI of 0.718. The Lago Sul location represents one of the Adventist challenges for 2013—building new churches in upper-class areas of the 79 largest cities in South America.

Edison Choque, general project

coordinator of the big-city evangelization project in South America, explained that this launch is an example for other regions. “Beyond forming congregations in wealthy areas of cities, we want to establish influence centers with activities that will benefit society's families, health, and education and that will serve to demonstrate that Adventists are concerned with changing whole lives,” remarks Choque. Along with the leaders from Adventist administrative regions from eight countries, he coordinated the foundation stone ceremony as a demonstration of participative construction.

The land measures 161,000 square feet (15,000 square meters) and costs 17 million Brazilian reais (US\$8.5 million). The investment was made in consideration of constructing an Adventist church with a 380-member capacity and the new Adventist Church administrative headquarters of the West Central Brazil Union Mission. While a start date isn't established, the hope is to also build a school as part of the Adventist education network in the area.

Jáder Carvalho, one of the leaders from the Central Brazil Adventist Church, spoke of the dream that this ceremony represents, since many small groups already exist in the area, with people who have already made and are making their decisions to accept Christ. He believes evangelistic work needs a structure such as this.

During the ceremony, division president Erton Köhler affirmed that “evangelizing in big cities was always among Adventist efforts. But in 2013 our emphasis is to plant new congregations in places where acquisition of power and secularization have complicated the community's interest in helping the church.”



SUBURBAN OUTREACH: South American Division president Erton Köhler (right), executive secretary Magdiel Pérez (left), finance director Marlon Lopes (center right), and General Conference general vice president Ella Simmons pose with books placed in the cornerstone of a new Adventist church in Lago Sul, an affluent suburb in Brazil's federal capital, Brasília.

ASN PHOTO

Köhler; Magdiel Pérez, secretary of the Adventist Church in South America; Marlon Lopes, financial director; and Ella Simmons, a general vice president of the worldwide Adventist Church, filled the center of the cornerstone with books and magazines that speak about Adventist biblical beliefs and values. The message was clear: the buildings that will stand there are founded on the Bible and books that reinforce the teachings of Jesus Christ. —reported by Felipe Lemos, ASN

Story of First Australian Adventist to Study Medicine Told

■ The previously untold story of the first Seventh-day Adventist to study medicine in Australia is now featured in a new book by an Avondale College staff member.

Rose-lee Power describes Dr. Margherita Freeman, the subject of *Born to Serve*, as “courageous and determined.” “For a woman to take up medicine was really . . . going against the odds—it was a man's world,” says Power, who researched the story for three years in her role as curator of the Adventist Heritage Centre.

Freeman, a graduate of the Univer-

sity of Sydney in 1911, played an important role in the accreditation of what was then known as the Sydney Sanitarium. At a time when women would usually be chaperoned when out in public, Freeman ran clinics and, in the absence of her husband, opened a birthing center, organized nurses' training, and presented at conferences.

What is now Sydney Adventist Hospital, its connection with the community, and its reputation for providing quality care "is in no small part due to the work of Dr. Freeman and others like her who had a vision and spirit of service that all would do well to emulate," said Barry Oliver, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific and chair of the hospital's board.

Oliver attended the launch of *Born to Serve* as part of an Adventist women's conference at the Watson Park Convention Centre north of Brisbane.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MELISSA PRESTON

STORY TELLER: *Born to Serve* author Rose-lee Power, of church-owned Avondale College, details the life of the first Seventh-day Adventist in Australia to study medicine and become a physician.

He notes how the history of the church in Australia includes "so many untold stories of courage, commitment and faith. Thankfully, Rose-lee . . . was not willing to let [this] amazing story . . . fade into the forgotten files of the archives."

Freeman is a "role model for women everywhere and for all time," writes Carole Ferch-Johnson in the foreword. The associate director for women in pastoral ministry in Australia's Ministerial Association remembers Freeman as a "formidable person" who commanded a "great deal of respect."

Rod and Nita Ellison, who were friends of Freeman, began the project to write her story. "She'd done so much for our church as a woman in ministry . . . we loved her," said Nita. She recalls Freeman's sense of humor. "We spent a lot of the time laughing with her while we were visiting."

Ellison approached Power to finish writing the story, but because Freeman had no children, Power found it difficult finding accurate sources. However, a set of documents and photographs became available from the Freeman Nursing Home in Rossmoyne, which is named in Freeman's honor, just before printing. The documents confirmed facts and provided images of Freeman later in life.

Philippine Adventist Publishing House Gets Quality Award

■ The Philippine Publishing House (PPH), one of 63 publishing houses maintained worldwide by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, received the World Quality Commitment Award in the Gold Category from Business Initiative Directions (BID).



PPH PHOTO

QUALITY AWARD: Florante P. Ty, Philippine Publishing House president, and Ronaldo B. Dumapig, vice president for finance, receive the World Quality Commitment Award at the Concorde La Fayette of Paris from Jose E. Prieto, president of Business Initiative Directions.

The awards ceremony was held during the BID World Quality Commitment Convention—Paris 2012, at which 54 countries around the world were recognized for achievements in "quality and excellence."

Jose E. Prieto, president and CEO of BID, said, "The awarded companies are symbols of commitment to leadership, technology, and innovation, making them models for others in their sectors."

Representing PPH during the ceremony, which was held at the Concorde La Fayette Hotel in Paris on October 29, 2012, were Florante P. Ty, president, and Ronaldo B. Dumapig, treasurer and vice president for finance.

Speaking to PPH employees after the Paris event, Ty said, "We praise God that after operating for almost 100 years, Philippine Publishing House has been recognized for quality, innovation, excellence, and commitment. I believe that the organization behind this award saw fit to bestow on us the honor of World Quality Commitment because of our unique person-to-person distribution program, which is being done by our literature evangelists and publishing leaders throughout the Philippines."

WORLD REPORT

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Inter-America officially launched its comprehensive initiatives for its 2013 Year of the Laity during a live online program at the Comayaguela Adventist Church in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on October 27, 2012. Dozens of executive committee members joined the historic event, while thousands of church board members across the territory connected via the Internet to witness and adopt the initiatives and activities.

“The church has been enriched by the hard work of our ministers and lay members in spreading the gospel in Inter-America. This is why we have designated 2013 as the Year of the Laity, to let work of the church be felt more throughout the community,” said Israel Leito, president of the church in Inter-America.

“Our online event was about directly involving our church boards in seeing, joining, partnering, and adopting initiatives that will continue to propel our church toward

sharing Christ more during 2013,” Leito added.

It was an orchestrated event that set the tone for the two-hour opening of the biannual executive committee meetings in an effort to solicit the support of local church board members to unite in carrying out evangelism efforts throughout their communities while celebrating the work of the laity.

Scheduled events and activities such as spiritual celebrations, virtual



LAITY YEAR LAUNCH: Seventh-day Adventist leaders in Inter-America participate in the launch of the church’s 2013 Year of the Laity initiative during a live Webcast held in Comayaguela Adventist Church in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on October 27, 2012. The online event connected thousands of local church boards across the territory during the two-hour program.

By: LIBNA STEVENS,
Inter-America Division

Online Event *Launches Inter-America 2013* Outreach Efforts

Year of Laity plans emerge at Honduras meeting

councils, gatherings, baptisms, evangelistic efforts, and community-impact events are planned as the church and its various ministries endeavor together for united efforts in 2013, said Melchor Ferreyra, personal ministries director for the church in Inter-America.

“We are excited to gain full participation from our lay members, which includes professionals, men, women, young people, and children

in the preaching of the gospel,” added Ferreyra.

Already nearly 1 million laypeople have been trained during an initiative that the church in Inter-America coined as Vision One Mission. The initiative sought to train 1 million disciples in any of five areas: preaching, Bible instruction, witnessing, small-group leadership, and global mission pioneering.

More than 8,000 connections registered to watch the Webcast, and



LEADER SPEAKS: Israel Leito, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Inter-America, addresses church leaders and online viewers on 2013 Year of the Laity initiatives.

REACHING CHILDREN: Women’s ministries director for the church in Inter-America Cecilia Iglesias (third from left) shares activities planned for women during the coming year during the program. Benjamin Carballo (center) youth ministries director and Dinorah Rivera (right), children’s ministries director wait their turn to share during the online event.

hundreds of comments were logged on the event Web site as it happened.

Division-wide initiatives highlighting the Year of the Laity include revival convocations, a day of fasting and prayer, virtual council for church elders, evangelism deployment throughout the territory, Vision One Million celebration, baptismal ceremony by church elders and community impact through health activities.

Ana Aceituno Ortiz of the Tepeyac Adventist Church in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, was among the members of the 30 church boards gathered at the live event in the Comayaguela Adventist Church. Her church board voted to adopt initiatives presented during the program.

As children’s ministries director in her church, Ortiz was excited to hear about the special activities, especially those that connect with the community.

“This program was such an inspiration because it outlined how all the

ministries can work together to have a greater impact,” said Ortiz. “We have to continue working for Christ and share with those who still don’t know a thing about Jesus.”

Ortiz has already organized activities with the 65 children in her church in music festivals, health brigades, and activities in orphanages and nursing homes in her community. “Next year will inspire us to do more and reach more,” Ortiz added.

For Ricardo Barrantes, a church elder and stewardship director at the 250-member Kennedy Adventist Church in Tegucigalpa, watching and listening to news about the eight major events scheduled for 2013 was exciting. “These are wonderful plans and activities, which means we have to work harder and faster to continue serving God and preparing others to meet Jesus,” said Barrantes.

Preparing and training others has been taking place in the Chiapas

Mexican Union and across Inter-America.

Ignacio Navarro, president for the church in Chiapas, Mexico, stood next to fellow administrators from Inter-America’s church regions in commitment to joining efforts planned for the Year of the Laity.

So far nearly 67,000 laypersons have been trained to witness in the southern part of Mexico, said Navarro. “This online program helped bring about renewed efforts for lay forces in our territory,” he added. The church is planning to hold a massive baptismal ceremony in a 35,000-seat stadium in February as a result of the work of the laity.

It’s about mobilizing laypersons to witness, preach, distribute literature, and do many more activities to reach lost souls during the special Year of the Laity, said Edgar Redondo, president of the church in North Colombia, who added that more than 50,000 passionate lay members have been trained for greater impact.

“These initiatives will only enrich the church, help individual church members to discover their gifts and talents, and focus on sharing about God’s love and grace,” said Redondo.

Already church members in North Colombia have been holding health expos, distributing 200,000 copies of *The Great Controversy* to authorities, government officials, and entire communities, according to Redondo.

Elsewhere in Inter-America, the church prepares to have a historic Year of the Laity and celebrate victories reached, leaders said.

“Without the laity, the church has no reason for being. So we are certain that God will continue blessing,” said Leito.

For more about the initiatives, and resources for the 2013 Year of the Laity initiatives, visit 2013.interamerica.org. ■

The following article is adapted from a sermon given during Annual Council on Sabbath, October 13, 2012, and conveys the first portion of that message. A second article in the February 2013 *Adventist World* will complete the message. Elements of the oral style have been retained.—Editors.

Our passage of Scripture—Matthew 14—presents a powerful and practical message set against the backdrop of a fascinating experience in the life of Christ, His disciples, and His church.

14. They relate very much to our experience as His remnant church poised for the proclamation of the loud cry:

Burden 1: Our need for a full understanding of medical missionary work and health reform as an integral

and followed Him on land and sea. Thousands gathered from the cities to see Him. In the book *The Ministry of Healing* we are told of Christ's method in reaching these people: "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men 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.' There is need of coming close to the people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen" (p. 143).

How did Christ exhibit this comprehensive health ministry? Ellen White tells us that "interrupted as He was, and robbed of His rest, He was not impatient. He saw a greater necessity demanding His attention as He watched the people coming and still coming" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 364).

How sympathetic and caring are we when it comes to giving up our private time to lovingly care for the needs of others? Christ's ministry must be our ministry.

A Comprehensive Health Ministry

It was my privilege to visit Israel for the first time this last June for the Third International Bible Conference organized by our Biblical Research Institute (see "International Bible Conference Opens in Israel," available online at www.adventistworld.org/article/1264/resources/english/issue-2012-1006/ibc-1). During part of the conference we stayed on the Sea of Galilee, not far from where this Matthew 14 event may have taken place. It was thrilling to imagine the setting on those hillsides as Jesus met the needs of people. His heart yearned to help the multitudes find the spiritual and physical healing they needed. He

Never Doubt: God Is in Control

By TED N. C. WILSON

Part 1

This passage also carries strong applications for us today.

Jesus had just received word of the beheading of His cousin and predecessor in ministry, John the Baptist, and needed some time alone. Matthew 14:13 records: "He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities."

Even amid His personal sorrow at the death of John, Jesus' heart went out to those in need. His mission was ever before Him, as, even during the most difficult times, it must always be before us. Weeping and working with Jesus for the people of the cities must be our passion.

Let's look at two important inter-related burdens of Jesus in Matthew

part of Mission to the Cities

Burden 2: Our great need for selfless unity in Christ as we proclaim the three angels' messages.

Christ's Method Will Give Success

Jesus had wanted a quiet place from the constant demands of the people who sought His presence and the truth He shared. As we seek to minister to others as Jesus did, it is important that we take time to allow the Holy Spirit to repair and rejuvenate our own souls for ministry and service to others.

However, when Jesus sought a quiet place, the people missed Him and asked where He was. Some noticed what direction Jesus had gone

opened before them the comprehensive health ministry in which all of us are called to participate, as it is an integral part of the three angels' messages.

In 3 John 2 we read: "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers." As Seventh-day Adventists we believe in the whole person concept of ministering to those around us in a comprehensive way. God, our Creator, was declaring that He wanted us to be revived, reformed, and in full health—physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually.

Following Christ's Example

Our magnificent Redeemer wants us to prosper through our relationship with Him and our service to others. While on earth, "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people" (Matt. 9:35).

This ministry of Jesus is to be the burden of every Seventh-day Adventist. In every city, Seventh-day Adventists should minister to people, not only from their local churches, but also from centers of influence such as health clinics, vegetarian restaurants, reading rooms, counseling centers, and community service centers. Health lectures, literature evangelism, small-group outreach, door-to-door mission work, innovative media evangelism, and social work that follows Christ's methods will be effective. Personal and small-group Bible studies, public evangelism, comprehensive health ministry, and a myriad of other creative outreach initiatives still to be developed through the leading of the Holy Spirit should be the hallmark of our work in the cities.

This work will require the involvement of lay members as well as established denominational ministries, including Adventist Community Ser-

vices, ADRA, Adventist World Radio, Hope Channel, Adventist Book Centers, and many others.

Working Unitedly

In this vital work of soul-winning in the large cities, God is calling us to reinvigorate the use of a balanced comprehensive health ministry and unite the efforts of our denominational organizations and supporting ministries. In counsel that is still relevant today Ellen White wrote: "Every minister of the gospel should be prepared to do practical medical missionary work. The medical missionary work is to be as closely united with the gospel ministry as the arm is united to the body. . . . In our large cities the medical missionary work must go hand in hand with the gospel ministry. It will open doors for the entrance of truth" (manuscript 117, 1901).

Ellen White counsels us to establish outpost centers or small institutes in the countryside just outside the cities where city workers can live or visit to be refreshed, where a simple health lifestyle center can care for guests who want to learn a new approach to life, and a place where young people can be trained for city evangelism.

We need Holy Spirit-inspired strategic planning by administrators, pastors, and health professionals for every city around the world that will produce the kind of "beehive" of comprehensive evangelistic, health, and community activities Ellen White described taking place in San Francisco around 1906 (see "Buzzing About the Beehive," available online at www.adventistreview.org/issue.php?issue=2011-1511&page=18).

Reaching the People of the Largest Cities

This is the type of work to be done in New York City as we plan for a giant evangelistic outreach in 2013. Leaders

and evangelists from the General Conference and around the world, along with local pastors, health professionals, and lay members, will participate in approximately 350 evangelistic meetings in the metropolitan area of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. My wife, Nancy, and I will hold one of those evangelistic meetings for three weeks in the very location I started my ministry—in the Manhattan Seventh-



day Adventist Church on West 11th Street in Greenwich Village.

All this will be preceded and followed by community outreach and comprehensive health ministry to reach New York and many other cities of the world. Pray for this outreach so that by the power of the Holy Spirit this ministry will reach approximately 650 of the world's largest cities by 2015.

I appeal to each of you, especially young people, to study, plan, pray, and engage in God's great plans for comprehensive urban evangelism and comprehensive health ministry. He is calling you to be part of His blended team of pastors, health professionals, church workers, and church members to show compassion on those who are weary, scattered, and broken in body

and spirit, and to bring them into a relationship with Christ.

Practical Compassion

Comprehensive health ministry is meeting people's needs in a practical way that shows them the love of Jesus, whether it is sharing a loaf of whole-wheat bread with a neighbor or treating a patient with Christlike kindness at one of our many technologically advanced Seventh-day Adventist health institutions.

"Medical missionary work has been presented as the entering wedge of present truth," wrote Ellen White. "It is by this work that hearts are reached, and those once prejudiced are softened and subdued" (letter 110, 1902).

We can show Christ's love and compassion in turning the local church into a center of life and health. Resource materials produced by health ministries departments and other health entities can be used for practical Christian witnessing—sharing with neighbors the benefits of heaven-inspired health habits, preventive health strategies, and simple, inexpensive home health procedures and interventions. "Every church a community health center" is one of the most inexpensive and effective preventive health-care approaches as we "tell the world" about God's complete plan of restoring the whole person.

The Loud Cry

Comprehensive health ministry is to play a strong role in the loud cry. Stressing the importance of this work, we read: "The health reform is as closely related to the third angel's message as the arm to the body; but the arm cannot take the place of the body. The proclamation of the third angel's message, the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus, is the burden of our work. The message is to be proclaimed with a loud cry,

and is to go to the whole world" (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 75).

Seventh-day Adventists are the only ones proclaiming the third angel's message, and they will proclaim the loud cry. Changes have to take place in us and through us to accomplish this heaven-directed work. The loud cry is going to be given amid a storm of persecution that will have an effect on all of us.

Because of the close working relationship between health reform and the third angel's message, there is work to be done in personal health before pastors and people will be given the power to proclaim the third angel's message as the loud cry. "God's people . . . have a work to do for themselves which they should not leave God to do for them. . . . It is an individual work; one cannot do it for another" (*ibid.*, p. 32).

Leaders and church members, have we become hesitant in strongly proclaiming and decidedly living the clear link between biblical truth and our physical wellbeing? Do we truly believe that God has given unique light to Seventh-day Adventists regarding a healthy lifestyle and charged us to "tell the world"?

Of course, we need wisdom, not fanaticism, in our presentation of the health message. "Health reform, wisely treated, will prove an entering wedge where the truth may follow with marked success. But to present health reform unwisely . . . has served to create prejudice with unbelievers . . . leaving the impression that we are extremists" (*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 285). Let us wisely expand the work of this powerful blending of the physical and spiritual ministry—without fanaticism.

The Answer to the Devil's Deceptions

Comprehensive health ministry—the practical presentation of God's health principles—is the answer to

postmodernism, the New Age movement, mysticism, and pagan philosophies that are part of the last day deceptions of the devil. Do not fall prey to the "strange fire" of mystic belief and practice whether in health or in spiritual life. Stay close to the Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy, and a personal prayer connection with heaven so the Holy Spirit will help you to discern truth and avoid error and extremism.

God is calling us to revival and reformation both spiritually and physically. Participate in "Revived by His Word" as we read at least one chapter a day in the Bible (see revivedbyhisword.org). We are not to be satisfied with only the rich heritage of the Seventh-day Adventist health ministry but to renew our commitment to innovative approaches of health practices, health promotion, and comprehensive health ministry.

I appeal to our pastors and health professionals to unite under the power of the Holy Spirit. I thank God for the wonderful things that are happening in many of our churches, healthcare institutions, schools, and supporting ministries. I appeal to our seminaries and colleges to have health courses for theology majors and all students. Let us realize the power of a united and blended approach since Christ is the origin of all life and health.

"The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Christ. A great work of reform is demanded, and it is only through the grace of Christ that the work of restoration, physical, mental, and spiritual, can be accomplished" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143). ■



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

Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.



Vitamin B₁₂ *Revisited*

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES and PETER N. LANDLESS

I'm a researcher and have focused on vitamin B₁₂. In the World Health column in the August 2012 issue of *Adventist World*, you suggested that lacto-ovo vegetarians might fare better than those eating a total plant-based diet. I recently surveyed the literature, and it's my finding that all vegetarians are likely to be deficient in vitamin B₁₂. Would you comment?

We have contacted researchers studying some 95,000 North American Adventists, including total plant-based dietary groups, lacto-ovo vegetarians, omnivores, and groups in between (the Adventist Health Study II). You are correct in suggesting that vitamin B₁₂ is of concern to all vegetarians—and maybe more so to those living where much of the food is not fortified.

Vitamin B₁₂ is a water-soluble vitamin that's important in facilitating the function of folic acid. It's also needed for blood formation and nervous tissue function. It's found naturally only in animal-sourced foods, and consequently its sufficiency is of importance to all vegetarians. Symptoms of deficiency are late in onset.

The group of Adventists in the Adventist Health Study do not at first appear to show significant numbers with vitamin B₁₂ deficiency, perhaps because of conscious attention to utilizing vitamin B₁₂-fortified foods or specific B₁₂ supplements. The findings reported to us of vitamin B₁₂ levels in the Adventist Health Study are preliminary and should not be construed

as definitive. There remains a need for vigilance among all vegetarians and even some who occasionally eat meat.

There's a condition called pernicious anemia, in which an individual lacks what's called the "intrinsic factor." This leads to a malabsorption of vitamin B₁₂. Persons with pernicious anemia usually require injectable vitamin B₁₂ of 1,000 micrograms a month, or a daily dissolvable tablet that absorbs in the mouth.

A recent article in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* reported on vitamin B₁₂ deficiency in two infants.¹ These infants were breastfed; one the child of a vegan mother, and the other of a mother with pernicious anemia. When a mother herself has low B₁₂ levels, her breast milk will contain inadequate B₁₂ levels as well. These infants became anemic and suffered neurologic developmental failure. They displayed symptoms of lethargy, low muscle tone, apathy, and general weakness. Imaging studies showed brain atrophy. Whether they will fully recover remains to be seen. This appears to indicate that all vegetarians—perhaps everyone—should be aware of the need for vitamin B₁₂.

One of our major concerns is the use of "homemade" or unfortified soy drinks as substitutes for cow's milk. These products do not contain the required fortification of vitamin B₁₂. It's important to check the nutrition content of *all* such substitutes for animal products to be sure they contain supplemental vitamin B₁₂. If they don't, we recommend that such vegetarians take supplemental vitamin B₁₂.

We are especially concerned that vegan breastfeeding mothers should have supplemental vitamin B₁₂, and

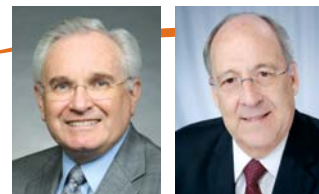
that their infants receive careful pediatric surveillance for its deficiency. Brain or nerve damage secondary to B₁₂ deficiency is often irreversible. The recommended minimum intake of 2.5 micrograms a day should be viewed as such: a *minimum* level.

The *Canadian Medical Association Journal* article (referencing several studies) reported one in 20 women of childbearing age in Canada has inadequate levels of vitamin B₁₂.² The Canadian Health Measures Survey found about 5 percent of women aged 20 to 45 years old were deficient, and 20 percent had marginal stores.

On a global scale, vitamin B₁₂ deficiency is a significantly greater risk on the subcontinent of India and in Mexico, Central America, and certain regions of Africa.

There are significant health advantages of a vegetarian diet. So far, neither the Adventist Health Study nor any other scientifically valid study permits selection of one or another variety of vegetarian diet as being definitely superior to the others, but it's clear that *all* vegetarians should be aware of vitamin B₁₂ requirements. ■

¹ Nadia Rommeliotis, David Dix, and Alisa Lipson, in *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 184, no. 14 (Oct. 2, 2012).
² *Ibid.*



Allan R. Handysides, a board-certified gynecologist, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.

Peter N. Landless, a board-certified nuclear cardiologist, is associate director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.

When people think about Genesis 3, they typically think, *Oh, yes, that's the chapter in which God kicked Adam and Eve out of Paradise.* Doubtless that's true. The chapter tells the sad story of humanity falling into sin and having to leave Paradise. But if we look a little closer, we will actually see a surprising revelation of the character of God and the gospel.

Knowing God

We can build a relationship only with someone we really know. If we have wrong conceptions about a person, it will negatively affect our relationship with that person. The same is true in our relationship with God. In order to have a loving relationship with Him, we must truly understand His character. That's why Jesus said: "And this is eternal life, that they may know You" (John 17:3).

When God created Adam and Eve, they knew God face to face. They loved Him. They found their greatest happiness in spending time with God. But when Satan deceived Eve, he planted a wrong image of God in her mind. He led her to believe that God is selfish and unjust and does not have their best interest in mind (cf. Gen. 3:1-5). Thus the relationship with God was severely damaged, and they hid from His presence. This is important to understand: *Sin did not start with a deed.* Rather it began with accepting a wrong image of the character of God! The deed of taking the forbidden fruit was just a consequence of this wrong concept about God.

Wrong Concepts of God

This is not just an ancient story. The same is true today! How many people, even in the church, have a wrong image of God? "God loves me when I am good enough!" "God will not forgive me; I have gone too far."

By MICHAEL DOERNBRACK

Discovering Light *in* Dark Corners

The gospel according to Genesis 3

"God loves me so much that He will save me no matter what I do." Wrong concepts about God abound in many shapes and colors, ultimately leading people away from God. It's tragic! When we have a wrong image of God, we cannot have a right relationship with Him, because we believe in a god that does not exist! That's the reason the devil is so eager to spread lies about the character of God! That's also the reason God moves heaven and earth to show us how He really is! He has many ways to help us understand that He is loving and just. But the best revelation of God we find in Jesus Christ. "Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Cre-

ator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men."*

God's Character in Genesis 3

This revelation of God through Jesus Christ did not start when Jesus lived on earth. Rather, it began in Genesis 3. As soon as there was sin, God revealed Himself as the Savior of man. Right then and there!

How did God respond after Adam and Eve had sinned? He didn't even try to find arguments to prove that the devil was wrong. Rather, He demonstrated that He was completely different from what Satan had claimed Him to be. Let's take a closer look at how God accomplished that!

1. After the Fall God could have sent angels to arrest Adam and Eve



“Sin did not start with a deed.”

and conduct them to the heavenly courtroom. But He did not do that. Rather, *God chose to leave heaven and come down* to where sin had occurred, to meet humanity where they were. Years later God did the same when He left heaven and became a man in order to save us.

2. When Adam and Eve hid themselves from God’s presence, *He sought them and asked questions*. He came to Adam and asked: “Where are you?” “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?” (verses 9, 11). When Adam blamed Eve and in consequence God, He turned to Eve and asked: “What is this you have done?” (verse 13). She blamed the serpent, and thus also God, because after all, who had created the serpent?

Think this through! Why does God ask questions! Doesn’t He know everything? Of course He does. When

God asks questions in the Bible, it’s never because of a lack of knowledge on His part.

When Elijah ran away from Jezebel, God asked him twice: “What are you doing here, Elijah?” (1 Kings 19:9, 13). When the people brought blind Bartimaeus to Jesus, He asked: “What do you want Me to do for you?” (Mark 10:51). Before Jesus healed the man at the Pool of Bethesda, He asked him: “Do you want to be made well?” (John 5:6).

When God asks questions, it is because He wants people to see their need of Him. He wants to lead them to repentance and salvation. This is important: *The God who asks questions is the God who wants to save*. When God came to the garden after the Fall, He came as the compassionate Savior who desperately wanted to save Adam and Eve. When God came to Satan, He did not ask a question. Why? Because the devil had gone too far. God did not come as Savior but as Judge.

3. *God also demonstrated His justice and His abhorrence of sin*. Adam and Eve had to leave paradise and experience the consequences of their sin. But God did not send them out of paradise without hope. In the sentence given to Satan, God put the promise of a coming Savior who would destroy Satan and save humanity.

4. *God revealed Himself as a caring God*. He saw humanity with their pitiful leaf garments and knew that they would not manage in the world they were about to enter. So He made them coats of skin to clothe themselves. Innocent blood was shed. It was God who provided this sacrifice. It was God who made the coats. It was God who clothed them. It is important to note that up until that point there was not a single sign of repentance on the part of Adam and Eve. The clothes were not God’s reaction to their repentance. They were rather gifts of grace! What a wonderful picture of the salvation He offers us as a gift, through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Genesis 3 is not just the chapter that shows how God kicked Adam and Eve out of Paradise. It is a chapter that draws a beautiful picture of the character of God and ultimately reveals the gospel. Next time you read this chapter, remember that God’s saving grace is greater than sin! ■

¹ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956), pp. 10, 11.



Michael Doernbrack

is pastor of the Isny Seventh-day Adventist Church in Germany. He is also the founder and director of the Josiah Mission School in Isny that trains young Adventists, willing to give nine months of their life, to be disciples who communicate the gospel effectively.

Some time ago I saw the caricature of a man descending from a mountain, with two stone tablets in his hands. He looked tired and worn out and was introduced as a modern Moses. Seeing himself surrounded and jostled by eager media personnel, he began his statement with the following words: “Because of the sensitive nature of this matter, my source wishes to remain anonymous.”

How do we think about God’s law and the Ten Commandments today? Is this a “sensitive” issue (or doctrine) that we prefer to pass by quietly?

salvation was made because humanity disobeyed God’s commandment. In consequence, we became sinners and needed a Savior. The Godhead made a plan—and His name was Jesus. His saving grace was our only hope, and it was to transform us. The Bible makes it clear: “No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him” (1 John 3:6, NIV). Earlier, in verse 4, John has already defined sin: “Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness” (NIV).

We sin by breaking the law, which means that we destroy our relationship with the Lawgiver. Even by way of

NUMBER 19

Inscribed INTO OUR Hearts

By CLIFFORD OWUSU-GYAMFI

His obedience inspires our love

The Author

In contrast to this caricature Moses, the real Moses of days past, begins his message by referring immediately to the true source: “And God spoke all these words: ‘I am the Lord your God’” (Ex. 20:1, 2, NIV).¹ God clearly distinguished Himself (from the other gods) as the author of the Ten Commandment. It’s quite easy to say that “the Ten Commandments are no longer binding.” But how many Christians would be able to say, “The divinely inspired Ten Commandments are no longer binding”? The source of a text tells us something about the content of the text and is closely linked to its authority. When we neglect the supreme source of the commandments, we carelessly deny their authority (Ex. 31:18).

The Main Point

Salvation is centered on Christ alone. If there is no sinner, there is absolutely no need for a Savior. But the plan of

definition, lawlessness is having no respect or regard for the law. If we believe that Jesus has saved us from sin, we must believe also that in Him is the power to obey God’s commandments, since in Him is no sin (verse 5). This obedience is not based on legalism, but is wrought by the grace that produces love in us (1 John 5:3).

A Reminder

Romans 3:20 reads: “Through the law we become conscious of our sin” (NIV). Paul later on further elaborates this by noting: “Well then, am I suggesting that the law of God is sinful? Of course not! In fact, it was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, ‘You must not covet’” (Rom. 7:7, NLT).² He continues: “But how can that be? Did the law, which is good, cause my death? Of course not! Sin used what was good to bring about my condemnation to death. So we can see how terrible sin

THE Law OF God

really is. It uses God's good commands for its own evil purposes" (verse 13).

As we open the Word, God's Spirit convicts us of sin and reveals to us its awful consequences. As a reminder, God's law drives us to focus on Christ. It drives us to yearn for a Savior. Hence we thank God that He wrote the law on the tablets of our hearts and minds (Jer. 31:31-33; Heb. 8:10).

The Testimony of Love

A lawyer once asked Jesus about the greatest of the law, and this was Jesus' answer: "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'" The second is this: "Love your neighbor as yourself." There is no commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:29-31, NIV).

No one should presuppose that this is a new commandment of the New Testament. Jesus quoted directly from the Pentateuch—something He often did while teaching (Deut. 6:4, 5; Lev. 19:18). God's people knew this law of love from the beginning—only they had neglected it.

I can imagine the lawyer nodding with a smile, saying, "Well said, teacher!" (Mark 12: 32, NIV), as Jesus continued: "You are not far from the kingdom of God" (verse 34).

We too are not far from the kingdom of God when we come to realize the true nature of God's law, and, more specifically, the Ten Commandments. It is through the law that we can learn how to love God and our human neighbors. We realize that God must be first and foremost. We understand the importance of obedience and respect between children and parents. We appreciate the sacred love relationship between husband and wife. God's law, written in our hearts and minds, helps us find access to the unlimited pool of divine love, which we, in turn, are able to share with those around us.

The Cross and the Law

Ultimately it is important that we realize that the cross defines love (John 3:16) while the law demands love (John 14:15; 1 John 5:2). We keep the law (which appears in tandem to the testimonies of Jesus in Revelation 12:17). Only true understanding of the cross *and* the law makes a complete Christian. The testimony of Jesus Christ and God's law go together and are a marker of God's end-time people.

God has given us His commandments to guide our moral behavior. They are the only legal principles that God has provided to rule our lives. They are meant to govern

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

our mind and conscience; and when they rule our nations they are a blessing. Yes, at times we may stumble, but His grace is always sufficient for us through our Lord Jesus Christ. We obey because we love. That's what He lived in His life, and that's all that He demands from us as well. ■

¹ Texts 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.

² Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.



Clifford Owusu-Gyamfi, originally from Ghana, is a postgraduate student in theology at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland.

The van bumped to a stop, and a distinguished-looking passenger sporting gray hair and black-rimmed glasses stuck his head out the window to get a clear view of the convoy of vehicles lined up ahead. Trucks, buses, cars, and animal carts stretched for about six miles (10 kilometers) between him—and the Adventist Development and Relief (ADRA) workers with him—and a bombed-out bridge. A crudely constructed ferry was apparently the only means available to cross the river, and because it was equipped to carry only a few vehicles at a time, Robert L. Rawson, at the time General Conference treasurer and ADRA assistant board chair, resigned himself to a lengthy wait.

Rawson was en route to Bosnia's capital, Sarajevo. About 18 months earlier, in February 1996, NATO's intense military intervention finally ended the almost four-year Serbian siege of the city, and Rawson was heading there to observe the follow-up work of ADRA employees and volunteers in the region. He had heard many stories of courage on the part of ADRA workers in Sarajevo. One woman had continuously put her life on the line by walking five miles from her home to the ADRA warehouse every day, running for cover and dodging behind buildings to avoid the shells falling around her, in order to sort mail and packages slipped into the city by ADRA Germany. She survived, but another ADRA volunteer's daughter, one of the mail carriers, wasn't so fortunate. She was killed while trying to help others.

Rawson was anxious to meet and talk with the people who had risked and sacrificed so much, but now, as he

eyed the long line of vehicles ahead of him, he thought, *We're going to be here awhile*. To his surprise, however, within minutes a uniformed military agent strolled over to the van and motioned the driver to pull up to the front of the line. Rawson and his group then drove aboard the ferry for its first excursion of the day across the river.

"What just happened?" Rawson asked his driver.

"It's the ADRA logo on the side of the van," the driver explained. "It's widely recognized and highly respected here. The people appreciate what we do."

Almost two decades later, Rawson, who came out of retirement in July 2012 to serve as interim president for the 29-year-old agency, recounts this experience to exemplify ADRA's commitment to humanitarian service.

"ADRA is the hands and feet of Jesus," Rawson told *Adventist World*. "Its mission is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the incarcerated, and help people who feel hopeless to see a vision of Jesus. . . . This is the most glorious task that God can give to a person—to help others."

How It Began

ADRA's roots reach back to 1956, when the church launched its first humanitarian relief and welfare organization called Seventh-day Adventist Welfare Service (SAWS). Within two years SAWS was actively assisting 22 countries by pro-

By SANDRA BLACKMER

Faces of ADRA

The church's humanitarian service arm provides hope and healing.



viding such aid as food, water, and clothing, with a total value of almost \$500,000. In 1973 its name was changed to Seventh-day Adventist World Service, and the organization's mission broadened to include long-term development programs as well as disaster relief.

To reflect this broader emphasis more accurately, an intrinsically new organization called Adventist Development and Relief Agency was created and replaced World Service in 1983. Today ADRA has some 6,000 employees—69 at its international headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States—implementing programs in more than 120 countries. With a financial base that comprises government grant monies and private donations, it assists millions of people worldwide every year.

“When you meet the people we’re serving and see how ADRA is bringing hope and help to seemingly hopeless people, it’s a life-changing event,” Rawson says. “Adventists should feel very proud of the work ADRA does.”

Sectors of ADRA

ADRA sees its mission as making known the just, merciful, and loving character of God through humanitarian service. Its principles embrace the right that all people have to basic goods, services, and care, as well as to a life of opportunity and the freedom to choose one’s own future. To accomplish these goals, ADRA provides five main sectors of service: emergency relief, agriculture, human rights, primary health, and basic education.

In Times of Crisis

ADRA is one of the first responders to many international disasters, often arriving within 24 hours of their occurrence. Emanuel da Costa, an ADRA International emergency management director, says this is because of a wide network of local and regional offices and redefined emergency-response plans. For smaller-scale disasters, the country director and regional ADRA teams assess the damage and then notify ADRA International which preplanned response best suits the circumstances and needs. Larger-scale disasters require a network response from not only ADRA International but also offices in such places as Germany, Australia, and Canada. In megadisasters such as the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, ADRA International, regional and country offices, and partner organizations collaborate their efforts.

“ADRA’s goal is to change people’s lives as dramatically for the better as the disaster dramatically changed them for the worse,” da Costa says.

Da Costa, a 12-year ADRA employee, has served in three African countries. The suffering and poverty he has witnessed is heartbreaking, he says, but notes that he “wouldn’t change [his] job for anything.” He also doesn’t expect the need for disaster relief to end any time soon.

“We’re seeing increased periods of drought followed by heavy rains causing devastating floods recurring in many places of the world. This is becoming the new reality for many populations that cannot cope with these lasting, and many times extreme, changes in the weather patterns,” da Costa



ZIMBABWE: (Left) Tonderai, whose parents died of AIDS, now has access to fresh, clean water from a well ADRA drilled. BRAZIL: (Top) ADRA training improves agricultural techniques and increases crop productivity. BANGLADESH: (Right) Flip charts are simple but effective tools for teaching health and nutrition.



explains. “Disasters that can be related to climate change and conflict are significantly increasing in number and impact.”

He quickly adds that the increasing needs add pressure to the use of agency resources.

“God has placed a big responsibility on the people in this organization,” da Costa says. “We’re to be appropriate channels for assistance. This is our mission, and we must do it well.”

In for the Long Haul

ADRA provides not only emergency relief; it also establishes itself in developing countries long-term, at least three to five years or oftentimes longer. ADRA’s vice president for finance, Robyn Mordeno, explains that changing lives for the better takes time, especially if it is to make a long-term difference.

“We need time to develop a person, a community, so the changes will be sustainable,” she says. “This way we become well-known in the regions and in our industry, and because we’re already there, when emergencies occur we can mobilize quickly.”

Mordeno cites Vietnam as an example of fostering sustainability. ADRA constructed and equipped a medical facility there, instructed the doctors and nurses on how to use the equipment, and then financed their travel and training in another already established hospital in a different country.

“They were taught modernized techniques and technologies, and brought back what they learned to integrate it within their own customs and local context,” Mordeno says.

Agriculture

ADRA has been ecologically conscious and has emphasized environmental sustainability long before “being green” became the trend. In its community-based agricultural projects in developing regions such as Bolivia, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nicaragua, Mozambique, and Peru, ADRA provides farmers with organic alternatives to chemical pesticides and fertilizers and promotes conservation.

Using environmentally friendly products and techniques results in higher yields, higher-quality products, and an increase in soil fertility, says Jozimo Santos Rocha, ADRA’s senior technical advisor for agriculture and economic development for the past five years.

“Most of us are here because we love our God, our church, and the mission of the church,” Rocha says. “We believe in what the church is doing to help others.”

Seeing positive changes in the lives of individuals and communities—moving people from inefficient and unprofitable farming methods to simple, cost-effective techniques that reduce the workload and increase crop productivity—is what strengthens his commitment, Rocha says. Rocha met one such subsistence farmer in Mozambique who was producing maize, a staple in that region. His crop yield was low, and he walked six miles to the market to sell what he had. He was barely



BOLIVIA AND GHANA: (Above and right) ADRA implements agricultural projects that address food insecurity in vulnerable world regions such as Bolivia and Ghana. **NIGER:** (Below) Thousands of girls in Niger are now attending school because of ADRA’s “Goats for Girls” program.



earning enough for him and his family to live on. Three years after ADRA arrived and provided technical assistance and training, the farmer was not only growing and selling larger quantities of maize but also other higher-priced crops such as peanuts and pigeon peas. He is now part of a community farmer organization, and his products are aggregated with products of other farmers and sent to market via a truck. His family's standard of living has increased to where he's able to purchase other goods, including a bicycle.

"When you see effort and money invested in something that really changes the lives of individuals and communities, it's very rewarding," Rocha says.

Health Initiatives

Sonya Funna Evelyn, the organization's senior technical health adviser, describes ADRA's health focus as holistic. She explains that focusing on the entire family—husband, wife, and children—provides the greatest potential for good health.

"In countries such as Sudan, when a woman becomes pregnant we ensure that she is getting the support she needs from her husband, and the nutrition she needs for herself and the baby," Evelyn explains. "When the baby is born, we again make sure they are getting proper nutrition and that the baby is vaccinated. We educate the husband to be aware of his family's needs—that when he goes out to work he utilizes the income for health or education or whatever is needed."

Using simple tools such as flipcharts, ADRA staff often go home to home throughout entire villages educating families on nutrition and health. Those people then share their newly acquired knowledge with others in surrounding villages.

"The multiplication effect is huge," Evelyn says. "We start with a few hundred women, and we end up reaching thousands. And it isn't long before we see the impact. Children don't get sick as often; fewer children die; women become healthier—and they're so receptive and appreciative of what we do."

Not for the Faint of Heart

ADRA workers in politically unstable regions often put their lives on the line, and some have paid the ultimate price. Others leave behind homes and families for less-than-ideal living conditions and extreme climates, subjecting their health to risk.

Jason Brooks, currently ADRA's private grants manager, served as Niger country director for five years. Only about 100 active members of the Adventist Church reside in the Muslim-dominated country. Temperatures there can soar to 130°F (54°C), and although the people are hard workers, they barely eke out a living farming the hard, sandy soil.

"Niger is a very needy, very underdeveloped place," Brooks says, "and with the intense heat and dust and the lack of sanitation for most people, it's not an easy place in

which to live. But ADRA is really making a difference there, and the Muslims see Adventists as good people because of the many ways we help them."

ADRA's influence in the education of girls in Niger is particularly vivid. Poverty forces parents to keep their daughters at home to assist with home duties rather than send them to school, so Brooks and his colleagues established a program called "Goats for Girls." Parents who agree to enroll their daughters in school are given a goat to help supplement their income. As a result, "thousands of girls are now in school," Brooks says.

"The payoff is unbelievable when girls become educated," he says. "The well-being of the family, how those girls care for their children later—everything comes up a notch when a girl is educated; several notches, in fact."

Sharing Jesus

Because ADRA utilizes government moneys to fund many of its projects, its workers are restricted from overtly proselytizing, "but we do declare who we are," Rawson says. "We are a faith-based NGO [nongovernmental agency]; we make that clear, and everyone understands that. But those communities where ADRA has served are fertile grounds for follow-up evangelism by other organizations within the church. ADRA sows the seeds and lays a foundation on which others are able to build."

"We may not be using words to proclaim the gospel," Brooks adds, "but we're proclaiming it with actions. We show that Jesus loves people by loving and caring for them too."

On October 10, 2012, directors of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International appointed Jonathan Duffy, CEO of ADRA Australia, to serve as president of the humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Duffy has been CEO of ADRA Australia since 2008. To read the full story, see the December issue of Adventist World or go to www.adventistworld.org.

Although they occasionally partner together, ADRA mostly serves countries outside the United States, and Adventist Community Services (www.communityservices.org) is the church entity that responds to disasters and other humanitarian needs within the United States.

To learn more about ADRA, go to www.adra.org. You may also follow ADRA International on Facebook (www.facebook.com/joinADRA) and on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/ADRAIntl>). ■



Sandra Blackmer is an assistant editor of *Adventist World* and lives in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.

By JAMES PARK

Finding Good Soil

Understanding how people respond to the gospel



PHOTO COURTESY OF ADRA

Most of us have seen the pictures, watched the videos, and read the reports of large numbers of people being baptized in faraway lands. In contrast to these glowing reports, the church in most developed countries is growing much more slowly and may even experience some decline.

While the above generalization has a germ of truth in it, I think that some church members would be surprised to learn that there are many places around the world that are much harder to grow than North America. In this article I

am interested in painting a brief picture of the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church throughout the world and how it might relate to the important principle of receptivity.

Seventh-day Adventists per Capita

The basic statistical data I will use is the number of Seventh-day Adventists in a country per 10,000 population, based on the 2010 General Conference online yearbook.¹

Using this basic ratio, we see there is a very wide divergence in the penetration of the Adventist Church in the world. To note two extremes, in the country of Turkey the ratio of Adventists to the population is about .01 members per 10,000 population. On the other hand, Zimbabwe has a very high ratio of 473 members per 10,000 population.

In North America there are 32 Adventists per 10,000 population, which is actually quite high for a developed country. By contrast, the British Union Conference has 4.5, and Italy has 1.4 per 10,000 population. These numbers in Western Europe are close to some of the most difficult fields in Asia.

The modern Buddhist countries of Thailand and Taiwan have about 2 per 10,000, and secular Japan has 1.2 per 10,000 population. One of the important factors that help us understand the reason for this wide divergence can be found in the key principle of receptivity.

Receptivity—A Major Factor

Many examples in Scripture and everyday life illustrate that an individual's or a country's openness to the gospel is greatly affected by the amount of change or trials they are facing. The imprisonment of Manasseh (2 Chron.

in different places

33:10-13), the leprosy of Naaman (2 Kings 5), and the judgment message against Nineveh (Jonah 3) opened these lives to the healing power of the gospel. Negative changes, such as the loss of a job, divorce, death, moving, a natural disaster, etc., tend to increase receptivity to the gospel, which offers answers to a life that has been challenged to its core.

Ellen White states in *The Desire of Ages* that this openness to the gospel can occur in an individual (the apostle John was the "most receptive")² or in a geographic area ("[the people of Galilee] were more open to the reception of truth").³ Stan Guthrie suggests that "countries facing political instability and natural disasters have been particularly ripe, especially when Christians combine practical relief and development ministries with their words of witness."⁴ In other words, a factor that should influence the strategic planning of the church is to be ready to respond in a wholistic way to specific areas that are undergoing crisis.

Receptivity, Wealth, and Community

But what about areas of the world in which the majority of the population

has been somewhat insulated from a prolonged crisis? In *The Fat Lady and the Kingdom* George Knight attempts to understand prosperity and its effect on the mission of the church. Knight quotes John Wesley to show the pattern of growth, institutionalization, and decay: "Whenever riches have increased, the essence of religion has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore I do not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride . . . and love of the world in all its branches. . . . So although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away."⁵

Wealth also tends to increase personal privacy and decrease the critical component of community or *oikos* fellowship within the church. In the largest study of small groups in North America, Robert Wuthnow found that when people meet together, they look for fellowship and community. "Community is what people say they are seeking when they join small groups. Yet the kind of community they create is quite different from the communities in which people have lived in the past. These communities are more fluid and more concerned with the emotional states of the individual."⁶

Because of the smaller and more crowded living spaces in developing countries, there is much more opportunity for people to be together physically as well as socially. These societies are much closer to the New Testament ideal of community; and the churches formed in these cultures are better able to grow because of the natural networking opportunities that are built into the social fabric. Let's see how these principles of receptivity work within specific areas and countries marked by a low, medium, and high ratio of Adventists per capita.

Countries/Regions With Low Ratio of Adventists to Population

Turkey, Indonesia, and countries in the Euro-Asia and Southern Asia divisions

Muslims are among the most difficult religious groups to reach. But even here the principle of receptivity is helping to spread the gospel message. Turkey and Indonesia, both of which are Muslim countries, may serve as examples. Whereas pro-Western and secular Turkey only has 77 Adventists in the whole country, Indonesia has 8.2 per 10,000 population. There is no doubt that Turkey's and many other Muslim countries' restrictions of Christian work are a major reason for the very low rate of growth. In some ways it could also be argued that the relative wealth of the Middle Eastern countries has insulated them from being open to foreign influences and ideas.

On the other hand, the standard of living in Indonesia is somewhat lower than in Turkey and other countries of the Middle East. Despite being the largest Muslim country in the world, the Adventist Church has a very solid work there, especially among the Batak, Manadonese, and Timor peoples.

The Euro-Asia Division, which includes most of the former Soviet Union, has 5 Adventists per 10,000. Organized in 1990 after the fall of Communism, this is a relatively new field. The church strongly entered the field after the fall of the iron curtain because of better receptivity at that time. Recently Russia has become the world's largest oil producer, and its increased wealth makes evangelism more difficult.

The Southern Asia Division, which is made up mostly of India, has 12.1 Adventists per 10,000. The challenge of India and its adjoining fields is its massive population. With less than half the landmass of the United States it has more than three times the population.

After securing a foothold for many years, the fruit of wise labor is showing a marked increase in the membership. Like Russia, this emerging world economy might become less receptive as its gross national product increases.

Countries/Regions With Medium Ratio of Adventists to Population

Argentina, Australia, and South Korea

It is interesting to note how developed countries outside Europe that have been heavily influenced by Western culture have nearly the same per capita figures as North America. Two of these countries are Argentina and Australia, which both have a ratio of about 25 per 10,000 population. It tends to show that similar sociological forces are shaping receptivity to the gospel in other regions outside North America.

One of the modern Asian countries that has about the same ratio of Adventists as North America is South Korea. This wealthy Asian country boasts 29.7 Adventists per 10,000, which stands in direct contrast to Japan, which has only 1.2 per 10,000 population. How did this happen? It might partially be explained by the excellent success that early missionaries had before its current economic expansion, when the country still experienced many difficulties. According to research, the church in Korea grew best during four periods of war in the twentieth century. Andrew Roy notes that “this hardship has lowered the national pride and arrogance toward foreign ideas, thus leading to raising the receptivity to the gospel.”⁷ This again underlines that hardship increases receptivity in both individuals and countries.

Countries/Regions With High Ratio of Adventists to Population

Inter-American Division, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Zimbabwe

The church has been particularly successful in the following regions and countries with the number of Adventists per 10,000: Philippines, 70; Inter-American Division, 120; Peru, 158; Papua New Guinea, 368; Rwanda, 463; and Zimbabwe, 473.

Anecdotal evidence throughout the world field tends to show that where there is little preparation of the soil before the gospel seed is sown or cultivation of the interests following the meetings, there is a fairly low rate of discipleship. The principle of “easy come easy go” might be applied here, and the need for a longer cycle of discipleship training would no doubt result in better long-term growth. To counter this tendency, Peru has developed an excellent annual discipleship cycle based on small groups.

What We Can Learn

1. For countries with a low ratio per capita: In a world that is often overly fixated on large numbers, it can be discouraging to labor in a field in which few apparent results are seen. However, all seed sowing is a matter of faith and Christ has promised that all true labor for Him will not be without fruit. It must be remembered that a little leaven will eventually affect the whole lump. Like Jesus, we have to focus on the few receptive ones first before we can reach the many. Ellen White encourages us with the principle that “the work done thoroughly for one soul is done for many.”⁸

2. For countries with a medium ratio per capita: Although wealth is currently inhibiting receptivity on a macro level in much of the developed world, watch for the many opportunities on a micro level, such as individuals or areas going through crisis. Develop friendships and carefully watch for the opportunity to sow gospel seed when trials come. Remember also that God often pre-

pares us to minister to others in trial by first subjecting us to the pains of life. Soul winning is more than a technique; it is a deeply spiritual process whereby individuals who have been redeemed by faith now sing their song of deliverance to other needy ones (Ps. 40:1-3).

3. For Countries with a high ratio per capita: In countries in which baptisms are plentiful, there is need to restudy the Great Commission. The risen Lord commissions His church to “make disciples” by baptizing and teaching them all things He has commanded. In reality, the viability of baptism cannot really be measured until at least one year after the commitment to the Lord and His church is made. By that time it will become evident if the plant has grown deep roots and is producing fruit, or has met the fate of the wayside, stony ground, or thorn-infested hearers (Matt. 13:1-8).

As we preach the good news of salvation, we need to pay attention to different soils and contexts. This task requires careful analysis, humility, hard work, and—above all—the same love and vision that characterized the ministry of Jesus.

It’s time to sow! ■

¹ www.adventistarchives.org/docs/YB/YB2010.pdf. These ratios reflect the numbers reported as of June 30, 2009.

² Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898), p. 292.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

⁴ Stan Guthrie, “Doors Into Islam,” *Christianity Today* 46, no. 10 (Sept. 9, 2002): 34.

⁵ In George Knight, *The Fat Lady and the Kingdom* (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1995), p. 32.

⁶ Robert Wuthnow, *Sharing the Journey* (New York: Free Press, 1994), p. 3.

⁷ Andrew T. Roy, *On Asia’s Rim* (New York: Friendship Press, 1962), p. 29.

⁸ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, p. 255.



James Park, Ph.D., is an associate professor of discipleship and mission at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Philippines.

Ministering to Soul and Body

The pioneer work of the gospel

When Christ sent His disciples out on their first missionary journey, He said to them, “As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give” [Matt. 10:7, 8, KJV]. And when at the close of His earthly ministry He gave them their commission, He said, “These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” [Mark 16:17, 18, NIV].

Of the disciples after Christ’s ascension, we read, “They went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following” [verse 20, KJV].

To Christ’s disciples today there come countless opportunities to minister to sin-sick souls and to those in need of physical healing. Physical healing is bound up with the gospel commission. Medical missionary work is the pioneer work of the gospel.

God’s people are to be genuine medical missionaries. They are to learn to minister to the needs of soul and body. They should know how to give the simple treatments that do so much to relieve pain and remove disease. They should be familiar with the principles of health reform, that they may show others how, by right habits of eating, drinking, and dressing, disease may be prevented and health regained. A demonstration of the

value of the principles of health reform will do much toward removing prejudice against our evangelical work. The Great Physician, the originator of medical missionary work, will bless every one who will go forward humbly and trustfully, seeking to impart the truth for this time.

Establishing Health Institutions

Sanitariums are to be established in many places, to stand as memorials for God. I know that the truth will reach the hearts of many who, but for the agency of these institutions, would never be enlightened by the brightness of the gospel message. Self-sacrificing workers, who have full faith in God, should be chosen to take charge of these institutions. They are to take up this work, not with the hope of gaining financial advantage, but because their hearts are weighted with the burden of the message for this time. They are to be willing to sacrifice personal gain and personal convenience for the sake of saving souls.

A Work Demanding Sacrifice

The work of God is to be carried forward in self-denial and self-sacrifice. “Whosoever will come after me,” Christ said, “let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” [Mark 8:34, KJV]. Christ became poor that we might be partakers of the “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” [2 Cor. 4:17, KJV]. We are to practice the same self-sacrifice that led Him to give Himself up to the death of the cross to make it possible for human beings to have eternal life. In all that we do or say, in all our expenditure of

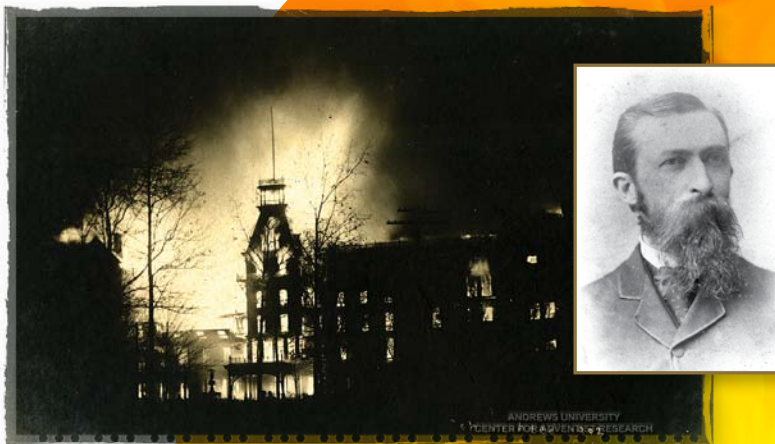
means, we are to strive with full purpose of heart to fulfill the purpose of Him who is the Alpha and Omega of medical missionary work. Beside all waters we are to sow the seeds of truth, winning souls to Christ by tender compassion and unselfish interest.

Seek to Understand

We are to seek to understand the necessities of those with whom we are brought into contact, and to obtain their confidence. People are eager to hear the truth from those whose lips are governed by the law of kindness. The divine word, spoken by such messengers, will be as music in their ears. Thus many of those whose minds are now filled with prejudice against present truth may be won to Christ.

Our work is a great and solemn one, and it needs men who understand what it means to give themselves to unselfish effort for the saving of the lost. But there is no need for the service of men who are lukewarm. Men and women are needed whose hearts are touched with human woe and suffering, men and women who have heard a message from heaven, and whose lives give evidence that they are receiving and imparting light and life and grace. ■

This article is a selection taken from an article “The Blessing of Service,” originally published in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 5, 1904, by Ellen G. White. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.



DEVASTATING FLAMES: The Seventh-day Adventist Battle Creek Sanitarium burns to the ground on February 18, 1902. **PLANNER:** John Harvey Kellogg made plans to rebuild the facility after the fire.

By ALEJO AGUILAR

REKINDLING

Revival Flames

Lessons from a famous fire

What kind of sermon would you expect to hear if the church you usually attend had burned to the ground just four days before? What would have been the topic of your pastor's sermon if one of the most important hospitals or publishing houses of your denomination had been devastated by a fire? What kind of articles would you expect to be published in the very first issue of *Adventist World* after such a hypothetical disaster?

First Reactions

On February 18, 1902, the renowned Seventh-day Adventist Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan, United States, burned to the ground. This event was the source of a general feeling of dismay among church leaders, and, understandably so, an obvious reference from many pulpits and in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* published exactly one week after the catastrophe.

Outstanding among reactions to the catastrophe was the report made by the sanitarium director John Harvey Kellogg, who made it clear that he planned to start immediately rebuilding a larger and better sanitarium.¹

A project like the one he envisioned would cost at least \$250,000, but Kellogg had it all figured out. With the insurance money he was expecting to get, plus donations by some of the well-off regular patients of the institution, the visionary leader hoped to reach his goal without running into debt.²

Kellogg, however, was not the only one feeling thrilled with his plans for new facilities. The emotional sermon that W. W. Prescott preached at the Battle Creek Tabernacle the first Sabbath after the fire is a proof of the predominant feeling. In his sermon, which he based on Haggai 2:9, Prescott assured his hearers that in the same way the glory of the “second temple” had been greater as a result of Christ’s presence, the glory of a “second sanitarium” would also be greater.³

But beyond these converging opinions, had the prophetic voice anything to say? Would the Lord send a particular message for moments like these? The same issue of the *Review and Herald*, published on February 25, 1902, includes an important inspired message in that regard.

A Different View

At the beginning of that issue, Ellen G. White wrote an article “The Need of a Revival and a Reformation,” which has certainly become an essential source when studying what the Lord’s messenger wrote about the topic of revival. “A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring

“There is nothing more important than allowing ‘the Holy Spirit to realign our lives with biblical values.’”

forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.”⁴

Even though these statements are well known and important, it is likely we don’t often take into account the particular moment when they were written. Clearly diverging from the thoughts of many church leaders—especially Kellogg—the message Ellen White gave at that watershed moment in the history of our church was certainly meant to make both leaders and members reflect on their priorities.

While for some the most important thing was to build better and larger facilities, the Lord wanted His church to turn from such a path. He wanted His people to understand that no grandiose building would be able to surpass in importance an earnest search for true revival and a deep movement toward reformation.

Now more than a century since the tragic fires of 1902,⁵ what can we learn from them? Is there something there that may also help us to understand and make the most of our church’s current focus on revival and reformation?

The Battle Creek Fire and Adventist Revival

The growth our church experienced since that time has been outstanding. Presently our church does not own just one sanitarium; it manages hundreds of hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries, as well as numerous schools, health food companies, and publishing companies.

But even though our church budget is—by the grace of God—well above those \$250,000 needed to rebuild the burned down sanitarium, could it be possible that our financial and institutional growth is well above our spiritual commitment? Have we reached a point in our spiritual experience that we feel we do not need the appeals of the Spirit of Prophecy to lead us into revival and reformation? Could it be that we also need some “fires” in our midst to help us to reorder our priorities?

Indeed, what Ellen White penned just two days after the Battle Creek Sanitarium fire includes a message for us as well. She wrote: “Trials come to us all to lead us to investigate our hearts, to see if they are purified from all that defiles. Constantly the Lord is working for our present and

eternal good. Things occur which seem inexplicable, but if we trust in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him, humbling our hearts before Him, He will not permit the enemy to triumph. . . . The Lord seeks to educate His people to lean wholly upon Him. He desires them, through the lessons that He teaches them, to become more and more spiritualized. If His Word is not followed in all humility and meekness, He brings to them experiences which, if rightly received, will help to prepare them for the work to be done in His name.”⁶

The lesson is clear: As we keep building and budgeting, as we strive for the best and highest-quality institutions, God wants to remind us that—in spite of it all—there is nothing more important than allowing “the Holy Spirit to realign our lives with biblical values; to submit to God’s will in every area of our lives.”⁷

It was a priority in 1902, and it has to be our priority as well. Mark Finley is right when he reminds us that “the spirit of revival and reformation will lead every institutional leader and administrative committee to reevaluate the practices of the institution they lead in the light of biblical principles and the counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy. . . . Heaven’s call to reformation is a call to reevaluate every personal and corporate practice in the blazing light of God’s Word. It is an urgent appeal to renew our commitment to doing Christ’s will in every area of our lives.”⁸

As we move forward to accomplish our mission to the very end, may the Lord help us—with or without destroying fires—to remember to keep building and enlarging that space that only Jesus must fill. ■

¹ Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Elmshaven Years, 1900-1905* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1981), vol. 5, pp. 200, 201. See also *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Feb. 25, 1902.

² A. L. White, pp. 200, 201.

³ *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Feb. 25, 1902. As long as those working at the sanitarium adapted their lives to the principles of the Bible.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958), book 1, p. 128.

⁵ The facilities of the *Review and Herald* also went through a fire later that same year.

⁶ Ellen G. White manuscript 76, 1903, Feb. 20, 1902, “The Burning of the Sanitarium,” quoted in Ellen G. White, *The Upward Look* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1982), p. 65.

⁷ Mark A. Finley, “Is ‘Reformation’ a Confusing Term?” available online at www.adventistreview.org/issue.php?issue=2011-1514&page=6.

⁸ *Ibid.*



Alejo Aguilar teaches Old Testament at Navojoa University, Navojoa, Sonora, Mexico.

Could you explain why the Bible sometimes refers to bones as “rejoicing”?

Can These Bones Live?

I will attempt to answer your question by discussing some of the biblical passages in which human bones are mentioned.

This aspect of human anatomy plays an important role in the biblical understanding of human nature. According to Scripture, we are an indivisible unity of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual life. Within this understanding bones have different functions in addition to being the frame of the body.

1. Bones and Life: Human bones are well hidden, covered by sinews and flesh (Eze. 37:3-10). They are an appropriate symbol of the inner life, or as the seat of life itself and its emotions. This life was created by God (Job 10:11), but it can be threatened by evil forces. Emotions such as terror, fear, and sorrow manifest themselves through the shaking of bones (Jer. 23:9), and by disjuncting and breaking them, not physically but in the sense of leaving the whole person without emotional or physical strength (Ps. 31:10). When in fear and emotional pain, the inner being—the bones of a person—is robbed of peace; figuratively the bones are rotten, unable to sustain fullness of life (Job 30:17; Prov. 12:4). Unconfessed sin creates guilt and disrupts the inner condition of the person; the bone/inner person lives in distress (Ps. 32:3) and has no *shalom* (Ps. 38:3). Only God can strengthen our inner life, and this takes place when the bones/person pray to the Lord (Ps. 35:10).

2. Bones and Death: Bones are the last remains of a person, and are therefore associated with death. In this case the term *bones* are often used in a literal sense. Dry bones are perceived as an extension of the person, and in that sense they evoke a memory of them in others. In such cases they are to be treated with respect by burying them (1 Sam. 31:13; 2 Sam. 21:12). During war there is no respect for the dead, and, consequently, bones left on the field or taken out of tombs become “like refuse on the face of the earth” (Jer. 8:2; see also Amos 2:1; Ps. 53:5). This is an expression not only of victory over the enemy, but of total contempt.

Bones can also designate a corpse (Gen. 50:25, 26; Amos 6:10). A deadly wound damages bones (Ps. 42:10); and when bones are covered only by skin the person is dying (Job 19:20; Ps. 22:17; 102:5). Bones connected to death are also a source of impurity; whoever touches them become unclean (Num. 19:16). As a source of uncleanness bones can also desecrate altars by being scattered around them (Eze. 6:5) or by burning them on the altar (1 Kings 13:2; 2 Kings 23:14, 16, 20). A sick person who feels close to death could describe the experience as an attacking lion that breaks the bones of its victim (Isa. 38:13).

3. Bones and Kinship: All humans have bones, and this leads to the idea of sameness. Humans are connected to each other by the fact that they all are flesh and bones. This idea reaches back to when Adam identified Eve as “bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh” (Gen. 2:23)—they were equal. The concept is particularly applied to relatives. David asked Amasa, “Are you not my bone and my flesh [Hebrew, *etsem*, “bone”]?” (2 Sam. 19:13). The tribes of Israel said to David, “We are your bone and your flesh [Hebrew, *etsem*, “bone”]” (2 Sam. 5:1). Because of this emphasis on sameness, the Hebrew term *etsem* (“bone”) was also used to express time (“In the bone of this day” means “On the very *same* day” [Gen. 7:13; Deut. 32:48]), or agreement of objects (“As the bone of the heavens” means “As the heavens themselves” [Ex. 24:10]).

Yes, bones can rejoice because they stand for the whole person, whose inner being is impacted by what the person does and experiences. That joy is threatened by sickness, pain, guilt, and sorrow upsetting inner wellness and finally bringing life to an end. We anticipate the moment God will cause our “bones” to live again and die no more. ■



Angel Manuel Rodríguez is retired after a career serving the church as a pastor, professor, and administrator.

Refreshing Your Faith

By MARK A. FINLEY



YAN MOURA

Have you ever felt as though your faith was “stuck in neutral”? You were not going anywhere. You seemed to be in a sluggish standstill. You longed to have a deeper Christian experience, but you wondered how it was possible. You knew where you wanted to go, but you didn’t know how to get there. In this month’s lesson we will explore the basis of a vibrant spiritual life. Be prepared to discover some life-changing principles that will make a dramatic difference in your life.

1 Read Psalm 119:25, 28, 107, 154. What earnest plea does David make regarding revival?

The Word of God is the basis of revival. The same Holy Spirit who prompted Bible writers to record God’s Word inspires us as we read it. Meditating upon the Word of God is life-transforming.

2 Read Psalm 1:2; 119:11, 15, 16, 81, 97. What was the object of David’s meditation?

Christian meditation focuses on God’s Word, God’s works, and God’s ways. This infilling of the principles of righteousness, grace, and truth transforms our thought processes and drives out our evil thoughts (see Phil. 4:7, 8). We are transformed through God’s Word (see Rom. 12:1, 2).

3 Read Acts 20:32 and James 1:21. If our spiritual lives seem stagnant, what does studying God’s Word accomplish?

4 The prophecies of Scripture predict a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit just before the coming of Jesus. Read Ephesians 5:25-27 and John 17:17. How will God prepare His church for this special manifestation of the Spirit’s power?

The Holy Spirit will be poured in abundant measure out prior to the second coming of Christ. The earth will be “lightened” with the glory of God. God’s people will reveal in their lives and proclaim with their lips the grace, righteousness, and truth of our Lord.

5 Read 2 Corinthians 3:18; Proverbs 23:7; and Romans 12:1, 2. Why is meditating upon God’s Word such a powerful agent in revival?

As we study God’s Word and prayerfully meditate upon its passages, applying the truths we discover to our own lives, our thought patterns are changed. We are transformed into His likeness. By beholding Jesus, we become like Him.

Ellen White wrote: “It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature that by beholding we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence. Man will never rise higher than his standard of purity or goodness or truth” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 555).

6 Read Colossians 3:1, 2. What urgent appeal does the apostle Paul make to each one of us regarding growing as Christians?

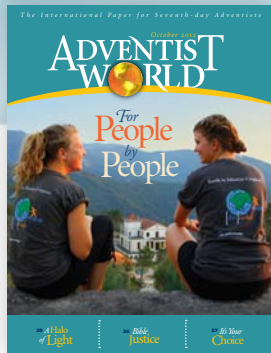
The apostle Paul urges us to “set” or “fix” our minds on things above, not on things below. When we surrender our lives to Christ we are a “new creation,” and all things are made new (2 Cor. 5:17).

Nevertheless our old nature still remains. It will not be totally eradicated until Jesus returns and we ascend to glory with Him. As long as we are in this “vile, corruptible” body our sinful nature remains; but it need not reign. Sin no longer has dominion over us, because God’s grace is more powerful than our sinful natures (see Phil. 3:20, 21; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; Rom. 6:11-14).

Here is the vital key in overcoming sin in our lives; the secret of whether sin or Christ triumphs: What nature are you feeding? With what are you filling your mind? On what are your affections set?

If our minds are filled with the things of eternity, if we spend time fellowshiping with Jesus in His Word daily, if we have a vital relationship with Jesus by faith in His saving grace and triumphant power, we will live vibrant Christian lives. We will grow in grace, our faith will be renewed, and our spiritual lives refreshed daily.

Would you like to fill your mind with God’s Word and live in the power of His Spirit? In and through Jesus you can live a victorious Christian life today. ■



Letters

Let's Finish the Work

About the time that the cover story “For People by People,” by Chantal and Gerald Klingbeil, appeared (October 2012), I went to Portugal to produce a TV documentary of the project as part of a series sponsored by ASI featuring OCI institutions in Europe. Needless to say, the location is gorgeous and the people are wonderful.

Since that visit something keeps bothering me, however. It is interesting to see the good side of being “just a building site,” but why not press forward to finish it soon and open it to the public? Let’s be practical; they need money to finish the place. With some financial help this center could be finished in a short time. I dream about a center where sick people come and find healing, a place where confused people come and find hope and certainty. This is already being done, but why not multiply the miracles by 20 or 30 at a time in a finished building?

ADRIAN BOCANEANU
Ilfov, Romania

What about Singles?

I recently saw the September *Adventist World* 2012 cover with the headline “Families First.”

I’m single by choice, and there are quite a few people like me in my church. You’ve just relegated us to being second-class humans, because families are first! How many singles are there in local churches, and how much work do they do? Look again. This cover seems to say they shouldn’t matter as much—because families first!

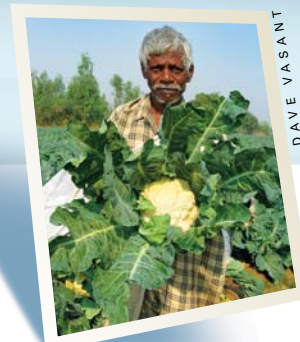
What would Jesus have said?
METTE KJØLLER
Denmark

Freedom of Conscience

I am writing in reference to the article “Freedom of Conscience,” by Ted N. C. Wilson (August 2012). *Adventist World* is a blessing; it shows us the wonders that God creates with His people, and it connects us to the global church that meets the mission.

Wilson’s article shows that religious freedom is not only a gift of God, it is the right—and current—approach. As Wilson suggests, we have to be vigilant and act on behalf of religious freedom; and on every occasion—be it a tense situation or actual crisis—share the gospel. And, when necessary, defend our faith with conviction.

ISAIAH MONTILLA
Panama City, Panama



DAVE VASANT

World Health

One of the first few pages I flip to when I receive *Adventist World* is the segment by Drs. Allan R. Handysides and Peter N. Landless. Thank you for the information in the column World Health, especially the August 2012 column. I do lack some vitamins, including vitamin B₁₂. The August column helped me a lot; now I know what type of vegetarian I am.

APRYLL EUNICE COMISON
Pagadian City, Province of Zamboanga del Sur, Philippines

Embezzlement in the Church

I’m writing regarding Robert Lemon’s article “Embezzlement in the Church” (July 2012). Whatever happened to “faith, hope, and love” as the operating values behind God’s work?

The developed world economies are headed toward a cashless society. What will we put in the offering plate then, our smartcard promise-to-pay, EFT arrangements, online donation details?

Jesus showed us the way by pushing the money changers from His Father’s house. We should do the same. Let God take care of the wicked. He will ultimately cleanse the temple to bring it back to being a house of prayer.

“Religious freedom is not only a **gift** of God, but it is the right—and current—approach.”

—ISAIAH MONTILLA,
Panama City, Panama

After less than 200 years of speaking about new spiritual awakening and preparing for the world’s “end-time,” it will be a sad day if the church’s focus shifts to become “Seventh-day Adventist, Inc.”

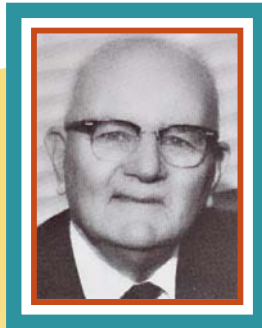
LIBBY BEAMENT
Stanhope Gardens, Australia

In Appreciation

I am not an Adventist, but I am a Christian. I was given the December 2011 issue of *Adventist World* by a friend. I have been inspired by the whole paper. I especially enjoyed Maiké Stepanek’s article, “Dichotomy and Divine Devotion.”

Thanks and be blessed.
DAMARIS RUTO, Kenya

Letters Policy: Please send to: 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.



117 Years Ago

On January 14, 1896, Arthur Stanley Maxwell was born in London, England. He served the church for 54 years as an author, editor, and administrator. Although he served 34 years in the United States as editor of *Signs of the Times*, he is perhaps more famously known as the “Uncle Arthur” of *Uncle Arthur’s Bedtime Stories*. The series was so successful that in 1945 he was asked to write a set of Bible stories for children that took seven years to complete and filled 10 volumes. The result is *The Bible Story*, still sold by literature evangelists around the world.

Maxwell’s most popular book for adults, *Your Bible and You*, sold nearly 2 million copies. During the 1970s one fifth of all Seventh-day Adventist publications bore his name.



Source: Robert E. Costa

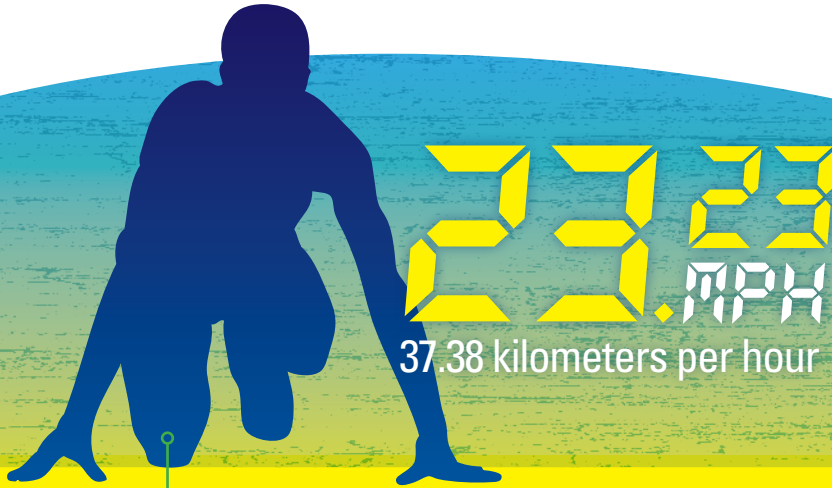
Acorn Squash

When it’s roasted, sautéed, or steamed, it has 9 grams of fiber, 115 calories, and is a good source of vitamins A, B₆, and C.

Source: Men’s Health

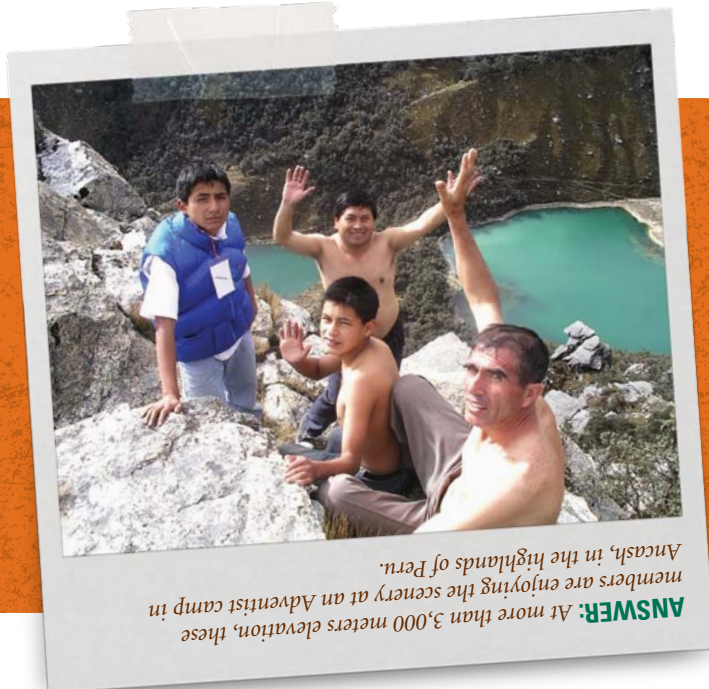


PHOTO BY ALEX CHEEK/DIGITALLY MODIFIED



Speed run by Usain Bolt in the 100-meter event at the 2012 Summer Olympic Games in London

Where in the World Is This?



ANSWER: At more than 3,000 meters elevation, these members are enjoying the scenery at an Adventist camp in Ancash, in the highlands of Peru.

Please pray for God to deliver my son from drugs! And pray for my son to give his heart to the Lord.

DENISE, *Martinique*

I am a newly baptized member. Please pray for me. My family wants me to work on Sabbath in the family business. I need a new job so I can move out.

TIMOTHY, *Uganda*

Please ask God to protect my brother, who suffers from terrible depression. Lead him to seek God and counseling or therapy.

ELAINE, *United States*

Please pray for my two children, 4 and 2. Both have heart disease.

VITALIJUS, *United Kingdom*

My son and his wife, who live in Japan, say they no longer believe in God. They have rejected Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and claim they are their own religion. Please join me in praying for them.

LAURA, *via e-mail*

Please pray that I get the opportunity to study at an Adventist university of my choosing. And pray for missionaries and Adventist youth around the world.

HIROK, *Austria*

Pray that God will send me a husband. And please pray that God supports my faith and provides for my rent by giving me a job and good health.

PRUDENCE, *Gabon*

The Place of Prayer: Send prayer requests and praise (thanks for answered prayer) to prayer@adventistworld.org. Keep entries short and concise, 50-words or less. Items will be edited for space and clarity. Not all submissions will be printed. Please include your name and your country's name. You may also fax requests to: 1-301-680-6638; or mail them to *Adventist World*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.

“Behold, I come quickly...”

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



GLOW Stories

GLOW: Giving Light to Our World

Giving Light to Our World—GLOW—is an outreach initiative that originated in California, United States, but is now branching out to other world divisions. It’s based on the concept of church members distributing GLOW tracts—free of charge—at every opportunity. The tracts are currently being printed in 29 languages.

Here are two short stories—one from Germany and the other from Cameroon—that depict lives touched by GLOW:

STORY 1: A recently baptized German man named Edgar was distributing GLOW tracts in his neighborhood when a little girl approached him and asked what he was doing. Edgar explained that he was from the Adventist Church and was giving out interesting reading materials. The girl asked if she could have one, so Edgar handed her a tract titled “A Gift for You,” written in German. This tract focuses on the gift of salvation. Later he saw the girl reading the tract to her friends. She then ran up to him and said, “This is so good! Can I have more?” Edgar gave her additional tracts and also the book *Steps to Christ* to give to her mother.



RICARDO CAMACHO

STORY 2: An Adventist missionary from Cameroon purchased GLOW tracts during a visit to the United States. When he returned home, he gave a GLOW tract that discussed the state of the dead to a friend who then gave it to another friend, and finally it ended up with a man who belonged to a church of another denomination. The man translated it into French and used it in a funeral sermon. After the funeral, people told him, “We didn’t know that you don’t go directly to heaven or hell when you die.” The man responded, “I didn’t know that either, but that is what the tract says.” So the tract generated discussion on this important biblical topic.

Stories compiled by United States’ Central California Conference GLOW director Nelson Ernst. To find out more about GLOW, go to sdaglow.org.

Publisher

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

Executive Publisher and Editor in Chief

Bill Knott

Associate Publisher

Claude Richli

International Publishing Manager

Chun, Pyung Duk

Publishing Board

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

Adventist World Coordinating Committee

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

Editors based in Silver Spring, Maryland

Lael Caesar, Gerald A. Klingbeil (associate editors), Sandra Blackmer, Stephen Chavez, Wilona Karimabadi, Mark A. Kellner, Kimberly Luste Maran

Editors based in Seoul, Korea

Chun, Pyung Duk; Chun, Jung Kwon; Park, Jae Man

Online Editor

Carlos Medley

Technical Coordinator and Reader Services

Merle Poirier

Editor-at-large

Mark A. Finley

Senior Advisor

E. Edward Zinke

Financial Manager

Rachel J. Child

Editorial Assistant

Marvene Thorpe-Baptiste

Assistant to the Editor

Gina Wahlen

Management Board

Jairyong Lee, chair; Bill Knott, secretary; P. D. Chun, Kamik Doukmetzian, Suk Hee Han, Kenneth Osborn, Juan Prestol, Claude Richli, Akeri Suzuki, Ex-officio: Robert Lemon, G. T. Ng, Ted N. C. Wilson

Art Direction and Design

Jeff Dever, Brett Meliti

Consultants

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

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

E-mail: worldeditor@gc.adventist.org

Web site: www.adventistworld.org

Unless otherwise indicated, all Bible references are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Texts credited to NIV are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide. Used by permission.

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

Vol. 9, No. 1

2013 NORTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION
**INTERNATIONAL
MISSION CONGRESS**

使命 
MISSION

- Powerful Mission Reports
- Inspirational Testimonies
- Seminars on Mission
- Cultural Encounters
- Music Performances
- Golden Angels in Concert
- Exhibition Arena for Mission

Be inspired to recommit to Mission!

Date : August 28-31, 2013

Venue : Jeju International Convention
Center, Jeju, Korea

SPEAKERS



Ted N. C. Wilson



G. T. Ng



Jairyong Lee



Derek J. Morris



Cheryl D. Doss

IMC website (GOIMC.ORG)