

The International Paper for Seventh-day Adventists

April 2015

ADVENTIST WORLD



BETWEEN SADDUCEES & PHARISEES

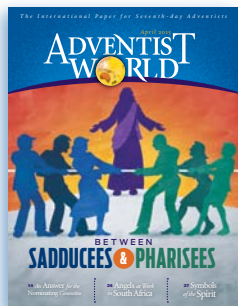
14 *An Answer for the
Nominating Committee*

24 *Angels at Work
in South Africa*

27 *Symbols
of the Spirit*

ADVENTIST WORLD

April 2015



COVER STORY

16 Jesus Claims the Center

By Gerald A. Klingbeil

Jesus was always too much for small religious categories.

8 WORLD VISTA Working Together

By Ted N. C. Wilson

A task as large as ours requires the involvement of us all.

12 DEVOTIONAL So You Were There

By Chantal J. Klingbeil

The characters around the cross bear a striking resemblance to the face in the mirror.

14 FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS An Answer for the Nominating Committee

By Daisy Hall

It's not a job, it's a calling.

20 ADVENTIST LIFE The Head, the Heart, and the Hands

By Yousri Guirguis

Wholehearted service includes them all.

24 ADVENTIST HERITAGE Angels at Work in South Africa

By Elaine Tarr Dodd

Africa's earliest missionaries faced tremendous challenges and wonderful rewards.

DEPARTMENTS

3 WORLD REPORT

3 News Briefs

6 News Commentary

10 A One-Day Church

11 WORLD HEALTH

Bee Stings

22 SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Contemplate Christ's Perfection

26 BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Stalked

27 BIBLE STUDY

Symbols of the Spirit

28 IDEA EXCHANGE

2015 General Conference Session

Official notice is hereby given that the sixtieth session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held July 2-11, 2015, in the Alamo-dome in San Antonio, Texas. The first meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m., July 2, 2015. All duly accredited delegates are urged to be present at that time.

Ted N. C. Wilson, General Conference President
G. T. Ng, General Conference Secretary



www.adventistworld.org
Available in 11 languages online

Picking Teams

It's one of the oldest traditions of the playground and the schoolyard.

The recess bell has barely rung when two captains line up the willing and the not-so-willing to "pick teams." Whether the game is "football" (in its U.S., Australian, or global version), baseball, basketball, or some home-grown test of skill, we wait to be selected for one team that will play "against" the other.

In the easy and shifting alliances of childhood, being selected for a team matters only for the hour. Yes, there may be the momentary elation of a winning goal, the three-point basketball rim shot that finally falls in, or the low line drive that clears the bush marking the left field baseball boundary. But the triumphs—and the divisions—are usually soon forgotten, washed away in the easy fellowship of those satisfied to simply be at play.

But the teams toward which we gravitate as we mature aren't so easily erased, for they pull at aspects of our history, our culture, our language, and even our faith that don't fade as when the teacher summoned us from recess or the timekeeper announced the end of the game. We begin to attach meaning—sometimes deep meaning—to the teams we've formed with those who share our chosen identity. We think of those who have joined us as "better people," unlike the "others" who have gathered around a different language, culture, or religious viewpoint.

So it is that even among God's remnant people, "teams" are almost continuously forming, no longer for play or simple enjoyment, but to mark off territory or score theological or behavioral points. Affinities, shared beliefs, and fellowship are among Christ's greatest gifts to His church, but He must also weep for the ways in which we sunder His body by unnecessary and sometimes unbiblical divisiveness that speaks more of our desire to win than to His prayer that "they may be one as We are" (John 17:11).

As you read this month's perceptive cover feature, "Between Sadducees and Pharisees," pray for a heart that is continually warmed by the unifying love of Christ and watered by the rain of the Holy Spirit.



Bill Kuntz

WORLD REPORT

Adventist Church Opens Religious Freedom Group in Jamaica



PHILLIP CASTELL

FREEDOM ON THEIR MINDS: Thousands attend the Festival of Religious Freedom at the National Arena in Kingston, Jamaica.

■ The Seventh-day Adventist Church has opened a Jamaican chapter of its International Religious Liberty Association, which defends the rights of all faiths, at a festival attended by senior government officials and thousands of other people in Kingston.

Leaders of the chapter, called the National Religious Liberty Association, said the group was needed because Jamaicans should not take their religious freedom for granted.

Religious freedom is on the minds of many Jamaicans after the government passed a flexible workweek law a few months ago that a number of religious organizations fear will not sufficiently protect their day of worship. The government, however, has insisted that the law is not a threat to religious freedom because it gives employees a 24-hour period to use as a day of worship.

The National Religious Liberty Association was launched recently during Jamaica's first Festival of Religious Freedom at the National Arena before a crowd of thousands of Adventists and members from other denominations.

"Our mission is to protect, promote, and defend religious freedom of all and everywhere. It is now your mission," John Graz, secretary

Continued on next page ▶

WORLD REPORT

general of the International Religious Liberty Association and religious liberty director of the Adventist world church, told attendees.

Robert Pickersgill, minister of water, land, environment, and climate change, who represented the prime minister, said the government recognized the “enormous impact” of religious freedom on Jamaica’s development and had enshrined the right in a 2011 amendment to the Jamaican constitution.

Parliament member Parnell Charles, who represented opposition leader Andrew Holness, urged Christians to speak out against human injustice. “An attack on freedom anywhere is an attack on freedom everywhere,” he said.

Jamaica joins more than 80 countries worldwide with national religious liberty associations. Most recently Papua New Guinea opened its own association at a festival in December. — *Rhoma Tomlinson, Jamaica Union Conference*

Papua New Guinea: Hope Makes History

■ Adventist Church-owned Hope Channel is gearing up to launch local operations in Papua New Guinea by shooting the equivalent of 300 half-hour television programs in the span of a month.

A team of 30 Hope Channel technicians from across the globe descended on Pacific Adventist University recently to team up with hundreds of volunteers in producing the programs, which feature local talent, sermons, and other content.

“By God’s grace we are making history in the Adventist Church,” said



HISTORIC BROADCASTS: Hope editors work on post production at Pacific Adventist University.

ADVENTIST RECORD

Edgard Lopez, a veteran television producer and project manager of the initiative, dubbed MEGA Project Hope PNG.

A Hope Project serves as the foundation for the development of the Hope Channel in each country the broadcaster enters, and in this case will help spread the gospel in Papua New Guinea and the rest of the South Pacific.

“This is the single largest Project Hope ever undertaken by Hope Channel to date,” said Kandus Thorp, vice president for international development at Hope Channel.

— *Shania Lopez, South Pacific Adventist Record*

Sierra Leone: ADRA Beds

■ The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is participating in the only decontamination program in Sierra Leone that sprays homes and replaces infected mattresses and bedding in an effort to prevent the spread of Ebola.

ADRA said Ebola survivors are at risk of reinfection because many would rather hide their bedding from government decontamination teams than buy it again.

But teams from ADRA and its nongovernmental partner, Plan Sierra Leone, are replacing mattresses and

bedding in high-risk neighborhoods on the outskirts of Freetown, the West African nation’s capital.

“Now they are eager to let go of their contaminated materials because they know they are going to be replaced,” said Gabriel Dankyi, Ebola response coordinator for ADRA’s local office. “This has made a significant impact on the population. They continue to express their gratitude.”

ADRA has decontaminated nearly 1,000 homes since November.

— *ADRA and ANN staff*



FIGHTING EBOLA: An ADRA decontamination team prepare to spray homes and replace infected mattresses and bedding in a neighborhood on the outskirts of Freetown, Sierra Leone.

ADRA INTERNATIONAL



ON LAKE MALAWI: A boat sailing at sunset in Nkhata Bay, where the *Vipya* left on its last voyage in 1946.

GEOFF GALLICE / WIKICOMMONS

By ANDREW MCCHESENEY, *news editor*, Adventist World

Malawi Pastor, Turning 100, Regrets Boat Tragedy

Patrick Ziba tells how four students died after stealing at an Adventist school.

A 100th birthday party may seem like a good time to celebrate a life well lived. But Patrick Ziba, a retired Adventist pastor and teacher in Malawi, saw his 100th birthday as an opportunity to share a tragic lesson about the importance of obedience to 150 well-wishers, including a state minister.

Ziba told how four students from a Seventh-day Adventist school perished with nearly 150 other people on a capsized ship on Lake Malawi after rejecting pleas to accept punishment for theft.

The tragedy, which happened when Ziba was 31, has tormented him for years. “Our father never tired of telling his children the story as a moral lesson that it pays to be obedient in life,” Margaret Limbe, the fifth of Ziba’s nine children, told the Malawi News Agency. “He has told us the story countless times from the time the tragedy happened.”

The story began when 14 students were caught stealing peanuts from a barn at the Luwazi Mission School in July 1946, according to an account of Ziba’s birthday published by the news agency. The theft of the school-grown peanuts had been going on for some time and was only discovered after an investigation into the barn’s shrinking supply.

The school principal gave the 14 students the option of being expelled or facing punishment. Each would have to dig an outhouse.

The students, all from the same village, chose to go home.

Ziba, a teacher, thought that the students had made the wrong decision. He invited them to his home, where he and his wife urged them to accept the punishment. The students refused and left the campus on July 27 for the port of Nkhata Bay, where they planned to take a ship home.

Ziba wouldn’t give up. The next day he walked the 15 miles (24 kilometers) from the school to the port.

“He found the pupils at the port and again pleaded with them to return to school,” said his daughter. “He spent the whole day trying to reason with them.”

The students again balked.

Six of the students bought tickets and boarded the M.V. *Vipya* when it docked. The other eight scattered, looking for odd jobs to pay their passage.

The 130-foot (40-meter) ship, making its fourth trip since its launch a month earlier, sailed from the harbor with 194 passengers and crew on board, including the six students.

The *Vipya*, custom-made in Belfast by the same shipyard that built the *Titanic*, started to roll heavily amid a strong wind during the voyage, according to the Bradt travel guide *Malawi*. Suddenly, an enormous wave capsized the ship. At least 145 people drowned in the disaster, the worst accident ever on Lake Malawi. Only two Luwazi students were among the 49 survivors.

The news of the drownings devastated Ziba. He told the guests at his 100th birthday celebration at the Mzuzu Hotel, located in the city of Mzuzu, about 28 miles (45 kilometers) northwest of the port, that he still blames himself for not doing more to keep the students at school.

The Malawi News Agency, in its account of the December 28, 2014, birthday, editorialized that Ziba’s desire to help the 14 students exemplified his selfless life. “It is this virtue of willingness to help others that made the retired pastor popular wherever he lived, doing God’s work,” it said. “He may have retired today from preaching, but people still speak highly of him.” ■

NEWS COMMENTARY

A number of years ago my wife, Melissa, and I were driving across Idaho when we stopped to use a pay phone.

The phone booth was covered with pink tracts that turned out to be excerpts from a book written by someone claiming to have visited hell. The author's description of hell was partly graphic, somewhat entertaining, quite incredible, and entirely unbiblical.

The same description could be applied to a 2010 book about a young boy's visit to heaven after he "died" in a car wreck that left him a quadriplegic. Alex Malarkey's *The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven* has sold more than 1 million copies and was developed into a television movie, gripping hearts around the world.

Six-year-old Alex spent two months in a coma following the near-fatal accident. The wonder of Alex regaining consciousness was overshadowed by the incredible account he gave of what he experienced while he was unconscious. He claimed angels had escorted him through the gates of heaven, that he heard heavenly music, saw the devil, and talked with Jesus Himself.

But Alex recently admitted that his story was nothing more than a heavenly hoax.

"I did not die," he said in an open letter. "I said I went to heaven because I thought it would get me attention."

The book has been taken out of print by its publisher, and bookstores have stopped carrying it.

Of course the bigger question is whether the book should have been published in the first place. From a biblical point of view, the clear answer is no.

The Bible says nothing about peo-



By JOHN BRADSHAW, *speaker and director, It Is Written*

Heavenly Hoax:

How a 6-Year-Old Boy Fooled the World

*A biblical perspective on the best-selling book
The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven*

ple dying, going to heaven, and returning to the earth to tell people what they have seen. Paul spoke about his own experience of seeing heaven in vision (2 Cor. 12:2-4), and the prophets Daniel and John wrote of visions of heaven they had experienced (Dan. 7:9, 10; Rev. 4). Jesus returned from heaven to earth after His resurrection to spend a few days

with His disciples. But Jesus—like Moses, the only other person the Bible discusses who died, went to heaven, and returned to earth—was silent about what heaven is like.

What the Bible Says

What's alarming about *The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven*, and similar stories, is that they directly

contradict the plain testimony of the Bible. The Bible clearly says that death is a sleep, not a condition in which people can travel to heaven or any other place. Jesus spoke of Lazarus as being asleep (John 11:11), which He clearly interpreted as meaning “Lazarus is dead” (verse 14).

The Bible is remarkably consistent on the subject. Paul wrote that the dead sleep until Jesus wakes them at the Second Coming (1 Cor. 15:51, 52), and that the saved who are alive when Jesus returns will go to heaven at that time, along with those who had previously died in faith and slept the sleep of death.

Numerous times the Bible refers to death as a dreamless sleep that lasts from the moment of death until the first resurrection takes place (Rev. 14:13; John 5:28, 29).

Over the years, the enemy of souls has conducted a deliberate and carefully orchestrated campaign to confuse people regarding death and life after death.

Like the majority of Christian believers, I was taught as a child to believe that those who die are ushered immediately into either heaven or hell—or in certain other cases purgatory or limbo. Rather than this being a minor theological point of debate or discussion, the twisting of truth on this subject leads to at least two extremely serious theological problems: the marginalizing of Jesus, and the opening of the door to spiritualism.

Spiritualism is serious business. Millions of dollars are spent on psychics, mediums, and related materials. A person who entertains thoughts of contacting a spiritualist medium is entertaining thoughts of getting into very close contact with the devil him-

self. Such was the experience of King Saul (see 1 Sam. 28).

The Bible makes clear that spiritualism will be a major influence in earth’s final days in preparing people to accept Satan’s final deceptions (Rev. 16:13).

A friend recently told me that following the tragic death of his 23-year-old daughter, he would undoubtedly have sought to contact his daughter through a spiritualist medium if he had not understood what the Bible says about death. Such involvement with the enemy has disastrous consequences.

A misunderstanding of death also reduces Jesus to being less than He actually is. In John 11:25 Jesus explained to the sister of Lazarus that He is “the resurrection and the life.” Without Jesus, the dead have no hope of life beyond the grave. Only through Jesus’ direct intervention at the time of the Second Coming can anyone be raised from the dead. Without Jesus waking the sleeping dead, the grave will never release its prisoners. Even the giants of faith listed in Hebrews 11—with the exception of Moses and Enoch—“did not receive the promise” (Heb. 11:39). They also wait for the return of Jesus before they can be raised from their various places of rest (verse 40).

If people go to heaven immediately upon dying, then a resurrection is unnecessary, and Jesus is no longer “the resurrection and the life.” Paul’s question in 1 Corinthians 15:55—“O grave, where is thy victory?” (KJV)—is a question not worth asking.

Boon in Books on Heavenly Tourism

Stories like that of Alex Malarkey are extremely popular. The book 90

Minutes in Heaven, published in 2004, spent more than five years on the New York *Times* best seller list and sold more than 6 million copies. *Heaven Is for Real*, the story of a 4-year-old who supposedly visited heaven, has sold more than 10 million copies and spawned a 2014 movie that grossed more than US\$100 million. This publishing phenomenon is now a genre of its own known as “heavenly tourism.”

This boon in heavenly tourism has upset the mother of Alex Malarkey, who apparently tried to get her son’s book pulled for some time.

“There are many who are scamming and using the Word of God to do it,” Beth Malarkey said in a blog post. “They are good, especially if you are not digging into your Bible and truly studying it.”

So how could this heavenly hoax have happened?

Some say Alex’s father, the coauthor of the book, saw an opportunity to make money. Book publishers have little motivation to stop printing profitable books.

“The idea that Alex suddenly recanted is just not true,” said Phil Johnson, executive director of a media ministry led by author and broadcaster John MacArthur, according to the *Washington Post*. “There was proof everywhere that he did not stand behind the content of this book. But it was a bestselling book. Nobody in the industry wanted to kill it.”

Now 16 years old, Alex has some sound advice to offer: People “should read the Bible, which is enough,” he said in the open letter. “The Bible is the only source of truth. Anything written by man cannot be infallible.”

My hope is that many people will take his counsel now as seriously as they took his story. ■

Working

By TED N. C. WILSON

Together

*A special call to pastors
and members*

In just a few weeks the sixtieth session of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will meet in San Antonio, Texas. In addition to the 2,571 official delegates, tens of thousands more Seventh-day Adventists will come to participate and enjoy fellowship with their brothers and sisters from around the world. It's during this time that special focus is given to the worldwide aspects of this God-ordained movement, now numbering more than 18 million members, with a presence in 216 countries around the globe.

But as wonderful as it is to think about how God is leading and blessing this movement in a global setting, let's also remember the vitally important role of the church members and pastors of 75,184 local Seventh-day Adventist churches.

Practical Infrastructure

Our spiritual foundation is, of course, our personal relationship with Christ—the Rock. The unity of our church can be found only as we all are connected to Jesus Christ. But the practical infrastructure of the church is built on its pastoral workforce—those involved in dynamic evangelistic outreach, nurturing church members, and sharing the Word of God in its complete message each Sabbath. They inspire members to share their faith and the soon coming of Christ, and are engaged in the very important work of being missionary trainers to church members.

We need to support, honor, and encourage our pastors around the world, many of whom have enormous districts that include scores of churches and thousands of church members. In these settings pastors must depend completely on the Holy Spirit and local church leaders. It's so important that we lift up these pastors as they train local leaders for an even more effective evangelistic outreach.

We Are Called

As we honor and pray for pastors, let's ask the Lord to help each of us, whether we are in small, rural churches, or large city or institutional churches, to support pastors by lightening their loads.

God has called each of us, including me, since I'm also a member of a local church, to reach out to the mission field around us: our local communities, neighbors, and acquaintances—befriending them, ministering to their needs, and sharing the unique God-given biblical messages entrusted to us. As church members, we have been called to do this work and shouldn't simply rely on the pastor to do it. One of the best ways to support our pastors is to say, "Pastor, please put us to work."

Pray for our pastors. Pray that the Lord will place a hedge of protection around them and their families. Pray that they will focus completely and totally on the Word of God, because the authority of Scripture is coming increasingly under attack. The messages from our pulpits must ring with biblical clarity and not philosophical, psychological, and cultural content.

A Word to Pastors

Pastors, one of your most important roles is to train and launch church members into local missionary evangelistic work so that you'll be free to plan how to enlarge the borders of God's kingdom.

This, of course, isn't a new idea. We are told, "Ministers should not do work that belongs to the laymen, thus wearing themselves and preventing others from doing their duty. They should teach the members how to work in the church and community, to build up the church, to make the prayer-meeting interesting, and to train for missionaries youth of ability. The members of the church should cooperate actively with the ministers, making the section of country around them their field of missionary labor."¹

Fifteen years later at the 1901 General Conference session, Ellen White had these pointed words for ministers:

"Who feels a burden for the souls who cannot receive the truth till it is brought to them? Our ministers are hovering over the churches, as though the angel of mercy was not making efforts to save souls. God holds these ministers responsible for the souls of those who are in darkness. . . . Establish your churches with the understanding that they need not expect the minister to wait upon them and to be continually feeding them. They have the truth; they know what truth is. . . . They must be rooted and grounded in the faith."²

A Clarion Call

The powerful message Paul gives us in 2 Timothy 4 is ever to be our clarion call: "Preach the word! Be ready in



season and out of season” (verse 2), so that we can say along with Paul, “I have finished the race” (verse 7).

Jesus says, “Feed My sheep” (John 21:17). To do that, we need to know God and have a daily connection with Him. Diligently study God’s Word and the Spirit of Prophecy. Be a strong advocate of personal and public prayer. “Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper” (2 Chron. 20:20).

Pastors, we are called to be God’s special servants after God’s own heart. In Jeremiah 3:15 God says, “And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.” The Holy Spirit will help you discern the true needs of people.

Let’s follow Christ’s example and search for souls. We’ve been called by God to a special work that can be done only as we cooperate with heaven in the glorious work entrusted to us, remembering that this is a cooperative venture with heaven.

God expects us to do our best. The apostle Paul wrote, “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ” (Col. 3:23, 24).

Be a Servant

The real work of a pastor is to be a servant, someone who gives unstintingly. In order to be a real servant, we must be close to God and submit our lives each day to Him.

Paul shares this concept in a dynamic way in Ephesians 4:1-6. He begins by calling himself a “prisoner of the

Lord,” and asks us “to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.” Verses 2 and 3 tell us that we were called “with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” We are to put real effort into the practice of showing love to others in the bond of peace.

The Larger Scope of Unity

Paul then helps us understand the larger scope of unity—larger than simply our own personal convictions—by lifting us to the heavenly courts and the eternal themes created by God Himself. Ephesians 4:4-6 crescendos with these lofty words: “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

As a pastor, make sure to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit leading you to the true unity that comes only as you become one with God in your life, witness, outreach, training, and spiritual nurture of others. “The secret of success is the union of divine power with human effort. Those who achieve the greatest results are those who rely most implicitly upon the Almighty Arm.”³

Take Time for People

Be a good administrator and make time to visit your church members and know them. The Lord spent time getting to know people. He ate with them, talked with them, listened to their problems, and sympathized with them. You may not be the best speaker or preacher, but if you visit your church members and spiritually encourage them, they will love you!

Stay close to your spouse and family. Let your family relationships be a shining example to the world about what it means to allow Christ to be head of the home and church through you as the spiritual leader of the family and the church. Let your children know that you love and appreciate them. Let your family life also show the signs of heavenly order and Christian stewardship. Be a leader in showing people how to rely completely on the Lord for every need and that a faithful steward is blessed by heaven beyond comprehension.

In 3 John 2 we read, “Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.” Our physical and spiritual health are intertwined, and we are to follow God’s natural laws as well as His moral laws. Be an active proponent of comprehensive health ministry, helping people in cities and rural areas



A One-Day Church

The 35-Year Prayer By CARRIE PURKEYPILE

find Jesus, the source of life and health.

Facing the Future

Pastors and members, as we face the future, we'll face many challenges and trials. We may be harassed and ridiculed. Keep looking to Christ and not to human beings. God wants us to have a steady and growing relationship with Him; it's the secret of real spiritual power. Every morning, place yourself in God's hands, asking that He lead in all that you do. As you allow the Lord to lead you each day, you'll be a great blessing to everyone you meet.

Being a believer in Jesus Christ is not a spectator sport; it's an active participation of outreach. We don't want anyone to feel guilty because they're not going door to door; there are many ways (including door-to-door efforts) to witness for Jesus in an active way. If you have a relationship with Christ, you have something to say; don't hide it. In this way you'll be helping to support the work of your pastor and the entire Advent movement.

Remember that your pastor needs time with family, and not always with you. Keep your faith strong in the Lord. Jesus is coming soon. As we remain faithful to Him and His Word, He will give us that wonderful invitation, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34). ■

¹ Ellen G. White, in *Review and Herald*, Oct. 12, 1886.

² Ellen G. White, *Pastoral Ministry* (Silver Spring, Md.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1995), p. 100.

³ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1890), p. 509.

PHOTOS: MARANATHA VOLUNTEERS INTERNATIONAL



Left: CHURCH PLANTER: For 35 years Madam Victoria shared Jesus with her friends and neighbors. **Right: INAUGURAL SABBATH:** A brand new building in Oyarifa testifies to a Christian's faithful witness and God's answer to prayers.

In 1978 Madam Victoria moved to Oyarifa, Ghana. She didn't wait long before she started knocking on doors, offering Bible studies. Passionate about Jesus, she wanted to start an Adventist church in her neighborhood.

But there was a saboteur in her midst. Everywhere she went, a man followed her on his bicycle. He watched her work, and after she spoke with the people in each house he told them she was a liar. "Don't believe her!" he told family after family.

But Madam Victoria kept praying and continued to share Christ.

After months of sharing, two people chose to be baptized. They joined Madam Victoria for worship in her small house. A couple years later seven people met regularly. Together they built four mud walls and tied thatch panels overhead for a roof: their first church! They were grateful for the space, but they kept asking God for a better space, a more dignified place to invite others.

Then one year heavy rain seeped through the grass roof, soaked the walls, and brought the whole church tumbling down into a pile of mud.

Madam Victoria kept praying and continued to share her favorite subject: Jesus. She was a missionary to her closest neighbors, but also shared God from town to town, distributing free cooking supplies.

Then, 35 years after moving to Oyarifa, Madam Victoria received news that Maranatha Volunteers International was coming to build a church for her congregation! Soon crews arrived and put up the church frame so fast that she could hardly believe it! The prayer of 35 years was answered in one short day.

She and her congregation immediately began finishing the steel structure with walls, stucco, and paint. When the completed church was dedicated, there was much rejoicing.

Said Madam Victoria, "My dream has come true!"

ASI and Maranatha Volunteers International fund and facilitate One-Day Church and One-Day School projects. Since 2009 more than 1,600 One-Day buildings have been built around the world. Carrie Purkeypile is a project planner for Maranatha Volunteers International.



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



Bee Stings

By PETER N. LANDLESS and ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES

My granddaughter was stung by a wasp or a bee—I'm not sure which—and she had a nasty reaction. Her hand swelled, and she had quite a lot of redness. Do you think she's at risk for anaphylaxis?

Insect bites or stings can cause variably severe reactions, but the group of insects called Hymenoptera is the more serious one. Three families of Hymenoptera commonly cause allergic reactions: These are the Apidae (honeybees and bumblebees), Vespidae (wasps, hornets, and yellow jackets), and Formicidae (fire ants).

Only female Hymenoptera sting, and usually only as a defense mechanism when threatened. The venom contains several amines and kinins, chemicals that mediate and help us to feel the pain, swelling, and itching at the site of the sting. Honeybees leave the stinger in the victim, but although it can be removed by scraping with a fingernail, removal doesn't lessen the reaction. This is because the venom is usually discharged within 20 to 30 seconds, or by the time the stinger is removed. The presence of a strong local reaction doesn't mean there will be a bodywide (systemic) reaction, the severest of which is known as anaphylaxis. Once a person has had a systemic reaction with a strong allergic manifestation, however, one can anticipate and be ready for a major reaction with subsequent stings. Such reactions are usually very rapid, although on occasion they may be delayed.

Anyone who has had a serious reaction should be referred to an allergist/immunologist and tested for

venom-specific IgE antibodies. These antibodies are specifically related to allergic reactions of varying degrees. Patients should be considered for desensitization, which may require some three years of repeated exposure to the specific antigen to accomplish the treatment successfully.

The incidence of death as a result of bee stings varies around the world, with as few as two per year in Sweden to about 40 in the United States. Honeybees belong to the Hymenoptera order of insects and are by far the most common culprits. The so-called killer bees are not more venomous but rather more aggressive, attacking sometimes in swarms. If this happens, a toxic (poisonous)—as opposed to allergic—reaction may occur.

Usually the transient local reaction requires little treatment other than cold compresses, ice, or some topical/local anesthetic and corticosteroid cream. Antibiotics are seldom required, and the appearance of red streaking early on indicates a venom reaction rather than an infection.

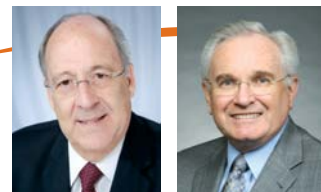
Systemic reactions are much more serious and require prompt medical attention. Upper-airway obstruction and/or cardiovascular collapse can be life-threatening. The immediate injection of epinephrine (adrenaline) into the mid-thigh muscle should be done with a preloaded EpiPen, or a dose of 0.5 milligrams for an adult and 0.3 milligrams for a child. There is no

contraindication to the use of adrenaline/epinephrine; in the presence of anaphylaxis, it's a lifesaver.

If symptoms persist, a repeat dosage at intervals of five to 15 minutes is indicated. Most patients will require only one injection, but rapid transport to medical attention is imperative. Antihistamines also help fend off symptoms. It's important that at least 12 hours of observation in a unit equipped to handle recurrence of symptoms be provided.

Both adults and children with a history of anaphylaxis should carry an auto-injector of epinephrine. Care to avoid at-risk areas is very important for such patients, and it may be wise to have more than one auto-injector available at all times.

The take-home message is that the difference between a local reaction (pain, swelling, redness around the area of the sting) and a systemic reaction (swelling of tissues in the throat, respiratory difficulty, or collapse) must be clearly recognized, as systemic reactions are the dangerous ones. ■



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

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



So You Were

By CHANTAL J. KLINGBEIL

THERE

Conversations around the cross

*“Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons” (Matt. 27:55, 56).**

Why were you watching from a distance? Were you afraid to be involved? Was it all just too much to take? I think I know what it’s like to watch from a distance. I’ve grown up in an Adventist home. I’ve been following Jesus for some time, and yet time seems often to add to distance. Keeping up with Jesus is hard work, besides the fact that it’s dangerous. No, I’ve never had to face the threat of a cross, but it’s so easy just to slip into a routine, to put my walk with Jesus on autopilot, and then the distance sets in.

“As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus’ body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He

rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away” (verses 57-60).

You just suddenly burst into the story. Your entrance is unexpected, and at such a dark moment so hopeful. All the disciples—those who have shared with Jesus most intimately—are hiding in fear, and here you are willing to step out of the shadows. Throwing off your secret double life, you step forward and bravely ask for Jesus’ body. You choose Jesus at a moment when He can’t offer you anything. But you offer Him something: your new tomb. What if choosing Jesus meant stepping away from my friendship circle? What if I couldn’t see any returns on my choice to follow Him? Am I following Him for what I can get or what I can give?

“The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ‘Sir,’ they said, ‘we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again’” (verses 62, 63).

So you remembered. Strange that His disciples seemed to have amnesia on this point, even though Jesus had

“You choose Jesus at a moment when He can’t offer you anything.”

been preparing them for this moment for some time. You knew, you had connected the dots, but it made no difference to your hard hearts. You thought you were right—you were defending truth—yet you had just killed the Man who was God!

Sobering . . . I know a fair amount too. I think I can prove from the Bible that Sabbath is Saturday and I know about the sanctuary and the state of the dead, but all this knowledge will not do me any good if I haven’t learnt to know the Master personally. Without that relationship with Jesus I could wake up one morning to find that I’ve been fighting God all along.

“Take a guard,’ Pilate answered. ‘Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.’ So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard” (verses 65, 66).

Come on, Pilate! Do you really think a seal on the tomb and a guard will do the trick? You have no idea whom you are dealing with. He is not just the King of the Jews. He breathes out stars and forms entire galaxies.

On second thought, maybe I shouldn’t be so hard on Pilate. I think I have more pieces of the puzzle of history and a clearer picture of God than Pilate did, and yet I often find myself treating God as if He were very small. In prayer I find myself telling Him what to do and how to do it. Maybe it’s about time I stopped trying to restrict, manipulate, or dictate to God and rather let my Creator do with me what He lovingly does best.

“The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified’” (Matt. 28:5).

You were afraid. I suppose that’s entirely normal. Almost every time that we humans meet holiness we are afraid. That paradox of being drawn to holiness and then repelled by it when we realize how foreign it is to our makeup as humans. It is that daily tug-of-war in my heart—the war over what I am and who I would like to be.

Perhaps you women at the tomb were onto something. You realized that all hope was lost unless you could find Jesus.

“Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age’” (verses 16-20).

You saw Jesus. Yet some of you doubted. I’ve sometimes thought that if I could just catch a glimpse of heaven, see something supernatural, have an angel visit me, then I would never doubt again. You doubting disciples show me that seeing is not believing. Faith is not a destination. It is a part of the journey. It begins with a choice to believe God’s Word and, move forward. All of you, even those who had had their doubts, took Jesus at His word and fueled by His authority, turned your world upside down.

I don’t need to wait for my church to initiate an outreach program that I feel comfortable with. I don’t need to be dependent on initiatives or a guilty conscience to get me witnessing. I don’t need to stand and observe from a distance. What I need is to claim His promise that He is with me always, and that includes today and tomorrow. I can say with confidence, “My Jesus is not dead. He’s alive. Look how He is changing my life. Come, I want you to meet my Jesus.” ■

* All Scripture quotations have been taken from the New International Version.



Chantal J. Klingbeil serves as an associate director at the Ellen G. White Estate of the General Conference. She is married to Gerald and has three teenage daughters who keep her on her toes.

They sit in a circle, heads bowed, praying for the task before them. After the “Amen” their eyes meet, then drop to the sheets full of empty slots before them. Half of the Sabbath school teachers have resigned, the Adventurer Club director is burned out, and the couple previously leading outreach ministries has moved away.

Church directory in hand, the nominating committee ponders who might possibly be willing to take on one of the empty slots. Then they begin making phone calls, practically begging members of the congregation to consider one of the vacant church offices. Everyone they call agrees that someone should do these jobs; but as the nominating committee members well know, it’s incredibly hard to find those willing to actually fill the empty slots.

The Answer

The New Testament provides counsel on how to fill our local church’s ministries so that the nominating committee is not left desperately looking for anyone willing to fill a slot. In fact, God gave us an amazing way to avoid this situation altogether by bestowing spiritual gifts to church members.

Spiritual gifts are abilities given to God’s followers by the Holy Spirit. These gifts could be called talents, but they are really much more. People can be talented at crossword puzzles or standing on one foot, but spiritual gifts are special abilities given to each person with the intent that they

will use them to support and grow God’s church and to do their part to fulfill the Great Commission.

Everyone Has a Gift

Every single member of God’s church has a spiritual gift, and we are instructed to use our gifts to bless others. First Peter 4:10 tells us that “as each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” Spiritual gifts are not traits we can own. They come directly from God, chosen for each person specifically by Him. God expects us to take care of them and use them for their intended purpose.

Our gifts may not stay the same throughout our entire lives. If we are faithful stewards of one gift, God may bless us with another, as with the servants who wisely invested their talents in Jesus’ parable. At some point in our lives our gifts may completely change. Situations and the needs of our communities change, and God is always able to mold us into that which would be most useful in advancing His kingdom.

Although there are many different kinds of gifts, the same Spirit is responsible for all of them. Paul put it this way: “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. . . . But one and the same



NUMBER 17

for the Nominating Committee

By DAISY HALL

Spiritual gifts to the rescue

SPIRITUAL GIFTS and MINISTRIES

God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts which each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. Given by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who apportions to each member as He wills, the gifts provide all abilities and ministries needed by the church to fulfill its divinely ordained functions. According to the Scriptures, these gifts include such ministries as faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, reconciliation, compassion, and self-sacrificing service and charity for the help and encouragement of people. Some members are called of God and endowed by the Spirit for functions recognized by the church in pastoral, evangelistic, apostolic, and teaching ministries particularly needed to equip the members for service, to build up the church to spiritual maturity, and to foster unity of the faith and knowledge of God. When members employ these spiritual gifts as faithful stewards of God's varied grace, the church is protected from the destructive influence of false doctrine, grows with a growth that is from God, and is built up in faith and love. (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:9-11, 27, 28; Eph. 4:8, 11-16; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 1 Peter 4:10, 11.)

“Spiritual gifts are not traits we can **OWN**. Spiritual gifts are His way of **EQUIPPING** us to accomplish that work.”

Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills” (1 Cor. 12:4-11).

Much like the fruit of the Spirit, spiritual gifts are the result of the Holy Spirit working in our lives. If we have accepted the Holy Spirit into our hearts to change us to be more like Christ and to do His work, we have also accepted the gift from the Spirit to help us accomplish that work.

Some of the spiritual gifts listed in Scripture include wisdom, knowledge, healing, prophecy, teaching, administration, giving, mercy, faith, evangelism, and craftsmanship, to name only a few (1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28; Rom. 12:6-8; Eph.

4:11; Ex. 31:3). There are a wide variety of gifts, and each one is essential to bringing about the kingdom.

Using Your Gift

There is a place within our church's ministries for people with every kind of gift that God sees fit to bless us with. Some gifts may have more obvious applications than others. Those with the gift of healing can become health-care professionals. Those with a gift for teaching can use that gift in many different ways within and outside the Adventist Church. Such gifts as giving, mercy, and faith do not correspond to a specific ministry; rather, they affect each ministry and can be applied in many different contexts. No gift is greater than any other, and God expects all of them to be used.

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 Paul compared the church to the human body. A body is made up of many different parts that all have different roles. If some parts aren't functioning correctly, the whole body suffers. In the church, every member of the body plays a vital role in the mission entrusted by Jesus. If we joyfully anticipate Jesus' return, we can't leave all the work to our pastors, teachers, or leaders. “If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be smelling? But now God has set the members, each of them, in the body just as He pleased” (verses 17, 18). The church body needs each of its members to be fully functioning to accomplish its God-given tasks.

Spiritual gifts are an incredibly important part of our fundamental beliefs. We Seventh-day Adventists believe that God has given us a work to do, and spiritual gifts are His way of equipping us to accomplish that work. As such, we need to discover what our spiritual gifts are, then put them to good use. By consulting with church leaders and with the Lord in prayer, every church member can discover their spiritual gifts and get started working in their ministry. The prospect of finding our unique roles within the church can be daunting. However, by giving us these gifts, God has enabled us not only to do these jobs but to excel at them. We can trust Him to choose each gift personally and appropriately. When we do, we can accomplish more for His kingdom than we ever thought possible. ■



Daisy Hall is a homeschooled high school senior living with her family in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. She enjoys writing, education theory, and road trips.

By
GERALD
A. KLINGBEIL

It's very complex," you would hear a peasant living in Roman-period Palestine sigh when asked about politics and religion in his town. Besides the daily struggle to survive, people living in first-century A.D. Palestine had to contest with oppressive Roman occupation, local leaders desperate for more power, nationalist parties who were ready to start the rebellion tomorrow—and religion. Religion played a major role and was entangled in everything. It affected dress style; what, when, and how to eat; how to relate to other people; and even covered what should be planted in one's field.

"It's very complex" was the refrain of everyday life in Roman-controlled Palestine when Jesus was born in "the fullness of the time" (Gal. 4:4). "It's very complex" marked His interaction with Jewish leadership, including scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees. "It's very complex" also sounds familiar to people living in the twenty-first century, regardless of where you live. Whether in secular Europe or in a favela in Brazil; whether in the politically charged atmosphere of Washington, D.C., or in strife-torn Syria or Iraq; we live in a fragmented world, divided by profound religious, political, or economic convictions.

Even in our own church we can see increasing fragmentation instead of the utterly committed interaction and integration Jesus prayed for in John 17:21. Just throw out hot-button issues like "women's ordination," "spiritual formation," or "creation and evolution and Genesis 1" in a fellowship lunch conversation after church, and you will most likely be part of a fervent discussion, often leading participants to look suspiciously on those with different opinions.

How did Jesus live in such a divisive context? How did He relate to those on the "right" or the "left" of religious opinion? How did the Savior of our



JESUS CLAIMS THE CENTER

Between Sadducees and Pharisees

world (not just the known Roman or Mediterranean world) manage to be faithful to His own divinely established principles, yet stay fully engaged in His world?

Jesus and Conflict

Conflict was a staple in Jesus' ministry. Not that He looked for it; rather, it seems, His mere presence caused people to take a stand. Some were strongly opposed to the Upstart from Nazareth. Others were intrigued or just stood by and watched conflict unfold. Mostly, Jesus' antagonists belonged to the leadership circle of Jerusalem. John calls them "the Jews" (John 1:19; 2:18; 5:16-18; 6:41; etc.); on other occasions they are introduced as scribes, elders, or rulers (Matt. 9:3; 16:21; Mark 3:22; Luke 23:35; etc.), or, more specifically, as Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt. 3:7; 9:11; 16:1, 12; Mark 12:18; for more about the religious groups of first-century Palestine, see the sidebar).

Conflict was also present in Jesus' inner circle. At times we find Him reprimanding His own disciples as they, too, struggled to make sense of their world, their Master's mission, the traditions they had grown up with, and their own human (and thus fallen) nature. Just remember the repeated discussions about who would be the greatest in God's kingdom (Mark 9:34; Luke 22:24).

Yet, in the midst of conflict, Jesus was always willing to engage everyone, even His avowed enemies. For example, we find Jesus in an intimate nighttime conversation with Nicodemus, a Pharisee, and one of the leaders of the Sanhedrin (John 3:1). Jesus can also be seen in the house of Simon, another Pharisee, who was giving a party in His honor (Luke 7:36-50). Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, rulers, and teachers of the law always seem to be around

Jesus, listening carefully to His reasoning, arguing stringently their convictions, disagreeing violently, and, finally, plotting

desperately to silence the One they just could not prevail upon.

At times Jesus responds in creative and surprising ways to traps laid out by some of His opponents. Remember the time when the unholy alliance of Pharisees and Herodians wanted to know if it was "lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not" (Matt. 22:17; cf. verses 15-28)? They thought they had Him cornered, yet His unexpected response amazed them and left them wringing their hands in frustration.

One reason Jesus caused Jewish leadership so much grief was that He could not be easily stuck at some spot along the theological spectrum of His time. One moment He "silences" the Sadducees when He responds to their misguided trick questions regarding the resurrection (verses 23-33); then He navigates expertly a tricky and delicate question regarding the "greatest commandment in the Law" (verse 36, NIV) put forward by the Pharisees. Again and again He refuses to answer their faithless demand for a sign (Matt. 12:38-45; 16:1-4),¹ but on other occasions engages them directly in discussions (Matt. 22:41-46).

Matthew's Gospel includes one of Jesus' most noteworthy interactions with Pharisees, scribes, and the teachers of the law. In a series of seven woes Jesus laments the spiritual pride and blindness of His opponents (Matt. 23).

In Hebrew culture a woe indicated mourning and imminent (or recent) death. Just reading the text without hearing the tone of His voice, we could come to the conclusion that these were the words of an angry Jesus. Yet we know that Jesus' mission at that moment was not one of retaliation, anger, or an irritated temper; instead, His rebuke was marked by a spirit of compassion and a plea to return. "Divine pity marked the countenance of the Son of God," writes Ellen White, "as He cast one lingering look upon the temple and then upon His hearers. In a voice choked by deep anguish of heart and bitter tears He

exclaimed, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!' . . . In the lamentation of Christ the very heart of God is pouring itself forth."²

Claiming God's Center

Jesus' interaction with people around Him was not guided by "political correctness" or strategic opportunities. Instead, driven by a love that "wilt not let me go" (as nineteenth-century Scottish minister George Matheson wrote), He knew Himself in the center of God's will. This attracted people to Him. Jesus was truly different: He spoke differently; His theology was understandable and of the salt-and-earth type everybody could appreciate; His humility was exemplary; His drive to alleviate suffering seemed indefatigable.

Just hang on, you may say, did you not just list all the moments of, at times, eye-popping conflict in the life of Jesus—and now you suggest that, in spite of seemingly constant conflict, He managed to reach His world? Yes—and yes. While Jesus did not shirk from conflict—especially theological conflict—He picked His battles carefully, and He never fell into the trap of putting people into neatly marked categories. You know—the type that says "liberal," "conservative," "ultraconservative," "mainstream," or "does not care." Whether Pharisee or Sadducee, rich or poor, educated or illiterate, Jesus saw the person, not the theological bent. Yet He never wavered on truth and divinely established principles.

A year ago I spent a summer reading again through the Gospels. It was vacation time; I had more time with the Word than would be available when working in a busy editorial office, and felt intrigued by how Jesus engaged the theologians and leaders of His time. Six important principles stuck out as I

followed Jesus through the pages of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

❶ **JESUS never picked sides—rather, He engaged Scripture.** While Pharisees focused on the Torah and ritual purity and the law’s intricacies pertaining to anise and cummin (Matt. 23:23), the Sadducees, at the other end of the theological spectrum, ignored the Word because they doubted its inspiration. Their enlightened Hellenistic thinking abhorred the primitive literalness of their theological opponents. Jesus clearly identified this when He summarized the Sadducees’ dilemma as “you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God” (Mark 12:24). When we consider Jesus, however, we hear Him constantly quoting and explaining texts from the Word.

❷ **JESUS focused upon His mission—God’s mission—and did not get sidetracked by power games and theological sparring.** Following the healing of Simon’s mother-in-law, and a multitude of others, Jesus prayed in a quiet place (Mark 1:29-39). The dis-

ciples were still awed by what they had seen the previous day. This was the moment to solidify their gains in Capernaum. Everybody was looking for Jesus. However, instead of solidifying, Jesus moved out—His mission so much bigger than Capernaum. “Let us go into the next towns,” Jesus says to Peter, “that I may preach there also, *because for this purpose I have come forth*” (Mark 1:38). Somehow, it seems mission-mindedness goes a long way to overcoming theological stalemates.

❸ **JESUS engaged all people, even His enemies.** We already noted that His love for people drove every action. Here is another great example. We can find the story in Matthew 19:16-24: A ruler tosses Jesus a tough yet vital question: “What . . . shall I do that I may have eternal life?”

I am sure everybody listened in on this one. Jesus highlights the second part of the Decalogue, the commandments governing human relations. “All these things I have kept from my

“**Conflict** was a staple in Jesus’ ministry.”

youth,” the ruler replies. Jesus never questions this statement, but puts His finger right on the sore spot: “Sell what you have . . .” You remember the rest of the story. The ruler turned away sorrowful because he had great possessions. Jesus does not turn away; He looks at him—sorrowful and lovingly.

❹ **JESUS recognized the importance of the prophetic word.** He came on time; He ministered on time; and He died on time (cf. Dan. 9:24-27). In His preaching, Jesus identified God’s plan proclaimed by the prophets of



First-century A.D. Palestine boasted a variety of religious groups and sects. We know a number from Scripture; others are not mentioned in the biblical text but are known from extrabiblical sources (such as Jewish historian Josephus, Jewish philosopher Philo, Roman authors, or later rabbinical texts). Their existence underlines the fact that life in Palestine was truly complex.

RELIGIOUS IN FIRST-CENTURY

PHARISEES: A group of mostly lay, not priestly, members that focused upon interpreting the law—both written and oral. They were interested in ritual purity and tithing, believed in an afterlife and judgment, and emphasized the teaching of the oral law. Like all Jewish groups at that time, they were acutely interested in Israel’s future and entertained messianic hopes.

SADDUCEES: A smaller group of mostly wealthy leaders, often associated with the elite priestly class. Apparently they were highly Hellenized (spoke and used Greek philosophy) while at the same time favoring a nationalistic agenda. They did not believe in an afterlife involving judgment or punishment and

old. Following the imprisonment of John, Jesus left Nazareth and made Capernaum the center of His operation. Matthew 4:14 tells us that He did this to fulfill prophecy (cf. Isa. 9:1, 2). When Jesus was traveling outside of Palestine along the Mediterranean coast in the region of Tyre and Sidon and a woman pleading for her sick daughter followed Him, He recognized that His ministry was first “to the lost sheep of . . . Israel” (Matt. 15:24). Every moment of His ministry was in harmony with the prophetic word.

🕊️ **JESUS spoke in a different way.** Somehow, beyond the miracles and the signs, Jesus’ audience recognized this difference. Matthew summarizes His wow effect like this: “The people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matt. 7:28, 29). Jesus not only used fresh and accessible language—He spoke with authority, something that His opponents could not muster. The Pharisees were experts in the oral traditions of the law; the Sadducees spoke Greek

fluently and tried to assimilate to Hellenistic culture. Yet Jesus spoke with an authority that did not come from an office or an appointment.

🕊️ **JESUS ultimately exhibited God’s power.** Beyond the talk there was action. He demonstrated God’s power, and people were “amazed” (Matt. 12:23; Mark 1:27). Instead of empty word shells, Jesus’ healing ministry touched a raw nerve of people hungering for God-with-us: a God who would touch and embrace His creation and walk with them on the dusty and dirty roads of a world that was (and still is) searching for authenticity.

It’s Very Complex

Can we learn from the Master as we try to navigate the complexities of a church facing a crucial General Conference session in San Antonio this year? Can we discover *how* He engages people of all stripes and colors? Jesus’ focus upon God’s revealed Word—in its entirety and recognizing Scripture-based principles of interpretation—and His ability to continue the conversation

with *all* people challenges me. I tend to listen to people whose positions I like, and get sidetracked by those I don’t.

His focus on His mission—our mission—and the recognition of the importance of the prophetic word is a good reminder of first things first. Finally, there is the crucial question of whether our engagement is based on God’s authority (and not mine) and accompanied by God’s power (or lack thereof).

No doubt: it’s very complex. No doubt: we have been hurt. But we are called, together, to move forward and claim the place where Jesus is: right in the center of God’s will. ■

¹ Jesus did promise them the “sign of Jonah” (Luke 11:29; Matt. 12:39; 16:4).

² Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898), p. 620.



Gerald A. Klingbeil

serves as associate editor of *Adventist World*. A some-time Pharisee and

a some-time Sadducee, Gerald is happy to find his center in Jesus.

GROUPS

A.D. PALESTINE

rewards. Rabbinical texts tell us that they had different purity ideals than the Pharisees. They opposed oral tradition.

ESSENES: This group is not mentioned in the New Testament. Some scholars have suggested that the group living at the shores of the Dead Sea at Khirbet Qumran, where the famous scrolls were found in 1947, should be identified as Essenes. They had strict rules involving a three-year initiation, shared property, (possible) celibacy, ritual purity, and community work, and were interested in Scripture and its interpretation.

HERODIANS: A group allied to the Herodian dynasty that was politically active and theologically mostly aligned with Sadducees.



ZEALOTS: This group organized officially in A.D. 67-68. However, their anti-Roman stance and messianic sense of liberation from Roman and Jewish aristocratic oppression was already present during Jesus’ time. Zealots focused more on politics and military action than theology, even though their actions had an underlying theological rationale.

What is mission? Noah Webster's dictionary defines the word "mission" as "being sent or delegated by authority, with certain powers for transacting business; commission; as sent on a foreign mission."¹ The Latin Christian theological term *missio Dei*² gives us the source of mission. It indicates that mission begins with God, who sends out missionaries. Referring to the sphere of mission, Stefan Paas says, "We must not limit 'mission' to countries far away."³ In other words, "mission should not be defined by an address or geographical location."⁴

In order for any missionary to be successful in the mission field, the "total person"—the head, the heart, and the hands—must be involved. We must be fully committed to God, serving others, and sharing the gospel message in order to change lives, including our own.

The Head

Mission begins in the head, where the brain, our cognizance, is located and our thinking takes place. To become believers, we must accept Jesus in our mind.⁵

The apostle Paul says: "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7). The word "understanding" is the Greek *nous*, which means "mind." This word refers to the ability to think, to reason, to understand, and to comprehend. It also depicts the mind as the source of all emotions.

In Greek, the word "mind" represents the inner power of a person. It's the central control center for a human being.⁶ Therefore, it was understood that the condition of the mind was what determined the condition of one's life.

Commenting on the significance of the mind, Ellen G. White wrote: "When the mind of man is brought into communion with the mind of God, the finite with the Infinite, the



The Head, the Heart, and the Hands

By YOUSRY GUIRGUIS

Mission takes all three.

effect on body and mind and soul is beyond estimate. In such communion is found the highest education. It is God's own method of development."⁷ This simply means that a positive attitude toward God will affect and influence our thoughts, our feelings, and the way we behave or do things.

The Heart

The heart is the "bed," or center, for the emotions. It is where we feel and anticipate what we believe, and where the Word of God begins its faith work. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Faith isn't just a mechanical application of truth; it also affects how we feel. A missionary must have a passion for mission. Siegfried H. Horn defines "passion" as "a strong emotion or desire."⁸ *The Cassell Concise English Dictionary* comes with a similar view: that passion is an "intense emotion overpowering affection of the mind" and entails "ardent enthusiasm."⁹ Thus, passion is an "intense, driving, or overmastering feeling or conviction."¹⁰

It's important to remember, however, that although faith will affect how a person feels, how we feel should not affect our faith. There is a difference.

When the apostle Peter wrote to wives in 1 Peter 3:4, he instructed them to give special attention to the "hidden person of the heart." The word "heart" is the Greek word *kardia*. Although Peter is not referring to the actual organ, the physical heart is a vital as well as central organ of the body. Although the heart is invisible to the natural eye, the human body cannot live without it. It has a great impact on every single part of the human body as it pumps blood through arteries and many miles of blood vessels. It therefore influences the person's ability to live and function. Peter gives the reader a powerful insight into the human spirit.

Similarly, ancient Egyptians believed that "every divine word has come into existence through the heart's thought and tongue's command."¹¹ Peter—as did the ancient Egyptians—used the word "heart" figuratively to refer to the inner person, the seat of feelings that drive our

SOLUSI GRADUATION: Solusi University in Zimbabwe, southern Africa, where the author lived, studied, and served for 12 years, is the inspiration for this article. “The professors, staff, and students at Solusi exemplify the true spirit of mission by their love, long-suffering, patience, joy, commitment, kindness, and training,” Yousry Guirguis says.

actions. In other words, if a person’s heart is filled with the life of God, it will pump life into every part of that person’s being. Therefore, whatever is in the heart will be reproduced in a person’s life and conduct, and will influence the way we relate to others.

The human spirit is the life force of any person. As Ellen White observed: “Everyone in whose heart Christ abides, everyone who will show forth His love to the world, is a worker together with God for the blessing of humanity. As he receives from the Savior grace to impart to others, from his whole being flows forth the tide of spiritual life.”¹²

Christ tells us that “out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matt. 15:19). These things destroy our mission and unity.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is mission-oriented. So it’s no wonder that Ellen White called the church’s attention to unity and not division. She admonished the church to “strive earnestly for unity. Pray for it, work for it. It will bring spiritual health, elevation of thought, nobility of character, heavenly-mindedness, enabling you to overcome selfishness and evil surmisings, and to be more than conquerors through Him that loved you and gave Himself for you.”¹³

Russell Brownsworth tells the story of Lord Nelson of England when he was about to enter an important battle. Lord Nelson heard that two of his officers were at odds with each other, so he called them in and said, “Gentlemen, give me your hands.” The two captains put their hands into the commander’s hands, and the commander squeezed them with a tight grip. “Men,” he said, “remember, the enemy is *out there!*”

This is a great story about the power of unity in action.

To have unity in action when involved in mission, we must follow Christ and proclaim Him to the whole world. We need to be deeply rooted in God’s Word and spend much time in prayer. In this way we will become a “sermon in shoes” and lead lost souls to Jesus (see Matt. 28:19).

The Hands

The hands symbolize action. We work, talk, and minister with our hands. We even fight with our hands. We use our hands to sign contracts, to adjust a microscope, or to play a musical instrument. Hands can show joy or disgust. So when head and heart are in tune with God regarding missions, then hands will be in tune as well.

We are not to be idle. We need to be active in community service and helping others. We should not wait for all conditions to be “right” in order for us to become involved in service. American publisher and author William A. Feather explained it well when he said: “Conditions are never just right. People who delay action until all facts are favourable do nothing.”¹⁴

Ellen White also emphasized the importance of labor: “In our labor we are to be workers together with God. He gives us the earth and its treasures; but we must adapt them to our use and comfort. He causes the trees to grow; but we prepare the timber and build the house. He has hidden in the earth the gold and silver, the iron and coal; but it is only through toil that we can obtain them. . . . No man or woman is degraded by honest toil. That which degrades is idleness and selfish dependence.”¹⁵

Keep All in Balance

We must embrace a balanced understanding of mission, one that involves the total person: head, heart, and hands. When we truly learn God’s will about mission, we will long to be involved. The roles people play in mission vary from individual to individual, but all of us must have hearts totally committed to God and a willingness to serve where needed. “Let the one who would worship God open his mouth in praise, his heart in receptivity, his mind in contemplation, his purse in dedication, and his hand in fellowship.”¹⁶

In the end, it’s all about love, which reveals itself in sacrificial action. It means giving of ourselves to help others and share with them the gospel message. It may cost us in many ways to love like this, but the benefits will be eternal.¹⁷ ■

¹ Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828), s.v. “mission.”

² “mission of God” or the “sending of God”

³ Stefan Paas, “Prepared for a Missionary Ministry in 21st Century Europe,” *European Journal of Theology* 20, no. 2 (2011): 119–130.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ A few thoughts and the title are taken from the sermon “The Head, the Heart, and the Hands,” by W. Alderman.

⁶ Rick Renner, *Sparkling Gems From the Greek: 365 Greek Word Studies for Every Day of the Year to Sharpen Your Understanding of God’s Word* (Tulsa, Okla.: Rick Renner, 2003), p. 751.

⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 126.

⁸ Siegfried H. Horn, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*, rev. ed. (1979), s.v. “passion.”

⁹ *The Cassell Concise English Dictionary* (1989), s.v. “passion.”

¹⁰ *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2003), s.v. “passion.”

¹¹ In *MindReach Library*, www.cosmic-mindreach.com/Egypt_Part1.html, accessed Jan. 27, 2014.

¹² E. G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 13.

¹³ Ellen G. White, *Counsels for the Church* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1991), p. 290.

¹⁴ www.worldofquotes.com/author/William+Feather/1/index.html.

¹⁵ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1903), pp. 214, 215.

¹⁶ Attributed to Keith Huttenlocker. See www.churchesofchrist.net/authors/Grady_Scott/thingsbeforeworship.htm.

¹⁷ I am greatly indebted to Cnaan Mkombe (senior lecturer at Solusi University) for proofreading this article and adding insights to it.



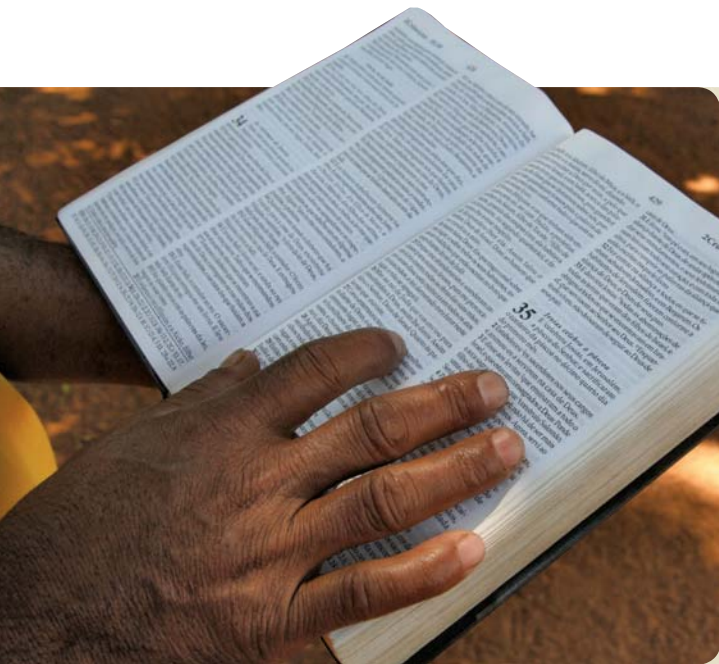
Yousry Guirguis holds a master’s degree in religion from Solusi University. He is pursuing a doctorate degree in biblical studies at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the Philippines.

Christ was infinite in wisdom, and yet He thought best to accept of Judas, although He knew what were his imperfections of character. John was not perfect; Peter denied his Lord; and yet it was of men like these that the early Christian church was organized. Jesus accepted them that they might learn of Him what constitutes a perfect Christian character.

The business of every Christian is to study the character of Christ. The lessons which Jesus gave His disciples did

practice the words of Christ. He braced his soul to resist the influence of the truth; and while he practiced criticizing and condemning others, he neglected his own soul, and cherished and strengthened his natural evil traits of character until he became so hardened that he could sell his Lord for thirty pieces of silver.

O let us encourage our souls to look to Jesus! Tell every one how dangerous it is to neglect his own soul's eternal healthfulness by looking upon the diseased souls of others,



By ELLEN G. WHITE

Contemplate Christ's Perfection

*Studying Christ's character
is our business.*

not always harmonize with their reasonings. There was an immense contrast between the truths which He taught, which reached to heaven and compassed eternity, and those things that related to the common, temporal, earthly life. The Redeemer of the world ever sought to carry the mind from the earthly to the heavenly. Christ constantly taught the disciples, and His sacred lessons had a molding influence upon their characters. Judas alone did not respond to divine enlightenment. To all appearance he was righteous, and yet he cultivated his tendency to accuse and condemn others. . . .

Judas had come to Christ in the same spirit of self-righteousness; and if he had asked, "What lack I yet?" Jesus would have answered, "Keep the commandments." Judas was selfish, covetous, and a thief, yet he was numbered with the disciples. He was defective in character, and he failed to

by talking upon the uncomeliness of character found in those who profess the name of Christ. The soul does not become more and more like Christ by beholding evil, but like the evil which it beholds. The same love of self, the same indulgence of self, the same hastiness of spirit, the same petulance of temper, the same sensitiveness and pride of opinion, the same unwillingness to receive counsel, the same unsanctified, independent judgment, will be manifest in those who criticize as in those whom they criticize. They will act as if they had not Christ as their pattern and example. O how much we need to guard against Satan's devices!

Serving God

The apostle Paul writes of God's chosen people, and says, "With many of them God was not well pleased: for

they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.” Then follows an enumeration of the sins that grieve the Spirit of God; and again the apostle says, “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.”

It is not an uncommon thing to see imperfection in those who carry on God’s work. Go into any place where

be defiled. The most unfavorable matters that are developed in Battle Creek or elsewhere should not cause us to feel perplexed and discouraged. Everything that causes us to see the weakness of humanity is in the Lord’s purpose to help us to look to Him, and in no case put our trust in man, or make flesh our arm. Let us remember that our great High Priest is pleading before the mercy seat in behalf of His ransomed people. He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. The blood of Jesus is pleading with power and efficacy for those who are backslidden, for those who are rebellious, for those who sin against great light and love.

Satan stands at our right hand to accuse us, and our advocate stands at God’s right hand to plead for us. He has

*“We are a part of the great web of humanity. We become changed into the **image** of that upon which we dwell.”*

there is a large church, where there are important interests at stake, as there are at Battle Creek, and there we may behold the deep plottings of Satan; but this should not lead us to dwell upon the imperfections of those who yield to his temptations.

Would it not be more pleasing to God to take an impartial outlook, and see how many souls are serving God, and glorifying and honoring him with their talents of means and intellect? Would it not be better to consider the wonderful, miracle-working power of God in the transformation of poor degraded sinners, who have been full of moral pollution, who become changed so that they are Christlike in character, partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust?

The Web of Humanity

We are a part of the great web of humanity. We become changed into the image of that upon which we dwell. Then how important to open our hearts to the things that are true and lovely and of good report. Let into the heart the light of the Sun of Righteousness. Do not cherish one root of bitterness that may spring up whereby many may

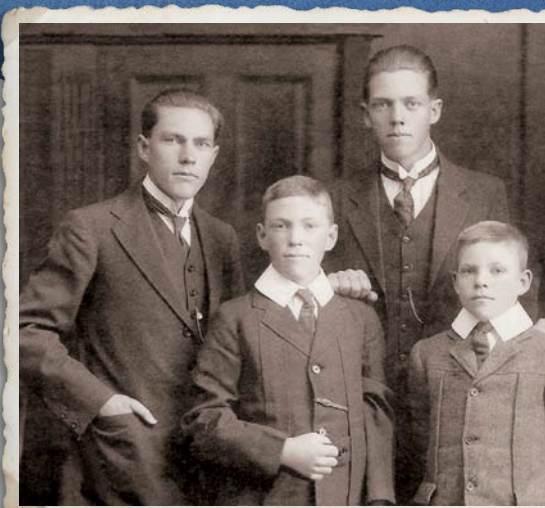
never lost a case that has been committed to Him. . . . He says, “I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. . . . I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil. . . . As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world,” that they may be partakers with Me in self-denial, self-sacrifice, and in My sufferings.

Yes, He beholds His people in this world, which is a persecuting world, and all seared and marred with the curse, and knows that they need all the divine resources of His sympathy and His love. Our forerunner hath for us entered within the vail, and yet by the golden chain of love and truth, He is linked with His people in closest sympathy. ■

This is taken from the article “Contemplate Christ’s Perfection, Not Man’s Imperfection,” published in *Review and Herald*, August 15, 1893. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

Angels at Work in South Africa

By ELAINE
TARR DODD



Two hours of study with a stranger

Reading wasn't Ida's favorite subject, but this story from her fourth-grade reader intrigued and impressed her. Entitled "The Transport Rider," it was about Fletcher Tarr growing up in South Africa during the 1800s, transporting goods to the diamond mines, and, in the process, learning about the seventh-day Sabbath. As she read she felt so strong a presence that she looked behind her . . .

Pioneer Background

Born David Fletcher Tarr in 1861, he was the twelfth of 16 children of James and Hannah (Brent) Tarr, godly Wesleyan Methodist Christians. The Tarr and Brent families had chosen South Africa among those now known as the 1820 Settlers. As new immigrants they transformed the wilds into a place they could call home, building houses, wells, and gardens, and a church near a hillock they named Clumber, where people still worship today.

Fletcher Tarr, a good athlete and crack shot who loved his Bible, became a Sunday school teacher at 15, and later a lay preacher. In 1887 his cousin Albert Davies and Albert's wife decided to transport supplies by ox wagon to the Kimberley diamond mines, about 800 miles to the northwest. *Something about the deal drew Fletcher in: something was calling him north.*

Journeying Into the New

With loaded wagons, they started out, making their own roads. Weeks later they reached Beaconsfield on the outskirts of Kimberley late on a Friday afternoon. Seeking a place to camp and graze their oxen, Albert was directed to a farmer named Pieter Wessels, who said they could stay as long as no Sabbathbreaking activity took place on his property for the next 24 hours. "The Sabbath begins at sunset today and lasts until the following sunset," he explained.

Albert, amazed that an intelligent person would not know one day from another, questioned him. At that Wessels plunged into a Bible study, apparently so sound that Albert rushed off to tell his cousin the new biblical interpretation.

Fletcher, the good Bible student, simply dismissed Wessels as somewhat unstable. But at Wessels' invitation the next morning, he went with him to preach to a large Salvation Army audience in Beaconsfield.

The following morning during Fletcher's personal devotions, a stranger appeared at the tent. Fletcher invited him inside. The stranger wanted to study, he said, "about the sanctity of the first day of the week." But after more than two hours of unsatisfying study regarding Sunday's sacredness, the man suddenly disappeared. Fletcher never saw him again. No area residents had ever seen him. Fletcher became certain the stranger was an angel sent to convince him of the true Sabbath. After hours of soul-searching prayer he decided to keep the seventh-day Sabbath. *Now he knew why he had felt urged to travel northward with the ox wagons.* God would show through Fletcher's ministry that that urge was not for his sake alone.

About four months later Albert, his teammate, and Albert's wife were baptized in the water of Brother Wessels' dam. Soon after this, his studies among relatives and friends, supported by the public preaching of I. J. Hankins, resulted in a strong church being raised up. Its new converts included five local preachers. Its house of worship, erected by Fletcher on land donated by a cousin, Ebenezer Purdon, is still used by Adventists in the area. Another church at Beaconsfield that he assisted in establishing is a national monument advertised as the First Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. It is almost on the same spot where the angel met with him in his tent that memorable morning.

A few weeks of study with his eldest brother, James,



Left: David and Olive's five sons: Floyd, far left, became a General Conference vice-president. **Center:** Olive Phillips Tarr, once the personal nurse of John Harvey Kellogg, married David Fletcher Tarr in 1893. **Right:** David Fletcher Tarr, pioneer South African pastor, evangelist, church planter

resulted in seeing his entire family of 15 children join the church, followed by his second-eldest brother, Walter, a widower, and his children. Of these two families, 17 became church

workers, including four ordained ministers. Many more descendants have since worked for the church.

Expanded Service

In 1890 Fletcher and two nephews sailed to America to attend Battle Creek College, where he became acquainted with, and cherished a friendship, with Ellen White. He returned to South Africa in 1893 accompanied by his new bride, Olive [nee Phillips], who had been chief nurse for John Harvey Kellogg.

As fluent in the Xhosa language as he was in English, Fletcher worked with the native population, often leaving Olive alone in their home, a corrugated iron house with only two rooms—unbearably hot in summer and bitterly cold in winter.

One night while drying fruit on the kitchen table, Olive left the upper section of the door open for ventilation. Suddenly a fierce face appeared in the doorway. Quickly she slammed and bolted the upper half, then ran to the open window, screaming for their large pet dog, Peter, and shut it just as the face appeared there. The bedroom window was shut, but as she closed the curtain, a huge rock smashed through. In a moment Peter arrived and caught the intruder by the seat of his trousers. Yelling wildly, the man disappeared into darkness. In the morning his torn clothing lay outside the bedroom window.

In time the Tarrs and their son Percy moved to Cape Town, where Fletcher pastored English and Dutch congregations. Then came evangelistic and pastoral work in various large cities on his national worker's salary of 7 pounds sterling a month—equivalent then to \$7 weekly. Olive fed their five sons and turned faded suits inside out, re-sewing the seams for a newer look. The family usually walked miles rather than ride a trolley for a few pennies.

Around 1916, to the dismay of conference officials and her husband, Olive accepted responsibilities with the City of Port Elizabeth, overseeing the welfare of indigent widows. Her labors upon Port Elizabeth's hillsides brought the family about \$3 a week. But her health suffered. Notwith-

standing, the great flu epidemic of 1918 saw her appointed head nurse for the city, because of her experience with Battle Creek Sanitarium. She also conducted Sabbath morning services for Fletcher when he was elsewhere, playing the old pump organ, leading the singing, and occupying the pulpit, all along attending to two little sons wiggling mischievously in the front row.

Furlough and Goodbye

In 1921 Olive took her first and only furlough after a 24-year absence from her friends and family in the U.S. Her old boss, Dr. Kellogg, observed that she needed surgery and insisted that he operate on her himself. She returned to serve for a dozen more years, and passed away in 1933 in East London at age 63.

After her death Fletcher lived alternately with his sons while still pastoring a local church. His grandchildren recall his absorbing stories and his unstoppable commitment to sharing his faith.

While living in Durban in 1947 he developed pneumonia, and passed away at age 86. His tombstone reads: "Awaiting the Lifegiver." Today countless believers wait along with him, who trace their Adventist faith to David and Olive Tarr's combined 99 years' work for the Lord in South Africa.

Back in California

Little Ida grew up and enrolled in the School of Physical Therapy at Loma Linda University, completely forgetting her odd experience while reading the Fletcher Tarr story. At Loma Linda she met dental student David Otis, who shared her love of the Lord. They married and began a family. One day David discovered among his belongings a fourth-grade reader with the story of his great-grandfather, David Fletcher Tarr, the first English-speaking Seventh-day Adventist minister in South Africa. He showed the story to Ida and that long-ago impression came flooding back. *It must have been a heavenly presence watching her fascination with a story that would impact her future.* ■



Elaine Tarr Dodd is a former public relations director for It Is Written. This story is her version of one first written by her father, W. F. Tarr, who passed away in 1994. Elaine lives with her husband of 56 years in Collegedale, Tennessee, United States.

Stalked

Did Adam and Eve know an enemy of God would come to tempt them?

No clear biblical passage indicates that this was the case, but there are some details we should examine.

Let's examine the narrative to see whether the biblical text provides some evidence pointing in that direction. I will also consider the Bible's overall teaching about the enemy of God.

1. Heavenly Beings Before Adam and Eve: The Bible indicates that God created heavenly beings before He created Adam and Eve. According to Job, heavenly "sons of God shouted for joy" when God was creating the earth (Job 38:4-7), and Genesis suggests that God had already created cherubim before Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:24). It was one of these cherubim who rebelled against God and was cast out of heaven (Isa. 14:12-14; Eze. 28:13-18). The enemy in the garden would be this cherub.

2. The Responsibility of Adam and Eve: The Creation narrative indicates that after their creation, God gave Adam and Eve specific instructions concerning their functions and responsibilities. One would expect that such instruction would include information about God's enemy. The first time God talked to them, He blessed Adam and Eve and commanded them to "fill the earth" (Gen. 1:28). They were to rule over the rest of creation and to enjoy a specific diet different from that of the animals (verses 29, 30). He also commanded Adam and Eve not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or they would die (Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:3).

There is hardly anything in these instructions about an enemy of God. But they were clearly accountable to God as stewards of the earth. There is also a reference to the possibility of dying, and this by itself would suggest an element of danger: that of making the wrong choice. But so far there is not a specific hint about an enemy against whom they should be on guard.

But there is more. God asked them "to work [*'abad*] it [the garden] and to take care [*shamar*] of it" (Gen. 2:15, NIV). The verb *'abad* ("to work; to serve") could mean in some contexts "to cultivate, to work on" the ground (Gen.

4:2, 12). The verb *shamar* means "to watch over, to protect, to guard." The use of this verb suggests that Adam and Eve were to be alert, guarding and protecting the garden; it implies danger and the potential presence of an enemy. God must have told them about the nature of the enemy. This interpretation of the verb is supported by its second use in Genesis 3:24. After the Fall the protection of the garden—in particular, the tree of life—was placed in the hands of cherubim. Since humans failed, God assigned their responsibility to others.

3. There Was a Tempter in the Garden: The danger implied in Genesis 2:15 is explicitly identified in Genesis 3. An enemy of God openly opposes His word and accuses Him of intentionally limiting the development of Adam and Eve (verse 4). He tells them that by rejecting the word of God they "will be like God" (verse 5). What this enemy introduces in the conversation is what the fallen cherub wanted for himself: "I will be like the Most High" (Isa. 14:14). Now we know the true identity of this enemy: the New Testament identifies him as "the devil, or Satan" (Rev. 12:9, NIV). These details are enough to indicate that Adam and Eve had been informed about him and were asked to be alert.

4. Deception in the Garden: Another piece of information could be helpful in answering this question. Eve attempts to defend herself, arguing that she was deceived by the serpent (Gen. 3:13). Unquestionably, she was deceived (2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:14), but deception was not accepted as a valid excuse for her disobedience. Why not? The reason, I suggest, is that they had been informed about the coming of the enemy of God to tempt them. She was expecting the enemy to work in a certain way, and he surprised her and deceived her. By not engaging the serpent in conversation, she would have been safe. ■



Angel Manuel Rodríguez has served as a pastor, professor, and theologian. He continues to serve the church in retirement.

By MARK A. FINLEY

Symbols of the Spirit



The Bible uses various symbols to describe the ministry and work of the Holy Spirit, each symbol revealing a distinct role. These symbols communicate facets of the Holy Spirit's ministry to our hearts. God speaks to us through these symbols to encourage and strengthen our faith. In this month's lesson we will study four of these symbols of the Holy Spirit: wind, water, fire, and oil. As you study each symbol, prayerfully ask God to apply the truths you discover to your own life.

1 How did Jesus describe the mystery of the new birth to Nicodemus? Why do you think Jesus used the symbol of wind? Read John 3:7, 8.

2 Read the vision God gave in Ezekiel 37:1-10. What spiritual condition is described here? What solution does God offer? How does this apply to us?

When Ezekiel saw the valley of dry bones, representing spiritual death, he was filled with despair. In response to God's question, "Son of man, can these bones live?" the prophet's response was "O Lord God, You know" (Eze. 37:3). What seemed impossible to the prophet was possible with God. God breathes new life into spiritually dead lives. The symbol of breath represents the life-giving power of God through the Holy Spirit to transform spiritual death into spiritual life.

3 At a time of severe drought what promise did God give His people? What is the deeper meaning of this promise, and how does it relate to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? Read Joel 2:21-23, 28, 29 and Acts 2:1-3, 16-21.

The outpouring of rain during severe famine and drought in ancient Israel symbolized the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost to launch the Christian dispensation. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal power resulted in tens of thousands coming to Christ in the book of Acts. God promises to pour out His Holy Spirit again at the end of time to complete the gospel commission.

4 What counsel does God give His end-time people regarding the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with latter-rain power? Read Zechariah 10:1 and James 5:7, 8.

Ellen White wrote: "The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close" (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 611, 612).

5 Why does God use the symbol of fire to symbolize the Holy Spirit? What does fire represent? Read Malachi 3:2, 3 and Hebrews 12:29.

In Scripture, fire represents the purifying presence of God through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Our Lord invites us to pray daily that the fire of the Spirit's presence will consume the worldliness in our lives.

6 What facet of the Holy Spirit's ministry is represented by oil in the Bible? Read the following passages and discover the meaning of oil: James 5:14, 15 and Luke 10:33, 34.

Throughout the Bible the symbol of oil is associated with consecration and healing. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus longs to heal the scars deep within and make us physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually whole.

7 How can we receive in its fullness this precious gift God has for us? Read Luke 11:13.

As we come to Jesus, believing that He longs to pour out His Spirit to give us new life, purify our souls, and heal us within, we can have absolute confidence that He longs to give us the gift of His Spirit even more than we long to receive it. Coming to Him in faith, we can have the assurance that He always hears the pleas of His children for the Spirit, and will bless us beyond our expectations. ■

Letters

Ng Worries About “Serious Loss” of Members

Regarding G. T. Ng’s concern about loss of membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church (December 2014): I agree that retention and nurture is important. However, our church leadership as a whole needs to reevaluate its methodology for church growth. Doing more of a failed thing isn’t going to produce better results.

Church leaders have to heed Ellen G. White’s counsel in *Christ’s Object Lessons*: “The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love” (p. 415). Perhaps we need to adjust our emphasis/approach from falling in love with the doctrines to falling in love with the Persons behind the doctrines—the Godhead. We need to spend more time assisting individuals to know God. I earnestly pray for a fresh approach to evangelism, which will decrease the “large losses” referred to in this article.

Regarding the Breathe-Free 2 stop-smoking program: I have been following the reader’s comments in the letters section. I think that Daniel Handysides’ objective (in Andrew McChesney’s September 2014 news article “Adventist Church Launches Breathe-Free 2, a New Stop-Smoking Program”) is a healthy, friendly approach toward smokers. Surely, no open-minded person would entertain the idea that an

“Jesus left us with a legacy of **love** and acceptance; and we need to find ways of reaching out to everyone with mercy and grace.”

—JOANNE RECTOR, *Battle Creek, Michigan, United States*

Adventist church is endorsing the smoking habit! In addition, children can be taught that God meets people where they’re at and helps them grow.

Jesus left us with a legacy of love and acceptance; and we need to find ways of reaching out to everyone with mercy and grace, and providing them with solutions to unhealthy habits. May Christ’s methods be our methods.

Perhaps we may need to look at our own sin of pious, perfectionistic attitudes.

JOANNE RECTOR
*Battle Creek, Michigan,
United States*

Trusting Our Almighty God

I just read Ted N. C. Wilson’s article “Trusting Our Almighty God” (December 2014). Satan is mentioned at least 21 times in this relatively short piece. Do we have to dwell so much on Satan? Should we not rather focus upon Christ and the good news He has brought? We will not convince people by painting a scary picture of Satan, and I doubt that many Adventists will be moved to a more committed faith walk through this.

I was sorry to hear that the Wilson family is currently experiencing a lot of



family trials. I very much look forward to heaven, when pain will be no more.

LIESELOTTE PETERSEN
Mölln, Germany

Women’s Ordination Again?

I am writing in regard to Andrew McChesney’s article “Question on Women’s Ordination Sent to GC Session” (December 2014). Why are we being asked to pray again for the Holy Spirit’s guidance on the matter? We were asked to pray for this guidance before the 1990 and 1995 General Conference session votes on this matter, which resulted in a large majority against women’s ordination.

Do we think God gave the wrong guidance? Are we asking Him to change His mind? Are we going to

Prayer & PRAISE

Please pray for me to pass my nursing exams and make it to the second year.

LORRITTA, *United Kingdom*

Please pray for my wife and me as we cope with health challenges.

MERLIN, *United States*

God blessed me with a wife and four children, plus 17 orphans in my care. I also lead a group of Christian believers intent on spreading the gospel to the entire world. Please pray for me and my work.

BENARD, *Kenya*

God has led me through many situations recently that show me He loves me and is there for me. He lives; and He is my Savior and friend! I had been a fake Christian for too long, and my relationship with God was nonexistent. That has all now changed! Thank you for your prayers.

GALEVA, *Papua New Guinea*

keep on asking and voting until those in favor of women's ordination get the "correct" guidance?

By asking us to pray again, it would appear the church does not believe that we got the correct guidance—or any guidance at all.

DERALD BARHAM
via e-mail

When I was 12, I longed to be a church elder and pastor. I had to put those dreams aside because the church was very strict in this matter. I changed my direction and became an engineer of food.

I'm 38 now, and I was thrilled to read this article on women's ordination. God is no respecter of persons. The call of God is for both men and women. I'm sure there are many women who have been called by God, and desire for ministry in their heart, who will have the opportunity to realize their calls for the honor and glory of God.

HULDA NAOMI CHAMBI MAMANI
Hortolandia, Brazil

Correction

Near the end of the January 2015 Adventist World news item "China: Reflections," the word "reputed" was used instead of the correct word, "reputiated." Our sincere apologies.

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

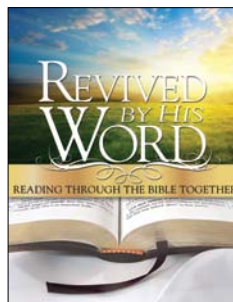


10,000 Steps

According to a study by the University of Oklahoma (United States), those who log at least 10,000 steps a day slash their odds of having cardiovascular disease risk factors by **69 percent**.

An Australian study found that people who use a pedometer app are 20 times more likely to exceed their step target. Pedometer apps are available for free for most smartphones.

Source: *Men's Health*



Revived *by* His Word

A Journey of Discovery Together Through the Bible
God speaks to us through His Word. Join with other believers in more than 180 countries who are reading a chapter of the Bible each day. To download the daily Bible Reading Guide, visit RevivedbyHisWord.org, or sign up to receive the daily Bible chapter by e-mail. To join this initiative, start here:

MAY 1, 2015 • Colossians 3

Remember me in your prayers. I pray to be free from my past and have a transformed life, restored health, and peace in my heart.

FENIX, Brazil

Please pray that I get a sponsor for my education.

JACOB, Uganda

My sons have stopped going to church. They drink alcohol, smoke, and take drugs. Please pray that they turn their lives completely around and follow and work for God for the rest of their lives.

BARWANA, Singapore

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



105 Years Ago

J. S. James

On April 2, 1910, Judson S. James baptized the first Adventist converts in southern India, 14 men and six women.

James went to India in 1906, and moved to the Tirunelveli district in the state of Tamil Nadu in 1908, living in a schoolhouse in the middle of a village. He and his wife operated a medical dispensary on the veranda of their house. A cholera epidemic forced them to spend most of their time working for the sick, with the aid of a nurse, Belle Shryock.

Local residents gave James .8 hectares (two acres) of land just outside the village, on which he built a brick-and-mortar residence; the first mission bungalow built in India with Adventist mission funds.

One of those baptized in April 1910 was Edward Duraiswamy Thomas, whose father was connected with the nearby Church of England training school. Thomas went on to be the first Indian to be ordained as an Adventist minister.

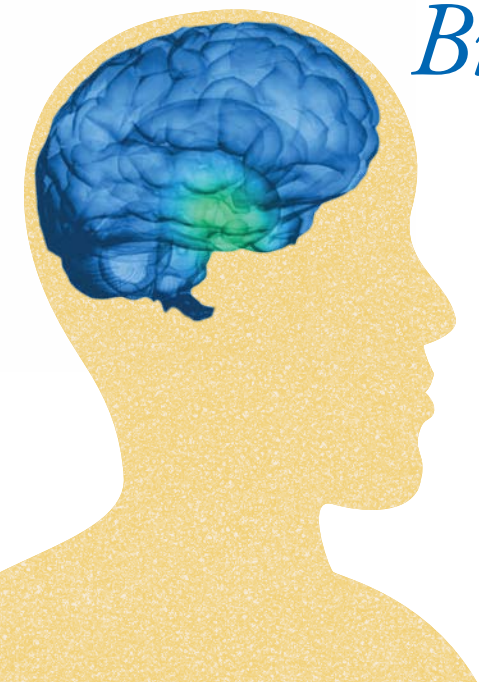
The James Memorial Higher Secondary School is named in honor of Judson James, and the E. D. Thomas Memorial Higher Secondary School is named in honor of Edward Thomas.

PHOTO: GC ARCHIVES

Brain Gain

Altruism—selflessness, serving others—has been shown to increase the size of the amygdala, that part of the brain that reacts to fear and pleasure. Amygdala may be larger and more responsive in altruists.

Source: *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences/The Rotarian*



top 5

The top five languages for conducting business in the world are:

- 1 ENGLISH
- 2 MANDARIN
- 3 FRENCH
- 4 ARABIC
- 5 SPANISH

Speaking more than one language may help delay symptoms of Alzheimer's disease.

Source: *The Rotarian*



Texting to Fight Malaria

Ninety-two percent of the world's malaria deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa, where low rates of faithfulness to treatment regimens compromise recovery. But researchers from the Harvard University School of Public Health found that text-message reminders increased the odds of completing treatment by about 5 percent.

Source: *The Rotarian*

“Behold, I come quickly...”

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

Publisher

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

Executive Publisher and Editor in Chief

Bill Knott

Associate Publisher

Claude Richli

International Publishing Manager

Chun, Pyung Duk

Publishing Board

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

Adventist World Coordinating Committee

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

Editors based in Silver Spring, Maryland

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

Editors based in Seoul, Korea

Pyung Duk Chun, Jae Man Park, Hyo Jun Kim

Online Editor

Carlos Medley

Operations Manager

Merle Poirier

Editors-at-large

Mark A. Finley, John M. Fowler

Senior Advisor

E. Edward Zinke

Financial Manager

Rachel J. Child

Editorial Assistant

Marvene Thorpe-Baptiste

Management Board

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

Art Direction and Design

Jeff Dever, Brett Melitti

Consultants

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

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

E-mail: worldeditor@gc.adventist.org

Web site: www.adventistworld.org

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

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

Vol. 11, No. 4

Where in the World Is This?



ANSWER: At the San Francisco Central Church in California, United States, Adventists in period costumes re-create Ellen White's vision about what might have transpired at the 1901 General Conference session in Battle Creek, Michigan, had delegates to that session demonstrated more humility. The 1901 session grappled with complicated issues related to the leadership and organization of the fast-growing movement. The finished production, "What Might Have Been," filmed in January, will be presented at the 2015 General Conference session in San Antonio, Texas, United States, July 2-11.

Another Reason to STOP

People who stop smoking feel less anxiety, depression, and stress than those who don't. Those who suffer from depression find their mood lifted as much from quitting smoking as from taking antidepressants.

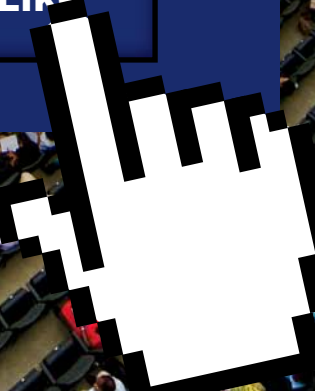
It typically takes six weeks after the smoking cycle is broken before mood improves.

Source: *British Medical Journal/Women's Health*





**If you can't
make it to
San Antonio,
raise your
hand.**



Don't miss a moment of the General Conference Session.

(July 2-11, 2015)

Follow our team of reporters on our live blogs at www.adventistreview.org
Get stories and pictures on Facebook, and tweets on Twitter



Like us on Facebook



Follow us on Twitter