or Blessed?
Keeping faith and raising a family in Siberia
**Cover Story**

**Banished, or Blessed?**

By Barbara J. Huff

Sasha and Valentina Ivanov were banished to Siberia. But that wasn’t the end of their journey.

**World Vista**

**Arise, Shine, Jesus Is Coming!**

By Ted N. C. Wilson

We are called to be ready when Jesus comes.

**Devotional**

**Crooked Wood, Upright Posture**

By Gerald A. Klingbeil

Jesus always straightens what is crooked, whether physical or spiritual.

**Fundamental Beliefs**

**In Awe of You**

By Marcos Paseggi

There’s so much to admire about God.

**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 Alamodome 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

Notice is hereby given that the next regular meeting of the members of the General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 7, 2015, for the purpose of electing the Board of Directors and for the transaction of any business that may come before the meeting.

Daisy Jane F. Orion, Corporate secretary

General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists

**Departments**

**World Report**

3 News Briefs
6 News Feature
10 One-Day Church
11 NAD News
14 NAD Update
17 NAD Perspective
18 NAD Letters

**World Health**

Potlucks: Fun or Fury?

19

**Bible Study**

Living in the Holy Spirit’s Power

43

**Bible Questions Answered**

The Difference Between Wealth and Desire

42

**Idea Exchange**

Available in 10 languages online

www.adventistworld.org

The Adventist World (ISSN 1557-5519), one of the Adventist Review family of publications, is printed monthly by the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Copyright © 2015. Send address changes to your local conference membership desk or www.adventistworld.org. For information about advertising, contact Glen Gohlke, 909·329·7250 (glengohlke9msn.com). Printed in the U.S.A. Vol. 11, No. 6, June 2015.
“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to prove you, as though something strange were happening to you” (1 Peter 4:12, RSV).∗

There’s no way to pretend we didn’t know. We were advised and cautioned, even warned: The life of discipleship will at some point intersect the path of suffering.

Perhaps it’s our native optimism that makes us forget the reality about which Jesus and His closest friends reminded us. Perhaps it’s the distortions of biblical truth preached by those who advertise only a gospel of prosperity and peace that cause us to assume that suffering for the Name will be anomalous and unusual.

Our favorite hymns are filled with messages of peace and joy—and rightly so, for these are also mileposts on the pilgrim way. But where are the hymns that remind us that those who stay faithful to Jesus will almost invariably face persecution? These were the comfort—and the courage—of the church of the Reformation.

Five hundred years ago Martin Luther wisely wrote:

“For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and pow’r are great; and armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.”

A generation ago Martin Luther King, Jr., forcefully recalled the painfully honest African-American spirituals decrying slavery and oppression. Who is teaching us such songs today?

Where are the Sabbath morning messages that teach us to expect as normal the anger and hostility of a world that doesn’t honor Jesus as Lord? The last of Jesus’ eight beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-12)—the one about expecting persecution for being His disciple—is the longest and, with the commentary He added, amounts to more than 40 percent of His famous words.

As you read this month’s remarkable feature story of courage and resilience in Communist-era Russia, pray for the thousands of fellow believers around the globe who are even now bearing the cross in ways we will never fully know until we gather in the kingdom.

∗ Bible texts credited to RSV are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1946, 1952, 1971, by Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

Continued on next page
Her plans to receive the free surgery to her doctor. The doctor had expressed disbelief that anyone would provide her with such an expensive operation at no cost, so she had presented him with a flyer about the event.

Sometime later the doctor found himself speaking with another patient who urgently required an operation but didn’t have the insurance to cover the bill. “How am I going to come up with the $25,000?” she asked. The doctor handed her the flyer for the free clinic.

Evangelist Mark Finley joined McKey at the front of the auditorium to share a montage of local television news reports about the free clinic. He reminded the audience that the event had aimed to introduce San Antonio to the Seventh-day Adventist Church before thousands of Adventist believers arrived in July for the General Conference session in the Alamodome.

“The major news in that city was ‘Seventh-day Adventists … helping people,’” Finley said. “When we go for the General Conference session in that city, people will know who Seventh-day Adventists are.”

Hundreds of thousands of Adventist young people shared Jesus’ love in 132 countries for Global Youth Day, setting a new record that surpassed organizers’ expectations.

Gilbert Cangy, Youth Ministries Department director for the Seventh-day Adventist world church, declared the third annual event a big success.

“I daresay today was a huge moment for the church and a huge moment for youth ministry,” Cangy said by telephone on Saturday night, March 21. “It was a pivotal moment. It proved once again that if you create an environment where young people can be involved, they will always surpass your expectations.”

Young people were challenged on Global Youth Day to “become Jesus’ hands and feet” by finding ways to show His love to others. Among other things, young people sang, visited hospitals, and swapped fruit for cigarettes. The motto for Global Youth Day was “Be the Sermon.”

Activities were held in 132 of the world’s 192 countries as recognized by the United Nations, and 73 percent of participants were young people between the ages of 13 and 34, said Cangy, the organizer of the event. He noted that this represented a critical age group that has disengaged from the church in large numbers in recent years.

“Global Youth Day goes against this trend,” he said. “It shows that our youth are willing to engage in the mission of the church if we are willing to give them leadership. I am very proud of our young people.”

It may never be known exactly...
how many people participated in Global Youth Day, but metrics from Google and on social media indicate that the number is up from the previous two years. Egypt, for example, was the only country in the Middle East and North Africa to host activities last year, but this year it was joined by Lebanon, Jordan, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, Cangy said.

In another first, footage from the event was live-streamed online and on the church’s Hope Channel from 19 uplink sites over 24 hours.

Virgil R. Bakulu tweeted from Manado, Indonesia, that his group had successfully given away fruit in exchange for packs of cigarettes. At a police station in South Africa, young people expressed their gratitude to officers by singing “Amazing Grace.”

Youth in India passed out food to homeless children, and a group in Botswana waved at passersby.

Ted N. C. Wilson, president of the Adventist world church, encouraged youth to go beyond Global Youth Day and be a sermon every day until Jesus’ return. Wilson, who has participated in every annual youth day, spoke from a gathering of 5,000 youth in Colombia.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has come a long way from the 60-minute *Let’s Talk* television program in the 2000s, when the Adventist Church president took questions from young people. “Now we have a 24-hour program from 19 locations in the world, involving the youth not just in the discussion but in the planning and recording,” said André Brink, associate communication director for the Adventist Church, who videotaped segments for *Let’s Talk* and prepared a video feature on the 2015 event. “This is truly amazing.”

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed concerns about growing religious intolerance worldwide during a private meeting with Adventist Church leader Ted N. C. Wilson, and he invited the Seventh-day Adventist Church to work with the U.N. in helping people.

Wilson, the first Adventist Church president to meet with a U.N. chief, noted that the church has long supported religious liberty and said it was willing to team up on initiatives that followed Christ’s ministry of helping people physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually.

Ban met with Wilson; John Graz, director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department; and Graz’s associate Ganoune Diop on April 6 for a 45-minute meeting at United Nations headquarters in New York.

The meeting was arranged with the personal involvement of Ambassador Joseph Verner Reed, dean of the U.N. undersecretaries-general and a friend of Seventh-day Adventists, who regularly corresponded with Diop to make the meeting a reality.

“It was a real privilege to meet the secretary-general and to hear his appeal for assistance for humanity,” Wilson told *Adventist World*.

“Seventh-day Adventists should be ready to witness for the Lord anywhere we go and to testify of God’s blessing in our lives and what we can do in His name,” he said. “The world is waiting for this type of heaven-inspired testimony with clear answers to today’s problems.”

Ban spoke about global issues such as poverty and a lack of education before voicing his concern about religious intolerance. He also expressed appreciation for the Adventist Church’s work in promoting religious liberty as well as education, health, and humanitarian aid through the Adventist Development and Relief Agency. ADRA has worked with the U.N. in assisting refugees in the Middle East and elsewhere.
Where 15 Percent of Baptisms Are Former Adventists

South America leads the way in reaching out to former members.

By Andrew McChesney

G. T. Ng, executive secretary of the Adventist world church, took a 10-day tour of three countries to find out why churches in the South American Division are so successful in baptizing and retaining members.

What he found surprised him. The Adventist Church in South America does more than organize robust evangelistic meetings and community initiatives, like its counterparts in other parts of the world. It asks church clerks, whose responsibilities typically revolve around bookkeeping, to oversee a unique program that reaches out to former Adventists.

The results of the Reencounter program are stunning. Rebaptisms have grown to a staggering 12 to 15 percent of all baptisms in the past three years, a record in the Adventist world church.

"The DNA is that church clerks go beyond their traditional role of recordkeeping of membership," Ng told Adventist World.

"To rectify the tragic loss of members, church clerks are trained to engage in local church membership care," he said. "They take note of missing members. They organize visitation teams to reclaim lost members. It's an innovative approach to redeem believers who have been lost twice."

Ng has prioritized membership retention during his five years in office. While the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a worldwide membership of 18.5 million, the figure would be much higher if not for the fact that nearly a third of the members baptized during the past 40 years have dropped their membership or simply gone missing, according to statistics that his office released last fall.

"As a church, the retention rate of new believers has been dismal," Ng said.

Adventists leaders around the world have sought to reach out to former members over the years, but no region has been quite as successful as the South American Division, church leaders said.

Ng made his first trip to Chile, Peru, and Ecuador in March to study why rebaptisms accounted for an astounding 29,866 of the division's 195,509 baptisms in 2014. Those figures represent a steady growth from 28,299 rebaptisms among 190,314 baptisms in 2013, and 24,732 baptisms among 174,767 baptisms in 2012. The division has 2,333,487 members.

"Not all of the rebaptisms were the result of the Reencounter program," said Magdiel E. Pérez Schulz, executive secretary of the South American Division. "But we can surely state that the majority were, and every year the number of rebaptisms are increasing."

"Welcome Back, Prodigal Son!"

Reencounter was born in 2012 when an annual meeting of secretaries from around the South American Division revealed that a significant number of members were leaving the church and that the secretaries lacked any plan to try to win them back.

When contacted, many former members expressed a desire to return, but the idea of attending church without someone visiting them first with a personal invitation to return left them feeling scared, ashamed, or alienated, Pérez said.

"We even heard stories about some of them coming back by themselves and being greeted by well-intentioned leaders with such words as: 'Welcome back, prodigal son! Have you had enough of the world, or has the devil let go of you?''' Pérez said.

So conference secretaries decided to make the reclamation of former members a priority and delegate the responsibility to church clerks, their counterparts at local churches.

As a result, church clerks now prepare a special Sabbath program and sermon once or twice a year that former members over the years, but no region has been quite as successful as the South American Division, church leaders said.

Ng made his first trip to Chile, Peru, and Ecuador in March to study why rebaptisms accounted for an astounding 29,866 of the division's 195,509 baptisms in 2014. Those figures represent a steady growth from 28,299 rebaptisms among 190,314
“It has proven to bring back former members,” Pérez said. The efforts have also proven useful in retaining new members, who join the clerks in inviting family members and friends to church, he said.

**Unity and Obedience Are Key**

Ng, who spent some time examining the program, said he believed it was flourishing because the church clerks are backed by a church unified in its vision of mission and obedient to the Bible and the counsel of Adventist Church cofounder Ellen G. White.

“One of the first things that impressed me was a sense of corporate unity,” he said. “Be it union, conference, or institution, one pulse beats through the entire Adventist infrastructure.” He said Adventist believers embraced 2 Chronicles 20:20—“Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper”—and had strong confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy, especially the counsel that “the work of education and the work of redemption are one” (Education, p. 30).

“Hundreds of elementary schools, high schools, and universities testify to that commitment,” Ng said. “Peru, for example, has three university campuses with almost 10,000 students.

Where schools are established, evangelism flourishes.”

Local church leaders also have a clear vision about mission, sharing a common understanding that every church and institution exists solely for mission, Ng said. “Of the missions and conferences we visited, administrators took time to articulate what they believed to be the mission of the church and how resources were being directed toward evangelism,” he said. “It’s no wonder church planting is going great guns in the South American Division.”

The number of churches and companies in the division has increased from 21,345 in 2010 to 25,942 in 2014, an increase of 21.5 percent over four years.

In addition to reaching out to former members, church clerks are tasked with church planting and work together to raise funds to construct at least one church per year in unreached areas identified by the church’s Global Mission. Ng attended the dedication of two churches in two conferences in Ecuador. One church cost $28,000 to build, while the other cost $16,000.

“During the dedication services I couldn’t help noticing the sense of pride beaming from the faces of church clerks in attendance, having collectively accomplished something they had thought impossible individually,” said Ng, who cut the opening ribbon. “The spirit of camaraderie was unmistakable.”

**“Thank You for Not Giving Up”**

Ten church clerks interviewed by *Adventist World* were united in their enthusiasm for their extra responsibility of reaching out to former members.

“Our responsibility is not just keeping the books of the church active and updated. We need to be cohelpers of Jesus in the mission of searching, keeping, and rescuing our members,” said Jacilane Maria da Silva Ibiapino, 31, church clerk at the Airport church in Rio Largo, Brazil.

Jacinta Marta de Azevedo Perpetuo, 46, a church clerk in Ipatinga, Brazil, said she had experienced no greater joy than seeing a former member approach her at the end of a special Sabbath program and, with tears in her eyes, say: “Thank you for not giving up on me. If it weren’t for your invitation, I never would have been here.”

“It’s completely worth the effort, the work, and the prayers—everything that we do in preparing this program,” she said.

The clerks appealed to their counterparts in other world regions to join them in reclaiming former members.

“To all the church clerks of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I would like to say that our work is not limited to keeping church books and the minutes of church committee meetings,” said Evelyn Katherine Lucio Luciano, 26, a church clerk in Chimbote, Peru. “Our main duty is to fulfill the mission.”

Watch the division’s 2012 “Missing You” video for former members at goo.gl/uZF7d6
The hope of the second coming of Christ has burned in the hearts of His people ever since His disciples stood gazing upward, watching their Lord ascend in the clouds. Surely, they hoped, He would return in their lifetime.

Through the centuries, faithful believers clung to the promise given by Jesus: “I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:3).

Charles Wesley, the great eighteenth-century hymn writer, put this long-held desire into words with his hymn “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus.”

During the Second Great Awakening of the early nineteenth century, “Jesus is coming soon!” was the cry on the lips of Baptist preacher William Miller and countless others as they delved into the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.

When, after the Great Disappointment, a group of people came together to search the Scriptures, they reaffirmed the imminence of their soon-coming Savior, and in 1860 chose the name Seventh-day Adventist to reflect the centrality of this hope.

Today in 2015, does this hope of a soon-coming Christ still burn within our hearts? After all, some may say, past generations have expected Jesus to come in their lifetimes but He didn’t, so why should I expect Him to come in my lifetime?

Where Is the Promise?

As human beings, we find it easy to succumb to the temptation of thinking that life is going to continue on just as it has in the past. We see these kinds of thoughts specifically mentioned in 2 Peter 3:4: “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”

From a purely secular standpoint, and even from a personal standpoint, we might be tempted to think this way at times. But even in my lifetime I’ve seen the transition from days when life seemed to just roll along and you could count on things—life was fairly predictable and dependable—to now, where life is filled with uncertainty and the norm is the unexpected.

Everywhere you look—if you are looking—you will see that from a political standpoint there are no more solutions. From a financial standpoint, we teeter between the edge of financial collapse and momentary prosperity, and we don’t know from day to day which one is going to take control. From a social and moral standpoint we see morality crumbling throughout the earth. From an ecumenical standpoint, things are happening at lightning speed as the pope and other religious figures reach out to leaders of many faiths, seeking a “reconciliation.”

One of the Biggest Dangers

But if we aren’t awake—if we aren’t looking—we won’t recognize the world in which we’re living. And that is one of the biggest dangers of thinking that Jesus isn’t coming soon, it’s an invitation to be so fully engaged with the world that our minds will become numbed by its consuming business and pleasures. Everything will appear as if life is going on as it always has, when in fact enormous changes are taking place.

This is why Jesus indicates in Revelation 3:14-22 that we, in this end-time setting, are Laodicean and desperately need revival and reformation. Jesus says, “I counsel you to buy from...”

By Ted N. C. Wilson
A Call to Action
The theme of the General Conference session in San Antonio this summer is a call to action: "Arise! Shine! Jesus Is Coming!"

In the very last chapter of the book of Revelation, Jesus proclaims three times that He is "coming quickly." This means that in the cosmic timetable it is soon. As we know from Daniel and Revelation, there are no more prophetic pinpoints after 1844. We recognize that we are living in the tips of the toes of the image of Daniel 2, and that the next event will be that stone cut out without men's hands—symbolizing the second coming of Christ.

So how do we "arise and shine" in preparation for Jesus' return? Guidance is given to us in Testimonies for the Church: "In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention."

Seventh-day Adventists have long understood that their very character and unique mission springs from Revelation 14:6-12—the three angels' messages—God's Word for these last days of earth's history. Some people may say these messages are politically incorrect or not advisable to make known. I want to tell you the three angels' messages are the most important messages to share. They are our theology and mission and the reason for God's wonderful remnant church.

The three angels' messages are directly related to Christ's second coming as the events they describe immediately precede His coming. This is why sharing these messages now is so important—eternal destinies are at stake.

We Are All Called
This is a calling for all Seventh-day Adventists, not just for ministers and evangelists. No one is excluded from this very important work. We are all called to find creative, effective, loving, and Christlike ways to share the important, lifesaving messages of Revelation 14 with those around us. It may begin with a friendship, or in a healthful cooking class, at a center of influence, or in the workplace, whatever may find yourself, spend time with God each day in His Word and in prayer, asking Him to show you how to reach those with whom you come into contact. Watch for divinely arranged encounters where you have opportunity to minister and share the truth as it is in Jesus.

One Day Soon
Brothers and sisters, Jesus is coming soon! What a day that will be when Jesus returns! Christ's second coming will be the culmination of God's finished work!

One day soon we will see in the eastern sky a small, dark cloud about half the size of a man's fist. It will get larger and larger and brighter and brighter, all of heaven poured out for this climax of earth's history. Everyone will see Him at the same time through a miracle of heaven. And there, seated in the middle of millions of angels, will be the One we have been waiting for—not the humble broken Lamb, not the High Priest, but the King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Christ our Redeemer! We will look up and say, "This is the God we have waited for" (see Isa. 25:9). Christ will look down and say, "Well done, good and faithful [servants]...Enter into the joy of your Lord" (Matt. 25:21), and we will rise to meet the Lord in the air to go home to be with Him forever!
“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

Are You Ready?

Let’s dedicate our lives, energies, talents, resources, and time to finishing God’s work so we can go home! God has promised to give you His power to finish His work. He will pour out the latter rain to proclaim the three angels’ messages and finish His work as a united church.

Are you ready for Jesus to come? Are you ready for mission? Are you ready to do whatever it takes to proclaim God’s last-day message to the millions and millions of searching souls in the cities and rural areas in your part of the world? Are you ready to participate in comprehensive health ministry, helping people to live life to the fullest here and for eternity? Are you ready to plead with the Lord for revival, reformation, and the latter rain of the Holy Spirit as we proclaim Bible truth? Are you ready to march forward in God’s mission?

Let’s all arise! Shine! For Jesus is coming!

---


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

---

Ever wonder what happens to a One-Day Church after the crew puts up the structure and leaves? When the crew finishes building the frame is actually the beginning of a new era. From that moment on, the congregation takes the wheel. They work together to paint their version of perfect onto the blank canvas provided.

We recently returned to Malawi, where just a few years ago Maranatha Volunteers International built more than 1,000 churches. We wanted to know: What has happened since then? The drive through Malawi is beautiful, and confusing. The rolling hills feature lots of cornfields, but not many street signs.

When we finally arrived at the Kaphentenga Adventist Church, what a beautiful surprise! Maranatha crews built this frame on May 25, 2011, and a lot has happened since then. Local elder Edward Khatsalira was there to give us an update. The believers worked together to build their church with handmade red bricks, baked in huge, hand-hewn, outdoor ovens.

After they completed the walls on their church, the congregation held an evangelistic effort and baptized 22 new members. Now this church is full of energy every Sabbath (and many weekdays), with 55 baptized members, plus 40 children.

Sometimes other members of the community ask to use the beautiful church. Khatsalira tells about a funeral held recently. Something about the Adventist service touched the hearts of one family who attended. They have attended every Sabbath since.
Kettering College Mobilizes to Support Legislation

Kettering College students, faculty, alumni, and staff worked behind the scenes to support federal legislation that would protect funding for nursing schools nationwide. Their grassroots efforts paid off. Legislators from both sides of the aisle have introduced related bills in the United States Congress.

At issue is funding for hospital-based nursing education programs like the one at Kettering College. In order to receive funding from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), such programs must be part of a hospital. However, new standards issued by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC)—the largest accrediting body for higher education—require hospital-based programs to become separately incorporated in order to retain accreditation.

Because of these conflicting standards, more than 100 nursing education programs are at risk of losing crucial funding, a problem that could result in significant tuition increases and program cuts. In mid-2014 Kettering Health Network’s Jarrod McNaughton, vice president of missions and development, and P.J. Brafford, manager of government relations, began working with others in the network to make lawmakers aware of this problem.

A first step was for Kettering College president Nate Brandstater to call and visit numerous congressional offices in Washington, D.C. Brandstater wasn’t the only one: people affiliated with other nursing schools and health-related organizations also voiced their support of legislative action. In July 2014 the Making the Education of Nurses Dependable for Schools (MEND) Act was introduced in the House of Representatives, which would revise CMS requirements so that the agency could continue to support hospital-based nursing schools that reincorporate independently to maintain HLC accreditation.

The next step was to encourage the Kettering College family to speak out through two “call campaigns.” “Students were the first group that came to mind because they are impacted in the most direct and immediate way,” Brafford said. “Bringing Kettering College faculty and staff into the mix, along with network executives and employees, was a natural next step. Everyone at Kettering Health Network recognizes the importance of affordable, high-quality medical education to...”

Continued on next page ▶
ensure that we have enough professionals to meet the long-term needs of a changing population.”

School officials set up a communications area on campus, and invited students, faculty, staff, alumni, and network employees to stop by and make phone calls to legislators’ offices and tweet their support of legislative action.

“Students were nervous, but once they realized how easy this was, they quickly became comfortable with the idea,” says Brandstater. “It was empowering for them to play a role in influencing our elected officials to address this important issue.”

Hundreds of calls and tweets later, significant progress had been made. Many new cosponsors have added their names to the House of Representatives bill. That bill is awaiting a hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee. On March 3, 2015, Ohio senators Rob Portman and Sherrod Brown introduced the MEND Act in the U.S. Senate. They are gathering support for the bill, which mirrors the House bill and has six cosponsors.

Brandstater says he is optimistic that lawmakers will enact legislation to preserve the vital funding. “This experience has highlighted to me how important it is to nurture relationships with our elected officials, who can be extremely helpful when critical needs arise,” he said. “The fact that the issue we’re trying to address is well understood, broadly supported, and not controversial makes it easy for elected officials to get behind it. We are extremely grateful for their support of affordable education for our nation’s future healthcare providers.”

—Jessica Beans, Kettering College

Tour de Youth: Ride for the Future

The Tour de France bicycle race is one of the most challenging endurance events in the world. It consists of cyclists riding for two weeks, more than 2,200 grueling miles, with brutal mountain ascents and unpredictable weather. Cyclists brave these conditions for a chance to wear the coveted maillot jaune (yellow jersey). Many who start the race are unable to complete it, because it is truly a “suffer fest.”

On June 28, 2015, cyclists from around the United States—pastors and lay members—will join members of the Southwest Region Conference in a Tour de Youth (TDY) cycling event. Team Southwest will ride from Dallas, Texas, to the sixty-sixth General Conference session in San Antonio. This ride is not for the maillot jaune, but for a far more precious prize: children and youth. TDY will be a five-day, 325-mile journey to raise awareness of youth and adult obesity, promote healthful lifestyles, and raise funds for Adventist education.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, during the past 10 years obesity rates in children ages 6-11 have doubled, and for children ages 12-19 rates have tripled. Higher obesity rates are often found in minority communities. Elizabeth Landau, CNN.com Health, reported that adult and youth obesity rates have risen in 28 states during the past few years and are projected to continue. “Ten out of 11 states with the highest rates of obesity are located in the South,” she reported.

In addition to highlighting health challenges facing Adventist youth, TDY will raise money to help make Adventist education more affordable. Adventist schools play an important role in the health and lifestyle choices of children. Yet they also face significant challenges. Larry Blackmer, vice president of education for the North American Division, wrote: “Formal Adventist education... is serving fewer than 40 percent of the children in our churches.

“It’s obvious that we must find ways both to make Adventist education affordable and to provide Adventist educational services to those who can’t or choose not to utilize the formal Adventist school system.”

The Tour de Youth Ride for the Future will be an expression of support, offering at-risk boys and girls an alternative environment in which to grow physically, spiritually, and academically while pursuing the American dream.


—Kenn Dixon, Southwest Region Conference

ROLL MODELS: Cycling Group from Grand Prairie and Keene, Texas rode 50 miles for “Let’s Move Day 2014.” In June they will join a group riding for Tour de Youth, highlighting both health and Adventist education.
More Than 300 Baptized in Edmonton

As spring emerged from the cold of a northern winter, hope sprang up in the hearts of many people in Alberta’s “Gateway to the North.”

A three-year-long citywide evangelistic project reached its crescendo as It Is Written speaker/director John Bradshaw presented Revelation Today, a monthlong study of many of the major themes of the Bible. Conducted in partnership with more than 20 local churches and companies, the city of Edmonton experienced an exciting harvest, the result of several years of careful sowing and cultivation. Four new church plants have been established, two of which worked directly with the series.

“While Edmonton is known as a difficult city to reach with the gospel, we’ve seen here an openness, a strong response to the invitation to know and accept Jesus,” Bradshaw said. “The churches have been working for some time, and the seeds that have been sown are starting to grow for the Lord.”

Yves Monnier, director of evangelism at It Is Written, was encouraged by the strong emphasis on planting new churches in Edmonton. “Many of those attending Revelation Today will become involved with the new church plants,” he reported. “We hope each church will have more than 100 members.”

During the first week of the Revelation Today meetings, Fountainview Academy Orchestra and singers from the British Columbia Conference entertained seminar guests with music performances. During the day, students visited Edmonton’s Light Rail Transit stations and invited people to attend the series: others were invited through street ministries in Edmonton. Several people attended Revelation Today on the strength of these invitations alone.

Keith LaRoy, outreach coordinator in Edmonton, managed a team of seven full-time Bible workers and assisting pastors and churches during this three-year project. He feels that the Revelation Today series came at the perfect time in Edmonton.

“This city is young and affluent compared to the national average. As a result, the vast majority of folks are just not interested in spiritual things,” LaRoy said. “Politically, economically, socially, religiously, this series could not have been better timed. We sense that God is trying to get people’s attention in this city.”

Bible study enrollment cards were distributed throughout Edmonton, and more than 300 people have been baptized.

Many of the Bible workers reported providential, positive experiences. Many encouraging testimonies about the activity of the Holy Spirit were heard throughout the series.

A Bible worker responding to a request for Bible studies was immediately buzzed into an apartment building when he stopped to visit. He was confused when a woman handed him a $20 bill. The woman he met was confused because he didn’t have the Chinese food she had ordered! When the misunderstanding was corrected, she began Bible studies and started preparing for baptism.

A woman who received a Bible study enrollment card began taking Bible studies and attended the meetings, the first time she has ever attended anything related to the Bible. Her husband, a self-proclaimed non-believer, also attended.

A man who mailed in an It Is Written Bible study request card decided against pursuing the studies, and told the Bible worker he wasn’t interested in attending Revelation Today. However, he showed up on opening night with his whole family and attended the meetings every night.

One Bible worker struck up a conversation with a man he was sitting next to in a public library. Eventually they started studying the Bible together. The young man not only attended the series, but also helped with registration as a volunteer.

As spring heralds new life, so new life is being experienced by many who responded to the invitation to know Jesus personally.

—Annalyse Hasty, It Is Written
Pastors Convene in Austin, Texas

**CALLED Convention highlights all aspects of pastoral ministry.**

One of the hardest things about being a pastor’s kid is that we have to move a lot and leave our friends behind,” confesses 11-year-old Jasmine Ramirez. “That’s why we’re excited about the pastors’ convention, where we will see our old friends and make new ones,” chimes in her 15-year-old sister Elennie. Jasmine and Elennie are two of more than 4,000 registered for the CALLED Convention for North American Division (NAD) pastors and their families to be held June 28-July 1, 2015, in Austin, Texas. The CALLED convention is actually several conventions occurring simultaneously at the Austin Convention Center. Pastors, spouses, youth, and kids will each have their unique time together.

“This has been prayed over for many months,” wrote Ivan Williams in his invitation to pastors. The director of the NAD Ministerial Association promised: “You will grow spiritually: you will be informed professionally and personally. It’s going to be a rich time.”

The name CALLED says it all. This is a chance for pastors who may have had a few bumps along the way to reaffirm their call to ministry. “Most of my ministry has been spent as a local pastor,” said Dan Jackson, president of the NAD, “and I know how important an event like this is.”

The CALLED convention is also a time for professional development and continuing education. Ralph Watts, president of the Hawaii Conference, noted, “In Hawaii we are quite isolated, living out in the middle of the ocean. But we’re committed to send every pastor to the convention for growth, study, learning, and to become more effective in our leadership and ministry.”

NAD pastors will be introduced to seven core qualities that contribute to effective pastoral ministry. These qualities will undergird the general session presentations featuring effective pastors and leadership experts, and more than 200 educational breakout seminars for pastors, spouses, and administrators. Innovation leader Gary Hamel asks, “How do you build a church where innovation is happening everywhere, all the time? What does it mean to lead that kind of church?”

Denise Hayden looks forward to the convention for pastoral spouses. “I saw the lineup of speakers and was excited to register.”

Patti Hoover reflects, “After 35 years of ministry, my husband and I know how important it is to take advantage of times when we can get together with other pastors and minister spouses. We can encourage each other and share. We can renew old friendships and make new ones.”

Jerry Page, Ministerial Association director for the General Conference, agrees. “Gatherings like this can be a time when friendships and marriages...”
Children and high school students will both have a place at the convention where they can develop skills to thrive in the pastoral home. James Black, director of youth ministries for the NAD, sees CALLED as “an opportunity to inspire, challenge, and encourage PKs for God’s kingdom.”

The CALLED convention will begin Sunday evening, June 28, and conclude at noon on July 1, allowing those who wish to make the 80-mile trip to San Antonio to arrive in time for the start of the General Conference (GC) session. International pastors are invited to come a few days early, attend CALLED, and look over the shoulders of their NAD colleagues.

CALLED is a major financial undertaking. Five different groups pulled together to make it possible: the NAD and its union conferences, local conferences, congregations, and pastors. If the end result of the CALLED convention is anything like recent NAD division-wide teachers’ conventions, the financial sacrifice will be a good investment. The intent is to have pastors return to their congregations renewed, refreshed, empowered, and ready to lead more effectively.

Ted Wilson, president of the GC, wants “to encourage you during this ministerial convention to take time to fellowship with and encourage each other as together we seek to grow in the wisdom and grace of our Lord, seeking for the most effective ways of carrying out His calling to tell the world of His soon return.”

---

**Lighting Lives Blessing Nations**

**LLBN**

The Teachings of Jesus Christ

24/7 on 7 TV channels

ENGLISH - ARABIC - CHINESE - KOREAN - LATINO - SOUTH ASIA - SMART LIFESTYLE

Satellite (Glorystar Package) - Roku (under Brightstar TV) - Web - Cell Phones - Mobile Devices

Gathering Place - Heritage Singers

Orchestral Concerts - Loma Linda University Church

Kettering University Church - Searching for Answers

Excavating the Bible - AND MORE!

**Visit us at the GC Session Booth C1019**

www.llbn.tv

1-866-552-6881

P.O. Box 550

Loma Linda, CA 92354

LLBN is an Adventist viewer-supported ministry
Learn to cook healthy, tasty, vegetarian meals!

“A growing body of scientific evidence confirms the health value of a plant-based diet. It is for this reason that I heartily recommend Teenie Finley’s beautiful new cookbook, Natural Lifestyle Cooking. As you put these tasty recipes into practice in your home, you, too, will enjoy the benefits of the diet given to us by the Creator Himself.” — NEIL NEDLEY, MD

Welcome to an adventure—an adventure in cooking healthy, delicious, plant-based recipes! A diet of fruits, nuts, grains, and vegetables is the diet chosen for us by our Creator. Increasing scientific research reveals that a plant-based diet will:

• Increase your life expectancy by ten years
• Decrease your risk of cancer and heart disease by at least 50 percent
• Lower the number of colds you get each winter
• Improve your outlook on life, as well as your mental efficiency
• Create an atmosphere of joy during mealtimes

If you are new to vegetarian cooking, the task of preparing nutritional meals for your family may seem daunting. These valuable resources from the Finley kitchen will make preparing healthy meals for your family easy, simple, and inexpensive.

If you are a seasoned vegetarian cook and want to be able to share what you know with others, Teenie’s Natural Lifestyle Cooking Instructor’s Manual will be an invaluable asset.
Among the sounds coming from within the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, a small voice asked a simple question: “Who does this?”

The voice, and the question, belonged to Lisa Salazar, one of more than 6,000 people who received free health care during the April 8-10, 2015, Your Best Pathway to Health event sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Over a three-day period thousands of desperate people battled long lines, sleepless nights, and rainy weather for an opportunity to receive life-changing health care.

The event, sponsored by Adventist Laymen’s Services and Industries (ASI), the North American Division, Adventist Health System, and the San Antonio Metropolitan Health Department, among others, not only served as a way of providing needed care to the San Antonio community, but also allowed Adventists to introduce themselves before the sixtieth General Conference session takes place in July.

Your Best Pathway to Health was the second such event to be held in the past two years, the first being Bridges to Health, which served the needs of people in the San Francisco and Oakland, California, areas. That event provided more than $5 million in free health care to 3,000 people, as 600 volunteers donated their time and expertise to serve as Christ’s hands and feet.

Bridges to Health fulfilled a dream that Lela Lewis had for meeting the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of people living in large urban areas. The success of the first event gave Dr. Lewis a bigger dream of providing care on a much larger scale. Thus the San Antonio event was born, and more than 1,700 volunteers decided to dream with her as they worked long hours to make the dream a reality.

What if more of us dreamed dreams like Dr. Lewis? The true success of the Bridges and Pathway events wasn’t the health care that was provided. It was that people from all over the world came together to seek a common goal: the betterment of those in need. Those efforts were blessed by the Holy Spirit, resulting in healing rarely seen in the church before.

What would happen if we, as a united church, put our differences aside and, instead of focusing on each other, turned our efforts toward helping those in need? As a church we have to realize that our differences make us stronger when we combine them in a concentrated effort to reach our local and global communities.

It was amazing to walk the floor of the Alamodome and see the vast variety of Seventh-day Adventists working together to provide loving, healing, and compassionate care to people they had never seen before. No one questioned each other’s beliefs about issues that have filled the pages of this publication over the years. Instead, the focus was put on the needs of others. Suddenly barriers set up to protect ourselves fell down, and the result was a living example of Jesus’ love played out on a massive scale. All because someone dared to dream big.

Lisa Salazar came to the Pathways event at the coaxing of her sister. They had been told about it by a young Adventist selling literature in their neighborhood to raise funds so he could attend college and become a pastor. When Salazar told him she didn’t have money to buy books because she had spent it all on medical bills, he gave her a free book and offered to pray for her. Before he left, he remembered the Pathways event and invited her to attend. She agreed, as her dental care had been neglected for many years because of a lack of insurance.

As I listened to Salazar’s story, tears came to my eyes as she answered her own question. “Who does this? God does!” she said. “I came here to get my teeth cleaned, but I received so much more. I found out there is an Adventist church within walking distance of my house. I now have a new church home to attend. God is good!”

Yes, God is good.

Daniel Weber is communication director for the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists.
NAD Letters

Top Adventist Leaders Build a Church
What a movement! I am referring to Libna Stevens’ article “Top Adventist Leaders Build a Church” (March 2015). As the leaders were moved by the Holy Spirit to move forward with this effort, the leaders and church members were blessed, and so was the community.

Our leaders set a powerful example: to spread the three angels’ messages through works of love to a dying world. As we pray for the latter rain, may we let the early rain remove division on issues that divide us, and, according to His will, let us work as a corporate body preparing people to go home to live with God.

PEARL WISE
Huntsville, Alabama

Faith Versus Finance
Thank you for printing Julian Archer’s article “Faith Versus Finance” (March 2015). I’ve been waiting for a long time for someone to put these words and ideas on paper, validate my concerns, and offer some suggestions. My family immigrated to the United States two years ago, and even though by the American standard we live rather poorly, we have so many material blessings here!

On the one hand, I love what we have and am grateful for it; on the other, I’ve noticed my faith growing weaker. There is more reliance on self and what I can buy, and less yearning for spiritual things. I still hope this materialistic obsession is temporary, and is more of an “immigrant syndrome” than a permanent heart condition. But I was so glad to read that somebody else observed the same pattern, wrote about it, and apparently came up with some ideas on how to cure it. I hope there is going to be a second article where Archer can elaborate on his ideas for a solution.

YELENA VERENCHUK
London, Kentucky

Of Graphics and Films
Adventist World is an excellent publication. I have always found the information in it good for discussion, contemplation, and general information. Here are two comments I hope will be of service to you:

At the end of articles there is a particular graphic that appears to be a swirl-type that enters from the left and exits at the right (or vice versa). I’m not sure what it is, but this graphic has been used for quite some time. Please consider changing this to something more appealing.

Julio C. Munoz’s story “Christian Filmmakers Seek to Take Down Goliath” (January 2015) was very appealing. I have access to the Hope Channel—and, of course, there is 3ABN and all the rest. Something missing from Adventist channels are the excellent films that have been created by Adventist filmmakers. Millions of Christian film lovers would tune in to a film before tuning in to a sermon or Bible study.

LINDA WILSON
via e-mail

Thank you for your letter! The graphic you refer to is a “horizon,” used to signify the end of an article and biographical information for the author. It is representative of the horizon motif from the cover of the magazine, a motif that carries itself throughout the magazine in subtle and not-so-subtle ways.

—Editors.

La Sierra Alum Lands Pistons Job
I know this is old news, but I just had to write! I am writing about the September 2014 article “La Sierra Alum Lands Pistons Assistant GM Spot.” We should applaud Brian White, and be thrilled that he will be bringing his Christian influence into such an organization. God can use him mightily in many ways, and he will have access to people who might otherwise never know Jesus.

LISA MOL
Highlands Ranch, Colorado
Potlucks
Fun or Fury?

By Peter N. Landless and Allan R. Handysides

I travel quite a lot, and it’s a pleasure to visit Seventh-day Adventist churches in different places. I’m disturbed, however, that potluck lunches vary so widely—not so much culturally, but with vegetarian and nonvegetarian foods. Does the church have guidelines on this?

This is a common question. The church does not have a specific voted guideline or statement on food served at potlucks, or fellowship dinners. We are guided by established principles and recommendations rather than prescriptive guidelines.

The General Conference Nutrition Council has a comprehensive position statement on planning fellowship meals, which many have found helpful, at: http://healthministries.com/articles/gc-nutrition-council/planning-fellowship-meals.

Regarding your query on vegetarian and nonvegetarian food, the church does indeed have a policy and recommendation regarding the most healthful diet in the General Conference Working Policy:

The church advocates that positive steps be taken to develop a healthful lifestyle, and encourages a balanced vegetarian diet. The church encourages the avoidance of flesh foods. The use of coffee, tea, and other caffeinated beverages, and all harmful substances are discouraged. Physical well-being and clarity of mind are usually interdependent; clarity of mind is essential for discernment between right and wrong, between truth and error. —General Conference Working Policy (2013-2014), p. 331.

This working policy was voted by world church leaders in 2007. It summarizes the information revealed to the Adventist Church through God’s Word and the Spirit of Prophecy, and is strongly supported by robust evidence from peer-reviewed science.

A balanced vegetarian diet has been shown to have tremendous physical health advantages as well as many positive benefits to our mental health and overall well-being.

A balanced vegetarian diet is associated with less obesity, improved cardiovascular health, less high blood pressure, and a reduction in certain cancers. These findings are corroborated by the Adventist Health Studies and papers emanating from these large cohorts, as well as other independent and separate studies. Avoidance of meat leads to significant reduction of colon cancer, one of the leading cancers in men. Interestingly, as the consumption of legumes as a source of protein increases and the quantity of red meat decreases, protective benefits of the plant-based diet are clearly seen.

In the planning of potluck meals, it’s consonant with church policy and recommendations for general health that such meals consist of balanced vegetarian food.

It’s sad but true that congregations have become divided on what constitutes a “balanced vegetarian diet.” Such a diet could be an ovo-lacto vegetarian diet, where dairy products are used more as a “condiment” to provide vitamins B₁₂ and D as well as calcium.

Total vegetarian diets, in order to ensure optimal nutrition, require supplementation of vitamin B₁₂, and often vitamin D and calcium. It’s essential that our food plates do not become the artificially imposed standard of assessing one’s relationship to God nor the church. We should not be angrily proclaiming the importance of one vegetarian diet over another. Our meal-times, whether at home or at church, should be occasions of loving, attentive, cordial, and caring fellowship, made complete by the most healthful food available in the regions we find ourselves. Fortified foods and supplement availability vary from country to country, and even from district to district, so the application of the quoted guideline may vary accordingly.

In your travels you will see varieties of potlucks. Sadly, you may experience varieties of attitudes, too, which will make you wonder what our fellowship is all about. When we have followed the instruction that the Lord has given us and have done the best we can, we would do well to remember the cautioning and salutary words of our loving, grace-filled Savior, Jesus Christ: “Listen and understand. What goes into someone’s mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them” (Matt. 15:10, 11, NIV).

As we cater, care, and nurture, let us be channels of grace and mercy around the table.

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.
Eighteen years is a long time. Eighteen marks full responsibility before the law in many countries. Eighteen-year-olds can drive cars, vote in general elections, or consent that their bodies be used in medical research.

Eighteen years is a long time. That’s how long the woman had to wait to experience the miracle of healing. But let’s not get ahead of ourselves. We should start at the beginning.

Sabbath in the Synagogue

It’s another Sabbath in Judea. Like most God-fearing Jews, we find Jesus in the synagogue, teaching (Luke 13:10). In fact, the only earlier mention of Jesus teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath in the Gospel of Luke can be found in Luke 4:31-37 and describes another Sabbath healing. Clue one: Pay attention to the day—it’s Sabbath.

Luke’s description of the condition of the unnamed woman is ambiguous. She was “bent over” and “had a spirit of infirmity”—she “could in no way raise herself up” (Luke 13:11). While Jesus’ healing miracle is not an exorcism, Dr. Luke establishes a clear link between disease and the destructive work of demonic forces.

As Jesus scans His audience, His eyes fall on the woman—bent over by years of pain, without any hope on the horizon. He calls her forward. Then He speaks—words that must have shaken the very foundation of the woman’s world. Clue two: Jesus sees what we need—always and anywhere—and acts on it.

The Miracle

Jesus’ recognition of the woman must have caused some murmurings in the audience. A man publicly addressing a woman not related to him was something out of the extraordinary—a fact that also was not lost on the Samaritan woman in John 9:9.1 “Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity,” says Jesus, or, as the New International Version translates: “Woman, you are set free from your infirmity” (Luke 13:12). Then Jesus commits the next cultural no-no. He “laid His hands on her” (verse 13). “Immediately,” Luke tells us, “she was made straight.” Immediately—that’s Luke’s way of painting for us the picture of an omnipotent Creator-God whose power clearly surpassed Dr. Luke’s more limited skills. Similar to the life-giving words uttered by the One who spoke heaven and earth into existence (Gen. 1-2), Jesus’ words have an immediate creative effect. Bone structures change, muscles flex, tendons stretch—and suddenly the impossible becomes a reality: the woman stands upright and praises God. Clue three: Jesus calls us to stand tall and straight.
How can we, fragile human beings surrounded by an ever-increasing crescendo of injustice, destruction, distraction, and futility, ever hope to walk upright and with purpose?

The Aftermath

The synagogue ruler’s reaction to this incredible miracle is not a surprise—at least not to Luke’s readers. The Gospel contains four Sabbath healings (4:31-41; 6:6-11; 14:1-6; and the present story in 13:10-17) and every miracle is accompanied by criticism and increasing tension between Jesus and the Jewish leadership. The synagogue leader’s rebuke, while directed to the people, is really an affront to Jesus. In his mind, healing equals work; thus, considering the fourth commandment, healings should only occur during the week (13:14).

Luke’s record of Jesus’ reply is important. Before our very eyes we see the change from “Jesus” to “the Lord.” The tone is sharp (“Hypocrite!” [verse 15]); the reasoning is sound. The woman is described as a “daughter of Abraham” (verse 16)—a phrase that appears only this once in Scripture. Jews loved to point out their connection to Abraham (John 8:33, 39, 53), the “father of faith.” Jesus underlines the importance of the woman when He describes her as a “daughter of Abraham.” Clue four: Our worth before God is not based on gender or race—God’s grace levels the differences separating us.

The Sabbath

Jesus’ statement in Luke 13:16 highlights a key truth about the Sabbath. The day, separated by God at Creation, is really a day of liberation and re-creation (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15). As evidenced by Jesus’ miracles in the Gospels, God purposefully steps every Sabbath into this world and demonstrates His grace that is sufficient for us. In this way the Sabbath healings of Jesus represent deliberate acts engaging His audience to think more biblically (and less traditionally) about the Sabbath. Furthermore, as was the case with the woman who had waited for 18 years to experience liberation, every Sabbath we are called to remember our own past bondage and crookedness and celebrate Jesus’ victory on our behalf. Clue five: God’s Sabbath is our refuge.

Crooked Wood

Helmut Gollwitzer (1908-1993) taught systematic theology in Germany for decades following his return from a Russian prisoner-of-war camp and a brief stint as the pastor of the Lutheran church of Berlin-Dahlem. A member of the Confessing Church during the Nazi-regime in Germany and opposed to Hitler’s evil dreams of world domination, he became an important voice in postwar German society.

In 1970 Gollwitzer published the book Krummes Holz—Aufrechter Gang (“Crooked Wood—Upright Posture”). In it he considered one of the most existential of human questions about the meaning of life. His title was a silent nod to ideas expressed earlier by two German philosophers, Immanuel Kant and Ernst Bloch. Kant’s “crooked wood” pointed to the senselessness and humility of human existence—nobody can make something straight out of crooked wood. “Upright posture” encapsulated Bloch’s idea of human aspiration and dignity, based on ideology that hopes for a human utopia—even though it recognizes human limitations.

Gollwitzer’s paradoxical title still challenges our hearts and minds. How can we, fragile human beings, surrounded by an ever-increasing crescendo of injustice, destruction, distraction, disease, and futility, ever hope to walk upright and with purpose? We can’t—we are always and forever crooked wood, doubled over, hopeless, and unable to straighten up. Unless—unless—we allow the Master to touch our bent-over frame and speak us into life.

Which areas of your life are crooked and bent out of shape? Jesus’ engagement with the synagogue leader in Luke 13:10-17 tells us that there is a worse crookedness than the physical pain experienced by the nameless woman immortalized in Dr. Luke’s description of Jesus’ Sabbath miracle. Crooked hearts and minds, bent attitudes—they all require Jesus’ touch and His word of life. The good news of Luke 13:10-17 is that Jesus is ready to change crooked hearts, minds, and bodies into something straight and upright and beautiful. Final clue: Allow the Master to help you walk and talk and dream upright.

1 Additionally, the woman at the well recognized the strangeness of a Jewish man talking to a Samaritan woman.
In religion—as in love—there is no enduring relationship without admiration. Just for a moment, put yourself in the shoes of a wife-to-be. You find your fiancé amusing, attractive, and talented. You are positive that sticking to him will substantially improve your prospects in life. People consider him “a good catch.”

Yet, imagine deep down that you despise him. Nobody knows it but you. It may be the condescending way he treats you. Or that he is conceited or snobbish. Or that he has all his priorities wrong. The cause is not important. But the fact is that you despise him. Even when you smile at him and call him “honey.” And there is nothing you can do about it.

Well, chances are your relationship is bound for failure. Without admiration, love is a sham. You may go through the motions, do “the right thing,” but never reach that stage when love springs up naturally and forcefully.

In church terms, you are part of the faithful few who never miss a church service, or a meeting, or a program. But you are there out of fear, or a sheer sense of duty. You may not be better than a sizable chunk of Jesus’ contemporaries, who in their forced obedience misrepresented “the character of God,” and caused “the world to look upon Him as a tyrant.”

If we truly believe in a God whose utmost desire is “to make His children happy,” there must be a better way of relating to Him. And while there are various avenues, one way would be when we learn to admire the fruits of His workmanship (see Rom. 1:20).

Well-channeled Awe

Throughout history a sense of awe before what we cannot fully apprehend has often triggered great inventions, discoveries, and theories. Just think of Galileo or Newton. But without an overarching frame of reference, our best creative efforts, marred by our sin-tinted glasses, may very soon take us adrift from the Creator. We begin to worship pitiable “gods” of our own making.

Consider the ancient Greeks: In deep awe before phenomena they were not able to rationally explain, they created the most intricate universe of revenge-thirsty, lust-driven incestuous gods, a pathetic lookalike of mere human beings who pursue their own twisted ways.

Our worship loyalties are often misdirected and contradictory. Indeed, there is no wisdom in praising “the wisdom of Mother Nature.” And certainly no kindness in celebrating “the kindness of Mother Earth.” Awe in itself is as pointless as trying to quench our thirst by memorizing the properties of water. Without an underlying “metanarrative”—which for Seventh-day Adventists is the great controversy theme—we are bound to eventually conclude that our best efforts are nothing but “utter futility” and “pursuit of wind” (Eccl. 1:2, 14, Tanakh). And once again, we may end up misplacing our awe in fleeting fruits of our own hands.

The Wonder of It All

We live in a time when devotion tends to be too narrow. Our hearts jump at the last technological gadget, while we blindly run past the wonders of the natural world, the amazing workings of our bodies, and the mind-boggling vastness of the universe. Constantly surrounded by miraculous wonders, we resign ourselves to secondhand, lackluster experiences instead.

Have you ever read Matthew 6:29—“Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of [the lilies of the field]”—and thought Jesus was exaggerating a little? Have you ever
Without an overarching frame of reference, our best creative efforts, marred by our sin-tinted glasses, may very soon take us adrift from the Creator. We begin to worship pitiable “gods” of our own making.

thought of King Solomon as a wise judge and a clever statesman, while ignoring his description of trees, birds, creeping things, and fish (1 Kings 4:33)? Have you ever considered Ellen G. White’s famous statement—“God is love” is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass—just as a “nice” metaphor?

As “the Sea of Faith” steadily retreats to “the vast drear edges . . . of the world,” those who still dare to voice their trust in an Almighty Creator find themselves too often entangled in apologetics, to the detriment of a proactive approach to God’s workmanship. But as a joyous people who “look for new heavens and a new earth” (2 Peter 3:13), we are called to reflect on the pristine state of the Creator’s creation and His ongoing care of the natural world as a way of announcing the restoration to come.

Worshipping the Creator

The last book of the Bible seems to zero in on the messages of the three angels (Rev. 14:6-12). Those messages are to be proclaimed by the Lord’s messengers, those “upon whom the ends of the ages have come” (1 Cor. 10:11). But even those solemn last warnings are driven by a clear-cut call to “worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water” (Rev. 14:7).

This single injunction may be the most important in God’s final call. Because without a primal acknowledgement of a Creator, there is hardly any use in sharing the rest of the messages. Everything else—from the announcement of the judgment to the fall of Babylon to the command not to worship the beast—is mirrored in that first Creation week, when God made everything “very good” (Gen. 1:31). It is to this ideal we must often look back, and even more often point toward.

Reclaiming the Wonder

As we strive to reclaim our battered sense of awe, we may find that in God’s creation, big answers are often found in the simplest pleasures in life. God still draws us to Himself through “the sunshine and the rain,” “the hills and seas and plains.” He does talk to us through “lovely birds,” “delicately tinted flowers,” and “lofty trees.”

So, I invite you to go for a walk in the park, caress your favorite pet, play with a chubby baby, or work in your garden. You could also take some scenic pictures, prepare your favorite natural recipe, or stare at the sunset. As you do it, do not forget to admire the infinite wisdom of the One who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment (1 Tim. 6:17, NIV), and who, very soon, according to His promise, will “make all things new” (Rev. 21:5).

Then our awe will be eternal.

Marcos Paseggi is a pastor, translator, and author living in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
By BARBARA J. HUFF

Staying faithful to God and His Sabbath in Siberia

From the sparkle in her eyes and the energy she exudes, one would never know that Valentina Ivanova had lived most of her life in primitive conditions in Siberia. Many of those near the age of 60 are languid; years of inconvenience, discomfort, and disappointment are etched on their faces.

That’s not the case with Valentina! She sprints instead of walks. She jumps instead of steps. Her smile brightens the darkest room; and the love of Jesus is reflected in her blue eyes.

In the Beginning

Alexander (Sasha) Ivanov finished medical school in Moscow in 1959. Medical school graduates were assigned a place to work for three years. After that they were free to work where they wanted. He was given the choice to stay and teach at the medical school or go to Osinniki, Siberia, to work.

Sasha knew that if he stayed in Moscow, he would have Sabbath problems. He thought that if he were far away in Siberia, he would be less likely to be harassed; so he chose Siberia. A year later he and Valentina were married.

Sasha had problems with Sabbath-keeping from the very start of his career. He did not have to work the first Sabbath he was in Osinniki. But early the next week he was fired because he
refused to work future Sabbaths for which he was scheduled. In the first two years after graduating from medical school, Sasha worked at various jobs in eight cities, including one job he held for an entire year. He was watched night and day for some infraction of the Communists' interpretation of the law.

After the KGB found Sasha at a home church, the local newspaper printed an entire page describing a man who chose the Bible over the scalpel. He feared that his medical license would be revoked. All this time Valentina stood by Sasha and cheerfully moved from one place to another. Eventually Nadia, the first of two daughters, was born.

In 1962 Sasha went to Anzherka to apply for work as a doctor who accompanied ambulances. He offered to work any time except Friday and Saturday, but he was scheduled for those days anyway. "I cannot do this," he told his supervisor. He was subsequently fired. For a couple weeks he had no work at all.

At the beginning of the following week, Sasha received notice to report to the KGB office. When he didn't return home, Valentina knew he had been arrested. After three days in jail and a mock trial, Sasha was sentenced to three years of exile and shipped to Mariinsk to work at a collective farm. It was a month before Valentina knew where he had been sent. Nadia was 13 months old; Valentina was 25.

Valentina eventually received a letter from Sasha's telling her that the collective farm near Mariinsk where he had been sent was called "Victory." With only this information, Valentina set off with a large bag and a backpack to find her husband. Leaving Nadia with a friend, and after a seven-hour train ride, Valentina arrived in Mariinsk.

It took awhile to find someone who knew where the farm was located. Eventually she was told about a man who was taking a truckload of supplies to Victory farm. She found the man, and he agreed to let her ride along.

Many types of people were sent to Siberia in those years: political prisoners; people like Sasha, who had been exiled because of some phony charges; and criminals serving sentences. Valentina was certain that the truck driver fell into the latter category. But she had no other way to get to the farm. She had to see Sasha, for she knew that his food would be inadequate and that he would need encouragement.

During a snowstorm the truck became stuck going up the final hill to the farm. It wasn't far, only about a kilometer (half mile). Valentina chose to carry her heavy load up the hill in the snow rather than stay in the truck. As she approached the farm, she saw a building that appeared to be barracks. When she got nearer, she saw a man coming from the building. "Is there a man here named Sasha Ivanov?" she asked. Joy rippled through her body when the stranger confirmed that her husband was there.

Sasha was speechless when he saw his brave, smiling wife. She spent the night at the farm, then went back to her home and prepared to move to Mariinsk. Spouses and families of those who were exiled were allowed to live with their family members.

When Valentina and Nadia arrived at Victory farm, they were assigned to live in a tiny house with a woman who, with her husband, had been exiled there in 1937. Although her husband was dead, the woman stayed on because she had no other place to go.

The space in the tiny house allocated to the Ivanov family was actually just a windy corridor. Happy to be together in spite of the accommodations, the Ivanovs enjoyed this arrangement for 10 days.
One evening Sasha did not return from his work of caring for farm animals. He had been transferred again. Later he told Valentina that party officials told him that the country was not rich enough to use doctors as laborers on a pig farm. Communists may have been blind to many things, but they were not blind to Sasha's unused talents, or to his integrity.

Again Valentina waited eagerly for word from anybody who might know the whereabouts of her husband. Eventually Sasha was able to get a letter to Pastor Zozulin, who made arrangements to move Valentina and Nadia by train. Thus began Valentina's second quest to find her husband.

**Good and Faithful Servants**

It was a joyful reunion when Sasha collected his little family from the train station. However, that was the easy part of the journey. The three of them went the next 50 kilometers (30 miles) by truck. With another 50 kilometers to go, Sasha found a little Mongolian pony that was "half dead" to take them the rest of the way. They put their little pile of belongings on the cart, placed baby Nadia on top, and she and Sasha walked behind.

"The scenery was breathtaking," says Valentina. They were in a quiet, peaceful river valley surrounded by mountains. Part of the time they traveled on the frozen river. However, the river had begun to thaw, so there was water on either side of their track. Night fell, but the travelers pushed on.

Suddenly the quietness was broken by the sounds of another horse and cart coming toward them on the frozen track. Soon the two horses were nearly nose-to-nose on the narrow path, and there was not enough room for the two conveyances to pass. The man in the other cart, in a drunken stupor, was unaware of the dangerous situation.

Sasha's solution was to tilt the other sledge up and lift one runner off the ice and to carefully, oh, so carefully, lead the two horses past each other. Exhausted from their ordeal, Sasha and Valentina had no choice but to keep walking. Their hope revived when they came to a little settlement where they found a home in which to spend the night. By now they had walked halfway to their destination, approximately 25 kilometers (15 miles).

The next day they found the cabin to which they had been assigned. Even though it had no windows, it was a most welcome sight to the weary travelers. Located on the side of the mountain, with a river flowing through the valley, the cabin's surroundings were magnificent and peaceful.

They arrived in March, which gave Valentina time to plant a garden and harvest the crops before Sasha was reassigned in September. During their three years of exile they lived in four places.

With Sasha's exile nearing an end, another daughter, Tanya, was born, leaving the family wondering where they might find work. While Adventists who lived in cities were often unemployed or working at menial, thankless tasks, Sasha was doing the work he loved and for which he had been trained. Adventists in the cities were harassed; no one bothered the Ivanovs. The rich Siberian soil always produced a thriving, abundant garden; so the family had plenty of good food to eat. These were happy years for the little family.

The Ivanovs were surprised and relieved when the administrator of the regional Siberian prison system offered Sasha a job. While in exile he had had no choice where he would work. Now, however, he had a choice, as his status had changed from being an exile to being a free man.

"Dr. Ivanov," the man said, "you will have problems with your Sabbath wherever you go to find work. We value your work, and we want you to work for us in a different facility."

Prison officials sent a helicopter to move the family and their belongings to the new location. They bought furniture for the family and settled them into a new home. This last move was to Novokuznetsk, where they lived in the same apartment for 25 years.

Nadia and Tanya went to the same school for 10 years. Even though their little second-floor apartment had no toilet, no sewer, and no running water, and they cooked on a woodstove, the Ivanovs felt richly blessed.

**Children of God**

Sasha never again had Sabbath work problems. Altogether he worked 30 years as a surgeon in Siberia. When
asked about the most difficult time in her life, Valentina brushed off the question. "Oh, everything was easy." Then she became serious and continued, "When Nadia started school, my real fears began. We would not send her to school on Sabbath, and the KGB threatened to take her away from us and put her in an orphanage."

One Sabbath Nadia's teacher came to the house and asked Nadia to go to school with her. "I will take you to an orphanage if you don't go," she told the first grader. Nadia politely told the woman that she would not go to school on Sabbath. The teacher went to town to speak to the director of education.

"What kind of student is this girl?" he asked. The teacher had to admit that Nadia received all A's. "Let them keep her at home," he said. "We have students who attend all the time and don't do nearly as well."

After the fifth grade, however, Sabbathkeeping became a bit more complicated. The school held classes in shifts, and students went to school either mornings or afternoons. Afternoon classes began at 2:00 p.m.

In December and January the sun went down at 3:00. That meant that all winter Nadia, and later Tanya, had to miss two days of school each week.

Nadia recalls spending every Sunday studying to do her lengthy homework assignments. When she missed class on Friday and Sabbath, she never knew exactly which material had been assigned for homework and what had been covered in class. When she called schoolmates to ask about her assignments, they feigned ignorance. They had been instructed not to tell her anything. To compensate, Nadia studied constantly, and ended up at the top of her class.

One might think that Valentina's daughters had a lonely childhood. Nadia says that that was not the case. They did not feel alone. They accepted their situation as a way of life. Their teachers talked openly against the girls in front of the other students.

Valentina's fears about the children being taken from her were replaced by knowing that it's possible to be true to God and also have community acceptance and friendship. Valentina cannot understand why anyone would feel sorry for the family being exiled to Siberia.

"We don't know anyone who has only joy, happiness, and roses in their lives. Everyone has problems and difficulties," says Valentina. "These difficulties make us stronger. We do not fear the future. We just try to find ways to overcome and survive. This keeps us closer to God because we need His guidance and wisdom in everyday living."

Siberia is a cold place with untouched forests, wind, wolves, bears, and other wild things. But from all of this Valentina drew warmth, joy, peace, and happiness. Was Valentina really in exile? You decide.
Seventh-day Adventists have long looked to our pioneers for inspiration. As we prepare for the sixtieth General Conference session in San Antonio, Texas, United States, in July 2015, there are lessons to learn and points of inspiration to take from the first, founding session 152 years ago, when Seventh-day Adventist leaders met in Battle Creek, Michigan, in May 1863.

That expression, “Seventh-day Adventist leaders met,” sounds so simple. But just 32 months earlier it could not have been said. For it was only as recently as October 1, 1860, at an earlier meeting in Battle Creek, that believers had agreed “that we call ourselves Seventh-day Adventists.”

Before then, the term Seventh-day Adventist had been used as often by enemies, as a term of abuse, as by the few members of the yet-unorganized movement that had emerged after the Great Disappointment of 1844, based on belief in the seventh-day Sabbath, in conditional immortality, and in the high-priestly ministry of Jesus Christ in the heavenly sanctuary.

At that 1860 meeting it took four days of debate to reach a consensus that if God’s remnant people formally organized their local churches and adopted a common name for themselves, they would not be retreating into Babylon. But those few steps were as far as Adventists would go. The prospect of any organization above the local congregation was unacceptable.
Conferences and General Conference

Yet, remarkably, within two and a half years Seventh-day Adventists in Michigan, Iowa, Vermont, Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, and New York had organized seven separate associations of churches into what they called conferences—two in Iowa, one covering Illinois and Wisconsin, the others each covering one state; then the two in Iowa merged into one. But what was recognized by many Seventh-day Adventists was that, in effect, this meant there were six Seventh-day Adventist denominations—not one. So in March 1863 James White, the unofficial (but undisputed) leader of Seventh-day Adventists, published, in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, the journal that bound the widely scattered believers together (usually known then simply as the *Review and Herald* and today as the *Adventist Review*), a call for a “General Conference.”

The term general conference had been used by the Millerites in the early 1840s; indeed, Joseph Bates had been chair of one such conference. In the 1850s the seventh-day Sabbathkeeping Adventists used the term for meetings that were open to all adherents of the Sabbatarians’ distinctive doctrines—that is, a conference, or meeting, that was general rather than local. However, by 1860 several Protestant denominations in the United States were using the term conference for a permanent association of congregations, and it was this use that the state conferences had borrowed. Moreover, Mennonites, Baptists, and Methodists, used general conference for an association of such conferences. Seventh-day Adventists, many of them former Baptists and Methodists, would have been aware of this use.

Still, James White’s announcement on the March 1863, issue of the *Review* probably seemed to some Sabbatarians to be calling just another general meeting, though it did hint that important matters of common interest might be discussed. He wrote:

“We recommend that the General Conference be held in connection with the Michigan State Conference at Battle Creek, as early as such a gathering can be convened... We suppose that it would be the pleasure of the brethren in other States, and the Canadas, to send to the General Conference either delegates or letters setting forth their opinion of the best course of action, and their requests of the Conference.”

White suggested late May as the best time, and soon after a date was agreed upon.

The First Day of the First Session

So it was, on Wednesday, May 20, 1863, that 20 leaders of the embryonic Seventh-day Adventist movement gathered in Battle Creek. Some arrived only during the course of the day, so it was not until 6:00 p.m. that they assembled in the Second Seventh-day Adventist Meeting House in Battle Creek.

There were 18 delegates from five of the six existing state conferences: Michigan, New York, Illinois and Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. The Vermont Conference (which included churches from across the Canadian border in Quebec) dispatched no delegates to Battle Creek, but two delegates were sent from the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Ohio, which had yet to organize into a conference. Also present were a number of members of the Battle Creek church, who were not official delegates of the Michigan Conference but interested observers of the proceedings. All the official delegates were men, though at least one woman, Ellen White, was among the locals who attended as onlookers. Two official delegates were laypersons, holding no ministerial credentials—and constituted two-thirds of the General Conference’s very first Nominating Committee!

The 28 delegates’ first action was to elect a temporary chair and secretary. The chair was Jotham M. Aldrich; the secretary, Uriah Smith. Aldrich was 35 and had only become a Sabbatarian Adventist in 1860; Smith was just 31 and, remarkably, was not a delegate, but one of the observers from Battle Creek. These two facts tell us something about the founders of our church. Many of them were young, and they were pragmatic. Where they saw talent, they would use it to spread the third angel’s message.

Having elected a chair and secretary, delegates and onlookers then joined in singing hymn number 233, “Long Upon the Mountains,” by Annie R. Smith, from the hymnbook James White had published in 1861 (itself a revision of a hymnal he had first printed in 1849). Then John N. Loughborough, of Michigan; Charles O. Taylor, of New York; and Isaac Sanborn, of Wisconsin, were chosen as a committee to inspect and verify the credentials of the delegates. This tells us something else about the men who founded the General Conference: they liked to sing hymns, and they valued proper procedure and committees. Some characteristics of our church go back to our very origins!

Delegates then duly presented their credentials for approval. None of the originals survive, though credentials for the 1864 session do survive, and one is pictured. Once the General Conference’s first committee had completed its business (which, with only 20 sets of credentials to review, could not have taken very long), the session adjourned until the following morning.

Founding the General Conference

The next day, Thursday, May 21, 1863, was the big day. The first step
was the selection of eight men to
draft a constitution: Sanborn, of Wis­
consin; Loughborough and Joseph H.
Waggoner, of Michigan; John N.
Andrews and Nathan Fuller, of New
York; B. F. Snook, of Iowa; Washing­
ton Morse, of Minnesota; and H. F.
Baker, of Ohio. They reported back
so promptly that some preliminary
work must have been done before the
session and the constitution was then
approved unanimously. The General
Conference of Seventh-day Adven­tists was thus formally founded.
More than a periodic meeting, it was
a permanent association that would
have annual sessions, with a constitu­
tion, three officers (president, secre­
tary, and treasurer), and an executive
committee.

Elections were then held. John
Byington was eventually elected
president (and took the chair from
Aldrich); Eli Walker (another Battle
Creek local who was not a Michigan
Conference delegate) was voted in as
treasurer; and Uriah Smith was chos­
en as secretary. George Amadon, a
Michigander, and John Andrews
were elected to make up the execu­
tive committee with Byington. A
committee was then formed (J. N.
Loughborough, I. Sanborn, W. H.
Binkerhoff, J. M. Aldrich, and W.
Morse) to draft a model constitution
for all state conferences and the ses­
sion then adjourned until Saturday
night, May 23. Meeting after sunset,
delegates approved the model consti­
tution (which all conferences that
wished to join the General Confer­
ence would have to adopt), and set
up another committee (White,
Andrews, and Smith) to report back
to the 1864 session on rules for local
churches to follow when organizing.
Then the 1863 session concluded.
 Whereas the “general conference”
late in 1860 had lasted four full days,
the first GC session transacted its
business in one full day plus two
short evening meetings.

Honesty, love and humility

The fact that so much was achieved
in such short time is striking, for our
pioneers were capable of blunt, plain­
spoken debate when they disagreed.
When they differed, they said so
straightforwardly. But our forefathers’
tendency to express themselves frankly
shouldn’t be misunderstood.

On the first day of the 1860 confer­
ence James White began his first
speech by addressing the chair, which
was proper parliamentary procedure;
but he did so in a unique way. For the
chair was Joseph Bates, whom White
had known for 20 years. These were his
opening words: “Brother Chairman
(you will permit me to call you brother
chairman as Mr. is so exceedingly
cold).” White’s use of “Brother Chair­
man” instead of the orthodox “Mr.
Chairman” reflects that our founders
had invested everything in the Great
Second Advent movement. They were
bound together by bonds of deep
affection. At times, they disagreed with
each other vigorously, but they sang
hymns and prayed together, too.

There was less debate in 1863 than
in 1860, partly because a Christlike
spirit prevailed, but partly because
delegates had largely reached consen­
sus on key points before they arrived.
Reporting in the next issue of the
Review, Uriah Smith wrote with satis­
faction: “Perhaps no previous meeting
that we have ever enjoyed was charac­
terized by such unity of feeling and
harmony of sentiment. In all the
important steps taken at this Confer­
ence ... there was not a dissenting
voice, and we ... doubt if there was
even a dissenting thought.”

This was one reason so much was
accomplished in just over a day.
Surely, too, as suggested earlier, some
of the eight members of the constitu­
tion committee had done some draft­
ing in advance. That was entirely
proper, for all those who met at Battle
Creek in 1863 knew that they needed
to be more united and more organized, if, in words they voted on May 23, 1863, “the great work of disseminating light upon the commandments of God, the faith of Jesus, and the truths connected with the third angel’s message” was to be accomplished. As the preamble to the General Conference constitution stated, it was founded: “For the purpose of securing unity and efficiency in labor, and promoting the general interests of the cause of present truth.”

From this we learn something else about our founders: Whatever the debates of the 1850s, by 1863 they were clear: they needed to be united if they were to fulfill their divinely assigned mission. This mission was truly uppermost in their minds, rather than personal factors. We can be confident of this because, Uriah Smith’s comments notwithstanding, there was one moment of disagreement in 1863.

James White was unanimously chosen president, but he declined to serve. After a considerable time spent in discussion, the believers urging reasons why he should accept the position, and why he should not, his resignation was finally accepted, and John Byington elected as president in his stead.

No reason was given why James White refused, but we can guess, I think. He had championed organization for several years and surely wanted it to be clear that he had done so because it was what the movement needed, not so that he could become president. With Ellen White as his wife, he almost certainly also wanted to avoid any comparison to Joseph Smith and Brigham Young of the Mormons, presidents of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, but also self-proclaimed prophets. White’s personal qualities were never better displayed than in this moment, arguing at length with his brethren so that they would not make him their leader. He put the unity and mission of the new denomination above all personal factors.

**Evangelistic Spirit**

Between the session's adjournment on Thursday evening and its resumption on Saturday night, Adventist leaders turned to their favorite activity: evangelism. On Friday, May 22, the Michigan Conference's evangelistic tent (what later generations of Adventists would call a “big tent”) “was erected on the green” near the Review and Herald office, as Uriah Smith reported. Eight evangelistic meetings were held, with delegates participating, broken by a church service on Sabbath, May 23, also held in the Second Meeting House. The session’s proceedings finally concluded with a baptism of eight new believers on the morning of Sunday, May 24.

Here is a last point about our founders. They valued committees, parliamentary procedure, and organization, but only as means to an end. The end they had in sight was the end of time, and the second coming of Christ, and a reaping of the harvest.

**The Spirit of ‘63**

The spirit of ’63 is still relevant for Seventh-day Adventists as we look forward to the sixtieth session in San Antonio, and to the future of the Great Second Advent movement. We need the same commitment to unity and to mission; we need to continue to follow proper, well-established procedures; and we need the same willingness to utilize all church members, finding ways to affirm all their talents and commitment.

We need, too, the same willingness to speak plainly to each other; but we also need the same love for each other, as brothers and sisters in Christ; and the same willingness to put the prophetic mission of this church above any considerations of self.

Without these characteristics, the General Conference would not have been founded in 1863; without them, our church would not have expanded around the world. And only if we have them, and have strong personal relationships with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, will we be able to fulfill the prophetic mission God gave to Seventh-day Adventists, who united for mission at the first General Conference session in 1863.

---

2. [James White], “General Conference,” Review and Herald, Mar. 10, 1863.
6. Ibid.

David Trim is director of the General Conference Department of Archives, Statistics, and Research in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.
A great work is committed to those who present the truth in Europe. No branch of our work has a more important field than the Central European Mission. There are France and Germany, with their great cities and teeming population. There are Italy, Spain, and Portugal, after so many centuries of darkness, freed from Romish tyranny, and opened to the Word of God—opened to receive the last message of warning to the world. There are Holland, Austria, Romania, Turkey, Greece, and Russia, the home of millions upon millions, whose souls are as precious in the sight of God as our own, who know nothing of the special truths for this time. The population comprised within the limits of this mission alone is four times that of the United States.

A good work has already been done in these countries. There are those who have received the truth, scattered as light-bearers in almost every land. We have nearly three hundred Sabbathkeepers in Switzerland. There are little companies in France, Germany, and Italy, and two hundred souls in Russia, who are obeying God’s law; and there is a church of forty members away in the far east, almost to the line of Asia. The foundation has been laid for a church in Holland. In Romania and Corsica there are a few who are seeking to keep God’s commandments, and to wait for His Son from heaven....

Obstacles to Overcome

There will be obstacles to retard this work. These we have had to meet wherever missions have been established. Lack of experience, imperfections, mistakes, unconsecrated influ-
ences, have had to be overcome. How often have there hindered the advancement of the cause in America! We do not expect to meet fewer difficulties in Europe.

Some connected with the work in these foreign fields, as in America, become disheartened, and, following the course of the unworthy spies, bring a discouraging report. Like the discontented weaver, they are looking at the wrong side of the web. They cannot trace the plan of the Designer; to them all is confusion, and instead of waiting till they can discern the purpose of God, they hastily communicate to others their spirit of doubt and darkness.

But we have no such report to bring. After a two years' stay in Europe we see no more reason for discouragement in the state of the cause there than at its rise in the different fields in America. There we saw the Lord testing the material to be used. Some would not bear the proving of God. They would not be hewed and squared.

Every stroke of the chisel, every blow of the hammer, aroused their anger and resistance. They were laid aside, and other material was brought in, to be tested in like manner. All this occasioned delay. Every fragment broken away was regretted and mourned over. Some thought that these losses would ruin the building; but, on the contrary, it was rendered stronger by the removal of these elements of weakness. The work went steadily forward. Every day made it plainer that the Lord's hand was guiding all, and that a grand purpose ran through the work from first to last. So we see the cause being established in Europe.

God is the source of life and light and joy to the universe. Like rays of light from the sun, blessings flow out from Him to all the creatures He has made.

One of the great difficulties there is the poverty that meets us at every turn. This retards the progress of the truth, which, as in earlier ages, usually finds its first converts among the humbler classes. Yet we had a similar experience in our own country, both east and west of the Rocky Mountains. Those who first accepted this message were poor, but as they set to work in faith to accomplish what they could with their talents of ability and means, the Lord came in to help. In His providence He brought men and women into the truth who were willing-hearted; they had means, and they wanted to send the light to others. So it will be now. But the Lord would have us labor earnestly in faith till that time comes.

Going Forward

The word has gone forth to Europe, "Go forward." The humblest toiler for the salvation of souls is a laborer together with God, a coworker with Christ. Angels minister unto him. As we advance in the opening path of His providence, God will continue to open the way before us. The greater the difficulties to be overcome, the greater will be the victory gained. . . .

God is the source of life and light and joy to the universe. Like rays of light from the sun, blessings flow out from Him to all the creatures He has made. In His infinite love He has granted men the privilege of becoming partakers of the divine nature, and, in their turn, of diffusing blessings to their fellow-men. This is the highest honor, the greatest joy, that it is possible for God to bestow upon men. Those are brought nearest to their Creator who thus become participants in labors of love. He who refuses to become a "laborer together with God"—the man who for the sake of selfish indulgence ignores the wants of his fellow-men, the miser who heaps up his treasures here—is withholding from himself the richest blessing that God can give him.

Brethren, "ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." As we recount the numberless mercies of our God, and meditate upon His matchless love; as we behold the wonderful sacrifice of the Redeemer, may gratitude awaken in our hearts, till it shall kindle a flame of sacred love that shall flow out to souls even in far-off Europe.

This is taken from the article "Our Missions in Europe," published in *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Dec. 6, 1887. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.
By Diane Thurber and Susan Jones

Three Days That CHANGE A City

Giving away medical and dental care is one way to get a city’s attention.
Your Best Pathway to Health, a three-day no-cost medical and dental clinic, was conducted April 8-10 at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, where the 2015 General Conference session will be held in July. Sponsored by Adventist Laymen’s Services and Industries (ASI), in collaboration with the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America, and many other entities, more than $20 million in free health-related services were provided by more than 1,700 volunteers to more than 6,000 of those in the medically underserved population of the city.

Free on-site facilities included primary-care visits; women’s health services; consultation with specialists; STD screenings; pediatrics; immunizations; dental care, including root canals, crowns, fillings, extractions, and dental cleanings. Pharmacy, eye care, physical therapy, X-ray, and laboratory services were also provided on-site. Even surgical procedures such as hysterectomies, gallbladder and tumor removal, and others were performed by prior arrangement for 360 people, both at the Alamodome and at the nearby Central Texas Medical Center, operated by the Adventist Health System. In addition to medical and dental care, volunteers also provided haircuts, chaplaincy services. Approximately 2,500 free sack lunches were distributed each day.

Some touching stories came out of the event.

Making Connections

One man came for medical services and mentioned that he was engaged to be married, but that he had no suit to be married in. Men’s Wearhouse had donated several hundred men’s suits, including one tuxedo. The tuxedo fit this man perfectly. He also had no connection with a pastor, and no church to be married in. But that connection was made as well.

Another man was devastated because his 15-year-old son had been shot and killed the day before. He was also upset because he didn’t have appropriate clothing for his son’s funeral. He too was outfitted with a suit, and received prayer and counseling services.

One woman came to the vision-care section and mentioned that she had experienced a sudden impairment in her vision just the day before. Her eyes were examined on one of the two reSamanthal cameras in the vision area, which showed that she had a reSamanthal detachment and bleeding in the back of her eye. She was immediately taken where she could get surgery on her eye and save her vision.

Someone who came through the medical line for an examination was discovered to have severe heart problems. An ambulance was called, and he was taken directly to the hospital.

Someone else had a heart attack in the Alamodome and received immediate medical care from the physicians there.

Hundreds had to be turned away. Some cried. One man begged to be seen after the cutoff for the day. A woman ahead of him in line, also waiting to be seen, heard his pleas and gave up her place in line so he could receive dental care.

One man, while talking with a chaplain, asked for prayer to reconcile with his brother. He shared that he had carried a knife with him into the Alamodome that day. He had been planning to leave there and stab his brother. One of the volunteers (perhaps someone in registration or hospitality, no one knows) learned that he had a knife and talked him into giving it to her, which he did reluctantly. After he relinquished the knife, he broke down in tears as the chaplain prayed for him.

A 14-year-old girl shared with a lifestyle counselor that she was struggling with depression. She had seen her father murder her mother. She was referred for further services to help her, in addition to receiving helpful tips and prayer.

All the people who received services during this event will receive follow-up care if they wish, based on results of lab work and diagnoses, and be referred to church- and community-run seminars such as Depression Recovery, CREATION Health, stop-smoking programs, Healthy Living...
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
WHAT HEAVENLY MUSIC: Live music was provided by different groups and musicians as people waited for treatment. This group of bell ringers is from Ouachita Hills Academy in Amity, Arkansas.

cooking classes, diabetes-management programs, and others.

In 2016 an outreach such as this one is being planned for Detroit, and in 2017 for New York City. A smaller Your Best Pathway to Health event is being planned for this summer in Spokane, Washington.

Renewed Faith

Chester Lane* leaned on a camp chair as he shuffled along the triage line, hoping for vision services. His wife, Audra, who needed dental care for an aching tooth, soon joined him.

The Smiths rose early that morning so they could be near the front of the line for these health services. It had been three or four years since Chester’s vision had been checked, and his vision had deteriorated to the point that he needed new glasses.

The couple had recently moved from Alaska, seeking better medical care for Chester. They found the surgeon they needed for his neurological problem, which had remained undiagnosed for 20 years. However, because they live on disability and are without insurance, it was difficult to save for their medical expenses. Audra described how several times she saved enough money to fix her tooth, but the dentist would insist on a course of antibiotics first. Then she would have to save again for dental expenses and the antibiotics. It was a cycle she couldn’t seem to avoid.

As Audra entered the Alamodome, saw the scope of what the event offered, and began to understand how many lives would be improved by the free services offered in the three-day event, she thought of friends back “home.” “You need to bring this event to Alaska,” she said. She explained that many there live under the poverty level and can’t afford health care. As Audra sought help for herself, she was thinking back to the community she and Chester had left and her desire for their good was evident.

“This event renews my faith in mankind,” Audra said. “I was getting to the point of believing that no one really cares.”

Earlier in their life journey Audra and Chester lived in Nevada, Missouri. There Audra encountered a Seventh-day Adventist pastor and his wife. “She saved my life,” said Audra, explaining how the pastor’s wife had insisted she visit the hospital for the abdominal pain she was experiencing. “It was a burst appendix,” she stated. These memories of her encounter with this couple led her to say, “I told my husband there would be nice people here today.”

Later that morning Chester finished his vision screening. “I’m going to pick up my new glasses June 1,” he beamed.

Audra said that she had cut her husband’s hair the day before, and explained how she had also trimmed the ends of her own. “You know how it is when you trim your own hair—the ends are jagged,” she explained. She then told how she was invited to enjoy a free massage and complimentary haircut while waiting for dental services. “It was wonderful!” she sighed.

Renewed vigor was evident in the couple’s steps and the smiles on both their faces as they shared about the special treatment and nice people they had met. “I don’t mind waiting until June 1 for my new glasses; it was all worth it!” Chester exclaimed.

Divine Appointment

Samantha and David Martinez were watching KSAT in San Antonio on Tuesday afternoon, April 7, 2015, when they heard a news story about Your Best Pathway to Health, a three-day event at which free medical and dental services would be offered.

“As soon as we heard about this event on the news, we came right over,” Samantha said.

She and David arrived at the Alamodome with a blanket and pillow, prepared to spend the night outside. They joined others in the line forming for dental services, so they could receive services as soon as the doors opened at 7:00. But because the parking lot would close overnight, David could not risk having their car impounded. So he left Samantha, who waited patiently through the night.

David returned the next morning, but not alone. He brought his mother-in-law, who also sought dental care.

The Martinezes have waited years for dental care. They attempted to receive services at a smaller dental
Consider a Charitable Gift Annuity.

- Want a better return than today's financial institutions pay?
- What provides a double tax benefit? A Charitable Gift Annuity provides lifetime payments.
- Want a plan with fixed payments not subject to market swings? Gift annuities benefit your charitable intentions.

Find out more at www.willplan.org
Neither Samantha nor David is currently employed. A work-related accident prevents David from driving a big rig, and Samantha cares for her aging mother. Disability checks help the couple make ends meet, but they have no other means to cover dental treatments.

Visible relief and broadening smiles were on the Martinezes’ weary faces as they stood in the triage line waiting to be seen by nurses who would review their health assessments and take their blood pressure. Soon they were on the way to the medical and dental waiting areas.

“This is awesome,” David said. “God is going to bless all these people for what they are doing.”

“I see this as a divine appointment,” Samantha exclaimed.

When David’s number was called for dental triage, he answered a few questions and moved into another waiting area. While there, he made friends with individuals also waiting for dental care. While in this waiting area he met Russ Laughlin, a pastor and vice president for spiritual development at Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, Texas.

A person sitting near David asked, “Which church is doing all this?” Laughlin responded, “Seventh-day Adventist.”

“I hear you believe in the second coming of Jesus,” stated David. He had met a chaplain in line who had answered questions, shared his business card, and invited David to his church.

Laughlin said, “Yes, it’s all in our name.” Then he proceeded to explain who Seventh-day Adventists are, and how the church’s name shares our belief in the return of Jesus. Other questions followed.

“Would you pray for me?” one woman asked, to which Laughlin gladly consented.

“Would you touch me, hold my hand?” she pressed. Again Laughlin complied, reaching out to take David’s hand also.

Laughlin’s prayer brought tears to the woman’s eyes. In addition to the dental relief she and the Martinezes received, they also experienced the healing touch of Jesus through kind volunteers like Laughlin.

**Sent From God**

Sonja Rojas sat at a table waiting to be seen by a dentist. “I’m waiting for my wife,” she said.

Jill Rojas had arrived at the Alamodome the previous day at 4:00 p.m. to join the line forming for dental services. She waited through the night so she could talk to a dentist and, she hoped, get a desperately needed crown.

The next morning Sonja joined Jill. She half-expected to receive a call during the night with a request to come pick Jill up. It had been just about two months since Jill had fallen from the second floor of their two-story home and broke her L1 and L2 vertebrae. She was in the hospital for more than a month, then moved to rehabilitation.

Jill, a nurse, had not worked since her own injury on February 15, 2015. Then Sonja had to quit her job to take care of Jill. She explained that Jill should have remained in rehabilitation longer, but without insurance, and because of their inability to pay $160 per day to receive physical therapy and nursing services, she was sent home.

Knowing Jill still suffers with constant pain from the accident caused Sonja to worry about how she had endured the wait outside the Alamodome. “She’s a strong woman,” Sonja
BE THE ONE TO SERVE THE ONE

We want to see you at GC Session this July in San Antonio! Drop by our exhibit to

PRAY to CHAT and to learn how you can SERVE

Booth C1353

Visit ADRA at Booth C1353.

ADRA.org | 1.800.424.ADRA (2372) #servetheone
said. “She won’t let people know she’s suffering and won’t let anything stop her.” Jill endured the long wait, and together they proceeded inside.

Sonja received vision screening. The attending eye doctor knew Sonja also wanted a dental cleaning. She smiled widely and reported, “The doctor said, ‘I like you. I like you a lot. I’m going to take you over to see if you can see the dentist, too.’” He was successful, and Sonja’s bright smile was the first thing Jill noticed when she returned from receiving her own dental care.

“IT was worth it!” Jill said. “I would have had to spend $1,300; and I got this crown for free.”

“The Lord sees everything. I know there’s a reason for everything...When you feel you’re down and out, then something happens. When you least expect it, He answers your prayers,” Sonja stated.

“This,” described Sonja, sweeping her arms out wide to take in the scene in the Alamodome before her, “is angels sent from God. What all you people are doing. You’re here for us. It’s awesome! It’s passion.”

Photos of the event are on Twitter: #pathwaytohealth, and on Facebook: www.facebook.com/yourbestpathwaytohealth.

*The names of the following patients have been changed to preserve confidentiality.

Diane Thurber (left) is associate director of communication and women’s ministries director for the Lake Union Conference. Susan Jones is a member of the Arbuckle View Adventist Church in Oklahoma.

“We are a group offive young people at a military camp. Each morning at 6 o’clock we get together and listen to your programs. None of us misses your programs. All of us have never gone to a church. We were all not believers. Your programs took us back to life.”

- Listener in Africa
The Difference Between Wealth and Desire

Why do some Bible versions translate Haggai 2:7, “And they will come with the wealth of all nations” (NASB), instead of “And the desire of all nations shall come” (KJV)?

The answer to your question is somewhat technical because it involves issues of Hebrew syntax and grammar. For a long time this passage was considered a messianic prophecy, announcing the coming of the Messiah. But most Bible commentators have given up this reading of the text, as reflected in more recent translations. I will try to explain some of the difficulties of the text, and offer arguments to support one of the translations.

1. The Problem: In Hebrew the verb translated “they will come” is in the third person, masculine/feminine, plural. The noun translated “wealth/desire” (khemdat) is feminine singular. There is no agreement between the number of the verb (plural) and the noun (singular). This means that “desire/wealth” could hardly be the subject of the verb. So the best translation may not be “and the desire... will come.”

There is a second problem: The noun khemdat could be translated as “desire” or as “valuable, precious.” How do we decide which one is correct for this passage? These problems open the door for different interpretations and translations.

2. Possible New Translations: To solve the problem of a singular noun versus a plural verb it has been suggested that the noun “desire/wealth” has a collective sense. In other words, it is singular in form but plural in meaning. This is a possible solution, but the translation “the desirable things/ the wealth of the nations will come [to the temple]” is unclear. Others find the suggestion too weak and prefer to follow the Greek translation, in which the Hebrew noun was translated as plural. In this case the Hebrew khemdat is changed to khamudot (plural). Notice that only the vowels were changed. This is also a possible solution, but since it emends the Hebrew text, it is not “desirable.”

Such difficulties have led others to argue that the best translation should be “They [the nations] will come/bring the wealth of all the nations.” This is a little better. But the question is whether khemdat means “desire” or “wealth.”

They argue that “wealth” is supported contextually because it is specifically mentioned in the next verse (verse 8). So the Lord is promising His people that the nations will, as an act of homage to Him, provide financial resources needed for the construction of the temple (see Isa. 60:5; Zech. 14:14, 17).

3. The Desire of the Nations: I suggest that it is better to work with the Hebrew text as we have it, and render it as follows: “They [all the nations mentioned in Haggai 2:7] will come to the desire of all the nations, and I will fill this temple with glory [the glory of the Messiah].”

Let me explain. First, the noun khemdat designates what is of value, and therefore desirable. It not only applied to things but also to Israelite kings as the “desire” of the people, i.e., the king they want (1 Sam. 9:20; contrast 2 Chron. 21:20; cf. Dan. 9:23; 10:11, 19). Second, contextually Haggai 2:7 is preceded by a description of a manifestation of God (a theophany) that shakes the cosmos, including, in a particular way, the nations of the earth. God is coming with power, and the result is that the nations will find in the Messiah the true desire of their hearts. Third, the reference to gold and silver in Haggai 2:8 indicates that for the Lord these things are not that important. What is important is that His glory, manifested in the Messiah, will fill the new temple and result in peace (verse 9). Fourth, the combination of a theophany and a messianic prophecy is also found in Haggai 2:21-23. The powerful presence of God that shakes the cosmos is used to introduce another messianic prophecy. Zerubbabel, who was of royal descent, was a prototype of the new David, the coming Messiah, who will become the “signet of God,” i.e., He will have royal authority as the chosen servant of God (Haggai 2:23).

May Christ continue to be the Desire of our hearts!
Living in the Holy Spirit’s Power

By Mark A. Finley

One of the great challenges facing Christians is not necessarily what they believe, but how they live. Beliefs are important, because what we believe shapes our understanding of life and leads to changes in our lifestyle. Biblical truths, rightly understood, change our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit. If our beliefs make little difference in how we live, we have misunderstood their purpose. In this month’s lesson we will discover how the Holy Spirit empowers us to live godly lives by applying the truths we believe to our daily lives.


Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), ministered in the power of the Spirit (Luke 4:14), and faced the temptations of Satan in the wilderness in the strength of the Spirit (Matt. 4:1). Jesus lived a Spirit-filled life and invites us to do the same.

2 What effect does the Holy Spirit have on our daily lives? Read Romans 8:11-14.

A careful reading of these verses reveals that the Holy Spirit does three very practical things for each believer. First, the Spirit gives us spiritual life (verse 11). Second, the Holy Spirit enables us to triumph over the inclinations and desires of the flesh (verse 13). Third, the Holy Spirit leads us to the reality that even while living in this world we are children of God (verse 14).

3 Read Ephesians 3:14-21. What was Paul’s great longing for the believers in Ephesus? What role did he see the Holy Spirit playing in their lives?

4 Read Galatians 3:1-5. What was the apostle’s concern with the church at Galatia? What tragic mistake did some Galatian Christians make? How can we apply Paul’s counsel to our own lives?

Evidently some Christians in Galatia were attempting to live their Christian lives in their own strength rather than in the power of the Holy Spirit. Any attempt to face the temptations of the evil one in our own strength is doomed to failure. Battling evil in the Holy Spirit’s power ensures victory.

5 What do the following Bible writers tell us about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of each believer?

Read James 4:5; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 3:24.

6 What did Jesus say is one of the functions of the Holy Spirit? Read John 14:17; 16:13.

The Holy Spirit leads us to understand the truth about Jesus and His Word. The Spirit guides us into an understanding of the Bible and the truths it contains. The Spirit works within us to live in harmony with those eternal truths. We can praise God that His Spirit not only guides us into all truth, but strengthens us so we can apply these truths to our lives.

Our hearts can rejoice that the One who reveals truth changes our lives through the truth He reveals, so we can represent His love before our friends and neighbors. It is one thing to know truth; it is quite another to have our hearts broken by the Holy Spirit and our lives transformed through His power to live in us.

Invite the Holy Spirit into your life today. Ask Him to strengthen you to live the truth you believe.
Letters

Religious Freedom Group in Jamaica
Thank you for printing Rhoma Tomlinson’s article “Adventist Church Opens Religious Freedom Group in Jamaica” (April 2015). What a mighty God we serve!

I remembered the days when, as a young man in Jamaica, I accepted the Adventist message and the challenges that came with it. Some were almost unbearable. “Adventist” was a label for whoever they wanted you to be. Finding employment or any form of social help would be denied because of your religion. That a difference!

TREVOR BONNEY
New York, United States

Just a word of caution: Remember we are warned by Ellen White that Rome is doing everything in its power to restrict this religious freedom that we now seem to be celebrating.

DERRICK BAKER
Jamaica

Malawi Pastor, Turning 100, Regrets Boat Tragedy
I am writing in regard to Andrew McChesney’s article “Malawi Pastor, Turning 100, Regrets Boat Tragedy” (April 2015). I was born in Zambia and went to the Anderson boarding school in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, in the 1960s and 1970s. I was 10, and often we children were found raiding neighboring orchards and camp meeting stores for something to eat—and we wanted it for nothing! We had pocket money and even got a weekly food parcel from town, or the odd cake from home.

Why did we do it? We were caught many times and got the cane and additional punishment. Yes, you guessed it, digging holes—and the ground was hard and full of stones.

I thank God, now, for teachers who cared enough to punish us. When sin is full-grown, it produces death, from which there is no returning. We do destruction to those living in disobedience when emotion and debate are common practice, like stealing grain or just a piece of fruit. There are eternal consequences for tolerance of sin.

We will all carry remorse for the past, but we see only with poor vision. What will eternity reveal?

We live in tough times; let’s give thanks and move it up a notch or two and focus on being obedient in Christ and to God.

GORDON COCHRAN
Australia

When Species Change
Thanks for L. James Gibson’s article “When Species Change” (March 2015). How interesting and refreshing to see a

I’m requesting prayer for my mom; and for me to find a job, and a suitable marriage partner.

Vincent, Kenya

Please pray for us to obtain a church. We are many members, yet our church is very small.

Sabati, Madagascar

I ask for prayer that I will deliver a normal, healthy baby. The baby is large, and I will have to have a cesarean section.

Sarah, United Kingdom

Please pray that I will soon have enough money saved to buy a car so I can help my widowed mother, who gets lonely.

Beth, United States

Please pray that my wedding can be held this year; we are waiting for a certificate from an embassy. Please also pray for my father, grandmother, and friend, who needed financial help and/or healing.

Margaret, Indonesia

Please pray that I will deliver a normal, healthy baby. The baby is large, and I will have to have a cesarean section.

Sarah, United Kingdom

Please pray that I will soon have enough money saved to buy a car so I can help my widowed mother, who gets lonely.

Beth, United States

We will all carry remorse for the past, but we see only with poor vision. What will eternity reveal?

—Gordon Cochran, Australia
church-employed scientist grapple with scientific issues seemingly at odds with the way the church has traditionally interpreted Scripture! To this nonscientist, however, the explanation of animal adaptation and change happening slowly over long periods of time is more reasonable than the idea that Satan with evil intent miraculously ordered changes in many animals' anatomy and function that would turn them into animals of prey.

MICHAEL WORTMAN
North Carolina, United States

Bible Study
I congratulate Mark A. Finley for the Bible studies he has been giving to readers of Adventist World. I especially appreciated the November 2014 study, which was on peace.

May Finley continue to be inspired by God to give more of such messages.

GLORIA AYIMWAADU
Kumasi, Ghana

Appreciation
Thank you for the godly message you always provide to us through Adventist World.

IVAN KATEREGGA
Mityana, Uganda

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 country from which you are writing. Letters will be edited for space and clarity. Not all letters submitted will be published.

Please pray for my friend who is distraught and suicidal after not hearing from her adult children for four years (no calls, no letters). Also, pray that my pregnancy progresses well.

Cécilia, Martinique

I am hoping to finish my doctoral studies soon, but am having trouble with my advisor. Please pray for me as I go through this experience.

Thank you!

Andrea, United States

Belief and Morality
Is it necessary to believe in God to be moral? People in the following countries say yes.

Canada 31%
Britain 20%
United States 53%
China 14%
South Korea 54%
Brazil 86%
Indonesia 99%

Source: Pew Research/Global Attitudes

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:
JULY 1, 2015 • Revelation 4

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 1-815-588-6618; or mail them to Adventist World, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.

June 2015 | Adventist World — NAD 45
On June 13, 1963, Vaiola Kerisome Head died on the south Pacific island of Niue.

In March 1909 Australian Joseph E. Steed, then in Samoa, made contact with a Niue Islander, Vaiola Kerisome, who accepted the Seventh-day Adventist message. The following January she accompanied Steed to Australia, where she attended Avondale College.

In 1915, after assisting with the work among the Maori in New Zealand, she returned to Niue. Vaiola eventually married Allan Head, an English businessman on the island. Working alone and without remuneration, she served the church on the island by giving Bible studies, teaching school in her home three days a week, conducting a children’s Sabbath school, translating Patriarchs and Prophets into the Niuean language, and nurturing baptized members.

Recognizing her educational talents, the New Zealand minister of island affairs, Sir Maui Pomare, encouraged her to take up teaching and begin an education program on the island. In later years she was known on Niue as the “mother of education.”
NOW AT THE BEST PRICE SINCE THE 20TH CENTURY!

LAUNCH SPECIAL

Try the new Review for 6 months for

$9.95 or $19.95

For a one-year subscription

US$19.95 or US$32.95

(regular US$39.95)

Includes our FREE app! (Available Fall 15)

FREE print supplement (Kidsview)

Full access to our NEW website!

THE NEW REVIEW COMES WITH 4 NEW SECTIONS

Connect
How do we relate to an eternal truth in a digital culture?

News & Commentary
From North America and around the world.

Engage
How do we give meaning to our lives for the sake of God's love and grace?

Discover
What are the guiding principles that make us citizens of God's kingdom?

Completely redesigned for a generation on the go.
Compact and sturdy to go wherever you go.
Striking and Modern and to be seen wherever you are!
Now once a month!

Order NOW by visiting our website www.adventistreview.org or call 1-800-447-7377!
Gain a **deeper understanding**

**“It Is Written’s Bible Study Guides are a great asset for your church, personal outreach, or ministry. You can use them for small groups, Bible classes, and baptismal preparation.”** —John Bradshaw

**ORDER TODAY!**

1-888-664-5573, M–Th, 8:30–6:00 p.m. ET