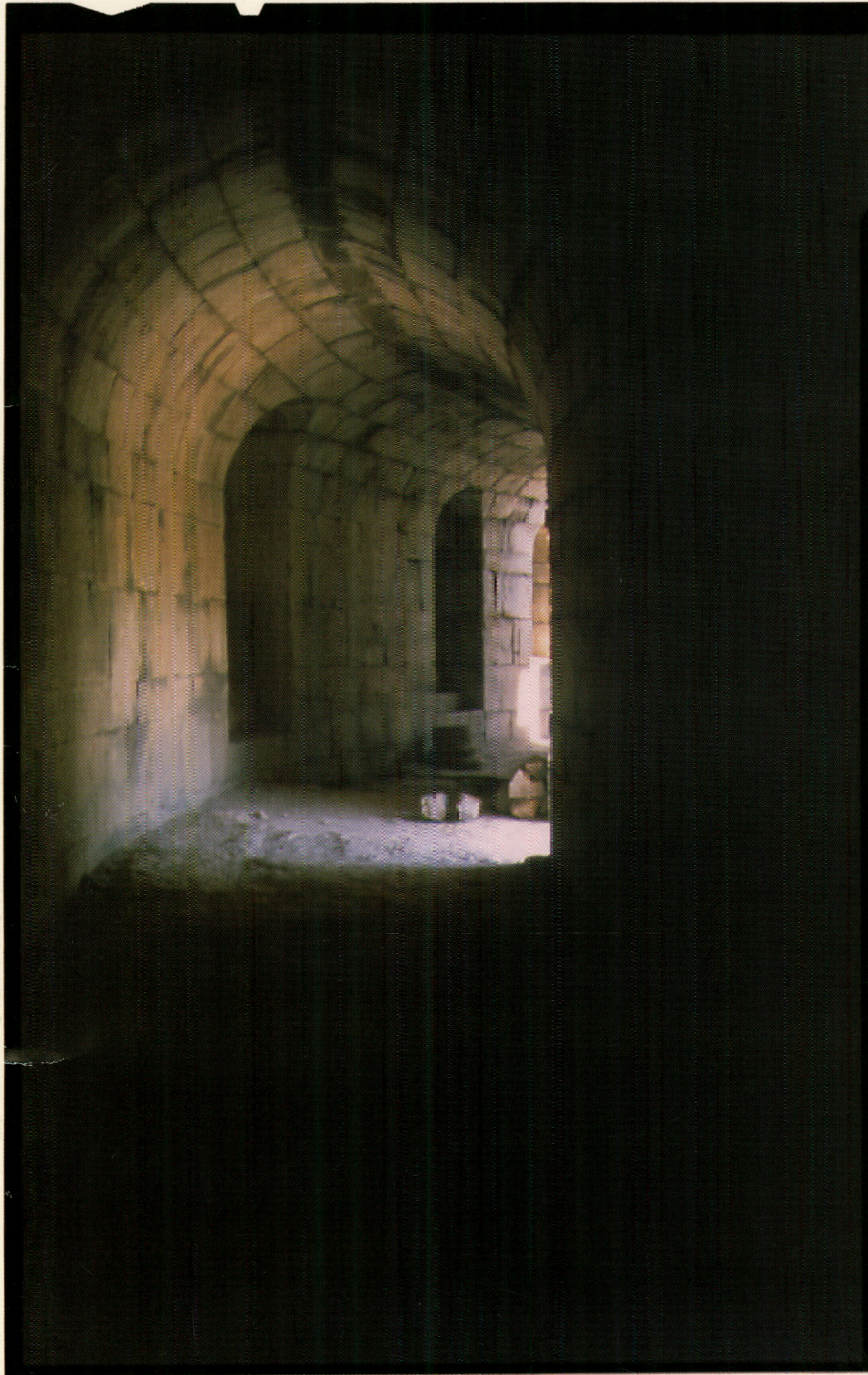


SPECTRUM

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**This Old House:
Daily Life in
Ancient Israel**

**The Remnant and
the Republicans**

**Church Planters
Sow New
Denomination?**

**Where
Church and
State Meet:
Spectrum Surveys
the Adventist Vote**

SPECTRUM

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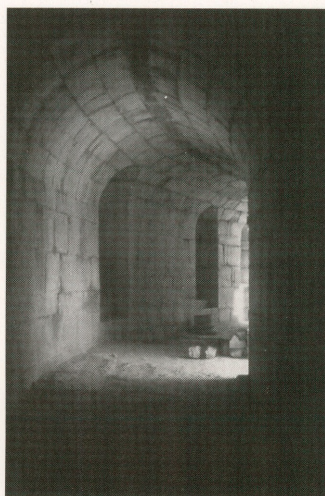
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About the Cover Photo

Passageway behind the Roman Theater at Umm Qays in northern Jordan. Photography by John McDowell.

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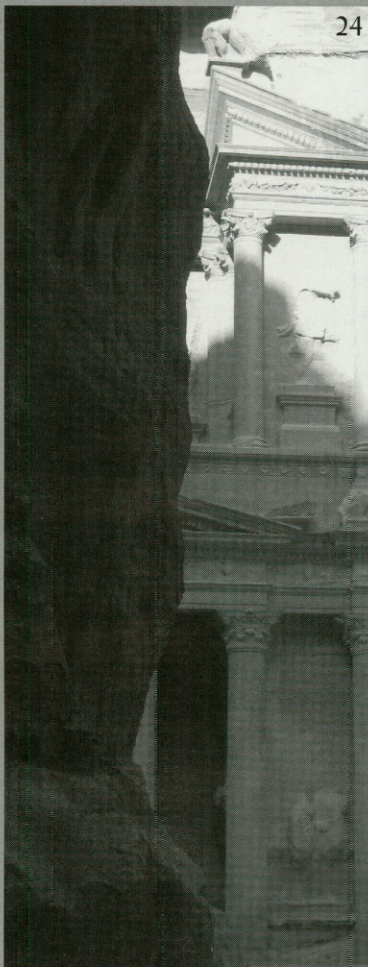
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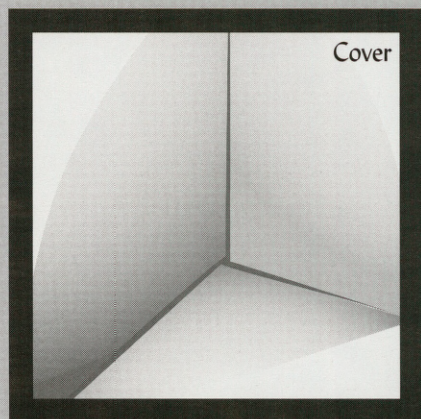
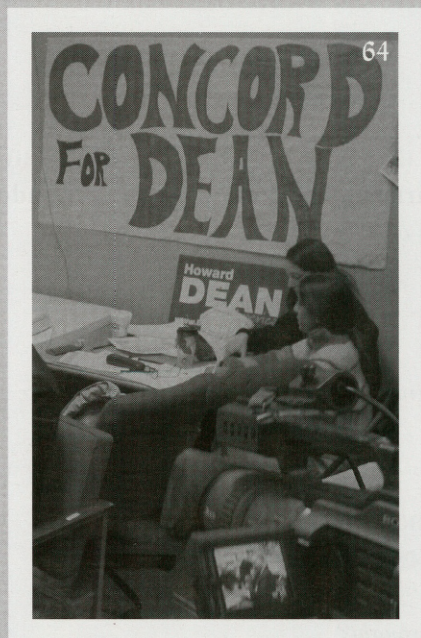
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In the Sanctuaries of Great Minds

During one week of August the world lost two great men, Czeslaw Milosz and Jack Wendell Provonsha, so I have been reading tributes to both at the same time. Although the Polish poet and Adventist theologian may not seem to have anything particular in common, the words about them echo praise for the significance of their thoughts.

"In the bleakest hours of World War II, Milosz produced a masterpiece called "The World," wrote Leon Wieseltier in the *New York Times*. "[This] sequence of 20 'naïve' poems 'written in the style of school primers,' in which the rudiments of a child's world—the road, the gate, the porch, the dining room, the stairs, the poppies, the peonies—are portrayed with the indomitability of genuine innocence. Against the horror, he pitted pastoral! And all the while he was working with the Polish underground. There were two ways, then, of resisting evil: engagement and disengagement; attachment and detachment; action against it and contemplation despite it. In his dark era, Milosz was the master of this complication, this salvation, of consciousness."

"Jack was a church theologian," Fritz Guy said in his theological appreciation given at the memorial service for Provonsha. "He served the Church, and served it well. He was no 'court prophet,' specializing in theological correctness. His theological service was far more valuable—and far more influential—than that. He helped the Church think new thoughts. He believed that 'every generation is a first generation all over again.' He helped us think in new ways about God and creation and Sabbath and church.

"Regarding God, he offered an understanding of atonement in which God is the author, not the object of atonement. The Cross was not an appeasement of divine wrath, but a revelation of divine love.... His first theological book was *God Is With Us*, and it pictured a God who comes and comes and comes, whose very nature is to come."

Attending Provonsha's famous Sabbath School class was engaging because he would take the subject of the lesson quarterly and turn it into something profound. After his insightful introduction, a few members of the large audience would ask him questions. One left feeling part of a great

conversation, even if they had said nothing the whole time.

Reading Milosz's poetry had the same delicious feel. His clairvoyance became our own, and that is a large part of our grieving. Wieseltier described Milosz's mind as one of the great sanctuaries of the twentieth century. Certainly Provonsha's mind became that for his students and colleagues. A sanctuary now closed. We are like the child Margaret that Gerard Manley Hopkins addressed in his poem "Spring and Fall":

Sorrow's springs are the same.
Nor mouth had, no not mind, expressed
What heart heard of, ghost guessed:
It is the blight man was born for,
It is Margaret you mourn for.

But these great minds deserve more from us than just glowing words of tribute and our sorrow for ourselves that we have lost their presence among us. They challenge us:

To know and not to speak.
In that way one forgets.
What is pronounced strengthens itself.
What is not pronounced tends to nonexistence.

Think more clearly, listen and observe closely, capture the significance of cherry blossoms, chrysanthemums and the full moon, explore the meaning of "the holy word: Is." To be a sanctuary is now our task.

Bonnie Dwyer
Editor

NOTEWORTHY



The Remnant and the Republicans

By Douglas Morgan

My membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church may not automatically make me part of “the remnant,” but it’s indisputable that I’m a Republican, duly registered in the state of Maryland. With full cognizance that I risk being challenged to a duel, I will also assert that I am at least as loyal a Republican as Zell Miller is a Democrat.

I stand on my record: I was founder and, to my knowledge, sole member of Nebraska Republicans for McGovern in 1972. I must warn that I will not submit in silence to any effort to tarnish that achievement with reports that I was not yet old enough to vote.

A vast chasm runs between my idiosyncratic Republicanism and the Republicanism of Dick Cheney and Tom DeLay. Yet it’s also true that today’s GOP bears little resemblance to the political party that grew up during the second half of the nineteenth century, contemporaneously with the Seventh-day Adventist “remnant” movement.

The Republican-remnant kinship, if unofficial, became so close that in the 1970s a scholar would describe late nineteenth-century Adventists as “conservative in theol-

ogy and overwhelmingly Republican in political sympathies.” Accurate in its denotation, the description also conveyed profoundly and insidiously misleading connotations.

By the 1970s, the word *Republican* evoked clean-shaven, suburban tameness as well as elitist privilege. Its usage had the effect of re-creating the Adventist pioneers in the semblances of Gerald Ford, Pat Boone, Billy Graham, and Richard Nixon. In fact, the Republicans with whom the Adventists of the 1860s had affinities looked and acted, in many respects, a lot more like the hirsute radicals protesting racial injustice and the war in Vietnam.

The Republican party was formed in 1855, the same year that the Adventists began setting up their headquarters in Battle Creek. The crisis over slavery was deepening and would soon culminate with the Civil War. The early Adventists’ sympathies leaned Republican because it was the party of liberty, human rights, and temperance. Always a diverse coalition, the party’s most forceful and coherent wing during its first couple of decades—the Radicals—were the foremost advocates in national politics for the powerless and oppressed.

When the Republican party fielded its first national ticket in the presidential election of 1856, the Adventists weren’t sure if they should vote

but were sure that they weren’t going to switch their energies from their fledgling remnant cause to getting out the vote for John C. Frémont. Their stance has subsequently been attributed to some mixture of premillennialist determinism, pietistic individualism, or sectarian stand-offishness. Yet it was quite similar to that of another variety of apocalyptic radicals more widely known on the national scene—William Lloyd Garrison and the American Anti-Slavery Society.

According to biographer Henry Mayer, Garrison saw the abolitionist movement as a “saving remnant” working for a “spiritual revolution accomplished by a minority liberated from conventional politics and armed only with the righteous conviction of truth.” The movement’s task was “to work on the constituencies rather than the candidates,” and thus to transform the moral conscience of society. Enmeshment in partisan politicking would undermine the power and authenticity of the reformers’ public witness.

The outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 and its transformation into war against slavery in 1863 created an entirely new situation by the election of 1864. The Great Emancipator, Abraham Lincoln, unwavering in his commitment to abolition after painful slowness in coming to it, stood for re-election as a Republican against the great

appeaser of the Confederacy, the popular Democratic general, George B. McClellan.

The fate of the slaves hung in the balance that fall. And because the Republican party had demonstrated both the ability and resolve to end the foul curse, Garrison believed it was now time to join the political fray, and he stumped vigorously for Lincoln.

In the *Review* that same fall, J. N. Andrews warned against any notions about the possibility of smuggling proslavery politics past divine inspection on judgment day. As their earthly sojourn prolonged, Adventists realized they had to act their part for the “Prince of Peace” until the final establishment of his reign. Questions of whether and how to vote, stated in a resolution voted at the General Conference session the following year, turned on the impact for “justice, humanity, and right,” and against “intemperance, insurrection, and slavery.”

The century following the Civil War witnessed an ongoing struggle for the soul of the Republican party. Would it be primarily the party of profit, allied with the interests of large corporations and a burgeoning military-industrial complex? Or would it be the party of principles such as liberty, equal opportunity, and honest, benevolent government?

Republican heroes of the latter emphases during the first three decades of the twentieth century (at least portions thereof) included leaders of black empowerment such as Ida B. Wells-Barnett and A. Philip Randolph, and eloquent progressives such as George Norris of Nebraska and Robert “Fighting Bob” La Follette of Wisconsin. During the second half of the twentieth century, Edward Brooke of

Massachusetts, Jacob Javits of New York, and Mark Hatfield of Oregon carried on the tradition.

This specie of Republican, however, dwindled to the verge of extinction by the end of the century. At the Republican Convention this year, the lieutenant governor of Maryland, Ronald Steele, referred to the little-noted fact that a far higher proportion of Democrats than Republicans in the Senate voted against the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Twenty-one Democrats voted against the legislation now so universally honored, whereas only five Republicans did.

What Steele did not mention was that one of the five Republican opponents was the party’s presidential nominee later that year, Barry Goldwater. It was the beginning of a “southern strategy” that made sharply conservative white southerners the dominant force in the party.

Through these transformations, the “remnant” people deepened their de facto bonds with the GOP. But the soul of Republicanism had fundamentally changed. A facade of tradition obscured parallel shifts in the soul of Adventism.

Ellen White, of course, had labored to keep the remnant from debilitating divisions over partisan politics. Her nonpartisanship, however, was not in the service of noninvolvement or apocalyptic fatalism. Rather, it was a strategy for a kind of “movement” politics based on a distinctive identity as “subjects of Christ’s kingdom.”

From that standpoint, Adventists could make discriminating use of the political process in the name of a healing, loving God, as well as resist being co-opted for evil purposes. The direction from the voice of the Son of God, Ellen White

declared, is “ye will not give your voice or influence to any policy to enrich a few, to bring oppression and suffering to the poorer classes of humanity” (*Testimonies to Ministers*, 331–32).

Differing conclusions may well be drawn as to how all of this influences electoral choices on November 2. Yet the Adventist heritage cannot, without delusion, be invoked in support of apathy, disengagement, or policies that diminish access to health care, education, housing, and economic opportunity, while favoring unfettered accumulation for the fortunate few and military aggression intended to preserve and extend that privilege.

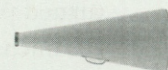
Douglas Morgan chairs the Department of History and Political Science at Columbia Union College, Takoma Park, Maryland.

What Does It Take to Be a Hero?

By Ryan Rasmuson

This year, Hollywood’s answer to this enduring question is addressed in films such as *Spiderman II*, *Van Helsing*, and *Harry Potter*. For Adventist documentary filmmaker Terry Benedict the answer is found in the story of an unlikely war hero from World War II, conscientious objector Desmond Doss.

The Conscientious Objector, Benedict’s film, chronicles the life of a soft-spoken yet firmly principled man whose heroism earned him the highest military honor in the United States, the Congressional Medal of Honor. For the project Benedict assembled cutting-edge camera



equipment that he used in innovative ways and spent countless hours interviewing Doss's fellow soldiers.

Benedict also arranged for Doss and several other veterans to return to the escarpment in Okinawa where Private Doss, the noncombatant, showed his heroism. There they detail the account of the battle and how Doss saved seventy-three lives during one night of frantic fighting. This becomes the highlight of the motion picture, and it elevates Doss to almost mythical status.

Audiences respond enthusiastically. In May, *The Conscientious Objector* took home two awards at the San Jose (California) Cinequest film festival.

Doss, however, remains humble about his accomplishments. He knows that he was saved by Christ and remains a committed Seventh-day Adventist. His faithful demeanor illuminated Christ to his fellow soldiers; his courage turned hostile officers into humble friends.

Today, Doss's schedule regularly makes him available to the public, where he is especially happy to talk with young believers. He was featured as a spiritual hero at the International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in August. Pathfinder clubs across the country will sponsor the showing of the documentary in November for Veterans Day. "Never let anyone look down on you because you are young," Doss tells Pathfinders. "And always put Christ first."

His story affects adults as well, particularly veterans. "Being in the army as a conscientious objector was never an easy thing," says Bob Sanford, a Korean War draftee turned professional educator in Carmichael, California.

It was made easier by the fact that I knew that someone else had already done it and done it well. When my superiors would tell me to take a gun or when my peers would chastise me, it allowed me an opportunity to tell them the story of Desmond Doss. I remember one soldier that this had a tremendous impact upon. When he first met me he was very antagonistic and questioned why I would choose to declare myself a C.O. But after sharing Desmond's story, he actually made a point as his vehicle was headed out, to come back, shake my hand and encourage me to stay strong in my personal beliefs.

As another veteran summarized, "Desmond succeeded where others have failed. For that, I say thank-you."

Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* has shown that there is an interest in Christian stories today. Benedict says there are plans to follow up this documentary with a feature film on the life of Desmond Doss.

In an era when Christianity is increasingly under attack, the story of Desmond T. Doss remains inspiring and provides hope for those who stand up for their beliefs.

Ryan Rasmusson teaches history at Sacramento (California) Adventist Academy.

Church Planters Sow New Denomination?

By Alexander Carpenter

On August 7, North American Division (NAD) president Don Schneider strode into an Ohio hotel room at the close of the Adventist-

Laymen's Services and Industries (ASI) national convention. He was not happy.

Inside the room stood Ron Gladden, author of the popular handbook *The Seven Habits of Highly Ineffective Churches* (2003) and former church planting director for both the North Pacific and Mid-America Union Conferences. That encounter was his one last appeal to Ron, "asking him to build plans that can work within the Adventist Church."

But it didn't work, and on August 9, Mission Catalyst Network (MCN) was launched with Gladden as directional leader.

A former speaker during summer SEEDs church growth conferences and workers meetings around the NAD, Ron Gladden explains that the purpose of MCN, a church planting organization, is to equip local churches to accomplish the Great Commission. Although NAD leadership labels it a new denomination, MCN counters that its planted congregations will be networked together less formally, through common doctrines and its three-member support staff currently based in Vancouver, Washington.

Explaining his motivation, Gladden states that "we made this decision in March 2004 when administrators expressed their strong support for the work of the Church Planting Center, but decided to discontinue the funding." Told by his union president that he was not allowed to raise private money to support the center for fear that other forms of evangelism would suffer, Gladden was terminated and not offered any other position.

Speaking on his mobile phone while directing a field school of

evangelism in Colorado, North American Division Evangelism Institute (NADEI) director Russell C. Burrill sounds troubled. "Sure everyone agrees that there is a problem with church structure, but I've chosen to better it inside, while Ron has now chosen to go outside." Distancing himself, Burrill adds that although Ron Gladden was associated with the church plant movement in North America, Ron was "never a part of division-level church planting."

Gladden, who was director of the Adventist church assessment for the NAD and attracted attention among Adventist and non-Adventist pastors eager for congregational growth, reports that the NAD did cover \$25,000 of his salary. Responding to suggestions that he is starting a new denomination, Gladden writes:

We are not breaking away from Adventist membership. We desire to be a supporting, enabling ministry that proclaims the same message. If we compare the approved usage of tithe in 1901 with the way the denomination spends it today, it seems that the slippery slope consists of spending more and more of its resources on the higher levels of the organization, while the local church struggles to fulfill its mission.

According to the MCN leaders, they are Adventist in belief, but no longer Adventist in organizational philosophy. Their belief statement is linked to the fundamental twenty-seven beliefs listed at the Adventist Church Web site. Mission Catalyst Network also publishes a ten-point distillation, citing the official thir-

teen Seventh-day Adventist baptismal vows as evidence of acceptable doctrinal summary.

Speaking with *Spectrum*, Gladden states directly that working outside the Church has nothing to do with doctrine; rather, his concern is church structure and tithe. At MCN, the only link between the local church and headquarters will be the 10 percent of collections sent up from the membership and the organizational support sent down.

Gladden reasons in a letter sent to church leadership: "everyone knows that most Adventist ministries accept tithe;" he adds, we will "follow the lead of others with one exception. We are not pretending that we don't accept it; we believe that the tithe is for the proclamation of the Adventist message and we will use it as efficiently as we can."

In his article, "Primacy of the Local Church and Tithe Distribution" published on the MCN Web site, Terry Pooler expresses frustration with a heavily layered church structure—conferences, union conferences, world divisions, General Conference—that uses tithe for expenses and payment of support personnel, whereas the local church cannot.

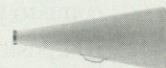
Weary of this criticism, Assistant to the NAD President for Communication Kermit Netteburg points out that in the last twenty years NAD union conferences have become smaller and leaner, with most having cut at least half their staff. He addresses complaints of a too-costly bureaucracy by suggesting that those who see church structure as overly stratified are employing "a nonexistent, pre-1980s straw man." Countering the claim that the church hierarchy absorbs too much

of the tithe, Netteburg, who was also at the August 7 meeting with MCN in Ohio, adds that the General Conference, NAD, and its union conferences use only 9 percent of collected tithe for their operating costs.

In addition to Ron Gladden, MCN management includes Dennis Pumford as assistant leader and Liz Whitworth as business administrator. By mid-October, MCN projects to have five church plants in process. The first, located in Portland, Oregon, is led by Pastor and Mrs. Steven Shomler, veterans from a SDA church plant in Minnesota. After passing through an official four-day evaluation and supplying the first \$5,000, each church planting couple receives \$15,000 from MCN to begin ministry. The first major goal of MCN is to plant congregations in roughly three hundred of the largest urban centers in the United States.

Defending the success of NAD evangelism, Russell Burrill states that 1,211 new, named congregation starts—churches, companies, and groups—now exist, due in part to NAD church planting work since 1996. Don Schneider states in an August 10 letter to conference presidents that since 1996, "we've planted about 1,000 churches, most of which are still healthy, growing parts of the denomination."

Gladden points to official church statistics kept since 1996 showing a net gain of only 318 churches, adding that, of those, a high percentage are ethnic churches. Subtracted from the total, and counting other shifts, he states that NAD non-Hispanic white church membership is almost stagnant. In response, Burrill points out that



those 318 churches exist as completely established churches with full constituency approval, which often takes many years, and that this official statistic does not reflect the many nascent church plants and growing companies.

During the August 7 meeting with Schneider, MCN asked the NAD to appoint a liaison to maintain good relations between the two organizations. In addition, MCN asked in writing for a NAD representative to be a voting member of the board. According to Netteburg, the NAD has not received an official request, and thus someone has yet to be assigned.

Gladden, who retains his Seventh-day Adventist membership, summarizes his rationale for planting outside the Church: “institutional Adventism prioritizes status quo and rewards mediocrity. Mission Catalyst Network provides a second way of proclaiming the same message with the opportunity to reinvest the lion’s share of the tithe back into the local mission.”

Alexander Carpenter is project specialist for *Spectrum* and the Association of Adventist Forums.

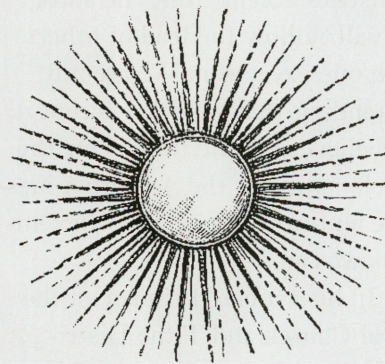
Harmony vs. Hegemony at the Faith and Science Conference

By Bonnie Dwyer

The statement that Jan Paulsen, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, made to church scientists and theologians in 2002 was simple and straightforward. The group was about to begin a three-year conversation about creation. He said, “As a church we don’t come to these discussions with a neutral position. We already have a very

defined fundamental belief in regard to creation. We believe that earth and life on it was created in six literal days and that the age of earth since then is a young one.”

Two years later, when he made a similar statement, however, the words came across differently. During the course of the faith and science meetings a movement had formed of people who felt the need to make the Church’s fundamental beliefs about creation more specific. Instead of the words of Genesis 1, which are included in the belief statement, the phrase, “a creation



week of seven literal, historical, consecutive, contiguous, 24 hour days,” became campaign-like slogan. It was repeated over and over as numerous speakers went to the microphone during discussion periods and called for official revision of the belief. As the calls for revision mounted, the harmony that had been building in the two previous years of conversations seemed to evaporate into hegemony.

So Jan Paulsen took the podium early in the 2004 conference and reminded the participants of what they had been asked to do—discuss the issues. Their report was to be descriptive. (The final document follows this report.) They had no authority as a group to vote on a change in the Fundamental Belief.

After the thousands of hours of

work and discussion represented in the meetings and papers, to have it all come down to changing a few words in the Fundamental Beliefs seemed slightly ridiculous to Ben Clausen of the Geoscience Research Institute, perhaps because he personally invested a great deal of his time in the project. As the coordinator of the Glacier View meeting in 2003, he was the one who created the Web blog that carried one of the liveliest discussions of creation issues ever in the Church, because messages were posted anonymously. His organization of the meeting at Glacier View was also given high marks by participants for its fair and balanced approach to the issues.

What impressed Clausen at the conclusion of the three-year span of discussions was the effort the Church made to bring people together for a significant discussion. He was encouraged that the scientific data had been taken seriously. He felt the meetings had shown that there were no easy answers—simply getting Christians engaged in research would not provide a solution to the controversy.

Both Clausen and Lowell Cooper, the GC vice president given the task of organizing the meetings in 2002 and 2004, talked about the need to approach the topic with humility. Clausen said, “Not nearly as many scientific answers about origins are available as desired. While working toward answers, humility is needed: paradoxical features are abundant in many areas, from the nature of Christ and predestination/free will to the wave/particle nature of light. We may just have to learn to live with them.”

Bonnie Dwyer is editor of *Spectrum* magazine.

An Affirmation of Creation

The International Faith and Science Conferences 2002–2004 Report of the Organizing Committee to the General Conference Executive Committee through the office of the General Conference President, September 10, 2004

Introduction

The very first words of the Bible provide the foundation for all that follows. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...” Gen 1:1. Throughout Scripture the Creation is celebrated as coming from the hand of God who is praised and adored as Maker and Sustainer of all that is. “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands,” (Ps 19:1 NIV).

From this view of the world flows a series of interlocking doctrines that lie at the core of the Seventh-day Adventist message to the world: a perfect world without sin and death created not long ago; the Sabbath; the fall of our first parents; the spread of sin, decay and death to the whole creation; the coming of Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, to live among us and rescue us from sin by His death and resurrection; the Second Coming of Jesus, our Creator and Redeemer; and the ultimate restoration of all that was lost by the Fall.

As Christians who take the Bible seriously and seek to live by its precepts Seventh-day Adventists have a high view of nature. We believe that even in its present fallen state nature reveals the eternal power of God (Rom 1:20), that “‘God is love’ is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass” (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p.10).

For us, all Scripture is inspired and tests all the other ways, including

nature, through which God reveals Himself. We have great respect for science, and applaud the prominence of science departments in our institutions of higher learning and healthcare. We also value the work of Seventh-day Adventist scientists and researchers not employed by the Church. We train students at our colleges and universities how to employ the scientific method rigorously. At the same time, we refuse to restrict our quest for truth to the constraints imposed by the scientific method alone.

The question of origins

For centuries, at least in the Christian world, the Bible story of creation was the standard explanation for questions about origins. During the 18th and 19th centuries the methodologies of science resulted in a growing understanding of how things worked. Today no one can deny that science has made a remarkable impact on our lives through advances in the areas of agriculture, communication, ecology, engineering, genetics, health, and space exploration.

In many areas of life knowledge derived from nature and knowledge from divine revelation in Scripture appear to be in harmony. Advances in scientific knowledge often confirm and validate the views of faith. However, in regard to the origin of the universe, of the earth, and of life and its history, we encounter contradictory world-views. Assertions based on a study of Scripture often stand in stark contrast to those arising from the scientific assumptions and methodologies used in the study of nature. This tension has a direct impact on the life of the Church, its message and witness.

We celebrate the life of faith. We advocate a life of learning. Both in the study of Scripture and in the orderly processes of nature we see indicators

of the Creator’s marvelous mind. Since its earliest days the Seventh-day Adventist Church has encouraged the development of mind and understanding through the disciplines of worship, education, and observation.

In earlier decades the discussion of theories on origins primarily occurred in academic settings. However, philosophical naturalism (wholly natural, random and undirected processes over the course of time) has gained wide acceptance in education and forms the basic assumption for much that is taught in the natural and social sciences. Seventh-day Adventist members and students encounter this view and its implications in many areas of daily life.

In its statement of fundamental beliefs the Seventh-day Adventist Church affirms a divine creation as described in the biblical narrative of Genesis 1. “God is Creator of all things, and has revealed in Scripture the authentic account of His creative activity. In six days the Lord made ‘the heaven and the earth’ and all living things upon the earth, and rested on the seventh day of that first week. Thus He established the Sabbath as a perpetual memorial of His completed creative work. The first man and woman were made in the image of God as the crowning work of Creation, given dominion over the world, and charged with responsibility to care for it. When the world was finished it was ‘very good,’ declaring the glory of God. (Gen. 1; 2; Ex. 20:8–11; Ps. 19:1–6; 33:6, 9; 104; Heb. 11:3.)”

Reasons for the Faith and Science Conferences

Because of the pervasive and growing influence of the theory of evolution, the

General Conference Executive Committee (Annual Council 2001) authorized a three-year series of Faith and Science conferences. These conferences were not called to modify the Church's long-held position on creation but to review the contributions and limitations that both faith and science bring to our understanding of origins.

The principal reasons that led to the convening of these conferences involved:

1. Philosophical questions: An ever-present challenge exists in defining the relationship between theology and science, between that of faith and reason. Are these two streams of knowledge in partnership or in conflict? Should they be viewed as interactive or are they independent, non-overlapping spheres of knowledge? The dominant worldview in most modern societies interprets life, physical reality, and behavior in ways that are markedly different from the Christian worldview. How should a Christian relate to these things?

2. Theological questions: How is the Bible to be interpreted? What does a plain reading of the text require of a believer? To what extent should knowledge from science inform or shape our understanding of Scripture and vice-versa?

3. Scientific questions: The same data from nature are available to all observers. What do the data say or mean? How shall we arrive at correct interpretations and conclusions? Is science a tool or a philosophy? How do we differentiate between good and bad science?

4. The issue of nurture and education for Church members: How is a Church member to deal with the vari-

ety of interpretations of the Genesis record? What does the Church have to say to those who find in their educational curriculum ideas that conflict with their faith? Maintaining silence concerning such issues sends mixed signals; it creates uncertainty and provides fertile ground for unwarranted and dogmatic views.

5. Development of living faith: Clarification and reaffirmation of a Bible-based theology of origins will equip members with a framework for dealing with challenges on this topic. The Faith and Science Conferences were not convened simply for the intellectual stimulation of attendees, but as an opportunity to provide orientation and practical guidance for Church members. The Church cannot pretend to keep its beliefs in a safe place, secure from all challenge. In doing so they will soon become relics. Church teachings must engage and connect with the issues of the day so that they remain a living faith; otherwise they will amount to nothing more than dead dogma.

Two International Faith and Science Conferences were held—in Ogden, Utah 2002, and in Denver, Colorado 2004—with widespread international representation from *The Faith and Science Conferences* theologians, scientists, and Church administrators. In addition seven¹ of the Church's thirteen divisions conducted division-wide or regional conferences dealing with the interaction of faith and science in explanations about origins. The Organizing Committee expresses appreciation to the participants at these conferences for their contributions to this report.

The Ogden conference agenda was designed to acquaint attendees with the range of ways in which both

theology and science offer explanations for the origin of the earth and life. The agendas for conferences in divisions were determined by the various organizers, although most included several of the topics dealt with in Ogden. The recent conference in Denver was the concluding conference of the three-year series. Its agenda began with summaries of the issues in theology and science, then moved on to several questions regarding faith-science issues in Church life.

These questions included:

- The on-going place of scholarship in the Church. How does the Church maintain the confessional nature of its teachings while being open to further development in its understanding of truth?
- Educational models for dealing with controversial subjects and the ethical issues involved for teachers and Church leaders. How shall we teach science courses in our schools in a way that enriches, rather than erodes, faith?
- What ethical considerations come into focus when private conviction differs from denominational teaching? How does personal freedom of belief interface with one's public role as a leader in the Church? In other words, what are the principles of personal accountability and the ethics of dissent?
- What are the administrative responsibilities and processes in dealing with variations in, or re-expressions of, doctrinal views?

Scholarly papers by theologians, scientists, and educators were presented and discussed in all the conferences. (The Geoscience Research Institute maintains a file of all papers presented at the conferences.) The Ogden and Denver conferences involved at least some representation from every divi-

sion of the world field. Well over 200 persons participated in the conferences during the three-year period. More than 130 attended the Denver meeting, most of whom had attended at least one other of the Faith and Science Conferences.

General Observations

1. We applaud the seriousness and dignity that characterized the conferences.
2. We noted the strong sense of dedication and loyalty to the Church that prevailed.
3. We experienced that even though tensions surfaced at times, cordial relations were maintained among the attendees, with fellowship transcending differences in viewpoint.
4. We witnessed in these conferences a high level of concurrence on basic understandings, especially the normative role of Scripture, buttressed by the writings of Ellen G. White, and the belief by all in God as beneficent Creator.
5. We found no support for, or advocacy of, philosophical naturalism, the idea that the universe came into existence without the action of a Creator.
6. We acknowledge that the conflict between the biblical and contemporary worldviews impacts both scientists and theologians.
7. We recognize that tension between faith and understanding is an element of life with which the believer must learn to live.
8. We observe that rejecting contemporary scientific interpretations of origins in conflict with the biblical

account does not imply depreciation of either science or the scientist.

9. While we found widespread affirmation of the Church's understanding of life on earth, we recognize that some among us interpret the biblical record in ways that lead to sharply different conclusions.

10. We accept that both theology and science contribute to our understanding of reality.

Findings

1. The degree to which tension exists regarding our understanding of origins varies around the world. In those areas where science has made its greatest progress in society the questions among Church members are more widespread. With the advance of science across all societies and educational systems there will be a corresponding increase in members wondering how to reconcile Church teaching with natural theories of origin. Large numbers of Seventh-day Adventist students attend public schools where evolution is taught and promoted in the classroom without corresponding materials and arguments in favor of the biblical account of origins.

2. Reaffirmation of the Church's Fundamental Belief regarding creation is strongly supported. Seventh-day Adventist belief in a literal and historical six-day creation is theologically sound and consistent with the teaching of the whole Bible.

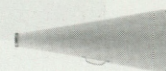
3. Creation is a foundational pillar in the entire system of Seventh-day Adventist doctrine—it bears direct relationship to many if not all other fundamental beliefs. Any alternative interpretation of the creation story needs to be examined in light of its

impact on all other beliefs. Several of the Faith and Science Conferences reviewed alternative interpretations of Genesis 1, including the idea of theistic evolution. These other interpretations lack theological coherence with the whole of Scripture and reveal areas of inconsistency with the rest of Seventh-day Adventist doctrine. They are therefore unacceptable substitutes for the biblical doctrine of creation held by the Church.

4. Concern has been expressed regarding what some see as ambiguity in the phrase "In six days" found in the Church's statement of belief on creation. It is felt that the intended meaning (that the six-day creation described in Genesis was accomplished in a literal and historical week) is unmentioned. This situation allows for uncertainty about what the Church actually believes. Further, it provides room for other explanations of creation to be accommodated in the text. There is a desire for the voice of the Church to be heard in bringing added clarity to what is really meant in Fundamental Belief #6.

5. Although some data from science can be interpreted in ways consistent with the biblical concept of creation, we also reviewed data interpreted in ways that challenge the Church's belief in a recent creation. The strength of these interpretations cannot be dismissed lightly. We respect the claims of science, study them, and hope for a resolution. This does not preclude a re-examination of Scripture to make sure it is being properly understood. However, when an interpretation harmonious with the find-

NOTEWORTHY *Continued on page 73*



THE BIBLE



Model shrine from
the Early Iron Age
at Tall al-'Umayri.

This Old House: Daily Life in Ancient Israel and Jordan

By Douglas R. Clark, Larry G. Herr, and Gloria A. London

Studies that involve archaeology and the Bible have long focused considerable attention on the issues of ancient history and how texts and artifacts can be understood together, in particular the Bible and the material cultural remains from the Ancient Near East. Areas of agreement have always generated enthusiasm, whereas problems produce debate and dissension. Some of the most contentious (modern) battles in the world of biblical archaeology have been fought over the interpretation of archaeological data versus the interpretation of the Bible.

A more recent impulse, driven by anthropology and the social sciences, has recommended that understanding daily life in antiquity might offer important insights into actual existence in the biblical world. The focus here has to do more with human beings than history, more with actual life and survival than major events, more with the essentials of living and belief than wars and dynastic collapses. The past several years have seen the publication of a tent full of books and articles on daily life—in ancient Israel and Jordan, in Mesopotamia, in Egypt, and so forth.

What can we learn from this avenue of inquiry, which might enhance our reading of the Bible and open to us new windows of discovery about biblical characters and their everyday stories? And how do we access this information?

Certainly we should do it with the help of a lot of TLC—attention to Time, Language, and Culture. We face considerable distance between us and people of antiquity, which forces us to find ways of bridging the gaps. Popular novels such as *The Red Tent* have grown out of a recent scholarly genre of narratives meant to help us



understand daily life in antiquity. Reading such stories ushers us into that world and thus permits us to see life at that time with more understanding. It is a way of removing our own shoes and replacing them with ancient sandals, taking off our garments and wearing their robes, setting aside to some degree our ways of thinking for theirs.

When we begin to examine the elements of daily life in ancient times, we discover people who struggled to survive in harsh conditions. Take the family of Eliyahu ben (son of) Berekyahu who lived on the western side of Kerem, a small one-acre village seven miles north of Jebus (later called Jerusalem). Twenty-nine-year-old Eliyahu (my god is Yahweh) and his wife of ten years, Yonah (dove), live with their three surviving children in a two-story house built and still occupied by Eliyahu's father Berekyahu (Blessed be Yahweh). Berekyahu's wife of fourteen years has died, and now he lives with a foreigner, Bat-Hadad (daughter of Hadad), a one-time domestic slave who belonged to his late wife. The one son they conceived together stays with them as well.

This is the family that we picture and often talk about during our annual archaeological expeditions in Jordan. Our sources for the projections we make about them include the Bible, archaeological remains, and recent anthropological approaches and theories. Trying to piece together the story of the Berekyahu family keeps us aware of the limitations of all of our sources.



Typical bedouin tent, showing many activities of daily life.

Recognizing our Limitations

The Bible writers, although preserving a few fleeting snapshots of daily family life in earliest Israel, never intended to provide modern readers with all the information they might want in order to carry on scientific investigations of the details that surrounded existence in their world. Their purposes lay elsewhere, especially in the arena of religious and moral instruction and divine invitation. This means we can honestly and adequately approach the concerns facing us here only by recognizing how much our quest differs from theirs.

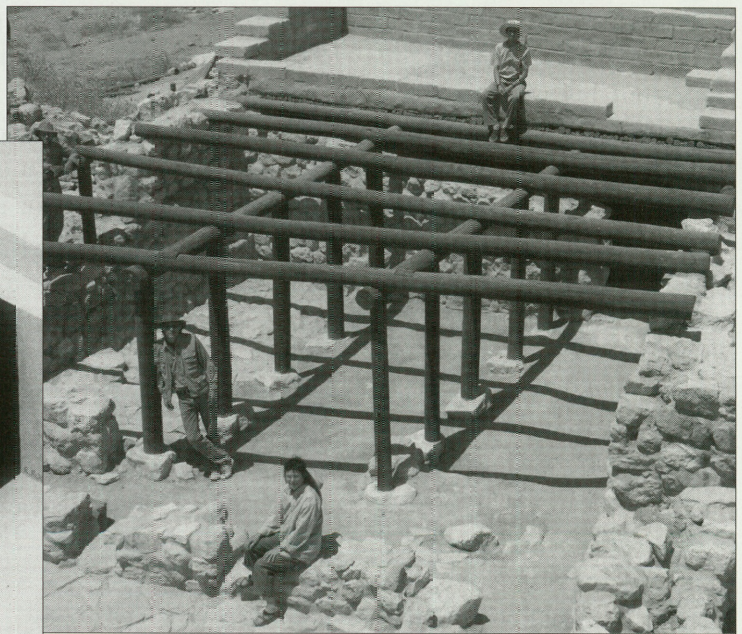
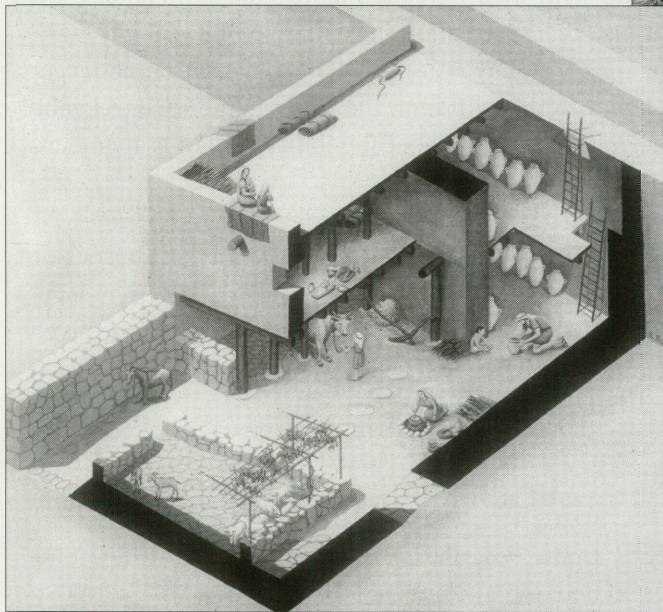
In addition, the Bible, bearing human fingerprints as well as divine credentials (the inspiration process), was transmitted to us by means of a relatively small group of mostly males over a long period in contexts that by and large were urban. Most families, especially during Israel's earliest history, did not live in urban centers. Rather, they lived out their lives as children and parents in households often surrounded by extended families or clans in the rural hinterland of the hill country. Hence the voices of the majority of men and almost all women and children received little or no hearing in the process by which our Bible came to us.

Just as important to our use of the Bible as a source of information about the life of ancient biblical characters is a hermeneutical concern of significant proportions. One cannot simply vault across barriers of time, language, and culture without regard for differences between our world and theirs. Ultimately, the task demands that we enter the ancient world as completely as possible, that we breathe ancient Palestinian hinterland air; experience the scents, sights, and sounds; and open ourselves to popular stories and worship; in other words, recapture the entire ethos that was ancient Israel.

Only then are we really in a position to translate principle, paradigm, or parable into our own ethos and make sensible comparisons. We will never completely succeed in this endeavor, of course, but we need to try. Limited in this regard or not, the Bible is still one of our best and most important sources of useful information about ancient life.

Although also helpful, archaeological remains pose their own set of restrictions for our investigation. For most of the past century archaeologists have concentrated on tells, major urban sites that, in the final analysis, can tell us little about how most of the populace

Below: Four-room house cutaway painting (Rhonda Root). *Right:* Four room house at Tall al-'Umayri, following excavation and partial restoration.



Entering the House of Berekyahu

lived. As the currently available evidence demonstrates, earliest Israel was almost entirely settled in small, rural villages without all the accoutrements of city living.

Only recently have the sketchy outlines of a picture begun to emerge about life in general and about families in particular. From roughly the time of David onward, we begin to see huge developments in the political world of ancient Palestine, with shifts away from more rural tribal entities to emerging nations. With this change came the inevitable social upheaval in the economic, domestic, and religious spheres of existence. Here is where tell archaeology becomes more important, but it still does not yield the entire picture.

The paucity of ancient written remains also contributes to the limitations of archaeology. If only the ancients had left written instructions for us on how to interpret wall fragments, standing stones, and broken pieces of pottery! We would certainly be in a better position to deal with questions of structure and function if they had, questions about the varying roles of men, women, and children; about how deeply religious experience permeated every waking moment; about how people survived in and made sense of their world.

However, even with all those limitations, there is much we can learn by making good use of the tools we have to examine the home of Eliyahu and Yonah for clues to the story of their daily life.

Built somewhat crudely of fieldstones chinked with large pebbles and small cobbles on the first story and with homemade, sun dried mud bricks for the second floor, Berekyahu's home, like surrounding buildings, consists of basically four rooms on each story. Entering from a courtyard on the eastern side, family members find themselves in the central room that measures almost eighteen feet long, six feet wide, and approximately six feet high. It appears larger than it really is because of two parallel rows of wooden posts on each side that separate it from two long side rooms, each about the same size as the central room.

A doorway at the end of one side room marks the entrance to the fourth room, which is about the same size as the others and stretches across the back width of the building. It is called a broad room or the inner room. Because walls of fieldstone have to be two to three feet thick to stand, thereby consuming tons of stone and lots of space, and because of primitive architectural techniques that do not allow wide spans between support walls, remaining space in a four-room house like this is fairly limited.

Two of the long rooms, the central and the north side rooms, have beaten earth floors. A cooking hearth has been placed along the outer wall in the side room. One can also find nearby farming implements used



with draft animals for agricultural purposes. The back (inner) room is filled with thirty to thirty-five large, three-foot-high storage jars made of clay. Over all these rooms, the first story is covered with a ceiling that consists of large wooden beams, smaller branches laid across the beams, and reeds situated on them, all plastered over with mud that forms the floor of the next story. Maintenance is an ongoing chore, requiring major investments of time and energy.

Paving stones cover the floor of the south side room. This room houses the domestic animals at night and in winter, the cobbled surface covered with straw that allows for drainage of liquid animal waste. Since the rows of posts that separate the side rooms from the central room provide only a partial wall, along with wooden mangers for the animals, animals and people learn to live together whether or not they like it. Besides, animal warmth on cool nights contributes to heating in the house, even if in the process it adds to the smell. Animals in the house also signal the presence of potentially dangerous insects and infections.

The second story of the house is laid out in a fashion similar to the first, but it is used entirely for human occupation. The central long room has additional food preparation equipment—a huge basalt lower grinding stone along with other food preparation implements like small stone pounders and grinders and ceramic vessels for cooking and serving food. Various members of the extended family use the side rooms for sleeping.

The back room, like that on the first floor, is filled entirely with additional storage jars. Ricketty wooden ladders lead up to the second story and then to a flat roof, where, in the summer, the family stores harvested grain and wool and where they sleep on hot nights. There the chamber pot sits, as well—to be emptied daily—along with the roof roller, a large cylindrical stone used to keep the mud roof together after each winter rain shower.

All told, the house itself took months to construct. There were thousands of large fieldstones and smaller chink stones; hundreds of mud bricks; scores and scores of felled trees for wooden posts, beams, rafters, and branch cross members; stacks and stacks of reeds brought up from wadis near the Jordan Valley; and donkey load after donkey load of lime for plaster and mortar, which had to be burned from the local limestone at tremendous cost and labor.

The weight of the materials alone is over 450 tons. Then there is the headache of ongoing maintenance to

keep the house functional. It is a never-ending job that demands time, energy, and expense.

Eliyahu, Yonah, Beninu, Rivkah, and Devorah, along with their extended family, make this house their home. The space allows each person only about eighty or ninety square feet in which to live, work, and sleep. However, this building, the “household” of Berekyahu, permits some degree of flexibility as family members need to move about.

There is a large courtyard off the three long rooms that provides open-air space for getting out of the house and for stabling more animals if necessary. This arrangement also permits sharing within the collective labor force of men, women, and older children, a feature necessary for survival.

Survivor—The Ancient Edition

R. B. Coote describes a menacingly difficult life in his 1990 book on ancient Israel. According to him, most inhabitants:

were poor and undernourished, living at or below the level of subsistence, surrounded with dirt, animal excrement, fleas, lice, mosquitoes, and other insects. Work was hard, food dear, water scarce, famine and drought a constant threat. Rain was unpredictable. On average every third year brought inadequate rainfall; often drought years arrived back to back. Pests, blight, and mildew were ubiquitous. Rats, mice, birds, and insects ate more of the food than the people did. Moreover, political forces largely beyond the working family's control intruded upon the productive regime, thus keeping the family on subsistence fare at the mercy of erratic circumstances, and compelling them to adopt short-term goals with catastrophic long-term effects.

The hardships of village life left the people susceptible to the spoliations of disease and violence. More infants and children died than survived. Girls were especially vulnerable, since parents favored boys. Persons who grew to adulthood did not normally reach their genetic potential. Villagers were often stunted in their physical and mental development. Diseases included environmental afflictions such as malaria, illnesses caused by unsanitary conditions such as dysentery, trachoma, typhus, hookworm, and cholera, malnutri-



Left: Bones from the cemetery at biblical Heshbon. Below: Artifacts, mostly tied to everyday life, found at an Iron Age farmstead in Jordan.

tion and its repercussions, venereal disease, rabies, leprosy, and alcoholism. Not all of these were fatal, and not all limited to the village.... [T]he debilitating of poverty made life short and hard for the working people of Palestine. Joys there were, and glad songs and dances celebrated weddings, harvest, recovery, and vindication. The village bard sang the people's stories, the women about victory, requital, and pride. The undertone of this period, however, was the exploitation, exhaustion, fevers, rashes, itches, toothaches, fractures, mutilations, pains and hazards of childbirth and other miseries of pre-industrial village life, and the most common songs in people's hearts were the lament and complaint.¹

Archaeology has uncovered in latrines the indestructible egg casings of tape worms and, on combs, lice egg casings. Broken bones, arthritic joints, skulls that reveal the (sometimes successful) trepanation operations to relieve pressure on the brain all show up in the record. Without the germ theory, without modern medical practice or pharmaceutical miracles, without the modern fetish with clearness, illness and debilitation affected everyone except the most hardy. These problems were even more difficult to take when accompanied by religious notions of divine causality as a result of past transgressions.

In addition to the bug-infested conditions and disease, the hardships of any preindustrial society also included military interventions. Archaeology and the



Bible are replete with evidence that people were forever waging wars, conflicts with disastrous affects on the population. There were no Geneva Conventions to control treatment of the conquered, no limits to which at least some aggressors of antiquity went to intimidate and humiliate unfortunate segments of the populace, no strictures on the brutality allowed against foreigners, women, the oppressed, the landscape.

Particularly poignant are depictions on stone of battle scenes and the occasional gruesome discovery of the skeletal remains of a war-ravaged village or household, as the one at Tall al-Umayri, where the burned,



Right: Stone grinders for turning grain into flour. Below: Clay figurine of woman kneading bread.



splayed bone fragments of four individuals (an adult male, another adult, a teenager, and a small child) appeared as mute testimony to the disaster of warfare waged against daily life. Nor was there any escaping the fact that virtually all wars were sacred in nature and carried religious consequences in their outcomes.

Death and burial, although accepted as a normal part of ancient life, became traumatic if experienced early or violently. For much of the Iron Age, life expectancy for men was between thirty-five and forty years and for women thirty to thirty-five, due perhaps as much to childbirth as anything else. Half of a couple's children might not survive until puberty. The hazards of childbearing and childhood sometimes contributed as many as 50 percent of the skeletons excavated in communal burial caves.

Provision

How did the ancients counter these problems?

By its very definition, the term *provision* suggests a gift, something donated. This is intentional, because the ancients perceived God or the gods as the source of all things, particularly all things good. Food, water, families, everything needed for survival—*kulu min 'allah*, "All

is from God," as they say in Arabic today. For the inhabitants of ancient Palestine, God/the gods was/were actively engaged in all aspects of life. Nothing escaped the watchful eye of the divine, nothing.

Anthropologists have noted the extensive role religion played in all societies, especially prescientific, preindustrial ones. Theologian Rudolph Otto uses the term *mysterium tremendum* to describe a sense of awe at the divine powers apparent everywhere in the ancient world. The result was not only adoration of the deity, but a sense of what he calls *numinous unease*, uncertainty about the intentions of the divine.

Although God/the gods might care deeply about his/her people, one has to bear in mind the difference between humanity and deity and the place of humans in the larger scheme of things. Before meteorology, humans sought explanations of weather phenomena, including destructive events, in the will of God/the gods. Before insecticides, people looked for religious reasons behind the onslaught of devastating locust swarms. Before advanced medical science, villagers pondered spiritual justification for deadly bouts of the plague. All life was wrapped up in the attitudes and actions of the deity, all life.

The Bible and archaeology clearly support this worldview. As not only the biblical stories, but also other textual and artifactual remains demonstrate, religion was a powerful and pervasive influence. In order to calm the chaos created by numinous unease, detailed worship guidelines developed, a gift from God/the gods to help restore order and structure to life. So did all kinds of cultic architecture like altars, shrines, and temples, as well as worship paraphernalia like bronze figurines of mostly male deities and ceramic figurines of mostly female deities. These are found virtually everywhere. Whether they were all idols or perhaps at

least some of them more like good luck charms is debated. But everyone had them.

As several recent scholarly treatments of religion in ancient Israel reveal in their titles, there appears to have been a good deal of religious diversity, especially in early, tribal Israel (the book of Judges makes this clear, too), as well, of course, as among surrounding peoples. The varied names for God in the Old Testament, studied in context, along with abundant archaeological evidence, also argue for a picture more complex than might first meet the eye.

It is more than apparent that at least some Israelites, even up through the sixth century B.C. and beyond, worshiped not only Yahweh, the national deity, but also a spouse, Asherah or Anat. No wonder some of the prophets came unglued! This provides the background for religious uncertainties uttered several times in the Yonah story and an important insight into the life of the people of the land, the common people.

In any case, it was God/the gods who held primary responsibility for providing the inhabitants of ancient Palestine with food and water. Although both came at no small investment of energy and expense, they were received with gratitude and gifts to the deity. Harvests were always times of celebration, and thanksgiving offerings reflected the joy (and relief) that provisions were in place for another year.

Water came from springs and streams where available, and wells, reservoirs, and cisterns where constructed. Food consisted of what could be collected, cultivated, corralled, or captured during the early centuries of the Iron Age (ca. 1200–1000 B.C.), and what could be grown, traded, and purchased when an expanded market economy took over after 1000 B.C. Diets consisted primarily of grains like barley and wheat; legumes like garbanzos and lentils; nuts; olives; vegetables; fruits like figs, dates, pomegranates, and grapes; and herbs gathered here and there, as well as spices brought in from afar when trade was possible.

Most inhabitants of ancient Palestine were vegetarian except during occasional religious feasts, when parts of the sacrificial animal were eaten, and during festal events of hospitality that surrounded weddings, funerals, special visits, and so forth. Meat normally came from domestic animals like sheep and goats, as did milk, cheese, butter, and yogurt. Wild animals like gazelle and deer provided part of the diet, as excavated bones indicate. So did fish and fish products.

Another aspect of provision, although less con-

cretely so, was the family, along with extended circles of community. Ancient culture structured society differently than we do in the West today. We begin with the individual and then behaviorally, ethically, morally move to larger entities of family, extended family, church, school, and so forth. Iron Age Israelites began with community and then moved to the individual.

A person had meaning and significance only as part of a group like the family or extended family or clan or tribal entity. Life was wrapped up in family activities. Married sons lived in the same house as their nuclear family, a room having been expanded, subdivided, or added to accommodate spouses and children/grandchildren. People seldom lived far from relatives, often in the same house or compound. No wonder so many laws governed interpersonal relationships among family members in the Old Testament. Based on an ethic of shame/honor, behavior was judged right or wrong on how it affected the group, not so much the individual.

It was the sense of community, however, that gave strength and cohesion to this culture. Activities that surrounded domestic life, religion, leisure, recreation, and making a living involved the entire family. Theirs was a shared enterprise. Eating, working in the fields, caring for the animals, worship, playing—all were done together. No one went alone, unless forced by circumstances beyond their control.

The Family That Works Together

On a typical summer day for the family of Berekyahu there are lots of chores. Yonah, Beninu, and Rivkah set about milking the goats early, then later guide the flock to pasture and water, and care for domesticated fowl. Breakfast must be prepared and cooked. This means going after water from the spring at the base of the hill on which the village sits; collecting and grinding grain; kneading dough; baking thin, flat bread loaves in their small oven; and supplementing it with yogurt and cheese and some dried fruits and nuts. The fire takes the edge off the early morning chill in the house.

The family cannot linger long at home because early summer is the time for harvesting winter wheat; the barley is already gathered in. The whole family, including Berekyahu and Eliyahu's brother's family, which lives in a similar house next door, hike the mile



and one-half to the family field to begin the arduous task of cutting grain stalks, bundling them, transporting the bundles on their only donkey to the public threshing floor just south of the village on a large flat limestone outcropping.

There the grain is threshed and winnowed, then brought home for storage in the large pointed-bottom storage jars set into the dirt floor of the storeroom of their house. Since it rarely rains in the summer, the straw is bundled and stored on the roof along with other foodstuffs until needed for the livestock. The process only begins today; it will be weeks before they complete the job.

Agricultural work never ends. Planting various crops occupies the months of November through February. March finds the family hoeing weeds away from vegetables, grains, and in fallow plots. Barley and vetch mature for harvest in April/May; wheat, peas, and lentils in May/June; and chickpeas are ready in June. Figs first ripen in June, grapes from July through September. Pomegranates and the second harvest of figs are ready in August and September. October and November see olives come to maturity. Throughout the year repairs to high-maintenance agricultural terraces must be made, and there are tasks related to the livestock.

Working in the field reminds the Berekyahu extended family that their entire lives are totally wrapped around the use they make of their land for basic subsistence. Men, women, and children all participate in food production. Although the heavier jobs like clearing the land, plowing, and terrace management fall to the men, equal opportunity reigns when it comes to most tasks



Orchard scene in rural Jordan, likely similar to ancient springtime life on the farm.

associated with the planting of seed and sprouts and with the harvest and preservation of produce.

Just as Eliyahu and his father, along with his brother, who lives next door, stay busy managing the heavier duties, Yonah's work is also never done. Not only does she perform almost all food preparation tasks, she also oversees water procurement, firewood gathering, and protection of food stores. At mealtime, her husband has first choice, while she and the children eat whatever is left. In addition, some pottery-making always awaits attention, as does spinning, sewing, weaving, mending, and the baby she either carries, nurses, or trains almost all her life.

The amount of a woman's life span involving the physical aspects of motherhood—pregnancy, breastfeeding, caring for young children—may have been one-third or higher in ancient Israel and Jordan. With relatively few women surviving to menopause, and with marriage and childbirth beginning not long after the onset of puberty, as much as half of a woman's life span would have been taken up with maternity. One might say that motherhood and adulthood were practically coterminous.²

Yonah has heard from travelers about life among the many and varied nomadic tribes that course through the countryside and wonders while she labors in the warming sun if life on the move might ease a bit the never-ending, dreary burdens that settled agrarian pursuits generate. However, it turns out to be a passing fancy. She reminds herself of the extreme hardships of eternal camping and perpetual transience in formidable stretches of wilderness and unfamiliar steppe expanses.

Besides, she understands that nomadic women don't appear to enjoy the position of authority and control she does, especially because of the instability of nomadic tribal groups. For these people life depends more on such factors as weather patterns and the whims of nature.

Yonah also dreams of life in a posh villa at Bet Shean or Hazor. How wonderful if her drudgery might cease, eclipsed by a life of ease. Servants could care in large part for food production, and an urban market economy would free her for more leisurely pursuits. She might even reduce the time she invests in basic survival tactics from 80 to 90 percent to a more manageable 30 to 40 percent. More time and space would



Clockwise from left: Application of reeds into roof structure, laid across wooden branches. Below: Mohammad moving stone for household reconstruction. The manufacture of replica mud bricks for household construction.



be available to her, as well as better food and, with it, perhaps even greater health and longevity. Her entire life would take on a new look, a more pleasant existence with occasion for reflection and the broadening of her horizons.

However, this dream does not come without cost, either. According to friends of hers who claim to know, men control life in the city—military, economic, political, religious life. The less bureaucratic males need the services of women, the less important women become; that is, the lower their status and the more powerless they are. Besides, for most village women like Yonah, the big cities are centers of debauchery that tear away at the moral fabric of families and rural clans.

Perhaps life in Kerem is not so bad, after all, relatively speaking. Perhaps the role Yonah plays in the very economic undergirding of her family accords her more control of her life than she had realized, granting her something close to gender parity. “In a prestate society in which the household is the fundamental institution and the primary locus of power, females may even have a predominant role, at least within the broad parameters of household life.... [P]erhaps ... women had an important place wherever public life is not significantly differentiated from domestic life.”³

If one adds to this a reminder of Yonah’s role in the socialization and education of her children, her shared responsibilities in legal functions for the minors under her care, and her religious functions, a move to the city—even if possible—would likely jeopardize Yonah’s status and whatever gender parity she enjoys.⁴

Perspiration

As we see from the Berekyahu family, work, sweat, and tears accompanied the lives of ancient Israelites and their neighbors like uninvited guests who overstayed their welcome. If we are to capture what it meant to live and survive in biblical times, we must deal with unending hours of backbreaking labor. Constructing and maintaining houses, carrying on with agrarian pursuits, shepherding flocks, opening cottage industries, working at slave labor to stay alive and feed a family—these occupied the vast majority of the hours, days, weeks, months, and years of life.

These were not easy times, and the vast majority of people, at least most of those who survived, were hardy and industrious.



In antiquity as today, many issues had to be addressed before a house could be built. These include several phases of activity: planning and fund-raising; provision for labor; locating, collecting, transporting and preparing materials; preparation of the site; purchase or manufacture of appropriate tools; lifting, leveling and adhering building materials into place; finishing surfaces for pragmatic and aesthetic purposes; maintaining, reusing and renovating when necessary—all important considerations. Add to these the enduring heat, humidity, long hours, physical debilitations, pests and varying degrees of difficulty and danger inherent in the process, and the complexity of building a home in antiquity becomes even more apparent.⁵

The total 450-ton weight of the building material for the four-room house at 'Umayri represents a huge amount of labor, demanding months of hard work, potential hardship, self-taught skills, and thousands of fefafel sandwiches. Felling and preparing wood; gathering and installing stone walls; manufacturing sun-baked mud bricks; collecting wood and stone to burn for days to make lime for plaster and mortar—these are backbreaking tasks.

Agricultural and pastoral pursuits required endless activity and attention to a variety of details. Excavating and maintaining highly labor-intensive terraces on the hill slopes consumed immense amounts of time. So did the cyclical schedule of soil preparation, planting, weeding, tending, hoeing, harvesting, threshing, winnowing, transporting, and storing food crops, each with its own time and season.



The same applies to the care and feeding of orchard crops and viticulture, and the tending of sheep and goats on a regular basis (*left*). Also demanding were food preparation over open-air hearths and in clay ovens, and storage of food in

large ceramic *pithoi*, or jars, each capable of holding 180–220 pounds of grain. (The 60–70 *pithoi* in the house at Tall al-'Umayri would, if full, have weighed between seven and nine tons if the jars themselves are included.) Food disposal in trash heaps and middens added to the burden.

Other endeavors also demanded a lot from people in Bible times, particularly during the latter part of the Iron Age. Community industries in olive oil or wine production sprang up as the markets grew and flourished. So did cottage industries in pottery and textile manufacture, in addition to fabrication of agricultural implements and tools for all kinds of tasks. In addition, trade and commerce occupied merchants and traders.

Good Times and the Promise of Hope

Our description of ancient life may appear bleak, and in many ways it truly was. But archaeology has also produced evidence of what we think were recreational activities. Gaming pieces—or so it seems—occur regularly, as do ceramic toys like wheels, “buzzes,” and figurines. These suggest that fun and happiness characterized at least a portion of the routine of ancient life and survival.

Additionally, inhabitants of ancient Palestine found hope through a number of avenues. Religion, although conveying blame for all negative aspects of life, also bore tremendous potential for positive and redemptive experiences and reflections. It was a community's faith that empowered devotees to overcome ever-present adversities, creating anticipation for divine intervention, based in large part on remembered stories of past miracles. God's presence was realized in worship, whether encountered at a public temple or household shrine, in the forms of liturgy, music, prayer, celebration, and lament. Ancient worship was participatory and holistic, engaging the entire person and community.

Another important aspect of worship involved music. Artwork and artifacts as well as texts from the ancient world illustrate extremely well the ubiquitous presence of musical instruments associated with religious expression. Stringed, wind, brass, and percussion instruments accompanied the praises of the faithful, helping create a parallel world in which life's setbacks were themselves set back. Optimism and hope returned, even if for only a few hours or days. Music was also part of celebrations that marked birth, cir-

Clockwise from right: Clay incense stand from Taanach, with four registers perhaps representing the god of the Old Testament and Asherah, the goddess of nature. Clay figurines of pregnant women, likely used as good luck charms. Bronze bull from an Israelite site in the early Iron Age.



cumcision, and marriage.

Storytelling also granted relief from the ongoing grind of everyday chores and hardships. Whether performed at home by the elders in the family, at worship by priestly functionaries, or more popularly by itinerant bards in the town square, this aspect of everyday life was an essential component for the well-being of the community.

So, at the end of the day, what do we know about daily life in ancient Palestine? A lot, actually. The Bible, archaeology, and more recent anthropological approaches, even with their limitations, have opened countless new windows of discovery onto the world of the Bible.

Life was not easy. Families kept extremely busy working to survive. Yet the ancients demonstrated how to face problems together with hopeful promise, and that is a lesson worth thinking about as we leave the ancient world behind and reenter our own. Storytelling, community, and worship still offer the promise of hope for daily life.



Notes and References

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4. Regarding socialization and education, see *ibid.*, 149ff; and J. L. Crenshaw, "Education in Ancient Israel," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985): 601–15.
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A Summer Lesson in the Art of Seeing

Photographs and Text By John McDowell

Follow the airport road east of Amman and you will find Tall al-'Umayri.¹ There is a Bedouin tent with a TV antenna pitched on the lower slope, just up from the road. Above the Tall rise the Ammonite hills, and you can see a Ferris wheel. Jordanian families love to picnic among the trees in the cool evenings. Follow the ridge and you come to the Seven Hills Restaurant, where on the patio at the end of the dig season you can, as we did, watch a full moon rise over the Madaba Plain.



Opposite, top: The Wadi Rum, a favorite place of T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia), who called this valley "Vast and echoing and God-like."

Opposite, below: Moonrise over the Madaba Plain. *Above:* My daughter, Myken, in front of the Treasury in Petra. This place was used in the Indiana Jones movie, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.



Below: Carolyn Waldron carefully excavating the vessels found with the shrine. *Right:* Omar, our Jordanian helper for square 7K60.



You have come for a traditional, cultural feast, a *mansaf*, where large platters are brought piled with rice, pine nuts, goat meat, and yogurt. The trick is with your right hand (your left hand is unclean) to form a ball of everything mixed together and then to place it in your mouth without your fingers touching your lips.

Spend a summer in Jordan with the Madaba Plains Project at Tall-'al Umayri and the Indiana Jones image of the swarthy whip-wheeling archaeologist quickly dissolves to Hollywood fantasy. You will come away a little dirtier than when you arrived. But you will also come away with a rich appreciation of a welcoming and diverse country

and with a deep respect for the discipline, insights, and value of Near Eastern archaeology.

Archaeology is about *destruction*: slowly removing layers of dirt and rubble. Often this also means removing walls and floors to allow one to go back in time. This is no wanton destruction: the taking down, the removing, the uncovering is all carefully planned. The area excavated is laid out in grids called fields. Each field is divided into squares.

I worked in Field A, Square 7K60. Everything in a square—every wall, every surface, and each distinctive feature such as a pillar post—becomes a locus. Each locus is numbered and all is marked on a sheet with levels indi-



Clockwise from top: The site where Jesus was baptized near where the present-day course of the Jordan flows. Doug Clark lecturing on his favorite subject: the construction of the Four-Room House. The steps up to Tall al-'Umayri. Baskets, or *gufahs*, used for hauling dirt to the sifts.

cated, the stratigraphy noted, the constancy and color of the earth recorded, and where ratio of pebbles to boulders is measured. All is documented. All is recorded.

Archaeology is about *translation*: translating what is found into data and document. An object, a “find,” has meaning and value largely because of the very careful recording of context. This recording is done by measurement, by photography, by drawings, and by written description. All pottery shards are cleaned and examined: the search is for diagnostics, those pieces that show part of a rim. From that rim a full complete vessel can be drawn. Because over time pottery techniques gradually

changed, the fragments culled from the sifting of each *gufah* (basket) become a map of time.

At the afternoon “pottery readings” the shards are examined and it can be known in what era one is digging. The main periods of focus and interest are from about the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1400–1300 B.C.) through the Iron Age (ca. 700 B.C.)—the time of the biblical judges. This translation into data, into information—all the measurements, all the drawings, the photographs, the descriptions of the week’s work—all shift together into the narrative of the site, into what we can know. From this detail in the unearthing of the



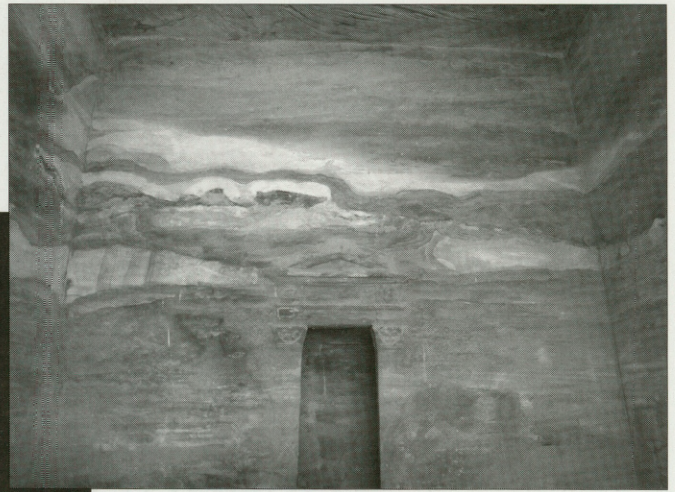
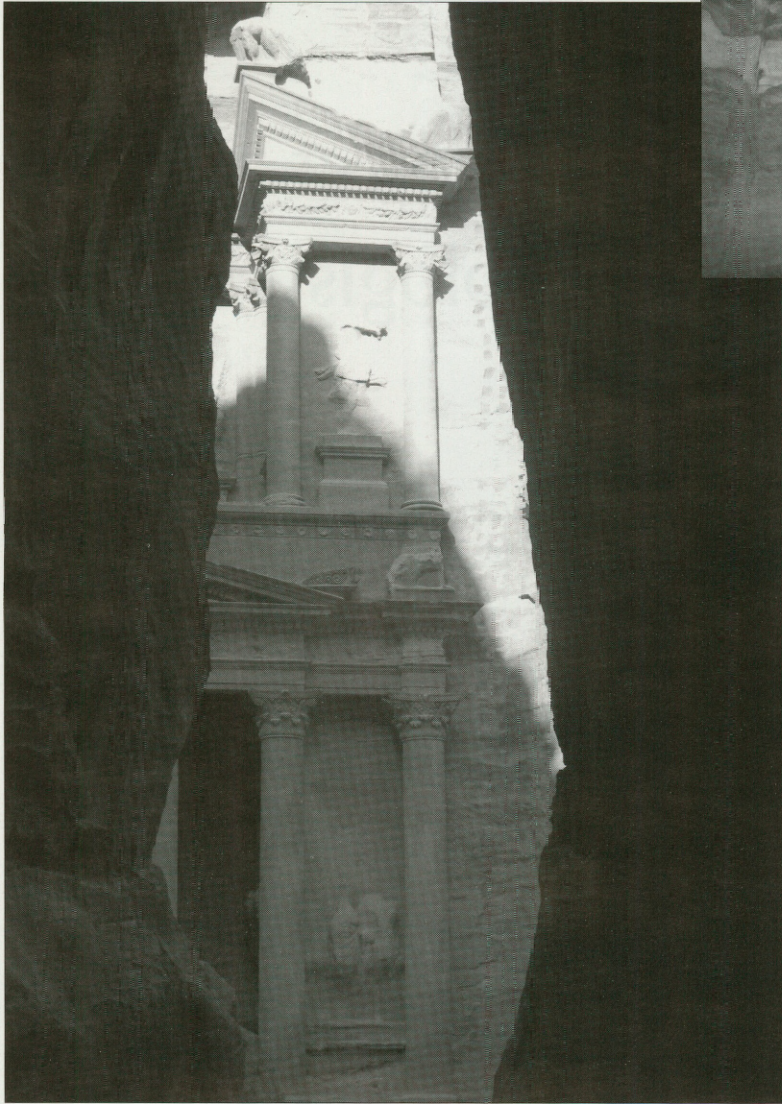
site one learns more about the peoples who lived here and what they did.

Archaeology is about *people's everyday lives*, not always the grand recorded events. Here is what is left of a jug that stored grain. Here was found a cluster of grinding stones. Here an earring. What is found tends to be mostly that which was lost, discarded, thrown away, forgotten: a bead, a bowl, an oil lamp, a jar stopper, a spindle whorl, a needle for sewing. What is found and saved is most often that which was lost or discarded.

Archaeology in the end is about the discipline of *seeing*. For the novice coming up the stairs to the site,

there appears to be little more than a warren of stone walls that make a scattering of rectangles. To the archaeologist, the scene is quite different. Here people lived. The archaeologist can see where at great personal cost and labor people built homes. One sees where people made food, kept livestock, built defenses, had personal places of worship, stored food, where there was a commercial center, where they worshiped in a temple.

Given the experience of the summer, I can better appreciate the meaning of 1 Samuel 16:7: "The Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." Seeing



*Opposite, far left: The Monastery: a Nabataean temple in Petra. Opposite, left: Roman columns at the Temple of Artemis in Jerash. Left: The first view one has of the famous tombs in Petra. Above: Inside the Treasury Tomb in Petra. Below: The *cardo* or main street in Jerash.*



the heart means seeing with understanding. Living and working in another culture and working with people from diverse parts of the world helps with seeing the heart of things.

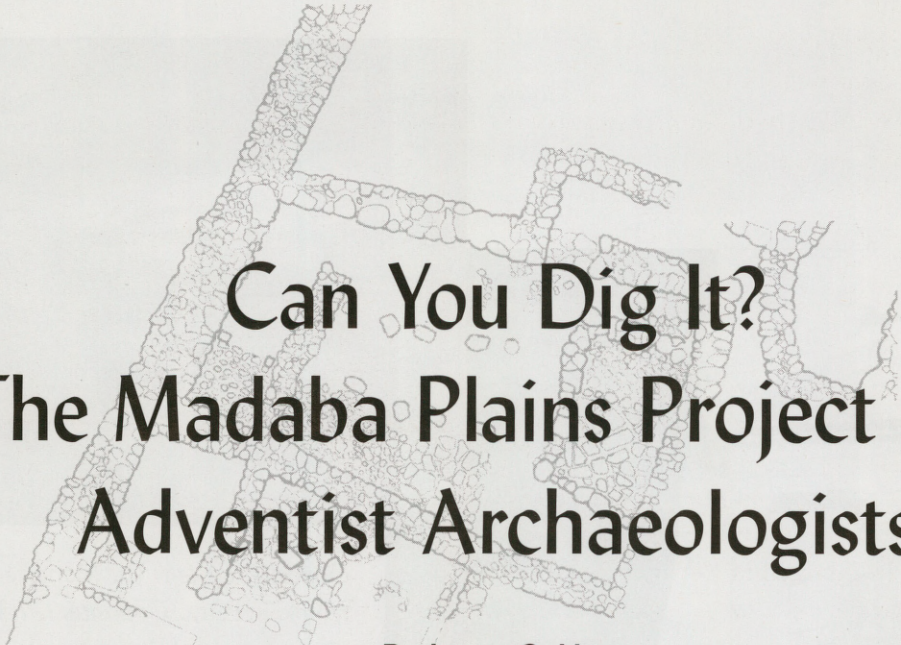
So, too, with archaeology, when one sees with understanding what once appeared to be a simple piece of rock or shard of pottery becomes something of value: an important part of the narrative of what happened here at Tall al-'Umaryi so many centuries ago. Learning what happened at Tall al-'Umaryi becomes an important part of bridging the gap of time and culture between the world of the Bible and our world in need of knowing who we are.

Notes and References

1. A tall is an archeological mound that may or may not be excavated.

John McDowell directs the honors program and is a professor in the English Department at Pacific Union College. He and Myron Widmer represent PUC for the Tall al-'Umaryi dig.





Can You Dig It?

The Madaba Plains Project and Adventist Archaeologists

By Larry G. Herr

In July, Adventist archaeologists discovered a 3,500-year-old temple from the late Bronze Age at Tall al-'Umayri just south of Amman, Jordan. The walls and cultic shrine of a temple dating from about 1,500 B.C. were uncovered by participants in the Madaba Plains Project.

Working in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities of Jordan and its director-general, Fawwaz al-Khraysheh, the excavators found an antechamber east of a large main room. Two other rooms were attached on the southern side. Dig leaders said the discovery is particularly exciting because the Late Bronze Age has yielded few structures of any kind in the central hills of Jordan and because it is one of the best preserved buildings and areas of worship that has been found.

The Madaba Plains Project

The Madaba Plains Project is an outgrowth of the Andrews University Heshbon Expedition, which started in 1968 when Siegfried Horn began excavations at Tall Hisban (biblical Heshbon). However, it more accurately dates from 1978, when plans for an expanded project were conceived by a team of archaeologists from Andrews University.

The project's founders were Larry Geraty, Øystein LaBianca, Larry Herr, and three graduate students: Larry Mitchel, Bjorner Storfjell, and Jim Brower. The team originally chose to excavate the largest tell site south of Amman, Tall Jalul, located in the rich agricultural plain south of Tall Hisban and east of the modern city of Madaba.

Geraty and his team set the first season of excavations for 1982. Operations were already under way when the Jordanian government denied an excavation permit. It did not give any reasons, but the problems apparently involved political, military, social, and tribal factors.

The focus then shifted to a smaller site north of Jalul, in the hills overlooking the Madaba Plain at Tall al-'Umayri. Excavations there began in 1984, with Geraty and Herr as directors, and with LaBianca as survey director. Ten seasons of excavation at 'Umayri have followed. The site has produced an excellent record that spans the period

between ca. 3500 and 400 B.C., with artifacts also from occupations after that time.

In 1992, the project finally received permission to begin excavations at Tall Jalul and a small team began work under the direction of Randall Younker and David Merling, both of Andrews University. This team has since expanded in size and conducted excavations for five seasons. So far, its discoveries date from the Iron 2 and Persian Periods (ca. 1000 to 400 B.C.), most notably a well-preserved Ammonite house with a mysterious cave underneath.

In 1997, LaBianca renewed excavations at Tall Hisban, this time with a declared interest in later periods, especially the Islamic Age. LaBianca wanted to examine correspondence between modern and ancient ways of life and enlisted the aid of an Islamicist, Bethany Walker of Grand Valley State University. Together, they have discovered a provincial city that flourished during the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt.

These three smaller projects currently make up the larger Madaba Plains Project. Until 1998, they operated together, making the Madaba Plains Project by far the largest archaeological endeavor in Jordan. Since then, they have worked separately due to pressures of size and complexity. At present, they operate independently in the field while still sharing some specialists, ideas, and resources.

Adventists in Archaeology

The Madaba Plains Project offers a glimpse into the extensive involvement of Adventist professionals in Middle East archaeology.

The most important (and only comprehensive) international professional organization for archaeologists specializing in the Middle East is the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR). With 1,150 members, it is designed especially for Americans and Canadians, but it also has members in Europe, the Middle East, Australia, and southern and eastern Asia. Almost every Adventist archaeologist working in the Middle East is a member of this organization.

ASOR has an administrative office at Boston University, a publications office at Emory University, in Atlanta, Georgia, and is affiliated with overseas centers in Jerusalem; Amman, Jordan; and Nicosia, Cyprus. In addition, it operates three separate committees for archaeology in Baghdad; Damascus, Syria; and Saudi Arabia.

The president of ASOR is Lawrence Geraty, cur-



From left: Larry Herr and Doug Clark, the dig directors in discussion with Samiyeh Khouri, Department of Antiquities representative; John Lawlor, Field A supervisor, and Christine Shaw, a square supervisor, about the daily progress made in Field A.

rently of La Sierra University. He works together with the chair of the board, raising funds, conducting public relations, and instituting special academic events and policies. ASOR's executive director is Douglas Clark, formerly of Walla Walla College. From his office in Boston he oversees the day-to-day operations of the organization, including personnel, a large budget, an annual meeting, public relations, and relations with other archaeological organizations.

Three operating committees oversee the basic activities of the organization, which include publications, the annual meeting and programs, and archaeological policy. Larry Herr, currently of Canadian University College, chairs the Committee on Publications, overseeing the operation of the Atlanta office and production of the organization's three academic journals, as well as four longstanding scholarly book series.

Until a year ago, Edward Lugenbeal of Atlantic Union College served as treasurer of the organization. Of its top eight positions, three are held by Adventists; when Lugenbeal was treasurer, it was four.

Other Adventists serve the organization in other



ways. Randall Younker chairs the nominating committee, which places academics on the board and manages elections of chairs for the operating committees. In addition, Younker serves on the board, as does Øystein LaBianca, who is also a member of the Individual Members Coordinating Committee. Furthermore, Michael Hasel of Southern Adventist University sits on the Agenda Committee.

Several Adventists are also active in the Near East Archaeological Society, which is comprised of archaeologists from evangelical backgrounds. The society runs an annual

meeting and publishes an academic journal once a year. David Merling serves as president of this organization, and Paul Ray, also of Andrews University, edits the society's journal, the *Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin*.

Adventist-Archaeology Connections

What accounts for the acceptance of Adventists in archaeological circles? The most important factor is the integrity, enthusiasm, prolific writing, and strong church loyalty of Siegfried Horn, the first serious Adventist to combine

excavation with biblical studies, languages, and ancient history, and to gain access to a large Adventist audience by popular and professional writing and lecturing. Horn was the godfather and catalyst of Adventist archaeology.

Horn enjoyed a reputation of determination and integrity among peers. His seriousness and the success of his project at biblical Heshbon, which the archaeological world received very well, demonstrated that Adventists could do archaeology on a professional level. This accomplishment overcame the suspicions of many who were initially concerned that Horn's religion would bias his science. Unquestioned acceptance of Adventist archaeologists today is

Adventist Archaeologists

Name	Type of Activity	Excavation Site	Active Dates	Institution
Lynn Wood	Biblical archaeology	Tannur, Khalayfi	1930s-50s	Potomac Seminary
Edwin Thiele	Biblical chronology		1940s-60s	Andrews University
Siegfried Horn	Excavation director	Hisban, Shechem	1950s-80s	AU Seminary
Julia Neuffer	Researcher	Hisban (1 season)	1950s-70s	<i>Review and Herald</i>
Kenneth Vine	Excavation, researcher	Caesarea	1960s-1980s	La Sierra University
Douglas Waterhouse	Biblical archaeology	Hisban	1960s-1980s	Andrews University
Larry Geraty	Excavation director	Hisban, 'Umayri, other	1970s-present	AU Seminary, La Sierra
Bill Shea	Biblical archaeology	Hisban	1970s-present	AU Seminary
Paul Bork	Excavator, tour leader	Gezer	1970s-1990s	Pacific Union College
Ed Lugenbeal	Anthropological excavation	Hisban pottery, other	1970s-present	Geoscience, AUC
Udo Worschech	Excavation director	Hisban, Balu	1970s-present	Friedensau Adventist University
Larry Herr	Excavation director	Hisban, 'Umayri	1970s-present	Canadian University College
Øystein LaBianca	Excavation director	Hisban, 'Umayri	1970s-present	Andrews University
Douglas Clark	Excavation director	Hisban, 'Umayri	1970s-present	Walla Walla College, ASOR
Bjornner Storfjell	Field supervisor	Hisban, 'Umayri	1970s-present	AU, Heyerdahl Museum
Glenn Hartelius	Excavator, researcher	Caesarea	1970s-1980s	La Sierra University
Larry Mitchel	Field supervisor	Hisban, 'Umayri	1970s-1980s	Pacific Union College
Lloyd Willis	Biblical archaeology	'Umayri	1980s-present	Southwestern Adventist University
Randall Younker	Excavation director	'Umayri Jalul	1980s-present	AU Seminary
David Merling	Excavation director	'Umayri Jalul	1980s-present	AU Seminary
Todd Sanders	Excavator	'Umayri	1980s-1990s	Harvard University (student)
Bogdon Dabrowski	Excavator	'Umayri	1980s-1990s	Adventist Seminary, Poland
Yvonne Gerber	Excavator, pottery specialist	Petra	1990s-present	University of Basel
Gotthard Reinhold	Excavator, researcher	'Umayri	1980s-present	Independent
Friedbert Ninow	Asst. excavation director	Balu	1980s-present	Friedensau Adventist University
Jim Fisher	Field supervisor	'Umayri Jalul	1980s-present	Andrews University
Paul Gregor	Field supervisor	Jalul	1990s-present	Northern Caribbean University
Jürg Egger	Excavator, iconography	'Umayri	1990s-present	Fribourg University
Jennifer Groves	Field supervisor	Jalul	1990s-present	Andrews University
Paul Ray	Field supervisor, publishing	Hisban, Jalul	1990s-present	Andrews University
Michael Hasel	Field supervisor	Jalul, Migne, Gezer	1990s-present	Southern Adventist University
Chang-Ho Ji	Survey and excavation director	Dhiban, Ataruz	1990s-present	La Sierra University
Connie Gane	Field supervisor	Jalul	1990s-present	Andrews University
Kent Bramlett	Field supervisor	'Umayri	1990s-present	Walla Walla College
Rhonda Root	Art	'Umayri	1990s-present	Andrews University
Jong Keun Lee	Archaeological survey	Dhiban, Ataruz	2000s-present	Sahmyouk University
Robert Bates	Excavator	Jalul	2000s-present	Andrews University
Efrain Velazquez	Excavator	Jalul	2000s-present	Antillian Adventist University
Ruben Tenorio	Excavator	Jalul	2000s-present	Montemorelos University
Duksoo Ahn	Excavator	Jalul	2000s-present	Sahmyouk University
Patrick Mazani	Excavator	Jalul	2000s-present	Solusi University

Many more Adventists have worked on archaeology expeditions than are included in this list. Digs require a variety of specialists, workers, and administrative personnel who are not named here. The list does not include scores of others who are professionals in related fields who use the results and finds of archaeology in their disciplines, such as biblical studies, ancient languages, church history, and art history. They are "part-time arm-chair archaeologists." The list gives a chronological picture of the people who have concentrated their work in the world of the ancient Near East.

Archaeology Web Sites

Project	Web site
Andrews University Expedition to Heshbon	www.madabaplains.org
Balua Excavation Project	www.thh-friedensau.de/deutsch/forschung/moab/start.html
Madaba Plains Project—Hisban	www.madabaplains.org
Madaba Plains Project—Umayri	www.wwc.edu/mpp
Madaba Plains Project—Jalul	www.madabaplains.org
Khirbat Mamariyeh/Wadi Mujib Project	www.afet.de/etm/08_1/fagat.htm

largely due to Horn's professionalism.

Horn's influence has also been felt among the laity. Horn appeared on the scene in the mid-twentieth century, just as the Western world was in the throes of enthusiastic positivism regarding the relation of archaeology to the Bible. Some believed that archaeology "proved" the Bible; others saw it as strongly supporting Scripture; and others believed that archaeology illustrated it. Horn spoke to this positivism through a book written for Adventists titled *The Spade Confirms the Book*, which was translated into several languages.

For many Adventists, archaeological evidence that Horn and other professionals offered in support of the Bible bolstered beliefs that scriptural prophecies are true. Thus, archaeology helped ground-level evangelism, and it became the major reason why so many Adventist evangelists today still use archaeology as an entering wedge. For many years, in fact, *Ministry* magazine included a monthly article on archaeology, which Lawrence Geraty edited.

Horn was not the only Adventist participant in the Biblical Archaeology movement, which was spearheaded by the great orientalist William Foxwell Albright, who is generally regarded as the single greatest mind in the discipline. Albright was the long-time director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem and a professor at the Johns Hopkins University. Horn studied under Albright for a year.

Two other notable Adventist students of Albright are Alger Johns and Leona Running, the latter of whom for many years taught Hebrews and biblical languages in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. As a student, Running worked as Albright's research assistant and later authored a biography of him.

Horn's heirs have built on these foundations. Horn's initial successor at Andrews University, Lawrence Geraty received his doctorate at Harvard University, as did Larry Herr. This has facilitated connections with other professionals in the field. Added to this is Geraty's uncanny

ability to facilitate and encourage teamwork and excellence among those who work with him, regardless of intellectual predisposition or ideological persuasion.

The result has been a team of specialists with a strong sense of identity, mutual encouragement, and willingness to debate. Among its members

are Herr, LaBianca, Douglas Clark, and scores of Adventist and non-Adventist alumni from Andrews University and the Heshbon and the Madaba Plains Projects.

Supporting Operations

Adventist archaeologists have benefited from generous support. The General Conference and the North American Division have given a few small grants, but by far the bulk of support has come from generous church members and the Church's educational institutions, especially Andrews University. Andrews University supported the Heshbon Expedition in its entirety and built up the Institute of Archaeology and the Horn Archaeological Museum on campus. In addition, it supports a major publishing department, which helps to spread word of the accomplishments of Adventist archaeologists.

Additional institutions joined in to support the Madaba Plains Project as the number of Adventist archaeologists, many educated at Andrews University, grew during the 1970s and 1980s. These now include Canadian University College, La Sierra University, Pacific Union College, Union College, and Walla Walla College. Other institutions, such as Atlantic Union College, are temporarily affiliated. Each college or university contributes to the project by providing consortium payments, research assistants, high-tech equipment, lab space, and research time for faculty.

Additional details about Adventist archaeologists and the Madaba Plains Project can be found online at <www.madabaplains.org> and the 'Umayri site at <www.wwc.edu/mpp>.

Larry G. Herr is professor of archaeology at Canadian University College, Alberta, Canada. This article is based, in part, on another that appeared in *The (Beirut) Daily Star*, August 5, 2004. It is used here with permission.



POLITICS



ILLUSTRATION BY MAX SEABAUGH

Why Politics Still Matters

By Jedediah Purdy

We live in a time that values public life very highly, but suspects that public life is dishonorable and unnecessary. I ask you to consider the idea that we need public life, as well.

These two words, *public* and *private*, go back to classical times. *Public* comes from *publius*, the people, which meant the political community. *Republic* comes from *respublica*. That means the public thing, or a government shared among the people. The public arena was the space where people exercised power and made important decisions. Being in public meant having a special dignity, the dignity of power and governance.

Three of the American Founders—James Madison, John Hay, and Alexander Hamilton—wrote under the name Publius during the battle over ratification of the Constitution. By calling themselves Publius, they claimed that they were the voice of the people, which was the only voice that had the right to govern the country.

And *private* was a very different word. It has the same origin as privation and deprivation. A private person was one who was deprived of the dignity of public participation and political power. A private man was a man who was defined by what he lacked, by what he didn't have. He was literally a man deprived.

Today, we have reversed these ideas about the public and the private. Private life seems powerful, exciting, and dignified. The great events of our time happen in private enterprise—children around the world want to be Bill Gates, not George W. Bush ... or Bill Clinton. In our own, smaller existences, we find our emotional satisfactions in the private life of family and friends, and put our ambitions into our pri-



vate careers. Whole industries exist just to aid our private pursuit of excellence: personal trainers, interior decorators, plastic surgeons, and all sorts of therapists and counselors.

At the same time as we've developed a heroic idea of private life, we've come to think much less of public life, and especially politics. It has become an impotent exercise, a form of entertainment with low production values. It attracts bad characters and low motivations. It doesn't promise to change much beyond the details of the tax code.

One reason we've gotten this idea of politics is simply the bad behavior of professional politicians. In the last decade, Washington, D.C., has seen a lot of hypocrisy, a lot of personal attacks, and a lot of purely partisan bloodletting.

But there are other reasons for our disaffection from politics that run deeper than the events of the last decade. One is the idea that "politics" means the work that professional politicians do: running for office, fighting over legislation in Congress, trying to advance the interests of your party. This is a narrow idea of politics. Professional politics attracts the worst ambition, even if it also sometimes attracts the best. Maybe more importantly, it doesn't make much room for the rest of us, except as spectators or employees. It's sometimes hard to get inspired by a politics that is just the ritualized warfare of powerful men, and now a few powerful women.

Another idea that makes us disaffected from politics is that the only successful politics is one that, as the phrase goes, "changes the world." This idea comes down to us from the revolutionary tradition, both in the United States and in Europe. That is a tradition where great political upheavals seek to free people from the chains of history, to restore their natural rights and inborn equality.

This is far from being just a Marxist idea; in some ways it is also a Christian idea. The last great expression of revolutionary politics in the United States was the civil rights movement, with its deep religious motivations and boundless ambition to change an unjust social order. In fact, it might be better to call this tradition not revolutionary, but Promethean. Prometheus was the figure from Greek mythology who stole fire from heaven and gave it to men so that they could change their world under their own power.

This is a great tradition, even if it is also a dangerous one. It has been the source of tremendous human betterment and also of terrible violence. But one of its more subtle, almost hidden dangers is that it sets a

false standard for most political activity. It suggests that when changing the world is impossible, the people should just give up on politics.

There is a better way of thinking about politics. It's a way that makes space for all of us, and doesn't imagine that changing the world is the only goal of political work.

Saint Augustine defined a political community as one whose members loved something in common. This didn't have to be a high-minded devotion: a band of robbers all love loot, and a community could also be bound together by sensuality, by an appetite for conquest, or by any other of the bad as well as the good things that people love. But if we take this definition of politics—Saint Augustine's definition—it helps us to understand something about our own political practice.

Politics is one way that we decide which of the things that we have in common we will publicly acknowledge, which ones will define us, which ones we will stand up and say that we love. And politics is also how we take care of those things. It is political work to preserve something good. It is political work to prevent the destruction of something we care for.

There is a politics of transformation, which aspires to change the world, but there is also a culture of maintenance, which concerns itself with preserving a world that is constantly endangered, and now more than ever. This politics never has the complete success that Promethean, or revolutionary politics, aims at; its victories are always partial and often invisible: a forest still standing uncut, a river unpolluted, a community still intact, a language preserved, some great transformation completed without destruction.

One difficulty that a politics of maintenance confronts is that, of the human values that have a claim on us, many are in contradiction with each other. They are genuine values, and their claim on us is real; but we cannot achieve them perfectly and all in one place. Environmental conservation and prosperity, or not even prosperity but just the relief of abject poverty, are both imperatives; but sometimes to have one we sacrifice the other. Personal liberty is a genuine good. Its violation is sometimes a crime and always a cause for regret; but security, stability, and equality are also genuine imperatives, and when we sacrifice personal liberty in favor of these, we say that we are making a necessary sacrifice.

These are aspirations and principles that have

some claim on all of us, that contradict each other. When they clash, the choice we make among them defines us as a political community. It says something about who we are, about what we love. In politics, we redefine and redefine what Saint Augustine would have called our political community—our community of people who love something in common.

And one thing I believe is true is that we cannot help loving things in common. In this world there is no good, or beautiful, or healthy thing that does not depend for its existence and preservation on a host of other good, and beautiful, and healthy things. Every one of us, in whatever way we are good, is deeply indebted: to family and friends, to communities and schools, to laws and freedoms, to the people and places that have taught us to be human.

Because no one is born a human being; we learn it the way we might learn a dance or a craft, by participating with those who have, imperfectly but determinedly, mastered it in their own lives. Loving anything well means taking a share in preserving everything that made it possible, that brought it into being and has kept it alive. This indebtedness is our human condition, and politics is one expression of our debt.

In this way, the division between public life and private life is an artificial one. The two weave into each other. Both politicians and parents can act in ways that preserve what we have in common, or in ways that neglect and erode it. They help to pass on the world in better or worse condition than when they found it. The question is not whether we are public or private people, but whether or not we live in a way that respects and adds to our cultural inheritance, our social inheritance, and our ecological inheritance. Politics is one way to address ourselves to this question.

It is human to be divided, both against each other and within ourselves. This is why politics can never be seamless or elegant or altogether inspiring. It is human to act from mixed motives, and for this reason we will always have reason to doubt politicians, and other people, and even ourselves. But it is also human to be deeply indebted, and to love things in common that become the basis of the community we share. We will never be able to get past or give up the politics that speaks to this condition. And we should not wish to.

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Where Church and State Meet: *Spectrum* Surveys the Adventist Vote

By Roger L. Dudley and Edwin I. Hernández

By the side of every religion is to be found a political opinion, which is connected with it by affinity. If the human mind be left to follow its own bent, it will regulate the temporal and spiritual institutions of society in a uniform manner, and man will endeavor ... to harmonize earth with heaven.

—Alexis de Tocqueville¹

If all U.S. voters were Seventh-day Adventists, George W. Bush would be reinstated as U.S. president in November! In a national sample of committed Adventists we found that a total of 44 percent plan to cast their ballots for President Bush, whereas only 16 percent plan to vote for Senator John Kerry and 26 percent are undecided. How do we know? A very recent groundbreaking study reported in this article provides an unprecedented opportunity to examine how committed Adventists in the United States relate to the most salient social and political issues that face the nation.

The United States has been going through a very exciting political year. Not only is control of the presidency and Congress at stake, but many public and social issues are also being hotly debated. Most of these concern moral and religious values. The United States faces a stark and very consequential decision come November 2: deciding who will lead the nation as president at an extraordinary time in its history.

This is the time of an unprecedented “terrorist war” that knows no geographical bounds and is being fought without a visible enemy, a time in which the occupation of Iraq, which lacks

an exit strategy, is increasingly more difficult and fraught with missteps; where an increasing number of Americans live without health insurance and in poverty; where the traditional wall of separation between church and state is being threatened seriously; and in which heated debate about same-sex marriage has polarized the country.²

Religious and nonreligious voters are processing all of these issues and many others in one of the most heated presidential races in modern history. Key to understanding the social-political attitudes and behaviors of Americans in the upcoming election are their

religious life and commitments.

Among Americans, religion continues to play a persistent role in all matters related to politics. As a result, within the last seven years major research universities and think tanks have devoted and received significant resources to study the role of religion in public life.³

How do American Adventists—particularly those most closely affiliated with the Church—fit into the mix of all these issues? The authors of this article have been writing on the relationship between Adventists and politics since the 1980s, and they covered the presidential elections of 1984 and 1988 (Dudley and Hernandez, 1992). Here, thanks to the support and encouragement of *Spectrum*, we return to the topic. But first let us provide a bit more context.

Kenneth Walt (2003), a key researcher in the field of religion and politics, notes, “religion is more important in American politics than most people realize but in different ways than they imagine. That is, religious influences are visible in all aspects of political life—the ideas about politics we entertain, the behavior of political elites and ordinary citizens, the interpretation of public laws, and the development of government programs” (xiv). Furthermore, in the last fourteen years or so no other factor has divided the electorate in more predictable ways than church attendance.*

Recent research reports by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press show that those who attend church regularly are two times more likely to vote Republican than those who do not. Researchers have termed this phenomenon the “God gap,” and according to Brookings Institution political scientist Thomas Mann church attendance “is the most powerful predictor of party ID and partisan voting intention, ... and in a society that values religion as much as [this one] ... that’s significant.”⁵ Can the same “God gap” be found among Adventists?

In his important volume, *Adventism and the American Republic*, Adventist historian Douglas Morgan chronicles the history of the Adventist Church in relationship to political and public issues since its beginnings in the middle 1800s through 2000. One unifying theme in this engaging historical analysis is how Adventist apocalyptic identity led Adventists to promote vehemently religious freedom and separation of church and state, so much so that Adventists have made major contributions that have affected America’s ongoing understanding of church-state relations.

In particular, Morgan notes how Adventist leaders during the 1980s pointed out the dangers of the resur-

gence of fundamentalists allied with right-wing politics. He documents that their concern was not so much that Adventists did not share common concerns with fundamentalists about moral decline in society, but rather the danger and suspicion of the Moral Majority’s aggressive agenda to legislate morality and weaken the wall of separation between church and state.

In the presidential election of 1992, the editors of *Liberty* magazine again raised this concern, warning that the growing influence of the religious right “posed a great danger to freedom in America” (Morgan, 2002, 203). Adventist apocalyptic thinking remained the “animating factor” that kept Adventists from being fully aligned with the religious right. However, political opinions are not always informed by theological commitments, as we clearly documented in our 1992 book, *Citizens of Two Worlds*.

In the 1984 elections, we showed how Adventists overwhelmingly voted for the Republican presidential candidate, Ronald Reagan. Thus, despite the concern of many in church leadership about the close alliance between the Republican party and fundamentalist right-wing evangelicals, Adventists as a whole found close affinity with the Republican presidential candidate and the party’s political platform in 1984 and 1988 (Dudley and Hernández, 1992). Pitted against other factors, the threat to freedom informed by our apocalyptic did not figure significantly in the social and political choices.

Furthermore, we found that religious commitment and values were not as consequential in shaping political values and actions compared to social-demographic factors such as race, class, and education. At present, the anticipated closeness of the election has led the Bush election team to lure and rally the churchgoing troops—the true believers who are more likely to vote and support the Republican agenda.

Today, the affinity between right-wing evangelical thinking and the Republican party is key to the reelection strategy and closer than ever before.⁶ One key agenda already evident during the first four years of Bush’s presidency is a frontal critique—some would call it an attack—on the doctrine of separation between church and state. As has recently been noted, “the Bush initiative represents a strategic change in thinking about church-state relations and signifies a move away from a strict separation toward greater accommodation of religion by government” (Formicola, Segers, and Weber, 2003, 3).



Are church-attending, tithe-paying, church-volunteering Adventists more likely to be aligned with one party over another? How civically engaged are Adventists? What role do Adventist pulpits have in shaping congregants' social-political attitudes and behavior? What significant shifts—if any—have there been in how Adventists relate to contemporary politics? What are the current issues that Adventists most favor or oppose? How do Adventists feel about hot button social issues like the war in Iraq, homosexuality, abortion, universal health care insurance, the Faith-Based Initiative, capital punishment, and other issues? How does religion relate to these social issues, which include civic participation?

We hope to provide some answers to these important questions, but first let us define and explain the methodology and sample used in this study.

Methods and Sample

Recognizing the critical nature of the upcoming election, *Spectrum* magazine sponsored a national study of Adventists in the United States titled *2004 Religion and Public Issues Survey*, which was conducted during the months of June and July 2004. A four-page eighty-nine-item survey was designed to include questions on demographic background, religious commitment, and numerous social-political attitudes and behaviors.

The survey was mailed to 1,500 randomly selected Adventists from a sampling frame of approximately 180,000 Adventist households made available by TEACH Services, Incorporated.⁷ A total of 100 surveys were undeliverable, which resulted in a final sample of 1,400. The survey was mailed twice with a reminder letter between. We ended up with 860 usable surveys, for a 61 percent response rate. The Institute for Church Ministry at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University managed the data collection process. The article uses crosstabs and chi-square statistics to determine level of significance.

How representative is the sample of the total Adventist population in the North American Division (NAD)? A good way to begin to answer this question is to compare our sample with the single largest study of Adventists and more than fifty different denominations ever conducted—the U.S. Congregational Life survey (USCL).⁸ The USCL is perhaps the best available source for understanding the regular church attending population of the Adventist Church in the NAD (Sahlin, 2003).

Table 1 (*opposite*) compares the background demographic variables of our sample with findings from the USCL Adventist sample. Compared to the total population of Adventists who attend church, our sample is overwhelmingly male, older, white, fairly stable financially, well educated, second generation Adventist, and affiliated with the Church throughout life. Also, compared to the USCL study, our sample is much less ethnically diverse. The most recent church data on ethnic diversity in the NAD comes from its Human Relations Office, which estimates the breakdown to be 53 percent white, 31 percent black, 12 percent Hispanic, and 5 percent Asian (Office of Human Relations, 2003).

Clearly, the sample in this study does not truly represent the membership that regularly attends the Adventist Church in the United States.⁹ Another way to assess the representative nature of the sample is to examine the level of religiosity. How religious is the sample? Table 2 (*page 42*) summarizes key religious variables in our survey. It shows that our sample is very committed to the Church. Religiously speaking, the sample is composed of local church leaders who attend at least once every week, are extremely devout, afford strong financial support for the Church, and have a religious perspective that is mostly religious conservative/fundamentalist.

Although the sample plainly does not represent the total membership of the U.S. Church, its strength lies in how it captures a strata of highly committed local church leaders who strongly support the Church with their finances and share a common cultural and social-economic standing. These are key, influential folks who make critical decisions and whose financial support sustains many Adventist institutions across the NAD.

In summary, this sample enables us to learn much about the politics of longtime Adventists deeply imbued in the Church's culture. This is the group whose social-political attitudes and behaviors we describe below.

Adventists at the Voting Booth

Adventists tend to be conservative both politically and theologically (Dudley and Hernández, 1992; Morgan, 2001). In this survey, 58 percent identified themselves as politically conservative, 32 percent as moderate, and only 4 percent as liberal. The remaining 6 percent were not sure. As to political affiliation, 54 percent claimed to be Republicans and 16 percent Democrats; the rest (30%) are independents.

Does this hold true when members go to the polls?

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics:
Comparisons Between the 2004 Religion and Public Issues Survey and the U.S.
Congregational Life Survey—Adventist (USCL)

	2004 Religion/Public Survey (N=860)	USCL (N=5,596)
1. Length of time as Adventist	%	%
a. Less than one year	—	—
b. 1 to 5 years	.4	—
c. 6 to 10 years	.2	—
d. 11 to 20 years	3.4	—
e. More than 20 years	96.0	—
2. Generation as Adventist		
a. First generation	31.0	—
b. Second generation	69.0	—
3. Place of birth		
a. United States	88.0	—
b. Outside the United States	12.2	—
4. Gender		
a. Male	61.5	41.0
b. Female	38.5	59.0
5. Marital status		
a. Married	76.5	48.0
b. Divorced or separated	4.1	8.0
c. Single, never married	3.6	19.0
d. Widowed	15.8	6.0
6. Age		
a. 19 years or younger	—	9.0
b. 20 to 35 years	.7	18.0
c. 36 to 50 years	9.4	27.0
d. 51 to 65 years	26.7	24.0
e. Over 65 years	63.2	21.0
7. Level of formal education		
a. Less than high school	3.4	14.0
b. High school graduation	8.7	52.0
c. Some college study	24.4	—
d. Four-year college degree	14.2	21.0
e. Post-college graduate study	49.4	13.0
8. Ethnic background		
a. Asian or Pacific Island	1.2	3.0
b. Black/African American	5.2	10.0
c. Hispanic/Latino	1.5	7.0
d. White/Euro-American	89.3	71.0
e. Other	2.8	2.0
9. Family income		
a. Under \$20,000	11.8	<\$24K 36.0
b. \$20,000 to \$50,000	49.0	\$25-49K 27.0
c. \$51,000 to \$80,000	21.9	\$50-74K 17.0
d. More than \$80,000	17.3	>\$75K 19.0

Yes, it does. In the 2000 presidential election, George W. Bush won a landslide 60 percent of the Adventist vote. Only 20 percent supported Al Gore, and Ralph Nader picked up only 3 percent. Only 17 percent did not vote, which demonstrates that Adventists were much more likely than the general population to cast ballots.

Will it happen again? Our research indicates that it will. As we said at the outset, about 44 percent of our respondents plan to vote for George W. Bush and only 16 percent for John Kerry. The president lacks majority support at this time, but 26 percent are undecided. At this point, even if every undecided voter were to go for Kerry—a highly unlikely scenario—he would receive only 42 percent. Of the remaining 14 percent, 2 percent say they will vote for Nader, whereas the rest don't plan to vote at all.

Do personal characteristics such as age, ethnicity, and education predict who will vote for whom? Length of time in the Church and Adventist upbringing are not related significantly to voting plans, although Bush gets 72 percent of his vote from Adventists reared in the Church, compared to the 60 percent of Kerry's supporters. However, this difference barely misses significance at .09.



Table 2

Religious Background
(N = 860)

	Weekly or more often	%
1. How often do you:		
a. Pray privately		97.5
b. Study the Bible		94.5
c. Read religious books or journals		93.8
d. Family worship		73.9
e. Volunteer for the church		60.1
2. How often attend church?		
a. Rarely or never		1.4
b. Once every month or two		1.3
c. Two or three times a month		6.6
d. At least once a week		90.7
3. How active in outreach/witnessing activities?		
a. Rarely or never		20.1
b. Once every month or two		17.7
c. Two or three times a month		25.2
d. At least once a week		36.9
4. Amount of gross income given to church:		
a. Less than 5%		1.8
b. 5% to 9%		3.7
c. 10% to 14%		32.7
d. 15% to 19%		26.5
e. 20% or more		35.3
5. Hold office or other service position in church?		
a. Yes		71.4
b. No		28.6
6. How would you identify yourself in regard to religious orientation?		
a. Fundamentalist		28.4
b. Conservative		48.0
c. Moderate		21.1
d. Liberal		2.4

Age is not a significant predictor, but education level is. We will ignore the "less than high school" group since its numbers are so small. Bush gains a greater percentage of voters among those with some college, whereas Kerry has somewhat larger proportions with high school and postgraduate education. But increase in education is not correlated with any particular candidate since the education variable is not linear. The biggest contrast is that smaller percentages of undecided voters have postgraduate education than do supporters of either candidate.

Also significant for related voting patterns is yearly family income, which offers a clearer picture: Kerry

enjoys support from greater percentages of voters with incomes over \$50,000 than does Bush (Table 3).

Another important background variable in social-political issues is race. As has been shown, race makes a difference in political attitudes among Adventists (Dudley and Hernandez, 1992) and the general population (Smith, Hali, and Fluher, 2003; Harris, 2001; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995). Thus, we divided our sample between whites (N = 762) and nonwhites (N = 91).¹⁰ As expected, the findings show significant differences (Table 4, *opposite*).

Whites are much more likely to be conservative and Republican, to have voted for Bush in 2000, and to vote for him again in 2004. The nonwhite group is significantly different from whites on all measures. Its members are more likely to identify as moderate and liberal, align with the Democratic party, have a history of voting as Democrats in 2000, and plan to vote in 2004 for John Kerry.

Positions on the Social-Political Issues

How do Adventists align themselves with current social policy issues? We presented respondents with twenty-eight "hot-button" issues, most of which might be influenced by religious or moral values. On a five-point scale we asked if they opposed or favored the particular position. To simplify the reading, we have combined the percentages for "strongly oppose" and

Table 3

Presidential Candidates by Demographic Background
(N=860)

	% Bush	% Kerry	% Undecided
1. Gender (***)			
a. Male	68	66	53
b. Female	32	34	47
2. Education (***)			
a. High School	7	11	8
b. Some College	26	19	24
c. College degree	12	12	15
d. Graduate degree	53	57	49
3. Income (***)			
a. < \$20,000	10	6	14
b. \$20,000 - \$50,000	49	43	50
c. \$51,000 - \$80,000	23	29	21
d. > \$80,000	18	22	15

Note: Significant at the *** .001 level.

Table 4

Racial Differences by Electoral Politics
(N=860)

	White (N=762)	Nonwhite (N=91)
1. What is your political orientation? (***)	%	%
a. Conservative	61.1	36.0
b. Democrat	30.4	40.7
c. Liberal	4.0	8.1
d. Don't really know	4.5	15.1
2. In politics today, do you consider yourself a: (***)		
a. Democrat	11.5	51.1
b. Republican	57.4	21.6
c. Independent	24.6	23.9
d. Other	6.4	3.4
3. For whom do you plan to vote in 2004? (***)		
a. George Bush	47.1	22.5
b. John Kerry	13.4	40.4
c. Ralph Nader	2.2	2.2
d. Undecided	25.6	28.1
e. Don't plan to vote	11.8	6.7

Note: Significant at the *** .001 level.

party draws its basic constituency.

Different ideas about religious liberty seem to drive Adventist disagreement with conservatives on the issues discussed above. The Adventist Church has long championed separation of church and state. In contrast, the religious right has been attempting to remove this barrier and promote the United States as a Christian nation. Perhaps as never before, there is a clear and present danger to religious freedom emanating from the Supreme Court itself (Hammond, Machacek, and Mazur, 2004). Faced with a choice between a conservative

“somewhat oppose” into simply “oppose.” Likewise, we have combined “strongly favor” and “somewhat favor” into “favor.” To the extent that percentages for oppose and favor do not total 100 percent, the difference represents the percentages of those who answered “uncertain” (Table 6, page 45).

Although solidly Republican and conservative in their voting practices, Adventists disagree in some cases with conservative positions and take more moderate or liberal stances on others. For example, about three-fourths oppose the Faith-Based Initiative—a prominent part of the Bush agenda. Another strong deviation from the conservative viewpoint is opposition to government vouchers to attend parochial schools. The vast majority also opposes changing the law to allow churches to campaign for or against political candidates. Current law prohibits congregations from doing this on pain of losing tax-exempt status, and leading conservative legislators have been working hard to change it.

A majority of Adventists also oppose teacher-led prayer in public schools and do not believe the nation of Israel has a special place in God’s plan for today. Both of these are major beliefs of the conservative evangelical right, from which the Republican

agenda and church-state separation, the majority of Adventists reject their conservatism and opt to keep the government out of religion.

But where it really counts—the voting booth—Adventists do not align their commitment to religious freedom and belief in separation of church and state with their voting behavior. In essence, by voting for the party that threatens religious freedom most, Adventists negate their convictions on religious liberty issues. Clearly, other issues are more important. Either there is significant misinformation, or religious liberty concerns as Adventists have traditionally understood them no longer hold sway.

Aside from matters of religious liberty, majorities of our respondents also reject conservative positions on several other issues. About two-thirds oppose the Patriot Act, a law proposed by the Bush administration and enacted by Congress. This law allows the government to examine citizens’ records—such as library borrowings—without a court order. Likewise, the majority opposes the indefinite holding of people suspected of supporting terrorism without any formal



charges. These positions again show concern for individual human rights. Adventists also seem to depart from the conservative position by favoring close government cooperation with the United Nations—something anathema to conservatives.

In contrast, Adventists have a conservative view of positions such as posting the Ten Commandments in government buildings, teaching “creation science” in public schools, opposing elimination of the phrase “under God” for mandatory recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in public schools, and forbidding same-sex marriage. This obviously reflects strong Adventist beliefs in the law of God, the seven-day creation, and biblical marriage. Yet a willingness to have these values promoted by government seems to be in conflict with separation of church and state, which is also a strong value.

The fact that 59 percent of our sample supports capital punishment whereas only 26 percent oppose it probably also reflects a high regard for law among Adventists. Of course, this one simple statement cannot probe the complexities of the death penalty, particularly the inequities in its administration.

Comparisons between whites and nonwhites on these same social issues show important differences (Table 5). On five of seven issues, where significant differences were found, nonwhites were more likely to hold liberal views, with the exception of the Faith-Based Initiative and teacher-led prayers in public

schools. Nonwhites were less likely than whites to support the war in Iraq and laws that forbid same-sex marriage, but more likely to support universal health care, gun control, and the United States working closely with the United Nations. In contrast, nonwhites were more likely to support the Faith-Based Initiative and teacher-led prayer in public schools. These findings illustrate the elusive character of religion and politics—conservative positions do not always translate into conservative voting behavior, and vice versa (Dudley and Hernandez, 1992).

From a research perspective, it is ideal to be able to connect people’s thinking on issues closely with behaviors that are consistent with a particular line of thinking. Although election day is still in the future, we can deduce fairly accurately that Adventists will, indeed, vote their preferred candidate, based on the high correlation ($r = .51$) between our respondents’ voting behavior in 2000 and their anticipated presidential choice in the 2004 election. Thus, we can compare how Bush and Kerry voters responded to the list of twenty-three social-political issues. By doing this, we can determine the level of consistency between one’s attitudes and voting behavior (Table 6, *opposite*).

Adventist voters know very well the social issues that separate the Republican and Democratic parties. In fact, the findings clearly show that Adventists who anticipate voting for Bush or Kerry in November 2004 hold significantly different social-political opinions on all issues

except one, on which they agree: churches should not be allowed to campaign for political candidates.

In some cases, both groups overwhelmingly favor or oppose an issue, yet still differ from each other. For example, on the issue of teaching “creation science” in public schools (question 11) the majority of both groups favor it (Bush [82%] and Kerry [62%]). Yet Bush voters are significantly more likely than Kerry’s supporters to do so.

The issues that most separate the two groups of voters are the war in Iraq

Table 5

Racial Differences by Social-Political Issues
(N=860)

	White (N=762)	Nonwhite (N=91)
	% who favor	
1. Going to war with Iraq	38	29 ***
2. Health insurance for all citizens regardless of ability to pay	44	63 ***
3. Increased gun control	46	64 ***
4. U.S. working closely with the United Nations	55	71 **
5. Giving illegal immigrants a chance to obtain legal status	36	57 ***
6. Faith-based Initiative (government funds churches in providing social services)	11	22 *
7. Teacher-led prayer in public schools	28	48 ***
8. Laws forbidding same-sex marriages	77	68 *

Note: Significant at the *** .001; ** .01; * .05 levels.

Table 6

Presidential Candidates by Social-Political Issues in the 2004 Election

Social-Political Issues	George Bush (N=369)		John Kerry (N=136)	
	% Favor	% Oppose	% Favor	% Oppose
1. Going to war with Iraq	67	19	6	88 ***
2. Health insurance for all citizens regardless of ability to pay	35	44	69	18 ***
3. Giving illegal immigrants a chance to obtain legal status	35	50	46	38 +(.06)
4. U.S. working closely with the United Nations	48	37	83	8 ***
5. Increased gun control	38	44	69	24 ***
6. Government support for stem cell research	36	35	61	14 ***
7. Elimination of the phrase "under God" from the mandatory Pledge of Allegiance	9	85	23	62 ***
8. Government vouchers to attend religious schools	22	66	13	82 **
9. Law to allow churches to campaign for or against candidates for political office	8	81	6	87
10. Increasing role of United States as police force for world affairs	17	61	8	84 ***
11. Teaching creation "science" in public schools	82	11	62	20 ***
12. Putting part of social security tax into personal mutual accounts	43	31	25	54 ***
13. Prescription drugs covered by Medicare	65	14	73	10
14. Faith-based Initiative (government funds churches in providing social services)	18	67	7	78 **
15. Teacher-led prayer in public schools	35	53	18	70 ***
16. Posting of Ten Commandments in public buildings	67	22	32	54 ***
17. The recent tax cuts enacted by Congress	70	9	10	69 ***
18. The Patriot Act (government can investigate private records of citizens)	28	52	4	85 ***
19. The nation of Israel having a special place in God's plan today	16	55	8	72 **
20. Capital punishment (execute people convicted of serious crime)	72	18	38	41 ***
21. Indefinite holding without formal charges of persons suspected of terrorism	30	51	7	84 ***
22. Laws or Supreme Court decisions making abortion illegal	61	29	19	65 ***
23. Laws forbidding same-sex marriages	85	13	54	38 ***

Note: Significant at the *** .001; ** .01; * .05 levels.

(question 1), the recent tax cuts (question 17), laws to make abortion illegal (question 22), gun control (question 5), universal health care (question 2), and capital punishment (question 20) (Table 6). The close alignment between the issues and the respective presidential candidate is remarkable.

What other similarities and differences distinguish Bush and Kerry supporters? First, we present the similarities. They are both as likely to be religiously committed, born in the United States, be lifelong Adventists, volunteer for church office, hold leadership positions, be of the same age and gender, and be just as well educated. As for differences, we have already mentioned that whites are two times

more likely than nonwhites to vote for Bush, but there are also others.

Among those differences is Adventist generational background—respondents with at least one Adventist parent are more likely to support Bush than Kerry. Since Bush supporters are vehemently against gun control, they are more likely to own a gun (37%) than Kerry voters (24%). And since Bush supporters are more likely to support the war in Iraq, it is not surprising that as an expression of support for the troops or out of sheer patriotism 72 percent display the U.S.



flag at home, in their office, or on their cars, in contrast to only 49 percent of Kerry's supporters.

Incidentally, U.S. Adventists display their flags just a bit more than the 69 percent of the American population at large that do (Pew Research Center, 2003). Perhaps most interestingly is the fact that those who favor Bush are significantly more likely (58%) to say they are religiously conservative, in contrast to Kerry voters (29%).¹¹ Furthermore, Kerry supporters are three times more likely (44%) than Bush supporters (14%) to say they are religiously moderate (36%) or liberal (8%).

The emerging conclusion is that the reason Adventists are closely aligned with the Republican party is related, in part, to the fact that they adhere to an increasingly conservative social agenda and religious identity. As we shall show below, this is so because an increasing number of Adventists have adopted a view of the Bible that sees it as inerrant, which makes them feel ideologically at home with the American right-wing evangelical moral-political agenda.

Discerning Religion's Impact on Politics

As mentioned above, our sample of highly committed Adventists points to a very religious group of people. Recognizing the multidimensional character of religion (Leege and Kellstedt, 1993), we used a number of religious measures in the survey to make this determination. Earlier

in this article we asked whether a God gap existed among Adventists. The answer is clearly No (see Table 2, page 42). Instead, we see a "hermeneutical gap"—that is, our sample of core Adventists is divided on the way respondents interpret both the Bible and Ellen White.

On most indexes of religion the sample demonstrates a high level of commitment. Differences of opinion—or variance—on a particular variable or area under study are fundamental to any social scientific analysis. So what does one do with a sample that does not show much variance in religious perspective—meaning that no God gap exists—because all respondents go to church and pay tithe, and many serve as church leaders? Fortunately, we also asked about perspectives on how respondents viewed the Bible and Ellen White's ministry (see numbers 1 and 2 in Table 7).

Some of those who checked "fundamentalist" in Table 2 (page 42, number 6) probably thought of themselves only as solid Adventists and did not understand that the term is usually applied to the far-right group of evangelicals that holds to verbal inspiration of the Bible and inerrancy in every detail.

However, more than one-fourth opted for a theory of verbal inspiration, which would necessitate inerrancy for the Bible, not only in its saving message, but also in all historical, scientific, and cultural details. The 28 percent who chose this option probably did not think through to

Table 7

The Bible and Ellen White Interpretation and Adventist Orthodoxy
(N = 860)

1. Which of the following comes closest to describing your understanding of the inspiration of the Bible?	%
a. The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word.	28.4
b. The Bible is the inspired word of God, but it must be interpreted according to its historical and cultural context.	71.6
2. Which of the following statements comes closest to your understanding of the work of Ellen White?	
a. Ellen White was inspired by God and presented God's message in terms of her own place and time.	42.8
b. Ellen White presented the message just as God gave it to her, and all her instructions are still applicable to our time.	57.2
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	% of agreement
3. God created the world in six literal days only a few thousands years ago.	90.8
4. The investigative judgment began in the heavenly sanctuary on October 22, 1844.	87.6
5. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is the true remnant church of prophecy.	88.4

the logical implications of their choice; they just responded to the language that seemed to honor the Bible most. However, some Adventists in the fundamentalist category consciously hold to that understanding of Scripture.

Because Adventists also believe in the inspiration of Ellen White, we asked a similar question, with quite interesting results! This one was really the same question as the one on biblical inerrancy, but note the reversed outcome. Although the question may be a bit tricky, careful reflection shows that it also deals with verbal inspiration and denies Ellen White any human responsibility in transmitting the message. It also holds her readers to nineteenth-century applications to Christian living.

Whereas 28 percent support biblical inerrancy, 57 percent see Ellen White's writings as inerrant. Thus, about one-fourth of the respondents seem to hold her writings to a stricter view of inspiration than the Bible (Table 7, *opposite*).

Are Adventists who hold to a literalist interpretation of the Bible also likely to hold to a literalist view of Ellen White? In contrast, are Adventists who believe that Scripture needs to be understood within its own cultural context and time also likely to hold that Ellen White's message needs to be understood in the same manner?

Table 8 shows the breakdown of what we call the "hermeneutical gap." Thirty-nine percent of the respondents are consistent in their belief that the Bible and Ellen White need to be interpreted in their own time and place. We call this group "Contextualists." In comparison, 24 percent are literalists both in their interpretation of Scripture and Ellen White. We call this group "Literalists." Thirty-seven percent hold a contextual view of the Bible but a literalist under-

Bible Literalists/ EGW Contextualists (N=37)	Bible Literalists/ EGW Literalists (N=196) Literalists=24%
Bible Contextualists/ EGW Contextualists (N=317) Contextualists=39%	Bible Contextualists/ EGW Literalists (N=299) Mixed=37%

standing of Ellen White. This group we have simply labeled "Mixed."

In what ways do these groups differ from each other? Contextualists are more likely than Literalists to be second generation Adventists, a bit younger, more educated, and earn higher incomes (Table 9). Given the way our sample is divided along the hermeneutical gap, what else can we learn about the

	% Literalists	% Mixed	% Contextualists
1. Second generation Adventists	63	67	77 ***
2. Age (over 65 years)	77	68	50 ***
3. Education (graduate degree)	36	43	66 ***
4. Income (< \$51,000)	29	34	51 ***
5. Religious Ideology (***)			
a. Fundamentalist	46	30	16
b. Conservative	48	53	43
c. Moderate	6	16	36
d. Liberal	0	1	5
% of Disagreement			
6. God created the world in six literal days only a few thousand years ago	2	4	10 ***
7. The investigative judgment began in the heavenly sanctuary on Oct. 22, 1844	2	3	9 ***
8. The SDA Church is the true remnant church of prophecy	3	3	12 ***

Note: Significant at the *** .001 level.

Table 10

Religious Orientation by Electoral Politics

	% Literalists (N=196)	% Contextualists (N=317)
1. Political orientation (***)		
a. Conservative	66	46
b. Democrat	24	43
c. Liberal	3	7
d. Don't really know	6	4
2. Who did you vote for in the 2000 election?		
a. George Bush	57	59
b. Al Gore	18	24
c. Ralph Nader	3	3
d. Didn't vote	22	14
3. Who do you plan to vote for in the 2004 election? (**)		
a. George Bush	59	46
b. John Kerry	15	22
c. Undecided	26	32

Note: Significant at the *** .001; and ** .01 levels.

to favor conservative positions, whereas Contextualists tend to support liberal ones. However, the relationships are more elusive than consistent. For example, Contextualists are more conservative than Literalists in their support of the war in Iraq, government private school vouchers, teaching of "creation science" in public schools, the Faith-Based Initiative, the Patriot Act, and putting Social Security tax dollars into personal retirement accounts.

However, Contextualists espouse more liberal positions than Literalists by supporting the legalization of undocumented immigration, U.S. support of the United Nations,

religious beliefs and background of these groups, the two most important for our purposes?

In terms of religion, Literalists and Contextualists are just as likely to attend church, give generous tithes and offerings, and serve as church leaders. Literalists are more likely to see themselves as fundamentalists, whereas Contextualists are more likely to see themselves as moderates or liberals (Table 9, page 47). With respect to core Adventist doctrines, although the majority of both Literalists and Contextualists agree with the three core doctrines used in the survey, Contextualists are more likely than Literalists to disagree with them (Table 9).

How do Literalists and Contextualists differ with respect to social-political issues and the upcoming presidential election? Table 10 shows that Literalists are more likely than Contextualists to identify as political conservatives. Although there were no significant contrasts between Literalists and Contextualists in candidate preference during the presidential election of 2000, there is a difference in 2004. Contextualists are more likely than Literalists to vote for Kerry, and the majority of Literalists will vote for Bush. Interestingly, almost one-third of both groups is still undecided.

On social-political issues, Table 11 (*opposite*) reports differences worth noting. On most issues, Literalists tend

stem cell research, removing the phrase "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance, elimination of prayers from public schools, absence of the Ten Commandments from government buildings, a woman's right to choose abortion, and opposition to restrictions on same-sex marriages.

Whatever else we might say about the hermeneutical gap, at the very least Contextualists and Literalists look at public issues from two very different perspectives.

Guns, War, and Just War Theory

The war in Iraq is one of the most controversial issues in this presidential campaign, and one most motivated by moral concerns. As shown above, Adventists who support Bush and Kerry are divided on this issue. About one-sixth of members are still undecided as to the war's rightness or wrongness. Those opposed miss a majority, but have a ten-point spread over those who favor it (see Table 14, page 52). It is interesting to compare these figures with the three-fourths (73%) who oppose Adventists joining the military as combatants (see Table 12, page 50). Obviously, some respondents favor going to war but do not think Adventist youth should fight.

What position do Adventists hold on the morality of war? We asked respondents if, from the Christian perspective, they believed wars are: (1) mostly morally justi-

fied, (2) rarely morally justified, or (3) never morally justified. Sixty-one percent of the sample indicated that wars are rarely morally justified, followed by 16 percent who aren't sure. Fifteen percent indicated that wars are never morally justified, and 8 percent that most of them are.

How might religious orientation affect moral opinions about war? Interestingly, 22 percent of the Literalists say that wars are never morally justified, in comparison to 8 percent of Contextualists. In contrast, Contextualists (68%) are more likely than Literalists (54%) to say that wars are rarely morally justified (see Table 13, page 51).

Given the importance and volatility of the war in Iraq, its growing cost in Iraqi and American life, and its growing importance in the upcoming presidential election, we asked respondents if in the last twelve months

they had heard any sermons against it from their pastors. Astonishingly, only thirty-three (4%) of our respondents indicated that they had. Caution needs to be taken when interpreting findings on this variable given the small numbers; however, we wanted to know what effect these sermons had on respondents' opinions about the war. It is fascinating to note that 70 percent of those who had heard sermons against it indicated that they oppose it. In contrast, 45 percent of those who had not heard a sermon against the war oppose it.

Furthermore, those few who had heard a sermon against the war were significantly more likely to differ on the morality of war (see Table 13, page 51). No person who had heard a sermon against the war indicated that most wars are morally justified, in contrast to 9 percent

Table 11

Religious Orientation by Social-Political Issues

	Literalists (N=196)		Contextualists (N=317)	
	% Favor	% Oppose	% Favor	% Oppose
1. Going to war with Iraq	35	47	38	47 *
2. Health insurance for all citizens regardless of ability to pay	46	37	47	34 *
3. Giving illegal immigrants a chance to obtain legal status	32	50	45	34 **
4. U.S. working closely with the United Nations	46	37	65	19 ***
5. Increased gun control	49	33	49	35
6. Government support for stem cell research	26	43	53	22 ***
7. Elimination of the phrase "under God" from the mandatory Pledge of Allegiance	10	82	16	73 ***
8. Government vouchers to attend religious schools	13	75	20	72 ***
9. Law to allow churches to campaign for or against candidates for political office	8	83	6	84
10. Increasing role of United States as police force for world affairs	11	73	16	69 *
11. Teaching creation "science" in public schools	71	18	77	11 **
12. Putting part of social security tax into personal mutual accounts	26	45	40	35 *
13. Prescription drugs covered by Medicare	62	15	68	10
14. Faith-based Initiative (government funds churches in providing social services)	10	75	17	72 ***
15. Teacher-led prayer in public schools	32	52	25	61 *
16. Posting of Ten Commandments in public buildings	58	28	47	39 ***
17. The recent tax cuts enacted by Congress	47	26	45	29
18. The Patriot Act (government can investigate private records of citizens)	14	67	20	62 **
19. The nation of Israel having a special place in God's plan today	17	53	13	62
20. Capital punishment (execute people convicted of serious crime)	61	26	55	29
21. Indefinite holding without formal charges of persons suspected of terrorism	27	57	18	65 *
22. Laws or Supreme Court decisions making abortion illegal	49	38	43	45 *
23. Laws forbidding same-sex marriages	78	18	71	23 ***

Note: Significant at the *** .001; ** .01; *.05 levels.

Table 12

Race and Religious Orientation by Adventist Political Engagement
(N=860)

	% Favor	% Opposed	% U.S. Population	
1. The Adventist Church issuing statements on public issues	44	31		
2. Adventists running for political offices	69	14		
3. Expressing views on social and political issues from the pulpit	16	73	28 favor (1)	
4. Adventists joining the military in combatant status	12	74		
5. Including religion in public debates on social/political issues	26	54	52 favor (2)	

	Whites (N=762)		Non-white (N=91)	
	% Favor	% Oppose	% Favor	% Oppose
1. The Adventist Church issuing statements on public issues	31	44	42	54 *
2. Adventists running for political offices	69	13	69	15
3. Expressing views on social and political issues from the pulpit	16	74	19	67
4. Adventists joining the military in combatant status	12	74	9	75
5. Including religion in public debates on social/political issues	26	54	20	52

	Literalists (N=196)		Contextualists (N=317)	
	% Favor	% Oppose	% Favor	% Oppose
1. The Adventist Church issuing statements on public issues	36	38	47	29 *
2. Adventists running for political offices	58	24	83	5 ***
3. Expressing views on social and political issues from the pulpit	9	82	22	65 ***
4. Adventists joining the military in combatant status	5	85	16	67 **
5. Including religion in public debates on social/political issues	20	63	31	49 ***

(1) Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, *Faith-Based Funding Backed, But Church Doubts Abound*, April 10, 2001.

(2) Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "But Stem Cell Issue May Help Democrats: GOP The Religion-Friendly Party," August 24, 2004. (www.pewforum.org).

Note: Significant at the *** .001; ** .01; * .05 levels.

of those who had not heard such a sermon. Those who had listened to a sermon against the war were almost three times more likely to say that wars are never morally justified. These findings suggest and tend to confirm the powerful role that pastors have in cueing parishioners on social political issues, as recent research has shown (Guth, Green, Smidt, Kellstedt, and Paloma, 1997).

However, since 73 percent of the respondents (Table 12, above) oppose expression from the pulpit of views on social and political issues, it is not surprising that Adventist preachers abstain from such a controversial topic. American Adventists (16%) are less likely than the U.S. population in general (28%) to favor discussion of social-political issues from the pulpit (Pew Research Center, 2001). The exceptions are nonwhite pastors, mainly African Americans.

When we compared whites with nonwhites, nonwhites were twice as likely as whites to have heard a sermon

against the war in Iraq. This is not surprising given that nonwhites are less likely to support it (Table 5, page 44). But did the preaching change minds or are people likely to gravitate to hear preachers who share their views—or did these respondents happen to belong to a socially active ethnic church? Well-documented historical and social scientific evidence indicates that black churches tend to be active in progressive causes (Billingsley, 1999; Lincoln and Mamiya, 1990; Smith, Halisi, and Fluker, 2003), and African-American Adventists seem to share in this tendency.

Given the limited number of respondents who had heard sermons specifically on the war, we cautiously suggest that preaching can make a difference on the attitudes of regular church-attending folks.

Can one's private choices about owning a gun affect one's political choices? One of the most surprising findings of our study is that Adventists own guns in about the same proportion as the U.S. population in general. About one-

third (31%) of our Adventist sample has a gun at home, compared to 35 percent of the American population (Pew Research Center, 2003). Why do Adventists own guns at such high rates? A clear answer is beyond the scope of this article. However, we do know that owning a gun seems to be related to a respondent's opinions on war, peace, and efforts to proliferate guns.

More than half (55%) of our sample who owns guns are more likely to oppose gun control efforts. As one might expect, 57 percent of those who don't own a gun support efforts to control them. Nonwhites, who don't own guns (24%) at the same rate as whites (32%), are also more likely to support gun control efforts (Table 5, page 44). Furthermore, those who own guns are slightly more likely to support Adventists entering the military as combatants (.10 level).

It is clear from these findings that on the most important public policy issue that faces Adventist Americans today—the war in Iraq—most Adventist pastors are characteristically silent, and those respondents who hold a Literalist religious orientation are more likely to espouse a nonviolent, no-war-is-morally justified position.

The issue of war and peace is quite complex. No single variable can predict one action over another. However, we have found that preaching, owning a gun, religious orientation, and presidential choice affect how people view guns, war, and its morality.

Adventist Churches and Civic Participation

Recent research has shown how religion—particularly churches—plays a very significant role in civic participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995), volunteering behavior (Campbell, 2003), welfare assistance (Cnaan, Boddie, and Yancey, 2002 and 2003), and strengthening social capital (Putnam, 2000; Smidt, 2003). Discussions about the role of faith-based organ-

Table 13

Morality of War and Preaching
(N=860)

	% Literalists	% Mixed	% Contextualists
1. Most wars are morally justified	9	6	10
2. Wars are rarely morally justified	54	59	68
3. Wars are never morally justified	22	18	8
4. Not sure	15	17	14

Have you heard a sermon preached in last twelve months against the war in Iraq? (*)**

	% Yes	% No
1. Most wars are morally justified	0	9
2. Wars are rarely morally justified	58	61
3. Wars are never morally justified	39	14
4. Not sure	3	16

Note: Significant at the *** .001 level

izations and their capacity to serve communities—particularly members who are most vulnerable and at risk—has increased dramatically (Dionne and DiIulio, 2000; Wuthnow, 2004). How do Adventist churches fair in their ability to affect their communities and mobilize members for civic participation?

As indicated above, in 2000 Adventists voted and in 2004 plan to vote in significant numbers (83% and 89%, respectively), compared to 65.5 percent of the general population.¹² Given our sample of older people, these high rates are consistent with findings that show older people tending to vote at higher rates (Eisener, 2004). Overall, Adventists (69%) are comfortable with the idea of other Adventists running for political office (Table 12, *opposite*). Less than half (44%) favor the Church issuing statements on public issues, whereas about one-third (31%) is opposed. Perhaps due to Adventism's strong tradition of support for church-state separation, there is significant hesitancy on the part of respondents to embrace heightened engagement of religion in American public life.

Not only do we see this hesitancy in the respondents' opposition to the Faith-Based Initiative and their attitude toward the Church making statements on public issues, but it can also be seen in their opposition (54%) to inclusion of religion in public debates on social-political issues (Table 12). In contrast, barely half (52%) of the general American population favors includ-



Table 14

Social-Political Issues
(N=860)

Issue	% Oppose	% Favor
1. Going to war with Iraq	47	37
2. Health insurance for all citizens regardless of ability to pay	35	46
3. Giving illegal immigrants a chance to obtain legal status	44	38
4. U.S. working closely with the United Nations	26	57
5. Increased gun control	35	48
6. Government support for stem cell research	33	38
7. Elimination of the phrase "under God" from the mandatory Pledge of Allegiance	79	12
8. Government vouchers to attend religious schools	73	16
9. Law to allow churches to campaign for or against candidates for political office	82	7
10. Increasing role of United States as police force for world affairs	70	13
11. Teaching creation "science" in public schools	14	77
12. Putting part of social security tax into personal mutual accounts	38	33
13. Prescription drugs covered by Medicare	13	65
14. Faith-based Initiative (government funds churches in providing social services)	74	12
15. Teacher-led prayer in public schools	57	30
16. Posting of Ten Commandments in public buildings	31	54
17. The recent tax cuts enacted by Congress	27	46
18. The Patriot Act (government can investigate private records of citizens)	66	18
19. The nation of Israel having a special place in God's plan today	59	15
20. Capital punishment (execute people convicted of serious crime)	26	59
21. Indefinite holding without formal charges of persons suspected of terrorism	61	22
22. Laws or Supreme Court decisions making abortion illegal	40	48
23. Laws forbidding same-sex marriages	20	76

issues. In terms of the Contextualist-Literalist division, Contextualists are more likely to support a more active role for religion in public life. In fact, they are significantly more likely than Literalists to agree with all four statements, including acceptance of Adventist young men and women joining the military as combatants (number 4).

Those who believe that the Bible and the writings of Ellen White should be read within the context of time and place favor a more activist role for religion in public life. However, they do not share the evangelicals' right-wing enthusiasm to Christianize America or knock down the wall of separation between church and state.

Evidence from our study simply suggests that, compared to Literalists, Contextualists tend to accept heightened involvement for religion in public life—perhaps out of a desire to see their Church more socially relevant and

ing religion in such debates (Pew Forum, 2004). Thus, Adventists are distinctly different in their view of how and whether religion should affect public life. Could this be a factor that explains why they are less likely to be involved in community service?

Despite the fact that nonwhite Adventists are more likely than whites to vote for Democratic candidates and hold more liberal positions, whites and nonwhites agree on four statements that reflect a more activist role for religion in public life (Table 12, page 50; numbers 1, 2, 3, 5). However, nonwhites are more likely than whites to favor the Adventist Church issuing statements on public

concerned. However, even this suggestion needs to be taken cautiously because Adventists as a whole are less likely to become socially and civically engaged in their communities than other non-Adventist church-attending members.

The most extensive research that compares Adventist churches with those of other denominations has found that Adventist churches "are less involved in community service than are other faith groups... [Indeed] one of the most significant findings ... is that Adventist congregations need to get more involved in public service and social concern" (Sahlin,

2003, 57). Clearly this is a major challenge for the Adventist Church today.

With this context in mind, we asked participants in our study what interaction they had with the community during the previous twelve months. Table 15 summarizes the findings. Note that most Adventists do not seem to be very involved with what happens in their communities, particularly in such areas of direct involvement in the political process as attendance at a political rally or meeting (7%) or working for a political campaign or voter registration drive (3%). However, more than one-third (36%) has contacted an elected official about a matter of concern, almost one-third (28%) indicate membership in a service club that does community improvement work, and 26 percent have given money to a political candidate, party, or lobby group. Only 10 percent report hearing a community leader speak at their church.

Interestingly, nonwhites tend to be slightly more involved than whites in community improvement efforts, though the relationship is not quite significant (.10) (Table 18, page 55). As with whites, nonwhites are not likely to be very involved politically. However, nonwhites are almost (22%) three times more likely to say that a community leader has spoken at their local church, which indicates that ethnic churches—particularly

African-American churches—seem to be better connected with leaders in their communities and seek out opportunities to connect those leaders with church members.

How are these political activities related to respondents' voting plans in the 2004 election? A much higher proportion of Kerry voters (almost half) has contacted public officials about issues of concern (see Table 16, page 54). A slightly higher percentage of Kerry voters has contributed money to a political candidate, party, or lobby group, but the difference with Bush voters is minor.

The major finding in this area, seen in Table 16, is that only 16 percent of undecided U.S. Adventist voters have contributed money to any political entity during the previous year. By the way, only 10 percent of those who do not plan to vote in the 2004 election made similar contributions. As mentioned earlier, few of our respondents were likely to attend political meetings regardless of their voting plans. However, significantly larger proportions of Kerry voters were.

Religious orientation is also related to civic engagement. Contextualists are slightly more likely than Literalists to be engaged in community improvement efforts (.10) and significantly more likely to give money to a political candidate, party, or lobbying group (Table 19, page 56).

Table 15

Civic and Political Participation
(N=860)

Political activism:

In the past twelve months have you done any of the following?	% Yes
1. Been a member of a service club with projects to improve the community	28
2. Contacted an elected official about a matter of concern to you	36
3. Given money to a political candidate, party, or lobbying group	26
4. Attended a political rally or meeting	7
5. Heard a community leader speak in your church on a local issue	10
6. Worked for a political campaign or voter registration drive	3

Sermons:

In the last 12 months, have you heard a sermon in your church about?

7. Protecting the environment	11
8. Against the war in Iraq	4
9. The widening gap between rich people and poor people	9
10. The need for Adventists to be involved in their local communities	61

Church involvement in the community:

11. Are you personally involved in any community or civic projects sponsored by the Church?	
a. Yes, on a regular basis	21
b. Yes, occasionally	56
c. No, never	24

Table 16

Presidential Candidates by Political Engagement
(N=860)

Public Involvement (% who said yes)	Bush	Kerry	Undecided
1. Contacted an elected official about an issue of concern	38	49	30 ***
2. Given money to a political candidate, party, or lobbying group	33	36	16 ***
3. Attended a political rally or meeting	7	14	5 **

Note: Significant at the *** .001; ** .01; *.05 levels.

Preaching and Social Action

One important way to determine the level of social awareness and engagement in the Adventist Church is through the pulpit—preaching. Members were asked about sermons they had heard in their churches during the previous year. As shown in Table 15 (page 53), they could have heard four different types. The kind heard most often (61%) focuses on the need for Adventists to be involved in their local communities. Eleven percent heard sermons on protection of the environment, and, as already mentioned, 4 percent heard sermons against the war in Iraq.

Although preachers cannot campaign from the pulpit for or against political candidates, in accordance with Internal Revenue Service regulations, they may take

positions on various issues, as Adventists have historically done on temperance and religious liberty. Note from Table 15 that the kind of sermon heard most does not advance a moral position but simply admonishes Adventists to get involved. However, even here only 61 percent of respondents remember hearing a sermon the previous year that called for social action. At least pastors are aware of the need for more involvement.

The low rates for the other three types of sermons show the feeble condition of moral challenges from the Adventist pulpit. The failure to deal with the war in Iraq—perhaps the leading issue of 2004 and the one on which the election will likely hinge—indicates that our pastors do not see this as a moral issue, but only as politics.

As neutral reporters, we are not taking a stand. Moral reasons could be cited for favoring and opposing

Table 17

Sermons and Civic Participation
(N=860)

In the past twelve months, have you heard a sermon about the need for Adventists to be involved in their local communities? In the past twelve months, have you also done any of the following?

	% Yes, heard sermon	% No, didn't hear sermon
1. Been a member of a service club with projects to improve the community	32	21 ***
2. Contacted an elected official about a matter of concern	38	32 *
3. Given money to a political candidate, party, or lobbying group	29	22 *
4. Attended a political rally or meeting	9	3 *
5. Heard a community leader speak in your church on a local issue	14	5 ***
6. Worked for political campaign or voter registration drive	4	1 *
7. Are you personally involved in any community or civic projects sponsored by the Church? (***)		
a. Yes, on a regular basis	22	18
b. Yes, occasionally	61	48
c. No, never	17	35

Note: Significant at the *** .001; ** .01; *.05 levels.

Table 18

Racial Differences by Civic and Political Participation
(N=860)

	% White (N=762)	% Non-white (N=91)
In the past twelve months have you done any of the following?		
1. Been a member of a service club with projects to improve the community	27	36 +
2. Contacted an elected official about a matter of concern	36	31
3. Given money to a political candidate, party, or lobbying group	27	22
4. Attended a political rally or meeting	7	9
5. Heard a community leader speak in your church on a local issue	8	22 ***
6. Worked for a political campaign or voter registration drive	3	6
In the past twelve months, have you heard a sermon in your church about?		
7. Protecting the environment	10	16 +
8. Against the war in Iraq	3	9 *
9. The widening gap between rich people and poor people	8	16 *
10. The need for Adventists to be involved in their local communities	60	66
11. Are you personally involved in any community or civic projects sponsored by the Church? (*)		
a. Yes, on a regular basis	19	31
b. Yes, occasionally	56	54
c. No, never	24	15

Note: Significant at the *** .001; ** .01; *.05 + .10 levels.

the war. But surely given the upheaval in the United States the Church should provide some guidance. It seems that this guidance is being heard more within ethnic congregations, primarily African-American churches. Nonwhites are three times more likely than whites to say they have heard a sermon preached against the war in Iraq, and two times more likely to hear a sermon on the widening gap between rich and poor.

The most likely political message our respondents have heard from the pulpit is the need for community involvement, but do such appeals yield results? Does preaching about an issue really make a difference? Over half (56%) of our respondents said they are occasionally involved in church-sponsored community or civic projects, whereas 21 percent said they were involved on a regular basis and 24 percent indicated no involvement at all. Interestingly, those who have heard a sermon on the need for involvement in their community are more likely to be civically engaged (Table 17, *opposite*).

On all of our measures of civic involvement those who have heard a sermon calling for greater social action are significantly more likely to be involved civically. This includes volunteering to improve the community, contacting an elected official, attending a polit-

ical rally, or working for a political campaign. The prophetic role of the ministry seems to make a difference—a noteworthy issue with consequences for the public mission of the Church.

We realize that asking people about whether they heard a sermon on a particular topic within the last twelve months is a bit risky. People often hardly remember a pastor's sermon from one Sabbath to another let alone during a twelve-month period. Furthermore, we do not know whether the member agreed with the message. Yet we wanted to assess the impact of preaching on social issues because research literature has shown consistently that political cues from the pulpit have an impact on parishioners' attitudes and behaviors (Brewer, Kersh, and Petersen, 2003; Djupe and Gilbert, 2003).

In this sample of Adventists, the evidence is both consistent with the literature and simply overwhelming. Hearing or not hearing sermons that address specific social issues has a very significant relationship on all the major issues we have examined—a finding worth pondering and exploring further.



Table 19

Religious Orientation by Civic and Political Participation
(N=860)

	% Literalists (N=196)	% Contextualists (N=317)
In the past twelve months have you done any of the following?		
1. Been a member of a service club with projects to improve the community	25	33 +
2. Contacted an elected official about a matter of concern	32	39
3. Given money to a political candidate, party, or lobbying group	24	31 *
4. Attended a political rally or meeting	7	7
5. Heard a community leader speak in your church on a local issue	7	13
6. Worked for a political campaign or voter registration drive	3	4
In the past twelve months, have you heard a sermon in your church about?		
7. Protecting the environment	10	10
8. Against the war in Iraq	4	4
9. The widening gap between rich people and poor people	7	8
10. The need for Adventists to be involved in their local communities	59	64
11. Are you personally involved in any community or civic projects sponsored by the Church?		
a. Yes, on a regular basis	22	20
b. Yes, occasionally	48	58
c. No, never	29	22

Note: Significant at the *** .001; ** .01; *.05 + .10 levels.

Hot Button Issues: Abortion and Homosexuality

Ever since *Roe vs. Wade*, the topic of abortion has led in what sociologist James Davison Hunter has called "The Culture Wars." Abortion is a very complex subject that involves such considerations as when human life begins and how much control a woman has over her own body. The world church has avoided taking a firm stand on this issue (and has been criticized both within and outside the Church), but it has issued some guidelines.¹³ These basically set a high value on life but ultimately leave the decision of whether or not to abort to individual consciences.

In an attempt to probe Adventist thinking on abortion, we gave our respondents three options, realizing that others might also be possible with such a complex subject. Note that we are not considering laws here but questions of right and wrong (Table 20, *opposite*).

The first choice, selected by 13 percent of our sample, is the one adopted by liberals and feminists. Here only the needs of the woman are considered; debate over the life of the fetus is ruled out. The third choice, selected by 9 percent of our sample, is that of extreme conservatives. Here the fetus—or even the embryo—

gets all the consideration. The woman's needs do not matter. The middle choice is an attempt to compromise a very delicate situation. It says that abortion should not be used for birth control, but that there are situations beyond the woman's control. This position is reflected in the guidelines from the Church and is the one chosen by 78 percent of Adventists.

Fueled by the controversy over gay marriage, homosexuality may surpass abortion as the most controversial issue of 2004. We did not ask about laws or Supreme Court decisions. We have already reported that our sample was split on that subject, with 40 percent opposing laws and rulings on gay marriage and 48 percent favoring them. Here we are interested in the spiritual implications of homosexuality itself and how respondents interpret and understand what the Bible says on this topic (Table 20).

We asked respondents to choose one of the following statements regarding homosexuality: (1) rightly interpreted, the Bible does not condemn homosexuality; (2) homosexual unions are not sinful if they take place within loving long-term commitments; (3) it is not sin to be homosexual, but it is sin to practice homosexual behavior; (4) homosexuality is deviant and sinful and should be

changed through prayer and counseling; (5) not sure.

Adventists largely reject the first two options, although both have been argued within the Church. A few respondents were not sure. The third option is the one that Adventists generally adopt. As 40 percent recognize, we do not discipline celibate homosexuals. Yet the majority chose option four, which puts homosexuals outside of church practice. Furthermore, option four introduces the very complicated subject of what causes homosexuality and whether or not it is subject to change.

Does knowing someone who is gay change one's view of homosexuality? We asked respondents if they have a gay friend, colleague, or family member. In the general population, 45 percent of Americans say Yes, whereas 37 percent of Adventists in our sample say they do (Pew Research Center, 2003). Table 20 shows clearly that, indeed, knowing a gay person significantly affects perceptions of homosexuality. Adventists who know a gay person are significantly more likely to be welcoming, less judgmental, and willing to accept the position that homosexuality is not a sin without homosexual behavior.

Voting and Sexual Issues

How are opinions about abortion and homosexuality likely to affect respondents' anticipated voting in 2004? Both subjects divide voters who plan to vote for Bush or Kerry (see Table 21, page 58). However, Kerry's supporters include a larger percentage of pro-choice advocates than do voters for Bush. This is not surprising since Bush opposes abortion and Kerry prefers to leave the decision to the woman, although he personally opposes abortion.

With respect to homosexuality, few respondents accept the position that the Bible does not condemn homosexuality. Only small numbers are unsure. Great majorities favor permitting homosexual orientation—but not homosexual behavior—or for deciding that even the orientation is wrong. Significant differences exist on these two positions. Kerry and undecided voters are much more likely to accept celibate homosexuals, whereas 60 percent of the Bush voters believe that the orientation toward homosexuality is sinful. Furthermore, they believe that

Table 20

Abortion and Homosexuality
(N=860)

(Abortion)

Which of the following statements comes closest to your own views on abortion?

1. Abortion is entirely the woman's choice	13
2. Abortion is acceptable in extreme circumstances (rape, incest, threat to the mother's life)	78
3. Abortion is not acceptable under any conditions	9

(Homosexuality)

Which of the following statements comes closest to your own views of homosexuality?

1. Rightly interpreted, the Bible does not condemn homosexuality	1
2. Homosexual unions are not sinful if they take place within loving long-term commitments	2
3. It is not sin to be homosexual, but it is sin to practice homosexual behavior	40
4. Homosexuality is deviant and sinful and should be changed through prayer and counseling	55
5. Not sure	2

Do you have a friend, colleague, or family member who is gay? (*)**

	% Yes	% No
	37	63
	(N=309)	(N=534)
1. Rightly interpreted, the Bible does not condemn homosexuality	1	1
2. Homosexual unions are not sinful if they take place within loving long-term commitments	4	
3. It is not sin to be homosexual, but it is sin to practice homosexual behavior	51	33
4. Homosexuality is deviant and sinful and should be changed through prayer and counseling	41	63
5. Not sure	3	2

Note: Significant at the *** .001; ** .01; * .05 levels.

Table 21

Presidential Candidates by Abortion and Homosexuality
(N=860)

	% Bush	% Kerry	% Undecided
Abortion (***)			
1. Abortion is entirely the woman's choice	11	25	13
2. Abortion is acceptable in extreme circumstances (rape, incest, threat to the mother's life)	79	71	80
3. Abortion is not acceptable under any conditions	10	4	7
Homosexuality (***)			
1. Rightly, interpreted, the Bible does not condemn homosexuality	1	3	1
2. Homosexual unions are not sinful if they take place within loving long-term commitments	1	7	45 ?
3. It is not sin to be homosexual, but it is sin to practice homosexual behavior	37	45	45
4. Homosexuality is deviant and sinful and should be changed through prayer and counseling	60	41	50

Note: Significant at the *** .001 level.

homosexual orientation can be changed. Also notice that, although the percentages are small, Kerry voters are more likely to accept the loving, long-term commitment view of homosexuality (Table 21).

How does one's reading of Scripture affect perceptions of homosexuality? On the two hot button issues of abortion and homosexuality, how one views the Bible and the writing of Ellen White, the sources of Adventist faith, makes a significant difference (Table 22, *opposite*). With respect to abortion, Literalists are significantly more likely than Contextualists to hold that abortion is not acceptable under any conditions. In contrast, Contextualists are more likely to say that abortion is a matter of private choice (Table 22).

A similar pattern emerges on the question of homosexuality. More than half (68%) of the Literalists selected the fourth option, which states that homosexuality is deviant and sinful and should be changed through prayer and counseling, whereas only 38 percent of the Contextualists did. Literalists (30%) are significantly less likely than Contextualists (52%) to have chosen the third option, which says that it is not a sin to be homosexual, but it is a sin to practice homosexual behavior.

A clearer and consistent picture begins to emerge. We indicated earlier that Literalists were more likely than Contextualists to support social policies to make abortion illegal and forbid same-sex marriages. It is no wonder that these two groups are voting for the presi-

dential candidate that fits their personal moral convictions. The two most divisive issues that face Americans are also the same two creating a wedge or a cultural divide within Adventism—the hermeneutical gap.

Conclusion

Now that most Americans have watched or heard reports about the Democratic and Republican Conventions and the presidential race is heating up, one wonders to what degree religious values and beliefs will influence Adventist voting behavior. When we asked the Adventists in our sample, 89 percent said that their religious beliefs influence their voting behavior. But what exactly does this mean when we have identified so many differences within this sample, which at first glance seemed to represent a homogenous group?

The fact is that Adventists, even among this very highly religiously committed, white, well-educated, church volunteering, and male-dominated group, are very different in their social and political lives. Clearly, the majority is aligned with the conservative Republican party platform and presidential candidate. Despite Adventism's historically strong adherence to a strict separationist view on matters of church and state, the politics that a sizable group espouses—particularly those with a Literalist perspective—is closely aligned with the evangelical right-wing political movement in the United

States—a potentially risky and dangerous phenomenon.

Clearly, Adventists are multi-issue oriented, as most voters tend to be. That is, no single issue determines their support for a political candidate. Yet as we have shown, Adventists are fairly consistent in connecting their political and social values with party preferences. So at one level, Adventists are clearly very politically engaged. They know what the candidates and their respective parties espouse and they align themselves accordingly. However, it is one thing to vote and another to be civically engaged.

One core issue in our findings is what we have called the hermeneutical gap—which, as we have shown, differentiates Adventists on many important issues. What lies behind the differences in interpretation of Scripture and the writings of Ellen White? What is it about the mindset that accepts the appropriateness of contextual variables in interpretation that distinguishes its adherents from Literalist sisters and brothers? What consequences will this phenomenon have for the future of Adventism, particularly on such critical issues as women in ministry, cultural diversity, and the mission of the Church?

Sociologist Nancy Ammerman Taton has documented the critical role of hermeneutics in battles that have divided the largest denomination in America, the Southern Baptist Convention (Ammerman, 1990). To what degree will the hermeneutical battle threaten the unity of

Adventism? What other struggles might lay ahead? At the very least, Ammerman's book might be good reading for those responsible for the leadership of the Church.

There can be no doubt that each side of the Literalist-Contextualist division draws upon sources it considers authoritative to justify its positions. But can this gap be bridged, and if so, how? Is there a theological solution, or is this gap determined more by sociological forces such as age, race, and whether one is a first-generation member of the Church or has an ancestry in Adventism that reaches further back?

If this gap is so evident in what initially appeared to be a sample of a very homogeneous group, we wonder how it would look with a more representative sample and how this gap might impact other areas of Adventist church life. At the very least, we have learned once again that things are more complex than they initially appeared.

The hermeneutical gap affects how the Church and its public mission are viewed and lived. Those who seek a church more committed to a peaceable kingdom and nonviolence may find it reassuring that Literalists share their concerns. Those who seek a church that wants more engagement with the community and more tolerance of different lifestyles might see hopeful signs among the Contextualists. In the end, Adventism may need both groups to remind each other of corresponding blind spots. Hopefully, as is likely, both groups are worshipping with each other.

Table 22

Religious Orientation by Abortion and Homosexuality
(N=860)

	% Literalists	% Contextualists
Abortion (***)		
1. Abortion is entirely the woman's choice	8	18
2. Abortion is acceptable in extreme circumstances (rape, incest, threat to the mother's life)	76	77
3. Abortion is not acceptable under any conditions	16	5
Homosexuality (***)		
1. Rightly interpreted, the Bible does not condemn homosexuality	1	1
2. Homosexual unions are not sinful if they take place within loving long-term commitments	0	4
3. It is not sin to be homosexual, but it is sin to practice homosexual behavior	30	52
4. Homosexuality is deviant and sinful and should be changed through prayer and counseling	68	38
5. Not sure	0	4

Note: Significant at the *** .001; ** .01; *.05 levels.

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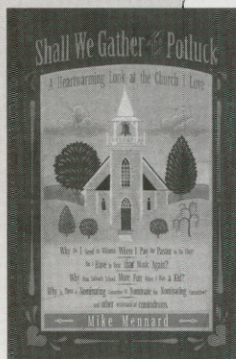
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Finally, we have added additional evidence to previous findings (Sahlin, 2003; and Dudley and Gillespie, 1992) showing that Adventist members—young and old alike, as well as churches—are not as involved in social service or community ministry programs as they could be. Earlier, we wondered if Adventist understanding of and support for separation of church and state has yielded the view that religion does not have much of a public role. We can only surmise at this point, but clearly the majority of Adventists, particularly preachers, are not connecting the dots of how theological positions inform public life issues.

More likely perhaps is the belief that individuals and their consciences should address these issues. Although we understand and respect this position, we wonder if collectively the Church should not stand and contribute more substantively to public dialogue on critical matters that face the United States and local communities.

We salute those few Adventist preachers who have chosen the “road less traveled,” to be prophetic in their critique of public issues, particularly the war in Iraq. Both of us remember vividly and with some degree of astonishment how Dwight K. Nelson of Pioneer Memorial Church at Andrews University spoke candidly and passionately earlier this year against the war in Iraq. Although he probably knew that his congregation was predominantly Republican—and thus prowar—he nevertheless spoke to a packed congregation, calling the war immoral and basing his position on the radical nonviolent teachings of the Bible.

Nelson reminded his congregation that our first allegiance as Christians is to the radical claims of the gospel and not to a president, political party, or popular war. Whether one agreed or disagreed, no doubt that Sabbath morning people were made to think more critically about their faith and its application to this important issue.

Perhaps most telling in terms of apathy and what appears to be increasingly socially irrelevant Adventist preaching is the absence of voices calling out for protection of the environment. We live at a time described by one of the most prominent U.S. environmental lawyers (Kennedy, 2004) as the “worst environmental times of our nation's history.” Again, we note conspicuous absence of discussion.

Either our preachers are totally oblivious to this crisis, or they know about it but simply do not connect it to Adventist views of the creation and Sabbath theology. Given the moral and theological convictions and values of Adventists as “Keepers of the Garden” (Baldwin, 2001), shouldn't Adventists be championing, alerting, lobbying, organizing, cleaning, writing letters, confronting powers, entering court briefs, and voting

accordingly, all for the sake of our responsibility as keepers or stewards of God's creation?

The gospel has significant social consequences, but it appears that a majority of Adventists are not hearing about it from their pulpits. On the most critical issues that face the United States today, Adventist clergy appear to be either too timid or misinformed, or they have adopted a strict separationist perspective so strongly that the connection between religion and devastating events like war and environmental crisis are disconnected.

Or perhaps we have succumbed so strongly to an individualist ethic that Adventist pastors figure such matters should be left to individual conscience. This raises the question of whether the Church should stand and be counted in some visible public way on pertinent social issues. It is one thing for the General Conference to issue statements, but what does that mean for a local church, family, or individual that claims a particular religious identity as Adventist?

Our findings on the social impact and power of preaching have significant implications that merit further study and reflection, particularly among those given responsibility for training, supervising, and promoting the Adventist ministry.

It is our hope that this discussion will ignite dialogue and provoke thought within the Adventist community about the many ways faith might inform the most critical social-political issues of our time. We also hope that Adventist pastors will lead congregations in reflecting seriously about these connections.¹⁴

We hope this dialogue will recognize above all that God is neither a Republican nor a Democrat. As Jim Wallis, editor in chief of *Sojourners Magazine*, recently stated at the People of Faith Luncheon during the Democratic National Convention:

Just because a Religious Right has fashioned itself for political power in one predictable ideological guise does not mean those who question this political seduction must be their opposite political counterpart. The Republican Party has misstepped in co-opting religious leaders. The Democratic Party should not make the same mistake. The best public contribution of religion is precisely not to be ideologically predictable or a loyal partisan, but to always raise the moral issues that will challenge both left and right, and governments who put power above principles. The best thing for the country and for politics is to let the prophetic voice of faith be heard.¹⁵

The Gospel stands quite apart from any political party, platform, or presidential candidate, beckoning us to a higher calling and level of responsibility. Whatever choices we make—on whatever basis—let us exercise the most important privilege given to us by a democratic free society: the power to vote.

Notes

1. Quoted in Kenneth D. Wald, *Religion and Politics in the United States*, 4th ed. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 158.
2. Larry Diamond, "What Went Wrong in Iraq," *Foreign Affairs* (Sept./Oct., 2004); <www.census.gov/hhes/www/hlth-in03.html>; and <www.census.gov/hhes/www/income03.html>. For a good overview of the current debate on the Bush administration's Faith-Based Initiative, see Jo Renee Formicola, Mary C. Segers, and Paul Weber, *Faith-Based Initiatives and the Bush Administration: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (New York: Roman and Littlefield, 2003).
3. Thanks in large measure to the generous support of the Pew Charitable Trusts, which helped establish numerous research efforts. See <www.pewtrusts.com>; <www.pewforum.org>; <www.fastennetwork.org>; <www.religionanddemocracy.lib.virginia.edu>; and <www.religionandsocialpolicy.org>.
4. Susan Page, "Churchgoing Closely Tied to Voting Patterns," *USA Today*, June 3, 2004, 1.
5. "Survey finds church attendance, party affiliation closely linked," <www.churchcentral.com/nw/s/template/article.html/id/17590>.
6. David D. Kirkpatrick, "A Call to 'Win This Culture War,'" *New York Times*, Sept. 1, 2004. See also, Carl M. Cannon, "Bush and God," *National Journal*, Jan. 3, 2004.
7. TEACH Services, Inc., <www.teachservices.com> claims to have the largest mailing list selection of church members, more than 180,000 households. The mailing list can be rented. In this case, *Spectrum* received 1,500 randomly selected households. TEACH's mailing list is updated daily and is compiled from different organizations and sources. (See its Web site for more details.)
A sample of the organizations that have provided mailing lists or used the list include: ADRA, Amazing Facts, American Bible Society, It is Written, Focus on the Family, Global Missions, Gospel Outreach, Holbrook Indian School, Project: Steps to Christ, United Prison Ministries, The Quite Hour, and Hope International.
The fact that a large number of these households are supporters of the Church and various Adventist ministries suggests that the sample is biased toward more committed Adventists—meaning older white leaders, highly committed supporters of the Adventist



Church, and donors to independent Adventist organizations as well as various ministries within the Church.

8. The U.S. Congregational Life Survey <www.uscongregations.org> represents the largest and most representative profile of worshipers and their congregations ever developed in the United States. It encompasses a total of 300,000 individuals from 2,000 churches and represents 50 denominations, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As part of this unprecedented study, a total of 94 randomly selected Adventist congregations in the North American Division participated, resulting in a sample of 5,596 church-attending adults.

9. Every research effort has limits and strengths. Getting a representative sample of Adventists in the North American Division is a difficult proposition, particularly if one also wants to represent the multilingual ethnic membership of the Church. There is no complete master list of all the members in the NAD.

Our previous study on this topic, reported in the book *Citizens of Two Worlds*, was based on a random sample of the mailing list of the North American edition of the *Adventist Review*. In that study, Asians, African Americans, and Latinos were also underrepresented. Because of time and funding constraints, we were unable to assemble a more representative list of church members. The best option available to us was the national list provided by TEACH Services, Inc. (see note 7, above).

Although we recognize the weaknesses of this sampling frame, it represents a segment of the Adventist population that can be identified as strongly committed leaders and supporters of the Church.

10. As noted above, our sample underrepresents Asians, African Americans, and Latinos. Since the numbers are so low, we don't assume that our few cases represent Adventist communities of color. However, for purposes of analysis we have clustered them together and identified them as nonwhite.

How different is the nonwhite minority group from white members? Separate analysis showed that the individuals in the nonwhite group are as old, educated, religiously committed, and of the same social-economic status as those in the white group. Again, even the nonwhite group does not mirror their counterparts in typical NAD Adventist churches.

Nevertheless, we felt justified in dividing the groups given the importance of race on these issues, and more importantly from an analytical perspective, because of ethnic group similarities in their social-political attitudes and voting behavior.

The reader should keep in mind that almost half (48%) of the nonwhite group is African American.

11. Interestingly, within the general population an increasing number of nonreligious Americans are likely to be aligned with the Democratic party. See <www.usatoday.com/news/politicssections/nation/2004-08-26-secular-democrats_x.htm>.

12. Federal Election Commission, *Voter Registration and Turnout 2000* <www.fec.gov/pages/2000turnout/reg&to00.htm>.

13. "Seventh-day Adventist Guidelines on Abortion," *Liberty* 88 (Jan.-Feb. 1993): 12-13.

14. For a helpful article in this regard, see Brian McLaren, "Scared to Talk Politics in Church?" *Sojourners Magazine*, 33.9 (Sept. 2004).

15. Quoted in David Batstone, "Take Back our Faith—Successes and Next Steps" <www.sojo.net/index.cfm?action=sojo-mail.display&issue=040827#3>.

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One January in New Hampshire:

A Wannabe Insider and
the Presidential Campaign of Howard Dean

By Nathan Blake

So this is politics?" I wondered as I waved a "Honk for Dean" sign at cars driving through a busy intersection in Concord, New Hampshire. The winter sun was setting, and it was, in a word, *cold*. A half-dozen college-aged guys surrounded me, whooping excitedly. I tried to decide whether this particular political action had even the efficacy of an evangelizing Rose Bowl float.



ILLUSTRATION BY MAX SEABAUGH

A solid twenty minutes of hopping and hollering went by before we dragged our numb bodies back to our cars. I learned an important lesson about political campaigning that night: avoid “visibility” assignments at all costs.

How Would Jesus Vote?

I’ve engaged in different forms of what I consider Christian-based activism, from writing letters to dictators on behalf of political prisoners to frying up grilled cheese sandwiches for the homeless to bearing witness outside a prison as my government kills a man. However, the Dean for America (DFA) campaign was my first substantial foray into the rather messy arena of electoral politics, where idealism is often overwhelmed by compromise and money corrupts absolutely. It can be an odd and challenging place for an Adventist, but ultimately it provided me an opportunity to live my ethics and work for good.

A friend of mine at law school is a new convert. On November 2, 2004, he will cast his first vote for president as a Christian. We’ve discussed the upcoming decision and the role one’s faith plays in politics. He asked me if I took candidates’ professions of faith into account when I vote. I replied that their policies matter more.

Who cares where George W. Bush is on Sunday morning if come Monday he’s handing out tax cuts to the ultrawealthy and shortchanging the forty-five million citizens who lack health insurance? Who cares if he uses evangelical language in his State of the Union address if he’s also spinning elaborate lies about Iraq? I make my

mises. In fact, my only other Adventist-at-Yale-Law-School friend and fellow intern, Justin Kim, and I had both been on the Dean bandwagon for well over a year. We figured if he—a John McCain-voting moderate—and I—a proud, if quixotic, left-liberal—could agree on one candidate, this guy just might have a shot.

A straight-shooting, socially liberal, fiscally conservative governor! How could Dean lose?

Not for Glamour

I did not sign up for a glamour position when I volunteered to work in the New Hampshire primary. I was not on my way to becoming a famous political operative like James Carville or George Stephanopoulos. I was not making policy decisions or communicating with the press. I was doing “field work.” So my “insider account” doesn’t describe how the wheels came off the Dean bus from the driver’s or even a passenger’s point of view. It’s more from the perspective of one of the loose nuts.

Our office was located just off Main Street in downtown Concord, New Hampshire, the state’s capital. Most of the other major campaigns had offices just around the corner and we ran into their staffers in the bagel shops and bars, where we eyed each other suspiciously. We were always on the lookout for faux Deaniacs, John Kerry volunteers masquerading as true believers in hopes of infiltrating.

The Dean campaign may have gone through \$40 million during the presidential primary, but it sure didn’t spend much outfitting this particular office. Right inside

**Asked if I took candidates’ professions of faith into account when I vote,
I replied that their policies matter more.**

political decisions based on who will best heal the sick, feed the hungry, care for the needy, respect life, and keep us safe.

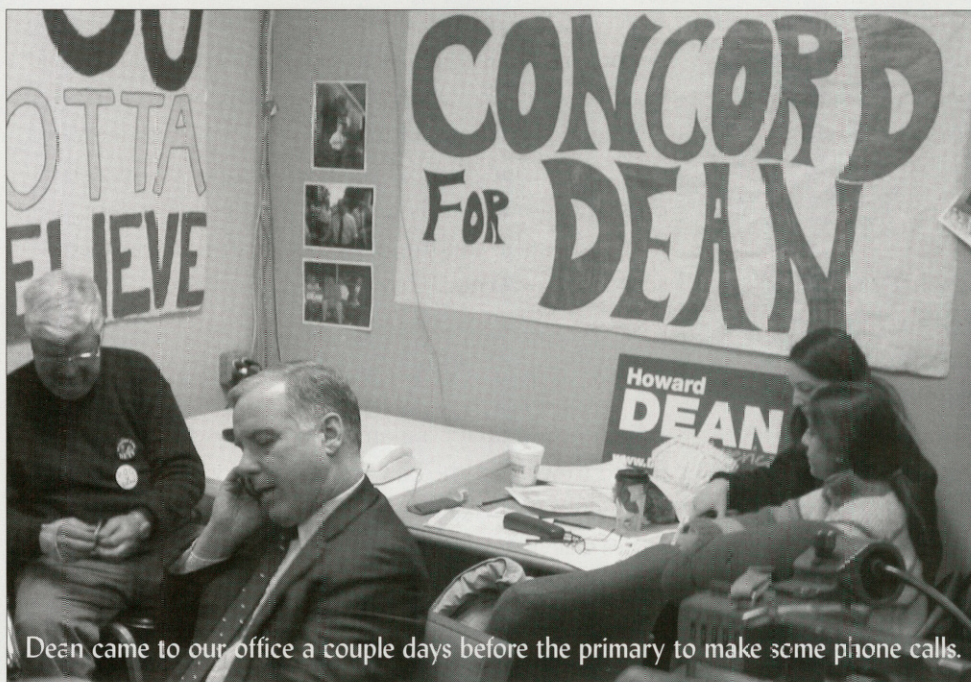
Governor Howard Dean appealed to me for those reasons. He had a practical commonsense plan to provide health care to almost everyone, as he had done as governor of Vermont. His environmental conscience was sound. Alone among the major Democratic candidates, he courageously opposed the invasion of Iraq because it was ill-conceived, unnecessary, and a major distraction from our struggle against the very real danger of Islamist terrorism.

In addition, Dean had a long history of governing as a moderate, balancing budgets and forging compro-

the front door was a living-room-sized workspace with three long tables and four desks jammed against the walls.

In the back were two small offices: one housed three staffers, the other had two staffers and served as the electronic heart of DFA Concord. Living up to the stereotype of an Internet-driven campaign, even our phones depended on the computer network. As our tech guy remarked, “You could shut down the campaign with a few solid swings of a bat.” At our level, it





Dean came to our office a couple days before the primary to make some phone calls.

strongly supported another candidate (5). We marked 3 for true undecideds, 2 for Dean-leaners, and 1 for those who had seen the light (strong Dean backers).

Exciting Monotony

Our schedule was somewhat predictable. Every night we would send out groups to “phone bank” (call long lists of voters). My first night I was sent out with two Brown University students to the law office of one of Dean’s college buddies. Essentially, we were political telemar-

was a rookie campaign flying by the seat of its pants.

Six or seven permanent staffers had worked in our office for months. Then, in a matter of a couple weeks, an extra twenty-five interns showed up to work the month of January. In an office built for probably three or four people, it felt crowded. So we expanded our workspace into the rather chilly basement, which could be considered “finished” only in the sense that it had cement on the ground instead of dirt floors.

We stuck a couple tables down there and some computers for data entry. Our “intercom” consisted of a hole in the ceiling, where we had stuffed a hose through to talk with the upstairs staff. One valiant bathroom served all.

Searching for Supporters

The campaign maintained a giant, detailed database with an almost-disturbing amount of information about area voters. Every time we talked with a voter we recorded the conversation in the database. We obviously knew their phone number and postal and e-mail addresses, but we also knew who lived with whom, often what issues concerned them most, any political events they may have attended, and—most importantly—how they planned to vote.

This is a pretty standard campaign scheme: Voters are ranked on a scale of 1 to 6. A 6 means that the person is ineligible to vote in the primary (they’re Republican) or that they are a “lost” Bush supporter. We gave scores of 4 or 5 to people who either leaned toward voting for another Democratic candidate (4) or

keters. Predictably, people hung up on us a lot, which is not the most pleasant way to spend an evening. On the initial calls we just tried to identify voters to figure out who they favored. As we got closer to the primary, the calls took on a more persuasive angle.

But, really, every day was different. When I arrived at the beginning of January, the on-the-ground campaign had had the same focus for months. We prized house meetings, where people opened their homes to neighbors and talked about Dean as if hawking Amway products.

The campaign made a big deal about empowering common people. Governor Dean always chanted, “You have the power,” and we focused on personal interaction. But almost immediately after I got to New Hampshire, the methods shifted. We upped the mass phone calling and started preparing get-out-the-vote (GOTV) tactics in earnest. We started sending people out to do “visibility” a.k.a. “viz.” We tried to maximize our exposure and our audience.

Moving Up

After a few days fighting with underlings for computer seats in the basement, I got called upstairs to help the two volunteer coordinators. My new responsibilities included answering phones, handing out yard signs and bumper stickers, and supervising the volunteers who came to phone bank every day. More importantly, I had my own desk space (shared with only one other intern), and I almost always had a valid excuse to get out of viz.

About a week later, I got “promoted” again. One of our area organizers was a little overwhelmed with the seventeen towns he was expected to manage for our GOTV effort. So I got the opportunity to help him in eight. I was responsible for getting every one of our known supporters to the polls on January 27. This meant setting up a structure in each town that plugged in volunteers to call people four or more times over the course of the day until our “poll monitors” witnessed our supporters actually casting their votes.

The Iowa Primary: Black Monday

We still had high hopes for Iowa on Black Monday. Our office had no television, so as the Iowa counties began to post results, our staff crowded around computer screens. I kept refreshing www.desmoinesregister.com. The first numbers came in and were awful. Unfortunately, they didn't change. Dean came in a distant third to a surging John Kerry. Even John Edwards beat us, though we handily beat Dick Gephardt, as planned.

The office was quieter than usual as we had our nightly wrap-up meeting. Our district organizer gave us a little pep talk and then told us that Dean was flying into Portsmouth, New Hampshire, at 3 a.m. that very night. Portsmouth was just over an hour away! Yay! Everyone got fired up and we decided we should welcome our man back with a bang. So a little after 1 a.m. we reconvened at the office, piled into five vans, and headed out to an airplane hangar.

It was a crazy scene. Hundreds of people clapped thundersticks and chanted for Dean. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee introduced the governor to raucous applause and he gave an extremely enthusiastic speech. Everyone got pumped up, drove back, slept for two or three hours, then went back to work.

Nail, Meet Coffin

The week that followed was a blur. I held house meetings in most of my towns preparing for election day. They felt like Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. A small group would gather together, I would show a short introductory video, we would talk about why we each liked Dean, and then we would nail down our plans for January 27.

The campaign rented out another building for the last five days to coordinate the scores of volunteers who poured into Concord. We sent them out to canvass, do viz,

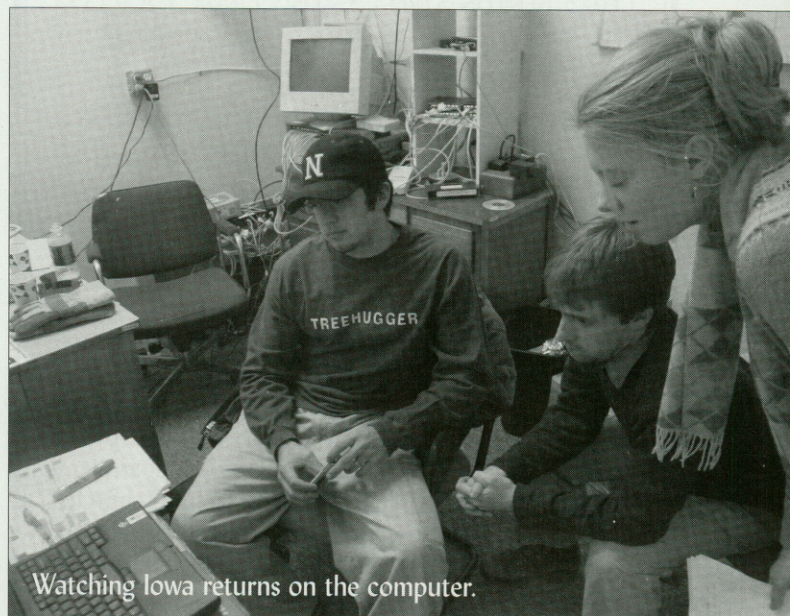
run “lit drops” (leave appealing pro-Dean pamphlets on doorsteps), and make phone calls in the evenings.

Finally the big day arrived. I felt a little guilty because my job was to act as a go-between for all my towns and the district organizer. My contacts in each town called me every few hours to let me know how many of our supporters had gone to the polls, then I entered the numbers into my computer. Everybody around the state was doing it so we could monitor turnout throughout the day.

My partner and I basically sat around our house all day talking on the phone and watching TV while most other volunteers were out in the cold. The midday polls showed a close race. As the time crept closer to 7 p.m. (when the polls closed), the staff got crazier. With about an hour to go, people went totally insane. We were given instructions to go out and “blind pull” people, meaning drive up to random houses, see if the residents had voted, and, if not, determine whether they would vote for Dean.

There were even some sketchy suggestions that interns like me—a one-month resident of New Hampshire—should try to grab a ballot and vote. I demurred. The word from above was that the race was supertight and any little effort could swing it.

Unfortunately, that was not true. Kerry had garnered 38.4 percent and we had only 26.5. Our supporters had turned out, but our campaign had underestimated the turnout (which was very high) and the undecideds had



*"My reason nourishes my faith and my faith my reason."
—Norman Cousins*

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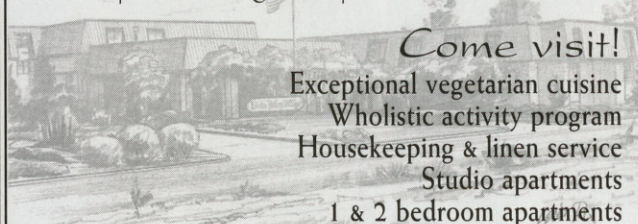
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broken toward Kerry. Of my eight towns, Danbury, Warner, and Bradford voted for Dean and the rest went for Kerry.

We packed up and headed down to an auditorium in Manchester, New Hampshire, for an event planned to be a victory rally. Dean gave a good speech, a hopeful speech, but we all knew it was over. The crowd was lively in a "thanks for everything" kind of way. The band we loved was breaking up. And that was the last time I saw Howard Dean speak in person.

Afterward, Dean's Concord staff went outside and couldn't really agree on what to do to memorialize the occasion, so Justin and I just drove back to New Haven and our law school lives.

Making Sense

Looking back on the campaign, I can see that a lot of things went wrong—almost all of them in Iowa. But even in New Hampshire, we had our share of problems. One of my friends in Concord had a bad habit of over-analogizing everything, but he came up with a good metaphor for our efforts in New Hampshire.

Basically, for months we had been working very hard to collect drops of water and keep these drops securely in our cup. Then Iowa had happened and it was like someone had dumped a big pitcher of water all over us. The Dean campaign always thought that it would win Iowa and then sweep all the way through the rest of the primaries. That's exactly what happened, just not to our candidate.

When you think about it, it's truly phenomenal how a few thousand Iowans can shift the shape of the country so immensely. It's also disillusioning how much impact the media has on New Hampshire currently, a place where retail politics used to reign. Our ground operation was solid, but it couldn't compare to the twenty-four-hour cable news and shallow horse-race reporting.

I'm still convinced that Governor Dean was the best candidate in 2004 and I have no regrets spending that time in New Hampshire. My experience was fantastic. And there's value in working for a loser, right? When the United States is at such a precipitous juncture, it's imperative that Christians get involved.

For people walking humbly with our Lord, electoral politics provides myriad opportunities to do justice and love mercy.

Nathan Blake is a second-year law student at Yale University.

“Just War” Theory and the Christian

Two Reviews of Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Just War Against Terror: The Burden of American Power in a Violent World* (New York, Basic Books, 2003).

A Flawed, Misleading Analysis

By Douglas Morgan

In *Just War Against Terror*, Jean Bethke Elshtain bases her appeal for American Christians to support their government’s war against terrorism on the venerable and honorable tradition of “just war” reasoning. In a lively and succinct style, the book showcases the process of appropriating that just war heritage, developed during the medieval centuries to regulate the running of a Christian empire, as an instrument for Christian moral perspective on running the American republic. Serious reservations emerge about the adequacy of that process when considered in the light of the earliest sources of the Christian faith.

Elshtain’s polemic expands on (and includes as an appendix) the statement “What We’re Fighting For” (WWFF), signed in February 2002 by sixty scholars and public policy experts and directed against critics of the Bush administration’s militant approach to the struggle against terrorism. WWFF affirms five foundational principles about human rights and religious freedom, the last of which states: “Killing in the name of God is contrary to faith in God and is the greatest betrayal of the universality of religious faith.”

Elshtain and her cosignatories do not view the military action they endorse as “killing in the name of God,” presumably because Western democracies have secularized the state, freeing it from ecclesiastical control. As a Christian interested in what it means to live in congruence with the good news about the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God proclaimed in the New Testament, trying to sort out what citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:20) means for living on earth, I don’t find the distinction between killing for God and killing for American values finally persuasive.

It is unconvincing, first, because Christians who support the project of American world hegemony retain a

profound moral and spiritual bond with the nation, notwithstanding formal separation of church and state. WWFF expresses this point quite explicitly, observing that though we have a secular state, “we are by far the Western world’s most religious society—a society whose citizens pledge allegiance to ‘one nation under God.’” Separation of church and state frees religion from state control, which in turn causes “government itself to draw legitimacy from, and operate under, a larger moral canopy that is not of its own making” (187–88).

In view of the monstrous and insidious threat posed by international terrorism, human freedom and dignity need a powerful guarantor, says Elshtain, and only the United States has “the power and (we hope) the will to play this role” (167). To protect the values that matter most from the evil that threatens most, American Christians must rely upon and support American military power, thus providing the legitimizing “moral canopy” (143–44; 166–73).

Elshtain’s approach moves beyond the model of direct Christian empire symbolized by Constantine, and also beyond the Reformation pattern of territorial rulers establishing their choice among the various

versions of the faith in the now-divided Christendom (neo-Constantinianism). However, it manifests what John Howard Yoder called “neo-neo Constantinianism.” The rhetoric of the current administration bears out more powerfully than ever Yoder’s observation that “American patriotism remains highly religious.... Moral identification of church with nation remains despite institutional separation. In fact, forms of institutional interlocking develop which partly deny the theory of separation (chaplaincies, tax exemptions)” (*The Priestly Kingdom*, 142). To declare a war “just” through a process of Christian moral discernment confers upon it sacred legitimacy even if fought in the name of democratic values rather than Christianity as such.

Moreover, although she seeks to affirm moderate, democracy-compatible Muslims, Elshstain’s call to arms is on behalf of Western democratic institutions—built on the Christian distinction between church and state—struggling against the fusion of religion and sword she sees at the core of the Islamic tradition. In other words, the war on terror is a clash of civilizations. She quotes Andrew Sullivan’s delineation of the stakes in the struggle. As with Nazism and communism, writes Sullivan, we are faced with “yet another battle against a religion that is succumbing to the temptation Jesus refused in the desert—to rule by force.” How to take cognizance of this reality “without descending into a religious war mentality” is a question Elshstain raises but never clearly answers (139–40).

“Mohammed was his own Constantine,” she observes disapprovingly (159). My question is, When Christians bless the military crusade for liberal democracy/American hegemony, have they not allied with a new Constantine? Have they not succumbed to the temptation in the desert, thereby surrendering one of the most crucial distinctions between their faith and that of Islam?

Second, Elshstain’s use of the laudable distinction between church and state that developed in Western Christendom opens the way to fragmentation and constriction of Christian identity and loyalty. She asserts that, in contrast to the Islamic Shari’a, Christianity “never presented a comprehensive, all-encompassing law good for all societies and covering every aspect of human existence” (29).

Although partially true in some respects, the statement is also seriously misleading. It implies that the gospel is irrelevant to some aspects of human existence, in which the guidance of Christians is ceded to an autonomous realm of “civil law.” The apostolic communities glimpsed in the New Testament, along with

Christian movements throughout history inspired by the apostolic ideal, embodied a wholistic faithfulness to the way of Christ determinative of economic practices, juridical functions, and societal relationships (see, for example, Acts 4:32–37; Acts 6:1–6, 1 Cor. 6:1–11; 11:17–22; Eph. 2:11–22; 2 Thess. 3:10–12).

Duke University scholar Richard Hays writes that the New Testament presents the church as “a counter-cultural community of discipleship ... called to embody an alternative order that stands as a sign of God’s redemptive purposes in the world,” and as such is a “concrete social manifestation” (*The Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 196). Opting out of the system of empire building through violence and coexisting with the dominant order rather than trying to smash it did not make the church any less a concrete political alternative or mean that it had no “law” to guide members concerning participation in the empire’s military agenda.

Wherever it ends up, it seems to me that Christian moral reasoning has to start with and prioritize the question of what it means to be the people of God constituted in accordance with the New Testament witness and not with short-term calculations about protection of American interests or even the lives of the “innocent” (which usually involves protection of only some innocents, selected along national, tribal, or religious lines).

That conviction lies behind the third major reason why I think *Just War Against Terror* fails to offer satisfactory guidance to American Christians. It makes inadequate use of the resources of the New Testament and the pre-Constantinian Christian movement, instead drawing theological light primarily from the wisdom of great thinkers from later periods such as Saint Augustine, Paul Tillich, and Reinhold Niebuhr.

For Elshstain, Jesus’ teachings aren’t of much use to Christians facing the complex challenges of today’s world. He “preached an ethic for the end of time” that directed his disciples “away from temporal pursuits.” Not only that, “Christ’s ethic seems unattainable in principle, save by the few saints among us” (99–100). She also tells us that “Jesus preached no doctrine of universal benevolence” (100). Some distinction must exist to explain why “love your neighbor as yourself” and “love your enemies” do not add up to a doctrine of universal benevolence, but we are not given it.

One gospel passage does receive considerable weight in Elshstain’s reasoning: “Render unto Caesar that which it Caesar’s, and unto God that which is

God's" (Luke 20:24–25). However, she foregoes serious analysis of this cryptic saying in historical and literary context, instead simply invoking it repeatedly as proof that Jesus affirmed a wide gulf between church and state (for instance, 28–30, 159). Other resources—such as Augustine, Luther, and liberal democratic theory—determine what is to be placed on either side of the gulf.

Elshtain also has little use for pre-Constantinian Christian voices in the second and third centuries, and badly misleads the reader concerning the evidence from this era. She contends that the claim that Christianity was a pacifist movement during its first three centuries and subsequently fell away from its nonviolent origins "does not bear up under close scrutiny." In support of this contention, she offers only a dismissal of Tertullian and Origen as "outside the Christian mainstream," after which she immediately points the reader to the more "powerful" and "more mainstream" teachings of Saint Augustine, Saint Ambrose, and Saint Thomas Aquinas (51).

Of course, all of these teachers come after the first three centuries of Christianity and the Constantinian revolution—a fact that a reader uninformed or rusty

on church history would be forgiven for overlooking. Without definite knowledge of when these men lived, the natural assumption would be that the whole paragraph deals with the first three centuries.

Although there is evidence of some scattered Christian participation in the military beginning in the late second century, prior to Constantine "all of the outstanding writers of the East and West repudiated participation in warfare for Christians" (Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace*, 68–73). In other words, Elshtain's "mainstream" did not exist before the Constantinian revolution.

To be strong and credible, a Christian case for adapting the just war heritage to American democracy must address, much more effectively than Elshtain has, the issues of sacred legitimization of democracy, the wholistic, communal character of Christian ethics, and the pre-Constantinian witness. I must leave to other respondents analysis of Elshtain's application of just war principles to the contemporary situation.

Douglas Morgan chairs the Department of History and Political Science at Columbia Union College.

A Lucid, Closely Reasoned Book

By David A. Pendleton

Jean Bethke Elshtain explains how one prominent Christian tradition understands the use of force by first providing the context for understanding just war doctrine. There is a spectrum of perspectives with respect to war that can be grouped into four schools of thought (56).

Realism holds that politics is about power. War, being merely politics by another means, is also about power. Hence pragmatic concerns always override moral analysis or at least assume the morality of exercising power.

Holy war is the belief that religious faith authorizes and compels killing of certain others. This is associated with some extreme forms of Islam.

The pacifist holds peace as above all other values. This is the categorical position that use of force is never justified and is therefore always morally wrong.

Fourth, and finally, there is the just war position. *Justice* is seen as the reigning word. This is the long-standing tradition going back to Augustine. Peace is a goal of the civil society. Yet just war recognizes that peace at any cost may be a peace purchased at the price of injustice—or at least inaction in the light of injustice perpetrated by others against third parties.

Elshtain, in classic just war fashion, argues that as long as there are those who would engage in violence against innocents, the strong must be prepared to protect the innocent.

The first criterion of a just war, then, is that war be entered into to prevent harm to the innocent. Other criteria include having legitimate authority, right intentions, and war as a response to a specific act of aggression against one's own people or an innocent third party; and war as a last resort (57-58). There must also be a reasonable chance of success. Even if all these criteria are met, they only justify entering war (*jus ad bellum*). Once engaged in war, one must conduct a war considering proportionality and with a clear distinction between combatants and non-combatants (*jus in bello*).

The last set of criteria contrasts holy war with just war theorists. Osama bin Laden does not discriminate between military personnel and civilian women and children. "For holy warriors or crusaders, the occasion for war is the simple intention to spread their gospel, whether political or religious, through violence, whenever or wherever possible, against the infidels. For just warriors, both aims and means are limited, even if one has been grievously harmed" (58).

Elshtain writes an unapologetic apologetic and does not seek to update just war doctrine. Morality does not change—despite advances in warfare technology.

Elshtain confronts difficult moral problems and militants of the peace movement. They have cast a false choice—peace or war—and she calls them on it. "Looking the other way is irresponsibility cloaked in Christian terms," she writes, commenting on Paul Tillich's outspoken support for military action against the Nazis. "Peace is a good, and so is justice, but neither is an absolute good. Neither automatically trumps the other" (53).

Peace has rarely been achieved because reasonable minds negotiated a blessed coexistence. Rather, one party ceased aggression because it was compelled by force to do so, à la Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany. Pacifism assumes aggression can end on its own absent a countervailing use of force. History demonstrates the falsity of that assumption.

Just war tradition recognizes that "justice and force are not mutually incompatible" (55). It does not overstate the case by claiming war is a social good; rather, it makes the more limited claim that war "may be better than the alternative" (57).

Elshtain quotes Clausewitz's famous description of "the fog of war." She argues, "As with waging war, the most certain thing about governing is its uncertainty. It is the armchair critics commenting from the sidelines who think the choices are absolutely clear.... The

just, or justified, war tradition recognizes this difference by giving us an account of comparative, not absolute, justice" (53).

The nuanced, case-by-case approach to war rather than the categorical approaches of holy war or pacifism is going to be more difficult to implement.

Elshtain argues hard but evenhandedly for her position. She could easily quote the sloganeering of protestors. But to do so would be unfair. The simple-mindedness of "Wage peace, not war" or "Drop Bush not bombs" reveals the sincerity but superficiality of some pacifists. Instead, Elshtain cites a diverse and representative spectrum of writers who hold to the pacifist position.

Yet it is one thing for me to "turn the other cheek." It is another for me to turn the cheeks of someone else's children targeted by terrorists. The only reason why pacifist Americans can freely express such ideas under our First Amendment is because police and soldiers stand ready to use force to defend them against those like bin Laden. There is nothing we can do as Americans to exempt us from the indictment of being "infidels." Our very commitment to a religiously free and politically tolerant society condemns us to death in the eyes of a bin Laden.

Some questions arise throughout the book. For example, Reinhold Niebuhr and Tillich spoke in favor of the use of force—but in a very different war. I think Elshtain's marshaling of their thought in support of her position is defensible, yet our circumstances today against terrorism are less black and white than during America's fight against uniformed border-violating Nazis in the last century.

The biblical basis for just war doctrine is another question. It arises with Augustine, years after Christ and after the close of the canon. Does *Sola Scriptura* disqualify just war as unbiblical?

As a Trinitarian, I am not terribly concerned that "Trinity" does not appear in the biblical text. I do not doubt that belief simply because of the timing of its development in Christian history. Inherent need not be expressed.

Elshtain has written with a lucid hand and a charitable tone a closely reasoned book I recommend to those who honestly wrestle with how Christians are to relate to war.

David A. Pendleton is an attorney, Seventh-day Adventist minister, and member of the Hawaii House of Representatives.

NOTEWORTHY *Continued from page 11*
ings of science is not possible, we do not allow science a privileged position in which it automatically determines the outcome. Rather, we recognize that it is not justifiable to hold clear teachings of Scripture hostage to current scientific interpretations of data.

6. We recognize that there are different theological interpretations among us regarding Genesis 1–11. In view of the various interpretations we sensed a high degree of concern that those involved in the Seventh-day Adventist teaching ministry conduct their work ethically and with integrity—by standards of their profession, the teachings of Scripture, and the basic understanding held by the body of believers. Since Seventh-day Adventists recognize their comprehension of truth is a growing experience, there is an ever-present need to continue the study of Scripture, theology, and science in order that the truths we hold constitute a living faith able to address the theories and philosophies of the day.

7. We appreciate and endorse the significant value of ongoing international and interdisciplinary dialog among Seventh-day Adventist theologians, scientists, educators, and administrators.

Affirmations

As a result of the two international conferences and the seven division conferences, the Organizing Committee reports the following affirmations:

1. We affirm the primacy of Scripture in the Seventh-day Adventist understanding of origins.

2. We affirm the historic Seventh-day Adventist understanding of Genesis 1 that life on earth was created in six literal days and is of recent origin.

3. We affirm the biblical account of the Fall resulting in death and evil.

4. We affirm the biblical account of a catastrophic Flood, an act of God's judgment that affected the whole planet, as an important key to understanding earth history.

5. We affirm that our limited understanding of origins calls for humility and that further exploration into these questions brings us closer to deep and wonderful mysteries.

6. We affirm the interlocking nature of the doctrine of creation with other Seventh-day Adventist doctrines.

7. We affirm that in spite of its fallenness nature is a witness to the Creator.

8. We affirm Seventh-day Adventist scientists in their endeavors to understand the Creator's handiwork through the methodologies of their disciplines.

9. We affirm Seventh-day Adventist theologians in their efforts to explore and articulate the content of revelation.

10. We affirm Seventh-day Adventist educators in their pivotal ministry to the children and youth of the Church.

11. We affirm that the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church identified in Revelation 14:6, 7 includes a call to worship God as Creator of all.

Recommendations

The Organizing Committee for the International Faith and Science Conferences recommends that:

1. In order to address what some interpret as a lack of clarity in Fundamental Belief #6 the historic Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the Genesis

narrative be affirmed more explicitly.

2. Church leaders at all levels be encouraged to assess and monitor the effectiveness with which denominational systems and programs succeed in preparing young people, including those attending non-Adventist schools, with a biblical understanding of origins and an awareness of the challenges they may face in respect to this understanding.

3. Increased opportunity be provided for interdisciplinary dialog and research, in a safe environment, among Seventh-day Adventist scholars from around the world.

Conclusion

The Bible opens with the story of creation; the Bible closes with the story of re-creation. All that was lost by the Fall of our first parents is restored. The One who made all things by the Word of His mouth at the beginning brings the long struggle with sin, evil, and death to a triumphant and glorious conclusion. He is the One who dwelt among us and died in our stead on Calvary. As the heavenly beings sang for joy at the first creation, so the redeemed from earth proclaim: "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created... Worthy is the Lamb who was slain" (Rev 4:11; 5:12 NKJV).

Notes

1. East-Central Africa Division, Euro-Africa Division, North American Division, South Pacific Division, Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, Southern Asia Division, West-Central Africa Division.

Source: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Miracles and the Bible

The three views of miracles in the spring 2004 issue (Brian Bull and Fritz Guy, “Then a Miracle Occurs”) invite comment and critique. Bull and Guy make a strong case for why our generation, in an age of science, cannot take at face value Old Testament accounts of certain events as due to God’s action and therefore supernatural. However, they seem not to apply the same reasoning to certain New Testament miracles such as the incarnation and resurrection of Christ.

If Old Testament authors were mistaken in attributing miraculous events to God’s action (a rather bold idea given Adventist tradition regarding inspiration of Scripture) what are the chances that New Testament authors were mistaken about the supernatural events that undergird the foundational Christian beliefs? Did not New Testament authors, like Old Testament ones, default to miraculous explanations? What about the “lesser miracles” of Christ’s ministry, such as calling forth Lazarus and making wine from water?

The authors assure us that though Old Testament authors were mistaken about attributing God’s action in certain miraculous events they were correct about God creating us, loving us, and saving us. This knowledge on their part is itself regarded as miraculous—a miracle we

are urged to duplicate. This admonition behooves us to examine more closely the difference between knowledge and belief and how one should interpret Scripture.

*Benton Stidd
Ellettsville, Ind.*

Brian Bull and Fritz Guy respond:

Benton Stidd seems to have misunderstood our article. We believe that miracles occurred in both Old and New Testament times, and that they still occur today. “Then A Miracle Occurs” is not about miracles per se, but about the vast—and in certain respects unbridgeable—gulf between the biblical perspective and ours today.

Those who lived in biblical times defaulted to a supernatural explanation for any event in the natural world that puzzled them. They had to. They knew of only two causative agents, humans and God—so if humans didn’t do it, God did. They had no other conceptual categories to use. This default to the supernatural did, however, have its distinctions. There were God’s usual acts (like bringing rain or hail), as well as God’s unusual acts (what we would call miracles).

Today we conceive of a wider array of causative agents. We ascribe events to God (miracle), to humans (choice), to nature (natural law), and to randomness (chance). Either or both of these last two concepts shape our default explana-

tion for any event in the natural world that puzzles us. We default to the natural. This does not exclude the possibility of miracle, but we require that humans, natural law, and chance be ruled out before we accept a claim that a miracle has actually occurred. So to us, trying to use miracle to get out of a sticky spot in explaining a natural event is funny. To them it would have been “business as usual.”

It is psychologically impossible for us to adopt the ancient perspective. This would require erasing from our minds all of our knowledge of the workings of the natural world. Too often, when reading the Bible we assume (unconsciously) that its writers shared our perspective—our understanding of the realm of “natural law.” For three hundred years this unrecognized assumption has largely fueled the controversy between faith and science.

The Slipped “Not”

In George Saxon’s article “Rating the Creation and the Big Bang” (summer 2004), the word *not* somehow slipped from one sentence to another, rendering both nonsensical. In the sentence “in which God stated that humans could not live forever—even in sin—by eating from the Tree of Life,” the *not* should be omitted, and in the sentence “even without sin their bodies would have deteriorated had they continued to eat from it,” the

word *not* should precede “continued.”
Little words can make a difference!

Richard S. Hughes
Placerville, Calif.

The editors regret this error. A corrected version of the article can be found at Spectrum's Web site, <www.spectrum-magazine.org>.

Faith and Science

Thank you for publishing the fine commentary on the Faith and Science Conference (online). Now, again, it seems, we might do well to quit ignoring the realities of physics in our discussion of the meaning of the six days of creation as told in the Bible.

How can we insist on an earth-bound system for measuring time when at the beginning of creation, as told in the Bible, (1) there was apparently no solar system (quite likely meaning no earth as well); (2) there were no humans; and (3) our present system of measuring time depends on counting the number of revolutions the earth makes on its axis, relative to the completion of one trip about the sun.

We do well to remember that God created time along with space and all that lies within it. We also do well to apply the laws of physics (God created them, too) to the whole idea of creation, recalling that God may very well have given us six of his literal (yes, twenty-four of his hours) days, from his frame of reference, not our earth-bound frame of reference.

Truth has no need to fear close scrutiny by theologians or scientists. Could God be so cruel as to give us irreconcilably conflicting sets of information, each so fundamental as to be totally intolerant of change, so that all derivative beliefs would simply collapse

if one tiny piece of our understanding of either truth is found to be incorrect?

Don't we have some tantalizing concepts to consider that might point toward reconciliation? Theologians, scientists, and fellow travelers alike—we all do well to recall God's many admonitions through the prophets to avoid arrogance, lest it destroy us.

Don Oelrich
Sumner, Wash.

Adventists and the Arts

What a delight to find an article focused on art-based experiences (Daniel Reynaud, “Toward an Adventist Aesthetic for the Arts,” summer 2004). Reynaud plunges into the field of aesthetic philosophy and theology with singular bravado. His goal is seemingly noble and straightforward: to “define a sound Adventist philosophical base for the arts”—an act, he reassures the reader, that would allow arts to assume a rightfully more privileged place in the lives of Seventh-day Adventists.

Reynaud deserves hearty congratulations for tackling this issue and broadening our conversation. He brings up many interesting observations and speaks with passion regarding a broad range of art-based experiences. Unfortunately, he underestimates the challenge that awaits and succeeds neither in providing a “sound Adventist philosophical base for the arts,” nor in proving that the logic behind the art-focused General Conference prescriptive is specious.

Reynaud fails to provide a sound Adventist philosophical base for the arts for multiple reasons, including the following three: (1) he does not employ a coherent conception of art; (2) he does not acknowledge the

diversity and range of art-based experiences available to Christians; and (3) he only partially embraces the implications that cultural diversity has for the issue of tastes within our church.

Employment of a lucid definition of art is a must for any “sound” philosophy in this area. Unfortunately, Reynaud offers multiple and largely incompatible descriptions of art's purpose. He writes that art isn't properly judged for epistemological reasons. The implication of his assertion is clear: it is inappropriate for individuals to bring pointed theological or epistemological concerns to an art-centered experience. However, he asserts elsewhere that art “exists to testify to his [God's] beauty and wonder” (53) and “provides a powerful window into the heart and soul of a society” (50).

Although he makes much of the idea that art is inexorably linked to God's “beauty,” Reynaud goes on to clarify that art can and sometimes should expose not only beauty but also ugliness. Problems arise when he acknowledges that art cannot only portray evil of the type that simply serves to illuminate good, but can also have a harmful impact on the perceiver. And even as he suggests this increased range for the aesthetic experience (harmful as well as uplifting), he clarifies that “God is the author of all aesthetics” (54), suggesting nothing less than that God is the author of not only ameliorative but also pernicious art-based experiences.

There are other problems with Reynaud's conception of art. His contention that art is more appropriately tied to the “heart” rather than the “head” (53) raises complicating issues that are not resolved. Additionally, he fails to clarify just where the dividing line is between secular art and nonart. Ultimately, the reader is left quite puzzled with what Reynaud believes

qualifies as art and what doesn't.

Reynaud too often dismisses the diversity and range of the Christian experience, and thus leaves his readers confused as to how an "Adventist" aesthetic relates to or differs from other Christian aesthetics, or non-Christian aesthetics for that matter. Christianity has always harbored a diversity of attitudes toward human creativity and a plethora of tastes that makes any attempt to pinpoint a "Christian tendency" vis-à-vis the arts highly problematic. (Consider the contrast between Kierkegaard's hostile suspicion of the arts and the attitude toward the arts by Pope Gregory I, Martin Luther, or the middle-aged Tolstoy!).

Additionally, Reynaud's implication that a greater proportion of modern-day Christians than non-Christians ignore or reject the arts (51) seems, to put it simply, far-fetched. That too few in contemporary society in general give marked attention to the arts seems a more defensible contention.

Reynaud's argument fails as well because he seeks to affirm a singular Adventist aesthetic even while he partially acknowledges that there may be enough diversity of culture within the Church to make a singular aesthetic unfeasible. Too much in passing, he writes near the end of his article that "one problem for Christians, particularly from a fundamentalist tradition, is that art involves taste" (54). But the issue of taste is not just relevant to a discussion of aesthetics, it is key. Plural cultures guarantee something enormously problematic for an organization that would seek uniformity in aesthetic values among peoples from various cultures: conflicting good tastes.

Reynaud not only fails to provide a "sound Adventist philosophical base for the arts," he does not show how the logic behind the art-focused General Conference prescriptive is specious. His

illumination of the "puritan" culture that nurtured our church from its earliest years is interesting. But he does not go further and acknowledge the integrity of the link between that culture, our church's traditional teachings, and the actions of our leadership.

Our church's traditional leadership has not been anti-art as much as it has been anti-Devil. From Ellen White onward, leading voices in our church have supported the notion that the great deluder pays unceasing attention to opportunities for hateful mischief. The fact that some of our more conservative members have been notably and energetically engaged with or otherwise supportive of mainstream and inoffensive art over the decades—one thinks of gifted Adventist classical musicians or visual artists passionately dedicated to relatively mainstream art—does not detract from this point.

None of those conservative members, as far as I know, have suggested that the prince of darkness abstains from evildoing simply because an individual is in the midst of an experience that has aesthetic qualities. Strongly believing that the prince of evil would try to trick people into damnation at every step, the leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has fully met its responsibilities and taken measured and logical action: in this case, working especially hard to help church members remain focused on evangelical concerns and remain wary of potentially pernicious artworks.

To put it simply, Reynaud's suggestion that the art-focused actions (or devaluing of art) by our church's leadership are short-sighted or otherwise inappropriate is, ultimately, difficult to accept when he does not simultaneously distance himself from that which gives direct support to those actions: our church's traditional

teachings and core values. His effort to affirm (or at least not condemn) those teachings and values while also decrying the actions that spring from them makes for difficult reading.

As far as I can tell, individuals, Reynaud included, cannot maintain a passionate and prolonged regard for a broad range of art-centered experiences (including some traditionally condemned by our church leadership) unless they are ultimately in some disagreement with traditional and conservative Seventh-day Adventist views on such fundamental issues as the following: the reality and identity of Satan; what constitutes and facilitates salvation; the significance and appropriateness of traditional evangelism; what constitutes sin; and so forth. But here problems emerge, for the act of revealing movement away from traditional views on such fundamental issues as these is potentially risky for those employed by the Church.

How might individuals who value their identity as Seventh-day Adventists and who deeply value a wide variety of art-based experiences (including some traditionally condemned by our church's leadership) best argue for greater promotion of those experiences within the Adventist Church? Reynaud has provided a partial answer. But the work required to complete that answer is substantial, and difficult.

Those who follow in Reynaud's footsteps should know that they will likely be unable to define a sound philosophy of art and an aesthetic that gives greater importance to a broader range of art-centered experiences (as opposed to simply giving more room for consideration of certain iconic and traditional artworks) until they at least bring the following interrelated understandings to their argument: (1) a coherent conception of what art is; (2) a broad understanding of the multiple

ways in which art-based experiences relate to or impact individual Christians; and (3) an understanding of the implications of the diversity of cultures and tastes within the Adventist Church.

Perhaps most importantly, though, they will need to come to the argument claiming a theological framework that differs from that which has long inspired church leaders to maintain a largely singular focus on evangelical concerns and, where art is concerned, prescribe desirable experiences.

Of course as progress in this journey is made, the involved philosophers, theologians, psychologists, art lovers, and the like will note that they are claiming not the Adventist aesthetic but an aesthetic for Adventists like them.

*Michael Stepniak
Takoma Park, Md., and
Cambridge, Mass.*

Daniel Reynaud responds:

I am so pleased that Michael Stepniak's comments call for an Adventist dialogue to help refine an aesthetic for Adventists. I hope that I am not the only one so moved.

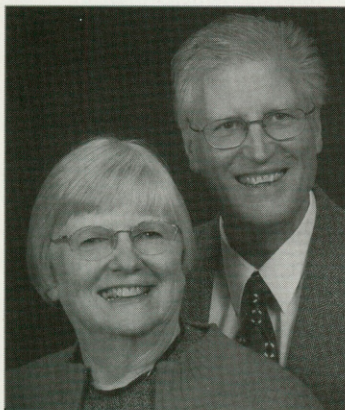
Stepniak rightly challenges me to find a coherent conception of art. As an amateur in arts (as someone who participates purely for pleasure, rather than adopting a disciplined professional attitude), I used unacceptably loose definitions. However, I suspect that the elusive quality of aesthetics will make it harder to define than the more binary disciplines of epistemology or metaphysics—but it is certainly a task worth pursuing.

I would like to clarify some specific issues. I categorically deny that “it is inappropriate for individuals to bring pointed theological or epistemological concerns to an art-centered

experience.” In fact, I deny it in the very paragraph that Stepniak refers to. What I assert is that aesthetics and epistemology overlap, but must not be confused with each other. Typically, evangelical Christians have made aesthetics a servant of epistemology and have denied it its proper place as a separate manifestation of the character of God.

Secondly, Stepniak assumes that I blame God for “pernicious art-based experiences” because he is the author of all aesthetics. Interesting. God is also the author of all nature, but I do not hold him responsible for hurricanes, shark attacks, and venomous snakes.

Stepniak also points to an apparent dismissal of the diversity of Christian aesthetic experiences. My article was perhaps a little too reliant on Franky Shaeffer's old and polemic *Addicted to Mediocrity*, but I feel that many of his



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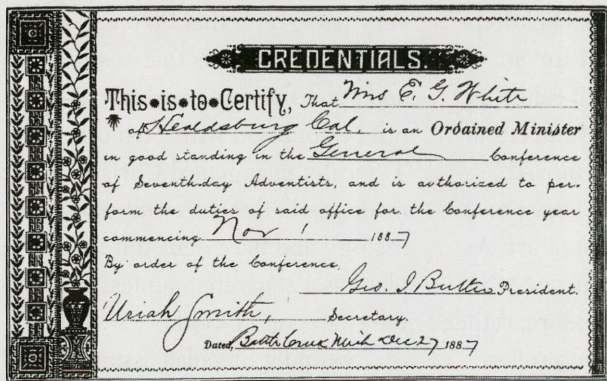
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observations are still relevant to evangelical Christianity and the anemic, sentimental "art" on sale in many Christian bookshops.

Furthermore, I feel he misunderstands my statement on Christian noninvolvement in the arts. My point wasn't that secular people are more art oriented than Christians; it was that Christianity, once a leader in artistic development, appears to have abandoned aesthetic leadership to the secular world.

I also do not share Stepniak's fears for my ability to support both the Church and aesthetics. I have little dispute with Adventist theology, as far as it goes. Indeed, I hold myself to be in the center of the best Adventist tradition of seeking to experience the fullness of God's intentions for us. Our denomination has done a magnificent job in many areas, adding richness to the gospel as previously understood.

What I mourn isn't what we have, but what we lack. I feel we have yet to do in aesthetics the same good work that we have done in epistemology. My argument is that God is also an aesthetic being, and we are in his image. To ignore it is to overlook part of the image of God. The central pillar of my case is that aesthetics needs its own approach, rather than merely transferring (inappropriate)

epistemological processes to aesthetic concerns.

I conclude by thanking Stepniak for making me think about these issues again, and I affirm his three-point challenge at the end of his response. Are there others in the Church who will take up his challenge and engage in a broad dialogue so that we can be as rich in aesthetic sensibility as we are in areas of our traditional strengths?

Spiritual Narcissism

Fundamental Belief number 28: Where did that come from? (*Spectrum*, summer 2004).

Webster's dictionary defines transcendental meditation as "a meditation technique in which mind is released from tension through use of a mantra, creating a feeling of calm and spiritual well-being."

All of a sudden it has become the duty of our church to brand and "exclude" someone else's spiritual practice as evil and "incompatible" with true religion?

Our spiritual narcissism is indeed overwhelming! What towering religious egos we have! Who are we to judge another's spiritual practice or what they find to be personally helpful and meaningful?

*Douglas Cooper
Angwin, Calif.*

Friendship with A Purpose

“You are my friends.” —*Jesus, in the Gospel of John*

The graduate students who invented the Association of Adventist Forums were friends. Although they were busy with preparation for their professions, they knew that a job isn't everything: you want to make a life, not just a living. So in 1960s New England they got together.

The founders shared a heritage and an enthusiasm for conversation. Because they were Adventists, they lived for more than breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and believed you could make a difference. Because they loved conversation, and were experienced in it, they knew that you forge ahead in understanding, or decline; knew that whether you're talking sports, politics, or faith, staying put means getting dumber. “They must upward still and onward / Who would keep abreast of truth.”

Some of the best friendships and best conversations in all of Adventism flourish because of those founders. They acted on their vision—started a journal to sharpen their thoughts and give them long life; established discussion circles around the world; built a network of contributors to assist with the cost.

For many in the Church's older strongholds—the United States, Europe, and Australia—friendships and conversations linked with the Association of Adventist Forums keep their connection with the Adventist community alive. From the best of these friendships and conversations, blueprints for a better Adventism—the ideal of equality for women comes to mind—have taken shape and made a difference.

Those of us who bear leadership responsibility for the Association of Adventist Forums know well what a treasure we have inherited. But we know, too, that everything good and

beautiful, as Thornton Wilder said, “stands always on the razor edge of danger, and must be fought for.”

So we want to protect the treasure. More than that, we want to increase it. We've begun work, in fact, on a strategy for doing so. But the most basic issue—and we're going back to the basics—concerns our mission and vision. Members of the Association Board have agreed, so far, that the mission is about creating conversation and community. Consensus regarding nuance—precise mission statement language—lies ahead of us. And as for vision—what exactly we want, by increasing the treasure, to become—consensus lies ahead regarding that, as well. We plan, in fact, to talk about all this with many of you, and also with people who do not subscribe to *Spectrum* or participate in the conversations.

But the bedrock is the founders' dream. It is friendship with a purpose and conversation that makes a difference, what Jesus had in mind, or so I imagine, when he called his disciples “friends.” In any case, we won't stray from that dream, and we won't stop until more people in more places embrace it, and become our active partners.

This association intends, in a word, to *advance*. Like sunlight (so we hope) stealing inch by inch across the landscape of Adventism.

Charles Scriven, Chairman
Association of Adventist Forums
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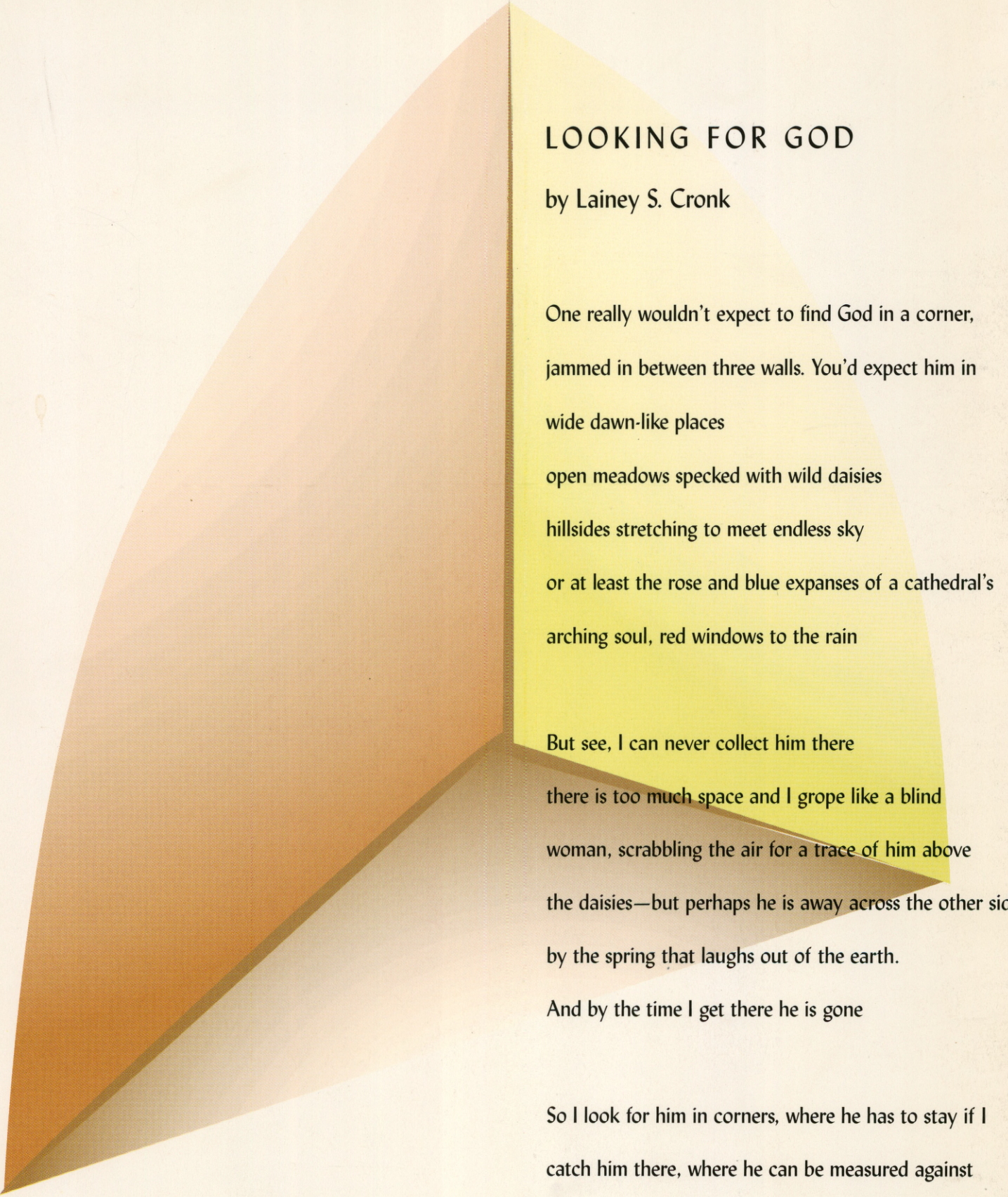
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LOOKING FOR GOD

by Lainey S. Cronk

One really wouldn't expect to find God in a corner,
jammed in between three walls. You'd expect him in
wide dawn-like places
open meadows specked with wild daisies
hillsides stretching to meet endless sky
or at least the rose and blue expanses of a cathedral's
arching soul, red windows to the rain

But see, I can never collect him there
there is too much space and I grope like a blind
woman, scrabbling the air for a trace of him above
the daisies—but perhaps he is away across the other side,
by the spring that laughs out of the earth.

And by the time I get there he is gone

So I look for him in corners, where he has to stay if I
catch him there, where he can be measured against
the plaster, where I can ask questions until he
answers. It makes much more sense, this

looking for God in the corners

Lainey S. Cronk graduated from Pacific Union College
in June 2004 with a bachelor's degree in English and currently
works in the college's Public Relations Department.