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*A Weekly Newsletter from atoday.org*
Adventist Doctor Speaks at National Prayer Breakfast, Sparks Political Reactions

Submitted: Feb 14, 2013
By AT News Team

Dr. Benjamin Carson was the keynote speaker last week at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. He is an active member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and chief of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University Medical Center in Baltimore. The event is the closest thing to a truly national religious celebration that the country has.

The 25-minute speech has been greeted by positive comments from right-wing columnists and bloggers while being described by others as preachy and disrespectful of the United States President, who sat just one person away. Carson promoted at least four things that are popular among political conservatives in America—reducing the national debt, a flat tax, health savings accounts and the danger of “political correctness.” But he also pushed for expanding quality education, reducing the school dropout rate and health care for everybody, while advocating that elected officials “focus on how to solve problems” instead of “how to win.”

A number of references in the sermon sounded like a standard theme from right-wing evangelicals. “I’ve been asking people what concerns them about the spirituality and direction of our nation,” Carson said near the beginning. He asserted that it was appropriate to say, “Merry Christmas” instead of using less Christian-specific holiday greetings. “My mother would never allow herself to be a victim,” he stated in a description of his upbringing amidst inner-city poverty. He expressed concern that “the fabric of our nation is changing” and mentioned “moral decay” as a cause of the downfall of the Roman Empire.

He also told a parable that reveals a much more centrist perspective. Speaking of the eagle, the American national symbol, Carson asked, “Why is it able to fly so high? Because it has two wings...a left wing and a right wing,” he said, answering his rhetorical question.

Critics also dinged Carson for mentioning his newest book; for talking about his scholarship program that has seeded savings accounts for college education of 5,000 school children; and for getting in the web address for the program. Jason Hines, a doctoral student at Baylor University, wrote a piece for Spectrum, the journal of the largest organization of Adventist academics, which pointed out the lack of spiritual focus in Carson’s message. This was the National Prayer Breakfast and Carson had almost nothing to say about prayer.

Carson did begin by quoting Scripture, including 2 Chronicles 7:14, a key text of the prayer movement; “If my people … humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (ESV). His other three texts, from Proverbs 11, are less religious, mentioning knowledge, wisdom and generosity. He did state that “Jesus is my role model” at one point, although it was unclear how he might have developed that idea.

Overall, it was more an expression of Carson’s views on public policy and current issues than an attempt to feed the spiritual lives of the listeners. It should be kept in mind that Carson is a
physician and teacher, not a theologian, Bible scholar or pastor.

One source pointed out to Adventist Today that Carson ended with the kind of nationalistic narrative that joins patriotism and faith in a way that Adventists have long feared. He told the story behind the National Anthem, written near Fort McHenry in Baltimore Harbor during the War of 1812, and ended with key lines from the Pledge of Allegiance, “one nation under God … with liberty and justice for all.”

“I had the distinct impression that he was primarily speaking to President Obama,” an Adventist pastor who viewed the presentation on C-SPAN told Adventist Today. “I could not put out of my mind the fact that the president has been on the offensive lately and the opposition party was weakened in the election last fall. I would give anything to know what Obama was thinking while he listened to Carson.”

“Some Adventists will have mixed emotions about this event,” a church member who has worked professionally in government commented to Adventist Today. “We are not used to seeing one of our own so prominently involved in current affairs and surveys show that Adventists are about evenly split between conservative and liberal political views. Carson really embodies some of the key features of the contemporary Adventist experience in the United States. He is from an ethnic minority, as are most Adventists now; and he represents the professional success that education brings, as do most Adventists in one way or another. This could result in some interesting discussions.”
Elder Morris L. Venden, the widely-known and much loved Seventh-day Adventist preacher, passed to his death on Sunday evening, February 10. He was 80 years old and had struggled with Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD), a rare form of gradual cognitive loss that affected him in a form known as Pick's Disease*, for the past ten years, according to an announcement from the denomination's Upper Columbia Conference (UCC).

The pastor of several large congregations near Adventist colleges and universities over the years, Venden’s personal ministry was largely with students, professionals and young adults. When he retired from pastoral ministry in 1998, he became an associate speaker at the Voice of Prophecy media ministry and in addition to speaking for regular broadcasts was a guest speaker at many camp meetings, convocations and other events, including the 2000 World Ministerial Council at the time of the General Conference Session in Toronto.

During his many years of ministry, Venden is best known for advocating a grace-oriented perspective and for defending Adventist theology in a way that was acceptable to at least some evangelicals. He had a profound impact on the spiritual lives of large numbers of church members and others through his preaching and writing. For example, He is described as “the very first preacher who ever reached down deep into my stone-cold heart-of-hearts … with a gospel message that got right into my kitchen and would not let me go” by a member of New Earth Band, the country gospel group based in Reading, Pennsylvania. “He was my pastor for all of the years I attended Pacific Union College … and was such a blessing to me in shaping my daily walk with Jesus,” wrote Pastor Steve Dayen on the SDA Ministers page on Facebook yesterday.

Another ministerial student at the time remembers that at the height of the controversy kicked up by theologian Desmond Ford, during a meeting of the theology faculty and students at Pacific Union College, “after a series of papers 20 to 30 pages [each] parsing the Greek and Hebrew,” Venden passed out a two-and-a-half-page paper and made this simple statement; “You must be born again. You must be born again. You must be born again. There was something wrong with your first birth so you must be born again.”

In addition to the Pacific Union College Church, Venden was also senior pastor at the Collegeview Church on the campus of Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska; the La Sierra University Church in Riverside, California; the Keene (Texas) Church near Southwestern Adventist University; and the Azure Hills Church near Loma Linda, California. He focused on
salvation and spiritual life, teaching that both justification and sanctification are by faith. He was famous for his dry humor and his stories, contemporary parables.

He wrote more than 30 books, many of them originating in his sermon manuscripts or transcriptions. The first, *Salvation by Faith and Your Will*, was published by the now-defunct Southern Publishing Association in 1978. The most recent—other than some reprints with title changes—was *Why Didn’t They Tell Me?* in 2005 at Pacific Press. Among the most important of his books is a three-volume series published by the Review & Herald in 1984 covering the doctrines of the Adventist movement: *Common Ground* presented doctrines that Adventists hold in common with all Christians. *Higher Ground* reviewed doctrines that Adventists share with some other conservative Protestants, mainly focusing on spiritual growth. *Uncommon Ground* included those doctrines that are largely unique to Adventist faith.

Also widely quoted are Venden’s 1987 book *95 Theses on Righteousness by Faith* and his 1991 book *Hard to Be Lost*, both from Pacific Press. Perhaps his most controversial book is *Never Without an Intercessor* (1996, Pacific Press). An earlier version was published under the title *Good News and Bad News about the Judgment*.

Venden spoke and wrote much about a widespread concern of his generation of Adventists—assurance of salvation. Many felt that the way the atonement and the sanctuary were presented from the 1920s into the 1950s left a person without knowing that their salvation was certain in Christ Jesus, a fundamental faith assertion very common among American evangelicals. As assurance was more widely emphasized by Venden and other preachers, an ultra-conservative reaction developed, rooted in the fear that Adventists would shift to the “once-saved, always-saved” attitude that has resulted in lax personal and social ethics among many evangelicals.

As a result of his themes, Venden is controversial on both former Adventist and ultra-conservative Adventist web sites. For example, on the greatcontroversy.org blog, Kevin Paulson begins a review of the 1996 *Never Without an Intercessor* by describing Venden as “one of the most curious yet tragic figures of modern Adventist history.” Paulson states that as a student at Pacific Union College, Venden got him started in his personal devotional life, then writes, “Yet the fundamental errors of Morris Venden’s salvation theology and his view of the church’s spiritual priorities continue to prevent clarity of understanding among many contemporary Adventists. … The theology of Morris Venden perhaps best epitomizes the modern Adventist obsession with the dangers of legalism,” when, in Paulson’s opinion, the concern should be focused on “the swelling floodwaters of worldliness and laxity in today’s church.” A similar critique of Venden, some of it very lengthy, can be found on many independent, ultra-conservative Adventist web sites.

The Former Adventist Fellowship Forum presents a contrasting view of Venden’s work. Commenting on *95 Theses on Righteousness by Faith*, one man wrote, “I find it disgusting that Venden would rely on a reference to Luther in order to teach many doctrines directly opposed to the central core of the Reformation. [He] teaches that righteousness by faith comes through the combined efforts of man and God … the Roman Catholic view that Luther, Calvin and others fought so strongly against. [He] denies original sin.”
“Perhaps the fact that he got disagreement from both sides is evidence that he was solidly in the center of both Biblical theology and the Adventist heritage,” one pastor told Adventist Today. “It is certainly true that no one since H. M. S. Richards has had such a widespread and deeply spiritual influence on a generation of Adventists. What Richards was to the World War II generation, Venden has been to the Baby Boom generation, at least among Adventists in North America.”

A memorial service will be held in the Loma Linda University Church on Sunday, March 3, at 10 a.m. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that gifts be sent in memory of Venden to the SonBridge Community Center in College Place, Washington, or to Maranatha Schools and One-Day Churches. He is survived by his wife, Marilyn; son, Lee; and daughter-in-law, Marji; daughters, Lynn and LuAnn; grandchildren, Kris, Lindsey and Mark; his brother, Louis, and sister-in-law, Margie.

Pastor Lee Venden, Morris Venden's son and a minister on the UCC staff, said, "Dad will be remembered for the one string on his violin that he consistently talked about, Jesus, and the privilege available to everyone to have a meaningful friendship with Him. At this point, it seems clear that Dad will be able to sleep this disease off, the long sleep from our perspective; the short sleep from his."

Most of Venden’s books can be purchased through www.adventistbookcenter.com and used copies of his out-of-print titles can be obtained through www.LNFbooks.com as well as the major online book sellers. Many audio and video files of Venden preaching can be found at www.allaboutjesusseminars.org. Many articles by Venden can be found through the General Conference Archives web site by searching the collections of Adventist periodicals there.

Note: Because of peculiarities of our web hosting technology that we do not fully understand, some readers may not be able to click on the links above and successfully get to the referenced sites. It may be necessary to copy the link, go to your browser and paste it into the browser.

*Pick's Disease* shares some characteristics with the far-better-known but equally tragic Alzheimer's, but its early symptoms usually affect the personality and emotions rather than the memory. A person with Pick's may develop urges to consume large quantities of food and may display other forms of out-of-character behavior. As these symptoms intensify and speech and other activities gradually slow down, MRI examinations of the brain show a telltale Pick's-pattern loss of tissue. There is no known current medical protocol to reverse Pick's, though medications can alleviate symptoms and tests are under way to study promising new treatments. Pick's patients, on average, survive eight years after the appearance of first symptoms, which may strike as early as age 45. Other forms of Frontotemporal Dementia are known by other names.
Pastor Ted Wilson, president of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is in Tahiti this week. He met last week with Oscar Temaru, president of French Polynesia, an overseas department of the Republic of France.

The Adventist leader met with President Temaru and other government officials at the president’s office in Papeete, Tahiti. President Temaru expressed appreciation for the positive impact the Adventist Church has on the South Pacific country, adding that Adventists are “good citizens.” Wilson, speaking in French, expressed his appreciation for the religious liberty granted by the government. As an overseas area of France, the island groups are given considerable autonomy, allowing for greater religious freedom than granted by laws in France.

Later in their conversation, Wilson illustrated the Adventist Church’s belief in wholistic living. Gesturing toward a table in the president’s office, he said, “When one leg is missing, the table can’t stand. Similarly, people need their spiritual, physical, mental and social needs met. We believe God wants us to develop all of these attributes in harmony.”

Before praying with President Temaru and his senior staff, Wilson read Micah 6:8, a Bible verse that advocates justice, mercy and humility. “That is the wish God has for you, your colleagues and your staff,” he said.

Earlier in the week, Wilson met with Gaston Tong Sang, the mayor of Bora Bora and former president of French Polynesia. Sang later made the 45-minute flight to Tahiti to attend an Adventist event that ran February 7 to 9. During his Sabbath sermon, Wilson urged an audience of 4,000 to prioritize spiritual development, citing the Old Testament story of Elijah, who advocated a return to godliness. “God is calling us to be Elijahs in our modern world,” Wilson said.

“This rally has been a profound blessing for us,” said Roger Tetuanui, president of the French Polynesia Mission. “It has brought our church family together … But most important has been the spiritual impact of the messages. We feel unified and spiritually energized.”

Local Adventist leaders credited the strong turnout to members who brought their friends and neighbors to the event. There are about 4,600 Adventists in French Polynesia, spread over some 130 islands. There are 37 local churches in the country, as well as an Adventist college and a media center.

Adventist missionaries first sailed to the island groups on a boat called the Pitcairn. The British colony of Pitcairn Island is an historic outpost of Adventist faith in the South Pacific.

This report is based on a release from the Adventist News Network (ANN), the official news service of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination.
Producer of ‘The Adventists’ PBS Documentary to Release Two Sequels this Spring

Submitted: Feb 11, 2013
By AT News Team

A sequel to the award-winning Public Broadcasting System (PBS) documentary, The Adventists will be released on April 7, World Health Day. The production company of award-winning filmmaker Martin Doblmeier has announced The Adventists 2 and a documentary on Adventist schools to be released later in the spring.

The first film continues the focus on Adventist health care with footage and interviews from Adventist hospitals and clinics in Haiti, Peru, Malawi, China, the Dominican Republic and one of the legendary medical launches on the Amazon River. In January, Doblmeier’s team interviewed Dr. Ben Carson on location at Johns Hopkins University Medical Center in Baltimore, one of the best known Adventist physicians.

“We interviewed Dr. Carson in order to hear his personal perspective on the wholistic approach to health care, spiritually, Adventist missionaries and the new Ben Carson School of Medicine,” said a statement from Doblmeier’s company. The Carson School of Medicine was opened last year at Babcock University In Nigeria.

The documentary on Adventist education will “profile the second largest private education system in the world and the commitment to educate the whole person; body, mind and spirit,” stated the production company announcement. It will include segments from the Bronx-Manhattan School in New York City, Holbrook Indian School in Arizona, Fletcher Academy in North Carolina, Spencerville Academy in the Maryland suburbs of Washington DC and Oakwood Academy in Huntsville, Alabama. “The viewer will experience the challenge of preparing today’s youth for a life of service.”

Doblmeier has produced more than 25 major documentary films that have aired on PBS, ABC, NBC, the BBC, The History Channel and other networks in the United States and abroad. His first theatrical release, Bonhoeffer, opened in cities across the country in 2003. Journey Films was founded in 1983 as a television and film production company specializing in religion, faith and spirituality. The Adventists was originally released in the spring of 2010 on PBS stations and became an Amazon best-selling DVD.

Short trailers and additional information on the two new films are available at:
http://journeyfilms.com/
The Purpose of Prophecy

Submitted: Feb 13, 2013
By Stephen Foster

It would seem certain that we have all heard of the Spirit of Prophecy. What it is exactly is undoubtedly disputed—and isn’t the topic of this blog.

What I’d like to consider is the purpose of prophecy. That is to say, for all who consider the Bible indispensable — as vitally important and God-inspired information—what is prophecy’s purpose? Is prophecy itself a vitally important and God-inspired feature or genre of Biblical literature; and if so, exactly why is it important to us?

The Bible is, of course, above all about the love of God (and the God of love), from a Judeo-Christian perspective. The Bible presents a narrative of how God has chosen, by means of love, to deal with His human earthly creation within the contexts of free will and evil. In the Scriptural narrative, He demonstrated this love in Person by means of Self-sacrifice.

Prophecy is the God-inspired revelation of what He wants those who claim/believe Him to know. In the 66 books that comprise the canonical narrative, the first prophecy we come to is the one which encapsulates the entire remaining narrative writ large—Genesis 3:15. It is the prophecy describing God’s plan.

Is the first prophecy the prototypical prophecy? Does it reveal to us what prophecy is all about in terms of purpose? It tells us what will happen and why; but not how it will happen. Subsequent prophecies, particularly those of the prophet Isaiah, certainly do reveal, or detail, how. (Isaiah 7:14 comes to mind for example.)

Since we, or actually since Adam and Eve, were told what would happen; it would seem that it was important to God that they know what would happen. On the other hand, since Adam and Eve would not live to witness that prophecy’s total fulfillment, why was it important for them to know what would happen?

Perhaps the obvious answer would be that some aspects of the prophecy would commence immediately and would therefore directly affect them. So apparently God wanted them cognizant of what was to immediately happen and why.

My understanding is that this prophecy was repeated orally and recorded by inspiration in Scripture because God intends for whoever claims Him as their God to know what He plans to do in this Controversy; as those who claim Him as their God are on His side (or ‘team’).

This is essentially what, I believe, Amos 3:7 is telling us; is it not? God will tell us, by way of His prophets, what He will do—or permit to happen—that is of importance. The question that remains however is “why?”

It would seem that one way to determine this is to study the history, circumstances, and messages
of the Biblical prophets.

By definition, God’s prophets are those who speak for Him, as in “thus saith the Lord.” Obviously, prophets speak to those whom God Himself intends to inform. Amos was such a prophet.

God informs whom He will for the same reason He does anything/everything; because He loves. Appropriately then, prophecy is given as a gift; in the spirit that all gifts should be given—and for the purposes that all spiritual gifts are given.

The purpose of spiritual gifts such as prophecy, i.e. the reason they are given, is for the building up (or edification) and the equipping of the body of believers known as Christ’s church. Ephesians 4:11-16.

But Christ’s church is built up, edified, strengthened, and equipped to do what? 1 Corinthians 12:10 certainly gives us several clues about the nature of the gifts given for this very purpose; but we need to know what is the gift of prophecy’s role in this edifying, strengthening, and equipping? In other words what does prophecy edify, strengthen, and equip God’s people to do?

Jesus, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micah, Paul, Peter, James, and John—to whom Jesus revealed that which “must shortly come to pass,” and who “bore record” of same—all prophesied for God; with Jesus doing so as God.

Their messages varied, but they were not in conflict; as their purposes were aligned. They were not in conflict and their purposes were aligned because each prophet’s messages (all) emanated from the exact same Source.

The Source of all Biblical prophecy is the Holy Spirit of the living God. Is that a reality that needs to be absorbed before we go any further?
I received this letter from a very special friend. How should I respond?

Andy,


The primary reason is that it is a survey and analysis of Biblical answers to the problem of suffering, based on deep study of the scriptures, and teaching a university course on the topic several times. It is very clearly written, non-polemic, and thoughtful.

The secondary reason is that the autobiographical material included to help the reader understand the background to his analysis, and how he moved from being a fundamentalist Biblical literalist to an agnostic who is not sure whether there is a God--but who believes that if there IS a Christian God--who intervenes in the world, but chooses not to allay suffering--He is morally repugnant.

This is the most clearly written expression I have ever seen of my own path in rejecting the Christian God. Ehrman came to it at a later stage in his life than I, but it seems to have been no less painful, and he was probably more self-aware in the process. For me, most of the transformation happened during our four years at PUC--although the Burbank Church helped me hold on to the notion of the church as a social institution for somewhat longer.

Where Ehrman cites Dostoevsky, "The Brothers Karamazov," on not "taking a ticket" to God's stage play on Earth, I would probably go with LeGuin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas." But the point is the same: No "greater good" can justify the deliberate infliction of suffering on the innocent.

I'd be interested in your reaction to "God's Problem." It's available on Amazon, of course, and in particular there's a Kindle version, which is what I read.
A Prayer for Coming Home

Submitted: Feb 13, 2013
By Debonnaire Kovacs

Today I declare to the YHWH my God, with deepest gratitude, that I have come into the land that YHWH promised to give me. Wandering gypsies (not by blood, just by spirit) were my ancestors; they came from Normandy, from Scotland, from Ulster into the foreign land of the New World (and some were already here long before). They became a great family, loud and populous. They loved music and laughter and storytelling—oh, how they did love storytelling!—and fighting and arguing, for good or ill. . . but most of all, they loved their God and each other. And they loved this church.

When life treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing pain and sorrow and loss and poverty on us, we cried to YHWH, the God of our ancestors; YHWH heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression.

YHWH saw our tears and walked with us through the nights and the valleys. YHWH brought us out of the bondage of old sin and addiction with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, usually in quiet and unseen power, but sometimes with signs and wonders. Some of our women dreamed dreams and some of us saw visions and heard a song in the night.

YWHW brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk (from my goats) and honey (from the neighbor’s bees), a land that brings forth vegetables and fruits bountifully. Still, in this place, there is pain and sorrow and loss, and still YHWH of our mothers walks with us.

So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O YHWH, have given me. I share the milk and the eggs with Your beloved ones, and (when summer comes) I shall share the vegetables and the fruits and the herbs. I share the first of the stories and the best of the songs and the highest words of praise I can form.

I set it down before YHWH my God and bow down before YHWH my God. Then I, together with the friends and the strangers, the known and the unknown, the understood and the misunderstood who reside among us, shall celebrate with all the bounty that YHWH our God has given to us and to our community.

Amen!

Based on Deut. 26:1-11, with a little of Joel 2 and other bits and pieces thrown in.
SAU Institute of Archaeology Assists in Excavation of "The City of David"

Submitted: Feb 13, 2013
By Debonnaire Kovacs

Here are two articles on the same subject--one from AT staff and one from SAU's Archaeology team.

A display called “The Battle Over King David” has been causing excitement at Southern Adventist University. Opening on November 7, 2012, and running through April, 2014, at the university’s Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum, the exhibit contains pottery, stone vessels, coins, and stamp seals excavated with the help of students of Southern’s Institute of Archaeology. For four years, the Institute, under the direction of Dr. Michael Hasel, has been taking students on summer trips to excavate the ancient Fortress of Elah, near the Israeli city of Beit Shemesh. “The excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa have been making headlines since 2008,” said Justo Morales, coordinator for the Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum. “The oldest Hebrew inscription (or piece of writing) in existence was discovered there by students, along with strong evidence that the Fortress of Elah may be where the Israelites camped before David had his famed battle with Goliath.” [Link](https://www.southern.edu/News/DispForm.aspx?ID=787) (You may also see a photo of this important inscription here.)
Interpretation of the site remains controversial. A Wikipedia article says, *Discoveries at Khirbet Qeiyafa are significant to the debate about the veracity of the Biblical account of the United Monarchy at the beginning of Iron Age II. As no archaeological finds were found that could corroborate claims of the existence of a magnificent biblical kingdom, various scholars have advanced the opinion that the kingdom was no more than a small tribal entity. Garfinkel, [professor from the Hebrew University of Israel, in charge of the dig] who said in 2010 that the debate could not "be answered by the Qeiyafa excavations", is of the opinion that "what is clear, however, is that the kingdom of Judah existed already as a centrally organized state in the tenth century B.C.E"*

It is possible that there is some misunderstanding of what constitutes “magnificent” in biblical terms. CNN posted a video in which some scholars argued that the site of “not evidence of a powerful biblical state,” not “some sort of great empire ruled from a wonderful capital,” or a “great empire with great armies.” As is often the case in biblically or religiously based controversy, it sometimes seems as if the “con” arguments are disagreeing with something no one really believes to begin with. Does anyone think David’s kingdom was what we would define as “magnificent,” “powerful,” or a great empire”? Solomon’s perhaps, might lay brief claim to some of those adjectives, but still only in comparison to local and contemporary concepts.


To read more about the opening of the special exhibit, “The Battle for King David,” go here: [https://www.southern.edu/archaeology/Documents/DigSight_21.pdf](https://www.southern.edu/archaeology/Documents/DigSight_21.pdf) The display is free and open to the public. For information, call Justo Morales, Museum Coordinator, at 423-236-2027

The following account of the excavation and Southern’s three-year part in it is reprinted with permission from the Archaeology Institute’s Newsletter, *Dig Sight*, Summer, 2011 issue.

The Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostracon, or inked potsherd, was found in 2003 and it is possibly the earliest sample of Hebrew writing. A replica of this important piece will be included in the new exhibit.
Photographs for this article, as well as more fascinating photographs and articles about Southern’s archaeology program can be found at
https://www.southern.edu/archaeology/Documents/DigSight%202017.pdf

KHIRBET QEIYAF 2011 SEASON
For the third consecutive year, Southern Adventist University’s Institute of Archaeology, in partnership with The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, excavated the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa, a biblical city from the time of King David. The city, identified as biblical Sha’arayim (Josh. 15, 36; 1 Sam. 17:52; 1 Chr. 4:31), overlooks the Elah Valley, a principal thoroughfare in biblical times that led to Jerusalem. The setting for the battle between David and Goliath was precisely this valley, and Khirbet Qeiyafa rests atop one of the hills overlooking the road. This is likely the reason the city was built as a garrison town or fortress during the reign of Saul or David.

Since 2007, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem’s team, led by Prof. Yosef Garfinkel, has been uncovering the massive fortifications of this city, including two contemporaneous gates that have been linked to its biblical identification (Sha’arayim means “two gates” in Hebrew). In 2009 Southern Adventist University joined the project and began working in the area south of the western gate (Area D). In addition to the excavation team, the Institute of Archaeology brings a group of survey and information technology specialists to coordinate the survey work and help maintain the electronic database. Using a state-of-the-art electronic theodolite and a GPS system, the team is able to record measurements with clinical precision and produce accurate, digital architectural top plans daily.

Last summer, the Southern team, under the direction of Dr. Michael G. Hasel, uncovered the remains of a large Late Persian/Early Hellenistic period (late fourth-century B.C.) building measuring approximately 6,000 square feet. This summer 50 Southern students and staff completed the excavation of the Hellenistic building and uncovered a major olive press installation adjacent to the building in the south. The press was built on bedrock and was plastered on the floors and walls. This is not only the first olive press excavated at Qeiyafa, it is one of the earliest examples of this type of industry in the Hellenistic period in Israel.

Further to the south, an Iron Age (early tenth-century B.C.) stone quarry was found. The bedrock was cut into very large rectangular blocks that were then chiseled into smaller boulders to be used in the fortification of the city. Excavators also discovered a Hellenistic or Roman period pickaxe (dolabra) in this area, indicating that the quarry continued to be used in later periods. Nearby, the remains of three Iron Age rooms emerged, and several partially restorable vessels were found on the surface above bedrock. A standing stone (massebah) stood in the center of one of these rooms, indicating that this might have been a cultic area in the Iron Age.

Hellenistic activity outside the olive press installation was limited to a large pit filled with Hellenistic material. As many as 24 buckets full of pottery shards were pulled out of the pit in one day! This pit was likely the olive press installation’s refuse pile, where broken jars and other vessels were dumped. The Iron Age remains were no less rich. Just north of the Hellenistic pit, the Southern team discovered the best-preserved example of an Iron Age floor at Khirbet Qeiyafa. The remains of five storage jars, two bowls, one Ashdod Ware juglet, and one very large, eight-handled krater were found on this plaster and pebblestone surface. Other Iron Age layers east of the pit yielded similar finds.
Altogether, more than 25,000 pieces of pottery and nine semi-restorable vessels were dug up this season in Area D. Other significant finds include several iron blades, a flint blade, a faience scarab seal, a bone seal with lion and man, an iron ring, part of a rare libation vessel, part of an Aramaic ostracon (pottery shard with writing), and dozens of silver and bronze coins. Dr. Martin Klingbeil, associate director of the Institute of Archaeology, is an expert on ancient seals and was particularly excited about the prospect of examining these objects: “Finding a seal in an excavation is always a highlight, since it represents a comparatively scarce object which can contribute important data towards the socio-political and religious understanding of the site.”

None were as excited, however, as the students who found the artifacts. “I’ve always wanted to go on a dig, but I never imagined I would personally find two of the most important finds of the season,” said Justin Alexander, a pastoral care major who found the scarab seal and the Aramaic ostracon. “I didn’t care for the early schedule at first,” explained theology graduate Jennifer Fos, “but once we started finding things, I was hooked!” Jennifer was in charge of recording the pottery and objects in the field.

Weekend tours also provided students with an opportunity to see other biblical sites, an experience that was as educational as it was spiritually enriching. “Having communion at the Garden Tomb was probably my favorite part,” recalled Stella Tsui, a pre-physical therapy major. “[Communion] never really clicked for me before, but seeing the place where Jesus died and was buried . . . that really put things into context. It was a spiritually uplifting experience that I will never forget.”

With three seasons of excavation completed, the Institute of Archaeology’s next goal is to finish the analysis and processing of the finds in order to publish the results in the next two years. “With the conclusion of our excavations at Qeiyafa, we now come to the more difficult task of publishing the final results of these three seasons of excavations,” stated Michael G. Hasel, director of the Institute of Archaeology. The report will be published in two volumes. The first will focus on the architectural descriptions and plans of the site. The second volume will contain the report on pottery, stone artifacts, and other finds. [Note: Adventist Today has been told that these volumes are still being prepared as of this writing. No publication date has been announced.]

More information:
https://www.southern.edu/archaeology/lynnhwoodarchaeologicalmuseum
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khirbet_Qeiyafa
https://www.southern.edu/News/DispForm.aspx?ID=787
I am an introvert who ranks smack-dab in the middle of the non-extrovert side of the Meyers-Briggs scale. I’m not shy, but quiet with a yen for discussion rather than argument. I read “Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can’t Stop Talking” because though I have never felt marginalized or looked down upon because of my quiet ways, I have seen it happen to others.

The book’s introduction sets the stage. Don’t skip it! Here author/attorney Susan Cain shares in story form two examples of the power of introverts, along with an informal assessment of where the reader falls on the introvert/extrovert scale. I took the test and was ranked exactly where past tests have placed me on the scale.

The author goes on to illustrate how extroverts initially tend to become overly popular, especially in the US, where “everybody” is encouraged to exhibit extroverted ways and minimize quieter traits. But she also illustrates the power that introverts can attain. So much so, in fact, that after the first few chapters I started wondering if the writer was carrying the argument for introversion too far, as an apologetic for quieter ways.

But as she lays out the strengths of introverts as compared to those of extroverts, the book’s rational premise emerges: Yes, extroverts have many attributes that we all need in our world, but if we build only on extroverted characteristics (which dominantly lead to positions of leadership and power in American business) the downsides of that imbalance can be spectacular.

The extroverted world needs the counteracting influence of introverts. It needs the focus and drive that introverts bring to music, the deep-thinking and caution they invest in problem-solving, and the negotiating skills they have for mapping a course to a bright future.

Among the many interesting results of studies and research the author shares are these highlights:

1. Studies of various animal groups show differences in response to danger according to “shyness” or “boldness.” During times of peace “shy” animals excel, but in times of danger or trouble, the “bold” are more successful.
2. Brainstorming is better done individually than as a group activity.
3. The most effective, creative business offices have flexible spaces—spaces for individuals to be alone or get together in groups of 2-3, and larger spaces like reading rooms or café-like venues where one can be around people without necessarily interacting.
4. Introverts can act like extroverts and become very good at it. But they need to understand the good reasons why putting on such an act is important—or they will find the experience very unfulfilling and draining.
5. Extroverted leaders do better than introverted leaders when workers are passive; introverted leaders tend to do better than extroverted leaders when workers are proactive.
6. Introverts seem to do best when they have restorative niches to which to resort regularly—especially when they are being called on to act in extroverted ways in the course of their duties.

I especially like what the author says about collaborating and working together on page 93, and I wonder if we couldn’t adopt it more in our Church, “The way forward, I’m suggesting, is not to stop collaborating face-to-face, but to refine the way we do it. For one thing, we should actively seek out symbiotic introvert-extrovert relationships in which leadership and other tasks are divided according to people’s natural strengths and temperaments. The most effective teams are composed of a healthy mix of introverts and extroverts, studies show, and so are many leadership structures.”

Good counsel for any organization, business, or church in a world where extroverts can often “take over,” with ruinous consequences. Warren Buffett, a confirmed introvert, has taken that insight billions of times to the bank.

Edwin A. Schwisow

Those of us who have lived and traveled internationally are particularly conscious of the self-marketing propensities of American extroversion. America is the land of Hollywood and more, and much of American business has a carnival tone to it (not only used-car sales-people, but popular musicians and certainly many TV ads). Quietude seems too frequently to be the kiss of social alienation in America, a relegation to wall-flower subsistence well south of Main Street. Thanks, Barbara, for a review that promises a nurturing read for a lifelong Adventist who has always felt guilty for being more comfortable gathering thoughts than spilling them.... And how appropriate that the review comes at a time when we remember Morris Venden, one of the most popular introverted preachers in history of the Church, in the tradition of H.M.S. Richards Sr.

Elaine Nelson

The great thinkers and philosophers have usually been introverts. Quiet and solitude is required to meditate, think and use the mind. Both types are needed today, and usually the personality is directed toward that pursuit.

Anonymous
BE not MINE, Mine VALENTINE

Submitted: Feb 14, 2013
By Timo Onjukka

Mid the month of winters day,
hark the words St. Valentine.
Every one in his own way
wants to say "be mine".

If were i could be so bold
to wish instead for this;
words my lips for thou foretold
that such could share much bliss.

Were thou mine i'd gleeful dance;
mine heart would joyful sing!
Yet rather than mere entranced
i'd loves great freedom bring.

Fain i'd wish thou to be mine,
would lock away thine heart.
Risk not spill, too sweet a wine
which spoileth from the start.

My wish instead for thou my friend,
no truer wish, mine valentine;
my wish for thou, with no sure end,
that will thou heart be thine?

For 'till thy heart is thine, is thine,
thou surely cannot empty, give
to hungered hearts such love divine,
and yet, too mortal, live.

Own thy heart, and give it not,
demand it neither spilled.
Know sure it canst be bought,
or cheap with words be filled.

Give thine heart what she demand;
that liberty hold tender, fast.
Liberty, she's loves last stand;
love when free, shall ever last.

Do not be mine, be thine, i cry;
bring thy heart, love's demand.
If, as thine, thou choose be mine,
then give thou i mine hand...

Mine hand can never, absent love,
touch my lips to love's sweet tea;
nor my lips speak truth above,
until content, that hearts love free.

Do not chain or be entwined,
Set free the love that set you free;
there our hearts might ever find
love ever sail 'tween me and thee.

Fair winds that blow this sea of love;
trust fair the winds that blow.
And high on clouds and stars above
Only God doth four winds know.

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