



*community through conversation*

# SPECTRUM

SINCE 1969

VOLUME 50 ISSUE 2 ■ 2022

[from Latin *historia*, from Greek: enquiry, from *historeîn* to narrate, from *histōr* judge]

[Middle English *histoire*, from Old French, from Latin *historia*, from Greek *historiā*, to inquire]

[learning or knowing by inquiry, history, derivative of *histōr* one who knows or sees]



community through conversation

# SPECTRUM

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## ABOUT SPECTRUM

*Spectrum* is a journal established in 1969 to encourage Seventh-day Adventist participation in the discussion of contemporary issues from a Christian viewpoint, to look without prejudice at all sides of a subject, to evaluate the merits of diverse views, and to foster intellectual and cultural growth. Although effort is made to ensure accurate scholarship and critical judgment, the statements of fact are the responsibility of contributors, and the views individual authors express are not necessarily those of the editorial staff as a whole or as individuals.

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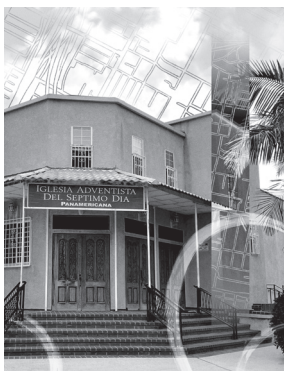
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## ABOUT THE COVER ART

This cover design explores the liminal spaces that exist in Adventism—both physical and spiritual. The past few pandemic-dominated years have altered longtime patterns of attendance and expectations around congregating and community. Is the future less clear and more open? This building, Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día—Panamericana, exists in a specific location, but also evokes the universal—a day, now, all, eternal—where humans bring their histories and create new stories together.



## ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST

A Latina graphic designer working in the entertainment industry in Los Angeles, California, Katie Aguilar graduated from Pacific Union College with a BFA in 2013.

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## CONTENTS



VOLUME 50 ISSUE 2

### Editorials

- 2 Some Changes Will Occur | BY ALEXANDER CARPENTER
- 3 Long-Distance Fun in 1975 — and a New Day Dawning | BY CHARLES SCRIVEN
- 6 There's Always More to the Story | BY CARMEN LAU
- 7 Mourning Mariupol | BY SIGVE TONSTAD

### Scripture

- 8 The Irony of Orthodoxy | BY KENDRA HALOVIK VALENTINE
- 13 On a Street in Bucha | BY SIGVE TONSTAD

### Adventist Historia: InterSECTIONS + diVERGEncE in our personal/communal stories

- 16 The Family Legacy of George McCready Price | BY JAMES HAYWARD
- 29 The Truth That Matters | BY SIGVE TONSTAD
- 30 Arriving in Uganda | BY SARI FORDHAM
- 38 Beware of Snakes | BY SIGVE TONSTAD
- 40 Des Ford, Music, and Me | BY WAYNE JUDD
- 53 The Shame of Winning | BY SIGVE TONSTAD
- 54 Leadership and the Gift of Submission:  
Insights from Early Adventist Leaders | BY GILBERT M. VALENTINE
- 67 In the Book of Lord Acton | BY SIGVE TONSTAD
- 68 Wrestling With the Angel at Bull Run: The Story of Adventist History | BY JONATHAN BUTLER
- 80 The End of Grief | BY SIGVE TONSTAD

# Some CHANGES Will Occur

In my first editorial I quoted from *Spectrum's* inaugural editor from 1969. By 1975, the journal changed. It now looked more like a magazine and it was co-edited by Roy Branson and Charles Scriven. The “About This Issue” editorial, signed by The Board of Editors, states: “The appearance and contents of this issue should make it clear...that some changes will occur.” It went on to point out its new “sensitivity to the rhythms of Adventist organizational life” has led to a focus on the General Conference. But change went beyond a focus on church politics. It assured readers that, “while aiming still for the highest academic standards, SPECTRUM will be less a scholarly periodical and more a journal of thought, opinion and creative expression. Having established its seriousness of purpose, the journal will now try to put more zest and passion onto its pages.”

The piquancy persists. As you’ll sense (again?) in the “Des Ford, Music, and Me” excerpt from Wayne Judd’s newly published memoir, *In Motion: My Stories*, Adventism felt like it was a-changing’ in this era. While documenting—and sometimes—driving the evolution of Adventism, *Spectrum* changed with the times.

Branson and Scriven altered the still young organ to “publish more forms of creative expression than heretofore. Not only formal articles, but interviews, profiles, narratives, personal essays, visual art, and even (as we hope) new hymns by Adventist composers, will appear.” There are hymns in this issue thanks to Wayne Judd. Yes! *Those* infamous lyric rewrites that circulated too widely and led to

*Continued on page 4*



ALEXANDER CARPENTER is  
executive editor of *Spectrum*.

# Long-Distance Fun in 1975 —and a New Day Dawning

The first year Roy Branson taught at the seminary, students could feel a new day dawning. We were considering church mission in relation to political society, and it was like waking up. So far, we'd been schooled in personal and predictive religion: how to find acceptance with God, how to understand the end-time apocalyptic scenario. But Jesus now had *public* significance. We were starting to hope not just for heaven but also for earth—for healing and renewal on earth.

That was academic year 1967-68. A paper I wrote for Roy—it had to do with Christianity and war—became an essay in the first-ever issue of *Spectrum*. I was hooked on the new thinking he stood for, and it felt very much like an *Adventist* project. We were not abandoning our heritage but amending it.

I did not belong to *Spectrum's* founding circle. I did not know the players (but for Roy) and had barely set foot in Boston, where all things Adventist Forum were then centered. But after a year of ministerial internship in Idaho, and brief flirtation with formal study of philosophy, I became one of the original (associate) editors of *Insight* magazine. I had edited my college newspaper at Walla Walla, and published some feature writing. During the next four years I would learn lots more about the nuts and bolts of putting out a publication. Knowing now how *way leads on to way*, it seems

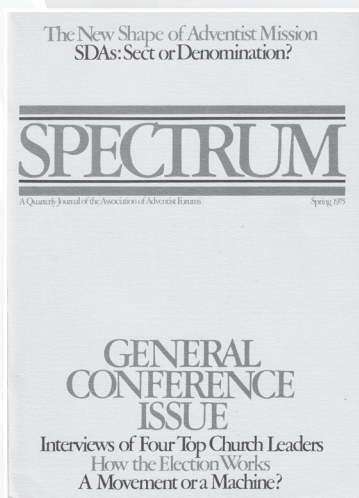
clear that I was already on a path to lifelong connection with *Spectrum*.

When Molleurus Couperus, the physician who had edited *Spectrum* from its start in 1969, was ready to step down, Adventist Forum leaders established a Board of Editors to oversee the *Spectrum*

ministry. Roy Branson's combination of fresh imagination and commitment to church life made him an obvious fit for editorial responsibility. But by now I had left *Insight*. Under an agreement that would return me to pastoral ministry in a year, I was teaching journalism at Walla Walla. I don't know exactly when my name got into the conversation about *Spectrum*, but it wasn't long until Roy and I were imagining an editorial partnership. He had the aforementioned qualifications, and I shared many of his convictions. I also knew the basics of publication. We could shift printing proper to Walla Walla's Color Press near me (such proximity then seemed to matter). We had great long-distance fun—hours on the phone, the satisfactions of productivity—and I am now able say that once upon a time—for three years or so—I was coeditor of *Spectrum*. That is a little-known fact, but it means a lot to me.

Three main things happened during the period of 1975-1978. Roy and I both favored a shift from formal scholarship to formal scholarship *plus*: now essays and creative writing would have a place—just as (along with visual art) they still do. I argued for a format change—from the staid look of an academic journal to the more informal, eight-by-eleven look of journals like *The Atlantic* or *Commentary*. Roy went to bat for article “clusters”—individual issues with both a focus on some theme and room for other pieces.

Here's what remained: Molleurus Couperus's passion for issues that afflict the Adventist soul, and my seminary ethics teacher's complacency-smashing conviction that received tradition thoughtfully reconsidered, could energize Adventism. Honest thought could amount to nothing less than a new day dawning.



*Continued from page 2* some historic drama. Wayne tells his side of the story.

Personal and communal narrative inspire this issue. In homage to the 1975 journal structure I created a “cluster” of articles for this journal. It’s an historic mother cluster! Recent Weniger Award for Excellence laureate Kendra Haloviak Valentine creatively explores the story of Job. Her La Sierra University colleague, Sari Fordham, writes about her family’s arrival in Uganda in the mid-70s in an excerpt from her book, *Wait for God to Notice*. Fordham’s work was both a Sarton Book Award Finalist and received Honorable Mention for General Nonfiction at the 2021 Los Angeles Book Festival. Speaking of family, they can evolve in surprising ways. Based on his research, zoologist James Hayward tells a fascinating tale of the descendants of George McCready Price, the famous Adventist creationist.

The 1975 issue of the journal focused on the upcoming General Conference Session. While most of our journalistic work around this year’s meeting will occur on our website, Gil Valentine’s case studies in Adventist leadership offer some strong story beats for those still trying to dance to the “rhythms of Adventist organizational life.” The prolific historian also recently

received the Weniger Award for Excellence and has a new book out titled *Ostriches and Canaries: Coping with Change in Adventism, 1966-1979*. Finally, Jonathan Butler wrestles with the angels and demons of Adventist historiography. While reviewing a recent book by Gabriel Masfa who teaches at Babcock University in Nigeria, Butler plots the rise and progress of historians grappling with the powers that be.

In addition to the hymns, I’m honored to share some creative expression on the cover by one of my former students. Katie Aguilar took time away from her legendary Hollywood studio job to visit an *iglesia Adventista* in Los Angeles and design an image that to me evokes the tensions between past and future, personal and communal, prosaic and profound. Speaking of creative meaning, Sigve Tonstad poetically explores the current story of Ukraine. Spaced throughout the issue as a sort of Greek chorus, I hope Tonstad’s rhythmic meditations provide soulful rhyme where reason fails.

As you read this experimental version of the journal, I pray the visual, lyrical, and narrative moments provide you space to consider the ways your own history connects to our communal story in meaningful ways.

## DEDICATION TO FAMILY HISTORY

I dedicate this issue to my uncle, Dwayne E. Carpenter. A graduate of Pacific Union College, he was a student of historian Walter C. Utt. My uncle completed his first PhD from the University of California, Berkeley, in the mid-1970s. As he tells the story, barely in his mid-twenties, he sat so nervously clutching his briefcase on his lap during his first job interview that even he understands why he wasn’t hired. As some do, without other options, he threw himself into the publishing work. The Berkeley Seventh-day Adventist church had a new, openminded, energetic pastor. Inspired by the changes that seemed possible in the 1970s, the church bought a printing press and named their periodical *New Wine*. My uncle was the editor and they ran a review of Ronald Numbers’ *Prophetess of Health*. There was some conflict with the conference. The *New Wine* press lasted just two issues. (Let’s ignore this ominous numerical coincidence.)

Out of a job, my uncle turned to the familiar: academia. Already a scholar of medieval Spanish literature and history, he explored religion

and law. He completed his second PhD from the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, and spent most of the 80s teaching at Columbia University.

I interviewed him recently for some family history and he told me a new anecdote. It was around this time that he attended an Adventist meeting in Boston where attendees were invited to discuss freely (sound familiar). For his presentation, he distributed the newish statement of fundamental beliefs and each person was invited to mark their level of conviction by each one. Afterward he realized he himself didn't believe enough to stay an Adventist and in a later visit to family in northern California, my uncle asked the Berkeley church to remove his name. Returning to New York, a Jewish friend of his said "you no longer have a religion, so you're nothing then." Now searching for a religious identity, he began attending services at prominent synagogues in New York City and then attending lectures at the Jewish Theological Seminary. He eventually converted despite the rabbi doing his job according to rabbinic law, trying to dissuade my uncle three times. A scholar with the spirit of adventure, he published in several disciplines, spent time in the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, and recently retired from Boston College as Professor of Hispanic Studies and cofounder codirector of the Jewish Studies program. He's a mensch to me.

Growing up he was just my dad's brother who liked to play backgammon, or any game of chance, with us for hours. He also spoke six languages and traveled around Europe annually which added a sophisticated and heterodox flair to our family gatherings around Christmas. He prayed in Hebrew and kept his bathroom light taped on during the Sabbath hours. But he also fully joined the family fun as we opened presents and ate my grandmother's sugar cookies.

As I began to explore my own Adventist faith, the pieces of his story that I heard here or there from relatives began to act as a continental counterbalance to my singular certitude. Going on 16 I mentioned that I had read the 17th century philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal's *Pensées* (a gift from my father). I dropped this as a nervous teen eager that it might connect us in conversation. He not only engaged, but recommended Søren Kierkegaard. I read most of Kierkegaard's work and several biographies. Thanks to my uncle's thoughtfulness I have since leapt from existentialism into critical discourses that continue to break open the world.

As my awareness of faith transformed, so did my sense of my uncle. No longer just another family member, he became a witness to a new life through true conversion. Not the cheap kind, this is personal evolution in which some parts of the past are, with some pain—to oneself, family, and friends—ironized. He modeled a significant way that the periodic modification of truth defines existence. Our old conversation subject writes:

"Particularly in our age, irony must be commended. In our age, scientific scholarship has come into possession of such prodigious achievements that there must be something wrong somewhere; knowledge not only about the secrets of God is offered for sale at such a bargain price today that it all looks very dubious. In our joy over the achievement in our age, we have forgotten that an achievement is worthless if it is not made one's own."

My Jewish uncle contributed to helping me forge what's "true" for me. As I grew, he grew from non-Adventist relation to an avuncular guide for the perplexed. I'll always be a Seventh-day Adventist. I have a different approach to my beliefs than my dear uncle—I value Adventist ideas both confessionally and culturally. Thanks, in part to him, I continue to appreciate the irony and the serendipity and the possibility for change. This conversion is evolution. Some changes will occur. I believe embracing this irony of essence in motion intertwines the personal and communal into an ultimately meaningful story.

#### Endnote

\*Kierkegaard, Søren, *The concept of irony, with continual reference to Socrates: together with notes of Schelling's Berlin lectures*. Trans. Howard V. Hong, and Edna H. Hong. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 327.



# There's **ALWAYS** MORE TO THE STORY

**H**istorians say it takes about 30 years to begin to untangle key parts of events and to consider approaches to grasp what truly happened. For example, an initial look at World War II would have examined the lives of Hitler and Churchill. Yet, there was more to the story, and, over time Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Anne Frank, and John Weidner, profiles of moral integrity, enriched our understanding.

Most people have a few stories that repeatedly echo in consciousness, clicking like stuck vinyl records and shaping reality by directing attention to certain facts that reinforce existing assumptions. For example, an “I live in the best country” story yields triumphalism that notices elements to support one’s celebrated space of special knowledge or position, or an “I do the most for this ungrateful family” storyline will generate a resentful narrative that spurs one to find evidence of continued slights and disrespect. We cannot pinpoint the precise implantation of these stories in our minds. Indeed, they are likely products of subconscious synthesis.

Cultural anthropologists know that groups also have stories that inform action and create reality. A vilified-other-narrative builds a case for exclusion and intensifies group cohesion by emphasizing elements of disgust that seemingly justify demonization of an outgroup.

Currently, we all seek to understand what narrative could drive Russia to initiate a violent war against Ukraine, its neighbor. Is this a case of vilification, or is it ruthless pragmatism for pure material gain? Could this war be driven by a redemption storyline that seeks to redeem Russia’s status as an expansionary entity worthy of utmost respect? Is Russian support for this war a form of religious zealotry that prioritizes reunification of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine with the Moscow Patriarchate? There is more to the story, and we will learn it as time goes by.

Adam Grant’s, “Think Again,” suggests that intelligence might be redefined as the ability to unthink

and to unlearn. We all have limitations but a consideration of the rest of the story brings one to an intelligent, more beneficial, space. I suppose my mother’s mantra to “rise above it” meant to refuse to be defined by one story.

Reflection on a different view and more aspects of a story are keys to development of an intelligent faith, and Spectrum contributes to this by highlighting stories and facts that are ignored by official church communication platforms. Stories nourish empathy and give tools to break out of one’s own favored narratives. A courageous Christianity with a radical love infrastructure, is based on the Sermon on the Mount with a Beatitudinal Constitution, and it has a path of blessing for unlikely people. Naturally, powerful folks, vested in reification of earthly stratification structures, perceive such religion as dangerous; this would be an untamed religion that worships a God, who like Narnia’s Aslan, is dangerous, but good.

Isaiah 56 describes a House of Prayer for all people. I envision this to be a sanctuary, a respite, for all, without respect to political party, ethnicity, or nationality. This House of Prayer Community includes those folks that hegemonic entities have deemed to be lesser: the doubters, the questioners, the orphans, the undocumented immigrants, and the trans people. I believe the goal for a House of Prayer would be to imitate Jesus. Could this include an invitation to welcome the lame, those who don’t walk the typical path, and to embrace the blind, those who don’t see the mainstream things? Maybe that would help us rise above our own stories. Maranatha.

CARMEN LAU is board chair of Adventist Forum.





# Mourning MARIUPOL

The city is named for “Maria,” which one we may not know,  
the first so named was a virgin, spoke of oppressors laid low. \*  
And many a mother wanted “Maria” for daughter’s name,  
the story’s humble beginnings and then the incredible fame.

I’ve heard that Maria’s city, the one on the Sea called Black,  
was rich with ethnic admixture before they plotted the sack.  
Greeks first to come, and many, their “Maria” easily known,  
Marianopol their city, I’ve had it confirmed and shown.

The city grew and prospered, ‘twas built by wheat and steel,  
four hundred and thirty thousand, the number is true and real,  
worked in the mammoth steel mill, toiled in the blazing heat,  
strolled on the shore of Azov, dined on some bread and meat.

Children in streets were playing—and music in concert halls,  
hospitals treating the ailing, secure within homestead’s walls.  
There was peace in Maria’s city, it was a place to enjoy  
until—it grieves me to say it—it fell to the villain’s ploy.

And now a city dismembered, rubble where once it stood,  
he called it a “liberation,” perverting the meaning of “good,”  
he says that they came to save it: bombs fell on every house,  
the people killed or departed, you’re lucky to find a mouse.

Words fail for calamity witnessed—for the despicable deed,  
the rape of Maria’s city—come witness the violent creed,  
walk in the streets now silent, pray in the bombed-out church,  
women and babies murdered, and God, too, left in the lurch.

I’ve looked in ancient scriptures, I’ve read the forgotten print,  
I found this in poetry’s pages—it’s more than a modest hint. †  
It tells of another villain, the first one, so I am told,  
the greatest of all pretenders, pretension’s original mold.

He was, he said, on a mission, to make himself like God,  
it was, like the man in Moscow, pure and unvarnished fraud.  
“Your land you destroyed,” said the poet, “killed your people, too,” ‡  
and now in Maria’s city, more proof of the fraudulent brew.

*By Sigve Tonstad, 2022*

\* “The Magnificat,” attributed to Mary upon the news that she will have a son (Luke 2:46-55).

† Isaiah’s magnificent poem about “the King of Babylon” (Isa. 14:12-20).

‡ Last line: “You have destroyed your land, you have killed your people.” (Isa. 14:20)

## Clinton Emerson Memorial Lecture

# The Irony OF ORTHODOXY

February 19, 2022 – Loma Linda University Church

By Kendra  
Haloviak Valentine

Charles Weniger not only left an enduring mark in twentieth-century Adventism, his ideas can also help inspire Adventism in this century. How?

I am not referring to his wholistic approach to public speaking—that the speaker must prepare her or his heart in advance, and always with humility. I am not referring to the way he reminded speakers to invite their listeners to respond in some way—to call people to embrace the kingdom, because sermons must change lives.

Nor do I have in mind his passionate call to seek “enriching experiences,” to live the good life. And I am not even referring to his excellence in the classroom. Rather, I focus on Charles Weniger’s understanding of the Bible as literature.

This essential conviction shaped his work with Genesis as narrative, Deuteronomy as persuasive oratory, the Psalms, Lamentations, and Song of Solomon as poetry, Isaiah and Joel as prophecy, and Proverbs and Ecclesiastes as philosophy. And his conviction of Scripture as literature underlay his love of the book of Job. It is why he took it seriously—as a poem inside a narrative.

Dr Weniger encouraged students to notice Job as a person, to imagine him sitting devastated on an ash heap, and in doing so to contemplate the experience of the dark night of the soul. While the specific causes vary from person to person, part of our shared human experience is numbing despair at great loss.

I learned from Richard Utt’s biography of Charles Weniger that he wanted his seminary students to preach on Job. One student who remembered well Weniger’s “Biblical Literature” class, recalled his mantra: “When you are out in the field, I want to drop by your church on a Sabbath and find you preaching on the book of Job” (Utt, 139). While the pastor interviewed for the biography said that Weniger had not been able to drop by his church, if he had, he would certainly have found him preaching on Job!

In his own work on the book, Weniger identified not just one response to the problem of human suffering, but several. He found them in various places within the work—the prologue, the first and third speech cycles, the response of the whirlwind, and in the epilogue. These responses were

articulated in the creative language of an artist in both prose and poetry, the vehicles for God's revelation.

In recognizing the book's artistry, Weniger heard multiple voices—conversations both within and between sacred texts.

### Job

Readers will recall that the book of Job begins with a story—of a righteous human who becomes the focus of the adversary or accuser.

Sitting on an ash heap mourning the loss of children and physical health and financial security, Job hears from friends. They present the sacred tradition, arguing the standard orthodox answers to his problems: sinners bring suffering on themselves; God punishes sinners for their sin (retributive justice); if Job repents, God will show mercy. Sabbath School memory verses, they represent biblical theology found throughout the law and the prophets. They are received tradition.

Yet, the “irony of orthodoxy” in the book of Job is that its readers know that the orthodox answers are not true.

Leland Ryken uses the phrase “the irony of orthodoxy” (Ryken, 343) noticing that:

- Because we have the prologue, we as readers know that Job *isn't* suffering because of his sins.
- Because we have the prologue, we know that God is *not* punishing Job.
- And because we have the prologue, we realize that God's mercy is *not* dependent on Job's repentance.

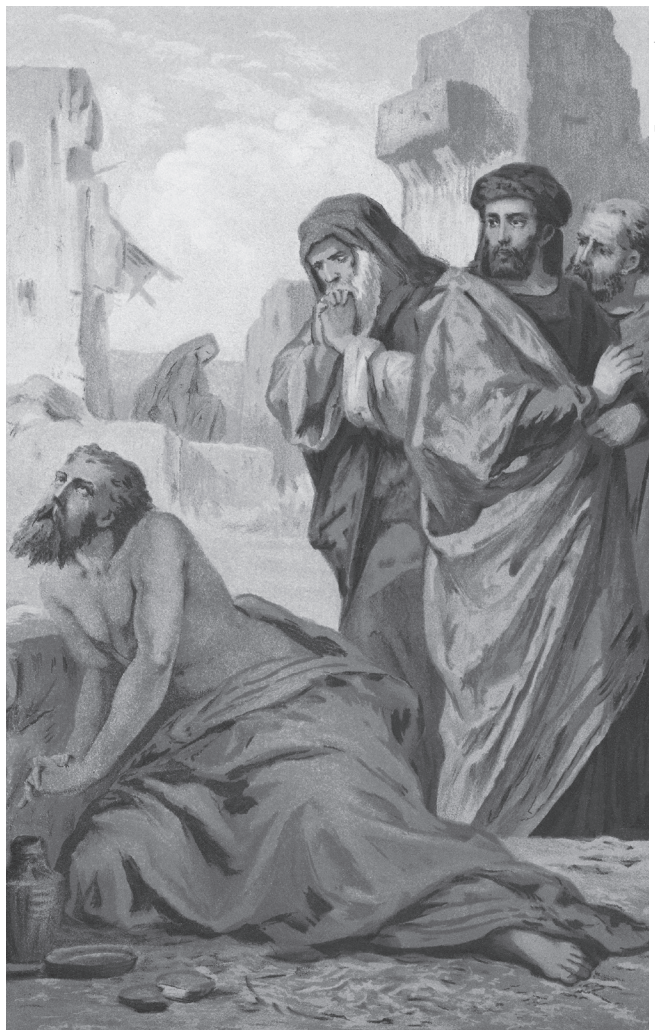
The irony of this orthodoxy is that we, the readers, know that the orthodox tradition isn't true. What lessons, then, might there be for those who insist on orthodoxy today? A caution? A plea for humility?

At the end of the book, no one asks the orthodox to pray for Job. Just the opposite! God asks Job to pray for them.

Lest we too quickly align ourselves with Job, however, we should notice that he, too, is wrong. God was not inflicting suffering, and certainly not delighting in it as Job contends. Considering God as cruel is also wrong theology. We must not infer that suffering indicates sin (Job's friends were wrong). And we must not assume that it indicates the enmity of God (Job was wrong too).

The irony of orthodoxy is that we know that orthodoxy isn't true. At least not always. And not right now. But our own rebellion against orthodoxy is also wrong. It is certainly not satisfying, not sufficient.

So where does that leave us?



*The Visit of Job's Friends. Chromolithograph, published in 1886.*

The orthodox tradition is inadequate. But so is our push back against it.

In a year of so much loss since our last on-line-only Charles Weniger Society celebration, what is our hope?

If God's retributive justice just does not work as an answer—that those suffering are *not* sinners—then what *does* make sense? What is a more adequate response?

Enter the book of Job, a complex prose-poem of complaints and rebukes and theophanies. Poetry in conversation with the prophets, it is sacred texts wrestling with each other, all in the search for greater understanding.

Up to this point in Israel's written tradition, the law and the prophets tended to focus on an elect group—Israel whether living within or outside the covenant. What would eventually be called “wisdom literature,” on the other hand, emphasized the universality of human experience—what all people have in common.



Engraved illustration of Job and His Affliction Map Engraving from *The Popular Pictorial Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments*, Published in 1862. Copyright has expired on this artwork. Digitally restored.

[istockphoto.com/bauhaus1000](https://www.istockphoto.com/bauhaus1000)

If the law and the prophets emphasized the huge chasm between Israelites acting righteously and Assyrians acting wickedly, wisdom, in contrast, emphasized how Assyrians and Israelites were so very much alike in knowing both joy and sorrow.

The shift in thinking required a new kind of literature. Instead of prophetic proclamation focusing on collective Israel's guilt before God, the story of Job zeros in on an individual without even stating his nationality. The key character is Job, whose experience is so very *human*.

This isn't about law vs. grace—all Job's friends believe in a gracious God.

Nor is it about social justice. Job had followed the prophets and done justly.

Instead, this is something new.

As Russian literary philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin suggests, a new ideology emerging from a specific social situation requires a new genre, for new ideas are inseparable from the form in which we find them. And here in Job we find a new form.

Wisdom's creation poetry allows a shift from God as covenant-maker to God as creator of all life.

And its new form highlights that God is sovereign.

When the whirlwind answers Job—when he experiences a God-appearance (theophany), readers encounter a transcendent Creator creating and creative

in ways that humans cannot comprehend—yet in which they participate.

When the whirlwind arrives, readers encounter something new ...

- A Creator of abundance and variety, one unhindered and surprising
- One unimaginable yet shaping human imagination
- A creator of creative creatures
- A God of unlimited possibilities
- One who will not be boxed in by retributive justice... or anything else!

Job's complaints paved the way for theophany and theophany for theological breakthroughs ... for new ways of thinking about God. They include:

- Covenant maker is better understood as surprising Creator!
- God is even more compassionate than we thought!
- People who suffer can also be innocent.
- Evil is somehow both outside God and yet controlled by God ... so that mystery remains.
- Perhaps silence before such mystery is the best human response of all.

New insights about God call for new literary forms and multiple voices and possibilities and progress!

Within this one book, we hear the prophets still protesting and the continued influence of retributive justice.

We hear wrestling with the human experience of suffering and innocence and the inadequacies of orthodoxy.

And the voices that expose the irony of orthodoxy are themselves sacred texts!

Seeing the Bible as sacred literature enables us to see the book of Job's theological breakthroughs.

Furthermore, seeing the Bible as sacred literature—that the Bible is to be read literarily, rather than literally—helps us to understand God in new ways.

Two brief examples:

### **I. First, if in reading Job, you find the ending inadequate, not satisfying to your sensibilities ... that might be precisely the author's point!**

The prose ending for the most part reinscribes orthodoxy. The tradition is so strong that it returns as a way of affirming that Job—who refused orthodoxy—is correct! So that he receives blessings for challenging the notion that blessings don't work that way! Readers must continue to wrestle with the contradictions between the creation poetry of the whirlwind and the retributive justice of the prose.

Suffering as punishment for sin has been exposed as false. The irony of orthodoxy is that here orthodoxy is wrong. Yet, questions remain ...

- Is it that suffering doesn't have moral meaning? To suggest so would itself be evil?
- Is it that suffering requires the supernatural for an adequate reply?
- Is it that suffering is not the result of judgment nor its cause? But somehow the stage for new creation?
- Is it that suffering is placed into a cosmic context? (Does that help?)
- Is it that suffering is part of humanity's story... and that God knows that?
- Is it that suffering is part of God's story too? Since the whirlwind joins Job?
- Is hope for suffering possible when it is placed next to a transcendent God of unimaginable creative ability?

Suffering isn't explained. Instead, it becomes something to be transformed, an opportunity for a whole new system in which the causes of suffering are eliminated.

### **II. Here's the second brief example.**

A literary reading would notice the book of Job's *inclusio*. To see an *inclusio* is to notice that a work's beginning and ending have similar elements. They mirror

each other, if you will. If we read the beginning and end of Job carefully, we find so many similar elements.

But *inclusios* are also fascinating when the ending is significantly different in some way. As is the case here. And what is a major difference between the beginning and ending of Job?

Have you ever noticed that the accuser *isn't* part of the epilogue?

The accuser is absent--gone! While key to the cause of Job's suffering at the start, in the end he has vanished! The character credited with causing Job's pain is no more.

Just restoration is not sufficient! Creation moves from the language of this-for-that to a new paradigm: the wonder of God's creative work. Transcendence goes beyond restoration to transformation—in which the accuser is no more... death is no more... mourning and crying and pain are no more...for the first things have passed away...behold *all things* are new! (Revelation 21).

### **Conclusion: the Bible as Literature**

So, is the whirlwind still whipping around? Even in a pandemic? Or are we all sitting on ash heaps trying not to further annoy each other while we wait for the whirlwind?

Can there still be something new? Something not yet considered ... but possible because of a creator God who will not be confined? Not even by our best questions?

What words of poets and prophets will help us think in new ways? What have we learned?

- Reading the Bible as literature recognizes and emphasizes the on-going conversations between the various voices within and between the books of Scripture—dialogues that extend well beyond Job.
- Reading the Bible as literature tells us that words that challenge orthodoxy become themselves part of our sacred texts. Words that push back on our memorized answers to questions can become sacred...are sacred!
- Reading the Bible as literature involves noticing that its content includes not only professions of faith and theological prose ... but also poetry and prayers. After the laws and the lists, finally comes the poet.
- Reading the Bible as literature notices that in Job, after the whirlwind and worship—and even as orthodoxy's dominance is reinscribed, the one behind Job's suffering—the one that brought the suffering is gone!

- Reading the Bible as literature embraces the varied literary forms of God’s revelation...

More than ever, our community of faith needs to learn to appreciate our sacred texts as sacred literature. It needs to absorb the implications of this hugely important truth. As we navigate our way through the cross currents of the numerous theological conflicts, problems about past and future, and debates about what it means to be an Adventist that trouble the waters of our community in the twenty-first century, understanding Scripture as literature—sacred, inspiring, authoritative literature—will help us avoid spiritual shipwreck.

God is a God of creative activity that began long before creation week, and has certainly not ceased since!

What new thing is God doing in our time? What rebirth of images? What bringing forth of things old and new...?

Because our pictures of God remain inadequate, American poet and theologian Amos Wilder anticipates that “As in the past, the Spirit will prompt new tongues, new names, new songs to clarify these quests” (Wilder, 11).

What insights are on our horizons? What new theological breakthroughs await us? How might our current complaints and protests pave the way for a theological breakthrough?

Along with the author of Job, we celebrate sacred texts that both hold onto orthodoxy and those exposing its inadequacies.

Charles Weniger not only left an enduring mark in twentieth-century Adventism, his ideas can help inspire Adventism today. Because the Bible’s meaning is much

more than literal—it is grounded in the literary!

And we stand next to Job not only because we know loss, but because we’ve heard at least a faint rustle of the whirlwind.

So let it be. Amen.

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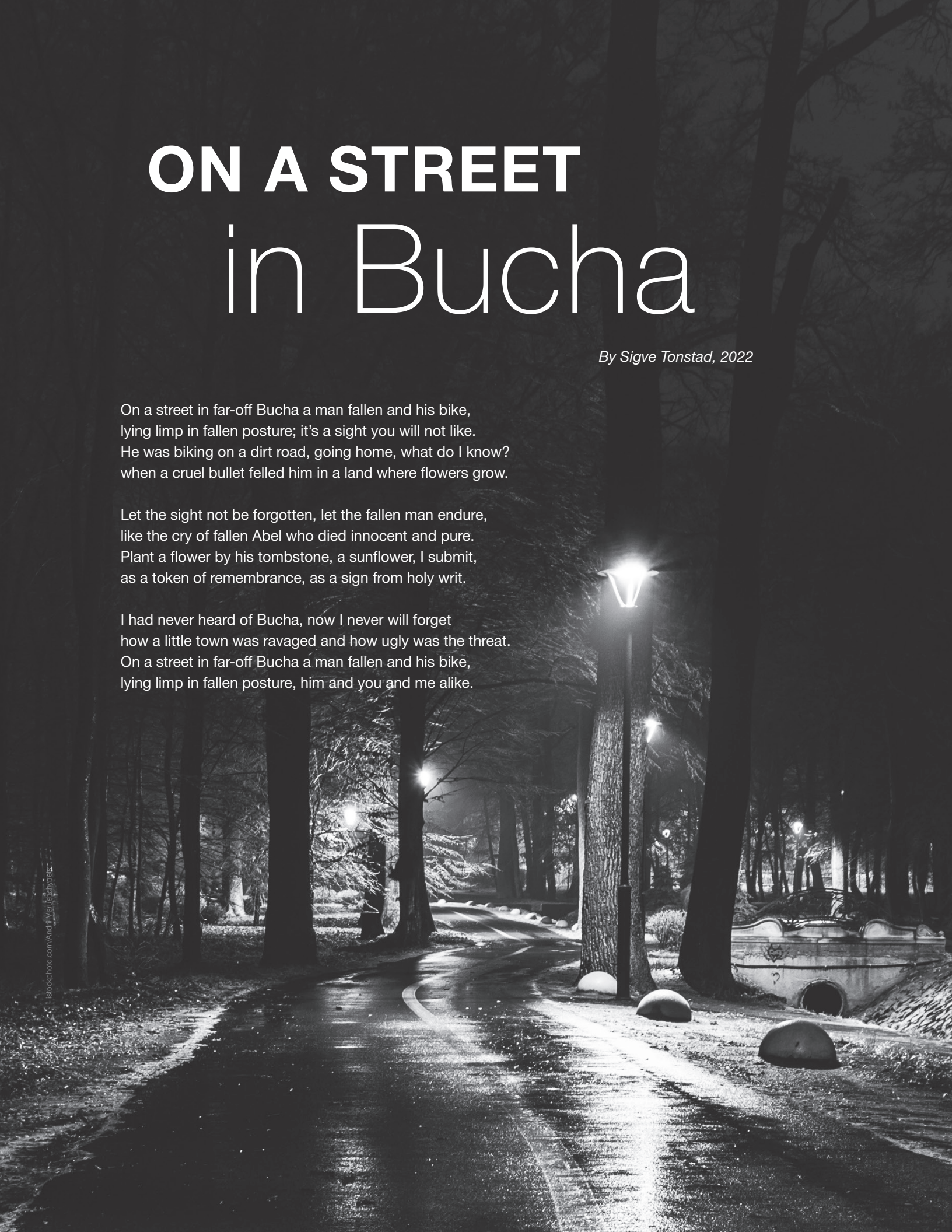
# ON A STREET in Bucha

*By Sigve Tonstad, 2022*

On a street in far-off Bucha a man fallen and his bike,  
lying limp in fallen posture; it's a sight you will not like.  
He was biking on a dirt road, going home, what do I know?  
when a cruel bullet felled him in a land where flowers grow.

Let the sight not be forgotten, let the fallen man endure,  
like the cry of fallen Abel who died innocent and pure.  
Plant a flower by his tombstone, a sunflower, I submit,  
as a token of remembrance, as a sign from holy writ.

I had never heard of Bucha, now I never will forget  
how a little town was ravaged and how ugly was the threat.  
On a street in far-off Bucha a man fallen and his bike,  
lying limp in fallen posture, him and you and me alike.





# Adventist *HISTORIA*





# InterSECTIONS +diVERGence

in our personal/  
communal stories

# The

Life  
Domain  
Kingdom  
Phylum  
Class  
Order

# Family Legacy

Genus  
Species



# of George McCready Price

By James L. Hayward

**A**s I scanned the books in my dad's office, *Genesis Vindicated*, a blue-bound volume by George McCready Price, caught my attention. As an adolescent fundamentalist, I was passionate about the natural world and eager to understand how it began. The title sounded intriguing, so I brought the book home. As I read, I underscored passages with neat, red-ruled lines.

Soon I learned that Price was a prominent figure both inside and outside Adventism. His two dozen books and hundreds of periodical articles on anti-evolution dominated creationist literature during the first half of the twentieth century. Moreover, he built the infrastructure for the emergence of "scientific creationism" during latter part of the century. Today, scholars continue to highlight his name and writings in historical treatments of that era.<sup>1</sup>

Price was a devotee of Ellen G. White whose writings steered him away from the lure of evolutionism.<sup>2</sup> Inspired by White's visions of the past, he invented modern "flood geology," the view that the deluge described in Genesis 6-9 accounts for most of the geologic column. According to Price, flood geology nullified traditional geology's claims of deep time, a prerequisite, he believed, for biological evolution to

be able to happen. Although Price was a nonscientist whose arguments were readily falsified by field data, his intelligence, lawyerly logic, bold assertions, and vibrant prose charmed his readers and convinced them that scientific fact supported his views.<sup>3</sup>

Although considered a hero among fundamentalists, Price endured the barbs of many detractors. During the 1925 “Scopes Monkey Trial,” for example, the acerbic defense attorney, Clarence Darrow, referred to Price as “a mountebank and a pretender and not a geologist at all,”<sup>4</sup> and Yale Geologist Charles Schuchert called Price “a fundamentalist harboring a geological nightmare.”<sup>5</sup> Even Price’s critics, however, recognized the force of his work. Baptist theologian Bernard Ramm noted that “the influence of Price is staggering,”<sup>6</sup> and the popular mathematics and science writer Martin Gardner referred to Price as “the greatest of modern opponents of evolution.”<sup>7</sup>

Nineteen sixty-three, however, served as the terminus of Price’s 60-year campaign against deep-time geology and biological evolution, for in that year the 92-year-old Price breathed his last. Four days before he died his physician asked how he was getting along. Price reportedly quipped, “Doctor, I am going to quote you an old Chinese proverb. ‘I expect to eat an egg laid by a hen that scratches over your grave.’”<sup>8</sup> Adventism’s “crusader for creation” was indomitable to the end.

By the time of his death, Price had firmly secured his personal legacy. But what do we know about his family legacy? Until now, very little. With help from Price’s descendants, however, I’ve pieced together a lively family history, one that includes Hollywood glamour, Sri Lankan intrigue, Scooby-Doo cartoons, rock’n’roll celebrity, the Bahá’í faith, musical acclaim, and much more. Here I provide a brief sketch of the colorful legacy of one of Seventh-day Adventism’s most iconic historical characters, George McCready Price.

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*OPPOSITE PAGE: George Edward Price and his family, ca. 1900. Left to right: Amelia, Beatrice, Ernest, Portia, George. On his first book, Outlines of Modern Christianity and Modern Science (1902), George listed his name as “Geo. E. McCready Price,” “McCready” being his mother’s maiden name. Thereafter, he dropped the “E” and went by “George McCready Price” (Courtesy of George Littlefield Price).*

*CURRENT PAGE: Ernest Edward Price, son of George McCready Price. Ernest Edward left home at age 15 and had little to do with his parents until later in life. He was a prolific letter writer, politically conservative, loved money, and worked as an insurance administrator (<https://www.geni.com/people/Ernest-Price/600000001155505593>).*

Darwin Price, great-grandson of the redoubtable creationist, appears on my laptop screen. He has graciously agreed to serve as my initial guide to the Price family. Moreover, he’s promised to share the story behind his ironic, amalgamative name. Meanwhile, separated by half of the world, our first real-time meeting occurs via Zoom.

Immediately I’m set at ease by his gentle greeting and honest, inviting face. He conveys an aura of peace, goodwill, and acceptance. I detect a faint Australian accent. His roots are American, but he’s lived Down Under for most his life.

I describe my intent to write about his famous ancestor. Although I’m a biologist by profession, I tell him, history intrigues me. Now retired after teaching for 30 years in Andrews University’s George McCready Price Hall, I want to understand more about its namesake. Though I admit that I’m no longer a fan of his great-grandfather’s views, I’m fascinated by the intellect, commitments, and history behind those perspectives.



His great-grandfather was talented and well-read, I note, and his fame spread far and wide.

Darwin was born two years after George McCready Price died, so he has no recollection of his famous progenitor, but he is keen to introduce me to family members who do. During the next few months, I meet Darwin's two older sisters, Melanie and Charmaine, his brother, Tom, his distant cousins Portia Dill Sherrard and George Littlechild Price, and the creationist's grandnephew, Bernhardt Marshall Huedepohl, and grandnieces, Marilyn Topper and Joan Foulston. All provide information, stories, and photos of George McCready Price and his accomplished descendants and relatives.

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In 1887, 17-year-old George Edward Price—later known as “George McCready Price”—wed fellow “literature evangelist” Amelia Nason, 12 years his senior. The following year, George and Amelia gave birth to Ernest Edward Price, the first of three children.<sup>9</sup>

The relationship of Ernest Edward with his parents must have been a rocky one, because at age 15 he left home and had little to do with them until later in life.<sup>10</sup> Unlike his fundamentalist father and mother, Ernest had no time for religion. He worked as a fire insurance administrator in southern California, loved money, and was politically conservative.<sup>11</sup>

Ernest was a “funny character,” says his granddaughter Melanie Price, who remembers him well. He often repeated the same puns and corny jokes. One of his favorites was, “It’s amazing there are people dying who have never died before.” A prolific letter writer, his missives were loaded with economic theory. He was a fan of Milton Friedman, the prominent advocate of free market economics.<sup>12</sup> Tom Price, Ernest’s grandson, says his grandfather “had a habit of cutting out articles in newspapers and magazines and circling the part he was interested in and writing his comments in the margin . . . His mind was very active right until the end.” Tom received a letter from him, postmarked the day before he died.<sup>13</sup>

An avid hunter and supporter of the National Rifle Association, each year Ernest brought back a deer or elk he’d killed. Then he froze the meat which lasted until the next hunting season. “He had a strict dietary regimen,” Tom says, “and preached it to me every chance he got—although not a vegetarian, he was careful not to combine certain foods, and only ate at certain times.” Ernest had “all kinds of rules.” One was that “You must eat one apple and drink two glasses [of] water when you wake up, and then walk at least three miles before

breakfast.” Also, he grew fruits and vegetables on his property in Malibu, which he paid Tom twenty dollars one day each week to tend. The garden, like Ernest’s daily schedule, was meticulously groomed.

When school was not in session, Ernest took Tom to a Swedish smorgasbord each Thursday for lunch where, as Tom notes,

the whole time I had to listen to his lessons about life, of which he had hundreds of sayings that I have heard a thousand times, and I could hear them coming a mile away. In everything we did, farming, beach club, restaurant, he was very regimented, and we always did exactly the same things in the same order. He was very disciplined and had lots of rules about life.

In 1915 Ernest and his first wife, Madge Sheppard, bore their only child, Edward Sheppard Price. When Edward was 8, Ernest and Madge divorced, and Edward and his mother moved to a large house on Walnut Avenue in Venice, California. Meanwhile, Ernest married Edna Leona Benedict. Edna’s father, Pierce Edson Benedict, became mayor of Beverly Hills. The Benedicts were the namesakes of Benedict Canyon in west Los Angeles.<sup>14</sup>

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Ernest and Madge’s son and George McCready Price’s grandson, Edward Sheppard Price, later changed his name to John Shelton Price, or simply John Shelton. As a kid, he was a handful. In a parental bid to reform his ways, they sent him at age 14 to a Seventh-day Adventist boarding school in southern California. The

*OPPOSITE PAGE*

*TOP: Lobby card for the MGM movie, “Blond Inspiration” (1941), starring John Shelton. Left to right: Virginia Grey, Albert Dekker, John Shelton, Charles Butterworth, Marion Martin (<https://www.moviemem.com/wpcontent/uploads/2020/07/BLONDEINSPIRATIONLC2-1024x800.jpg>).*

*LEFT: Eighty-six-year-old George McCready Price in 1956 with his son, Ernest Edward Price, and his great-grandson Tom Price. As a young boy and adolescent, Tom spent considerable time with his grandfather, Ernest, a highly regimented insurance administrator (Courtesy of Tom Price).*

*MIDDLE RIGHT: John Shelton Price (far right), grandson of George McCready Price, was a Hollywood actor who knew many prominent figures of his day. Here he joins hands with the young John F. Kennedy, the actress Ann Rutherford, and an unidentified individual (Courtesy of Darwin Price).*

*BOTTOM RIGHT: Christmastime, 1970, for John Shelton Price and his family, just months before the family’s disastrous move to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Left to right, Lorraine Ludwig, John Shelton, Charmaine, Darwin, Tom, and Melanie (Courtesy of Darwin Price).*

"I've lived on coffee for 24 hours! One more cup...and I'll drown!"



*BELOW: The members of the musical group Lake Street Dive visiting the White House during Barack Obama's administration. The band, which formed in 2004 at the New England Conservatory of Music, is based in New York and tours internationally. Lead vocalist for the group, Rachel Price (fourth from the left), is the daughter of Tom Price and the great-great-granddaughter of George McCreedy Price (Courtesy of Rachel Price).*

attempt, however, was short-lived—John was expelled for roasting on a school radiator a deer that he'd killed.<sup>15</sup>

When John was 17, he eloped with his girlfriend. Marriage without parental permission at his age was against California law at the time, and Madge had the marriage annulled.<sup>16</sup>

At six-foot-one, with an easy smile and ample sex-appeal, 21-year-old John Shelton became a Hollywood actor. Father Ernest, ever concerned with finances, disapproved of his son's thespian ambitions, recognizing as he did the difficulty of making a living on the silver screen. But John persisted, landing roles with RKO Pictures, and later MGM Studios.<sup>17</sup>

At 23 he married a second time, this time legally, but it lasted only a couple years. Then in 1941 he fell in love with singer and actress Kathryn Grayson, who's good looks and coloratura soprano voice caught his fancy. "Dad always loved Kathryn," Charmaine Price, John's younger daughter, told me. But in 1946, Kathryn divorced John, and between 1946 and 1953, John married three other women. Melanie, however, believes he "was not a playboy" but a moral person who married each time because he believed it was the right thing to do.<sup>18</sup>

John Shelton rubbed shoulders with Howard Hughes, Ronald Reagan, and John F. Kennedy, and acted with some of the biggest names in Hollywood—Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Lionel Barrymore, Ann Rutherford, and Lana Turner, among others. By the 1950s, however, acting opportunities for John on the big screen began to dry up, and he went on to play a few TV gigs, dabble in politics, and experiment with business. In 1953 he married his last wife, Lorraine Ludwig, a woman of Ukrainian Jewish heritage. Lorraine hailed from a prominent Hollywood family and had trained as a classical pianist. She and John produced four children: Melanie Rose, Thomas Shelton, Charmaine Lily, and Darwin Ludwig.<sup>19</sup>

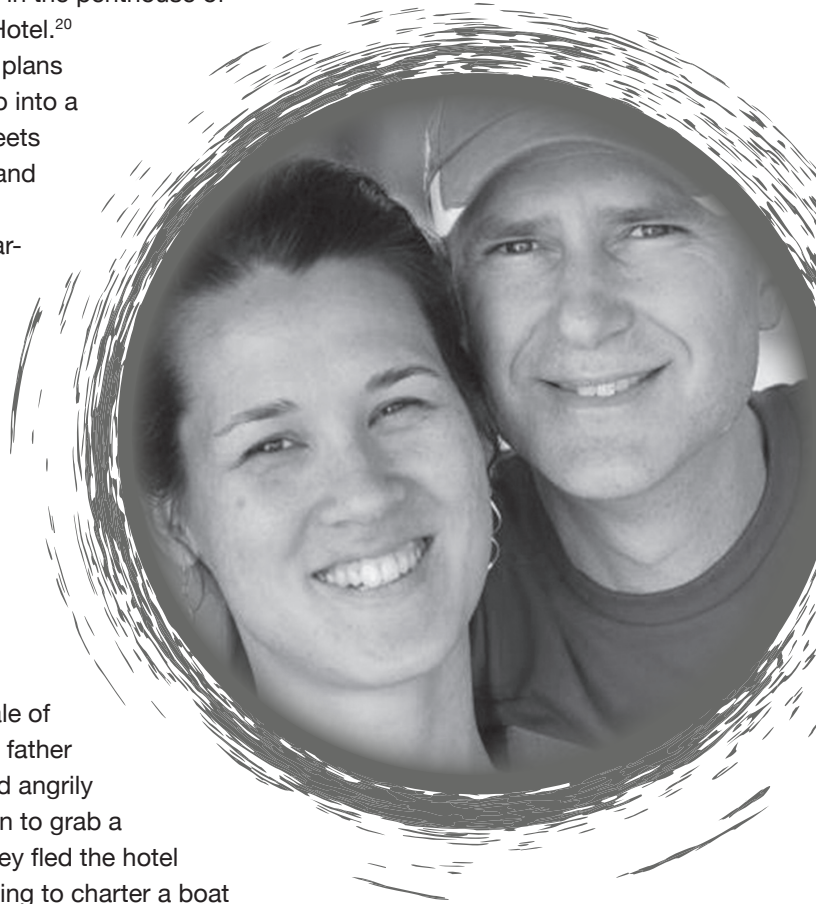


John seemed to settle into a more stable life with Lorraine and his growing family. But he was drinking heavily and, as later discovered, became involved in some dubious financial dealings. In mid-March 1971, desperate for financial security, he sold the family heirlooms and moved Lorraine and the four kids to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) to produce a movie. Betting on a fortune, he lodged the family in the penthouse of Colombo's luxurious and storied Mount Lavinia Hotel.<sup>20</sup>

On April 5, 1971, however, John's hopes and plans shattered. A Marxist insurrection turned Colombo into a war zone. Government tanks rolled down the streets by the hotel, police stations came under attack, and people were killed. Lorraine and three of the kids went to Sydney, Australia, while John and 15-year-old Tom stayed behind in hopes that the political situation would right itself and John could get on with his work. Only four guests remained in the Mount Lavinia Hotel, all the others having left the country.<sup>21</sup>

For a time, John and Tom remained at the Mount Lavinia, albeit under curfew. During this period, they witnessed the comings and goings of people who met with the hotel manager, a wealthy Muslim by the name of Farouk Salih. Salih, it turned out, was sending money illegally to his brother who lived out of the country. The authorities assumed Salih obtained it from the sale of gems on the black market. One day Tom saw his father talking on the phone, slam down the receiver, and angrily declare, "Farouk has screwed us!" He told his son to grab a few belongings, because they had to escape. They fled the hotel and boarded a train for the northern coast, planning to charter a boat to India. But on the way police arrested them and took them back to Colombo. The authorities threw John in prison, but released his son. For a time, Tom stayed with a Disney film director he knew and was allowed to attend his dad's trial, which ostensibly was for absconding from the hotel without paying the bill.

After the trial, Tom received an airline ticket to Australia, but on the way to the airport police arrested him under the suspicion that he was trying to smuggle gems out of the country. They stripped, probed, and x-rayed him but found nothing, and he spent the next several weeks enduring unspeakable conditions in the same prison that held his father. The authorities interrogated and verbally abused both of them. Once the authorities discovered that he could offer little information, they



*ABOVE RIGHT: Darwin Price, great-grandson of George McCready Price, with his wife, Mei-Ling (Leong) Price. Darwin surmises that his great-grandfather Price would disapprove of their marriage given the elder Price's bigoted views on ethnic diversity. Darwin works as an information technologist in Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia (Courtesy of Darwin Price).*

eventually released him and told Tom that his father would soon join him. Flying to Australia, Tom reunited with his mother and siblings. But seven months later, John Shelton Price, still imprisoned, died of a stroke one day shy of his fifty-seventh birthday. The Ceylonese government deposited his body at the U.S. embassy in Colombo.

Melanie, George McCready Price's great granddaughter and the first child of John and Lorraine, was born in 1954 in Manhattan. Tom, her brother, was born in 1956, and Charmaine the following year. The family eventually moved to California, where the children attended school. Late in 1964, John took Melanie and Tom to Cairo, Egypt, to produce a musical film tentatively entitled "Only the Poor Have Rich Dreams." The children attended grade school at the Cairo American College.

Lorraine and Charmaine, meanwhile, remained in California where Lorraine was pregnant with Darwin. In response to the influence of a friend, Lorraine began attending Bahá'í Firesides and soon announced her intent to join the Bahá'í community. Melanie, too, upon her return from Egypt, became interested in the Bahá'í Faith, feeling "that something 'spiritual' was missing from my life." She and Lorraine joined the Bahá'í community of Malibu in 1969. Once Darwin reached 15, the Bahá'í "age of spiritual maturity," he joined as well. Charmaine does not consider herself a Bahá'í but has always maintained a spiritual outlook on life.

For Tom, however, it was a different story. As Melanie



*BELOW LEFT: Sisters Melanie and Charmaine Price, great granddaughters of George McCready Price and daughters of John Shelton Price. Melanie is a university-trained educator who teaches the Bahá'í faith, and Charmaine worked as a cartoonist bringing to life Scooby-Doo, Yogi Bear, Huckleberry Hound, and other Hanna-Barbera cartoons (Courtesy of Charmaine Price).*

*OPPOSITE PAGE TOP RIGHT: Tom Price, great-grandson of George McCready Price, is a prominent musician and speaker in the Bahá'í Faith community. As a young adolescent Tom ridiculed any form of religion, but soon after his harrowing experience in Ceylon he converted to the Bahá'í Faith (<https://bahaiculture.blogspot.com/2014/12/tom-price-collection.html>).*

*OPPOSITE PAGE BOTTOM RIGHT: George McCready Price with his wife, Amelia Price, their daughter Portia Price Dill, Portia's son, Douglas Gordon Dill, and baby Douglas Gordon Dill, Jr. in Amelia's lap, during the 1950s. As a teen during the late 1930s, Douglas Gordon Dill lived for a time with his grandparents in Berrien Springs, Michigan, where George taught at Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University) (Courtesy of Portia Dill Sherrard).*

recalls, "Tom ridiculed and teased myself and my mother with full teenage fervor relentlessly whenever the subject of Bahá'í (or any religion) was mentioned." And although John Shelton felt attracted to the teachings of Bahá'í and attended some of the meetings with his family, Melanie notes that he "was not the 'joining' kind of man" and never united with any faith tradition.<sup>22</sup>

Following their harrowing experience in Ceylon, Lorraine, Melanie, Charmaine, and Darwin were destitute, and upon their arrival in Sydney they received help from the kindly members of the local Bahá'í community. Then, to the total surprise of the rest of the family and within a week of his arrival, Tom, emotionally shattered following his horrific Ceylonese arrests and imprisonment, made a sudden about face and joined his mother and sister in the Bahá'í Faith.<sup>23</sup>

When I met her, Melanie was teaching the Bahá'í Faith in her local Sydney community. Given George McCready Price's extensive writings against evolution, I asked her what Bahá'í people believed about the topic. In a notable divergence from her great-grandfather's perspectives, she replied that members of the Bahá'í Faith had no problem accepting evolution as a process occurring over long ages. But, she said, "humans were always humans, even though God might have started them out as fish or other animals."<sup>24</sup>

In 1974, Tom enrolled in the University of Sydney with a major in music composition, and the following year he began conducting the Bahá'í Temple Choir in Sydney. He became involved with a Bahá'í musical group, "1844," which presented teachings of the faith, concerts, firesides, and produced an LP recording entitled "Dreams of Tomorrow." After he married a troupe member, Elizabeth Sounness, the couple had four children, all musically gifted.



Tom's considerable talent and eclectic musical tastes motivated him to express artistic sentiments ranging from the sublime to the edgy. In 1981, he and a friend, Billy Field, released a rock and roll hit, "Bad Habits":

*"I'm off the rails / My resistance fails / Temptations got a hold on me / And I can't refuse."*

The catchy tune and lyrics earned them a double platinum recording that spent two weeks at the top of the Australian music charts. Following their success, Tom and Billy traveled with the Bad Habits Band to the United States, Great Britain, and various Pacific nations to perform.<sup>25</sup>

In 1989, the Bahá'í House of Worship choir selected Tom to direct at the architecturally spectacular Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois. He became choral director of the Second Bahá'í World Congress in 1992, attended by 35,000 believers. Since then, he has conducted public concerts in more than forty countries, including with several of the world's great orchestras. Currently, he directs The Voices of Bahá Choir and is a regular speaker at Bahá'í gatherings.<sup>26</sup>

Tom and Elizabeth's oldest child, Joel Price, has served the Bahá'í community in Australia since returning there in 2016. Emily Price studied music at Northwestern University in Chicago and is a professional mezzo-soprano, featured in the troupe Chicago A Cappella as well as joining in many performances for the Lyric Opera Company of Chicago. Juliette Price, the third child, studied law at Northwestern University and then did post-graduate studies in public health. Currently she practices in Washington, DC. Rachael Price, youngest of the siblings, is a jazz and blues artist and lead singer for the American band Lake Street Dive. She and her fellow band members studied at the New England Conservatory of Music. All four of Tom Price's children, as well as Melanie Price's son, Elliot, and Darwin's daughters, Raina and Giaan, are adherents of the Bahá'í Faith.<sup>27</sup>



Charmaine Price, John and Lorraine's third child, possesses the good looks and friendly, open spirit of her parents and siblings. In 1977, after spending four years at Sydney Girls High School plus a year of secretarial training, she moved to Los Angeles. There she worked for Hanna-Barbera Productions, Inc., an Emmy Award-winning studio bringing Huckleberry Hound, Fred Flintstone, Yogi Bear, Scooby-Doo, and the Smurfs to life for Saturday morning cartoon shows. First, she worked as a cell painter, and later as an ink and cell painter. Other cartoon companies would employ her as well.<sup>28</sup>

Charmaine's Facebook page is populated with

pictures of horses, photos of family members, cartoon characters, and movie stills of her dad. Many of the latter images are romantic scenes of John with leading actresses. One of her Facebook photo sections features her great-grandfather Price: “Although I don’t agree with all of his ideas,” she says, “I [do] appreciate the dialogue of Evolution vs. Creationism.”

Charmaine now lives in Nashville, Tennessee, where she works as a security guard and continues to draw and paint cartoons, a hobby for which she has exceptional talent. She also repaints works by the masters—Picasso, Matisse, Van Gogh, Miro, Kandinsky, Munch, De Chirico—often with her own spin and gentle sense of humor. And like the rest of her family, she loves music, singing and playing the piano and ukulele.<sup>29</sup>

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Darwin is the youngest of John and Lorraine’s children. Although born in California, he has spent most of his life in Australia where he works as an information technologist. Having a great interest in his family’s ancestry, with Melanie he helps to curate the family records on a genealogical website.<sup>30</sup>

He surmises that his great-grandfather Price would have disapproved of his marriage to Mei-Ling Leong, daughter of a Chinese father and Caucasian mother. In 1924, George McCready Price opined that in the “post-diluvian world” God had segregated “the people of the world into self-contained groups, thus most effectually preventing them from ever again uniting,” and that “if human beings had always been as true to natural instincts as are the species among the higher animals, there never would have been amalgamation among these races which had thus been set apart from one another by a special intervention of Providence.” Moreover, Price suggested that following the great Flood, some branches of the human family may have degenerated by hybridization into “negroids,” “Mongolian types,” and “anthropoid apes.” Notwithstanding his great-granddad’s bigotry, Darwin and Mei-Ling are happy and well-matched.<sup>31</sup>

Despite divergent views on issues such as marriage and the history of life, Darwin remains intrigued by his great-grandfather. During one of our visits, he proudly displayed the Langhorne Orchard Prize Medal the elder Price won in 1924 from the Victoria Institute of London for his essay “Geology and Its Relation to Scripture Revelation.”<sup>32</sup>

So how did Darwin get his name? For a week or so after his birth, his family referred to him as simply “Boy Price.” During that week, the story goes, John Shelton

Price, Darwin’s father, and Ernest Price, his grandfather, imagined George McCready Price and Charles Darwin conversing in heaven. Having now reconciled in Paradise, they believed the two men had come to know the truth, a golden mean somewhere between the extremes associated with their respective names. To honor such a reconciliation, John and Ernest thought it would be fitting to join the surnames of both iconoclasts into the moniker Darwin Price. “It’s time to bring the Darwins and the Prices together!” John proclaimed.<sup>33</sup>

Tom tells an alternate story, saying that he does not recall anything about a conversation between Ernest and John. Instead, he vividly recalls that he was in the kitchen when John told Lorraine that since George McCready Price and Charles Darwin were now together, it would be nice to unite their names. “But what I most remember,” Tom observes, “was the devious, cheeky smile my father had when he said this. It really pleased him. Of course, you probably could have united his last name with ‘Satan,’ and it wouldn’t have been any worse to George than to put Darwin in front of his surname . . . [T]his irony was not lost on my father.”<sup>34</sup>

But Tom recalls yet still another irony. A year or two before Darwin’s birth, Lorraine gave birth to a hypopituitary dwarf who was to be named “George McCready Price,” but the baby died soon afterward. Tom states that his great-grandfather “was on the losing side of a general conflict between science and religion.” But given the elder Price’s intellect and creativity, many observers viewed him as something of a rare intellectual mutation. Ironically, Tom notes, Price’s “namesake . . . [also] turned out to be a rare genetic mutation, itself a consideration in the theory of evolution.”<sup>35</sup>

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In 1891, George McCready and Amelia Price gave birth to their second child, Portia. Although she remained closer in contact with her parents than did her brother Ernest, by adulthood she and her sister Beatrice had joined their brother in rejecting Seventh-day Adventism. Both sisters’ branches of family, however, avoided the celebrity and drama that attended Ernest’s branch. George and Amelia’s great-granddaughter, Portia Dill Sherrard, thinks that the couple raised their children so strictly, that “when they got a taste of freedom . . . they never went back [to Adventism],” and never attached themselves to any religion. Notwithstanding, Portia and her family visited her parents frequently through the years. One photograph shows her standing beside the desk of

her aged father, appearing to work with him on his papers.<sup>36</sup>

Portia married Ivan Joshua Dill, a small businessman and rural mail carrier from an Adventist family in Loma Linda, California. After birthing two sons, Ivan J. Dill, Jr. and Douglas Gordon Dill, the couple divorced. Portia worked as a proofreader for various newspapers in southern California. After she retired, she moved to Eugene, Oregon, where she attended the University of Oregon.<sup>37</sup>

When he was about 15, Portia and Ivan's son, Douglas, lived with George McCready and Amelia Price in Berrien Springs, Michigan, where his grandfather taught philosophy and creationist geology at Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University). As Douglas' daughter, Portia Dill Sherrard, tells it, "My father didn't follow the Adventist diet, so meals were awkward, to say the least."<sup>38</sup>

Eventually, Douglas enrolled at the California Institute of Technology, where he earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree. He worked at Douglas Aircraft (later to become McDonnell Douglas) as an aeronautical engineer. In the evenings he taught mathematics at the University of Southern California. Before his death in 1957, he became attracted to Roman Catholicism, although he never officially joined the church.<sup>39</sup>

Portia Dill Sherrard remembers "quite often" visiting her great-grandfather and great-grandmother in Loma

Linda, California. Great-grandfather Price, she says, "was not an affectionate person to us kids—he seemed aloof. Great Grandmother was more welcoming and was always showing us things she [had] collected—shells, rocks, and stuff like that." Following Amelia Price's death in 1954, George McCready Price remarried, and after that his great-granddaughter found him to be "much more amiable."<sup>40</sup>

Portia's younger sister, Beatrice, the youngest of George McCready and Amelia Price's children, was born in the mid-1890s. She became Beatrice Jones after marriage and bore four children. The couple divorced early on, leaving her as a single mom. She worked as a bookkeeper well into her seventies. According to Portia Dill Sherrard, her great-aunt Beatrice was a "technocrat, believing that we should be governed by scientists, not politicians . . . She was often the voice of reason when kids had issues with parents and [she] steered us in the right direction."<sup>41</sup>

Members of the Ernest and Portia Price family lines have lost track of Beatrice's more recent descendants.

All three of George McCready Price's children abandoned their father's faith early in life. Even so, Darwin Price believes that his great-grandfather set a "religious foundation for the Price family," and Tom Price sometimes wonders "if George McCready has been guiding us spiritually from beyond."<sup>42</sup>

George McCready Price's younger brother, Charles Luther Price, never officially joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church but lived the Adventist lifestyle and attended Adventist congregations all his life. Charles Luther became friends with Albion Ballenger, one of Adventism's well-known heretics, and Charles attempted to convince his brother that SDA theology



*LEFT: George McCready Price with his daughter, Portia Price Dill. Portia remained closer to her parents than her two siblings. Note the photos of geological formations and Stonehenge on the wall behind Price (Courtesy of Portia Dill Sherrard).*



*INSET: Portia Dill Sherrard, great-granddaughter of George McCready Price and granddaughter of Portia Price Dill. Portia Dill Sherrard vividly recalls visits with George McCready and Amelia Price in Loma Linda, California, during which her great-grandfather "seemed aloof," but her great-grandmother was "more welcoming" (Courtesy of Portia Dill Sherrard).*



*Charles Luther Price, two years younger than his brother, George McCready Price. Although Charles Luther never officially joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church, he lived an Adventist lifestyle. He was friends with Albion Ballenger, one of Adventism's early heretics. Along with Ballenger, Charles Luther objected to the "Sanctuary doctrine" of Adventists (<https://www.geni.com/people/Charles-Luther-Price/6000000011603116468>).*

and prophetic interpretation, particularly as related to 1844, the "sanctuary doctrine," and the "investigative judgment" were in error. Neither brother was willing to change their viewpoint, and eventually the conflict reached such an impasse that they ceased correspondence.<sup>43</sup>

Charles Luther Price had two children, Josephine (Huedepohl) and George Marshall Price, both lifelong Adventists. Josephine, notes her son Bernhardt (Bernie) Marshall Huedepohl, "had a profound influence on each of her children." She was physically and mentally tough, and she passed a love of learning on to her offspring. After her husband died in an auto accident, she earned a degree in education, taught school, helped on the family farm, cared for her aging father and in-laws, and raised five children: Anne Josephine became a teacher, Charles August a government agrologist, Bernhardt Marshall an English and music teacher, Linda Louise a business owner, and Lorna Mae an insurance adjuster. Three of the five remained Adventists, one is heavily involved in another denomination, and another claims no church affiliation.

Self-taught after third grade, Charles Luther was passionate about learning and passed that love on to his descendants. As grandson Bernie Huedepohl notes:

learning was seen as necessary as breathing. I grew up in a library. Everyone read and you were expected to discuss what you read. At our first family reunion, of the 72 descendants and spouses of my parents, there were 32 teachers, 18 of them music teachers.<sup>44</sup>

Charles Luther's son and Josephine's younger brother, George Marshall Price, graduated with an MD degree from Loma Linda University and became a much-loved physician in Tofield, Alberta, east of Edmonton. His daughter, Marilyn Price Topper, a Loma Linda graduate in occupational therapy, says she is "one of the Price relatives who is still a member of the Seventh-day Adventist church. My parents were Adventists," she states, "but [they] definitely were more liberal theologically. My own beliefs are also more liberal than SDA standard theology, but there is still much that I respect about Adventism." She comments that she "is privileged to be part of a very loving and supportive local congregation, and that is where my loyalties lie."<sup>45</sup>

Marilyn's sister, artist M. Joan (Jo) Price Foulston, is a graduate of Canadian Union College (now Burman University), but she, along with two brothers, Dave and Don, have left the SDA Church. "I eventually studied my way out of the Adventist cult-like religion," Jo reports. Nonetheless, she feels "fortunate for my upbringing and schooling and also for my parents having taught me to study and make my own mind up about things."<sup>46</sup>

Unlike his heterodox brother, orthodox George McCready Price failed to pass along his Adventist beliefs to any of his descendants. But he and Amelia did extend qualities of intelligence, creativity, and accomplishment to what are now five generations of heirs. The Price lineage contains talented businessmen, writers, actors, artists, musicians, public speakers, engineers, information technologists, and other gifted individuals. “Even the severest critics among his personal acquaintances never questioned his intelligence and integrity,” writes historian Ronald Numbers.<sup>47</sup> And the fact that Price either directly and indirectly convinced many to endorse his radical and often quirky interpretations of nature is an indication of his persuasive ability.<sup>48</sup>

For good or for ill, the influence of George McCready Price persists today among millions of young-age creationists, as well as among a capable cadre of relatives and descendants who proudly trace their lineage back to the iconoclastic writer.<sup>49</sup>

#### POSTSCRIPT

*If you have any personal anecdotes or memories about George McCready Price and his legacy, please share them with me. I am writing a biography of Price in which I may use them. I will credit you for any contribution that I include in the book. My email address is: hayward@andrews.edu. Thank you!*

#### ENDNOTES

1. For example, see Ronald L. Numbers, *The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design*. Expanded ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Adam Laats, *Fundamentalism and Education in the Scopes Era: God, Darwin, and the Roots of America’s Culture Wars* (New York:

Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Carl R. Weinberg, *Red Dynamite: Creationism, Culture Wars and Anticommunism in America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2021).

2. Numbers, *The Creationists*, 91, 92.
3. James L. Hayward, “Price, George McCready (1870–1963),” *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, accessed February 21, 2021, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=79ZW&highlight=Conference>.
4. Ronald L. Numbers, “‘Sciences of Satanic Origin’: Adventist Attitudes Toward Evolutionary Biology and Geology,” *Spectrum*, vol. 9 (no. 4, January 1979): 17–30.
5. Charles Schuchert, “The New Geology: A Text-book for Colleges, Normal Schools and Training Schools; and for the General Reader. By George McCready Price. Pacific Press Publishing Association, Mountain View, California.” *Science*, vol. 59 (no. 1535, May 30, 1924): 486, 487.
6. Bernard Ramm, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), 125, 126.
7. Martin Gardner, *Fads & Fallacies in the Name of Science* (New York, NY: New American Library, 1957), 9.
8. Harold W. Clark, *Crusader for Creation: The Life and Writings of George McCready Price* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1966), 64.
9. “Ernest Edward Price (1888–1983),” Geni, accessed on October 19, 2021, <https://www.geni.com/people/Ernest-Price/6000000011555505593>.
10. Harold W. Clark, *Crusader for Creation*, 65.
11. Interview with Darwin Price, February 22, 2021; interview with Melanie Price, April 21, 2021.
12. Interview with Melanie Price, April 21, 2021; interview with Charmaine Price, May 2, 2021.
13. Information in this and the following three paragraphs from Tom Price to JLH, August 1, 2021.
14. Melanie Price, “Price Family Chronology from 1953 to 1994,” unpublished manuscript; interview with Melanie Price, April 21, 2021.



LEFT: George Marshall Price, son of Charles Luther Price and nephew of George McCready Price, with his new wife Margaret. George Marshall graduated with his MD degree from Loma Linda University and served as a physician in Tofield, Alberta, for more than forty years (Courtesy of M. Joan Foulston).

RIGHT: Four of George McCready Price’s grandnieces and grandnephews, the children of George Marshall Price: Left to right, Dave Price, Joan (Jo) Price Foulston, Margaret Price Topper, and Don Price (Courtesy of M. Joan Foulston).

15. Interview with Darwin Price, February 22, 2021; Melanie Price to JLH, July 4, 2021.
16. Melanie Price to JLH, July 4, 2021.
17. IMDb Movie database, accessed 25 October 2025, <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0791349/>; interview with Melanie Price, April 21, 2021; interview with Darwin Price, February 22, 2021; Tom Price to JLH, August 1, 2021.
18. Melanie Price to JLH, July 4, 2021; interview with Charmaine Price, May 2, 2021.
19. IMDb Movie database, accessed 25 October 2025, <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0791349/>; interview with Darwin Price, February 22, 2021; Tom Price to JLH, August 1, 2021.
20. Interview with Darwin Price, February 22, 2021; Tom Price to JLH, August 1, 2021.
21. This and the following two paragraphs from Tom Price to JLH, August 1, 2021.
22. This and the following two paragraphs from Melanie Price, "Price Family Chronology from 1953 to 1994"; Melanie Price to JLH, July 4, 2021; Melanie Price to JLH, July 25, 2021.
23. Melanie Price to JLH, July 1, 2021; Melanie Price to JLH, July 4, 2021.
24. Interview with Melanie Price, April 21, 2021.
25. Melanie Price, "Price Family Chronology from 1953 to 1994"; Genius, accessed October 26, 2021, <https://genius.com/Billy-field-bad-habits-lyrics>.
26. Melanie Price, "Price Family Chronology from 1953 to 1994"; "Tom Price (musician)," Wikipedia, accessed October 26, 2021, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom\\_Price\\_\(musician\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Price_(musician)).
27. Melanie Price to JLH, July 27, 2021.
28. Zoom interview with Charmaine Price, May 2, 2021; Charmaine Price to JLH, July 28, 2021.
29. "Charmaine Price," Facebook postings, accessed October 26, 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/charmaine.price>.
30. Interview with Darwin Price, February 25, 2021.
31. George McCready Price, *The Phantom of Organic Evolution* (New York, NY: Fleming H. Revell, 1924), 106.
32. George McCready Price, "Geology and Its Relation to Scripture Revelation," *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, vol. 61 (1924): 97–123.
33. Interview with Darwin Price, February 22, 2021.
34. Tom Price to JLH, August 1, 2021.
35. Tom Price to JLH, August 1, 2021.
36. Portia Dill Sherrard to JLH, July 19, 2021.
37. Portia Dill Sherrard to JLH, March 26 and July 19, 2021.
38. Portia Dill Sherrard to JLH, March 26, 2021.
39. Portia Dill Sherrard to JLH, July 19, 2021.
40. Portia Dill Sherrard to JLH, March 26, 2021.
41. Portia Dill Sherrard to JLH, July 19, 2021.
42. Darwin Price to JLH, February 22, 2021; Tom Price to JLH, August 1, 2021.
43. M. Joan Price Foulston to JLH, November 5, 2021; Marilyn Price Topper to JLH, December 31, 2021. "My grandfather would have loved Des Ford," opines Marilyn Price Topper. Desmond Ford was an Adventist biblical scholar who, like Albion Ballenger, lost his ministerial credentials over his opposition to the church's doctrine of the "investigative judgment."
44. Bernhardt Marshall Huedepohl to JLH, March 15, 2022.
45. Marilyn Price Topper to JLH, December 31, 2021 and March 3, 2022.
46. M. Joan Price Foulston to JLH, November 5, 2021.
47. Ronald L. Numbers, *The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design*. Expanded edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 103
48. Price was a well-known contributor to fundamentalist periodicals, but as Ronald Numbers observes, his views on flood geology did not convince large segments of the public until the appearance of *The Genesis Flood*, by John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1961). Whitcomb and Morris based their book directly on Price's views, although they barely acknowledged his influence (see Numbers, *The Creationists*, 114–119, 225–229). More than a half century after it first appeared, *The Genesis Flood* is still in print and remains popular among fundamentalists.
49. For a recent study of Price's influence, especially on American fundamentalist culture, see Weinberg, *Red Dynamite*. Weinberg borrowed the term, "Red Dynamite," from the title of chapter 12 in Price's *The Predicament of Evolution* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1925). See also, Carl R. Weinberg, "'Ye Shall know Them by Their Fruits': Evolution, Eschatology, and the Anticomunist Politics of George McCready Price," *Church History* 83, no. 3 (September 2014):684–696.



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# THE TRUTH THAT MATTERS

*By Sigve Tonstad, 2022*

He said it is about NATO, but Navalny is the name,  
the man in the far-off prison and hated all the same.  
He said it is about values: this is the value he fears,  
people living in freedom: "I will give them tears."

The claim of security threatened, this is partly true,  
corrupt men fear the people, it is nothing new.  
Navalny is spelled Zelensky, or do it in reverse,  
doesn't matter to Moscow, both are under his curse.

If you wonder about his values, Navalny is the name,  
and the emperor is naked, and all can see his shame.  
Dissent, and go to prison, or drink the poison cup,  
Submit, get the promotion, this is how to move up.

He fears what he cannot dictate, it puts him ill at ease,  
it almost makes him sleepless, it takes away his peace.  
And if you do resist him, the tanks are rolling in,  
this is the truth that matters, everything else is spin.



**W**hat would you do if you knew Jesus was coming in five years?”  
Sitting in a hermeneutics class full of men, my father’s head jerked up. He was a twenty-year-old theology student, sweet-faced and sincere. In his dorm room, he kept his few clothes and his many books, including his Bible, several Bible commentaries, and Ellen White’s *Steps to Christ* and *The Desire of Ages*.

The professor, a preacher by training, paused and repeated his question for dramatic emphasis while my father and his classmates scrambled to answer. Those who were thinking *Get married. Quick!* didn’t say it. Instead, they said they would knock on doors, hold evangelistic crusades, make and distribute religious tracts, and go overseas. They would go to India or Norway or Uganda, and they would tell as many people as they could about this urgent good news.

Of course, the professor’s question was hypothetical. Of course, it wasn’t.

The Seventh-day Adventist church began with the certainty of God’s imminent arrival. In 1818, William Miller, a Baptist preacher, read Daniel 8:14—*Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed*—and believed he was looking at a secret code: the date of Christ’s return. If each prophetic day was a year and the countdown began with the rebuilding of Jerusalem in 457 BC, then the second coming would happen in Miller’s lifetime. He must warn the world. Humanity, he wrote, was “sleeping over the volcano of God’s wrath.”

### **Soon and Very Soon**

My mother was born into Adventism. Her father was a Bible teacher at the only Adventist high school in Finland. Even when he was young, my grandfather was known as the Grand Old Man on campus. Because he was entrusted with the spiritual development of other people’s children,



# ARRIVING IN UGANDA

An excerpt from Sari Fordham's *Wait for God to Notice*,  
(Wilkes-Barre, PA: Etruscan Press, 2021).

his own were expected to be models of Adventist virtue. My mother—studious, obedient, and loyal to her own mother—didn't complain. Instead, when she had free time, she climbed into the attic and read the illicit novels she had somehow procured. If my grandfather knew, he said nothing.

My grandfather, whom we called Pappa, was a shy man, with an elfin face and a generous smile. He was friendly to everyone but unable to form deep connections, even with family members. His most sustained relationship was with Ellen White. When he visited us in the United States, he came with one suitcase filled with her books. My mother reached for that bag, and its weight wrenched at her arm. She loved to tell the story: "I thought his suitcase was full of rocks, but it was only Ellen White."

I never saw my mother reading Ellen White's books, and unless she was pointing out inconsistencies to her daughters, she rarely discussed Adventist theology. She was an Adventist who minded the edges of the Sabbath, read from Psalms and the Gospels, cooked vegetarian meals, and before evening prayers, sang, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus," her attention clicking away from us, her face softening.

My father converted to Adventism when he was a child. His mother, Marjorie, was dynamic, beautiful, and impulsive. She divorced young and had a knack for bad relationships. When men told her they wouldn't date a woman with children, she dropped off her kids at various foster homes, visiting when she could. My father and his siblings were frequently beaten, and at one home, a woman broke my father's arm. My father's uncle intervened, arranging for my father and his older brother, Johnny, to stay at an Adventist home in the Mojave Desert. The couple owned a chicken farm and required the brothers to do chores and mind their manners.

My father attended a one-room Adventist school. He could barely read or write, and during class, he wandered around the room, no doubt annoying his teacher. Yet she responded with kindness, igniting in my father an admiration for the profession and an awareness of how one teacher can change someone's life trajectory. She stayed after school and tutored my father until he caught up with his peers. For the



My father's students at Bugema Missionary Training School.



My parents

first time, my father felt the pride that comes from academic excellence and the security that comes from a structured home life. He and Johnny lived for two years on that old chicken ranch, attending Sabbath School and church each Saturday. When their mother, who had moved to Hawaii for a job, finally brought them to live with her, she was surprised at how devout they were, particularly her youngest.

The Adventist church became the ballast in my father's childhood. My grandmother moved from man to man, apartment to apartment, job to job. Every few months, she and her children would pack their belongings and scrub down their rental unit. No matter, on Sabbath, my father was at church. Sometimes his siblings came. Sometimes his mother came, too. When he was old enough, my father enrolled himself in an Adventist boarding school, paying his way through work-study programs. In the most secular sense, the Adventist church had saved him.

My father was devoted to his mother, and he was also determined to be nothing like her. As a teenager, he developed his capacity to see things through. By the time my mother met him, he was like a landmass. Once he set his mind to something, he didn't budge. He listened politely to others and remained steadfast, doing precisely what he said he would do. My mother called this his stubbornness.

My father dedicated himself to serving God and dreamed of someday becoming a missionary. The life he envisioned looked so different from his mother's that he didn't recognize their mutual restlessness. By most metrics, they were opposites. She discarded everything. He discarded nothing. She was outgoing and assertive. He was introverted and diplomatic. She was impulsive. He was responsible to a fault. She couldn't sit still. He loved academia and could spend hours poring over his books. While he was studying for a degree in theology, she was having an affair with a married man. Yet beneath their contrasting natures were matching fulcrums tipping

them toward adventure— the more reckless, the better. If Marjorie's child was going to be religious, it made absolute sense that he would want to be a missionary.

After asking his class about the second coming, my father's hermeneutics professor listened to their answers, and what he

heard were earnest and self-important plans. The theology professor's job was to temper any fanaticism and to teach the value of inquiry. To be of any use to future congregations, these men needed to wrestle with hard questions like, *How could a good God allow bad things to happen?* The professor still studied and prayed over that one, while my father and his classmates had a fast answer, a non-answer: God was coming soon and would make everything right.

"If you knew Jesus was coming in five years," the professor told his students, "the best use of those years would be to finish your education and only then start preaching."

This moment became my father's second conversion. He loved studying and had often felt guilty for his misplaced priorities. Shouldn't he be more anxious to do the important work of evangelism? Now, he was assured of the importance of his interests. Education wasn't just valuable; it was crucial. Jesus said you needed to have the faith of a child, and didn't children question everything, and didn't Jesus say you needed to be as wise as a serpent? If my father really wanted to be a missionary, he should bring something to the table: an education. He filled out paperwork expressing his future interest in mission work, then burrowed down into his studies.

My father finished his degree in theology and enrolled in the Master of Divinity program at Andrews University. He met and married my mother, graduated with honors, accepted a pastoral position in Indiana, had two daughters, and took advantage of his proximity to Ball State University to study part-time for a Master's in Public Health. He hadn't forgotten about the mission field. It just didn't consume his daily consciousness the way parenting did. So when a letter arrived from Adventist Mission, he was taken by surprise. The church was offering my father—and by extension our family—a mission appointment in Uganda.

The job was at Bugema Missionary Training School, a sprawling campus about an hour outside of Kampala. It had a rigorous high school, an on-site farm, and a training school for ministers and teachers. The Adventist church wanted my father to transform the ministerial certificate into an accredited college degree, the first one offered at Bugema. My father had no teaching experience, no PhD, no unique connections within Adventism. It was as if someone was flipping through mission applications, read my father's, and thought, *Well, this guy seems earnest.*

My father didn't speculate about why he had been chosen. He assumed someone knew he was up to the task. He also believed in his own work ethic, in his aptitude to learn from others, and, of course, in his ability to see a task to completion. Mostly, he was elated, and even my mother felt the pricklings of excitement. He was being offered the chance to teach in Uganda. Life was finally getting interesting. Of course we would go.

Years later, my father learned that fifteen more qualified candidates had turned down the position before he had been asked. My parents didn't wonder why the others had said no. By then, they already knew.

### Jambo

The long rains had ended when our plane landed at the Entebbe airport. The ground beside the runway was plush, and cattle egrets stepped through the grass, catching crickets and frogs. Sonja pressed her forehead against the oval window, and beside her, my mother peered past Sonja's nut-brown hair and gazed at the earth with its greens and reds. The intercom crackled, and with the voice of the British Empire in his throat, the captain said, "Welcome to Uganda."

Our plane stopped on the tarmac, stairs were wheeled over, and the door was flung open. It was midmorning, and already the heat seeped in. Passengers stood, gathered their bags, and shuffled for the exit. My mother held a carry-on in each hand and another slung over her shoulder. She set me in the aisle and told me to go on. She was overwhelmed with bags, and babies, and a growing sense of unease. My father had gone to Uganda before us, and without him, she was having trouble just getting off the plane. We were the last to exit.

Our first step into Africa offered light so fierce we shut our eyes before reopening them slowly, a sliver of eye against the sun. Our gaze swept across the tarmac and beyond that to a small, cement airport. Sweat gathered on our faces and bodies as we were embraced by the showy heat of Uganda.

My mother must have reeled at the enormity of our arrival. When she had married my father, she had left Finland behind. For months at a time, she spoke only English. At the bank and at bus stops, she was asked,

"Where are you from?"—a frequent reminder that she didn't belong. Now, she was even more conspicuously an



My sister and me in our yard in Bugema.



My mom, Sonja, and me at a game reserve with a guide.



My father and his students.



My grandmother as a hair model.

outsider. We planned to live in Uganda for six years, and she hoped this place would feel like home to her daughters. For herself, we had become her home.

My father waited behind a velvet rope. He stood, leaning outward, the image of a man who had lived alone the past two months and hadn't liked it. His hair was brown and long on his neck. It was recalcitrant, wavy hair, and he would have looked like a moppet if he hadn't been so tall and thin. He was, in fact, the tallest, thinnest, whitest man in the lobby. His glasses were overlarge, and he wore tan slacks and a western shirt with silver snaps. He was the first person everyone noticed as they entered. Still, when we stepped through the door, he waved one hand above his head and shouted, "Jambo! Jambo!"

He had come to Uganda before the academic year, arriving alone because my mother couldn't bear to fly through Europe without stopping in Finland to see her parents. Her mother had cancer, and she carried daughter-guilt with her. *How many years left?* Where our mother went, we her daughters followed. This would become our pattern: my father starting or finishing a school year in Uganda, the three of us in Finland.

Alone, my father moved into the house I would always think of as home, the definitive home: a place of warmth and wonder. It was a red brick house, squat and square, with a corrugated metal roof and a screened-in verandah. Because it was the farthest house from campus, nobody had wanted to live there. "Hurry to Uganda, or you'll be stuck with the house on the hill," my parents had been warned. When it was assigned to him, my father was elated. The jungle surrounding the house was still inhabited by monkeys, civet cats, mongoose, and bush babies. My father could scarcely believe our luck.

*I am batching it in a very big house, my father wrote his mother. I don't know how Kaarina will take to the rudimentary conditions. I don't mind. My needs are taken*

*care of. Except that I have only two pots. It is so hard to transfer everything back and forth since I have no storage containers. So I must boil water for drinking, cook beans, and cook rice, all in the same pot, plus I cook my soup in it. I don't know what to do with one, while I'm doing the other. It would surely help if I had an electric rice cooker. I would appreciate it very much if you could airmail one to me.*

Over the next decade, my parents would ask my American grandmother to send many things, including clothes, which they would ask her to wash first (*and don't iron*) so that the items would look used. *Customs is 100 percent of value, or more*, they wrote. My grandmother wearied of these letters, but that first request, she was quick to respond to: Only two pots, oh my! I'm not sure if the rice cooker arrived before we did; the screens are what my father remembers.

"When is your family coming?" the school secretary would ask. My father's solitary arrival worried the staff at Bugema. It sure didn't seem as if he planned to stay long.

"I'll send for them after the house gets screens," my father replied. He was joking and not joking. Our tickets to Uganda were open-ended, and he had a *mzungu's* fear of malaria. When we arrived, the screens, such as they were, were in place.

My mother dropped the bags and half ran to my father. They embraced for a time before remembering us. I hadn't seen my father in a long while, and when he bent to hug me, I wiggled away. Sonja placed her arms around his neck and allowed him to kiss her cheek, but she soon pulled away.

"You've gotten so big, pumpkin," he offered. She smiled and took my hand. "You girls have really grown."

"Well," my mother said to my father, hands on her hips. The worry on her face was gone, and behind the smile there was nothing more complicated than brightness.

"Well," my father said. He, too, was giddy. The two

months had been long ones, filled with work and wonder and foolish mistakes. Each day, he had been shoring up stories to share with my mother, for she was a fine one for laughing.

“So,” she said, “this is Africa.” She reached up and touched the hair that looped across his forehead. “You need a haircut.”

“How would you like to go shopping?” he said. “I know the best place in town.” The truth was that he would have liked to take us straight home. The flight was long, and he knew we must be tired, that my mother must be anxious to see the house, that a woman wants to unpack something. But we didn’t yet have a car, and the family who would drive us back to Bugema was now shopping in Kampala, an optimistic pursuit.

The Entebbe airport was outside of Kampala, and so we took a taxi into town. My mother gazed out the window, her first look at Uganda. The taxi rattled past dukas selling bananas and fish, past a dip in the ground where men stood knee-deep in water and washed a Mercedes with old t-shirts, past a marabou stork the same size as me. “Pretty amazing, huh?” my father said, pointing out the window. The stork was standing on a heap of rubbish, fussing over something. “They’re all over Kampala, but you won’t see many in Bugema.” We gazed at the trees and grass, at the ground and sky. Only the words were familiar. The difference between Finland and Uganda was like the difference between watercolors and oil paints. The textures were thicker here, the colors more intense.

My parents hadn’t stopped talking. They hadn’t been separated this long since they were married. They had met during my mother’s last semester of graduate school, her commencement nipping at their heels, her need to get married looming over every exchange. In her dorm room, she would sit with her friends and analyze her dates with my father. Was this significant? Was that? Would he propose before she left?

Though my mother alone knew it, their courtship was being played out under the long shadow of my Finnish grandmother, a shadow that stretched from Turku to Michigan. My grandmother was a formidable woman who had kept a keen eye on all her children’s romantic prospects. When my uncle Hannu dated the “Kissing Machine,” my grandmother dispatched my mother to the Machine herself to demand the couple break up. My mother complied, as did the Machine. Few, apparently, could say no to my grandmother. My mother’s own romantic prospects were scarce. She’s too skinny, the family said, too bossy, too shy with the boys. My mother was sent to America to get her master’s degree. That she

was also to find a husband was not only assumed, but also discussed in exhaustive, embarrassing detail.

If my mother was ever shy, it was certainly news to my father. “You’ll have to find another girlfriend soon,” my mother announced pointedly near the end of the semester. Her accent was British in its exactness, but Scandinavian in its rolling Rs. As her departure slipped from weeks to days, she intensified her campaign, pointing to girls with their miniskirts and their swinging blond hair. She selected tall, voluptuous girls, girls with twanging accents and large blue eyes, girls who were nothing at all like her. “Is she your type?” my mother would ask. “What about her?”

When my father finally proposed, my mother felt first a rush of relief and then happiness. They told the story of their courtship often, interrupting each other with points of contention, laughing at each other’s versions, then listing romantic rivals and complications, including a breakup. My father said he had every intention of proposing. My mother said that he would never have asked if she hadn’t compelled him to. If she’s right, then it was one of the few times my mother got her way over something significant. Though opinionated, smart, quick tempered, and strong, my mother had a soft spot for my father. That she ever agreed to live in Uganda would surprise everyone for years to come, her daughters most of all.

The suburbs surrounding Kampala were disarmingly rural with banana trees and tied-up goats and tin-roofed homes, and my mother hardly noticed we were nearing the city until the taxi jostled into Kampala. And even still, the capital of Uganda felt more like a town. The tallest building was the fourteen-story International Hotel. The road gave some indication of Kampala’s importance. It had become an alarming tangle of cars and bicycles and matatus, each jostling to pass the other. Our driver, sweat running down the back of his neck, poked his head out the window and shouted at pedestrians, then at a kombi driver, and then he turned to my father and shouted, “Nobody can drive here, eh?” and laughed. It was a laugh so full and leisurely that he could have been sitting in a parlor telling stories.

Kampala was built on seven hills. While Rome has Romulus and Remus, Kampala has the Kabaka and the colonizers and long-necked antelope. Imagine a land green enough to overwhelm every other color, though the dirt is red and the sky is blue. Imagine that the land is already separated into distinct kingdoms, each with its own language, culture, traditions, and religion. The monarchies are as distinct as any Europe has to offer. And there, in the heart of Buganda—a kingdom as old as the

British Tudors—lies Kampala (before it was Kampala). And imagine Ugandan kob stepping through the brush, moving in herds, their heads tilted, listening and then sensing no danger, eating at the green, green grass. Here, where we hurtle down the tarmac, is where the Kabaka once hunted.

In 1858, British explorers John Hanning Speke and Richard Burton came to Uganda, searching for the source of the Nile. When Burton grew ill, Speke continued without him, traveling north until he came to a virtual ocean of water edged with papyrus. Crocodiles lay upon the muddy banks. Though it was already named Lake Nyanza and owned as much as any body of water could be, Speke called it Lake Victoria.

He returned to England and announced (somewhat correctly) that Lake Victoria was the Nile's source. Burton disagreed. The two men traveled England, giving competing presentations and were about to debate each other in public when Speke died in what was either a suicide or an accidental shooting. For those living in Uganda, it didn't matter. Other explorers were coming, and then missionaries. They would arrive and find Uganda a good land, a lush and temperate place where the sun rose and set at seven, and they would set in motion the destruction that was to come.

Buganda was the largest kingdom and the most powerful. The Kabaka was king, and he lived on a hill surrounded by impala. The British called this place "the hill of the impala," and the words were translated into Luganda as kasozi k'empala, shortened eventually to Kampala.

Kampala became the heart of a new and reluctant nation. Kingdoms were gathered like fish in a net and tossed together under one protectorate: the British Empire. England used one kingdom as an administrator, another as a police force and army. They exploited grievances and pitted region against region. When Uganda's independence came, it brought with it the nationalism of many nations. Each former kingdom carried a reasonable grudge against the others, and with that grudge came fear. Is it any wonder that Uganda was hurled toward tragedy?

We arrived in Kampala ignorant or naïve, idealistic or malevolent, depending on how one would judge us. We carried with us the historical baggage of missionaries: the colonialism, the racism, the imposition of one culture over another, of one religion over another. We also carried the idealism: the sacrifice, the good intentions, the hospitals that had been built, and the schools. For good or for ill, we had come to Uganda. One family can't answer for all

the evils that religion has wrought upon the world, nor can it take credit for any mercies. The only certainty about our arrival was its foolishness. Years later, my mother would write in a mission talk: *If we had known enough about Uganda to make an intelligent decision, we probably wouldn't have gone.*

How my parents managed to remain ignorant, I'm not certain. When our plane touched down at the Entebbe airport, the United States had already closed its embassy, moved its ambassadors to Kenya, pulled out the Peace Corps (a volunteer had been shot and killed at an army checkpoint), and advised U.S. citizens against travel to Uganda. Idi Amin had evicted (or "booted out," as he said) sixty thousand ethnic Indians and Pakistanis, stripping them of everything they owned. He had accused fifty-five Catholic missionaries of smuggling weapons. They were lucky to only be expelled. Shopkeepers accused of price gouging were executed. People were disappearing. And Idi Amin had declared himself President for Life. In 1975, the year my parents received their invitation to serve in Uganda, the country's Finance Minister escaped to England, saying, "To live in Uganda today is hell."

The taxi stopped at the market, and together my father and the driver pulled our suitcases out of the trunk and lined them up on the street. "Watch them," my father told my mother. "They'll walk off if you're not watching."

My mother sat on a white hardback and set me on her lap, holding me to her with one hand, the other gripping the strap of her carry-on. "Don't wander off," she called to Sonja. "Come and wait here."

My mother had never lived anywhere hotter than Michigan, though she had visited California, Hawaii, and Florida. She was used to poverty, but not the tropical scent of it. The air of Kampala was heavy with smells: over-ripe fruit, burning rubber, the absence of soap. Flies landed on our arms and faces, their feet tickling our skin. My arms shot up in protest. The flies lifted, circled our heads, and landed again in the same moist places. A few children had gathered. We would have been a peculiar sight anyway, a bulky circle of suitcases and bewilderment, but with the exodus of expatriates, our existence was even more extraordinary. A boy bolted forward and touched Sonja's arm, then ran back, giggling. Other children held out their hands. "Hello, mzungu. Hello. How are you? Give me money."

What was a mzungu if not wealthy?

My mother placed both palms out, revealing their emptiness. "Do you have money?" she asked my father.

"If you start giving money, we'll be mobbed," my father replied.

My mother sat on a suitcase surrounded by children who were as beautiful and as curious as her own. Of their clothes, she would later write *one wouldn't even use them for rags, and many of the trousers have holes where it counts*. She would soon learn that Ugandans placed a point of pride on dressing smart and were appalled that Americans, who could afford better, dressed like hippies. She would learn that most Ugandans earned fifteen cents an hour, and clothing here was more expensive than in the States. She would learn that the stores were mainly empty, that a soldier would kill for a piece of soap, and that soap was, in fact, the perfect bribe. She would learn how to bribe and how to sweet-talk her way out of trouble. She would learn how to move through this city on her own, how to sell items in one place and purchase airline tickets in another. But no matter how much she learned, she would always be aware of the color of her skin, of its otherness. It was her passport as much as anything else.

The children darted forward in ones and twos, laughing. How could anyone be as drained of pigment as we were? They touched our skin and held tentative fingers toward our hair. Their hands were fleeting, like hummingbirds. Fingers grazed our bodies and then shot back to the bodies they had come from. The children stared at us, and Sonja and I stared back.

The other missionaries were visible from a distance, and my mother watched them for a long time as they approached. They moved easily down the road and did not seem to notice how they were noticed. Each person turned as the couple passed. They walked up to my parents, smiling. "Jambo," they said, shaking my mother's hand. "You are welcome, as they say in Uganda." The couple was tall and blond and friendly, and during the drive to Bugema, they took pleasure in trying to shock my mother, their voices overlapping: "Idi Amin. What a madman! He'll kill us all yet. He's certainly killed enough Ugandans, but don't say that to anyone here, it'll get you killed. He's crazy, all right. He was offering aid to America. He must have sent it, too, because there was nothing in the stores. Nothing! And everyone sitting around selling their nothing. What else are you going to do? I hope you brought lots of food with you. Or ate well on the plane. You've got to smuggle in flour if you want any without bugs, and you can only buy the buggy flour from a VIP store, strictly for expats. Of course, we all eat bugs here. We enjoy a good bug now and then, don't we? Good protein. Good for the vegetarian diet. Some insects actually are for eating. Termites are

edible. Did you know that? You just pull off the wings. No, we haven't tried them. We're not that hungry yet. Who knows, maybe next month."

My mother was more amused than anything. They expected her to be horrified, and their expectation was bracing. Besides, she was certain they were exaggerating. If the Adventist church was still sending missionaries, Uganda must be reasonably safe, food must be reasonably available. She smiled as if she couldn't wait to eat a termite, as if she had come for that very reason.

"It can't be all bad," my mother said. She had been to the market and had been dazzled by the fruit. There were pineapples, passion fruit, paw paws, and bananas. So many bananas. She hadn't known so many varieties existed. She had bought a bit of everything and couldn't imagine needing anything else. She gestured to her bag. "There's something to buy."

The wife turned to my mother. "The fruit *is* lovely. But you'll see, there isn't much else, and the political situation, well, it's pretty awful."

The trip to Bugema was at least an hour's journey on the road, which began paved and gave way shortly to dirt. The earth was red, and it rose up from the road and clung redly to the windows, and behind the van, a cloud of maroon hung in the air before returning to the road and to the grass beside the road. The lane was narrow, and when cars approached from the opposite direction, the smaller vehicles had to pull to the side. Bicycles and pedestrians traveled at their own peril. "The road to Jericho," the missionaries called it after the carjackings began.

ABOVE: Our family at the airport. BELOW: My family at the equator in Uganda.



We passed grove after grove of banana plants. A cluster of trees stood outside every home. Bananas could be boiled, steamed, fried, mashed, made into beer, or eaten raw. The word *matoke* means both banana and food. Through the shredded leaves, great clusters hung down from stems as solid as a leg. When the fruit was harvested, the stalk was cut with a panga, and the whole bunch, weighing as much as a goat, was dropped in a corner of the kitchen.

The homes were made either with cinderblocks or earth and were roofed with corrugated metal or straw. The kitchens, my mother would later learn, were usually separate, a hut in the back where women squatted beside a fire and where smoke was a second ingredient. Cooked on a stove, *matoke* could taste bland.

Sonja and I closed our eyes against the adult voices. We weren't jetlagged. There was only an hour's time difference between Finland and Uganda, between this land of lakes and trees and that land of lakes and trees. But we were tired from rising early, our day beginning with a drive into Helsinki, the checking-in of luggage, the moving from plane to plane, the whine of wheels before liftoff, the jolt of wheels upon landing, and then, finally, Uganda. We were soothed by this rhythm of tires against dirt, and even the bumps couldn't wake us.

Later, we would come to know this road and to love it. We would sit in the backseat of our Ford station wagon, our bodies angled toward opposite windows.

"I recognize that chicken," I would say.

"I recognize that man on the bicycle," Sonja would respond.

It was a joke, this game, as if the same chicken and the same man and the same bicycle waited along this road, waited for us to return. When we came home after a long absence, we would set our happiness to song. We would commemorate what we were returning to in a long and loving litany—our friends, our cats, our dog, our chickens, our house, our hallway, and even

our guava tree, the one I had named Bertha. We added verses and changed the tune, laughing at our own cleverness. We played with the words, stretching out the vowels. But the chorus was always the same: *We will soon be home. We will soon be home.*

It was late when we finally arrived at the house on the hill. Sonja and I were sleeping, our heads lolled back on vinyl seats. "Here it is," my father said. "What do you think?" He carried suitcases to the house. My mother carried children. They waded through grass that hadn't been slashed for several weeks. The house sat at the top of a hill in a small clearing, encircled by jungle. In the fading light, it was hard to notice the flowers. My mother was left only with the shadows, the buzzing of insects and frogs, the greens that grew steadily darker, and a vervet monkey that scampered from branch to branch, edging for a closer look.

My mother was a woman with many fears: driving, choking on pills, cancer. To that list, she promptly added snakes. Only later would she include Idi Amin and Uganda's "political situation," the delicate phrase missionaries used to refer to the killings. But those early days, our mother's biggest fear was snakes.

The house my mother moved into was so infused with snakes that even for Uganda, it was notable. It was as if Medusa lived in our attic. Students later spoke of a science teacher who lived there, a man who kept snakes on the verandah, their aquariums arranged in stacks. They said he bred mambas, pythons, vipers, and cobras, and when no one was looking, he cooed to them as if they were a room full of guinea pigs. Before the missionary returned home, he carried his collection to the yard, removed each lid, and watched as the snakes rustled in the grass, their pulses disappearing into the jungle. The story passed from year to year, class to class, and like the most vivid legends, it wasn't true. What is true is that there were snakes here, a lush and diverse population, and that they would remain long after we had left.



SARI FORDHAM is a professor, writer, and environmental activist. Her work has appeared in *Best of the Net*, *Chattahoochee Review*, *Baltimore Review*, *Green Mountains Review*, among others. Her memoir *Wait for God to Notice* was a finalist for The Sarton Award for Women's Literature.



# Beware of SNAKES

*By Sigve Tonstad, 2022*

On road to far-off Kiev—I see it from the sky—  
a snake is coming nearer, the pictures do not lie.  
I see its winding motion, serpentine and fierce,  
filled with lethal poison—fences soon to pierce.

The rustling in the grasses, the whisper in the trees,  
sounds of looming danger, enough to make me freeze.  
I try to make eye contact, to see its face up close,  
but it is whirling faster, and now the danger grows.

I asked about its mission, it answered thus to me:  
“I’m here to help the people, I want to set them free,  
from addicts and the Nazis, from the hateful gang,  
I’m coming to your rescue, to free you with a bang.”

At once I knew the riddle: it wasn’t what I saw  
but words by serpent spoken, words from serpent’s jaw.  
It was the lying reason, the justifying gall,  
the stupefying blather preceding bombs that fall.

It is the lie that matters, the Big Lie and the small,  
of an election stolen, the speech on hallowed Mall,  
of countries not existing, of people lacking rights,  
deceit that truly matters, this is the lie that bites.

Thus, too, in ancient garden, a serpent barely seen,  
but words were subtly spoken, targeted and keen,  
of burdensome repression, of scrumptious fruit denied,  
of facts that do not matter, truth brazenly defied.

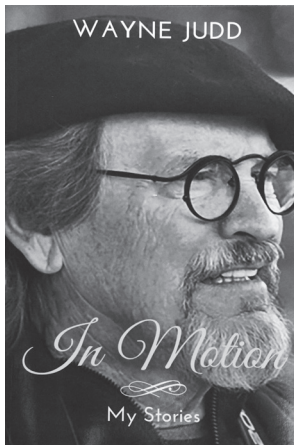
A small advantage noted, the snake that I can see  
on road to far-off Kiev—I trust you will agree—  
the hidden snake more fearsome, especially the lies,  
the subtleties well-spoken, and unseen from the skies.

# Des Ford, Music,

# AND ME

An excerpt from Wayne Judd, *In Motion: My Stories*.  
Independently published. 2022.

By Wayne Judd



“Wayne, I don’t see any reason why we shouldn’t bring Desmond Ford in as a guest lecturer, do you?” Pacific Union College president Jack Cassell said to me one day. Adventist Church leadership in Australia had approached him, requesting relief from a major Australian theological debate. The controversy had created two highly polarized factions in the country with Desmond in the middle.

“We’re pretty secure here at PUC,” Cassell added. “Let’s give the Australians some time to cool down.”

When Ford arrived, I knew in our first handshake that the college was in for a rough ride.

## The Australian Debate

“Hello, Wayne” (it sounded more like “wine” because of his Aussie accent). “I’ve appreciated reading your articles and papers.”

I responded that I was pleased to meet him, too. And I was. I liked Des, and we became good friends.

“You Americans are far too congenial,” he commented, an unusual thing to say on our first encounter. I didn’t respond but took note, aware that the Aussie scholars are fighters, clinging fiercely to their “positions,” as they called their approaches to theological and biblical studies.

The polarization immediately invaded the Pacific Union College campus, and in fact much of the West Coast of the United States and beyond.

What Cassell had apparently overlooked in his confidence that the college could provide relief for the Australians was that Des’s presence on the West Coast would create an even greater need for it in America. Cassell had also missed another cue. One of the leading religion teachers on the PUC campus was an individual who had himself crossed swords with Desmond Ford in Australia. Erwin Gane had fiercely opposed bringing Des into PUC’s religion department, even though it was billed as a temporary arrangement.

Gane told the religion department chair, Larry Richards, that Ford's presence would destroy the department. Early on, Larry shared Jack Cassell's optimism. But it wouldn't last.

At the time I hosted a two-hour call-in radio show on Friday nights on the powerful KANG college radio station. We received calls from as far away as Redding, Sacramento, Oakland, and San Francisco. I determined to give both Ford and Gane a hearing on my talk show. But to my dismay, Ford always said yes to my invitations while Gane always rejected them. So, because I hosted Des without the counter theological positions, I quickly became labeled as a "Fordite" by those who feared that not only the PUC religion department, but also the entire Adventist Church could collapse as a result of Ford's ideas.

Then I did another thing that elevated the already sizzling theological temperature. It seemed to me that it would be a good idea to have dispassionate conversations among a few scholars on the competing theological positions. To present Ford's and Gane's positions would fill a book, but I'll include a paragraph or two here for those unfamiliar with a debate.

To perhaps oversimplify the controversy, Gane and traditional Adventism took a more Methodist perspective of living a holy life ("sanctification") in response to justification by faith. On the other hand, Ford declared that salvation was an act of grace on God's part, appropriated by faith without good works.

Irwin Gane fought hard to maintain the historic position of the Adventist Church, which insisted that faith was incomplete without good works. Too much grace, in his view, would lead to a crumbling of institutional authority and a compromise of the traditional focus on getting ready for Jesus's soon to return to earth, which naturally included good behavior.

To be sure, the most contentious elements of the debate centered around understanding what happened when William Miller's prophecy of Jesus's return to earth on October 22, 1844, failed. But the real challenge Des Ford presented to the church was strong his emphasis on grace, forgiveness, and the completed work of Jesus on the cross without the necessity of exonerating God through the lives his people on earth lived.

Convinced that Pacific Union College was one of the havens in Adventism for authentic academic freedom, I asked two good friends to join me in forming a chapter of the Association of Adventist Forums on campus. The organization existed largely outside the approval of many denominational leaders, billing itself



*Charles Scriven (left) and Wayne Judd (right) commuted to Berkeley, California, together for two years attending doctoral seminars.*

as providing access to enlightened conversations among "thoughtful Adventists."

Adrian Zytoske and Charles Scriven agreed that it would be a good idea to organize a chapter of the forum at PUC. So we did. The college administration responded with a barely visible frown, but we moved forward, inviting Desmond Ford to speak on the topic, "The Investigative Judgment: New Theological Truth or Historic Necessity?" I knew Desmond Ford had been revisionistic on the doctrine and that it had become a polarizing issue in his native land.

### **The Moment**

Ford accepted our invitation to speak at the forum, and we scheduled his presentation for October 27, 1979, with obvious proximity to October 22, the "Great Disappointment" date.

Many versions of the succeeding events below have been written. Those I've seen all contain errors. No doubt mine will too, but I was there, right in the middle of it all, start to finish, so here it is.

We reserved a classroom that seated 25 people upstairs in the Paulin Hall music building on the PUC campus. The small size of the venue indicated my complete ignorance of Des Ford's star power.

Twenty-five people soon filled the small classroom. Out of the classroom window we saw hundreds more streaming toward the music building. Quickly we shifted to the Paulin Hall Auditorium.

In just minutes several hundred people had filled the auditorium with hundreds more still arriving. My plan

that a dozen or so scholars would hear Ford's ideas, then have a quiet discussion, completely derailed. We had not promoted the event widely, and at the moment we were far too busy trying simply to find seating for the hordes to ponder the overwhelming response to our meeting.

The answer was not complicated. We had inadvertently found ourselves in the midst of a major moment that was already unfolding in the Adventist Church. One that would belong to the masses, not to the scholars.

Once again, we transferred the meeting, this time to the historic Irwin Hall chapel, which seated 1,000 people. The audience filled almost all the main floor and wrap-around balcony seats. A handful stood around the periphery of the chapel.

We had asked Eric Syme, PUC's church history teacher and a somewhat outspoken Brit, to give the response to Des's presentation. On one occasion, after facilitating a closed department meeting in which Ford and Gane stated their positions, he had emphatically declared, "There's not dime's worth of difference between the two of you." Still, Syme agreed to do the response.

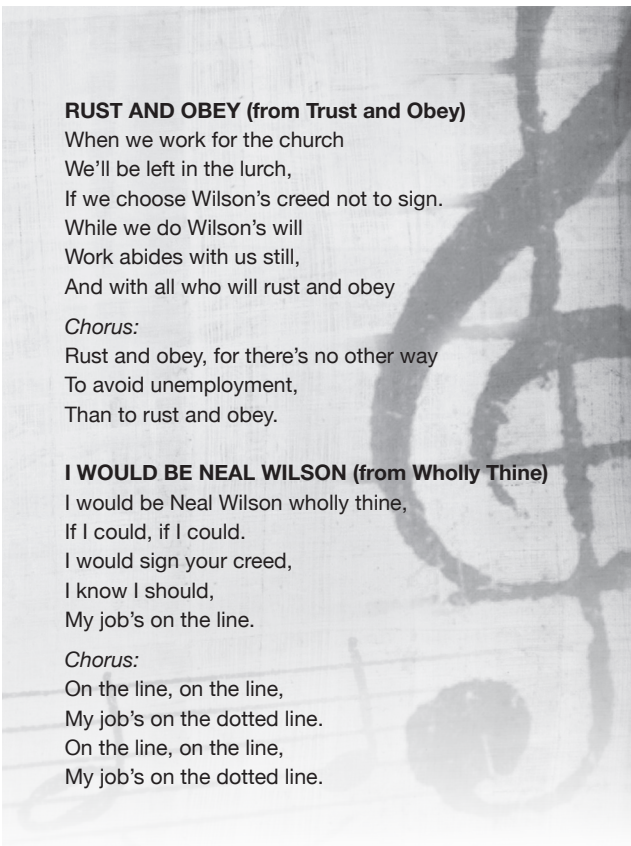
Finally, Adrian, Charles, Eric, Des, and I walked onto the historic stage, surrounded by elaborate old wooden beams, pillars, pulpit, and a wonderful display of organ pipes overhead. Ellen White had stood at this very pulpit many years before.

I followed directly behind Des. As we entered, I heard him say quietly, "It's time. It's time" — only with his Australian accent, it came out "It's tawym, it's tawym." Aware of what he was doing, he realized that his presentation would violently rock the denominational boat.

And he knew beyond doubt that the audience contained as many detractors as disciples. St. Helena, eight miles down the hill from PUC, was a coveted retirement destination for Adventist ministers and leaders, many of whom had showed up for the Forum meeting.

About halfway through Des's presentation, Adrian Zytoskee scribbled a quick note and handed it to Eric Syme, then gave it to me after Eric read it. Adrian understood the historic dynamic

much better than I did. He wrote: "Eric, there are some fairly powerful people who are prepared to crucify Des on this issue and drum him out of the church! If there is any way in your response, even if you disagree strongly with his interpretations, that you can demonstrate your solidarity with scholarship in the church and your support of him personally so as not to give aid and comfort to those who want to push him out, it would be helpful. The only reason I am writing this is to let you know the intensity of his opposition,"



**RUST AND OBEY (from Trust and Obey)**

When we work for the church  
We'll be left in the lurch,  
If we choose Wilson's creed not to sign.  
While we do Wilson's will  
Work abides with us still,  
And with all who will rust and obey

*Chorus:*

Rust and obey, for there's no other way  
To avoid unemployment,  
Than to rust and obey.

**I WOULD BE NEAL WILSON (from Wholly Thine)**

I would be Neal Wilson wholly thine,  
If I could, if I could.  
I would sign your creed,  
I know I should,  
My job's on the line.

*Chorus:*

On the line, on the line,  
My job's on the dotted line.  
On the line, on the line,  
My job's on the dotted line.

Adrian was one of the most skilled politicians I ever knew. His note was an important prompt. Syme, though convinced that this Australian debate was a tempest in a teapot, obliged and gave a favorable response. Unfortunately, that outraged Ford's detractors even more.

When the floor opened for discussion, I was in still in shock at the attendance and intensity of the event. The topic quickly became much more a can of worms than a teapot. When Adventism was in its creative youth, with doctrinal and cultural definitions emerging in its fledgling institutions, the leading voices frequently disagreed. Now, the raised voices shouting their disagreements in the old, historic Irwin Hall Chapel, seemed a historic re-enactment of the early days. I thought it was wonderful.

At the time I was excited that, although the meeting was something of a brawl, it seemed that new ideas could still be debated. Believing that Ford was destroying the church, they directed their anger at him during the discussion following the presentation and response. To me that was a healthy thing, especially in an academic institution. Such Forum meetings employed a pattern of feedback and discussion. Believing that Ford was destroying the church, they directed their anger at him during the discussion following the presentation and response. And as news spread of the meeting church leaders at the General Conference would have none of it.

### **Aftermath**

The rather large and noisy cohort of Ford disciples, along with the need to display at least a semblance of justice, nudged church leaders to go through the motions of hearing Des out in more congenial settings. Ford wrote a massive document stating his positions. The church scheduled a major conference to address the issues at Glacier View Ranch in Colorado, August 10-15, 1980. Ford supporters viewed this "Sanctuary Review Conference" as a trial. One hundred and fifteen international Adventist Bible scholars and church administrators attended the conference and plowed through the issues. In the end, a secret ballot stripped Ford of his ministerial credentials. He was defrocked.

Beyond firing Ford, the Glacier View conference accomplished nothing. Congeniality went out the window. Both sides in the debate and its aftermath were guilty of absolute intransigence. Although Ford was himself a most congenial individual, his followers were not, often making strident and schismatic proclamations that would negate any chance that the

two sides could achieve any reproachment. In Ford, they found hope that the church could transition from its historic emphasis on grinding obedience to the law to a life lived freely under liberating grace. They longed for denominational reform and were willing to fight for it.

The traditionalists were equally determined. Although I was not squarely in either camp, during the conflict that followed it was the traditionalists who turned against me. The so-called "Fordites," even when I refused to support them in their schismatic actions, never attacked me.

What did change was that Ford, now stripped of his ministerial credentials and banished from the realm of Adventist higher education, set off to build his own version of what he thought Adventism should be. Calling his movement "Good News Unlimited," his emphasis was on faith, grace, and the completed salvific intervention of Jesus on the cross.

Independent congregations sprang up around the country, led by disillusioned Adventist pastors who believed Ford was correct in his viewpoints. Ford himself launched his counterculture with headquarters in Newcastle, California, 32 miles east of Sacramento. Many younger Adventist ministers and religion teachers defected to join his movement, believing that at last someone within the Adventist tradition had discovered the full and liberating meaning of the gospel.

Because I had been identified as a friend of Ford, some of those individuals phoned me for advice on what they should do. My response was always the same: "You can withdraw from the church and start your own congregational fellowship, but you should know that your efforts will likely be one-generational at best." Adventism had been already defined as a sectarian withdrawal from mainstream denominations, which meant that the Ford offshoots would be sectarian withdrawals from a sectarian withdrawal. Without structure and institutional support, the odds of long-term survival were against them. While sympathetic and marginally supportive of the disillusioned preachers, the futility of their plight, along with my own world view, dissuaded me from any significant involvement. Still, let me share how and where I fit into those troubled times after October 27, 1979.

### **The Singing Incident**

When Ford had settled into his new location in Newcastle, I decided to slip away from Angwin on a Saturday morning to visit him and his second-in-command, Smuts van Rooyen, a former seminary

colleague of mine and powerful preacher in his own right.

Knowing that they shared my affection for Des, I decided to invite three other professors to join me, Adrian Zytkoskee (behavioral sciences), Eric Anderson (history) and Bill Price (auto mechanics). Not surprisingly, they all eagerly said yes. Adrian had just purchased a new Volkswagen Jetta, so we nominated him to drive. As the three arrived to pick me up, I impulsively grabbed a church hymnal off our piano, hopped into the left side of the backseat, and we were on our way, as we agreed, “to cheer Des up.”

Our drive to Newcastle was 103 miles. It would take us one-and-one-half hours. Time enough to have some fun creating parodies from the hymnal to bring at least a few smiles and maybe a laugh or two to Des, Gillian, Smuts, and Arlene. The parodies gushed out of us without effort. We drew on hymns that would be very familiar to any Adventist and most other Christians. Filled with insider allusions, they captured the anguish of those who thought the General Conference president, Neal Wilson, had seriously abridged justice in the Des Ford case.

Another reference in the songs was to Gerhard Hasel, appointed by the General Conference as dean of the Adventist Theological Seminary to the dismay of at least 22 leading seminary professors.

At Des’s new headquarters, I slipped into a back office and typed out the lyrics to our parodies. Des and Smuts were delighted with our doggerel. So were we. When we returned to PUC that Saturday afternoon, we went to Bill Price’s home where he had recording equipment. Gathering around the mic, we recorded the parodies on a cassette tape. Later, I placed a label onto the cassette: “*The Sudden Sound Singers*, from Keene, Texas, in an attempt to obscure the actual origins of the parodies if the tape ever got out.”

But we still were not finished. Jumping back into Adrian’s Jetta, we drove over to see Kent Seltman, chair of the English department and a good friend. We performed our songs for him—more, I recall, to our delight than his, although he chuckled a restrained approval. I believe now that he had foreseen that our parodies would cause trouble, given the polarized atmosphere around Desmond Ford’s concepts.

Then we piled back into the Jetta and sang for Walter Utt, chair of the history department, then Fred Veltman, religion department professor. Caught up in our enthusiasm, we finally headed to Larry Mitchel’s house to serenade him. Larry was a fellow religion teacher with

an emphasis in Old Testament. It was a balmy day, so his windows were open, which meant that our voices wafted across the yard into the neighborhood. Having thoroughly contained our irreverent actions up to this point, we trusted Des, Smuts, Kent, Walter, Fred, and Larry to keep our cathartic performances confidential.

### Detection

But the sound from Larry’s open windows caught the ear of the very conservative college registrar, Howard Hardcastle, as he walked out of Larry’s next-door neighbor’s house. We didn’t know we’d been discovered, so we went our separate ways assuming that we had achieved our objective of employing satire to ease the burdens of two very good men, along with releasing some of our own accumulated frustrations.

The next Monday we were hailed into the college president’s office. “What’s this I hear about your singing sophomoric parodies at Larry Mitchel’s house?” he asked. He told us that Hardcastle had reported what he had heard in terms that could not be misunderstood.

Hardcastle, upon hearing the singing, had sneaked into Larry’s yard, hid in the bushes, and noted the identity of the four men who exited the house. Later, Hardcastle told me, “I couldn’t have been more shocked and offended if you men had been engaged in devil worship.”

“This could be very bad,” President Cassell observed. “This Ford business has already given the college a bad name.” We explained that we were simply using satire and humor to ease the stress from the whole Ford controversy. Also, we assured him that the incident would be contained. Cassell knew that a large segment of leading faculty members was dismayed at the treatment Des had received at the hands of church authorities. However, we did *not* tell Cassell or *anybody* that we had written and sung the parodies in Newcastle to cheer Ford. In fact, we somehow escaped ever having to face that aspect of the incident. Had the administration and board found out the real purpose of our parodies, we conjectured that we would all have been fired on the spot.

That weekend Larry Geraty visited Angwin. An archaeology professor at the seminary in Berrien Springs, Michigan, he was one of the 22 scholars there distressed by the appointment of Gerhard Hasel as dean.

In my presumptuous role as something of a chaplain to my teaching colleagues, I decided to send not only the sheet with the lyrics back to the seminary with

### WHAT? NEVER THINK AGAIN?

(from *What Never Part Again?*)

There is a land of pure delight,  
A place where there is no sin.  
A place where there are no bright lights,  
And scholars never win.  
Oh there was a time,  
Yes it was sublime;  
And it's coming back  
If enough are sacked,  
And soon we will be scholarless,  
And never, never think again . . .

Chorus:

WHAT, never think again?

NO, never think again.

WHAT, never think again?

NO, never think again.

And soon we will be scholarless,

And never, never think again.

### WHAT A DUD WE HAVE IN WILSON

(from *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*)

What a dud we have in Wilson,  
Every member hoped for more.  
Now we're filled with lamentations,  
As we're writhing on the floor.  
Can we stand this any longer?  
Will our spirits never soar?  
Only if we can dispense with  
Andrews' hermeneutic whore.

### ONE FOUNDATION

(from *The Church Has One Foundation*)

The church has one foundation,  
'Tis Ellen White of old,  
And she has always told us  
There will be scoffers bold,  
In the last days before us  
Omega will arise,  
Unless dear Olivera (a church leader who  
deplored the "cancer" of liberalism)  
The cancer doth excise.

### A MIGHTY SCHOLAR

(from *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*)

A mighty scholar is Gerhard,  
His orthodoxy never fails.  
He plagiarizes where he can,  
While gospel workers he impales.  
And now he will clean house,  
The fires of error douse.  
He'll exegete his way  
To calling all fair play.  
Gerhard! The Seminary hails!

Larry Geraty, but also a copy of the cassette tape. Larry was sure the parodies would provide cheer to his disappointed colleagues who met in Fritz Guy's home in Berrien Springs. When the seminary professors saw the lyrics and heard the songs, one of them declared that the four PUC singers should be fired, not for the lyrics, but for the singing itself. Our out-of-tune quartet would never perform together again.

Geraty promised that the cassette tape would be returned to me, which it was, and that copies of the lyrics would all be collected and destroyed, which they were not. No doubt, though, he did his best to keep that vow. But he couldn't have.

I was more than surprised to learn that their spouses had come along with the disheartened professors to join the gathering. I thought I had made it clear that our parodies were for the professors alone, minimizing the vulnerability of the PUC singers.

All heard the cathartic songs and left. So did a copy of the lyrics. Fritz Guy reported that one of the professor's spouses had absconded with a song sheet, which, because it so delighted her and others, demanded circulation. The lyrics went far and wide and naturally fell into conservative hands. Eager to prove that PUC was a den of dangerous liberals, one of those individuals greatly multiplied the number of sheets in circulation, now with the added heading, "Circulated by Wayne Judd."

During the next few years, I collected several file boxes of documents relating to this period of my life. As I leafed through them, I was stunned again, now 43 years later, at the vitriol and fear that consumed the conservative wing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I had no trouble deflecting the hostility that was directed toward me at the time, because I had amazing support from my students, colleagues, and family.

But the full implications of those events extended into the next five years of my tenure at PUC.

### **Backlash**

By the time 1981 rolled around, the Ford debacle was consuming my professional life. I continued to chip away at my research for my dissertation, but the assaults from my detractors became difficult to ignore. I still had abundant support from students and colleagues, all of whom became aware that I was on thin ice professionally.

Almost daily I received hate mail from frightened right-wingers, although I rarely saw them. Audrey, my wife, intercepted and destroyed the hate letters before I got home to see them. I rather wish we had kept a few, but as she was my rock of support throughout these years, I cannot begrudge her protective spirit.

Our sons, Ken and Kris, were aware of the grinding conflict in my professional life, although we never discussed it with them. But they tell me now that they realized what was happening.

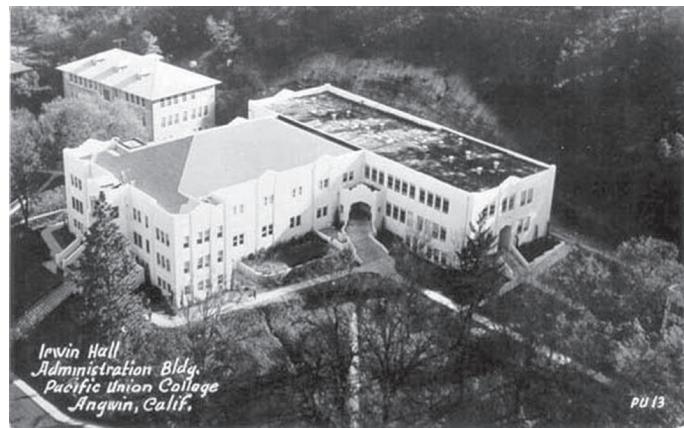
One consequence of the conflict was that neither of them, then at the age when their friends were becoming baptized members of the Adventist Church, never once expressed any interest in being baptized or joining the church. I honored their autonomy. And they never did become Seventh-day Adventists.

One Wednesday when I came home from work, Audrey announced to me that we had not received any hate mail that day. Deciding that a no-hate-mail day deserved to be celebrated, we drove down the mountain into St. Helena and ordered pizza.

### **Aloha**

In the middle of the Pacific Union College theological debate, I received an invitation to go to Hawaii for a two-month stint to teach a college extension course to Hawaiian Mission Academy senior class students, along with two additional courses for 40 elementary and secondary school teachers in Hawaii to meet their credentialing requirements. They were two of my favorite months of my teaching career. The Hawaiians made it clear that the aloha culture was not a tourist trap, but rather a description of who those people were.

I preached every Saturday for two months in eight different Adventist churches in Oahu, with a satisfying level of support. My classes were also received with appreciation. The gentle people cared little about the issues that had divided mainland Adventists. Hawaii provided a needed respite. While there, it seemed to me that chocolate covered macadamia nuts and the aloha spirit were more relevant than theological debates.



ABOVE:  
Irvine Hall, Pacific  
Union College



Audrey and our two sons, now entering their early teen years, joined me for two weeks in the middle of my stint in Hawaii. I had fallen in love with the state and its people and suggested to Audrey that we should move to there to escape the political intrigue at PUC. I could do that, she replied, but it would turn out to be a very long commute for me. She made the same speech years later when I had a couple opportunities to join the Castle Medical Center executive team on the windward side of Oahu.

Finishing my two months of teaching in Hawaii, I resumed my classes in Angwin. The students received me warmly, the administration tentatively. The ultra-conservative Adventist constituency of the college wished that I had not returned at all. These were not only outside critics—sometimes lay people, other times retired ministers—who felt threatened. A few faculty members and a handful of theology students also opposed my presence at PUC.

The aloha culture of Hawaii had deceived me to some extent. I wondered why liberals, moderates, and conservatives in the PUC world could not just decide to love each other rather than continuing the furious theological debates. My own values, my observations of Adventist church history, and my doctoral work in Berkeley informed my growing awareness that Adventist culture and theology were in serious transition.

### **The Times They Are a-Changin'**

One of my colleagues in the religion department of PUC, Dennis Priebe, with whom I had attended the theological seminary, had positioned himself fervently against Desmond Ford and his alleged heresy. Ironically, Dennis and my other colleague, Erwin Gane, who both promoted a very traditional view Adventism and therefore should have been safe, were fired, not for heterodoxy, but rather for insubordination after their public attacks on the college administration for not dealing with the religion department liberals. In a series of hard-hitting religion departmental “group therapy” sessions led by Terrence Roberts, a psychology professor at PUC and one of the Little Rock Nine students who integrated Little Rock Central High School in 1957, it became clear that there would be no reproachment within the department. That became another reason for the two dismissals. The college administration felt it could not have a religion department at war with itself.

Some more liberal-minded teachers at PUC considered the firing of Gane and Priebe to be some

sort of victory. It wasn't—it was a shame. Taking no joy in it, I had hoped all along that when the dust settled, we could resume our friendships. I liked Desmond Ford a lot. But I also appreciated Erwin Gane and Dennis Priebe. They were good men driven by deep convictions and a compelling sense of their calling.

I invited Dennis to my office to review our circumstances and relationship, which had previously been positive. He had promoted what he and other conservatives called “historic Adventism.” Greatly simplified, this position translated essentially into several components. First, Jesus was the example of how to live a perfect life, an illustration of what God's people in the “last days” should emulate.

Second was the notion of “salvation by character.” Ellen G. White wrote, “When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in his people, then he will come to claim them as his own.” (Years ago, I even wrote a book under the title *You Can Still Believe*. The Pacific Press Publishing Association book editor, Herbert Douglass, wrote in his rejection notice, “Your book does not contain enough salvation by character.” (The manuscript lies buried somewhere in my computer.)

Third, the “remnant” or chosen believers, would continue toward perfection until they proved to a watching universe that God's ways were best.

And finally, the work of Jesus on the cross was not all-sufficient. The “atonement” (bringing God and humanity together, or “at one”) was not completed at Jesus' crucifixion. Only when God's remnant people lived a holy life, thus vindicating God's character, could the atonement be considered complete.

Ironically, much so-called “historic Adventism” can be found in the radical Unitarian creed. Both focused on the “ability of man” in actualizing salvation. Having spent a good deal of time digging around in American religious history, with particular emphasis on Millerite and Adventist history, I thought it appropriate during my visit with Dennis to quote the nineteenth-century Unitarian creed: “The fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the leadership of Jesus, salvation by character, and the progress of mankind onward and upward forever.”

Seeming more puzzled than interested in my observation, Dennis concluded our visit by saying, “Wayne, the church is changing. And it's clear to me that it's moving in your direction, not mine.” His studied perception of denominational transitions was in fact prophetic, though many continue to fight relentlessly to preserve and protect such church traditions and leadership authority.

## The Talk

Back from my halcyon months in Hawaii, I walked squarely into another buzz saw. Actor Robert Blake, recently the star of the TV series *Baretta* (1975-1978), had accepted an invitation to address the student body of Pacific Union College. I never found out how Blake or *Baretta* fit in with the student body of a faith-based college. His presentation was to take place shortly after I returned home from Hawaii. Two days before Blake's scheduled talk, his agent notified the college that he was unable to come. The college administration scrambled to find a speaker and landed on me.

I said yes, as I did to all such invitations. Although I had loved Hawaii, I had also missed my students back at PUC. So, with the warm glow of aloha in my heart, I quickly prepared my talk, with the goal of addressing the divisive polarization that afflicted the Adventist community in Angwin and beyond.

Building a case for moderation, I declared that most of us were not far left or far right, but rather moderates. I addressed what I called "positionolatry," in which the two sides in the ongoing theological debate become guilty of worshiping their *positions* rather than the God they claimed to represent.

The old Irwin Hall chapel, same site as the Ford presentation, was filled with students, faculty, and administrators. Also present was Ronald Numbers, who, visiting PUC from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, had himself experienced rejection by the Adventist Church for writing a book that was seismic in Adventist history. Published in 1976 by Harper and Row, *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White* revealed that Adventist pioneer and founder Ellen White had used multiple sources for her extensive writings. Numbers' retired minister father, who had also endured denominational chagrin because of his son's activities, was sitting with Ron in the crowd that day.

Ron Numbers and I had collaborated in a learned conference in Killington, Vermont, in which 11 scholars read papers to an assembled group of 20 on nineteenth-century premillennialism and the Millerite movement that launched the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Most of the scholars were not Adventists, but they reflected a broad interest in the Millerite movement. Indiana University Press published the material in 1987 under the title *The Disappointed*. I wrote the chapter on William Miller. The conference and the book were to honor Vern Carner, who had been tireless for decades in promoting early Adventist history.

Because of our common interest in American

religious history, Ron and I found ourselves attending history conferences, where we always intersected. At the end of one of those sessions, as attendees exited the convention center, I was standing at the bottom of a long, crowded escalator waiting for him to descend. Throughout the conference we had heard scholars congratulating one another on the wonderful papers and books they had published. Numbers had just published his watershed work on Ellen White. At the bottom of the escalator, I looked up as he descended.

"Reverend Judd," he shouted down to me in greeting as others on the escalator and down below turned to discover what the outburst was all about.

"Dr. Numbers," I said back. "I read your book."

"Good," he responded.

"It was *shoddy*," I shouted.

Historians buckled over with delight. "Best one-liner of the conference," one said as he walked past me. Ron later handed me an autographed copy of the book with the note, "To Wayne Judd, the shoddiest scholar I know, Ron Numbers."

After the release of his book on Ellen White, Ron was no longer welcome in Adventist culture. So, he went to the University of Wisconsin where, as Hilldale Professor of the History of Science and Medicine, he became a leading voice in his field, retiring after 38 years.

At the *Baretta* talk, I spotted Ron as I began my speech. "I'd especially like to welcome Ron Numbers who is with us today," I said. "Ron's presence here reminds us that we still have not learned as an organization how to deal with our heretics."

The student body applauded vigorously. They knew Ron Numbers' story, largely because I had shared it in my classes in the context of Adventist history and how church authority was built around the writings of Ellen White. The students also sensed that I was probably not far behind Ron in my own future relationship with the denomination.

During those turbulent times, someone would record almost all my public presentations, then circulate them within the right wing of the Adventist culture. The *Baretta* talk was one example. In it I "professed" to have received my testimony from God as Ellen White had done for her massive writings. "I was shown" was her typical launch into her testimonies.

In my testimony, I condemned extremists on the right and the left in favor of a more reasonable, moderate theological stance. "Most of us here today are not conservatives or liberals," I explained. "Most of are moderates, and it's time for us to find our voices."

I identified contemporary “brothers” and “sisters,” much as Ellen White did in her testimonies, as “Brother A,” or “Sister B.” My allusions to warriors on the right and left, were often not difficult for the students and faculty to identify.

The students, who by now were weary of the debate that divided the college, cheered my talk. But I heard from them that one of the conservative religion professors wept over my presentation in the class he taught immediately after the assembly.

### **Defendant**

As it became clear that my future as a college professor was severely at risk, I began to spend less time working on my PhD and more sitting in on business and communications classes that would point me toward an MBA. I took courses in marketing, management, publication design, communications, and fundraising from my teaching colleagues. By now I realized that I needed a backup plan. False rumors continued to circulate about my heresies. My presentations in and out of classes continued to be surreptitiously recorded. A neighbor told us that they had seen someone rifling through our garbage cans early one morning, no doubt hoping to find some evidence of non-compliance with the church’s conservative lifestyle. They found nothing but garbage.

Reports circulated that I had been seen walking with Des Ford, and that I had attended his meetings. While I did walk with him, I never went to any of his meetings, not because I was worried about guilt by association, but because I became less and less interested in dogma and other sectarian elements in Adventism.

An organized group of conservatives who called themselves “The Friends of PUC” published newsletter reports to the college constituency condemning the administration and board for not dealing with the blatant heresies of the religion department. One piece in their newsletter declared,

“The PUC Board of Trustees in their Sept. 22 meeting approved the request of the Administration to promote Wayne Judd and Larry Mitchel of the PUC Department of Religion. Both men have been highly critical of the church’s fundamental stance on

### **I SAW ONE WEARY**

(from early Adventist hymn, I Saw One Weary, Sad and Torn)

I saw one weary sad and torn,

Who’s frock no longer could be worn. (Des Ford)

He smiled a friendly smile at me,

But Lewis Walton said to flee. (Author warning against liberalism)

I gasped and gaped and with a shout

I asked him, “What’s this all about?”

He said, “My friend, what can I do?”

“I went on trial at Glacier View.” (Desmond Ford’s denominational demise)

doctrine, and were involved in the infamous singing incident, in which church leaders, doctrines, and Ellen White were ridiculed. These two men are strong supporters of the revisionistic tendencies prevalent in current Adventist theological circles. They operate under a smokescreen of conservative sermons and statements designed to allay fears of the conservative wing of the student body and church members.”

### **Fact-finding Committees**

As the pressure continued to increase, the college administration responded with a fact-finding committee of the board that interviewed me and others to evaluate departmental orthodoxy. I prepared a notebook for each member of the committee, indexing my alleged heresies with responses to each. I also played excerpts from cassette tapes that students had made of key lectures that the rumor mill had misrepresented.

One of the legitimate accusations that I faced was that I had accepted an invitation to audition for the role of King Arthur in a *Camelot* production of the Napa Valley Fine Arts Productions organization. When I was cast in the musical, the college president and academic dean called me into the president’s office and said, “We cannot have a religion teacher on stage as King Arthur right now.”

In reply, I stated that for years I had urged my students and colleagues to become engaged in their communities, rather than to isolate among the faithful. I added that King Arthur stood for right, honor, and justice, nothing that conflicted with Adventist religious principles. Also, I told them that the Napa drama group had changed two Friday night performances to Sunday matinees to accommodate my Sabbath tradition. Furthermore, I even chose as a stage name, Reuben Williams (my middle name and my grandfather’s first name) to slightly obscure my identity in the Napa press.

The fact-finding committee was largely supportive of my work and my influence on the students, so nothing came of the three-hour interrogation. I believed I had been cleared of the accusations.

But I was becoming more than a trifle exhausted by the relentless assaults of the conservatives. Then, just as I had hoped the dust had settled, I had another call from the college president’s assistant.

“Wayne, the president and board want to call you back for further questions.” She gave me the time and place. Hanging up the phone, I wept. It was the only time throughout those years of conflict that my emotions completely overwhelmed me.

Once more I spent another two hours before the fact-finding committee. Again, most of the committee members were on my side. But Bill Penner, a dentist who was a conservative board member from Sacramento, had come under the influence of The Friends of PUC. In fact, a group of physicians and others in the Sacramento area who had pledged a sizable amount of money to build a new science building on the PUC campus decided to hold their money hostage until the college administration dealt appropriately with the liberals. The great metal beams rusted on the abandoned construction site as the debate raged on.

Now Penner did his best to put me on the grill, though I can remember only one of his questions. “Do you believe in Ellen White?” he asked. I said I did. She was a very real historic figure, and a founding mother of the Adventist tradition. Easy to answer. How could I not believe?

When Penner finished his questioning, it was clear that the committee believed I had passed the round two test of my five-hour interrogation. Our wizened financial VP, Bill Strickland, who was anything but outspoken, turned to Penner and barked, “Do you still think he’s a heretic, Bill?”

Years later, in 1995, Audrey and I moved to Roseville and occasionally attended the Carmichael Adventist Church in Sacramento where Bill Penner was a member. Now he was altogether congenial, even apologizing and inviting us to his home for a Sabbath lunch. Still hurt, I was not able to accept his apology or his lunch invitation. Character flaw? Maybe.

But to me, such repentance was way too easy. Simply erasing the sin and allowing sinners to trudge happily forward in life, while the consequences of their actions continued to impact the innocent, makes no sense to me. I decided during my experience at PUC that forgiveness, although it has therapeutic value for the confessor, is what Dietrich Bonhoeffer would call “cheap grace.” Wanting none of it, I didn’t feel guilt for refusing to forgive those who stole from me the thing I loved most in my professional life: the college classroom.

Moreover, formulaic repentance struck me as an act of self-interest by the offender, who was more concerned about shoring up his own record in the divine courts than in assuaging the pain of the offended.

Although I passed the second fact-finding committee interrogation, knowing that the conflict was far from over, I attempted a proactive approach. I urged, even begged, the administration to form an independent judicatory body to judge my worthiness, indicating that I would gladly subordinate to the decision of such a committee. But I told them I would not bow to the demands of the frightened conservatives, who knew that the church was changing and assumed that teachers like me were going to undermine the sacred traditions. But nothing came of my request for authentic justice. And the shrill voices on the extreme right continued their harangue. By now, the college president and academic dean were themselves facing professional risk. Something would have to be done.

Eric Anderson, one of the hymn parody singers, stood his ground within the Adventist academic world, remaining in the PUC history department, later becoming president of Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, Texas, then briefly president of PUC to clean up a later crisis of leadership. Now retired in Angwin, Eric is the director of the PUC archives. He provides a first-person account of the next development in the drama:

“The ‘singing incident’ returned with a vengeance in the spring of 1981. College administrators assumed that they had heard the last of our hymn parodies, but the episode suddenly got new attention when an Adventist ‘offshoot’ newsletter published the lyrics

(in slightly garbled form). Cassell and Madgwick felt betrayed, since we had assured them, after the first explosion, that the recording of the songs had been secured and circulation ended. The singers (plus one unlucky listener, Larry Mitchel) were again called into the president’s office.

“We knew what to expect because we had been tipped off by a colleague. Richard Hughes, physics professor and a shirttail relative of Cassell, had learned the night before what the president’s plan was. The sole religion professor in the quartet, Wayne Judd, would be fired. The others would face lesser penalties.

“The five men ‘on the carpet’ seized the initiative, declaring that we knew what the plan was. I said that if Judd was fired, the other three of us would make so much fuss that we would have to be fired too. I added that such a result would, in turn, bring down the president and academic dean as well. Adrian Zytkoskee seconded the motion.

“This ambush was so successful that President Cassell denied that he had any such plan, though he did not venture to suggest what the board might do. “A particularly memorable moment came when Larry Mitchel protested the violation of his privacy.

“Speaking directly to Cassell and Madgwick, he said: ‘I feel like you held me down, while Howard Hardcastle raped me.’ Afterward, “news quickly spread across campus that Wayne’s job was in danger.”

### **Protesting Students**

Cassell did, in fact, tell me before I left his office that the board would fire me the next day. That was indeed the plan. Despair and hopelessness filled me as I left the meeting.

My sister’s daughter, Susan Chaffee, had come from Minnesota to Angwin to attend PUC. I told her after leaving the president’s office that the board would terminate me the next day. She was dating a leading senator of the student association. Bob Logan was an activist. Without my knowledge, he and Sue went into the dormitories and announced to the students my expected fate. They collected hundreds (I was told) of notes and letters from students protesting the firing. I suspect that there actually may have been scores, probably not hundreds. By the morning the collected student letters were in the hands of the president and board chair.

In addition to the letters and notes, once the student body learned of the danger that I was in, they sent me many notes of support, which I greatly appreciated,

while at the same time believing strongly that students should be immersed in their academic and social lives, not taking time to defend a teacher who mistakenly believed in academic freedom.

### The Verdict

Late on the afternoon of the dreaded board meeting, I received a call from the president's office indicating that I would not be fired. The support of my colleagues and the response of protesting students frightened the board and administration more than the perceived heterodoxy of Judd. Instead, the administration offered me time off to complete my doctorate, which was already moribund. Now planning my future outside academia, a degree in American religious history would have minimal value. I wanted an MBA. But I wasn't ready to leave the college yet.

Consequently, I declined the offer of time off, certain that it was intended as a way to get me off campus to appease the critics without alienating the students further. Academic dean Gordon Madgwick, asked me why on earth I would not take advantage of their generous offer.

"Because I believe that it is in fact a half-way house on the road to unemployment," I said—not unlike Desmond Ford's "time off" after his October 1979 lecture. Des never returned to the classroom.

Word that I would not be fired spread quickly throughout the community. Audrey and I received a phone call from Karen Trivett, wife of Terry Trivett, a microbiology professor. "We have about 15 couples gathering at our house to celebrate the good news," she said.

We walked into the crowded house where the women were gathered in the kitchen and the men in the living room. The women were crying, the men laughing. Because Adventist culture forbids alcohol, we gorged on ice cream to celebrate.

On the way home I asked Audrey, "Why were the women crying when we arrived?"

"Oh, they told me that their husbands had



declared that if you were fired, they would all quit their jobs and leave PUC."

I stayed on for two more years, teaching and chipping away at classes that would advance me toward an MBA.

### Exits

By 1984 Jack Cassell and Gordon Madgwick had resigned. The polarizing conflict at PUC had pushed the board into making a major change in the college administration.

Despite all the hubbub over my role at PUC, I never was fired as many people believed. In fact, the new academic dean, Charles Bell, urged me to stay on. "Wayne, you are the sort of teacher this college needs for its students," he told me.

Malcolm Maxwell, the new president, equivocated. Phoning me one day, he suggested that I should stay on at the college, although not in the classroom. He said he thought I would do a good job in student recruitment. The next day he rescinded his tentative offer. Someone had gotten to him.

I received an invitation to give the 1984 summer commencement address in the college's outdoor amphitheater. President Maxwell, who would introduce me, was one of the very few who knew that it would be my last presentation as a PUC professor. The next day I would head south to Burbank to take up my new healthcare career in Adventist Health System/West's Glendale office, later moved to Roseville, California, where Audrey and I landed in 1995, 11 years later.

"Malcolm," I said just before we went onto the platform, "you cannot announce that I'm leaving."

Somewhat puzzled, he asked, "Why not?"

"Because, Malcolm, I want to finally control the narrative after all that has happened. And I don't want to receive fraudulent declarations of regrets from those who are no doubt happy to see me gone," I added. The next day I drove down the mountain humming the doxology.

WAYNE JUDD retired from his strategic planning and mission management roles for Adventist Health in 2010, and now lives in Southern California, where at age 80 he wrote his memoir, *In Motion: My Stories*.



# The Shame OF WINNING

The war is lost, you should know it, and lost even if you win,  
and try as you might deny it, this truth is resistant to spin.  
You dread the shame of losing, there's greater shame to come,  
the shame of the violent conquest, by that shame now undone.

You raise the flag victorious, a flag now the symbol of shame,  
with fanfare and music hollow—and you as the one to blame.  
Triumph defeated by wreckage and pride by what was wrought,  
monuments for the ages, for this foul glory you fought.

There's shame, I admit, in losing, but greater the shame to come,  
the shame of inglorious winning, by that shame fully undone.  
Your soldiers fighting bravely, and fighting the shame they must,  
the shame of killing a neighbor, reducing his dwelling to dust.

Perhaps you are counting your assets, the assets few that are left,  
I know what they are and will name one, accomplices to the theft.  
The church in your land applauding, cheering the wicked deed,  
this is the foulest asset: it embraced your violent creed.

Heaven and history watching, the penultimate chapter of shame,  
earth keeping faithful record, inscribing shame on your name.  
It could be the shame of losing, there's shame in losing, too,  
much greater the shame of winning, that's what the losers do.

# Leadership and the Gift of Submission:

INSIGHTS FROM EARLY ADVENTIST LEADERS

By Gilbert M. Valentine

Emmanuel cared for the lawns, the yard, the car, and the garden. Parveen dusted and swept the floors, did the laundry, and cleaned the windows three days a week. Shireen filled in for him during the other two days. We would always introduce those stalwart church members to our visitors or family members who came to stay at various times as our “home help” or “workers.” One day a neighbor inquired whether he could use my “servant” for a small task. It made me feel very uncomfortable. When Emmanuel asked me to witness his thumbprint signature on a scholarship application form his son had filled out, I noticed that the youngster had listed his dad’s employment as “servant.” Now I felt even more uncomfortable. In my egalitarian culture we did not think of such roles as “servants.” The term carried overtones of hierarchy, class, and demeaning labor and implied the idea of being submissive. And were we not in the late twentieth century and supposedly beyond all that? But this was another country, another culture, and servants were very much part of everyday life on the sub-continent. Because the term was unsettling, we tried to use any employment descriptor other than “servant.”

Perhaps such sensitivities help to account for the discomfort many leaders experience in our twenty-first century world with the concept of servant-leadership. It is such a paradox. Leaders don’t take orders—they give them. How can a person lead if they have to be submissive? And aren’t servants required to be submissive, receiving directions and orders even if disguised or framed as polite requests? Are church leaders such as conference presidents meant to be servant leaders? And should General Conference presidents be submissive? To whom and when?

Although it sounds as if the concept of servant-leadership may seem derived from Scripture, that is not the source of the idea



according to its originating theorist, Robert Greenleaf. Rather, the seed idea for his philosophy of servant-leadership germinated, he recalls, from the tale related in Hermann Hesse's 1956 novel, *Journey to the East*.<sup>1</sup> Hesse explained how a group of travelers on a mythical journey lost its way and fell into disarray after Leo, the unobtrusive servant of the traveling group, disappeared. It dawned on them that in reality their servant had been their leader. If Greenleaf did not derive such an insight from Scripture, however, the idea nevertheless resonates well with biblical themes and finds many illustrations in the sacred text.<sup>2</sup> Because the concept of servanthood is such a strong motif in Scripture and because it provides an essential theological framework for disciples, it is also an appealing model for the leaders of such disciples.

Servant leadership was not, however, the first model that suggested itself to early Adventist leaders as they began to think about the nature of the leadership task even with their commitment to the Bible. When in the early 1870s Adventist administrators began to search for something to provide guidelines for expected leader and followership behavior, it was the "great man" motif from the story of the Exodus that seemed most applicable. A strong, authoritarian "great leader" style patterned after the manner of Moses seemed the most appropriate for a young movement. George I Butler, two-time General Conference president who occupied the position for a total of 12 years and began under the tutelage of his predecessor in office, James White, formally articulated the great leader idea in a pamphlet in 1873, and the General Conference endorsed it in session that year. Butler's essay attempted to resolve deep leadership tensions that had emerged during the first decade after the church's organization. But rather than settle the controversy, Butler's paper on leadership ignited even more intense debate about the nature of church leadership.<sup>3</sup>

The theory, carefully thought out by Butler, in fact, did not set out his own home-spun self-justifying philosophy of leadership. Rather, it sought to provide a theoretical and theological framework to scripturally justify the autocratic, domineering leadership style experienced by the colleagues of James White. The strong leader idea provided a framework and an expectation for White's close associates to be able to fall into line, implement his plans and ideas without challenge, and remove cause and occasion for any criticism or carping.<sup>4</sup> God had called Moses, and he followed divine direction. Associates then followed Moses' commands. Thus, it should also be the case

in Adventism. Two years after the endorsement of the "Moses" concept and further reflection on the negative implications of the model, the church in session formally rejected it in 1875.

Theologically, James White argued, such approach to leadership did not concur with New Testament principles, however much his personal temperament locked him into that style and caused problems for his associates. Even when others tried to relate to the autocratic president White in New Testament terms, viewing him as an apostle, it did not solve the problem. The idea of one-person rule in a monarchical format claiming "kingly power" was not the way for a church trying to establish itself among a constituency both seeking to be faithful to Scripture and valuing the principles of a democracy. Even after the formal rejection of the strong, one-man-in-charge model outlined in Butler's position paper, however, the idea was difficult to dislodge from church administrative behavior. The style was so deeply linked to the temperaments of both James White and his apprentice, George Butler, that it became embedded also in the organizational culture and continued to plague church leadership relationships to the end of the century and beyond. As historian Benjamin MacArthur observed, such a leadership pattern reflected the ethos and spirit of the times. It was an era when business monopolies owned and controlled by titans of industry exercising "kingly power" were so much admired in North America.<sup>5</sup> In the church, the problem of individual, autocratic dispositions was exacerbated by an inadequate and over-centralized organizational structure. As a result, an anti-autocratic emphasis became the theme of many of Ellen White's letters to church leaders during the last decade of the century.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, despite the tendency for senior leadership to adopt autocratic modes of leadership and exercise "kingly power," another prominent strand of early Adventist leadership reflected a broader but related approach now understood within the framework of servant-leadership.

This article will argue that although early Adventist administrators may not have used the technical terminology of servant-leadership, nevertheless one of the key concepts of servanthood—submission—lies at the heart of the model and characterized Adventist leadership even as it posed distinctive challenges for them. The requirement of submission was essential for survival under James White's practice of leadership. But even more generally, the idea of submission was seen as an important dimension of successful spiritual

leadership. Being a servant inevitably involves submission. My article reflects on this distinctive dimension and investigates how early Adventist leaders related to it. What did submission mean in practice for them?

First, I will consider servant-leadership as submission particularly in a context in which charismatic and executive leadership function together in a shared or team leadership relationship. Several case studies from Adventist history will then examine various attitudes to submission and the role of submission in such a shared leadership relationship when a strong charismatic style is present. Such historical analysis would suggest that empirical studies might profitably further explore submission as a characteristic of servant-leadership in contemporary shared leadership settings. Hopefully insights from the historical analysis will both illuminate and inform contemporary leaders who perceive the model of servant-leadership as more adequately embodying biblical ideals in achieving the objective of being a servant-leader.

### **Servant-leadership as Submission**

In 2002 leadership theorist Larry C. Spears identified ten distinctive characteristics of servant-leadership. The list included, among others, listening, empathy, healing, awareness, and stewardship.<sup>7</sup> But submission was not among the ten. A growing body of study on “servant-leadership” as an empirically verifiable model or theory of leadership has in more recent years, substantiated the core behaviors and attitudes linked with this understanding of leadership. Some studies have sought to clarify whether the pattern is linked to temperament or if it is more appropriately described as a set of behaviors. Peter Northouse in his classic text on leadership devoted a whole chapter to this distinctive approach to understanding leadership.<sup>8</sup> A 2011 review and synthesis of the new wave of servant-leadership studies in the *Journal of Management* by van Dierendonck notes that thus far, researchers have identified about 35 “key characteristics.”<sup>9</sup> Some of the descriptions of the characteristics overlap with each other, and it appears that some are clear duplicates such as when researchers simply use different terms to describe the same thing. Sen Sendjaya, J. C. Sarros and J. C. Santora of Monash University in Australia, in a 2008 study of servant-leadership, identified “voluntary subordination” as a key characteristic of servant leaders.<sup>10</sup> In 2011, D. Van Dierendonck and I. Nuijten distinguished “humility” and “standing back” as two

separate characteristics that may together mirror the “voluntary subordination” that Sendjaya noted.<sup>11</sup> The linkage would seem to be a natural one. Research on the identifying characteristics continues from a variety of perspectives including study of the impact that culture may have on attitudes and behaviors, for example in societies such as Nordic Europe where “power distance is low” and in Germanic Europe where “low humane orientation” may present a challenge.<sup>12</sup> Here I note that in early Adventist leadership practice, submission is a clearly observable characteristic of leadership.

The concept of submission is, in reality, inherent to the idea and the role of servant. Serving involves work done for another. It necessitates personal subjection in the process. The ancient world considered such a stance as unworthy and dishonoring for a free person, because it implied inferiority and stood in contrast to governing or ruling. “Lord” and “servant” were antonyms. In the New Testament, for example, the word cluster used to describe the act of serving exhibits a clear overlap of meaning between the roles of servant and slave. The common Greek term *doulos* is translated into English as both “servant” and “slave.”<sup>13</sup>

Submission for either servant or slave involved the absence or removal of one’s autonomy through the subordination of the will to another. Culturally, the ancient world viewed the roles with revulsion and contempt.<sup>14</sup> Both servant and slave received instructions and submitted to the will or desire of the master. It is at this point that the paradoxical heart of the idea of servant-leadership is so striking. A servant, by definition is one who submits. And yet the idea of submission seems so totally at odds with the strident ambition commonly associated with leadership. Thomas Cronin and Michael Genovese elaborate on the nature of this paradox in *Leadership Matters* in which they argue that the role of leader as servant is a vital part of understanding the link between leader and follower. Leaders are nothing without followers. Leaders serve their followers in a submissive relationship. Yet this stands in tension with the common understanding of ambition, of leading from the front and the exercise of power.<sup>15</sup>

Early Adventist leaders working within the framework of their distinctive shared leadership arrangement often experienced pressure to submit, frequently enforced with a particularly sharp edge. They could not, in fact, succeed, nor even just survive in leadership if they did not manifest a markedly “submissive” spirit. It was not submission of the kind suggested by the leader-

follower paradigm, but submission required by the model of shared leadership. The submission needed for participation in Adventist shared leadership had a distinct and unique focus occasioned by the presence of a distinctive authoritative charisma among the leadership team. Manifesting a “submissive” spirit was thus an essential requirement for success as an early Adventist leader.

### **Shared Leadership and Submission**

Persons called to formal positions of administration in the early Adventist church organization found themselves leading alongside a very strong, informal, extra-organizational influence and authority. It derived from the distinctive charismatic leadership of Ellen White which functioned outside the formal organizational structure.<sup>16</sup> She never held any official position or appointment within the organization other than to attend General Conference sessions as a credentialed delegate. Nonetheless, her influence inserted itself aggressively into the processes of the organization alongside and in collaboration with formal leadership. In organizational terms, the exercise of Ellen White’s charisma required shared leadership. The community validated her charisma and give it a high degree of deference and respect.<sup>17</sup>

Studies of the social source of power and influence in an organization such as those by French and Raven in 1962 help elucidate the nature of power and the inevitable tensions associated with its exercise. Formal position or legitimate power gives control over resources and therefore is linked with the ability to reward, or punish and coerce. Referent or personal power derives from the possession of expertise or specialized knowledge. Personal power also involves a recognized personal charisma or giftedness.<sup>18</sup> Other studies have explored how the dynamics of such influence work. The ability to exercise influence and power in an organization can be viewed as political skill and/or social skill linked with the capacity to call on and utilize accumulated social capital.

We can clearly observe such patterns of interaction between different sources of power and influence in the early Adventist Church as its organization developed. Many times tension developed between the charismatic influence of Ellen White and the formal positional executive or legitimate power exercised by officially appointed leaders. In fact, an ongoing systemic state of tension existed between those sources of influence. Leadership even as it “serves” also inevitably involves

the exerting of influence, the exercise of power. It is a leader’s role to cast the vision, bring about desired change, and monitor, control, and direct resources. The sources of power available to leadership to enable it to function derive from position, skill, charisma, and the ability to reward and punish.

The problem for those called to positions of formal executive leadership in early Adventism, from an organizational perspective, was the presence of a complementary external source of influence which, while it was consistent in its pursuit of principle, could also, at the same time, be erratic, unpredictable, and idealistic. To be successful, Adventist leaders had to learn to submit to this strong para-organizational source of influence and find workable ways of relating to it. It required diplomacy, depths of spirituality, patience, forbearance, and an attitude of submission, a reality easier for some than for others.

Many accounts of Adventist history have viewed the presence of this charismatic influence as a large factor in the survival and expansion of the community. It provided guidance and spiritual insight. In hindsight it has been seen to have helped the community grow and prosper. But that was an outcome not always able to be perceived in advance. The relationship between charisma and senior executive leadership was often actually a partnership that involved mutual planning, traveling, preaching, and even using shared living and accommodation arrangements. From this perspective it was essentially a cooperative, collaborative partnership in leadership—of serving the community of faith together. At times, however, the relationship was also competitive, and thus it generated conflict, sometimes quite serious. For some early leaders, finding ways to submit in the midst of conflict was not always easy or successful. Furthermore, at times executive leadership paradoxically had to find some way to resist the expectation to submit—even while submitting.

For example, properly constituted executive authority in the church (democratically elected leadership acting on decisions of committees and boards), often faced the need to make a decision that involved the determination of priorities, goals, and strategies to meet such goals. It would then be followed up by the strategic allocation of financial resources as well as the assigning of personnel. At this point and sometimes during the process of determining priorities, conflict would open between the executive and the charismatic views of the issues involved.

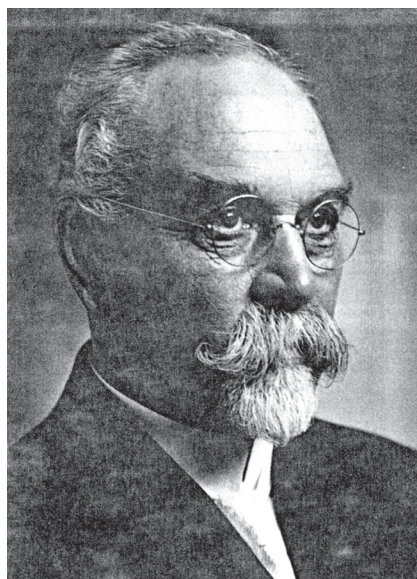
The problem became how to resolve the competition

between the two sources of authority. Which source of authority should prevail? Servant-leadership for Adventist leaders at such times more often than not required “submission”—often at significant personal cost. And there could also be a price to not submitting. On some occasions, in spite of the potential cost, it was clear that submission was not considered to be the best resolution to a conflict.

I believe that the following five episodes offer exhibits or short case studies of how various Adventist leaders approached the various dimensions of submission. Significant tensions between the two leadership nodes in the early Adventist movement often surrounded the determining of strategic priorities and the allocation of financial resources. Two particular flashpoints were especially significant. The first involved the matter of the timing, locating, and financing of new projects. How was it to be done? The second was the distribution and disbursement of funds raised for special projects. Again, the question concerned how to do it. The leadership team often saw priorities differently and struggled with the requirement of submission.

### **Case Study 1: A. G. Daniells and the Locating of a College**

In late 1894, the 36-old president of the Australian Conference, Arthur G. Daniells, found himself wrestling his way through a perplexing requirement to be submissive. American church leaders in Australia were in the midst of trying to establish a school and had made a start in Melbourne. Unfortunately, disputes had emerged among them over school discipline and significant tensions among the staff. Criticism from Ellen White directed at the spouses of the leaders had also strained relationships. To a certain extent the group was experiencing aspects of what has been called “cabin fever.” Then in the search for a new location for the school there had risen a genuine disagreement among the leaders over the appropriateness of a certain possible property proposed for the new college at Cooranbong near Newcastle, 90 miles north of Sydney. A serious lack of money and an inability to find a good site that could be profitably



*Arthur G. Daniells, Center for Adventist Research Image Database.*

used for farming complicated the matter. Daniells, an experienced man of the land from the American corn belt, was not at all sure that the Cooranbong location was the right place. Furthermore, a government agricultural officer advised against it. So did the General Conference. But the site did have some attractive elements. Ellen White strongly favored it, and so a holding deposit had been put on the property.<sup>19</sup>

A decision by Australian conference officials made at camp meeting in Sydney in November 1894 authorized proceeding with the purchase at Cooranbong. Ellen White had urged the action. But in December, even after their decision, members of the group were still not certain that they had made the right choice. Ellen White also was persuaded to continue searching for better land, inspecting a possible site in the Penrith area west of Sydney.

At the camp meeting in Sydney, she had hard words to say to Daniells, because of his opposition to the Cooranbong site. At the end of December, she followed up with a letter to him. Although scolding in tone, because it came from Ellen White, it carried spiritual authority. Ellen White informed Daniells that he needed to get behind the Cooranbong location and stop opposing it.<sup>20</sup> So troubling and harsh was the letter that Daniells was not able to write for three months. And when he did reply, he wrote with difficulty.

Since the Ashfield camp meeting my mind has been exercised almost daily with reference to the matter you read to me on the campground, and which was forwarded to me by post a few weeks later. I have desired to write to you, but my reason for not doing so is that I have not known what to write. I have been tempted to feel that you have little confidence in me, and that anything I might say would lead to more severe criticism.

But I believe that all this is from Satan, and I had desired to say nothing until the Lord had delivered me from wrong thoughts and put into my mind right views of this matter.

I have read the testimony which you sent me many times, and have endeavored to do so with a prayerful heart. Some portions I do not as yet understand. Other parts are plain. I do not cast any of it aside, but pray the Lord to help me to be admonished by it all. Some of the points I would like to write about, but I do not know as it would be right to do so. I am sorry that I have not counseled with you more about the perplexities of my work, but at first I thought you would not care to be troubled with me. But I feel that my course has increased your burdens, and now if you are willing I feel that I should like to write you freely with reference to the plans we are trying to carry.<sup>21</sup>

Milton Hook, the historian of Avondale College, observes, “These are the words of a leader groping to find his way back from a fractured relationship.” Despondent, Daniells admitted his uncertainty and the depths of his spiritual struggle. Hook suggests that his expression “some portions I do not as yet understand” is perhaps “a euphemism for his feeling that some of the criticisms were unjustified.”<sup>22</sup> Clearly, Daniells struggled with the need to be submissive at this point. His carefully chosen words indicate that he desperately wanted to reply in self-defense but chose to bite his tongue, as it were, and to keep moving on for the good of the cause. It took another 18 months of some very difficult experiences before he realized that the school project was really going to succeed and that he should get fully on board. Doing so, he apologized to Ellen White for being so cautious to begin with. As a result, he came to appreciate her role in the project even if in his own mind the college could have perhaps succeeded better or at least as well in some other location. His need to submit clashed with what seemed to be his better judgment.

### **Case Study 2: A. G. Daniells and the No-Debt Policy**

After what Daniells described as a terrifying financial experience in the establishment of the college at Cooranbong, church leaders resolved as a matter of general policy that new enterprises should not be established under large loads of debt. Wherever possible, funds should be raised first, and when sufficient money was in hand, only then should the building or the purchase get under way. Ellen White agreed, and although allowing for an occasional

exception in a new field where the “the brethren are few” and “their means limited,” she laid it down as a principle that institutions should be established free of debt. “We should shun debt as we should shun the leprosy.”<sup>23</sup> It was a mantra she reiterated many times during the years that followed the exceptionally difficult experiences at Avondale and a lesson that Daniells learned well. He had been obliged to go cap in hand to banks and businesses and friends of the cause to seek help after deposits and other financial commitments, which he considered rash, had been made on the purchase of the properties at Cooranbong. Daniells felt he had been forced into raising funds to meet commitments made by others when adequate resources were not in hand, and he did not like it at all, particularly when it involved deadlines and forfeitures and he had come perilously close to losing everything. Such an approach had cost him many a night’s sleep. The interests of the cause had been put at grave risk. From Daniells’ perspective, it was not sensible stewardship, a signature characteristic of good servant-leadership.

Daniells had adopted the no-debt approach for new institutions as the standard policy for his administration after his election as leader of the worldwide General Conference, and he tried to insist on it, for the most part successfully. He disagreed vigorously with those organizational entities and leaders who would venture into new enterprises, whether colleges, sanitariums, or publishing houses, or start a major program without sufficient resources, and then come to the General Conference and expect it to bail them out. It was over this issue of policy and leadership that led Daniells into his power struggle with Dr. J. H. Kellogg, director of the Battle Creek Sanitarium, who wanted to establish a new sanitarium in England entirely on borrowed money. But Daniells also found himself in conflict on the issue with others, including Ellen White. Tension arose over the possibility that a too rigid approach on the issue would retard the growth of the church. Ellen White felt that the church could ignore the issue of debt if the opportunity for mission and expansion seemed too good to pass by. A real point of tension between the two sources of influence in the church, it proved exceptionally difficult at times for administrators such as Daniells who experienced the dilemma as a conflict between vision and opportunity on the one hand and good stewardship and rational common sense on the other.

On some occasions, such as in regard to Kellogg’s proposal to build a sanitarium in England on borrowed capital, Daniells fiercely resisted. But in regard to other

projects such as the establishment of Loma Linda and several other sanitariums in California, the tension was resolved by allowing such project to go ahead. Even though Daniells might personally disagree, he found himself needing to submit.

The attitude to debt continued to cause ongoing problems for church administration. Ellen White's own accumulation of debt in 1915 at the time of her death embarrassed church leaders and led to continuing tensions and conflict with the administrators of her estate. In those later conflicts, paradoxically, it was the managers of the literary legacy of Ellen White's charisma who found themselves obliged to adopt a stance of submission.<sup>24</sup>

### Case Study 3: W. W. Prescott and the Redirection of Special Donations, 1899-1905

Another area of tension between the charismatic leadership of Ellen White and the executive administration of the church related to the question of ethical obligations in regard to special donations. Could special gifts solicited and targeted for one specific mission project be reassigned to some other project, and could they be used to offset regular allocations already budgeted? The latter had happened in the late 1890s when apparently some treasury officials in Battle Creek had in their accounting calculations credited private donations for Ellen White's work in Australia to general consolidated church revenue instead of designating the money directly for her. They had then offset the special donations from the already budgeted appropriation to Australia without any additional funding. Ellen White had labeled the practice "robbery." It seems that the episode was long remembered, and it created an enduring suspicion of the General Conference treasury by Ellen White over the way some officials handled her finances.

On the floor of the 1899 General Conference session held at Union College in Nebraska, W. W. Prescott, at that time, director of the British Mission, had dared to raise the particular matter publicly and exposed it as an example of miss-appropriation of mission field funds by

the General Conference treasury. Prescott spoke on behalf of the absent Ellen White, being familiar with her plight after having spent some time assisting with her projects in Australia. His speech seems only to have created hostility. At the time, the General Conference was continually operating in the red, constantly struggling with over commitments and having to operate on the basis of loans from the publishing house. Financially, from every angle it was a highly stressful time.<sup>25</sup>

Later, in 1905, when Ellen White aggressively advocated the kind of re-allocation she had previously condemned, church leadership was chagrined. At this time Prescott was serving as the vice president of the General Conference and as editor of the *Review*. He had recently been pressed into taking the responsibility of relocating the *Review* and Herald Publishing Association in Washington, D.C., following the destruction by fire of its previous facilities in Battle Creek.<sup>26</sup> Establishing

a new publishing house had its challenges, especially given the lack of funds for rebuilding.

The church had launched a fundraising drive targeted to help the struggling institutions in Washington and advertised it in the *Review*. After the announcement that \$15,000 had been dedicated for the new publishing house, funds had been solicited and given for this specific purpose. A few months later, Ellen White sent instructions that the \$15,000 should instead be sent to the work in the southern states, because she thought that the need there was greater at that time, Prescott was not a little "troubled" and "confused." The

switch perplexed both W. C. White and W. W. Prescott. Previously, she had sharply reproved church leaders for such a practice that she had called "robbery," and Prescott had attracted considerable opprobrium by speaking about it. He couldn't figure out how if such a diversion was robbery then, could such a similar diversion be made to "look straight" now? And besides, Prescott wrote back to W. C. White, the diversion had forced the publishing house to breach another policy and go into debt.<sup>27</sup>

There was no easy answer. It seemed plainly inconsistent. W. C. White replied that he was just as



W. W. Prescott, Center for Adventist Research Image Database.

puzzled. But he pointed out that in the past submission had resulted in blessing. The way that W. C. White explained the matter to himself was that “perhaps the Lord knows more about his work than we do.” Prescott went along with the re-assignment even though for him it seemed inconsistent and even unethical. Submission in this instance appeared to impose a heavy cost on personal integrity.<sup>28</sup>

#### **Case Study 4: J. H. Kellogg and Intellectual Property Rights**

A further case of tension between the two nodes of leadership occurred in 1894 when submission of executive leadership in the medical branch of the church in a dispute over resource

allocation required a “submissive spirit” in order for progress to occur. In this instance, Kellogg had initiated the development of new health food products at the Sanitarium in Battle Creek. The church had not been able to invest in the research and in the development of the technology, and thus Kellogg had used his own money to develop a number of cereal and nut products. He had then patented them. When Union College started to manufacture the products on their campus as part of its student labor program and to provide financial

support for the institution, Kellogg asked for license fees since the patents were his. As a result, a very intense quarrel broke out. Church administration argued that Kellogg had created the products while employed at the Sanitarium and so they belonged to the church. Kellogg responded that if copyrights for a book or an article belonged to the author even though that author might be employed by the church as a pastor or teacher, how would that be any different than for ideas about food products and production? He subsequently took an action prohibiting Union College from manufacturing the foods until they paid licenses, crippling the college and unraveling much of the student work program. The General Conference officials sympathized with the college.

Ellen White sided with the college and the General Conference on the issue. Unable to understand the

ethics of the situation, Kellogg fought it. It was an example of how he found it difficult to submit when the referee ruled against him. Mrs. White supported the college, because it was a matter of financial necessity. It was the only way that she and the General Conference administration could see for the school to survive, and mission always outweighed other priorities.<sup>29</sup>

#### **Case Study 5: A. G. Daniells and Madison College-- Submission Resisted**

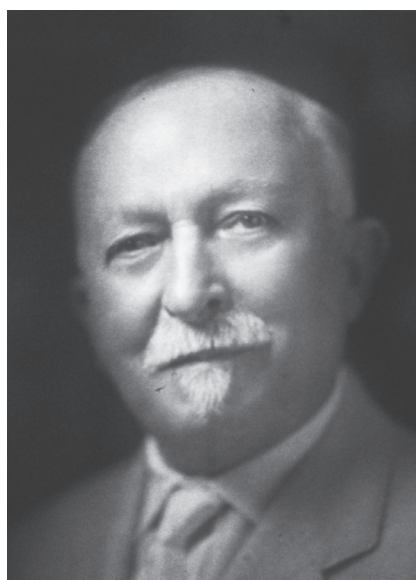
At times in their leadership experience, General Conference presidents endeavoring to follow the path of servant-leadership judged that submission was not the best way to resolve the tension between the charismatic

gift and executive administration. In some circumstances, resistance would be a more appropriate response. Such an example occurred during a particularly difficult stretch of Daniells’ administration in 1907.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, he experienced difficulty relating to the increasing assertiveness and negativity of some independent ministries. Ellen White and her son W. C. White had actively encouraged the establishment of several such endeavors, particularly what became Madison College. It, she had insisted, should be independent and not owned by the church. The work should not be bound by always having to go through “regular channels,” she

advised. Daniells could understand and appreciate this, and he was willing to accept the idea of a structurally independent Madison College in Tennessee. But then later, when she urged the General Conference to give donations to Madison College and support them in their work, the request, to Daniells, seemed contradictory and inconsistent. In fact, it seemed to him to be an impossible demand. He wrote a lengthy response to Ellen White about the issue in which he stated that he was “more perplexed and troubled over this matter than any other one problem” his administration faced at the time.<sup>30</sup>

For Daniells, if Madison could be independent but supported by the church, then why should not the same apply to Battle Creek Sanitarium? What was the trouble with Dr. Kellogg also being independent? Or any other group? Daniells just didn’t see the logic in that. His



*John Harvey Kellogg, circa 1880s, Center for Adventist Research Image Database.*



*Barn and vineyard at Madison College, Center for Adventist Research Image Database.*

administration, together with Ellen White, had carefully and painstakingly worked through those issues, and he thought that they had resolved them. Therefore, he could not understand why in 1907 Ellen White seemed to reverse herself. And he could not figure out how he would be able to submit to that advice.

The letter from Ellen White that made the suggestion about giving funds to Madison also contained veiled criticism of his integrity and honesty as a leader, something he considered quite unfair. Daniells knew that as the letter would become public, it would make his work even more difficult. As he reflected on it, such a letter would actually create complications for anyone in leadership, because of its open support for independent programs outside the organization as well as its idea that such projects should receive denominational appropriations. His response to the pressure from Ellen White on this occasion illustrates the robust interaction between the two individual leaders and also the inherent tension that arises between complimentary but also essentially competing sources of authority. In Daniells' view, appropriate leadership on this occasion required not submission but respectful resistance.

Ellen White's letter had quoted Calvin P. Bollman, who, at the time, was the secretary of the Southern Missionary Society that focused on projects in the

southern states. Apparently, Bollman had led Ellen White to conclude that his work for African-Americans in the South had not been receiving "all the donations intended for it." It seems further, that she understood Bollman to mean that the General Conference may have been diverting funds. Her letter to Daniells and I. H. Evans, the General Conference treasurer, while not exactly clear about who was actually at fault, contains a clear rebuke. "Not one penny of the means that comes in from different sources for the work in the Southern field should be diverted to the work elsewhere," she remonstrated. No portion of any means given should be withheld from the field for which it was intended, and she entreated the General Conference officers to "be very careful" in how they handled the donations. "Not one dollar is to be turned aside to any other field." To an ordinary reader, it would seem that the two men were the ones at fault.<sup>31</sup>

The second part of the troublesome letter went on to urge that the General Conference should financially support the Madison school in spite of the fact that it was an independent operation. She went on to explain that she had actively encouraged the Madison administration to remain separate from conference organization. Daniells bristled at this section. He read the section of the letter repeatedly and carefully, for Madison presented a huge organizational conundrum. For Ellen White, independence in this case was a virtue and ought to be supported, although she was political enough to advise that the "matter need not be blazed abroad." Part of her rationale was that while foreign missions were important (which Daniells had been emphasizing), missionary work also needed to be done "in this country, as verily as in any heathen land." While serving as a pioneer in the 1890s in far off Australia, she had continually argued for the church to invest more resources in overseas mission. Now she seemed to suggest that things had gone too far in that direction.<sup>32</sup>

Daniells considered that the difficulties posed by the letter from Ellen White merited an urgent response. After consulting with Evans, he dictated one the following day. In this carefully worded reply he was respectful but also forthright and firmly assertive. At the outset he



re-affirmed his commitment to accepting and learning from Ellen White's counsel, but he qualified it by clearly indicating that he could not do the impossible. "It is my purpose always to heed the counsel that comes through the spirit of prophecy as far as I can understand that counsel, and know how to carry it out." Then he affirmed strongly his acceptance of the counsel about not diverting funds from the South "in its fullest and broadest meaning." Here was a principle he heartily endorsed. Almost in the same breath, however, he strongly defended his integrity. Stating that, in fact, he applied this principle "to all other fields as well," he avowed that it had been his fixed purpose, ever since he had come into office, "to never divert one dollar from the field . . . for which it was intended by the donor." If such a thing had ever happened, it had been a mistake by a careless bookkeeper. A very few cases had come to his attention during the past seven years, he reported, and he had them corrected as soon as discovered.<sup>33</sup>

Daniells could hardly believe that Bollman would report such a serious charge to Ellen White, for he "knows that we have cheerfully cooperated with him in correcting any mistakes that have been detected." If Bollman knew of any "single instance" of "any kind of manipulation," why did he not come "straight to us with it?" Daniells questioned. The annoyance and indignation in his reply is unmistakable. Then he quoted Bollman directly back to Ellen White. He had just a few days previously received an effusive letter from the Southern Missionary Society secretary, stating that not only he, but all the leadership in the South, felt "that the brethren

in Washington have treated this field not only justly but generously." If there was any "dissatisfaction" in the South "toward the General Conference," Bollman did not "know where it exists." Was Bollman being two-faced? Was he referring to other church officials who were diverting funds? If so, why would Ellen White write to himself and Evans?

The General Conference president was particularly chagrined at the letter, he explained, because he realized that certain parties in the church would use it all over the country to sow suspicion about the General Conference. He knew that he would now have to "meet this everywhere I go." Was he implying that she had overstepped the mark this time? Daniells explained that he had read the letter very carefully and that he would be obliged to adopt a public response that would defend his colleagues. Feeling that he should inform her of what such a response would involve, he listed the points he would make.

"First," he would have to point out "that your message does not say that Brother Bollman charged the General Conference" with misappropriation of donations. "Second, that your message does not say that the General Conference has done this; third, that the General Conference has not knowingly done this; and fourth, that we accept this message as a re-statement of what has many times been made to our men entrusted with the funds of our people." Repeating his assertion that he did "not object to reproof," at the same time he told her that he wanted "to be clear as to just what was meant."



*Bralliar Hall at Madison College, Center for Adventist Research Image Database.*

From Daniells' certain knowledge of the circumstances in this matter he knew that the General Conference was not in the wrong. Then, in respect to her authority and influence, he asked "if I am wrong in this" [with regard to his interpretation that her letter was not pointing the finger at the General Conference], "will you kindly correct me?" But then in a clear reiteration of his defense of his colleague, he pointed out that the General Conference's accounting books and correspondence belonged to the denomination and were at the disposal of the members of the General Conference committee for any investigation. Bollman could check things out if he had a particular problem. The General Conference did not manipulate funding. In what amounted to a gentle chiding, Daniells appealed for more caution in such matters. He explained that he was "in a very trying place" at the moment and "if ever we needed to be careful of what we say and do, it is at this time."<sup>34</sup>

The president's response to the second part of the letter about funding for Madison illustrates the sharp conflict he experienced in trying to meet two competing expectations. As the leader of an organization, he had to be responsible for the careful stewardship of funds which inevitably meant accountability. Also, he had to ensure their equitable distribution to meet the many competing demands. In fact, earlier he had sent some money to Madison following a visit to its campus by his education secretary, Professor Frederick Griggs. Daniells had asked Griggs to check out the situation there. The General Conference president and Griggs had no way of knowing the real plans and needs of Madison. Furthermore, none of the men who had visited the campus in a show of denominational support (he cited W. C. White, G. I. Butler, and G. A. Irwin) "has ever given any definite information regarding their plans for investment, nor their true financial situation." The school had its own board of directors and private account books. Without any financial reports, how could the General Conference have confidence that the school actually needed any money that it might provide? Madison was "soliciting and receiving contributions from our people in all parts of the States, but no one but themselves knows how much is received or how it is spent." As a result, Daniells explained to her that realistically "we have no basis on which to make appropriations." Furthermore, correspondence to him from Madison's leaders acknowledging an earlier contribution had indicated that the college did not lack the "necessities of existence."<sup>35</sup>

Daniells' frustration over the issue is evident in

the tone of his reply at this point. "Now Sister White," he wrote in his teacher's voice, "I want to do all that I should in this matter, but so far no one seems able to outline anything definite regarding what is required." Then he asked her what he should let go of in order to help Madison. The General Conference had "tremendous demands from all parts of the world" and with "our slender resources we must move understandingly in their distribution." He cited the case of two missionary families, one in China and one in Africa, who were living in impoverished circumstances as they sought to extend the work of the church. He sent a photograph of the mud-brick missionary house in Africa and rather boldly asked if he should *not* send money to these families in order to give it to Madison. As it was, he noted with some drama, that very day at headquarters the General Conference's treasury was "ten thousand dollars overdrawn."<sup>36</sup> Giving money to Madison was not a simple matter.

Clearly the conflicting demands exasperated Daniells. Part of him knew that as a servant leader he should submit and accept the counsel of the charisma resident at Elmshaven. But as a servant leader, he also knew that he needed to be responsible and wise in regard to stewardship. Again, his frustration palpable and his tone one of reproach as he lamented, "now Sister White, these things almost distract me." He honestly did not know what to do in response to what she had written about helping the Madison school. "Greatly perplexed" and "well nigh disheartened," he stated that he was ready to quit the presidency. "I have about made up my mind that it is time for me to clear out," he wrote. It was time for new blood--time for someone else to take his place--"who will be able to get more means and plan better." The president was in good health and perfectly willing to go overseas himself. He had not fallen into unbelief. His "confidence in the cause" was good and he longed "to see it consummated." But he had tried to do his best, and it was clearly "too great for me." Daniells would ask his fellow administrators "to let me off to other lands." In the meantime, he was expecting to visit Elmshaven in the near future and sincerely hoped that he and Mrs. White would have time to talk matters over. Above all, he wanted to "get more light as to just what to do."<sup>37</sup>

This remarkable exchange of correspondence with its frank dialogue between the two sources of influence and authority in the church highlights the dilemma sometimes faced by servant-leaders. When is it right to be submissive and when should one be assertive?

Daniells' letter does not show a compliant, unthinking administrator uncritically accepting a message from the bearer of the charismatic authority in the church. Instead, we find real spiritual wrestling involved in implementing the counsel received.

Although he was willing to accept reassignment, at the following session in 1909 his fellow leaders did not wish to see him released to serve elsewhere. They believed that he was still needed in the presidency.

## Conclusion

Servant-leadership would seem to be a particularly appropriate model for Christian leadership. Putting the interests of others first in order to empower them and help them develop their full capacities articulates well the understanding of the biblical doctrine of spiritual gifts that the Lord has placed in the church "to prepare God's people for works of service" (Eph. 4.12). Christian leaders who have endeavored to follow the servant-leadership path recognize, as Spears has noted, that this model of leadership embraces characteristics such as empathy and stewardship among others. Servant-leadership in a shared leadership context highlights the submission characteristic of such leadership. While Adventist leaders viewed the role of Ellen White from a distinctive perspective and acknowledged a prophetic quality to her charisma, the dynamics of such shared leadership are not unique and the examples drawn from Adventist history provide helpful insights about relationships in any shared leadership context.

This study from an historical perspective suggests that the demands of Christian leadership in a shared leadership context requires a sensitive, spiritually aware, and principled "submissive spirit" to ensure that collaboration is truly fruitful. Servant-leadership senses when to submit to others and when to respectfully assert an alternative viewpoint. Such submission is itself a gift.

## Endnotes

1. Robert Greenleaf, *The Servant as Leader*, (Peterborough, NH: Windy Row Press, 1970), 4.
2. John Dugan points out the dangers of "narrowly interpreting servant-leadership through the lens of religiosity and appropriated as solely a story of Judeo-Christian leadership." It should not be confined to a single faith tradition. *Leadership Theory: Cultivating Critical Perspectives* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2017), 200. 205. The theory has also been critiqued from a feminist perspective by Deborah Eicher-Catt who observes that when viewed as grounded in Judeo-Christian ideology, it is influenced by its roots in patriarchy, reinforces gendered tropes, and can be "appropriated to serve political ends." "The Myth of servant-leadership: A Feminist Perspective," *Women and Language*, 28 (2005), 17-25.
3. Kevin Burton "Centralized for Protection: George I. Butler and His Philosophy of One-Person Leadership," MA Thesis, Andrews University, provides a detailed study of the historical context of Butler's leadership paper.
4. This perspective corrects the mistaken assumption that Butler was just articulating his personal philosophy of leadership. See the discussion in Gilbert M Valentine, *J. N. Andrews: Mission Pioneer, Evangelist and Thought Leader* (Nampa, ID Pacific Press, 2019), 493-501.
5. Benjamin McArthur, *A. G. Daniells: Shaper of Twentieth-Century Adventism* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2015), 93-95.
6. Gilbert M Valentine, *The Prophet and the Presidents*, (Nampa ID; Pacific Press, 2011), 95ff.
7. Larry C. Spears, "Tracing the past, present, and future of servant-leadership: in L. C. Spears and M. Lawrence (eds), *Focus on Leadership: Servant-Leadership for the 21st Century* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2002), 1-16.
8. Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, eighth edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2019), 226-256.
9. D. Van Dierendonck, "Servant leadership: A review and synthesis," *Journal of Management*, 37:4 (2011), 1228 – 1261. Cited in Northouse, 232.
10. S. Sendjaya, J. C. Sarros, and J. C. Santhora, J., "Defining and measuring Servant Leadership behavior in Organizations." *Journal of Management Studies*, 45:2 (2008) 402-424.
11. D. Van Dierendonck and I Nuijten, "The servant leadership survey: Development and validation of a multidimensional measure," *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 23 (2011), 249-267.
12. Northouse, 234.
13. See for example Romans 14.18. In Matthew 20. 26, 27, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave," *diakonos* = servant and *doulos* = slave, are used interchangeably.
14. Colin Brown, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI; Zondervan, 1979), vol. 3, 543-552; 589-599.
15. Thomas E. Cronin and Michael A. Genovese, *Leadership Matters: Unleashing the Power of Paradox*, (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2012), 20.
16. Ellen White's charisma resonates comfortably with German sociologist Max Weber's identification of a charismatic leader as one who is gifted with exemplary qualities, is highly esteemed, and who exudes confidence, dominance, and a sense of purpose. The characteristic leadership behaviors are discussed in B. M. Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research and Managerial Applications*, (New York; Free Press, 1990), 189-192. See also Northouse, 166-183 for a review of more recent research. Adventist leaders attributed prophetic authority to the charismatic leadership exercised by Ellen White which made the relationship in shared leadership more complex.

17. Servant-leadership writers also note the importance of foresight. In the Adventist context, what made leadership difficult at times was that such foresight was seen to reside in a particular individual and was vested with significant authority.
18. J. R. French and B. Raven, "The Bases of Social Power," in D. Cartwright (ed.) *Group Dynamics: Research and Theory*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 259-269.
19. Details of the episode are discussed in Milton R. Hook, "The Inter-Relationships Between A. G. Daniells and E. G. White During Their Years in Australia," *Symposium on Adventist History in the South Pacific: 1885-1918*, ed Arthur J. Ferch (Warburton, Vic: Signs Publishing, 1986), 92-104.
20. Hook, 96. Ellen White's letter is not extant.
21. A. G. Daniells to E. G. White, March 3, 1895.
22. "Hook, 97.
23. Ellen G White, *Testimonies to the Church*, (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), vol 6, 207, 217. The volume was first published in 1900 and comprised materials written during Ellen White's time in Australia.
24. See my *Struggle for the Prophetic Heritage: Issues in the Conflict for Control of the Ellen G. White Publications 1930-1939*, (Westlake Village, CA: Oak and Acorn, 2018) for a fuller discussion of these tensions.
25. It was not until 1895, during Olsen's third term of office, that the church adopted the idea of actually developing a budget for General Conference anticipated expenses. O. A. Olsen to L. T. Nicola and J. I. Gibson, November 21, 1895; O. A. Olsen, circular to 'Leading Brethren', November 28, 1895. See also Gilbert Valentine, *The Prophet and the Presidents*, 86.
26. W. C. White to W. W. Prescott February 22, 1905; W. C. White to A. G. Daniells and W. W. Prescott, January 25, 1905. Both Ellen White and W. C. White had urged Prescott to take on the onerous role as founding president of the new publishing house. "There is no nobler work you could undertake just now," argued W. C. White who pointed out that the professor would have the rare chance to put a completely new mold on the whole project just as it had happened when James White first started it.
27. W. W. Prescott to W. C. White, July 13 and 31, 1905.
28. W. C. White to W. W. Prescott, August 11, 1905. See also for example W. W. Prescott to W. C. White, September 5, 1908.
29. Gilbert Valentine, *The Prophet and the Presidents*, 171.
30. A. G. Daniells to E. G. White, October 11, 1907.
31. We are reliant on Ellen White for the account of what Bollman reported. E. G. White to A. G. Daniells and I. H. Evans, Sept. 23, 1907.
- 32.. A. G. Daniells to E. G. White, Oct. 11, 1907.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*
36. The overseas families whose plight Daniells described included an Elder Anderson and his family living in the heart of Africa "in the midst of millions of colored people," because he had "a profound conviction that God had called him there." They were living in a thatched mud brick hut with only a dirt floor. The rain washed parts of the walls away every so often, and "he or his family will die with malaria from exposure." They needed a brick house with a board floor. The General Conference had no funds, but they borrowed some to send so that he could have a suitable house. The other family was the J. N. Anderson family in Canton, China. It was obliged to live near a fish market that opened at 4.00 am every morning. The market surrounded their house. The fish from the river were "slaughtered, washed, etc, all around their doors and windows," and by the time the sun was out the air was "reeking with the unsavoury smell." The Lord had been blessing the missionaries' work wonderfully, Daniells reported, but it was too expensive for the family to rent a home elsewhere. To build one for them in a better, more healthful place, was going to cost several thousand dollars. Prescott had recently returned from staying with the family in the midst of the fish market and had strenuously argued that they needed help urgently for their health's sake. Many other similar problems also existed.
37. A. G. Daniells to E. G. White, Oct. 11, 1907.



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# IN THE BOOK of Lord Acton

It's there in the books of Lord Acton,  
the tale of how power corrupts  
it's not, not at all, an abstraction,  
the power abused—it disrupts.

The quote runs like this, or almost,  
that power, it tends to corrupt,  
and absolute pow'r—to the utmost,  
feeds corruption to make it erupt.

It happened again this morning,  
it happened again last night,  
it didn't come without warning,  
Lord Acton prepared for the sight.

In the grand hall in far-off Moscow,  
a man of great power held court,  
he staged it to be a grand show,  
he said he would hold the fort.

And yet, as a show for the ages,  
he proved my Lord Acton true,  
corruption, as say the sages,  
it peddles warmongering brew.

His face the smirk of the haughty,  
his demeanor as though a god,  
he proved he was merely naughty,  
and yes, that he is a fraud.

By absolute power corrupted,  
and now absolutely corrupt,  
our world profoundly disrupted,  
and mayhem soon to irrupt.

And us, all bereft of power,  
awaiting the killing, the blow,  
we see you in far-off tower,  
absolute corruption, we know.

And yes, there is fear in our faces,  
shock at the brazen attempt,  
fear that leaves furrows, traces,  
the rest that you see is contempt.

*By Sigve Tonstad, 2022*



Portland, Maine, conference on Ellen G. White organized by Terrie Dopp Aamodt, Gary Land, Julius Nam, and Ronald L. Numbers in 2009.

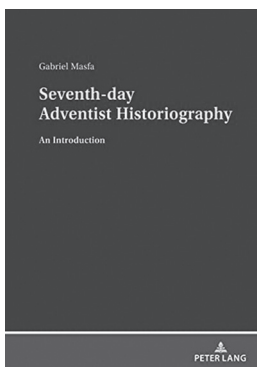
# Wrestling With the Angel

## AT BULL RUN:

### THE STORY OF ADVENTIST HISTORY

By Jonathan Butler

A review of Gabriel Masfa, *Seventh-day Adventist Historiography: An Introduction* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2021).



**P**rone to vanity, I started reading Gabriel Masfa's study of Seventh-day Adventist historiography near the end of the book. I wanted to know how he dealt with me. I eventually fell in line, however, taking the chapters in order. The first one focuses on classical historians such as Thucydides who are not my usual bedtime reading. But perhaps he should be.

Thucydides could teach us all something about Adventist historiography. As Masfa writes, Thucydides used "naturalistic explanation in order to reject supernatural claims by describing just historical facts." But Masfa could have brought the point home even more forcefully to Adventist historians. Thucydides was an Athenian general who battled Spartans in the Peloponnesian War, lost the war, and then wrote the history of it from a nonpartisan viewpoint. Unlike most Greeks at that time, he did not tell the story from the gods' perspective, nor with the bias of an Athenian who

believed the gods were on his side. Instead, he fathered “scientific history,” based on naturalistic evidence-gathering and the strictest standards of impartiality.

If Thucydides could do that for the Greeks in the fifth century BC, could Adventist historians do it today writing Adventist history? And should they? Masfa introduces us to such issues and more in his book on Adventist historiography. In describing the work of historians both inside and outside of Adventism, Masfa will no doubt prompt readers with a number of important questions: Can Adventist historians write “scientific history”? Can they write with such detachment that we cannot tell whether they are Adventists or Mormons or Catholics? Are they able to tell the history of their religion as if God had no control of the “rise and progress” of the church? Can they write like the father of historical writing who left the gods out of the story and wrote with such clear-eyed objectivity that we could not tell whether he was an Athenian or a Spartan?

### History and Metahistory

In the chapter on classical Greek historians, Masfa also discusses Christian historians. They were more likely read by 19th-century Adventists, including Ellen White. In 1858, following a spectacular vision in Lovett’s Grove, Ohio, Ellen White wrote *The Great Controversy Between Christ and His Angels, and Satan and His Angels*. That would become her magnum opus and the prism through which Adventists saw their past and future. In reading their prophet’s best-seller, Adventists got used to thinking of history as a cosmic battle between Christ and Satan, with both good and evil angels actively involved.

Conventional historians—including many Adventists—now write history closer to the way Thucydides did than Ellen White. Historians base their narratives on documents available to anyone with access to an archive. Ellen White said nothing about musty library books and boxes of primary sources as the basis for her history; she spoke of her longest visionary experience. Just three years after Lovett’s Grove, during the Civil War, Ellen White saw in another vision what happened at the First Battle of Bull Run.

The Southern men felt the battle, and in a little while would have been driven back still further. The Northern men were rushing on, although their destruction was very great. Just then an angel descended and waved his hand backward.’



Because of an angel, the North was defeated. As with Ellen White’s sweeping history of Christianity, in her telling of the First Battle of Bull Run, the supernatural creates the story and its meaning. In her historical view—her vision—“God...sent an angel to interfere.”

No *historical* evidence exists for angels as agents in the human story. Adventists can grapple with the same historical subject matter that Ellen White did, but they cannot document how the supernatural affected the flow of historical events. Ellen White went “behind the scenes” and told the story of Roman times or the Middle Ages, the Reformation or William Miller’s era from God’s point of view. But historians sit in the “cheap seats” and witness events, as humans see them, with the natural eye. From where they sit, even Adventist historians cannot see an angel at Bull Run. Historians can tell us a lot about the natural, cause-and-effect unfolding of events, but they have nothing to say, definitively, about the supernatural in history. Strictly speaking, that is not history, but a form of metahistory, where plot and moral meaning control the past. Contemporary *historians* can tell us, as historians, whether the people they study believed in the supernatural and how that belief affected their lives and times. But, as *historians*, they cannot share with us their own faith, or how they believe their God may have shaped human history.

This has not always been true of Adventist historians. For decades, they wrote providential history as if they could see—and *prove*—that God held the

events of the past in His hands. There was an angel at the Battle of Bull Run and that angel dictated the outcome of the battle.

After 1930, and especially after 1960, as more and more history teachers gained university education, they approached the past differently. With doctoral degrees in history, Adventist historians were still believers, but they now studied their subject systematically and rationally. In the transition from providential history to scholarly history, Adventist historians wrestled, for a time, with the whole idea of evidence for an angel at Bull Run. Students did not let them pass over Ellen White's Bull Run vision in silence. Historical professionals were asked, in effect, if "that PhD in history" meant they could no longer see the angel hovering over the battlefield.

Adventist historians now ply their trade in a far more mundane way than Ellen White did in writing *The Great Controversy* (1888, 1911), or than her handpicked historian of Adventist history, John Norton Loughborough, did in writing *The Rise and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (1892) or *The Great Second Advent Movement: Its Rise and Progress* (1905). Ellen White wrote of the past in a way that moved effortlessly between history and metahistory. Inspired by her example, Loughborough saw God's leading in Adventist history.

The difference between a Hebrew prophet and a historian is a lot like the contrast between a poet and a literary critic. While Ellen White sees the world as God sees it, from the extraordinary vantage point of a visionary, the historian's view is more ordinary. The historian explores *The Great Controversy* within its religious, cultural and social context, less as sacred scripture than as a literary genre. In what sense is it Whig history? How typical is her anti-Catholicism for her era? Is her book influenced by the poet John Milton, or an historian such as Jean-Henri Merle d'Aubigné or former Millerite H.L. Hastings who wrote *The Great Controversy between God and Man* in 1858? The historian may believe that Ellen White had visions. He may even have seen her in vision, like Loughborough did. But in writing about her, he always does so as a historian not as a believer.

Reading Masfa's review of 19th-century Christian approaches to history deepened my understanding of Ellen White's writings. Having been over this terrain pretty thoroughly in the past, I appreciated that Masfa had something to teach me. I did not imagine how captivated I would be by his review of Christian

approaches to history among 19th-century historians who saw God's hand in historical events. According to him, in a way I had not thought about, historical giants such as Merle d'Aubigné and Philip Schaff had influenced the kind of providential history Ellen White wrote in *The Great Controversy* (more on that later).

In chapter two, on Adventism's theological approaches to history, Masfa closes in on my scholarly interests in his discussion of pioneer icons such as Joseph Bates, J.N. Andrews, Loughborough, as well as White herself. These historical figures are so familiar to me and, at the same time, far removed from what I now actually do as a historian. In contrast to an Andrews or Loughborough, I write history in a way that does not explain events by evoking the supernatural. Yet, ironically, I find it inspirational to write history in this way. What I needed to know from Masfa is how he views Loughborough's kind of history relative to my own.

Chapter three covers Adventist historians as apologists, such as the prolific, self-made, 20th-century historians Le Roy E. Froom and Francis D. Nichol. Over the years, both had lost a little of their luster for me, but I was interested in Masfa's view of them. Froom had famously written tome after tome about the history of millennialism to prove that Adventist belief in the Second Coming was not such a crank idea after all. Nichol had sought to rehabilitate the Millerites in the wake of a 1924 caricature of them by Clara Endicott Sears in *Days of Delusion*. He also defended Ellen White against D. M. Canright's assault on her in *Life of Mrs. E.G. White: Her Claims Refuted* (1919). It seemed to me that Masfa could have done more to expose the shortcomings of Froom and Nichol, who acted less as scholars than as defense attorneys.

When I immersed myself in chapter four, it read like a newspaper account of events I witnessed. I had been there. These historians are friends of mine. We had written "critical history" together: William Peterson on the French Revolution and Ellen White; Donald McAdams on John Huss and Ellen White; Ronald D. Graybill with a highly productive though complex relationship to the Ellen G. White Estate, which led to his two dissertations (one for Johns Hopkins University and the other for his employer); and Ronald Numbers' blockbuster of a book among Adventists, *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White* (Harper & Row, 1976; University of Tennessee Press, 1992; W. B. Eerdmans, 2008). Masfa takes a more sympathetic view of Numbers than most Adventist historians did in the 1970s, especially in public. But in covering the historical



debate over *Prophetess of Health*, mostly in *Spectrum*, he is carefully descriptive without offering much in the way of fresh analysis.

I still regret that I did not do more to stick up for my friend Numbers in that difficult time. Though he expected churchmen and particularly the White Estate, to rain fire and brimstone on him, he had believed historians would support him and he was deeply wounded by their abandonment. I did write a review of his book in the American Society of Church History's journal *Church History*. C. Mervyn Maxwell, a church historian at the Seminary, was so upset by my favorable review of the book that he wrote the president of Loma Linda University and told him to terminate me. As time passed and the vitriol of the revisionist 1970s subsided, Adventist historians became more at ease with publicly expressing their support for Numbers. Masfa certainly illustrates this new attitude, though he is too young to have been there when Numbers was a lightning rod for criticism. As the University of Wisconsin professor entered the highest echelons of academic success, Adventist historians paid tribute to Numbers as the biblical Joseph's brothers did in Egypt.

Later we can make allowances for Adventist historians of the 1970s. Some had distanced themselves from Numbers for more than a matter of self-preservation as denominational employees. He had broken new ground as an historian and it would take a while to catch up. But a sea change regarding *Prophetess of Health* occurred in March of 1978 when Gary Land, whom Masfa admires, reviewed in *Spectrum* the White Estate's critique of the Numbers book. Masfa's failure to mention that review is a major oversight. With some trepidation, Land had faced off against the White Estate staff, despite its formidable clout at the highest levels of the church, and he changed many minds.

Land argued that the White Estate exaggerated its differences with Numbers. And where the divide was substantial, the White Estate had often been unpersuasive in its criticisms. Ultimately, it had been exposed for its confusion over the way historians work. It identified the critical question in this way: Ellen White's health teachings originated either from earthly sources or by way of divine inspiration. If Ellen White had drawn her health teachings from other health reformers, that undermined her inspiration and thus her authority. The White Estate insisted, in fact, that historians, from the outset, had to presuppose Ellen White's inspiration or they would reach faulty conclusions about her. In later conversations with Land, however, staffers backpedaled

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Adventist historians, like other academics and artists within the church, have been forced to stare up at the dark and ugly underside of the Adventist community, the church at its worst.

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on whether historians had to assume the inspiration of a prophet—only the *possibility* of it. They would not suggest that historians should take for granted the inspiration of Ann Lee, or Joseph Smith, or Mary Baker Eddy. Only Ellen White.

### **What Masfa Does**

Masfa earned his doctorate at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) in the Philippines, where he wrote the dissertation that became his book. Masfa is a church historian who teaches in the Department of Religious Studies at Babcock University, an Adventist institution with over 10,000 students in Nigeria. Though I have studied the history of Adventism in America for years, I am abysmally ignorant of Adventism beyond my country's borders, where almost all Adventists live and flourish. How did Masfa view the historians of Adventism, including my ilk?

When I started the book at the back—owing to my self-interest—I came across minor gaffes in the text. Looking for my name in the index, I appear, variously, as “J. Butler” and “M. Jonathan Butler” (who?). In the bibliography, I am identified as the author of Ronald D. Graybill's dissertation, “The Power of Prophecy” (which is now a book), though, fortunately, elsewhere in the bibliography, Graybill is also credited as the author. This put me on the alert for more spelling and grammatical issues than we would expect had the publisher, Peter Lang, used competent copyeditors as better-regarded publishers do. In the footnotes, one of White's

*Testimonies* is cited without indicating which of the nine volumes it is. I was also startled to read that Christ *did* come on October 22, 1844. As I read Masfa's text, I felt as if I were reading a rough draft. He could have benefited by more red ink from his dissertation advisers as well as his own editorial refinements.

But none of Masfa's errors should distract us from what is, in the main, a valuable and substantial book. Its limitations, which certainly can be attributed to Masfa, to no small degree also reflect the shortcomings of Adventist historiography itself. Adventist historians, with a few notable exceptions, publish through Adventist publishing houses and for an Adventist readership. Within these strictures, there has been a remarkable record of accomplishment, but only so much can be done.

Masfa's study of Adventist historiography is worth reading because it reveals both the promise and the failures of the field. Masfa focuses on three aspects of how Adventists write history: the first is the *historical methodology* and, in particular, how the faith of the historian relates to the writing of history; the second is the *mainstreaming* of historical subject matter—for him Adventist history—from the margins of public and scholarly attention to nearer the center; and third is what Masfa terms *mediating*, which is where historians find ways of explaining their controversial findings relative to the church and especially its churchmen. In all three cases, Ronald Numbers makes appearances, either evoking contention or admiration.

In the 1970s, the emotional debate over historical methodology among Adventist historians and their detractors might never have happened had Numbers written a different preface to the first edition of *Prophetess of Health*. It is tempting to imagine a counterfactual history of that period where he had not declared, in print, his attempt to write "as objective as possible" by refraining "from using divine inspiration as an historical explanation." Here Numbers had offered the briefest lesson in the historical method, but too many Adventists misunderstood. Before going any further, however, it is important to make the point that there is no such thing as "*the* historical method" as an all-encompassing category. There is no single "historical method." Historical methodology is too rich and variegated in its approaches to be defined in one way. But with Numbers in mind, among the many historical methods, there is none that uses the *supernatural* to account for historical cause and effect. Though Masfa is, on the one hand, drawn to the idea of faith as integral

to historical methodology, which puts him at odds with Numbers, he is, on the other hand, dazzled by the importance of Numbers in placing Adventism on the historiographical map.

### Historical Methodology

To understand *historical methodology*, Masfa reaches way back. Adventist general readers may skim over his studious survey of classical and secular historians. For Adventists, however, Masfa's description of the 19th century historians will become far more familiar and more relevant. Merle d'Aubigné was one of the most widely read historians of the century, especially his best-selling *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*. Ellen White read his books aloud to her family in the evenings, and she borrowed from them extensively in writing *The Great Controversy*. Merle d'Aubigné interwove traditional Christian doctrines and beliefs with the historical method as it was then coming into its own. In the same narrative, he wedded history based on evidence and metahistory inspired by belief.

This was exactly what Ellen White had done in her historical writing. Since the 1970s, Adventists generally concede that White was not entirely reliable as a historian, but her metahistory—of God's actions behind the scenes—is why they read her. She no longer settles historical questions but rather, at most, pulls back the curtain of history to reveal the metahistory behind it. But Masfa's discussion of Merle d'Aubigné and other providential historians dramatically changes that kind of thinking. He suggests that Ellen White relied on 19th-century historians not only for her history, *but for her metahistory as well*. We are left to conclude that visions were not essential to either. The history based on evidence and the metahistory based on faith drew on the historians at hand.

In 1974, I took my first job to teach and write history. I arrived at Union College from a PhD program at The University of Chicago, where I had studied millennialism. I was twenty-nine-years old. One reason I went to Union was because of Everett Dick, the great social historian of the American frontier. He had arrived there, in 1930, from a PhD program at University of Wisconsin, where he had studied the Millerites. Union College was not only his first teaching job but his only one; he remained there for his entire long and productive career. In our very first conversation, he told me a story with some acidity in his voice, despite recalling events of nearly a half century earlier.

In what I took to be Dick's cautionary tale for me, he said that Froom and Nichol had quashed his effort to publish what would have been his first book. They viewed his pathbreaking social and religious history of the Millerites as too secular in its approach. They therefore imposed their considerable ecclesiastical will on the young faculty member, banning his book before it had been published. In what had to have been a moral low point for him, Nichol then disingenuously recycled Dick's dissertation for his own purposes in *The Midnight Cry*, published in 1944. But Dick did not allow this nasty turn of events to define him. He went on to pursue a distinguished career as a social historian and produce such notable works as *The Sod-House Frontier, 1854-1890*; *Vanguards of the Frontier*; and *Life in the West Before the Sod House Frontier* among many other books. His academic life turned out fine despite the initial setback—perhaps *because* of it. Masfa includes the Everett Dick story in his narrative, though he could have named names with respect to Froom and Nichol. This is too important an incident to be understated. Dick was the harbinger for worse times for historians in the church before they became better.

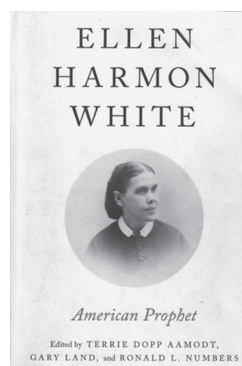
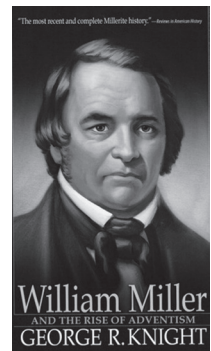
The key to unlocking Masfa's understanding of how an historian's faith relates to the historical methodology may be found in his two appendices: Nicholas Miller's chart on Adventist historiography and Masfa's tweaking of that chart. Both charts, it seems to me, are rooted in a misreading of the preface to *Prophetess of Health*, where Numbers writes, "I have refrained from using divine inspiration as an historical explanation." This single line provoked a huge ruckus in the church, and it is likely the reason so many opposed the book. But with this assertion, Numbers had not denied the existence of the supernatural; only that he would not use it to make his *historical* argument.

The preface tells us nothing about Numbers as a believer; it is simply an explanation of how history is written. One is a matter of faith; the other is a technical explanation. If we look to other disciplines, we can



ABOVE: Killington, Vermont conference that resulted in the publication of *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century in 1987.*

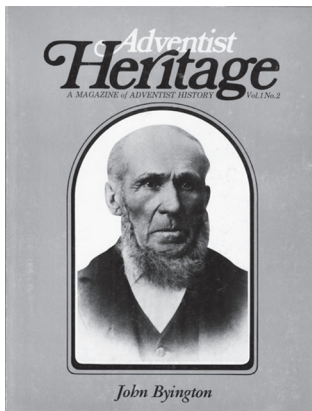
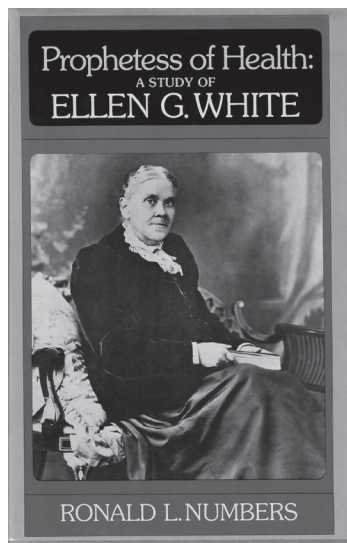
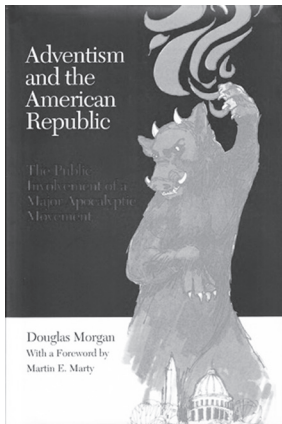
clarify the difference between faith and explanation. For example, a neurosurgeon may believe in God's power to heal and even pray before and after his work. That is an expression of faith. But on the day of my brain surgery, I want a highly skilled doctor at work, not a faith healer. A meteorologist may wholeheartedly sing in church the Isaac Watts lyric "And clouds arise and tempests blow by order from Thy throne." But she would not—of course—explain an impending storm except in naturalistic terms accessible to her unbelieving colleagues. Why should we have different expectations for historians?



With his naturalistic point of view, Numbers does not belong to the "left" of other historians of Adventism, where we find him on church historian Nicholas P. Miller's historiographical chart. Nor should Numbers be all alone in his own forlorn category on Masfa's chart ("closed secular confessional history,"



Ronald L. Numbers



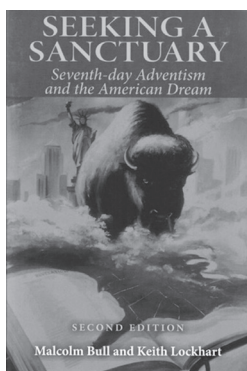
whatever that means). There he is placed at odds with his friends who occupy an altogether different category (“open critical history”), which includes McAdams, Peterson, Butler, Graybill, Land, and McArthur. There are no historians of Adventism these days—including George R. Knight, Nicholas P. Miller, and Gabriel Masfa—who would disagree with Numbers on historical writing as he describes it in his preface to *Prophetess of Health*. Numbers and Knight have both “refrained from using divine inspiration as an historical explanation.” With respect to Numbers, the fundamental mistake in both charts (Miller’s and Masfa’s) is the assumption that his lack of faith diminished the quality of his historical writing.

The charts do more to muddle the relationship between faith and history than to illuminate it. In the first place, Numbers is placed further to the chart’s “left” for *Prophetess of Health*, though he wrote the book as a *believer*, if an increasingly disillusioned one. Secondly, he is credited with moving to more moderate contributions to Adventist history: such as *Ellen Harmon White: American Prophet* (Oxford University Press, 2014) as well as *The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1992, and an expanded edition, Harvard University Press, 2006), which in the latter case should appear on the charts but does not. When Numbers produced both these books, he admits, somewhat uncomfortably, when called upon to provide expert testimony at a Louisiana deposition, to being an “agnostic.” His agnosticism should not be confused, of course, with nonbelief; it only means uncertainty. So, according to the charts—and this would seem to undermine the purpose of them—the less Numbers believes the *better* history he writes.

So, what is Masfa saying? Does he believe that “Christian historians” adhere to their own, distinctive historical methodology? Do they write history with a halo around it? Or is their history like everyone else’s? Do they write history based on the same evidence with the same results? Masfa seems conflicted about this. He wants to have it both ways—a hybridized historical method which combines the naturalistic and the supernatural in the same historical work. He argues that George Marsden, Mark Noll, and Nathan O. Hatch, three lustrous names in the evangelical historiography of the late twentieth century, “initiated a new line of...historical methodology consistent with the canons of history and that of an honest dedication to the cause of Christ.” They blended an historical method and their personal beliefs in a unique way or what Masfa terms a “nuanced historiography” (pp. 57-59).

They adhered to the best and most rigorous historical methodology just as any other historian would do. But when they came upon those “events” which were “a matter of faith” they were less *historians* than *believers*. They interpreted those events through the eyes of faith not the hard, cold eye of the historian. Masfa applauds these evangelical historians and he traces their influence to the most prolific and widely read of Adventist historians—George R. Knight—and several of his proteges: Gilbert Valentine, Alberto R. Timm, Merlin D. Burt, Michael W. Campbell, and Theodore N. Levterov.

For all the sophistication and deep reading that Masfa has done in this study, I think, at the heart of it, he obfuscates the nature of historical writing. He suggests that, regarding evangelical historians, being a believer creates an advantage in writing history, especially religious history. He finds the same to be true of Adventist historians in their debt. In Masfa’s view, they add a special sauce to the historical method. But this is not true. The evangelical historians added nothing new to their historical method. They simply studied the heretofore neglected and marginalized field of evangelicalism with the same historical methodology employed by other historians regardless of belief or disbelief. Adventist historians likewise have dredged up new documents and studied them with fresh eyes but without drawing upon spiritual perspectives inaccessible to the nonbeliever. At critical moments in his study, Masfa seems to know this, but he should have been clearer and less equivocal in stating it throughout the book. From my reading of him, I am quite sure he is not looking to prove historically that angels had anything to do with the First Battle of Bull Run. As for Knight and his students from Andrews University, I am certain that Knight as a *believer* is closer to Burt, Campbell, and Levterov than he is to Numbers, but as a *historian* there is not a whit of difference between Knight and Numbers.



### Mainstreaming

Masfa moves from the *historical method* to another major motif in the book: the *mainstreaming* of Adventist history. Here he finds that Marsden, Noll, and Hatch stand tall, once again, as role models for Adventist historians. Masfa celebrates the skill and artfulness by which these big-

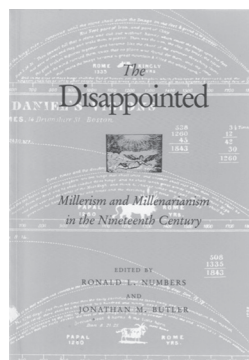
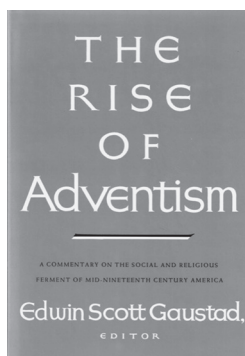
three brought American evangelicalism from the fringes of American religion as a discipline to its mainstream. This shift occurred after I entered graduate school and it changed the face of religious scholarship. Masfa clearly covets this *mainstreaming* of evangelical historiography, hoping Adventists can achieve something analogous to it. This calls for a heavy lift on the part of Adventist historians who tend to seclude themselves in a cultural and religious backwater far removed from the mainstream.

Masfa recognizes that Ronald Numbers is the remarkable exception to this insularity among historians of Adventism. He should pay more attention to Malcolm Bull and Keith Lockhart, whose classic study of the denomination in *Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream* (Harper & Row, 1989; revised and expanded edition, Indiana University Press, 2007) will outlive us all. The fact that their book fuses sociology with history may explain his neglect of it. In his study, Masfa also should have included Walter Rea, *The White Lie* (Turlock, CA: M & R Publications, 1982), though it is an odd mix to place Rea in the same paragraph as Numbers, Bull, and Lockhart. Masfa might have ignored Rea’s book because it was such an undisciplined rant rather than a history or literary study. But the importance of Ellen White’s literary borrowing for Adventist historiography makes Rea unavoidable. Fred Veltman’s massive examination of White’s literary practice in *The Desire of Ages* (1898) also deserves Masfa’s attention. All that said, however, Numbers is in a league of his own for not only the most impactful book by an historian of Adventism but for his body of work on Adventist history throughout a celebrated career. And Adventist history has been integral to his success story, resulting in several of his more noteworthy scholarly trophies.

Numbers lived out the blueprint of how Adventist historians can mainstream the study of Adventism. Like the evangelicals Masfa admires, he attained employment in a non-parochial institution. He taught the bulk of his career in a penthouse of academia, allowing him to focus on research and writing unencumbered by the sectarian concerns of the Adventist church. Most of his extraordinary body of work had nothing to do with Adventism and earned him a named chair as a Hilldale Professor of the History of Science and Medicine at Wisconsin, with a joint appointment in Religious Studies. His extraordinary academic achievements over a lifetime also garnered him the Sarton Medal, the highest distinction in his discipline. All along he continued to

make increasingly significant contributions to the history of religion: not only *Prophetess of Health* but, in the long run, and perhaps more memorably, *The Creationists*, as well as such works as *Science and Christianity in Pulpit and Pew* (Oxford University Press, 2007), and his current project for Harvard University Press, a biography of John Harvey Kellogg. For just his publications in American religion — his career within a career — he was named president of the American Society of Church History.

The Adventists know Numbers for *Prophetess of Health*; the scholarly community and the evangelical world know him for *The Creationists*. Just after Numbers had first published *The Creationists*, Mark Noll came out with *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* in which he lauded Numbers for the book which placed the historian of science among “first-rate scholars” who write “with sympathy” for their subjects. Though Numbers was anything but “an antireligious zealot,” he told a “disquieting” and “sad tale” about one of “the weaknesses of evangelical intellectual life.” A distinctive form of creationism had become a matter of evangelical orthodoxy. Two aspects of Numbers’ game-changing scholarship stood out: first, the creationist theory of a young earth had not been embraced by Christians or scientists until the 19th century; and second, that this novel theory can be traced to none other than Ellen White whose creationist views were then marketed by George McCready Price. This was a case when Ellen White can be credited with being an original who was truly “ahead of her time.”



Though Numbers has reached the pinnacle of his profession with the publication of over twenty books on all areas of the history of medicine and science, he has never lost sight of Adventism. His several edited books on Adventist history — and the conferences he helped organize from which these books emerged — further refine the blueprint for mainstreaming Adventism.

While still a professor at Loma Linda in the early 1970s, Numbers and his friend Vern Carner created a lecture series through the Loma Linda University Church which

featured several of the more prominent scholars of American religion at that time. These academics each wrote essays on the cultural context for the origins of Adventism. As a neophyte scholar and the only Adventist among them, I wrote the essay on Adventism itself. The book that resulted was *The Rise of Adventism: Religion and Society in Mid-Nineteenth Century America*, edited by Edwin Scott Gaustad (Harper & Row, 1974).

In the mid-1980s, Numbers and I coedited *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in Nineteenth Century* (Indiana University Press, 1987; University of Tennessee Press, 1993). This book resulted from a conference in Killington, Vermont, which drew together major players within the field of American religion who wrote chapters for *The Disappointed* on the social, cultural, and intellectual world which had produced William Miller. Established scholars and fledglings in the field, non-Adventists and Adventists sat across from each other and hashed out their studies on Millerism.

*Ellen Harmon White: American Prophet*, co-edited by Terrie Dopp Aamodt, Gary Land, and Ronald L. Numbers (Oxford University Press, 2014) had been developed through a 2009 working conference in White’s hometown of Portland, Maine. Numbers proved at first reluctant to participate, but the organizers realized, pragmatically, that they needed him as a magnet for drawing established non-Adventist scholars to Portland, and they knew, too, that he would be invaluable in securing a prestigious press for publishing the book. He ultimately agreed to coedit the book and write for it under one condition: that it be an even-handed historical work, neither parochial nor polemical. Each chapter draft was reviewed two scholars, one familiar with Adventist studies and the other a specialist in the historical context. When we gathered for dinner one evening in Portland at an elegant restaurant that had been, before its remodeling, the home of Ellen Harmon’s childhood congregation — the Chestnut Street Methodist Church — there was nothing parochial or polemical about that incandescent occasion.

To celebrate what Numbers has done for Adventist history is not to suggest that Adventist historians should — if in fact they could — pattern themselves after him in every way. As for the “could” part: with respect to his academic achievements, Numbers borders on a *sui generis* figure. As for the “should” part: no one is urging Adventist historians to abandon, *en masse*, their teaching positions at denominational schools for state universities. Nor should they leave Adventism for agnosticism. But, as we have seen, Numbers can

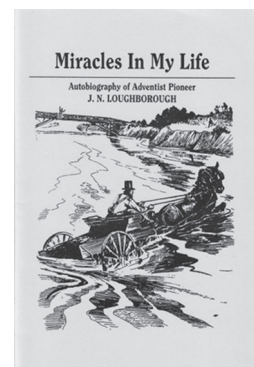
be a role model in other ways. He can inspire them professionally to reach beyond the sectarian boundaries of Adventism, so they can see their subject matter from the outside and not just from within. He can encourage them to collaborate with non-Adventist historians and to raise new questions of Adventism within new intellectual and cultural contexts. Throughout his career, Numbers has acted as mentor and sponsor—often as the silent partner—for many historians of Adventism. In helping to mainstream Adventist historiography, he has been what Benjamin McArthur called “the rainmaker.” He was certainly that for me. From the outset of my career, I determined to write about Adventist history for the non-Adventist world. In almost every project I took on—in some crucial way—Numbers had a hand in it. He linked me to the scholars with whom I worked and the presses through which I published. As with other historians of Adventism, I owe him.

### Mediating

We should not be too surprised that Adventism has produced an historiography fraught with particular challenges, which surface in Masfa’s study. As believers, Adventist historians struggle with removing the “God particle,” as it were, from their historical arguments, especially when it comes to Ellen White’s life and ministry. And in their relatively isolated enclave, they find it demanding to reach a mainstream audience. But nothing reflects the idiosyncrasy of Adventism more than what Masfa terms “*mediating*.” This has to do with the “style or tone” adopted by Adventist historians rather than their academic prowess. It involves threading the needle between hagiography and more realistic history. The best at mediating, in Masfa’s view, has been George Knight, but he cites other favorites, such as Richard W. Schwarz, Floyd Greenleaf and Gary Land. These scholars assume a “critical approach” to writing history but also a “more balanced” one that avoids “conflicts with church administrators.” Despite his “provocative” style, Knight is especially adept at finding a middle ground between the “right and left wings of the Adventist world” (pp. 165, 171). Masfa’s description of mediating has less to do with historical rigor, or imagination, or integrity than it does a dialect of diplomacy, etiquette, or civility. To survive among Adventists, historians must learn this second language.

Adventism is, after all, a culture with its own vocabulary and Adventist historians, occupying that space, have been writing for one another in ways that limit their contribution to the wider historical community beyond Adventism. Adventist historians do not look in on Adventism from the outside; they are insiders with a personal stake in how *their* story is written. They share in the same heritage as the subjects of their study. Too often, in other words, Adventist historians are as much *Adventists* as they are *historians*, which reduces their value to the church as well as to the scholarly community as a whole.

Masfa is right about the importance, for Adventist historians, of a language of diplomacy. What he neglects to mention, however, is that language involves two-way communication. It is not just the historians who are called upon to accommodate to the church but the church that must take care of its historians. Mediating would be unnecessary if there were not two sides. Everett Dick’s troubling interaction with churchmen has been, unfortunately, repeated time and again. Adventist historians, like other academics and artists within the church, have been forced to stare up at the dark and ugly underside of the Adventist community—the church at its worst. If the historians need to do their part in finessing those findings that endanger traditional beliefs, the church at large needs to do



its part in opening up to fresh understandings of those beliefs. Over the years, the church has racked up quite a body count among its historians. Parenthetically, I should interject here, however self-serving on my part, that Masfa does not accurately depict the departures of Numbers, Butler, or Graybill from their denominational employment as historians. Though their cases varied widely, none of them was, speaking precisely, “terminated.”

Masfa does not appreciate how much heavy lifting was required of historians in the 1970s with respect to “mediating,” while the church leadership, seemingly, did not want to lift a finger. The Numbers case alone could supply enough illustrations of this to outweigh the Harmon “big Bible.” But we can concentrate on examples that, to some degree, involve “mediating” from both sides. During the writing of *Prophetess of Health*, Numbers, on a post-doctoral fellowship at Johns Hopkins University, and Graybill, a doctoral student there, roomed together for a year, one night a week, in Baltimore. Also working for the nearby White Estate, Graybill generously alerted Numbers to important and, at times, problematic documents that could help with his research. In one instance, Graybill let Numbers know that Arthur White, who was secretary (director) of the board of trustees of the White Estate, had just uncovered evidence that Ellen White had taken her sons to a phrenologist to get their heads “assessed.” Numbers was eager to see the source for himself. Graybill cautioned him to wait a few days so Arthur White would not suspect who had been the mole. When Numbers got around to asking White about the phrenology episode, he looked Numbers straight in the eye and denied there was any such thing. Graybill had done his part as a mediator, fostering a better understanding of Ellen White. Numbers had been diplomatic about timing his query to protect Graybill, an invaluable resource for historians and the church. But Arthur White had miserably failed as a mediator.

When the Numbers manuscript was in its late stages, the White Estate, as a mediating gesture, proposed a meeting between Numbers, Schwarz, and Graybill. The three of them together would comb through the manuscript, line by line, with an understanding: if Graybill and Schwarz agreed that a line should be altered, Numbers would do it. If Graybill and Schwarz, however, disagreed with each other, one of them taking Numbers’ side, he would leave the line as he had written it. For all who had wanted the “summit”—including the White Estate staff—this was full-blown mediating. As

a result—and this needs underscoring—*every line* of *Prophetess of Health* was approved of by either Schwarz or Graybill. But in the aftermath of that collaboration, things unraveled a bit. After the book appeared, Schwarz wrote a harsh review of it. But it turned out he had reviewed the earlier draft before substantial changes and softening of the manuscript. Schwarz apologized to Numbers for his gaffe. For Graybill’s part, he toured the country for the White Estate, taking issue with Numbers for the book to which he had, in so many ways, contributed and finally given his approval. Graybill later apologized and Numbers accepted his apology.

The most astonishing instance of mediating came, in the same era, from another historian doing Ellen White studies: Donald McAdams. Oddly, Masfa failed to mention this. McAdams was in his early 30s at Andrews University, a new member of the History and Political Science Department that included Schwarz, Land, and, for one year, Numbers. He was also a close friend of William Peterson, across the hall in the English Department. As a historian of 18th-century Britain, McAdams became interested in Ellen White’s use of historians in *The Great Controversy*, much as Peterson had been as a scholar of the Victorian era. McAdams painstakingly analyzed Ellen White’s writing on Huss alongside the historical source she leaned upon most heavily for the Huss and Jerome chapter, James A. Wylie. During McAdams’ work at the White Estate, Graybill fortuitously discovered Ellen White’s original, handwritten draft of the chapter. In 1977, McAdams submitted a 234-page manuscript to the White Estate entitled, “Ellen G. White and the Protestant Historians.” With reference to the traditional understanding of Ellen White as an inspired writer, these findings were revolutionary. McAdams had carefully scrutinized the prophet’s writing habits on Huss and his parallel columns placed her narrative alongside Wylie’s. This made clear that her writing on Huss had not been based on visions but on her cribbing from Wylie. It also proved how obvious historical inaccuracies in Wylie made their way into *The Great Controversy*.

McAdams knew this was a bombshell. But he could not have been more accommodating to the White Estate or General Conference officials. Unfortunately, neither he nor the church seemed well served by it. McAdams had grown up in Takoma Park where his father had been Secretary of the General Conference Publishing Department and a member of the White Estate. Arthur White and his children were family friends. McAdams did not want to make trouble, but he did want to make a



difference. He asked the White Estate staff to study his manuscript and come to their own conclusions about it. Where it was appropriate to make changes, he would be happy to make them. He had already toned down an earlier version of the paper (1974) before offering the 1977 paper to the White Estate. He asked for a careful, detailed response to it from staffers. If they accepted his argument, it should lead to changes in how they described Ellen White publicly as an inspired writer.

All seemed to go well initially. The White Estate was persuaded by the McAdams study. Then Gerhard Hasel, a professor of Old Testament and Biblical Theology at the seminary, entered the discussion. He attempted to refute McAdams on key points and, though his answers to the historian were largely untenable, the staffers cooled in their support of McAdams. No critique of McAdams ever resulted. No changes in White Estate pronouncements followed. McAdams even faced flak for his research. Robert H. Pierson, then General Conference president, unsuccessfully tried to block McAdams' appointment as college president of Southwestern. In good faith, McAdams had done his best to be a mediator, aiming for mutuality, but those with administrative power did not reciprocate.

In Masfa's study, we learn of the unique and daunting challenges for Adventist historians relative to methodology, mainstreaming, and mediating. With its strengths and weaknesses, Masfa's introduction to Adventist historiography tells a story well worth reading. Is it time for Adventist historiography to move in a new direction? Is it time for historians of Adventism to become a less exclusive club? Yes, of course! The time has come to invite in historians from a range of disciplines and a variety of faiths—even the faithless who become interested—to take on the task of doing Adventist history.

That brings to mind Joan D. Hedrick, director of Women's Studies and Professor of History at Trinity

College in Hartford, Connecticut. She is the author of *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Life* (Oxford University Press, 1994) which won the Pulitzer Prize in Biography. In 2009 Hedrick delivered a keynote address at that working *Ellen Harmon White* book conference in Portland, Maine, which ran from Oct. 22-25. She gave insightful and inspiring remarks on the art of writing biography and then stayed for the remainder of the meetings. She found herself enthralled with Ellen White. She went home and dug into researching her life. She read the *Testimonies*. She then went to the White Estate in Silver Spring, MD, to explore the idea of writing a biography. But Hedrick became discouraged when told her access to the primary documents would be restricted and so she decided against doing the project. More recently, David F. Holland, Professor of New England Church History at Harvard Divinity School, has enjoyed a better reception from the White Estate and the church. Holland is due to publish a comparative biography of Ellen White and Mary Baker Eddy. Holland is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and he is used to non-Mormons contributing a rich literature to Mormon historiography. It is time for this to happen in Adventism as well. Change is coming: Don McAdams' book on Ellen White, John Huss, and James A. Wylie is being released by Oak and Acorn Publishing.

Adventist historians, of course, will continue to write, and for this we should be grateful. In the newest generation of these historians, much good work is being done. That's because the believers among them—including Masfa—have stopped claiming that they know, from their study of evidence, where angels have interfered in the human story. Adventist historians no longer wrestle with the angel at Bull Run. That fight is over.

#### Endnote

\*Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), 267.



JONATHAN BUTLER, PhD, studied American church history at the University of Chicago and has produced a number of historical studies on Ellen White and Seventh-day Adventists. He contributed two chapters, entitled "Portrait" and "Second Coming," to *Ellen Harmon White: American Prophet*, edited by Terrie Dopp Aamodt, Gary Land, and Ronald L. Numbers.

# THE END of Grief

*By Sigve Tonstad, 2022*

I know that the sun was shining, don't know if it was a dream.  
I was strolling in Red Square, at the back of a steady stream  
of people cheering and dancing: it was a peculiar sight.  
Then I asked for the reason: "The beast has lost its might!"

"The beast," said one, "is all broken. It fell by its rotten weight.  
Its legs, they suddenly buckled, and the beast, it crashed at the gate."  
"It fell," said another, "loudly, you could hear it in Beijing.  
Even there, in that distant country, glad voices started to sing."

"The beast," said a third, "was a liar, its head the shape of a snake,  
this lay deep in its nature: the words that it spoke were fake."  
"Indeed," said a fourth, "it persisted by ceaselessly spreading lies,  
and people were sorely bewildered because of the darkened skies."

"But now," said a fifth (he was smiling), "a brighter day is here.  
Look to the front of the marchers and see why we no longer fear."  
I looked but I could not believe it; I could not believe my eyes:  
Were they Moses and Elijah? Had they fallen from the skies?

I tried to remember their faces, it seemed I had seen them before,  
one, he looked like Zelensky, and the other Navalny of yore,  
their faces were also beaming, they were walking arm in arm,  
the sun, as I said, was shining, it was truly a day of charm.

I admit that my mind was hazy, I wonder what it could mean,  
Perhaps I'm going crazy, so perplexed by what I had seen?  
Had I been walking in Red Square, or was it a heavenly sight,  
a fleeting moment of glory: "The beast has lost its might!"?

Today, all rested and sober, this is the meaning that's left:  
heaven belongs to what's human and not to the brazen theft.  
As for the beast that has fallen, the liar as well as the thief,  
all vanished the hell of its making, and this is the end of grief.

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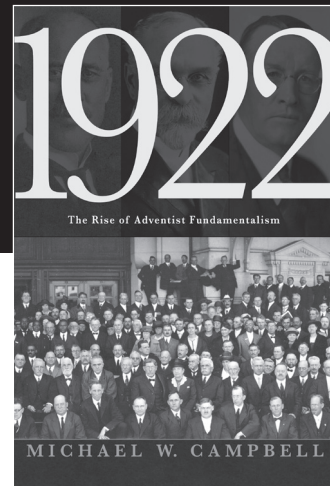
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