

The International Paper for Seventh-day Adventists

January 2014

# ADVENTIST WORLD



## THE SHIFTING LANDSCAPE OF ADVENTIST MISSION

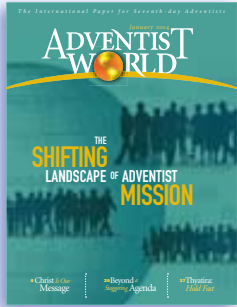
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# ADVENTIST WORLD

January 2014



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## The Way of the Cross

An old story told by my family pictures this encounter between a math teacher and a 10-year old boy:

TEACHER: Johnny, if you have two apples, and I ask you for one, how many will you have?

JOHNNY: *Two.*

We smile because we know too well the inherent stinginess of the human heart. From our earliest moments, we have understood the power that comes from being able to deny someone else the thing they ask for. Thus children routinely refuse requests to play with their toys—not because there is any shortage of playthings, but because the sinful spirit takes perverse pleasure in being able to say “no.” Adults—even believers—deny each other reasonable requests for support, encouragement, and forgiveness, sometimes for no better reason than to measure the pain that saying “no” will cause. The one being asked is at least temporarily assumed to be the greater one, wielding authority over things as trifling as dolls and dollars.

“*Yet it shall not be so among you,*” Jesus tells His disciples. In unmistakably clear language, Jesus demands a different ethic of the ones who will carry His name in the world: “*But whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all*” (Mark 10:43, 44).

This crucial (cross-bearing) teaching of Jesus cannot be heard often enough among us as we near the decisive conflicts of earth’s final days. Unless we regularly repeat these words to each other—study them, pray them, build this movement’s processes upon them—we will inevitably mimic the painful power structures of this world that already wound and oppress too many.

As you read this month’s probing cover essay about the changing profile of international Adventism, and consider the implications for how this movement moves, ask for

the heart and spirit of Jesus to help you be the “greater” one—the one who gives, forgives, and therefore truly lives.



*Bill Knott*

## WORLD REPORT

# Adventist Young Adult Wins NYC Marathon

AP/KATHY WILLENS



**RUNNING TO WIN:** Priscah Jeptoo (center), a Seventh-day Adventist, poses with fellow competitors after winning the women’s title at the New York City Marathon on November 3. Jeptoo is a member of the Adventist Athletic Association in Kenya.

■ November 3, 2013, was a good day for 29-year-old Priscah Jeptoo. Jeptoo, a Seventh-day Adventist from Kenya, not only participated in her first ING New York City Marathon, but she finished first among women, with a time of 2:25:07. She crossed the line 49 seconds ahead of the second-place women’s finisher. With the victory, Jeptoo earned the World Marathon Majors women’s title, and the US\$500,000 bonus that comes with it.

Jeptoo’s pastor, Noah Kipkoeth Chumo, said, “We are thankful for Priscah. She and her husband are dedicated and committed to the church.” Chumo explains that Jeptoo’s husband has been called to be a deacon in the church next year, adding, “When she comes back from New York, we will have a special celebration.”

Jeptoo wasn’t always a Seventh-day Adventist. She first began competing in top competitions in 2008, and met Adventist runner Abel Kirui in a training camp in Iten, Kenya. (Kirui is the 2012 Olympic Marathon silver medalist; his story appeared in the March 2013 *Adventist World*, and is online at <http://bit.ly/IeQvaX>). Kirui invited Jeptoo to visit church. Soon she became a regular visitor, and met her future husband.

Jeptoo got baptized and married. Then her running career took off. She brought home silver at the Daegu World Championships in 2011, followed by silver at the London Olympics, and a first-place finish at the 2013 London Marathon.

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## WORLD REPORT

Chumo says that the runners in the church have started an Adventist Athletic Association. When the athletes leave for a major meet, the church holds a special consecration service, during which Chumo reminds them that they run with God's power.

—by Kimberly Luste Maran, with reporting from Claude Richli

### Montenegro Conference Examines Outreach to Post-moderns

■ “GO BEYOND NORMAL: Making God Known in Europe” was the theme of a three-day conference on secularism and postmodernism that convened in Montenegro, November 12-14, 2013, sponsored by the Trans-European Division.

According to Miroslav Pujić, director of the Ministry to Postmoderns, and organizer of this conference, the Lord has given the Adventist Church a great opportunity to reach out to a generation that is disillusioned with the institution of religion, but that is seeking for meaning in life, and is open to hearing “story”: open to hearing “story” so long as it is personal and disseminated through authentic relationship or the means of modern technology.

The conference spoke to three principal themes: “Culture, Essence, and Praxis.”

“Culture” considered the post-modern rejection of absolute truths, and coercion (man is the center of all things).

“Essence” examined the why of postmodernism, and what it is made of (the failure of modernist institutions such as organized religion and ideologies).

Under “Praxis,” attendees discussed how believers communicate in a post-



TED PHOTO

**POSTMODERN FOCUS:** Participants at a Trans-European Division summit discuss ministry to postmoderns.

modern culture. More than 140 participants engaged in discussions following presentations.

According to John Surridge, president of the Welsh Mission, “One of the things we recognize is that we have to be honest, to recognize that there is a long way to go with many of our congregations. But there are a lot of individual strategies that we can try even now. For example, a less formal style of worship; making outsiders, postmodern people, feel more at home; taking our ministry out into the community, rather than trying to make our churches the centers of community; for example, having Bible studies in the café.”

Anne-May Müller, a pastor in Denmark, added that “it has been challenging, because it changes the way we look at things, the way we do church. It emphasizes the need for us to rethink the methods we use. It is very important that the church be relevant in the culture the church is in. Our culture is secular and postmodern, and the church must learn how to reach out to people in the culture that we’re actually in.”

Ted N. C. Wilson, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, attended the conference, not as a speaker, but as an interested participant. He said, “There were a lot of things that pushed everyone’s thinking. Everyone has to contextual-

ize what we have heard here to their own setting. I would hope that people will not make reaching postmoderns or anyone too complicated. Because it really requires a very relational and proactive approach to actually just get out and try to befriend people.”

Raafat Kamal, field secretary of the Trans-European Division, and one of the organizers, shared his hope that rather than wait five or six years to have a conference like this again, this could be done every two years to “keep this on our radar and bring some new elements to the discussion.”  
—Adventist World *associate publisher* Claude Richli reported from Bečići, Montenegro

### Sahmyook University Hosts Leaders of Private Schools

■ On October 11, 2013, top leaders in the Republic of Korea’s educational community attended the eleventh Korea Private University Presidents Conference (KPUPC), held at Sahmyook University in Seoul. The school is owned by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Nam-soo Seo, the country’s minister of education, along vice ministers and more than 100 private university

presidents were present. The KPUPC is a consultative educational organization formed to promote a balanced development of education through mutual cooperation among 158 private universities.

Conference attendees were introduced to the history and philosophy of Sahmyook University in the course of President Sanglae Kim's welcoming remarks. Jun Young Kim, president of Sungkyunkwan University and KPUPC chairman, expressed his gratitude by awarding an appreciation plaque to President Kim. Discussions focused on pending issues of private universities, including the reorganization of university structures and financial support from the government. A meeting was arranged with the minister of education for a question-and-answer session concerning impending issues affecting private universities.

Education Minister Seo said, "I was surprised that the history of Sahmyook University covers 107 years. I visited the Sahmyook campus 40 years ago when I was a college student, and since then the campus has become so beautiful. I wish for great success in Sahmyook University's development."

The university provided a vegetarian buffet for the presidents. At the

luncheon the presidents toasted the school and made positive comments regarding the Adventist vegetarian dishes. They also expressed appreciation for a warm welcome and admiration for the beauty of the campus.

—Suk Hee Han, Northern Asia-Pacific Division, reporting from Seoul.

## Scholars Celebrate 450<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Glagolitic New Testament

■ On a crisp autumnal Sabbath afternoon in Zagreb, Seventh-day Adventists from Croatia, the United States, and elsewhere were joined by scholars and publishing experts to celebrate the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the release of a New Testament in the Glagolitic language, common in the area at that time.

Although verses of the Scripture had been available as early as the Middle Ages, this was the first time a complete New Testament was available, and it was a cause for celebration, both at the time of its release and today, centuries later.

Croatian President Ivo Josipovic, who was unable to attend the ceremony, said in a statement read at the event that "this is a worthy endeavor that has come on the [heels] of the Reformation," declaring that the original work "will surely [be placed] in Croatian cultural and intellectual heritage."

Scholars from church-owned Adriatic Union College, as well as the University of Zagreb's Faculty of Philosophy, organized the seminar, which was attended by dozens of students, professors, and others interested in the unique history of the Glagolitic New Testament. The work was compiled and printed in Bad Urach, Germany, near Tübingen, as part of a Reformation-led



**SEMINAR SPEAKER:** Seventh-day Adventist scholar Nikolaus Satelmajer (left) with translator Dragutin Matak of Adriatic Union College, addresses a symposium on the 450<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Glagolitic New Testament in Zagreb, Croatia.

MARK A. KELLNER/ADVENTIST WORLD

effort to disseminate scriptures. However, Emperor Maximilian II, a Roman Catholic, also financially supported the printing and distribution of the volume, and at least one former Catholic bishop, who had already joined the Reformation, supported the effort as well.

This New Testament was printed in the Glagolitic alphabet, an alphabet unique to Croatia and used by Croats until several hundred years ago. Another edition was printed in the Cyrillic alphabet. It was published in Cyrillic because some Croats (especially in Dalmatia and parts of Bosnia) in the 1600s used it. Cyrillic was also used by Serbs, Bulgarians and some Turks of the Ottoman Empire. The two alphabets were used so that the Bible could be read by all residents of the southern Balkans.

Adriatic Union College's Dragutin Matak, assistant dean for development, noted that the Glagolitic New Testament was published with the purpose and intention of making the biblical text available to everyone: "Because at that time it was printed in Glagolitic and Cyrillic, and has become an integral part of Croatian culture and identity," Matak said.

—Reported by Mark A. Kellner, news editor, in Zagreb, with information from Darko Kovačević, Adriatic Union Conference



NSD PHOTO

**UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE:** Leaders of private universities in the Republic of Korea gathered at Adventist Church-owned Sahmyook University for a leadership conference.

## WORLD REPORT

Seventh-day Adventist leaders in Inter-America connected with thousands of teachers, principals, and educators to reaffirm an ongoing commitment to Adventist education during a virtual council held on November 16, 2013, at the Inter-American Division (IAD) headquarters.

The five-hour program brought together more than 120 educators from Adventist schools throughout the 22 church regions in the territory. Thousands more watched the online event from dozens of primary and secondary school sites, as well as auditoriums and conference rooms throughout the IAD.

“Today we acknowledge and strengthen our commitment to God, our commitment to the church, and our commitment to leading children and young people to the feet of Jesus and preparing them for the kingdom,” said Gamaliel Florez, education director for the church in Inter-America, as the online program began.

Teachers were encouraged to continue seeking God’s wisdom and commit to elevated responsibility and accountability as they continue to grow, develop, and expand Adventist education and impact the lives of thousands of students.

“The IAD has dedicated this quinquennium from 2010 to 2015 toward improving education and working to give every Adventist child and young person the opportunity to receive an Adventist education,” Florez said. He recognized administrators for their committed efforts to strengthen education by improving school campuses, strengthening the quality of education, training teachers, offering new Bible textbooks, and more.

Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, education director for the Adventist world church, congratulated church leaders



LIBNA STEVENS/IAD

**COUNCIL OPENS:** The Inter-American Division hosted an Education Virtual Council where more than 120 teachers, principals and educators gathered to the historic online event on November 16, 2013, in Miami, Florida. The five-hour online event drew thousands of viewers from across primary and secondary school sites as well as auditoriums and conference rooms throughout the IAD territory.

By LIBNA STEVENS, *Inter-American Division, reporting from Miami, Florida.*

# Adventist Leaders Connect With Thousands of Teachers During Historic Online Event

*“Virtual Council” connected 120 educators across 22 regions; thousands more watch online.*

and educators for the strides made in improving education across the Inter-American Division and spoke on the core principles of Adventist education.

“Adventist education imparts more than academic knowledge; it transforms, it fosters a balanced development of the whole person, spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially,” said Beardsley-Hardy.

Inter-American Division president Israel Leito reminded teachers of their role as key partners with parents in building the character of students in a challenging world.

“Parents entrust their children into your care every day, they are trusting

the church and the organization in this partnership of the home and school,” said Leito. “Your church recognizes your value and knows that without your influence this generation would be difficult to save.”

Ensuring a strong Adventist education is what prompted top church administrators to tackle challenges and pour millions of dollars into supporting educational institutions throughout the IAD territory.

Filiberto Verduzco, treasurer for the church in Inter-America, presented the growth of Adventist education throughout the IAD since the 1920s and the challenges facing the educa-



tional system. Verduzco also highlighted the commitment of church administrators to confronting those challenges.

Among the 30 commitments made to improve Adventist education were: increase student enrollment, study membership growth patterns, prepare students to learn the mission concept, increase the number of Adventist teachers with Adventist preparation, improve school campuses, offer leadership training for teachers, incorporate more community outreach projects into the curriculum, promote professional development, improve integration between faith and learning, market schools better and make them more affordable, and make every school a center of influence in the community.

The educational mission has driven the Adventist Church in the Dominican Republic to improve their schools and school administrations, said Cesario Acevedo, president of the

church in the Dominican Republic.

Hundreds of teachers have left the Adventist school system in the Dominican Republic for higher-paying public school jobs. This has led to the restructuring of the church's school system on the island, said Acevedo.

"Our objectives were to improve our schools academically, provide better salaries for the teachers, and protect the philosophy of Adventist education all managed under an administrative body of educators," said Acevedo. A national Adventist Church office of education responsible for regional offices will manage all of the 90 primary and secondary schools—much like a government would run its ministry of education. The national office would unify funds and ensure payment to its 1,000 teachers consistently and allow for more direct professional development and incentives, he explained.

The revolutionary strategies to improving education in the Dominican Republic led top leaders to award church leaders on the island with a special plaque of recognition.

The North Mexican Union leadership received a special plaque recognizing its investment in education, for establishing a new educational model, for standardizing salaries for teachers through the overseeing local fields, and for making a serious commitment to improving education.

The online event also saw finalists of a math challenge competition that took place throughout Adventist high schools in 12 unions in Inter-America earlier this year. More than 300 students participated in the competition, said Faye Patterson, associate education director for the church in Inter-America and organizer of the challenge.

As a sign of dedication to improving Adventist education, teachers from

primary and secondary level read and signed a commitment on behalf of thousands of teachers in the Spanish, English, and French territories.

For more than 35 years Rachele Romain has been a teacher in the Adventist system in the French Antilles territory. She traveled from College Lycee La Perseverance junior high school in Guadeloupe, and is glad to hear that church leaders are serious about hiring more Adventist teachers in church schools. "Our mission has never been clearer as teachers," said Romain. "Our passion continues to be about touching the lives of our students with God's love."

Iraida Lopez of Andres Bello Adventist School in Bolivar, Venezuela, was excited to travel to Miami for the event. She has taught in the Adventist system for 21 years and is convinced that the love of Jesus she portrays makes a difference in a student's life. As a first-grade teacher, Lopez has seen some of her students become doctors, and seen the children of students come through her classroom. "I praise God for giving me the opportunity to mold children for the eternal kingdom," said Lopez.

Brief reports came in from dozens of sites viewing the live program online: More than 400 teachers gathered in several regional sites throughout Guatemala, some 420 teachers gathered throughout Chiapas, in Mexico, more than 39 schools were connected across the Inter-Oceanic region in Mexico, and hundreds connected in Central America, Colombia, Venezuela, the Caribbean, the French Antilles, and more.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Inter-America operates nearly 1,000 primary, secondary, and tertiary schools, and oversees nearly 10,000 teachers and more than 153,000 students. ■

LIBNA STEVENS/IAO



**GUATEMALAN WINNER:** Adolfo Rolando Salazar of El Progreso Adventist School in Guatemala City, Guatemala, proudly holds his certificate and awards for being the top winner of the church's math challenge. Salazar competed against dozens of students from 24 secondary schools in Guatemala during this year's competition.

# Christ

By TED N. C. WILSON

# Is Our Message

*Not just a story*



The last recorded words of Jesus to his disciples were full of significance both for them and for us today: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8, KJV).

We are now living in the “uttermost part of the earth.” The gospel message is going everywhere, and yet there are millions who haven’t heard of Christ, much less the three angels’ messages. God has a great work for us to do as His modern-day disciples.

### The Sole Purpose of the Church

The biblical book, The Acts of the Apostles, and the book written by Ellen White of the same name, describe this magnificent mission entrusted to God’s servants beginning in the early Christian Era. “The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world.”<sup>1</sup>

This mission continues today with God’s remnant people, the Seventh-day Adventist Church—people, as Revelation 12:17 indicates, “who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ;” who

know that Jesus is coming soon, and live with that expectation in their hearts and on their lips as they serve others in Jesus’ name; people who share the gospel in word and deed. Without question, the sole purpose of the church’s existence is to carry the gospel to the world.

### What Is the Gospel?

There has been some debate about what constitutes the gospel we are to share with the world. Of course, the gospel is the “good news” about Jesus, but what does that actually mean? The incarnation of Jesus? The truth about Jesus’ sinless life and faithful ministry? The selfless sacrifice of Christ on the cross?

You might say, and I would agree, that these are *aspects* of the gospel, but these truths alone do not constitute the entire gospel message that we must share with the world. The apostle Paul explains: “If Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.” “And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins” (1 Cor. 15:14, 17). According to Paul, a gospel without the resurrection is no gospel at all!

And the gospel extends still further. In his sermon on the day of Pentecost Peter adds the truth of Christ’s

present position in the courts of heaven: “This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being *exalted to the right hand of God*, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out *this which you now see and hear*” (Acts 2:32, 33).

In complete harmony, Hebrews 8:1, 2 indicates, “Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We *have* such a High Priest, who *is* seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.”

### Christ Is Our Message and Mission

When the apostles preached the gospel, it wasn’t limited to old news; it included powerful present truth! The gospel isn’t just the story of what Jesus did; it is the truth of what Jesus is doing right now in the Most Holy Place and in our own hearts. Acts 24:25 records Paul’s presentation of the gospel before Felix and how he “reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come.”

The gospel is deeper than merely a story; it is the Savior Himself. The gospel is Jesus Christ in His entirety. It is He who Scripture declares to be “the



# “God has promised STRENGTH for the spiritual battle.”

fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9). He is our message; He is our mission.

This complete gospel, the bold proclamation of the truth of Christ combined with a humble demonstration of the character of Christ, is the work to which we as Seventh-day Adventists are called. Do not allow any other “gospel” to enter your thinking or preaching or living.

## **One Message, Various Methods**

This message, the eternal and present truth of Jesus Christ, is what the apostles were commissioned to present to the world. Some testified before large councils, others to individuals. Some debated with philosophers; others preached in synagogues and marketplaces. While circumstances changed and each audience required a different method of approach, the gospel message remained the same.

Perhaps no individual better exemplifies the delicate but crucial balance between the adaptation of *method* with fidelity to *message* as does the apostle Paul. Ellen White describes how Paul, in the metropolis of culture and philosophy that was Athens, presented the truth of Christ: “His intellectual power commanded the respect of the learned; while his earnest, logical reasoning and the power of his

oratory held the attention of all in the audience. His hearers recognized the fact that he was no novice, but was able to meet all classes with convincing arguments in support of the doctrines he taught.”<sup>2</sup>

In Corinth, a city of commerce, Paul witnessed to fellow tentmakers Aquila and Priscilla. During this time, Paul determined to change his method of gospel presentation. He records in 1 Corinthians 2:1, 2: “And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” Clearly, a new circumstance required a new approach. But the message remained the same: Christ and Him crucified.

In Ephesus, a city known for its superstition and idolatrous worship, yet another method of arresting the people’s attention was employed. The Holy Spirit granted Paul a powerful counterargument to the satanic influence so pervasive in Ephesus. Acts 19:11, 12 records how “God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.” Ellen

White comments: “These manifestations of supernatural power were far more potent than had ever before been witnessed in Ephesus, and were of such a character that they could not be imitated.”<sup>3</sup>

Everywhere Paul journeyed he encountered new obstacles, mind-sets, and lifestyles that required new methods of labor. We, as a world church, should focus on creativity, and support every effort to effectively communicate present truth to those with a postmodern worldview. We must be exceedingly careful, however, not to get swept away into the Ephesian sorceries of our time. God has promised that as we follow His counsel and His ways that His work will prosper and His church will be triumphant.

## **Message and Experience**

Christianity is a message, not merely an experience. God alone holds the future, and in His grace He has made His will known to us through the pages of Scripture. As Seventh-day Adventists we must remain steadfastly faithful to the mandate we have been given—to preach the three angels’ messages to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.

We are promised that “as field after field is entered, new methods and new plans will spring from new



# A One-Day Church

## The Roar of Yasur

circumstances. New thoughts will come with the new workers who give themselves to the work. As they seek the Lord for help, He will communicate with them. They will receive plans devised by the Lord Himself.”<sup>4</sup> In our zeal as a worldwide church to reach the lost and awaken the faithful, we must remember that our plans for creative labor and ideas need to be established upon clear biblical principles, fervent prayer, and the guiding voice of the Spirit of Prophecy.

Sending His humble disciples into a world that would hate them, Christ’s prayer was that they would be grounded more firmly in the Word. As we face the sophisticated deceptions of the devil, God has promised strength for the spiritual battle. “God has provided abundant means for successful warfare against the evil that is in the world. The Bible is the armory where we may equip for the struggle.”<sup>5</sup> Let’s spend more time in God’s Word, which is the only source that will give us spiritual discernment when the final deception comes from Satan.

God wants us to be Spirit-filled, powerful witnesses for Him in the twenty-first century, seeking refuge in the safety of God’s Word. Soon Jesus will come, and the Christian movement begun at the time of the Acts of the Apostles will culminate with the end of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. What a day that will be! ■

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 287.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 6, p. 476.

<sup>5</sup> E. G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 502.

PHOTOS BY RICHARD DUERKSEN



**NATURE’S FURY:** To the right of the volcano, near the ocean, is a One Day Church that stands as a witness of God’s power.

There are 31 One-Day Churches on the islands of Vanuatu in the South Pacific Ocean. Most have been built by local Adventists. Each one is the center of a growing Adventist community. Several of the churches have been constructed on the island of Tanna, where the Yasur volcano tosses lava grenades thousands of feet into the air all day, every day.

Not far from the Yasur volcano, on a green jungle track near the sea, a One-Day Church stands as confirmation that this congregation has not been forgotten by its home church in the United States.

“We told our neighbors that the big church would one day bring us a church building,” one member reported. “They laughed at us and said the big church did not even know we were here. Then one day a big truck came around the volcano and down the track toward our small village. It was loaded high with steel. Church steel!” If you’re ever on Tanna, walk to the top of the volcano and peer into the cauldron of burning lava. Then, come down its slopes and follow the thin track that leads toward the sea, toward Manuwapen. If it’s early morning or at sunset, you will hear music, God’s children singing praises to the Creator.

Walk toward the music and you will see a Seventh-day Adventist church whose walls and roof amplify the sounds of happy voices until the music of God becomes louder than the roar of Yasur.



**Ted N. C. Wilson** is president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



*ASI and Maranatha Volunteers International collaborate to fund and facilitate the One-Day Church and One-Day School project. Since the project’s launch in August 2009, more than 1,600 One-Day Churches have been built around the world.*



# Postpartum Depression

By PETER N. LANDLESS and ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES

**My wife had postpartum depression after our first baby. She recovered, but it was three months of misery. She now wants another baby, but I am very nervous. What do you recommend?**

Postpartum depression may vary a great deal among individuals in its intensity. Some women suffer an extreme postpartum psychosis, where thought processes may become totally unhinged. Reality may then become lost, and hallucinatory voices can invoke paranoia and behaviors seen in schizophrenia. This condition is internationally recognized, affecting women in all cultures.

Depression, the most common feature, has serious implications for both the mother and her child. Failure to recognize and treat this condition can result in severe outcomes, even death. Infants of such mothers often suffer neglect and may show developmental delay and malnutrition, and grow more slowly.

The risk is greater with under-recognized postpartum depression, with which a mother may struggle until reaching a breaking point that may translate into harming herself or her baby.

It is not easy to predict who will get postpartum depression. Factors that do seem to share some predictive validity are a history of depression, including postpartum depression; a lack of social support; and often a new immigration status.

While these factors may increase risk, their absence does not ensure a smooth postpartum period. It has been postulated that the hormonal alterations that accompany the postpartum period are most likely the triggering events. The loss of the placenta with its huge hormonal contribution, the surging levels of prolactin, and the relatively inactive ovarian contribution all lead to significant hormonal adjustments.

Women who have experienced high stress in the years before delivery or have suffered interpersonal abuse or social isolation are at greater risk.

A recent study published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* found the Canadian prevalence to be less than that traditionally reported in developed countries.\* Researchers found a 7.4 percent prevalence, versus the  $\pm 13$  percent rate in other countries.

Interestingly, this study also suggested that rural women might suffer less depression than urban women.

What these studies tell us is that support, awareness, and rapid intervention can reduce the risk of such depression.

Because so many individual factors are involved in each situation, we would suggest that you consult your obstetrician, as well as your mental

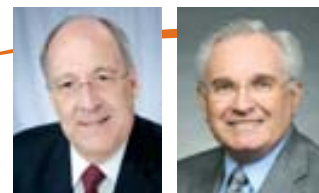
health specialists, about your wife's desire for another child.

Second pregnancies are often less problematic than first pregnancies, because so many of the adaptations come more easily. Postpartum depression may occur again, although not necessarily.

Awareness of the potential complications involved may provide greater support, better routines, and quicker recognition of a problem. Conversely, however, the mother now has two children to cope with, which can sometimes seem overwhelming.

Postpartum depression, in most cases, is confined to a given period of time, and after medical consultation you and your wife may be able to make a decision together with greater assurance and planning as to how you could cope with the condition, if necessary. ■

\* *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 185, no. 13 (Sept. 17, 2013): 1129-1135.



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# The Fence

By TIM MATSIS

*Appreciating the oneness of God's imminence*

While working my way through boarding school, I was told of a bull with a reputation for being extremely dangerous. It was very large and muscular, and charged at anything that came within what it considered its domain. When having to move the bull around the farm, its owners never entered the paddock in person; they did it from the safety of the truck. Sometimes the truck came off a little worse for wear.

Just imagine the damage that beast could have done if it had escaped its paddock and made its way into a crowd, or onto the main highway. Fortunately there was a good reason the bull never got out. Around the perimeter of the paddock was a wire that ran a reasonably strong dose of electrical current! Despite the animal's utter contempt for the farm workers, the truck, and just about everything else, it showed the electric fence great deference!

The same power that gives us light, heat, and numerous other conveniences was recognized by a crazed animal to be worthy of great respect. In fact, anyone who knows anything of electricity knows that it is to be both appreciated and feared.

## Mount Sinai

When God descended on Mount Sinai to meet with His people, He also commanded that a fence be erected. He said: "You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. Not a hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot with an arrow; whether man or beast, he shall not live'" (Ex. 19:12, 13).

This was no common, social gathering; it was a divine audience with the all-powerful Creator, and God's people were to show an attitude that would be fitting for such a solemn occasion. The people prepared

themselves to meet with God by both cleansing their hearts and their attire (Ex. 19:14).

The Bible records that on the third day "there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. . . . Now Mount Sinai was completely enveloped in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly" (Ex. 19:16-18).

God was trying to teach His people that the great God of creation, who had sheltered, warmed, and led them in a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, was also a God to be feared and respected. The God who loved them enough to rescue them from their enemies and feed them with the bread of heaven was also a God who required their utmost respect and reverence.

God knew that His willingness to condescend, to dwell, and to speak with fallen humanity would also be an avenue Satan would exploit by fostering an attitude of familiarity and disrespect. However, like electricity, but with the added blessings of divine personality, God wanted it known that He was to be both loved *and* feared.

God repeatedly told Moses to warn the people of His holiness and transcendence (Ex. 19:24). Sadly, a short time later His people forgot this important lesson (Ex. 32). The solemnity that was to characterize their worship of the Creator was replaced with revelry. There was music and dancing, and rather than dressing up to meet their God, they undressed. Their conceptions of a holy God were reduced to a statue of an animal—a golden calf. If you are tempted to think that this depiction of God is not so bad, being made of gold, just imagine ordering a portrait of yourself by describing yourself to an artist over the phone, then being sent a picture of a golden cow!

## and transcendence

The Levites rightly refused to participate in this degraded worship and were honored by God with the priesthood, while many of those who led out in igniting this alluring but false revival perished. I wonder about the close link between loss of respect and reverence for God and the increased sense of human independence sometimes present in our worship experience.

### Mount Horeb

It was not only the nation that needed to be taught to both love and reverence God. Moses, prior to being called to lead God's people, had to become acquainted with God's loving mercy and His terrible grandeur. In that interview at the burning bush at Horeb, God revealed to Moses His merciful plan to deliver His people. Yet at the same time His miracle-working promises were preceded by the firm warning: "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." Moreover He said, 'I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God" (Ex. 3:5, 6).

In his final address to Israel before his death, Moses warned the people: "Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God. . . . For the Lord your God is a consuming fire" (Deut. 4:23, 24).

### What about Today?

The lessons God taught Israel have not lost their relevance. Why should they? God does not change (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8). The letter to the Hebrews, reminding us of God's solemn appearance at Mount Sinai, warns: "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a

consuming fire" (Heb. 12:28, 29).

"From the sacredness," writes Ellen White, "which was attached to the earthly sanctuary, Christians may learn how they should regard the place where the Lord meets with His people."<sup>1</sup> Rather than losing reverence and respect for the worship of God because we no longer see the visible tokens of His presence, we should be mindful that wherever we meet with God, we should regard that place as sacred. And, continues Ellen White, "the house is the sanctuary for the family, and the closet or the grove the most retired place for individual worship; but the church is the sanctuary for the congregation."<sup>2</sup>

Reverence toward God, for the Seventh-day Adventist Christian, is to be lived out in every aspect of our worship, whether public or private. God calls us to do more than just observe regulations for reverence dictated to His people in the Old Testament. He wants to write His laws on our hearts and minds. Then our witness to the world will truly be "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water" (Rev. 14:7).

I long to worship my holy Savior and Maker with everything I am. ■

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, p. 491.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



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**W**hat difference does it make? I thought to myself. Why is the biblical concept of the Trinity so important?

I had been studying the Bible with Miguel, a well-meaning gentleman who sympathized with the Jehovah's Witnesses. Miguel's wife, a devout Jehovah's Witness, had recently passed away. She had told him that Christ and the Holy Spirit were *not* God; that there was no such thing as a "Trinity." He had simply taken her word for it.

I tried very hard to convince him otherwise, confidently pointing out every tiny bit of linguistic, syntactic, semantic, and grammatical evidence I could find in the Bible in favor of the Trinity—but to no avail. Miguel simply wasn't interested in the minutia of biblical-exegetical evidence in favor of the personality and divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. It was all too abstract and impersonal to him.

What difference does it make, anyway? I found myself thinking. Then, suddenly, it hit me: I had been missing the

point entirely. What I had to do was show Miguel *why* the concept of a triune God was so important, especially *for him!* Frankly, I hadn't even thought much about why it was so important *for me!* Little did I know I was in for a new, mind-boggling perspective of the Godhead.

### Why It's So Important

The Trinity is not just an inconsequential and isolated philosophical concept. What we believe about the personality and nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit has a great impact on many other doctrines and beliefs. It is not something we can set aside lightly without affecting several crucial aspects of our Christian experience, such as:

**Salvation:** If in the cross "mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed" (Ps. 85:10), then Christ *had* to be fully divine, part of the triune God. If not, then God would have been dependent on some inferior, created creature to demonstrate His love and satisfy His justice. God would have been taking out His wrath on an innocent third party, raising the question of the entire justice of such an act. Rather, in the God/man Christ, God has met the needs for justice through *His own* willingly given divine self-sacrifice. For "God was *in Christ* reconciling the world to Himself" (2 Cor. 5:19)! And, of course, only a being who naturally possesses immortality can offer everlasting life to those who take advantage of the saving power of His atoning death (John 11:25). Thank God our

# THE Trinity

By WALTER STEGER

## Is it *that* important?



salvation does not depend on any inferior, created being, but on the eternal triune God Himself!

**Knowledge of God:** Much of what we know about God comes from what Christ came to reveal through His teachings and example (John 1:18; 14:9). However, only one who is God in the fullest sense of the word can effectively show us what God is like. Otherwise, Christ's revelation of the Father would have been flawed and incomplete. Only a divine "Insider" could really show humanity the truth about God. And only the divine Holy Spirit, who has been eternally bound up with the heart of self-sacrificing love in the Father and the Son, can fully communicate such love to lost human beings. Furthermore, the fact that the Holy Spirit is a fully divine *person*, and not a mere "force" or "power," is very significant. We cannot relate to a force as we do to a person. An impersonal "power" can be easily manipulated, but not a person. Only a real divine Person can comfort us, teach us, and guide us (John 14:16; 16:13).

**Reconciliation:** Humanity's reconciliation with God could only be accomplished by someone who was equal with God, possessing the divine attributes that would allow Him to intercede on man's behalf before the infinite God and also represent God to a fallen world. He must also share our own human nature, a connection with the human family whom He was to represent, in order to be a mediator between God and humanity (Heb. 4:14-16). Furthermore, only the omnipresent Spirit, who fully knows the heart of our great high priestly Intercessor, can adequately comfort us and impart the blessings of Christ's constant intercession on our behalf.

**Sanctification:** Sin has distorted God's creation in such a way that the only one who can fix it is none other than the original divine Creator. Jesus the Creator becomes the great physician of the human soul. He alone has the power to re-create God's image in any sinner who willingly and humbly comes to Him for restoration. However, Christ is no longer physically present to do this work. The only being capable of working together with Christ in bringing about this transformation is the divine Holy Spirit, who has also worked with the Son in creation.

**Unity:** Jesus prayed for His disciples of all times, asking "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You" (John 17:21). If the Son and the Father were not completely equal in power, nature, and attributes, what kind of unity could Christ be asking for? It would be an unequal and subordinate "unity." But since He and the Father (and the Spirit) are mutually interdependent in

# Trinity

There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. He is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 14:7.)

their divine love, existence, and work, the same oneness is asked for the disciples: that they may also be one in equal interdependence and loving service.

**Marriage and equality:** In the beginning, God created man "in His own image" as male and female (Gen. 1:27). The ideal expressed in Creation was for man and woman to form a whole in which they were to be mutually complementary and interdependent, following the pattern of relationships in the Godhead (John 17:24). Had there been hierarchical differences in the nature and attributes of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, being created "in His own image" wouldn't have made any sense when applied to the equality of men and women (Gal. 3:28).

## Unavoidable

To some, the Godhead is the ultimate paradox. Somehow They are separate, yet inseparable; somehow They are three, and yet They are one. But once you have looked at the alternatives, the doctrine of the Trinity is unavoidable. We may not be able to completely solve the mystery of the Trinity in this life, and maybe not even in the next one. But one thing's for sure: There is no other God beside Him. He comes to us in His magnificent three-ness of being, and this three-in-one God is all we need. ■



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We are living in a time of change. The adage of the Greek philosopher Heraclitus that “change is the only constant” is truer than ever. Few people realize that during the past decade six of the 10 fastest-growing economies in the world were African, and in eight of the past 10 years, Africa has grown faster than eastern Asia, including Japan.<sup>1</sup>

It is not only in the arena of economic growth that the developing world is excelling; church growth is also advancing with breakneck speed, and the religious landscape is being redrawn. Church historian Philip Jenkins calls this shift “one of the transforming moments in the history of religion worldwide.”<sup>2</sup>



More than  
**TWO-THIRDS**  
of all Christians  
live in Africa, Latin  
America, and Asia.

During the past 50 years or so, the center of Christianity has shifted from North America and Europe to Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The amazing redistribution of Christian membership has redefined the contours of world mission. The Christian heartland of Europe is shrinking perceptibly, and Africa, Asia, and Latin America are rapidly expanding, causing the center of Christianity to shift from the so-called Global North to the Global South.<sup>3</sup> The phrase “Global North” is used here in reference to Europe and America, which used to be the traditional industrialized and missionary-sending continents, while “Global South” denotes Asia, Africa, and Latin America, which

By G. T. Ng

# THE SHIFTING LANDSCAPE OF



*How do we...*

were formerly recognized as mission fields.<sup>4</sup> This redistribution of Christian membership is owing in part to the success of evangelization in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and in part to the unprecedented decline of Christian adherence in Europe.

Shifts in four important areas, including membership, mission, theology, and financial resources command our attention. At the risk of oversimplification in a diverse and complex world, we must realize that there are exceptions to every trend. Christianity is a collective body of Christians throughout the world. Each branch of the Christian community adheres to diverse traditions, which differ even within their respective persuasion. Despite the complexity, there are discernible and measurable trends. Not all of these trends will be reflected within the Seventh-day Adventist Church; however, their existence should challenge us to think beyond the local level and look at the global picture.

## Membership

In broad strokes, the number of Christians in the Global North has

shrunk noticeably, whereas membership in the Global South has grown consistently through the past decades. The late Christian statistician David Barrett estimated that in 2000 there were 1.9 billion Christians in the world, 59 percent of whom lived in Africa, Asia, or Latin America, compared with 28 percent in Europe and only 11 percent in North America. Barrett estimated that by 2005, Christians in Africa, Asia, and Latin America would represent 68 percent of the world total, with only 30 percent living in Europe and North America.<sup>5</sup> Dana Robert summarized the change of demographics this way: “The typical late-twentieth-century Christian was no longer a European man, but a Latin American or African woman.”<sup>6</sup>

The epochal change in the demographical shift in Christianity to the “two-thirds world” is also evident in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.<sup>7</sup> In 1962 the Church in the Global South had a membership of 818,716 (60 percent of world membership of 1,362,775). In 2012 Global South membership shot up to 16,380,066,<sup>8</sup> representing 92 percent of world



# ADVENTIST MISSION

*How do we relate to new realities?*

membership. The Global North had 544,059 members in 1962 and reached 1,501,425, or just 8 percent of total membership, in 2012.

Membership increased in tandem with baptisms. In 1962, the baptisms in the Global North represented 24 percent, and in the Global South represented 76 percent of world baptisms, respectively. By 2012, baptisms in the Global South increased threefold to an extraordinary 96 percent of all baptisms that year.

All around the world the rate of church growth has exceeded that of population growth in the past 50 years. Both the Global North and Global South have done well considering the huge population growth in the developing world. Fifty years ago in the Global North there was one Adventist to 1,380 nonbelievers, while in 2012 the number had decreased to 1 in 692. Rapid growth in the Global South membership reduced the ratio of member to nonmember from 1 in 2,918 in 1962 to 1 in 368 in 2012.

In 1962 the Global North had 47 percent of the total number of churches. A half century later that

number shrank to 13 percent. In contrast, the Global South's share of churches increased from 53 to 87 percent during the same period. The same trend is also reflected in terms of ministers. The percentage of the Global North's number of ministers was reduced from 64 percent (5,334) in 1962 to 25 percent (6,708) in 2012, whereas the Global South increased its share of ministers from 36 (3,017) to 75 percent (20,115) over 50 years.

## Mission

The Global South has been noted for its missionary fervor. One is likely to find South Korean missionaries in Europe, Brazilian missionaries in the Middle East, or Filipino missionaries in Africa. Churches in the Global South now send missionaries to the Global North. More than 10,000 foreign Christian workers are today laboring in Britain, France, Germany, and Italy—more than 35,000 in

the United States.<sup>9</sup> South Korea has nearly 22,000 missionaries serving overseas, many of whom are "tentmakers."<sup>10</sup> Nigeria has already sent out 5,200 missionaries all over the world. They hope to raise 50,000 missionaries who will work in North Africa.<sup>11</sup>

In this reverse missionary movement from the Southern Hemisphere to the Northern Hemisphere, the previous notions of "sending country" and "receiving country" have been tossed aside. In 1962, the Seventh-day Adventist Church sent out 490 long-term missionaries, the overwhelming majority (443, or 90 percent)<sup>12</sup> of whom originated from Global North countries. In 2012, the trend reversed itself. The Global North's share of world missionaries dropped to 53 percent,<sup>13</sup> while the Global South's share of cross-cultural missionaries (represented by the three top-sending divisions, Southern Asia-Pacific Division, South American Division, and Inter-American Division) increased to 47 percent. The Adventist missionary landscape looks very different than it did 50 years ago, reflecting similar shifts of gravity from the Global North to the Global South.

Aside from the reverse missionary movement, the Global South is noted for its intra-missionary movement.



1962  
60% of Adventists lived in the Global South

2012  
it was 92%



A case in point is the church in China. The exponential advancement of the gospel in recent decades is attributed to the ingenuity and diligence of indigenous missionaries and church leaders. When all foreign missionaries left China between 1949 and 1952, all Adventist schools and hospitals, the seminary, and the publishing house became inoperable. Chinese believers took responsibility

**1962** ratio of members to non-members

**1 IN 2,918**

**2012** it was

**1 IN 368**

ity and ownership of the church. They started from the grassroots, propagated from the grassroots, and became a bottom-up, grassroots movement. On their own, with no financial or personnel assistance from foreign countries, they took mission to heart and went about organizing and training church leaders on a scale deemed unthinkable to the outside world.

### Theology

The theological landscapes between the Global North and Global South are in stark contrast in mainline and even evangelical Christian denominations. Global North scholars, influenced by Enlightenment-based education and culture, tend to ask philosophical questions relating to such topics as the nature of Christ and Calvinism versus Arminianism. They tend to dismiss miracle stories or allegorize them. They discount miracles

in the Gospels as legends and not historically plausible. Thankfully, in the Seventh-day Adventist Church such blatant disregard of the supernatural in Scripture is rare.

To Christians in the South, theological debates are extraneous and irrelevant to day-to-day reality. They know that they live in a supernatural world. They are concerned about battles between angels and demons. To them, supernatural events are normative. Dreams and visions are part of their present-day reality. Christians in the Global South place a premium on angelic encounters. Global South pastors acknowledge the vast power of witchcraft and confront it head-on by burning fetishes.

In much of the world, Christians are more in tune with the Bible as they read it in their existential contexts. When they read narratives of healing, they see a God who cares about their suffering. When they read about miraculous accounts, they thank God for divine intervention. The Bible is at once wholistic and relevant. In Africa “you do not have to interpret Old Testament Christianity to Africans; they live in an Old Testament world.”<sup>14</sup>

### Financial Resources

The shift in population brings with it a change in wealth distribution. The London School of Economics estimates that in 1980 the global economic center was located in the middle of the Atlantic. By 2050 “the world’s economic center of gravity will be somewhere between India and China.”<sup>15</sup>

Economic development and wealth accumulation in the “two-thirds world” notwithstanding, Western countries remain affluent in contrast to others. The Global South has large membership but is more economically challenged. With the decline of membership in the Global North and exponential growth in the developing world, distribution of resources remains skewed.

Today the Christian minority in the



In 2012

**75%**

of all Adventist ministers served in the Global South.

North continues to commit substantial resources to the poorer Global South because “the preponderance of funding for missions still comes from the West.”<sup>16</sup> In the Adventist Church the North American Division, the major component of the Global North, remains the backbone of funding for the world church budget. Based on the most current available data, the tithe of Seventh-day Adventists in the Global North increased from \$57.6 million in 1962 to \$1.22 billion in 2011. The \$1.22 billion they gave in 2011 represented 53.8 percent of total tithe income of the world church. In other words, 8.5 percent of world membership in the Global North contributed 53.8 percent of world tithe.

Seventh-day Adventists in the Global South, on the other hand, have been contributing an increasing amount through the years. In a half century, their tithe has increased much faster than the Global North, though the Global North still contributed more in terms of the dollar amount. The Global South gave only about \$7.4 million (11 percent of world tithe) in 1962, but by 2011 it contributed \$1.047 billion, or about 46.2 percent of world tithe.

### Important Implications

What does the epochal swing of the epicenter of Christianity from Europe and the United States to Africa, Asia, and Latin America mean to the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

One implication of the paradigm shift is that the Global South has been reasonably successful in evangelism,

and much of that success is attributed to trained and active laity. Mission is very much part of the DNA of the Global South, and the receptivity of the populace in the developing world is an added advantage.

In terms of challenges, the Global South is generally poorer than its Global North counterparts; financial self-reliance is a distant dream for many. Increasingly, though, the Global South has taken stewardship seriously and is catching up in recent years in tithes and offerings, rapidly approaching the same level of giving as the North.

Another challenge of the Global South is urban ministry. Rural evangelism has long been the default mode of operation. We have converts by the millions from mountains and villages but relatively few converts are found in cities. Rapid urbanization is a global trend in the developing world; more than half of the world's population now lives in urban areas. Increasingly the Global South must prioritize urban mission when cities "have been neglected so long."<sup>17</sup>

While sharing the need for urban ministry, the Global North is also being confronted with a different set of challenges. In the face of advancing secularism, Christian faith, and practice in the former Christian heartland are in decline. Its precious Christian heritage is in danger of being lost. The

church is also greatly affected by slow or stagnant growth. It is striking that all of the 10 unions whose membership declined between 2008 and 2012 are found in the three European divisions. The Global North's membership is rapidly aging, and the need for infusing new blood has become critical.

Given that the Global South has the membership and that the Global North has the money, what are the implications? The wide disjunction between the two is obvious but not often spoken of, at least not in public. Where is the church? One could argue, "The church is where the members are," or "The church is where the money is." How then should we vote? Do we vote with wallets or numbers? To ask this question is to ask the wrong question, because numbers and wallets are not mutually exclusive. Having wallets without numbers misses the mark, and numbers without wallets can suffocate growth.

Perhaps a more appropriate question is "how should wallets and numbers complement each other in a collaborative and complementary manner to accomplish the mission of the church?" With the dynamism and growing wealth of the Global South and the affluence of the Global North, the church could accomplish much on a scale never before imagined. Both the Global North and Global South have plenty to bring to the table. Opportunities abound for a greater degree of collaboration between the Global North and Global South. Never has the missiological task been more pressing, or the need for meaningful partnership between North and South been more urgent.

Standing at the beginning of 2014, we are mindful that billions have yet to hear the three angels' messages. Great swaths of the 10/40 window remain barren. Hundreds of

teeming cities continue to challenge us. Yet we are reminded that we are not alone in this endeavor. The Holy Spirit stands ready to empower a languishing church. Revival and reformation will precede the latter rain. Indeed, the latter rain will be poured out in full measure, and God "will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness" (Rom. 9:28).

I eagerly wait for this moment. ■

<sup>14</sup>"The Hopeful Continent: Africa Rising," *The Economist*, Dec. 3, 2011, p. 15.

<sup>15</sup>Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, rev. and expanded edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011), p. 1.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 2-4.

<sup>17</sup>In this article Global North is defined as Europe, North America, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.

<sup>18</sup>David Barrett, George Kurian, and Todd Johnson, eds., *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comprehensive Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>19</sup>Dana Robert, "Shifting Southward: Global Christianity Since 1945," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 24 (April 2000): 50.

<sup>20</sup>Two-thirds world: Over the past three decades the term "two-thirds world" has been used to describe the developing world, covering roughly two thirds of earth.

<sup>21</sup>2013 Annual Statistical Report (Silver Spring, Md.: Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2013), p. 5.

<sup>22</sup>David Barrett, Todd Johnson, and Peter Crossing, "Missionmetrics 2007," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 31 (January 2007): 31. See also Michael Jaffarian, "The Statistical State of the Missionary Enterprise," *Missiology* 30 (January 2002): 15-32.

<sup>23</sup>Tentmakers: Mission specialists use the term "tentmaker" to describe volunteer missionaries serving in their professions in countries that are difficult to penetrate for Christian pastors or missionaries. The term is based on the ministry of the apostle Paul, whose tentmaking expertise funded his mission trips and often opened ways to reach the population of an unreached city.

<sup>24</sup>Howard Brant, "Seven Epicenters of Emerging Mission Movements," *SIMS*, Oct. 30, 2008, available online at [www.sim.org/index.php/content/seven-epicenters-of-emerging-mission-movements](http://www.sim.org/index.php/content/seven-epicenters-of-emerging-mission-movements).

<sup>25</sup>There were 303 from the North American Division, 53 from the Northern European Division, 50 from the Australasia Division, and 37 from the Southern European Division.

<sup>26</sup>With 33 percent coming from the North American Division, 7 percent from the Trans-European Division, 8 percent from the Euro-Africa Division, and 5 percent from the South Pacific Division.

<sup>27</sup>Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 46.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup>"Faith and Conflict: The Global Rise of Christianity," Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, Mar. 2, 2005. Available online at [www.pewforum.org/Christian/Faith-and-Conflict-The-Global-Rise-of-Christianity.aspx](http://www.pewforum.org/Christian/Faith-and-Conflict-The-Global-Rise-of-Christianity.aspx).

<sup>30</sup>Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases* (Silver Spring, Md.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1990), vol. 3, p. 220.



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Jeyaselvi lives alone in her newly built modest house in Kannankurichi, a small town in southern India. She is a successful businessperson, a wholesale dealer in peanuts, the principal crop of the area. In addition, she leads out each Sabbath a homegrown church of some 30 adults—an Adventist church born out of her personal trials and God’s marvelous leading.

**How It Began**

The story began nine years ago.

Hopeless, homeless, and hungry, Jeyaselvi thought that she had reached the end of her road. Life for this single mother was not fair, and her little boy

homeless, hopeless, hungry, and now-bleeding woman mixed with the yelling of her son brought passersby to her side. Lots of pity, some expressions of grief, few words of wisdom as how not to be bitten by a dog came from those who passed by her, but no sight of bread; nor any volunteer to bind the wound and stop the bleeding.

When all sounds of pity ceased, the wounded woman was left alone on the pavement. She dragged herself to her “home”—a place to lie down under the overpass of a city road—and waited for whatever “fate” would bring.



# Beyond a Staggering Agenda:

By JOHN M. FOWLER

## *Adventists in Southern Asia*

could hardly understand the difference between fair and unfair; all he wanted at that moment was a piece of bread. It was for this bread Jeya set out that day nine summers ago on the narrow streets of Kannankurichi. As she looked for some benevolent person who would give a rupee or two toward her day’s project—a loaf of bread—she did not anticipate the unexpected visitor that charged at her and sent his sharp teeth deep into her calf muscle.

Jaya staggered, and fell flat on the cement sidewalk. The cries of the

Her sobbing arrested two men passing by. They turned to see what was happening. It did not take any scientific investigation to know what the suffering woman needed: some binding of her wounds and some food to eat. They helped her with the first, and then directed her to go to a little meeting place a block away, where on that Sabbath afternoon food was being served to anyone who needed it. That’s the “gospel” Jeya was waiting to hear. She picked up her son and rushed to the Hope Channel Bible

study center, where volunteers were distributing food for the poor after the Sabbath service.

As soon as she reached the site, Jeyaselvi found out once again what she knew all her life: “luck” was never on her side. The food had run out, and her disappointment again turned into tears. One Hope Channel volunteer couldn’t bear the pitiable sight, thrust in her hand a 20-rupee bill, and suggested that she get some food from some wayside eating place. The hopeless woman realized that hope has its own ways to make its mark, and hurried with her boy to buy some food. On her way she had to pass by several homes, and on the steps of one stood a middle-aged woman with a banana-leaf wrapped package. She was waiting to fulfill a vow she had made that every Saturday she would give a meal to someone in need—her way of nudging the world of the hungry. Jeyaselvi and her son had their first decent meal in days.

**Life After Hunger**

With hunger gone, Jeyaselvi had a practical problem: what to do with that 20-rupee bill? Even the poorest of the poor have their conscience raise some awkward questions. Or was it some





**Top, Left: SOWING SEED:** Hope Channel is more than the proclamation of the gospel through television. It is one of the best means to sow seed for periodic small group gatherings that eventually yield a harvest. **Bottom, Left: GROWING CELLS:** Discipleship classes, intercessory prayers, and small group sessions open up opportunities that may not otherwise be available. **Above: UN-SUNG HEROES:** Women have emerged as a powerful force in the witnessing, worship, and prayer life of the church in Southern Asia, giving a fresh meaning to evangelism and soul winning.

reflection of the image of God, however dim or dull, that each person is created with? Jeyaselvi was not privy to such theological insight, but she was a person with her own ethic. Right now her hunger was gone, and the money could be used for someone else. She returned to the Hope Channel Bible study center and gave back the money to the volunteer who showed her that compassion. “God met my need for the day,” she told him; “perhaps the money can help someone else.”

John Prakasam, the Bible worker, was stunned at the action of this homeless, hopeless, and no-longer-hungry woman. She may be all that, but John saw in her a spirit seeking more than food. He began to study the Bible with her, and she drank deeply from God’s Word. Within a few weeks, when the Hope Channel team had a baptismal service, she wanted to be baptized. “Her love for the truth was so overwhelming,” says S. Johnson, the Adven-

tist TV ministry pioneer in the Southern Asia Division and now the union conference evangelist and Hope Channel coordinator, “that we had no hesitation or reservation to baptize her.”

Baptism over, Johnson and colleagues planned to put Jeyaselvi on economic life support. True, one shall not live by bread alone, but one does need bread to live. Christian compassion and practical sense put on their boots, and Johnson’s team looked around the town and encouraged Jeyaselvi to become a peanut vendor. The entire area was famous for growing peanuts. With some hard work, a little planning, and faith in God’s enormous promises, the small-scale vendor in time became the area’s leading peanut wholesale trader. In nine years she was no longer homeless, hopeless, and hungry. Out of God’s blessings she built her own house, with a hall for a meeting place for an Adventist group in that town.

A church was born! A little compassion, a persistent sharing of the good news, a mind to plan a way to live—all directed toward a homeless, hopeless, and hungry woman. The dirt of the earth can become an instrument to build a temple for the Creator and Redeemer of the world. Soon Jeyaselvi had won 30 persons to worship with her in her home. The once-homeless person provided a house church for God!

### A Line of Miracles

Such miracles, ancient and new, mark the history and mission of the church in southern Asia. One of the first Adventist missionaries was a woman, Georgia Burrus, who came to India in 1895; her first convert was a woman. From Georgia to Jeyaselvi, the church has witnessed thousands of women and men, paid workers and lay members, young and old, who lived in hope, sowed in tears, and reaped in joy. The church that began

with 23 members in 1899 today is poised to cross the 2 million mark by the next General Conference session. Urban seams and rural outposts across the land are bursting with Adventism.

The growth is not in membership alone. Airwaves, once unavailable for the proclamation of the gospel, are now at our reach. Hope Channel and TV ministry broadcast in six languages, reaching vast masses across the country.

Evangelism is no longer the monopoly of men. Women and young people are increasingly involved in church growth and development. Adventist education is mediated through seven colleges and 356 K-12 schools to 175,000 students.

Nepal and Bhutan are tasting the joy of the gospel without hindrance for the first time. Never before in the history of the Southern Asia Division has so much been accomplished by so few for the salvation of so many.

However, what is yet to be done rises as Mount Everest in comparison to the plains of what has been done thus far. Standing on that plain of achievement, Southern Asia’s leaders and believers feel confronted by a thousand peaks to climb: membership audits, moving stewardship upward from being the lowest per capita tithe (US\$3.23 in 2011) in the world, providing a living wage to pastors and teachers, and building a highway for our God that will wind through thousands of villages and towns yet untouched by Adventism.

The agenda is staggering. But the power is there. The Spirit waits to use those—like Jeyaselvi—who come to Him to accomplish the task. ■



**John M. Fowler** recently retired after 53 years of service in the church, including 21 years at the General Conference.

Ellen White's writings display striking urgency and missionary zeal for urban evangelism. Indeed, after spending significant time in North American and European cities (from 1874 to 1901), she became more deeply concerned with the needs of New York and other great cities.<sup>1</sup> In fact, she "had a burden that the church had neglected gospel work in the cities. Correcting that neglect would be a focal point of her ministry between 1901 and 1910."<sup>2</sup> So strongly did she feel on the issue that for a while she refused interviews with General Conference president A. G. Daniels until he delineated an aggressive urban strategy.<sup>3</sup> In 1908 White wrote, "There is means now tied up that should be in use for the unworked cities in Europe, Australia, and America, and in the regions beyond."<sup>4</sup>

### Not Just One Approach

Rural living perspective and the "outpost"<sup>5</sup> evangelistic model are often the highlighted counsel from her writings on the subject. In this model missionaries live in the country and commute to the city to witness. But George Knight notes that other statements, "even though equally valid and important, have been neglected. Thus Adventists generally have highlighted only one half of Ellen White's perspective."<sup>6</sup>

Ellen White is also on record in support of the "in-post" model: "Close around us are cities and towns in which no efforts are made to save souls." Families "who know the present truth [should] settle in these cities and villages, to set up there the standard of Christ."<sup>7</sup>

These two sets of counsel do not contradict one other, and are further delineated between institutional and residence placement. Ellen White sought to avoid large numbers of families being unnecessarily settled in the cities because of institutional placement. She did not emphasize the outpost approach in relation to local churches,<sup>8</sup> and further, her counsel on rural migration is expressed under the rubric of personal and providential Divine direction.

### Balanced Statements

One of her earliest statements on urban to rural relocation, written in 1885, effectively illustrates this: "As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation in the decree enforcing the papal sabbath will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains."<sup>9</sup>

This practical and gradualistic counsel extends also to

# Ellen White & URBAN Evangelism



By IVAN LEIGH WARDEN and J. L. THOMPSON

located church institutions, as demonstrated by her use of such qualifying phrases as “until it is possible for them to leave” or the “way opens before them to do so.”<sup>10</sup> Evident in these quotations are both Ellen White’s practical, nondogmatic posture, and the importance of personal, divine direction in rural relocation decisions.

Ellen White urged believers to cultivate a balanced approach: “While it is in the order of God that chosen workers of consecration and talent should be stationed in important centers of population to lead out in public efforts, it is also His purpose that the church members living in these cities shall use their God-given talents in working for souls.”<sup>11</sup> Elsewhere she emphasizes that “especially are the church members living in the cities to exercise, in all humility, their God-given talents in laboring with those who are willing to hear the message that should come to the world at this time. . . . As such workers undertake to win souls for Jesus, they will find that many who never could be reached in any other way will respond to intelligent personal effort.”<sup>12</sup>

Ellen White did advocate living and setting up church institutions outside of cities *when possible*; and her position on families who do not “avail themselves of God’s appointed means, and get away from the cities”<sup>13</sup> was quite clear. In her writings, she criticizes some families who were “loitering” and “making no determined efforts” to relocate.<sup>14</sup>

Evidently, the gradualism of her rural relocation counsel did not include ignoring God’s instructions to move, however, while families wait for God’s guidance or signal, she sanctions an “in-post” model of urban evangelism: “So long as they remain, they should be most active in doing missionary work, however limited their sphere of influence may be. . . . God will bless them with wisdom and discretion, and in His own way and time He will make it possible for them to place themselves where they will not be surrounded constantly with the contaminating influences of modern city life.”<sup>15</sup>

### No Contradiction

Ellen White’s counsel does not show contradiction between her instructions on rural living and urban evangelism. Her teaching on the matter may be summarized as follows: (1) God is personally directing believers on the “when” of relocation; (2) He is also calling some believers

to locate into the city to evangelize; (3) new believers will arise within the city because of both “in-post” and out-post evangelism; (4) God will enlighten these new urban believers as to their own evangelistic option (outpost or “in-post”).

White’s own experiences in North America, Europe, and Australia—and the messages she had for those involved in urban ministry in her day<sup>16</sup>—indicate her passion for urban evangelism. “The ordained ministers alone

“White sanctions an **“IN-POST”** model of urban evangelism.”

are not equal to the task of warning the great cities. God is calling not only upon ministers, but also upon physicians, nurses, colporteurs, Bible workers, and other consecrated laymen of varied talent who have a knowledge of the word of God and who know the power of His grace, to consider the needs of the unwarned cities. Time is rapidly passing, and there is much to be done. Every agency must be set in operation, that present opportunities may be wisely improved.”<sup>17</sup> ■

<sup>1</sup> Ellen White noted that “the work in Greater New York should have the help of the best workers that can be secured” (*Evangelism* [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946], p. 384).

<sup>2</sup> George Knight, “Another Look at City Mission,” *Adventist Review*, Dec. 6, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> Arthur White, *Ellen G. White: The Later Elmshaven Years, 1905-1915* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1982), pp. 223-228.

<sup>4</sup> E. G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 428.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76; Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958, 1980), book 2, p. 358.

<sup>6</sup> Knight, “Another Look.”

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christian Service* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1925), p. 180.

<sup>8</sup> Knight, “Another Look.”

<sup>9</sup> Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, pp. 464, 465.

<sup>10</sup> Ellen G. White, “Behold, What Manner of Love!” *Review and Herald*, Sept. 27, 1906.

<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 158.

<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1932), p. 332.

<sup>13</sup> Ellen G. White, *Country Living* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946), p. 6.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> E. G. White, “Behold, What Manner of Love!”

<sup>16</sup> Stephen N. Haskell, who began work in New York City in 1901, was one individual Ellen White specifically counseled on the urban work (see Hetty Haskell to E. G. White, July 29, 1901; and S. N. Haskell to E. G. White, July 18, 1901; July 29, 1901).

<sup>17</sup> E. G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 158, 159.

Ivan Leigh Warden is an associate director of the Ellen G. White Estate; J. L. Thompson pastors the Vallejo Berea Seventh-day Adventist Church in Vallejo, California.





**Above:** CATCHING UP: Tytti and Hannele enjoyed visiting together in Finland.

**Right:** NEW FRIENDS: Tytti and Satu became instant friends when they first met.



# God's Strategy

*It's not always what we expect.*

While on holiday in Finland last summer, my husband and I visited friends and relatives whom we had not seen for a long time. We had lots of catching up to do. For instance, I did not know that my friend Tytti had had a life-threatening accident two years previously and had consequently been ill for a long time. She told me how God had healed her hemiplegia—a paralysis of one side of the body—and that she had learned to walk again as a result of intercessory prayer.

Tytti asked me about current hap-

penings in my life, and I told her that I had been invited to record Christian programs for Hope Channel Ukraine. I actually had just completed taping them before leaving on holiday. Tytti's eyes widened as she listened attentively. She then explained that she had been asked to be part of a program on a Christian television station in Finland, where she was to tell her experience with the accident and how she had been healed. She was to give a personal testimony about how God had heard her prayer and what intercessory prayer can do.

Tytti was convinced that our meeting again at that particular time was not a chance happening. I was able to encourage her and give her some insights into studio recording techniques. I was also looking forward to seeing her program.

Two months later, Tytti sent me the Internet link to the program, and I was able to watch her present her personal testimony. She looked radiant and happy, and her words obviously flowed from a sincere heart. She gave God all the glory for her healing.

By  
HANNELE OTTSCHOFSKI

# ogy

## Sharing the Link

After watching the program, I thought of my friend Satu, who is also originally from Finland but is living in Germany, as I do. Satu is a Christian as well, and I thought she might be interested in viewing the program. So I sent her the Web link and mentioned that Tytti is a friend of mine.

The next day Satu wrote: “Thank you for being a link in God’s chain of blessing.” She then explained that she had been praying relentlessly for months for two people who are very dear to her. She had wept and grieved with them. She even attended a Week of Prayer and Intercession being held at her church and prayed earnestly there for her friends. God, however, did not seem to be answering her prayers. The situation appeared to be only getting worse, and she was becoming very discouraged. She said she felt like King David in Psalm 38:8, 9 when he wrote: “I am feeble and utterly crushed; I groan in anguish of heart. All my longings lie open before you, Lord; my sighing is not hidden from you.” She needed a sign, she

said, that her prayers were not in vain.

It was then that she received the Web link to my friend’s testimony. She told me that the program was such a blessing and consolation to her that she was unable to express her joy in words. She watched the program several times and thanked God for His message of love. Satu then contacted Tytti via Facebook, and they became instant friends.

Satu’s experience attests that God’s timing is perfect. Satu and Tytti now have a wonderful friendship. They share their experiences with God and encourage each other. They are looking forward to discovering what else God has in store for them in the future.

## God’s Instruments

God can use us for His purposes even when we don’t realize it. I feel so privileged that I was able to play a small role in establishing a contact through which God’s blessings can flow.

I marvel at the many small steps that were necessary to bring about this result. It seems as if God used an intricate strategy to place us in the right positions at the right times so we could be a blessing to others. It was 10 years ago while performing in a concert during a choir trip to Rosenheim that I first met Satu. We could never have imagined then that we would one day both be standing before God in amazement and praise, overwhelmed by His love and goodness.

God told Abraham: “I will bless you; . . . and you will be a blessing” (Gen. 12:2). God wants all His children to be a blessing to others. We can trust Him to lead us and to do what is best for us and our loved ones. He can then use us as His tools of love and grace.

A tool, or instrument, can do nothing by itself, but when the Master takes it into His hands, good things happen. He is an expert craftsman, and we can trust Him to do all things well. ■

*Lord, make me an instrument of  
Your peace;*

*Where there is hatred, let me sow  
love;*

*Where there is injury, pardon;*

*Where there is doubt, faith;*

*Where there is despair, hope;*

*Where there is darkness, light;*

*Where there is sadness, joy.*



*O Divine Master, grant that I  
may not so much seek*

*To be consoled, as to console;*

*To be understood, as to understand;*

*To be loved, as to love.*

*For it is in giving that we receive;*

*it is in pardoning that we are*

*pardoned;*

*and it is in dying that we are born  
to eternal life.*

*—cited as the prayer of Francis of  
Assisi, but the actual author of this  
beautiful verse is unknown.*

\* All Bible texts in this article are from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.



**Hannele Ottschofski**

lives in southern Germany with her husband, a retired pastor. She is

a speaker for Hope Channel Ukraine and women’s ministries.

# Time: Then *and* Now

What does  
“three days and  
three nights”  
mean?

Your question is about how long Jesus was in the tomb. Some believe He was dead for 72 hours; others argue for less than three full days and nights.

This is a case in which it is important to know how days were counted in biblical times. In order to avoid misunderstandings, it is always important to examine the context and the use of similar terminology in other places in the Bible.

**1. Three Days and Three Nights:** The text seems quite clear: “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:40). For us, this is a precise statement of time: three full days of 24 hours each. Not necessarily so for the biblical writer, who is simply emphasizing that it was three days.

A day in the Bible is constituted by day/light and night/darkness. Therefore “three days and nights” is another way of saying “three days.” Matthew says that Jesus fasted “forty days and forty nights” (Matt. 4:2) but Mark says it was “forty days” (Mark 1:13). The biblical writers were not thinking about an exact period of 24 hours. This was not their concern, for they did not have watches as we do. The two phrases are synonyms, but the first one emphasizes the amount of days, not their exact extent in hours. Are we more precise in terms of time? Yes!

**2. Other Phrases:** The Gospels use different temporal expressions related to the resurrection of Jesus. Some of them seem contradictory: “After [*meta*] three days he will rise” (see Mark 9:31; 10:34; Matt. 27:63); “on three days” (with the preposition *en* “on/in,” Matthew 27:40; without the preposition, see Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; Luke 9:22; 18:33; 1 Corinthians 15:4); and “in/after [*dia*] three days” (see Matt. 26:61). In this last case, the preposition *dia* could be translated “in or within/in the course of three days” (see Hosea 6:2). “After” suggests that the resurrection took place on the fourth day, but this is denied by other phrases. So the question is: What does “after” (*meta*) mean (Matt. 27:63)?

In Jewish usage the phrase “after three days” meant “the day after tomorrow,” and this is how people understood it. According to Matthew 27:63, those who heard Jesus understood that He would be resurrected on the third day and that His tomb was “to be made secure until [*heos*, “up to, until”] the third day.” This implies that “after three days” refers to a period of time that includes any part of three days, and can be used as the equivalent of “on the third day.” In Matthew, Jesus mentions the three days only in 12:40—“three days and three nights,” indicating that His contemporaries understood Him to say “within three days.”

**3. Inclusive Counting:** Our examination of the different phrases indicates that the idiomatic phrase “three days” counts portions of a day as full days. As an idiomatic expression it cannot be taken literally. We find a similar usage in the Old Testament. The phrase “three days and three nights” means “three days” (1 Sam. 30:12, 13). Esther asked people to fast together with her for “three days, night or day” (Esther 4:16). Then “on the third day” she appeared before the king (Esther 5:1). This is inclusive reckoning; the three days include portions of days counted as days. King Rehoboam asked the people to “depart for three days” and come back to him. They came back on “the third day” (1 Kings 12:5, 12). We find the same phenomenon among non-Israelites. An eighth-century-B.C. Mesopotamian king tells about his arrival at a city: “I waited in the city of Azlayanu for three days, and on the third day they approached.” A portion of the first day plus a portion of a third day are counted as three days.

In order to interpret the Bible correctly, we have to count days the way the biblical writers counted them. Jesus died on Friday and was resurrected on the third day! ■



Before his retirement **Angel Manuel Rodríguez** served the church as a pastor and a professor, and most recently as director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference.



# Thyatira:

## *Hold Fast*

By MARK A. FINLEY



The messages to each of Revelation's seven churches contain vital lessons for God's church today. They also speak to us as individual Christians. They unfold principles of godly living and counsels about what it means to live as Christians in the real world. These messages from Jesus are not primarily theological treatises, difficult for the average person to understand and debated by theologians in academic institutions. They are pastoral letters from Jesus for average church members about growing in the Christian life and holding fast to the faith in difficult, challenging times. This is especially true in Jesus' message to the church at Thyatira.

**1 Read Revelation 2:19. What compliment does our Lord give the church at Thyatira? List the five qualities for which He praises this church. Why are these things so important?**

On the surface it certainly appears that the church at Thyatira was thriving as a spiritual community. They were commended for their "works, love, service, faith, and your patience." They apparently were actively involved in the community with "good works." They performed admirable community service. But there was a problem.

**2 Read Revelation 2:20. How did Jesus describe the problem at the church in Thyatira?**

**3 Who was Jezebel? What does she represent? What does the symbolism of adultery describe? Read the following texts for clues about the real problems in Thyatira: 1 Kings 16:30-33; 19:1, 2; 21:25; James 4:1-4; Revelation 17:1, 2.**

Israel's King Ahab, contrary to God's command, married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, the king of the Sidonians. He further violated God's will by entering into Baal worship with her. Ahab blended the religion of Israel with Baal worship, compromised his integrity, and led God's people into apostasy. Idolatry flooded into Israel.

Jezebel, Ahab's wife, represents spiritual adultery, the blending of the false with the true, and apostasy from the true God. The church at Thyatira represents a mingling of truth and error, a compromised, corrupt faith that maintains the outer shell of Christianity.

**4 What was God's response to Thyatira's apostasy? Read Revelation 2:21, 22.**

Our merciful, forgiving God gave Thyatira time to repent. But God's mercy is always blended with His judgments for those who spurn His love and reject His grace. The expression "I will kill her children with death" (verse 23) must be understood in the context of spiritual death for those who continually violate God's commands. Apostasy and rebellion passed from one generation to the next results in eternal loss. But the cycle of death can be broken by repentance.

**5 Read Revelation 2:24. Were there any in Thyatira who resisted the trend of apostasy and remained loyal to Christ?**

The expression "the rest in Thyatira" reminds us of the remnant, or the "rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17). Once again at the end-time, Jesus will have a loyal remnant that does not yield to the pressure of compromise.

**6 What counsel did Jesus give the church at Thyatira, and how does it apply in the last days? Compare Revelation 2:25 with Matthew 24:13, 42.**

**7 Read Revelation 2:26-28. What promise did our Lord give to the overcomers in Thyatira?**

One of the clear lessons in the messages to the seven churches of Revelation is simply this: In whatever circumstances we find ourselves, it is possible to overcome through Christ's grace. No challenge in life is too great for God's grace.

That's incredibly good news. ■



# Letters

## Family Legacy

What an wonderful delight to see a picture of my great-great-grandparents, Julio (Jules) Dupertuis and Ida Arn de Dupertuis, for the first time in my life in Silvia Scholtus Roscher's article "God's Bountiful Care" (October 2013)!

In an interesting set of events, the October 19, 2013, vespers at Loma Linda University church was about the history of J. N. Andrews as the first official Adventist missionary. Niels-Erik Andreasen spoke, as well as Andrews' great-granddaughter, Jeanne Andrews-Willumson. It was wonderful to share my family's story with this amazing woman, and to thank her for her family's missionary service as it changed my family's history forever. I

“It is truly amazing to see how God’s **timing** works.”

—GRACIELA ELVIRA ANOBILE (DUPERTUIS),  
Loma Linda, California, United States

showed her a letter Julio had written in 1889 to the *Advent Review* and Sabbath Herald (now Adventist Review) in which he thanked the General Conference for sending a letter of encouragement, described conditions as a Sabbathkeeper, and asked for workers to be sent to their area.

More than 100 years later, my uncle taught at Andrews University; my brother is president of the Arizona Conference; my two nephews are studying to become pastors; my niece is studying at Andrews University; and I served as a student missionary in Haiti while working on a nursing degree.

I had wondered how Julio and Ida received the *Signs of the Times* in the first place, a question this article answered. It is truly amazing to see how God's timing works.

GRACIELA ELVIRA ANOBILE  
(DUPERTUIS)  
Loma Linda, California,  
United States

## Praying for Antonio Monteiro

I was greatly dismayed after learning that the accused minister Antonio

Monteiro is still imprisoned ("Newly Released Footage Shows Family of Imprisoned Pastor in Togo," June 2013). To help participate in the goal of liberating Monteiro, not only will I sign the petition (he is part of our church family)—I will pray for his release. I invite all the members of my church to pray for him too.

CHARLES ABDONEL  
Gonaives, Haiti



## The Beginning of a Movement

Thank you for publishing the special commemorative edition "The Beginning of a Movement" (May

2013). My family and I are especially pleased to read about the early history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and about the first vision Ellen White had about the beginning of the church. It is nice to know all the details of the vision.

ANGIE ANAYA  
Barrancabermeja, Colombia

# Prayer & PRAISE

My wife and I are concerned about our daughter. Please pray that God helps her find a young Christian who is a good person to plan a future together and form a family that honors God. Thank you very much!

Victor, Argentina

I am studying theology at the university but have been out of school for more than two semesters because of lack of funds. Please pray that the Lord makes it possible for me to get back into school.

Humphrey, Zambia

Please pray for me to secure sponsorship for a degree in theology.

Chisomo, Malawi

I am in poor health and need financial help. Please pray for me.

Mylabathula, India



### Thank You

I thank *Adventist World* for keeping church members well informed through the pages of the magazine of the miracles and actions of our gracious God and Father. The articles show how God's work spans the world. Congratulations for the excellent material!

After Jesus Christ, my favorite Bible character is the apostle Paul, because of his faithfulness to follow the orders of the Lord to take the gospel to all, regardless of what bad things happened to him.

HEITOR APARECIDO DOS SANTOS  
*Mogi das Cruzes, São Paulo, Brazil*

*Adventist World* is a fine publication. I congratulate you on this work. The magazine is put out by a good team, and it shows.

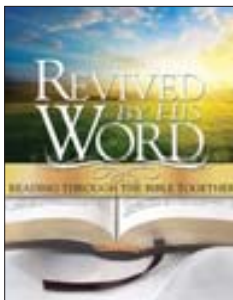
I think it's the best magazine in the world. We get it here every month.

GUSTAVO RAFAEL SANTAJULIANA  
*Dichato, Chile*

*Adventist World* is produced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church and distributed to members free of charge. We are also on the Internet at [www.adventistworld.org](http://www.adventistworld.org). We are gratified that the magazine is filling this need.

—Editors

**Letters Policy:** Please send to: [letters@adventistworld.org](mailto:letters@adventistworld.org). Letters must be clearly written, 100-word maximum. Include the name of the article and the date of publication with your letter. Also include your name, the town/city, state, and country from which you are writing. Letters will be edited for space and clarity. Not all letters submitted will be published.



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**FEBRUARY 1, 2014 • Proverbs 28**

# Check It Out

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's Web site—[www.adventist.org](http://www.adventist.org)—

has been redesigned to appeal to secular as well as religious readers. Posts about Adventist life as demonstrated in our spirituality, vitality, and service are available in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese.



My son is working in Beijing, China, and is lonely, lost, and depressed. Please pray for him—and for me. I'm getting rebaptized and feel that Satan is attacking me. I'm becoming very tired, and I long for Jesus to come.

Adele, via e-mail

Please pray for my country.  
Moses, Kenya

**The Place of Prayer:** Send prayer requests and praise (thanks for answered prayer) to [prayer@adventistworld.org](mailto: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.



ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE



# 114 YEARS AGO

Writer and temperance worker Sarepta Myrenda Irish Henry died on January 16, 1900, in Graysville, Tennessee, United States.

The daughter of a Methodist minister in Illinois, Henry accompanied her father on many of his itineraries. She attended Rock River Seminary and married James W. Henry. Her husband died after 10 years of marriage, leaving her with three small children. She supported her small family by writing stories and poetry for publication.

At the age of 35 Henry became active in the temperance movement, eventually becoming a spokesperson for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Ill health forced her into an early retirement, and in 1896 she was a patient at Battle Creek Sanitarium, where she embraced the Seventh-day Adventist message and recovered her health.

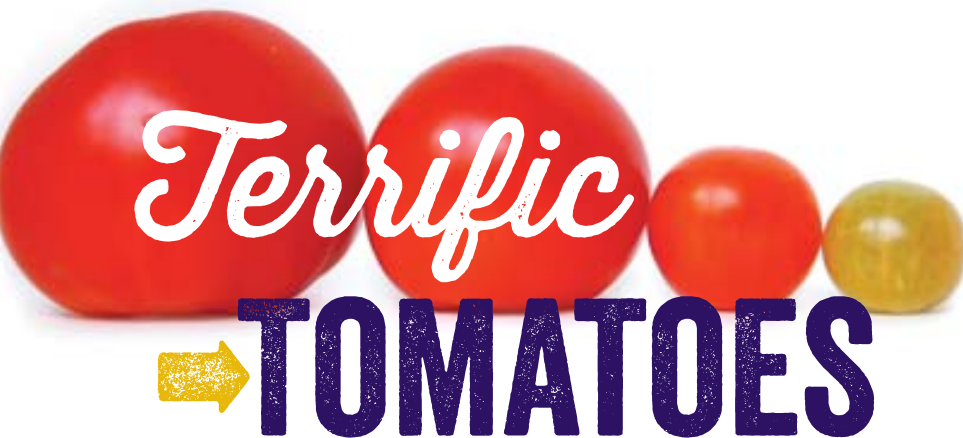
The following year her articles began appearing in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, and she traveled extensively, lecturing on the role of mothers in the moral education of society. In 1898 the General Conference voted to issue her a ministerial license.

## top 10

The following 10 languages, out of approximately 7,000, are spoken as their first language by nearly half the earth's population.

<b>Chinese</b>	1,213 million
<b>Spanish</b>	329 million
<b>English</b>	328 million
<b>Arabic</b>	221 million
<b>Hindi</b>	182 million
<b>Bengali</b>	181 million
<b>Portuguese</b>	178 million
<b>Russian</b>	144 million
<b>Japanese</b>	122 million
<b>German</b>	90 million

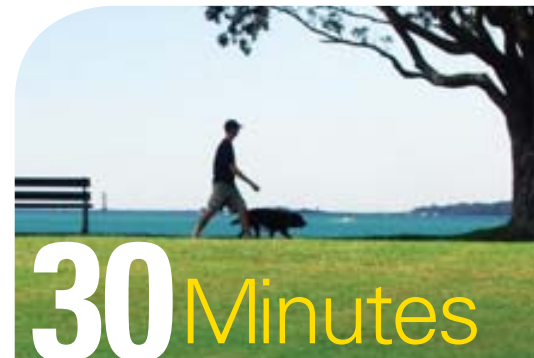
Source: National Geographic



Women who eat tomatoes three or four times a week are 70 percent less likely to get ovarian cancer than those who eat tomatoes more sparingly. For men, eating tomatoes decreases their chances of having prostate cancer.

Source: [www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/02/the-lovely-hill-where-people-live-longer-and-happier/272798](http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/02/the-lovely-hill-where-people-live-longer-and-happier/272798)

PHOTO BY SHARI YAGAN



Improve long-term health and fitness by dedicating just 30 minutes—a half hour a day—to “incidental moderate physical activity.” Such activity includes taking the stairs instead of the elevator, using parking places as far from your office as possible, walking the dog, shoveling snow, raking leaves, working in the garden.

Source: *Medicine and Science in Sports and Medicine/Men's Health*

PHOTO BY GABRIEL REZENDE SOUZA

*“Behold, I come quickly...”*

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

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# Where in the **World** Is This?

**ANSWER:** Betty E. Reynolds (left) poses with her granddaughter, Ann Reynolds, in Tennessee, United States. The photograph was taken just before Betty participated in a rock-climbing demonstration taught by Ann as part of Southern Adventist University's outdoor sports program. Betty, now 88 years old, lives in active retirement in Harrah, Oklahoma, United States, where she serves as a volunteer in her local church.



## Something to *Think About*

A moment without Jesus, a move to confusion.  
A day without Jesus, a step closer to destruction.  
A week without Jesus, a journey to nowhere.  
A year without Jesus, a rehearsal for eternal loss.

—PASTOR GRACESON KAMEI *at pastors' spiritual fellowship, Manipur Section, India.*

# Wake Me *When It's* Spring

A hedgehog's heart rate goes from 190 beats per minute to 20 when it's hibernating.

Source: *National Geographic*

PHOTO BY ALI TAYLOR






It's what connects us to our church family.



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

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