

# CURRENT

FAITH MEETS LIFE AND CULTURE

FALL 2019—Vol. 7

 Seventh-day Adventist  
Theological Seminary  
Andrews University

**WORLD CHANGERS**  
*Seeing Beyond the Majority*

SEEING BEYOND  
THE MAJORITY:  
Unsung Adventist Heroines  
*page 19*

I DELIGHT IN  
GOD'S GOODNESS  
in Spite of Devastating Problems  
*page 30*

RELEVANT  
REVELATION  
*page 41*



## WORLD CHANGERS: TRANSFORMED TO SERVE

It is quite arrogant to think that we are able to change the world knowing that we often are not able to change even our own behavior. To change a spouse or people around us, stop addictions, or change our own habits seems an impossibility, and we recognize it on the basis of our own experience. A spiritual power stronger than an atomic bomb is needed to break and transform the human heart. To make a difference in life is very challenging and problematic. *Metanoia*, repentance comes from above (John 3:7; Greek word *anōthen* means “from above” or “again”) and is a result of accepting God’s kindness (Romans 2:4). Only God’s goodness and the power of the Holy Spirit can change people, which is accomplished through His grace and Word (Ezekiel 36:25–27; 37:1–14; Ephesians 2:1–5; 1 Peter 1:23). To change something and someone for good is impossible unless we let God be God in our lives (James 1:17, 27). He can do marvelous things if we allow Him to change

### Transforming Relationship

In Christ we are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), and the apostle Paul explains twice how the transformation of our lives occurs: (1) it is experienced by accepting God’s mercy: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed** [μεταμορφοῦσθε; verb imperative present passive 2nd person plural from μεταμορφόω] by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:1–2 ESV).<sup>1</sup> He explains that the change in life occurs first in our mind, and then is reflected in our ethics of everyday behavior. (2) It happens by beholding the beauty of Christ’s character: “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are **being transformed** [μεταμορφούμεθα; verb indicative present passive 1st person plural from μεταμορφόω] into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18 ESV). The same word *metamorphoo* is used for the transfiguration of Jesus (Matthew 17:2; Mark 9:2).<sup>2</sup> This renewal is a daily process in which we need to grow: “Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed [ἀνακαινούται; verb indicative present passive 3rd person singular from ἀνακαινώνω] day by day” (2 Corinthians 4:16 NIV). Peter aptly underlines: “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18a ESV).

It is a fact that only people transformed by God’s grace can be His instruments for influencing others for good with lasting results (but see Jonah’s story; exception confirms the rule). World changers are made by God Himself. Changes are not done lightly but by His extraordinary power. Changed people see beyond the majority and are able to motivate and direct others toward a better life by following what is right. This transformation comes from their close relationship with the Lord (Micah 6:8).

From time to time I ask students of the Bible a trivia question: “Where did God bring Israel after He liberated them from Egypt?” Their typical answers are: “God brought them to the Promised Land;” “To Mount Sinai;”



and enable us to do what is right (Philippians 2:13; 4:13; cf. Ephesians 2:4–10). Every change is extremely difficult for we naturally resist change; we love the *status quo*. To change things demands courage, humility, and boldness. When Joshua was commissioned to lead Israel into the Promised Land, God had to repeat three times (in just 8 verses) in His first speech to him not to fear but be bold and courageous (Josh 1:2–9). Real change cannot be commanded, but is experienced as a consequence of being with the Lord and walking daily with Him (Micah 6:8).

<sup>1</sup> Biblical quotations are cited from the NIV unless it is stated otherwise.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek word *metamorphoo* is used only 4 times in the New Testament (Matt 17:2; Mark 9:2; Rom 12:2; and 2 Cor 3:18).

The transformation of mind and life is like the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a beautiful butterfly.

"To the desert." These answers are geographically correct, but theologically completely wrong. God actually answers this question, which may surprise many. God powerfully states: "You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and **brought you to myself**" (Exodus 19:4). Thus, the biblical-theological answer to the question reveals God's priority and goal: "The Lord brought them to Himself."

The living God of the Bible is the God of relationships. The most important thing for our Lord is not a thing, accomplishing an agenda, but a person. Our God pays close attention to people and the primary purpose of His activities is to rebuild a personal relationship with humans. He leads to places in order to bring people through this journey to Himself. Jeremiah, at the end of the book of Lamentations, longs for this kind of personal relationship with God: "Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored!" (Lamentations 5:21). In unison, all biblical prophets call people to a meaningful, personal relationship as, for example, Joel proclaims: "'Even now,' declares the LORD, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning'" (Joel 2:12; see also Jeremiah 3:1; Ezekiel 11:19–20; 18:30–32; Hos 14:1). Jesus Himself stated the same: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself" (John 12:32 ESV). God is not only concerned with our ethical behavior, right doctrine, set of proper actions, but, above all, with a personal intimate relationship with us. Both biblical creation accounts (Genesis 1–2) are about *relationship*: the first about the vertical with God (the Sabbath) and the second underlines the horizontal relationship among humans (marriage). The knowledge of God must be an experiential and relational knowledge that leads to salvation (John 17:3). World changers are those who cultivate a trust relationship with God and are guided by His teachings and principles as revealed in His Word.

## Moses as a Model of Growth and Transformation

Very instructive in this regard is the story of Moses (Exodus 19–34). The God of Israel made Moses an outstanding leader. How was Moses transformed in order to become a spiritual frontrunner and be such a powerful changer and mover of things? Most believers are fascinated by the story of Moses's shining face; however, they assume that God called Moses to Mount Sinai and, after spending some time with the Lord, he returned to camp and his face was shining. Well, this is not true; it was not so simple.

It is significant to observe that, prior to this transforming experience resulting in a radiant face, Moses was used by God in a mighty way as the Lord was preparing him for a special leadership role. God gave him the best education: first by his mother and then in the Egyptian University with top educators and mentors. He was probably put in charge of different military campaigns and learned how to lead people into action. In the land of Midian, while taking care of sheep, God used him to write two books: Job and Genesis.<sup>3</sup> Then he was called by God in the dramatic event of the burning bush to lead Israel out of Egypt. He witnessed the defeat of the Egyptian gods and the mighty Egyptian army. He observed how God spoke to His people on Mount Sinai and gave him the Decalogue together with the instructions on how to build the Tabernacle. Following that, the transforming experience came with his shining face, after which he led Israel for another 39 years to the brink of the Promised Land. The biblical message states that Moses was a faithful servant of God (Deut 34:5; Josh 1:1), unmatched light, a model prophet according to whom others would be measured (Deut 18:15, 18). He was an agent of change, even though people did not always follow his directions and words. When they did, they prospered. We may learn from Moses's experience because his exceptional life-story





tells us what God can do when we let Him change us. He can also make us world changers. So, when and why was Moses's face radiant?

One reads the following about Moses's *first encounter* with the Lord on Mount Sinai: "Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, 'This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel'" (Exodus 19:3). God told him that He wanted to establish a covenant with Israel to be His special people, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation (19:5–6). After his descent there is not one word in the text about his radiant face: "So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the LORD had commanded him to speak" (Exodus 19:7). People reacted to God's initiative positively: "We will do everything the Lord has said" (Exodus 19:8). For the *second time* Moses climbed Sinai when he brought Israel's "answer back to the LORD" (Exodus 19:7b). God spoke to him (Exodus 19:10–13), and then he descended the mountain (Exodus 19:14). Again, there is no statement regarding his face being radiant. Later, Moses ascended Mount Sinai for a *third time*: "The LORD descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up" (Exodus 19:20). God spoke to him (Exodus 19:21–24) and "Moses went down to the people and told them" (Exodus 19:25). Even after the third time he was in the Lord's presence, his face was not shining.

A diligent student of the Bible who knows that Moses's face will be radiant needs to ask a pertinent question: What was it in the life of Moses that caused this new experience? In the past, I thought that Moses's face was radiant because he had been in the presence of the Lord. This assumption proves to be incorrect because the biblical text reports that he already had been in the presence of the Lord several times and still his face was not shining. So what brought about the difference?

According to Exodus 20, God decided to speak to all the people (not only to Moses) when He uttered the Decalogue on Sinai. It was the most solemn occasion in the history of God's people when God Himself spoke in the midst of lightning, music, smoke, and the earthquake. God's voice was

heard and people were terrified: "When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, 'Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die'" (20:19). Moses firmly responded: "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning" (20:20). God wanted to help them by this extraordinary event to cultivate His holy presence in life and to stay connected with Him; unfortunately the people missed it.

After that God invited Moses for the *fourth time* to climb the mountain: "The people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was" (Exodus 20:21). During this stay on Sinai, God gave Moses "The Covenant Code"—the interpretation of the Decalogue outlining how to put into social practice God's will (see Exodus 20:22–23:33). Moses descended and "went and told the people all the LORD's words and laws," and the people of Israel responded twice with one voice, "Everything the LORD has said we will do" (Exodus 24:3). The renewal of the covenant occurred on that occasion, and their relationship with God was even sealed with sacrifices and the sprinkling of the blood (24:5–8).

After this firm reestablishment of the covenant with God, Moses climbed Sinai for the *fifth time*. At the beginning of this climb, Moses was not alone. He had an excellent company of 73 leaders: "Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of sapphire, clear as the sky itself. But God did not raise his hand against

these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank" (Exodus 24:9–11). This was the leaders' highest experience: they saw God (theophany); twice the text underlines this reality. It was the time for the leaders to seal the covenant with God by eating together, by a banquet with the Lord, God of Israel, who was their Host. In biblical times in the Middle East (and to a certain extent even until today), eating together is a high experience, great honor, and privilege. It offers forgiveness and forms a bond of friendship, forming one family. It implies being there



<sup>1</sup> Ellen White comments: "The long years amid desert solitudes were not lost. Not only was Moses gaining a preparation for the great work before him, but during this time, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote the book of Genesis and also the book of Job, which would be read with the deepest interest by the people of God until the close of time" (ST Feb. 19, 1880; see also 3BC 1140).

for each other and staying together in times of crisis and problems. By eating together, they promised to each other, without words, that if something should happen to one party, the other was obliged to come and help. To be invited to a meal was a special treat which was not extended to everyone. To refuse an invitation to a table was the worst kind of insult.<sup>4</sup> These leaders were deeply honored by God.<sup>5</sup>

While on the Mountain of God with the elders, God extended a special invitation to Moses. He directed him: “Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and commands I have written for their instruction.” When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered the mountain, and on the seventh day the LORD called to Moses from within the cloud . . . Then Moses entered the cloud as he went on up the mountain. And he stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights” (Exodus 24:12, 15–16, 18).

Moses was invited by God to come closer to Him than everyone else. One can observe how Moses was drawn to a more intimate relationship with the Lord and grew spiritually. Careful reading of the biblical text reveals it: First Moses climbed the mountain and “went up to God” (19:3), then he went “to the top of the mountain” (19:20), after he approached the cloud, “the thick darkness” in which God resided (20:21), but now “Moses entered the cloud” where God was, and he stayed with the Lord 40 days and 40 nights. During these 40 days, God gave Moses two precious gifts: (1) the gift of the Decalogue written on the two tables, chiseled by God Himself (Exodus 24:12), and (2) the instructions on how to build the Tabernacle (see Exodus 25–31).

After spending 40 days and 40 nights with the Lord, Moses returned to the people. Was his face now shining? On the contrary, Moses face was burning with anger because he had to confront the Golden Calf apostasy and the people’s brash immorality: “When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain” (Exodus 32:19). Breaking the tablets with the Decalogue was an external sign of breaking its content. However, God slightly rebuked Moses for it, because later He commanded Moses to chisel them again, “two stone tablets you broke” (Deuteronomy 10:2) in order that He could write the Ten Words again.

Terrible things happened in Israel’s camp in correspondence to their apostasy. Many people died due to their rebellion. The following day, Moses declared to people: “You have committed a great sin. But now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin” (Exodus 32:30). It is reported that “Moses went back to the LORD and said, ‘Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They

have made themselves gods of gold. But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written”” (Exodus 32:31–32). So Moses climbed Mount Sinai for the *sixth* time. No wonder Moses is considered to be a type of Christ because of his intercessory prayer and his willingness to offer his own life for the sinners. What exemplary compassion for sinners! He demonstrated his total dedication to the Lord and sacrificial love for the people. The book of Exodus does not say how long Moses stayed this time with the Lord on the Mount, but the book of Deuteronomy reveals that he was on Sinai again for 40 days (see Deuteronomy 9:18). After such commitment, would his face now be radiant? Surprisingly, not yet even though he had twice spent 40 days with His Lord! So we ask, what was still missing? In what area did Moses still need to grow even more?

At this point, God advised Moses that he did not need to climb Mount Sinai to meet Him. He instructed him to build a Tent of Meeting (do not confuse it with the Tabernacle, which was later erected at the center of Israel’s camp) that was constructed outside of the camp. The biblical passage reads: “Now Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it the ‘tent of meeting.’ Anyone inquiring of the LORD would go to the tent of meeting outside the camp. And whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people rose and stood at the entrances to their tents, watching Moses until he entered the tent” (Exodus 33:7–8).

I do not know how many times Moses went to the Tent of Meeting to encounter his God. If it was five, ten, twenty, or even more times, but one thing I know: Moses and the Lord developed a special relationship, a friendship. The text underlines it: “The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend” (Exodus 33:11a). A friend is a person to whom you can tell everything, and he or she will always love you, never reject you, and will keep the secret. A friend is present in time of need.

One day when Moses was in discussion with his Friend, he realized that he actually needed to know Him better. The more he knew his Lord, the more he realized that he did not know Him. According to Exodus 33:13, Moses requested: “If you are pleased with me, **teach me your ways** so I may know you and continue to find favor with you.” The knowledge Moses desired was not mere intellectual understanding of God, but experiential knowledge of His Person. Up to this time, Moses knew his God very closely. He was the One who inspired him; He was the Almighty God who smashed all the Egyptian gods; He was the Mighty Warrior who opened the Red Sea; He was the Splendid General who defeated the Egyptian army; He was the Revelator of truth and His law; but He was also the loving and caring Parent who provided

<sup>4</sup> This insight helps one to understand stories in the New Testament, e.g., when Jesus Christ was heavily criticized for eating with sinners (Luke 5:30). When believers celebrate the Lord’s Supper, they also establish this close bond of being there for each other, and God’s actual family is reestablished (see Matt 26:26–30; Mark 14:22–25; 1 Cor 11:23–29).

<sup>5</sup> An insight from the life of Nadab and Abihu, who were the sons of Aaron and thus priests, is troubling. Even though they had such a deep experience with God, they were not transformed by this encounter with Him, but they took it as a pretext for superiority and freedom to do what they wanted and liked. They were not growing in knowledge and service, but became proud. Instead of being a shining light, their arrogance was their downfall. They became drunk and went with the forbidden fire into the Tabernacle. They saw God, and still their faces were not radiant. On the contrary, their faces were pale because they were found dead in the Tabernacle of God (Lev 10:1–2, 9). They became possessors of truth, pleased with themselves, manipulators of holy things, and the holy became common to them. Sadly, one can see the Lord, have a great experience with Him, and still be spiritually dead, not allowing Him to change one’s own life.

for every need of Israel. But Moses desired to gain new insights. Please, “teach me your ways,” Moses asked of God. He felt that there was much more to learn. He wanted to understand Him better, discover His ways. He realized that he did not know everything. No surprise that Moses was characterized as “a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth” (Num 12:3). Even a great leader can be a humble person when he/she knows their dependency, has a sense of insufficiency, and need for learning and collaboration. Moses was teachable.

During that discussion with the Lord, Moses made a special request: “Show me your glory!” (Exodus 33:18), and God’s answer was affirmative: “I will cause all **my GOODNESS** to pass in front of you” (emphasis supplied; Exodus 33:19). From this juxtaposition of words, one can safely conclude that God’s glory is His goodness, that the glory of God is His character. The fact of the matter is that only God’s goodness may change people’s thinking and behavior (Romans 2:4), and this was also true for Moses.

Before Moses climbed Mount Sinai for the *seventh time*, God instructed him to chisel two stone tablets so He could again write on them the Decalogue, and Moses obeyed: “So Moses chiseled out two stone tablets like the first ones and went up Mount Sinai early in the morning, as the LORD had commanded him; and he carried the two stone tablets in his hands” (Exodus 34:4). Then the LORD revealed His nature to Moses. He “came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD” (Exodus 34:4–5). Then the prophet heard the best description of God’s character explained by God Himself. The Lord proclaimed that He is “the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation” (Exodus 34:6–7).

This is the best description of who God is and it is provided by God Himself. The Lord’s nature is presented with His several indispensable attributes. The God of Moses is a God of love, compassion, grace, patience, faithfulness, forgiveness, truth, and justice. The self-revelation of God is the masterpiece of God’s revelation, which is like a golden

***It was only  
when he knew  
God’s loving,  
kind, and good  
character that  
Moses was  
transformed.***

thread going through the entire Bible (see, for example, Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalms 86:15; 103:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2). Later biblical authors repeated after God, and interpreted what the Lord said. It is the John 3:16 of the Hebrew Scriptures. God proclaimed that He is the Lord, namely the close personal God, God of the covenant, God of His people who intervenes in humans affairs and cares for us, helping us in our troubles. It is plainly confirmed that God’s glory is His character of love because He is love (Deuteronomy 7:8; 33:3; John 4:16). In the book of Revelation,

the first message begins with God’s grace: “Grace to you and peace” (1:4) and the last message ends with a strong wish: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all” (Revelation 22:21 NKJV).<sup>6</sup>

At the time of this seventh ascent, Moses’s stay again lasted 40 days: “Moses was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments” (Exodus 34:28). Now, for the third time, he has spent 40 days and nights on Sinai with the Lord. On returning after 40 days with God, Moses’s face was finally radiant. Yes, at last! The inspired Word declares: “When Moses came down

from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD” (Exodus 34:29). Note that Moses did not realize that his face was shining. Those people who shine do not know that they are shining. The closer one is to the Lord, the keener that person is aware of imperfections in comparison to God’s holiness.<sup>7</sup> Through this growing and transforming, Moses became stronger and more powerful in changing his world. For another 39 years, he led God’s people through their wilderness experience in the midst of many dangers and challenges from within and without.

### **Secret to Becoming a Spiritual World Changer**

This leads us back to our principal question on which we need to reflect: What was it in Moses’s life that brought this change so that His face was radiant? It was not the fact that he was in the presence of God! It was not enough to be with the Lord, but it was important to come and live in the company of God because if he were not in God’s

<sup>6</sup> It is significant that the first and last sentences in *The Great Controversy* series written by Ellen G. White refer to God’s love: “‘God is love.’ 1 John 4:16. His nature, His law, is love. It ever has been; it ever will be” (PP 33), and “From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love” (GC 678). Her bestseller book *Steps to Christ* begins with the same emphasis: “Nature and revelation alike testify of God’s love” (SC 9).

<sup>7</sup> Ellen G. White confirms: “Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell upon the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to His divine image, the more clearly will they discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects.

When persons claim that they are sanctified, they give sufficient evidence that they are far from being holy. They fail to see their own weakness and destitution. They look upon themselves as reflecting the image of Christ, because they have no true knowledge of Him. The greater the distance between them and their Saviour, the more righteous they appear in their own eyes.” (SL 7–8)

presence his face would never shine! It was only when he knew God's loving, kind, and good character that Moses was transformed. Thus, it is not sufficient to just come into God's presence, but much more importantly, it is **to know existentially God's goodness** and open up personally to Him and to the influence of His kindness. Then our hearts and minds can experience a change and our lives can be transformed. We should be like a flower opening up to the sun. Remember that God's amazing grace is always transforming. If God's grace does not transform, it means it's not amazing.

While pastoring in Europe years ago, I met two families who for more than 10 years did not speak to each other, even though they were going Sabbath after Sabbath into God's presence in the same church. If we want to be world changers, we need to allow God to transform us. Only people transformed by God's kindness can transform for good. When one reflects God's character and demonstrates integrity of character, honesty, and transparency, we will then have the positive power of influence. His characteristics will be our characteristics. His virtues and attitudes will be ours. We will become like Him. It means we'll be loving as He is loving, as gracious as He is gracious, as forgiving as He is forgiving, as serving as He is serving, as unselfish as He is unselfish, as encouraging as He is encouraging, as patient as He is patient, as faithful as He is faithful. As Ellen G. White has so eloquently stated: "It is the glory of God to give His virtue to His children. He desires to see men and women reaching the highest standard" (AA 530). His glory is to embrace sinners and supply everything which is needed to change them. To give glory to God means to reflect, in our character, the character of God, His goodness, kindness, and love. In this way, we not only have a chance to change the world, but to be a shining light for the whole Universe, as Paul states: "For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men" (1 Corinthians 4:9). This cosmic dimension gives to our lives and service a new outstanding depth and width.

On a gloomy day, a father and son visited a cathedral. While looking at the stained glass windows with beautiful paintings of different biblical scenarios, the sun suddenly began shining through the glass and the picture of some people standing suddenly became brightly illuminated with impressive light. The small boy asked his father: "Daddy, who are these people?" The father didn't know much about Christianity, Christ, and His disciples but quickly said: "These people are Christians." This dazzling picture stayed in the mind of the son. One day his school-teacher asked, "Children, do you know who are Christians?" The small boy remembered the bright picture in the cathedral and answered, "I know, Christians are shining people." Jesus stimulated his followers: "Let your light shine before

men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Only shining people can be world changers.

When Paul reflected on the experience of Moses, he wrote to Christians: "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18). We can be broken, yet God's grace may restore, heal, and transform us to be reflectors of His goodness and be efficient contributors to the beauty and meaning of life. Then we will warm people

with the love of God. Unfortunately, people are often disappointed with those who should show reliability and balance. They often cannot hear what they say because their deeds are louder than their words. Can we say with Mahatma Gandhi: "My life is my message?" Francis of Assisi aptly stated: "Preach Christ always and when it is necessary use your words!"

### **Conclusion: Small Acts of Kindness Matter**

Let's be humble. Maybe we will not change the world, but we may make a difference for good and contribute to a positive view of life by listening, visiting, playing with, or writing little notes to others in need. Share God's love with people and in places where there is hatred; peace where there are tensions and miscommunications; understanding and support where there is abuse and pain; joy where people experience depression and disappointments. Let's be genuine, consistent and contagious Christians. World changers warm people in order for the ice on their hearts to melt so they also can become loving people.

Only God's kindness can transform lives. Paul transparently declares: "Do you hold his [God's] priceless kindness, forbearance, and patience in low esteem, unaware that the kindness of God would lead you to repentance? (Romans 2:4 NAB). The NKJV renders the text in the following way: "Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" Only God's kindness leads His followers to be kind, good and unselfish servants as He is kind, good and unselfish. Just small acts of kindness can change the world. You may never know which deed made a difference in someone's life. Your random but systematic, and maybe most of the time unnoticed, tiny positive actions, encouraging words or gestures, or a small deed of kindness may motivate and encourage people in a powerful way, making you a world changer.

***World changers warm people in order for the ice on their hearts to melt so they also can become loving people.***



# *Keep the Faith*

Revelation 14:12







## 2 World Changers: Transformed to Serve

by Jiří Moskala  
*Ruach ve Dabar*



## 10 Coming and Going

*Faculty members who are leaving,  
joining us at the Seminary this  
year, or changing positions*



## 12 First the Blade

by David Sedlacek



## 15 World Changers at Their Best

by Magdana Gedeon



## 18 Seminary Student Organizations

*BSAS, WCN, SSF*



## 19 Seeing Beyond the Majority: Unsung Adventist Heros

by Hyveth Williams



## 24 The Making of a Slave

by Everette B. Samuel



## 30 Psalm 73—Its Structure and Theology

by Jiří Moskala



## 41 Relevant Revelation

by Latoya Wright



## 44 Church Leadership, Politics, and Social Media

by Cedric Vine



## 46 2018 Publications by Professors

*Take a look at what some of our  
faculty has produced this year!*



## 50 Seminary Directory

*Faculty and staff information  
by department and program*

*CURRENT Magazine is published annually, and printed in the U.S.A. at Lithotech, Andrews University.*

### Subscriptions and more info:

Contact: Hyveth Williams

hyveth@andrews.edu or access online at digitalcommons.andrews.edu.

**Printed copies:** \$20. Make check payable to Andrews University/CURRENT.

### Mail to:

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary  
4145 E Campus Circle Dr  
Berrien Springs MI 49104-1500 USA



# COMING and GOING



ANNA GALENIECE



ROY G. GATÓN



ABNER F.  
HERNÁNDEZ



JEROME L.  
SKINNER



ANDREW J.  
TOMPKINS



## INCOMING

**Anna Galeniece**, DMin, transferred from the Adventist University of Africa, Kenya, to join the Department of Christian Ministry to serve as Seminary chaplain and associate professor of chaplaincy on January 1, 2019.

**Roy G. Gatón**, DMin, brings 25 years of pastoral care and family counseling to serve in the Department of Christian Ministry as associate professor of pastoral care and counseling since January 1, 2019.

**Abner F. Hernandez**, PhD in Religion (church history), with a cognate in systematic theology, joined the Seminary faculty on August 1, 2019, as assistant professor of Adventist studies in the Department of Church History.

**Jerome L. Skinner**, assistant professor of Old Testament exegesis and theology since July 1, 2019, is a native of Buffalo, New York. His educational background consists of a BA in theology (Atlantic Union College), a Master of Divinity (Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary), and PhD in Old Testament studies (2016). He has contributed several articles to books on Psalms interpretation and recently completed a theological commentary on the book of Ezekiel (Andrews University Press). He is currently co-authoring two commentaries for the forthcoming Seventh-day Adventist International Bible Commentary (Isaiah, with Roy Gane, and Ezekiel).

**Andrew J. Tompkins**, PhD, worked in India for several years in various capacities including associate director of the Global Mission Center for South Asian religions at Spicer Adventist University. He is currently serving, since May 1, 2019, as assistant professor of mission and intercultural theology in the Department of World Mission.

## OUTGOING

After 19 years of service to the Seminary, **O.M. “Skip” Bell**, professor of leadership, emeritus, retired May 1, 2019. In addition to teaching, he served as director of the Doctor of Ministry program. He also led in the establishment of the Christian Ministry Center and the Journal of Applied Christian Leadership.

**Darius W. Jankiewicz**, professor of historical theology, began attending Andrews University in 1993 to pursue an MDiv. He also completed a PhD in historical theology in 2001. He returned to Andrews in 2008 to teach historical theology for the Department of Theology & Christian Philosophy, eventually becoming chair of the department in 2013. He returned home with his family to Australia where he will serve as field secretary, ministerial secretary and Spirit of Prophecy coordinator for the South Pacific Division.

**Edyta Jankiewicz**, assistant professor of religious education earned her PhD in religious education in 2016, receiving the award for Outstanding Dissertation of the Year in the Seminary. She joined the Department of Discipleship & Religious Education in 2017 and departed with her husband to Australia on June 9, 2019.

## CHANGING FACULTY POSITIONS

**Oliver Glanz** was recently appointed co-editor of Andrews University Seminary Studies (AUSS). He is currently associate professor of Old Testament.

**Ante Jerončić** was appointed chair of the Department of Theology & Christian Philosophy as of June 1, 2019.

**John Reeve** was designated director of the PhD (religion) and ThD programs on August 1, 2019. He follows the excellent leadership of Tom Shepherd, who was the PhD/ThD director for the last 8½ years.

**Trevor O'Reggio**, professor of church history, became chair of the Department of Church History on August 21, 2019, replacing John Reeve.

**Cedric Vine**, associate professor of New Testament, will become director of the MA (religion) and Seminary Affiliations and Extensions on January 1, 2020, replacing Felix Cortez who is returning to full-time teaching in the Department of New Testament.





# FIRST THE BLADE

*By David Sedlacek*

First the Blade is a ministry to seminary families that was initiated by seminary faculty who saw the struggles of many seminary student families to support their children's education in the Adventist school system. Its initial vision was to provide limited funding for Adventist education for these children. As the ministry has evolved, its mission and vision have expanded to include other forms of support for seminary student families that includes resourcing, counseling, parents' night out, and other new ventures such as a children's author program.

Staffing for First the Blade includes a faculty coordinator currently from the Department of Discipleship & Religious Education, seminary students who choose First the Blade as their Theological Field Education internship experience, and social work students who do either their first- or second-year field placement with First the Blade under the supervision of the faculty coordinator. Students can also do their MA (religious education) family ministry practicum with First the Blade.

## **Scholarship Funds for Adventist Christian Education**

Each month, an offering is collected at one seminary worship service in order to provide funds for scholarships for the Adventist education of the children of seminary students who cannot fund this education by themselves. Donations also come from other faculty, staff and community sources. Students apply for these funds on an application form provided by the ministry. While the seminary family is committed to supporting the children of the men and women who study here, our experience over the past few years has shown that what we can provide alone falls far short of meeting the complete needs of student families. Depending

upon the amount that comes in during both the fall and spring semesters, we have been able to give amounts ranging from \$125–\$350 per child per semester. There are still many seminary student families who cannot afford to send their children to Adventist schools due to a lack of funds on their part as well as our inability to help enough. We believe that our vision has been too small. We serve a big God who is well able to make it possible for any seminary student family to send their children to an Adventist school, be it elementary, academy or university. Our new vision is in harmony with God's more-than-abundant provision. Therefore, our goal is to fund an endowment program that would be sufficient to provide funds for every seminary family to enroll their children in Adventist education. If you feel impressed to assist in meeting this goal, please prayerfully make a generous tax-deductible contribution through the Andrews University Giving website: [vault.andrews.edu/vault/app/pages/advancement/login/development](http://vault.andrews.edu/vault/app/pages/advancement/login/development). Locate the "I Want to Invest In" link and scroll to the First the Blade Scholarship Fund. Thank you in advance for your help. Contributions to First the Blade are tax deductible.

## **Other First the Blade Services**

The creative energy of seminary and social work students is greatly appreciated as they design programs that are helpful to seminary student families. We survey families to discover some of their real needs and below are some of the services we have found that resonate with them.

**(1) Parents' Night Out:** Students are very busy with classes, reading, papers and other projects. Most of them also must work to provide for their family's needs. Often they are too busy to spend enough time nurturing their relationship with one another. Therefore, First the Blade plans



## FIRST THE BLADE

Helping Seminary Families  
Disciple Their Children

nights where we provide organized childcare experiences while parents enjoy time with one another. These have been greatly appreciated breaks for parents.

**(2) Family Visitation:** Social work students often take the lead in visiting seminary families to provide counseling, support and prayer. Often they find that student families are unaware of resources in the community to help with food, clothing, furniture, homeschool connections and also much-needed social services. Sometimes children have special needs that can be helped by First the Blade staff. First the Blade, in cooperation with Andrews University, has produced a list of community resources that we give to families.

**(3) Family Connections:** Events are planned to help seminary student families connect with other families. By carefully listening to students, we have discovered that many families coming from other parts of the world experience loneliness and disconnection. Due to visa constraints, spouses of seminary students are unable to become employed. If they have children, they are home all day alone with them while the seminary student is busy with studies. This gives the spouse little opportunity to make connections that would make life here more enriching. Therefore, First the Blade is supporting a new initiative to orient not only seminary students but also their spouses at the beginning of the semester. We also try to connect families with other families who can watch each other's children in a cooperative childcare venture. At many of the events planned by First the Blade, a spiritual educational element is included for the parents. Often the topic relates to the family.

**(4) Random Acts of Kindness:** A new project being initiated by the First the Blade team involves recognizing that everyone needs to be treated kindly. When a person does a good deed, it feels good to be recognized even though that is not the motivation for being loving. However, when a person

is recognized randomly, just because they are, something special happens in the heart that draws that person closer to God. That is the purpose of this initiative.

**(5) Children's Book:** The newest venture for First the Blade is the production of a children's book called "Jesus Really Loves Me Because..." This book will be written by the children of seminary students and their parents. It will be an actual publication and each child will be recognized as a real author. They will be able to sell their books. Some of the proceeds will come to First the Blade. This is a very exciting new venture brought to us by seminary student Latoya Wright.

*Students who are interested in being a part of this cutting-edge ministry or who want to do their TFE with us should contact David Sedlacek at [sedlacek@andrews.edu](mailto:sedlacek@andrews.edu). Please also contact him to apply for scholarship funds for seminary student children. To learn more about First the Blade, visit our webpage at: [andrews.edu/sem/firsttheblade](http://andrews.edu/sem/firsttheblade).*



**David Sedlacek** is professor of family ministry and discipleship at our Seminary. He received his master's and doctorate in social work from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. He has worked in both public and private settings as a clinician, researcher, teacher, pastor and administrator. He has worked extensively in the areas of addiction, abuse, relationships, marriage and family. He is a certified family life educator and a licensed clinical social worker and currently directs the MA in Youth & Young Adult Ministries program in the Seminary.



“...Jesus was a developer/world changer.”





# World Changers at Their Best

By Magdana Gedeon

**T**he Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary introduced a new duo to its curricula in the 2018–2019 academic year—the dual degree Master of Divinity and Master of Science in Community & International Development (MDiv/MSCID). The relationship between this pair is one of the best ways to render theology relevant and meaningful in the lives of believers and non-believers alike. The University's motto “World Changers Made Here” is practical at its best in this combination. It helps to intervene in areas where theology may become irrelevant when spirituality fails to satisfy the necessities of life. As the apostle James states: “If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?” (James 2:16, NIV). The Community & International Development Program (CIDP) gives the pastor practical resources to help his or her congregants sustain their spiritual needs and satisfy the mental and physical needs of themselves, as well as that of their family. This article will answer the following questions: What is a developer? Was Jesus a developer? What opportunities are there for the pastor-developer to marshal the individual, holistically, for Christ?

## **The Developer as a World Changer**

A developer works with people who are cast aside to help them either integrate or reintegrate themselves into society by providing the tools needed to care for their environment. The individual is urged to be part of development actions that will help them partake in their own development either through economic, social or cultural activities, so they are able to stand up for themselves and their family in every area of their lives. At times, they may become

the network between their community and organizations working toward development. In underdeveloped areas, the developer helps in any way they can to get the person back on their feet or to initiate an activity or project that will put them on the road to development. Some people may have lost everything due to cyclones or some act of nature; while others may have never had anything to begin with, as in places where people have never worn shoes because they have never had them. This is an example where the developer can gather shoes to give to individuals. While this is a small gesture to some, to the individual whose feet have been burned by the sun or frozen by frostbite, this is a great gesture of kindness.

## **Jesus as a World Changer/Developer**

Based on the definition of a developer, there is no doubt that Jesus was a developer/world changer. He came to change the world's view of God's Kingdom and give a voice to the marginalized. He ate with the social outcasts called publicans (Mark 2: 13–17; Matthew 9: 10–11). Jesus cared for the needy: “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.” (Matthew 11:4–6). He gave preeminence to the women of his time (John 4: 1–42; Luke 7: 36–50; Ephesians 5:25). Before Jesus preached the gospel to anyone and called them to follow Him, He cared for their needs first, as a true World Changer. Jesus established the perfect example of how the church is to live in the world and be a world changer. Before

God created Adam and Eve, He created everything they would need. God desires us to be more than spiritually healthy. He wants us to be holistically whole. The pastor-developer has a chance to do just that—help people be whole.

### The Pastor-Developer

Many pastors are witnessing the decline of churches and must figure out how to bring the sheep back into the fold. Great sermons are no longer good enough, no matter how powerful the evangelist is. However, the pastor-developer has a greater opportunity to be involved in the community because development becomes a witness to the power of God. Rather than starting with preaching the gospel or addressing spiritual needs, the pastor-developer starts by assessing the needs of the community to see where he or she can provide the tools to help. By assessing the community and following through with assistance, the pastor is fostering a bonding relationship with and knitting into place the discipleship training for a higher purpose. Sometimes, especially in this generation, people do not want us to preach the gospel to them, they want to see the gospel. By being a pastor-developer, the gospel grows nearer to the people in the form of “service rendered” and aids them to see that God is still Sovereign.

### Practical Example of CIDP Producing World Changers

Every summer, Joel Raveloharimisy takes a group of Andrews University students to Madagascar. The students register to take two classes: Poverty Analysis and Humanitarian and Development Practice. Upon arrival in Madagascar, the students are brought to an area where poverty is at its highest and the community is invited to talk with the students about their needs. Afterward, both the students and the community share a meal together, a sign of unity. After the meal, the community is divided into groups of men, women and children to express their concerns from the first meeting. Only the male leaders of the community are allowed to talk in the first meeting, but in the second meeting, which is separated by gender, everyone is

able to open up and speak freely of the needs of the community from their own point of view.

An assessment is then made from five things that the CIDP community is able to provide. If it is something that can be provided immediately, the CIDP students get to work with joy to satisfy the needs of the community.

In 2018, when I went to Madagascar, the community needed supplies for the K–12 students, a new bridge because their former bridge has been destroyed by the cyclone, and a clinic in their own community, freeing them from walking an hour and a half to the nearest clinic. In order to have the clinic, some members of the community had to go to school to receive training, which the Community & International Development program provided. The community rated school supplies as the first priority and the new bridge as second.

While a group of us started working on obtaining school supplies with the help of the community, another group, Engineers Without Border (EWB), started to work on building a bridge, also with the community's help. We bought school supplies for most of the K–12 students in the community. Since the job of the developmentalist is to enable the individual or community, nothing is done without the involvement of the community: men, women and children. There is a Chinese proverb by Laozi, a Chinese philosopher, that states: “**Give** a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. **Teach** a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.” This is how the MDiv/MSCID dual degree creates world changers.

### Conclusion

The MDiv/MSCID is one of the best programs to truly develop world changers who go above and beyond the norm. The programs are not only philosophical, but practical. The pastor-developmentalists leave the Seminary equipped to really go and put into practice the Great Command of Jesus: “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19–20)



**Magdana Gedeon** earned a MEd in Florida, recently graduated with her MDiv from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, and is four classes away from finishing her MSCID at Andrews University. Her desire is to work as a local church pastor/community-developer. She is the CEO of Forget-me-not, an organization which seeks to restore and prevent youth living in generational poverty from incarceration. When she is not doing these things, she is spending time watching Netflix with her daughter.

# BLACK STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF THE SEMINARY (BSAS) OFFICERS 2019/20



**PRESIDENT**  
Nicole  
Harvey-Williams



**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Paul Lawrence

[harvey@andrews.edu](mailto:harvey@andrews.edu)



**TREASURER**  
Silburn Reid



**VP OF SPIRITUAL  
AFFAIRS**  
Chaka Samuel

**VP OF  
COMMUNICATIONS**  
Robert Washington

## WOMEN'S CLERGY NETWORK (WCN) OFFICERS 2019/20 | [auwomensclergy@gmail.com](mailto:auwomensclergy@gmail.com)



**PRESIDENT**  
Alexis Langston



**VP OF MENTORING**  
Esther Green



**VP OF OPERATIONS**  
Vanessa Hairston



**VP OF  
SOCIAL  
AFFAIRS**  
Kerry-Ann  
Butler



**VP OF  
SPIRITUAL  
AFFAIRS**  
Dannet  
Simon



**VP OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
RESOURCING**  
London D.  
Anderson



**VP OF  
COMMUNICATIONS**  
Kendra  
Arsenault



# Seminary Student Forum (SSF) 2019–20

*"The Faith Effect: Faithful to God. Faithful to the Call. Faithful to Each Other."*



Latoya  
Wright



Kris  
de Bruin



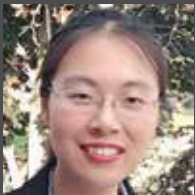
Krysten  
Thomas



Michelet  
William



Elijah  
Stanley



Xiaorui  
Wang



Tariro  
Mutindori



David  
Thorpe



Melvin  
King

## Co-Presidents

Coordinate the activities of the Seminary Student Forum and represent students' interests to the Seminary and school administration.

William  
Washington III



## Co-Academic Coordinators

Coordinate convocations, publications, programs, and activities of an academic nature, in accordance with the objectives of the SSF team.

Ellainna  
Hart



## Co-Communication Coordinators

Coordinate between SSF and other student organizations and disseminate essential information regarding activities and programs.

Thorly  
James



## Co-International Coordinators

Represent the special needs and sensitivities of the international community within the Seminary.

Donald  
Francis



## Co-Spiritual Coordinators

Coordinate all religious convocations, programs and activities, in accordance with the objectives of the SSF team.

Donna  
Torrence



## Co-Financial Coordinators

Disburses, accounts for, and informs necessary groups regarding SSF funds and takes responsibility for the task of fund-raising.

Jomante  
langa



## Co-Secretaries

Assist the presidents, stand in place of presidents in their absence, serve as recorders and custodians of all information vital to the organization, keep records of all SSF events planned or associated with, and ensures SSF Officer pictures are in the Andrews University Cardinal Yearbook.

Alyssa  
Hislop



## Social Coordinator

Coordinates programs and activities of a recreational or social nature sponsored by this organization, in accordance with the desires of the Executive Committee.

## Health Coordinator

Coordinate and initiate all health programs and activities, in accordance with the objectives of the SSF team.



# SEEING BEYOND THE MAJORITY:

## UNSUNG ADVENTIST HEROINES

*By Hyveth Williams*

We are inspired by contemporary miracle stories. We are challenged by tests that result in amazing testimonies. We repeat and spread these stories like wildfires, on the Internet and in social media, to encourage ourselves and others to believe in God and stand firm in our faith. Although our motives and intentions may be mixed or differ, one thing is clear: we love heroes/heroines and use their experiences, as world changers, to affirm that with God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26).

However, many heroic acts, especially by Adventist women, fly under the radar of public knowledge and approbation. Perhaps it's because these women were and are not celebrities about whom we want to see or hear at camp meetings or on conference stages. For their tremendous sacrifices, they receive no parades, monuments, or holidays named after them. They largely go unnoticed in our history books and this is unfortunate, if not a literary crime, because they acted nobly and gave themselves for the greater good of humanity. Some

endured more than their fair share of discomfort, deprivation, and persecution. Others bore children who made historical contributions to our culture and country. A few committed their lives to civil rights, justice, fighting poverty, and bringing hope to the dark places of our nation. But they all have one thing in common: they are unsung heroines who add depth and significance to our history. And, they deserve recognition precisely because they didn't act or ask to be noticed, but, like Robert Kennedy, asserted existentially that, "Some men [women] see things as they are, and ask why. I dream of things that never were, and ask why not."

One such woman, known as **Sojourner Truth**, was born into slavery in New York and was originally named Isabella Baumfree. "She was sold several times, and while owned by the John Dumont family in Ulster County, married Thomas, another of Dumont's slaves. She had five children with Thomas. In 1827, New York law emancipated all slaves, but

Isabella had already left her husband and run away with her youngest child. She went to work for the family of Isaac Van Wageningen" who "sold one of her children to slavery in Alabama. Since this son had been emancipated under New York Law, Isabella sued in court and won his return. . . In 1843, she took the name Sojourner Truth, believing this to be on the instructions of the Holy Spirit and became a traveling preacher (the meaning of her new name). In the late 1840s she connected with the abolitionist movement, becoming a popular speaker. In 1850, she also began speaking on woman suffrage. Her most famous speech, 'Aint I a Woman?' was given in 1851 at a women's rights convention in Ohio. Sojourner Truth became such a great world changer that Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote about her for *The Atlantic Monthly* as well as a new introduction to Truth's autobiography, 'The Narrative of Sojourner Truth.'"<sup>1</sup>

Although there are no extant records indicating she was a baptized (or profession of faith) member



of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a number of reliable sources suggest and substantiate the claim that she was. For instance, in 1856, when she moved to Michigan, Sojourner Truth “became acquainted with such prominent Adventist leaders as Ellen G. White, John Harvey Kellogg and Uriah Smith”<sup>2</sup> and, under their influence, is believed to have joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In 1883, she died in the Battle Creek Sanitorium, of infected ulcers on her legs, and was buried in Battle Creek Cemetery, where many Adventist leaders of her day, from that location, are interred.

“Her activism for the abolitionist movement gained the attention of President Abraham Lincoln, who invited her to the White House in October 1864 and showed her a Bible given to him by African Americans in Baltimore. While Truth was in Washington, she put her courage and disdain for segregation on display by riding on whites-only streetcars. When the Civil War ended, she tried exhaustively to find jobs for freed blacks weighed down with poverty. Later, she unsuccessfully petitioned the government to resettle freed blacks on government land in the West.”<sup>3</sup> It is reported that Congress never took action on her petition and Sojourner returned to her Michigan home where she spent her final years becoming progressively blind and deaf before her death.

When **Phoebe Dickerson Harding** joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1879, she was already the mother of a young man who would become the 29th president of the United States of America. President Warren G. Harding’s younger siblings also embraced the Adventist faith, but he showed “little interest in the Adventist Church, preferring instead a more carefree lifestyle than that recommended for Adventist young men.”<sup>4</sup>

Phoebe, a homeopathic physician, along with her husband, was a renowned world changer in medical ministry. She also deserves mention

and recognition among Adventist her-  
oines, not only because she is the first  
and only woman in our church who  
produced or raised a president of our  
nation, but for not allowing the poli-  
tics of her day and the scandals sur-  
rounding her son to detract her from  
her faithful commitment to Christ and  
Church throughout her life.

Another courageous, world changer  
was **Irene Amos Morgan Kirkaldy**.  
In 1944, over a decade before Rosa  
Parks (1955 civil rights protest), this  
black, Seventh-day Adventist mother  
of two, defied Jim Crow segregation  
laws in Middlesex County, Virginia.  
Although her contributions to the civil  
rights movement were overshadowed

***Phoebe,  
a homeopathic  
physician, along  
with her husband,  
was a renowned  
world changer in  
medical ministry.***

by Parks, according to reports, she  
had nothing but praise for her while  
passing out petitions against segre-  
gation in Baltimore schools, without  
telling people who she herself was.

Among her many protests, Kirkaldy  
is best remembered for publicly refus-  
ing to obey requirements that blacks  
sit in the back of buses or stand on  
a bus crowded with white passen-  
gers. Her spontaneous act of defi-  
ance launched the long struggle of  
the civil rights era to end segregation  
laws in the U.S. “Her scuffle with law  
enforcement on a bus, headed across  
the state line to Maryland, led to her  
arrest and subsequent high court rul-  
ing” during which she “earned national

attention, mostly from black newspa-  
pers, and inspired a group of black and  
white activists, later called Freedom  
Riders, to ride buses and trains for  
several weeks in the southeastern  
U.S., testing the new anti-segregation  
law.” It was only “After losing in local  
and state court, [that] her case was  
appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.  
The team of lawyers from the National  
Association for the Advancement of  
Colored People included Thurgood  
Marshall, who would become the first  
black justice to sit on the nation’s  
highest court. She won and became  
the first female US civil rights pio-  
neer.”<sup>5</sup> She was 90 years old when she  
passed away on August 10, 2007.

“In 2000, Gloucester County hon-  
ored Kirkaldy during its 350th anniver-  
sary. The next year she received from  
President Bill Clinton the Presidential  
Citizen’s Medal—the second highest  
honor for U.S. civilians. Kirkaldy, long  
a footnote of history, was virtually  
unknown and overshadowed by civil  
rights icon Rosa Parks.”<sup>6</sup> Although little  
known or celebrated in our denomina-  
tion, especially during annual Black  
History Month celebrations, Irene  
Morgan Kirkaldy was once recognized  
by Jan Paulsen, former President of  
our world church. In a letter to the  
celebrants at Gloucester County, he  
noted that: “We as a church are appre-  
ciative of her remarkable strength in  
those defining moments in the history  
of the United States and the world.”<sup>7</sup>

**Phyllis Ware (now Lee)**, the first  
female conference president in the  
Seventh-day Adventist denomina-  
tion, was elected by the Central States  
Conference (CSC) in 1994. Prior to that  
historic event, she served as interim  
president during the illness and sub-  
sequent passing of President Paul  
Monk. This means that decades before  
Southeastern California Conference  
elected Dr. Sandra Roberts as presi-  
dent in 2013, this unsung heroine had  
served our denomination as an offi-  
cially elected conference president.  
Yet, there seems to be no protest or  
denouncement of her holding such a  
position from the General Conference  
leaders of the day.

Ware served as “Executive  
Secretary and Treasurer of the Central  
States Conference before becoming  
President.”<sup>8</sup> One of her co-workers,  
Arvin Toppes, who was hired by Mrs.  
Ware and served as her Associate  
Treasurer, was interviewed for this  
article. When asked what it was like to  
work for a president who was female,

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.blacksdahistory.org/sojourner-truth.html>

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/sojourner-truth>

<sup>4</sup> The Nearly Adventist President (<https://www.adventistreview.org/2006-1503-8>)

<sup>5</sup> <https://news.adventist.org/en/all-news/news/go/2007-08-19/us-civil-rights-pioneer-irene-morgan-kirkaldy-remembered-for-courage/>

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*

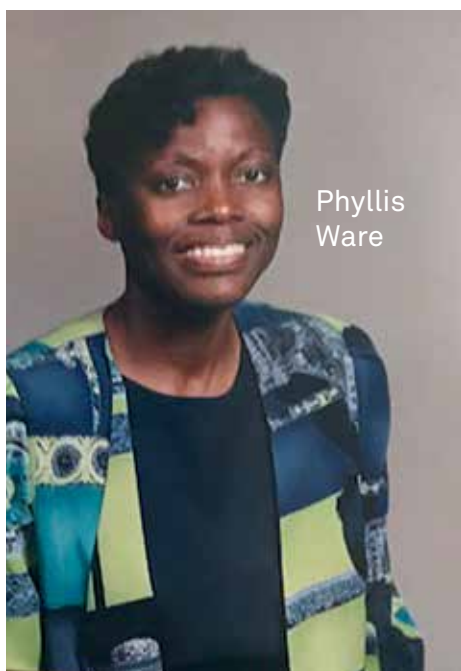
<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

<sup>8</sup> <https://women.adventist.org/adventist-women-of-distinguished-service>



he quickly noted that, “She was fair, had the best interest of the conference at heart, supported the pastors and workers by listening to their ideas, and encouraged implementation of their plans.” He recalled fondly that “President Ware counseled workers when needed and was trusted by them.” Then he added, nostalgically, “I came to work at Central States for a short time, but because of her I stayed thirty-one years” (and plans to retire in 2020).

Visitors to the CSC complex will notice that her photograph stands out among the conference’s pictorial tributes to all previous presidents. The plaque under her picture reads: “Mrs.



Phyllis Ware 9th President 1994.” In 1999, she was recognized and awarded the Association of Adventist Women Outstanding Achievement Award. Mrs. Ware, now married to Preston E. Lee, Sr., lives with her husband in Atlanta, Georgia, where she has served as Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer for the Office of Regional Conference Ministry and the Regional Conference Retirement Plan since 2008.

**Rebekah Liu**, the first to receive world-wide, official recognition as an ordained female pastor in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is an enthusiastic and engaging speaker. She “was ordained in 2011, by the laying on of hands by four Seventh-day Adventist pastors, one of whom was a woman,”<sup>9</sup> approved by the Chinese Union Mission based in Hong Kong. Senior pastor of the growing 10,000-member Chengdu Seventh-day Adventist Church in southwestern China, she credits her mother, an active woman in ministry, for her inspiration. According to an article by Jiggs Gallagher, senior editor for *Adventist Today*, “Growing

***“A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature—the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man.”***

up in the shadow of the Cultural Revolution with its militant atheism, she came under the influence of a Sunday-keeping clergyman of the government-sanctioned Three-Self Movement in 1988, when she was 17.”<sup>10</sup> However, things changed after “Her mother had told her she had a dream that a man would bring her a book that would influence her life. Sure enough, the minister presented her with a Chinese language copy

of *Desire of Ages* by Ellen G. White. It turned out he had been the president of the China Division of the Adventist denomination, which was dissolved by Mao’s new Communist government in 1951, almost 40 years earlier. Out of a job as a minister, he reluctantly joined the officially approved indigenous religious movement known as Three Self.”<sup>11</sup>

As Rebekah read the book, “she was taken by the chapter on Sabbath keeping. The story of her life from that point on was, in her telling, a succession of miracles, enabling her to pass college entrance examinations without sufficient study time or tutoring, travel as the first person ever allowed to travel outside China to attend college (to the Philippines to earn a bachelor’s degree—not the normal thing in the early 1990s), to travel to the seminary at Andrews University (AU) with virtually no money for her M.A. in theological studies, and just this past December to complete her PhD in religion at AU.”<sup>12</sup>

The story of Pastor Liu is a profile in courage and an unshakeable commitment to Christ. “In 1996, when she had finished two degrees and returned to Chengdu, she thought she would work in the populous city. But her mother assigned her to hike on foot through steep and sparsely populated mountains near the Yangtze River to visit isolated women. She learned to rely more and more on her God and less on her own inflated concept of self.”<sup>13</sup>

As a strong female and respected leader, Dr. Liu has cracked the ordination glass ceiling in our denomination, as we eagerly anticipate it being totally shattered by the increasing number of women who are educated and prepared to serve the Lord as pastors.

These, and many other unsung heroines who courageously exercised the privilege of going where no other Adventist female had gone before, demonstrate three characteristics world changers possess:

**(1) Values.** Those non-negotiable, non-compromising inflexible qualities such as integrity, honesty, obedience to the will of God, discipline, stick-to-it-iveness, and abhorrence of mediocrity. They emulate these thoughts penned by Ellen White in which the word “women” can and should be added: “The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men

<sup>9</sup> <https://atoday.org/adventist-womens-conference-reviews-history-looks-to-the-future/>

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*

<sup>14</sup> *Education*, p. 57

who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall. But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature—the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man.”<sup>14</sup>

**(2) Valor.** Valor is defined as boldness or determination in facing great danger, especially in battle, heroic courage. It is honor plus dignity. It is gallant bravery, moral worth, and strength. It is often displayed in the face of something designed to crush it, as in the great controversy between good and evil. While such victories are often rewarded with the conferring of a medal, believers in Christ will receive “the hidden manna, a white stone indicating victory and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he or she who receives it (Revelation 2:17).

Those who possess valor are willing and able to take risks for the glory of God, say what they mean, and mean what they say. Their lives demonstrate boldness to act on their belief in God though the majority may declare the opposite. They possess and exercise determination to face whatever comes, knowing that God has guaranteed, not just promised, but guaranteed victory over whatever they put their hand or heart to do.

**(3) Vision.** The ability to see God’s presence, to perceive God’s power and focus on God’s plan in spite of obvious obstacles. Vision is also the ability to see above and beyond the majority. It is an attitude to be optimistic instead of pessimistic, based on belief in the power of God and confidence in those He’s provided to partner with us beyond the bottom line. It is the capacity, flexibility, and willingness to be stretched beyond our comfort zone and the determination to hang tough when the going gets rough. It is enthusiasm, a great word from the Greek *entheos* “in God” that always makes

life enduring because it defines the ability to see God in every situation. It’s the one essential ingredient for being an original in a day of copies, where we are overwhelmed by the odds. Without vision, results are predictable, giants are numbered, their heights are measured, onlookers feel like grasshoppers in their sight, become intimidated and, like the ten spies (Numbers 13 & 14), wind up discouraged or defeated.

But not so for the heroines of our church; though often unsung, they are world changers who see beyond the majority and accomplish what others declare can’t be done.



**Hyveth Williams, DMin,** is professor and director of homiletics. She also serves as founder and pastor of The Grace Place in South Bend, Indiana.

## *Call for papers and posters!*

### FOR THE 16TH ANNUAL SEMINARY SCHOLARSHIP SYMPOSIUM

#### Include in the abstract the following:

1. Title
2. 200-word (or less) summary of the research project you wish to present (poster) or the abstract (paper)
3. The name of a faculty member familiar with your project



**Email abstract to:** Dorothy Show (showd@andrews.edu)

**Abstract deadline:** December 16, 2019

# 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminary Scholarship Symposium

February 6, 2020 | 11:30 a.m. & 7 p.m.  
Seminary Chapel



## GUEST PLENARY SPEAKER

President Emeritus **Niels-Erik Andreassen** served for 22 years, from 1994–2016, as the fifth president of Andrews University. His vision for Andrews inspired the necessary financial support for multiple capital improvements on the campus, including the Seminary Hall addition, Howard Performing Arts Center, J.N. Andrews Boulevard and Welcome Globe, a new milking parlor at the Dairy, renovations to Dining Services, the Undergraduate Learning Center (Buller Hall and renovations to Nethery Hall) and Damazo Hall. These improvements enhanced the physical footprint of campus, improved the academic experience for students and faculty, and provided significant ways to welcome the surrounding community to campus.

## Seminary Student Week of Spiritual Emphasis (WOSE)

Tuesday–Thursday, March 10–12, 2020



## GUEST SPEAKER

**Bledi Leno** is the multiethnic ministries director at the Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, having previously served as pastor of the Jackson Heights SDA Church in the borough of Queens, New York. Born and raised in an atheistic environment in Albania, he was first introduced to God and the Bible by Brazilian Adventist missionaries meeting in a public library, just after the fall of Communism in the 1990's. He and his wife Gabriela, also from Brazil, are proud parents of one son, Matthias.



# The Making of a Slave

By Everette B. Samuel

**H**istory has left indelible marks on the lives of many. The annals of time bear record of many unpleasant historic events that, over time, have been immortalized through annual recollections and reflections that can either break us, or make us able to look beyond the past and even the present, to a better tomorrow. One such unpleasant, historic event is the physical, emotional and systemic enslavement of one group of people. And though over the years humanitarian interventions have enacted laws that have led to the abolition of physical slavery, the current law and order is seemingly devoid of the power to effectively demolish the residues of systemic slavery. I am inclined to look at slavery through the eyes of our fallen nature, because of the residues of systemic slavery and the tension and hurt that comes with the yearly celebration of Black history in the month of February. In spite of the emotions that come with the recollection of Black history month, I look forward to this because it is a time when many are driven to not just revisit the holocaust of slavery, but, to some extent, gain insights from pain and struggles; to examine the struggle of a people and hopefully chart a path to reconciliation.

Another reason I am inclined to look at the issue of slavery through the eyes of our fallen nature is my disposition toward the event. I think about the anger and the "righteous indignation" that burns deep inside as I recall the abuse and suffering of my predecessors. Over time, I became uncomfortable with my emotions, and began to

resent the anger threatening to overwhelm me. In my role as a shepherd walking in the footsteps of the divine Shepherd, it was evident that I needed to step away from my emotions. It was then that it became evident to me that the issue of slavery is a sin problem. As the lights came on for me, I realized that I had to see beyond the majority and change my perspectives in the observation of Black history month. Hence, I found myself pleading with God to give me a message for the people He has called me to lead; a message that would mitigate the relational tensions embedded through the effects of slavery, and bring healing, hope, reconciliation and restoration.

Scripture is replete with circumstances that mirror just about any experience of modern and postmodern times. The issue of biases (e.g., gender, cultural and ethnic) is a sociological concern throughout the testaments, and it is necessary to juxtapose the narratives of the Testaments with our contemporary narratives. According to Durant (2015), "Readers bring multiple 'selves' to their reading of biblical texts, selves shaped by identities of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, class and gender" (pg. 79). The story of Sarah, Abraham and Hagar is a familiar narrative; one in which we all can find our identities and which outlines for us the elements of the making of a slave. We explore our propensity to slavery in this narrative, as well as the liberating power of the grace of God that is available to us.

The narrative of slavery is about people who are victimized, marginalized, dehumanized,

“...the narrative of slavery is ubiquitous, pervading the sanctity of our social, emotional, and spiritual being.”



manipulated and devalued. It is a story of self-worth and prestige, a story about the “haves and have-nots,” a story of social class stratification, a story undergirded by capitalism, exasperated by sexual privileges and abandonment. In a general sense, the narrative of slavery is ubiquitous, pervading the sanctity of our social, emotional, and spiritual being. Ironically, it is my story and should be your story also. In fact, if you cannot personally identify with the excruciatingly painful circumstance of being a slave, chances are you know someone who can. The following biblical narrative discussed here not only shows the widespread reality of slavery, but is also a demonstration of how slaves are liberated.

### **A Triangle of Slavery**

In ancient times, women acquired their self-worth and social status from their family and the number of children (especially male) to whom they gave birth. Following the extinction of the antediluvian world, God called Abram and his wife Sarai to be the progenitors of a new generation. But there was a slight challenge to this call, as Scripture tells us that “Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children” (Genesis 16:1). This statement in the beginning of Genesis 16 is especially significant. In this brief introduction, we know that Sarai is the wife of Abram, an affluent man (presumably a prestigious, wealthy businessman, see Genesis 14:18–24), but Sarai was childless. In that one verse we see Sarai’s honor rise and fall based on her self-worth and status (Weems, 1991). Sarai’s status is strained by the dichotomy between her barrenness and socio-cultural worth.

Culturally, Sarai had social standing, but she had no respect! She was the wife of a prominent man, but she felt empty. She had material abundance, but she was not comforted. She was beautiful, but seemingly without self-worth. Sarai was discomfited because she was childless. To be barren in Sarai’s culture, a woman was viewed as “less than” in the eyes of her Hebrew community. That which she craved most, her husband’s wealth could not acquire. Unfortunately for Sarai, that which she desperately wanted seemed only accessible through the womb of her servant/slave Hagar. Interestingly, in describing Sarai’s position Genesis 16:1 strategically introduces a third character stating: “And she [in reference to Sarai] had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.” According to custom and a twist of legal technicality, because Hagar was Sarai’s property, any child Hagar bore would legally belong to Sarai. Thus, what the Lord had prevented, what the Lord had restricted, what the Lord held back from Sarai, she set out to obtain through her ownership of Hagar, her slave.

Sarai is a representation of both “the haves,” and “the have-nots” of our culture today. She depicts the people who have everything money can buy, yet at the same time she embodies those in need of that which they are unable to produce on their own. We see examples today of this identity. Sarai’s circumstance is an embodiment of the educated individual who is unable to find a job or the one who is gifted but lacks resources to become educated or to launch a successful product or become an entrepreneur. Her account may also be evident in the married woman without children, able

young men without wives, beautiful women without husbands, skilled individuals without trades, the rich without peace, or the leader without authority.

Despite Sarai's social and economic privileges, she is trapped by a want, a slave to a growing envy, and a victim of the shame of barrenness. She is the barren slave. Although being married to a wealthy and affluent man, her barrenness made her a woman to be ridiculed. Sarai's infertility is her *marginalization*—the fuel that feeds *the making of a slave to society's expectation*.

Hagar is Sarai's handmaiden, and by nature of her status, she was constantly thrust into the unusual position of responding to circumstances constantly out of her control. As a maidservant, Hagar had no voice and no vote in matters that affected her, hence it did not matter whether she wanted to bear Sarai's child. Her choice of childbearing was taken away. Sarai exploited Hagar to save face, to compensate for the shame that came with the stigma of infertility. In her desperate need to gain acceptance and honor within her community, Sarai seemed oblivious to the consequences of handing Hagar over to her husband. Hagar's fertility did not take away the demands of her mistress; hence, she was reckoned and remained powerless, even after demonstrating the power of pregnancy and birth. The brief elevation that came with bearing her mistress's child did little to reduce Hagar's slave status or situation. As quickly as she was elevated to the position of wife, she was demoted to the position of slave. Furthermore, eventually she was sent into the desert with her child to die. This is worse than being treated like a slave because even a slave is valuable property. She became a wife through a transfer of power, and became a property again, through a transfer of power—without her permission (Weems, 1991) Hagar is a representation of the *dehumanized* and *victimized*—a process which marks *the making of a slave of circumstances*.

In this context, Hagar's experience depicts the strangers in a foreign land: The dreamers; those running away from political upheavals or bad economic conditions; victims of molestation, addiction and sexual exploitation. Hagar represents those whose parents gave them away to the aunt who couldn't bear children; the sister who couldn't bear children. Hagar represents the "barrel children."

Furthermore, Abram, the father of the faithful, a man whom God has chosen, can also be seen as a slave. Though a master, though a leader and entrepreneur, though obedient in his response to God and being guided by the Spirit of God, he is still very much a slave. He is cornered in Sarai's scheme to save face and mitigate the stigma of her infertility. So she [Sarai] said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her. And Abram agreed to what Sarai said" (Genesis 16:2). Evidently, Abram failed to hold fast his

identity in the promises of God; he gave in to Sarai's advice and was denigrated to a slave of manipulation. He wanted to please his wife; even though he knew he had to wait on God. He knew God would do what He promised. He knew he should not give up on God, but there are no indications that he resisted the offer.

It is interesting to note that, prior to being drawn into the demise of Sarai's plot to help God, Abram might have been torn by his allegiance to God, his faith in His promises, and the seeming reality of Sarai's barrenness. He might have even wrestled with the prohibition of God regarding his misguided faith that his servant Eleazer might be the "promised seed" to his posterity. But God made it clear that would not be:

Then the word of the Lord came to him: This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir. He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them. Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be. Abram believed the Lord and he credited it to him as righteousness." (Genesis 15:4-6)

Later, when the situation between Sarai and Hagar became complicated, Abram tried to be fair and attempted to treat Hagar as more than property. In the process, Sarai became resentful and angry, and began casting blame:

Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me. Your slave is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her. (Genesis 16:5-6)

In response to Sarai's outburst, Abraham renounced his authority for the sake of peace—returning Hagar to Sarai to do whatever she wanted. In doing this, Abram unknowingly succumbed to the making of a slave of manipulation.

### Application

The story of Sarah, Abraham, and Hagar is a familiar one in which we may examine the elements of the making of a slave. Studies show that added elements in the making of a slave embody fear, envy, and distrust (Lynch, 2011, p 51). In the Willie Lynch letter (Lynch, 2011), purported to be drawn from a speech to slave-owners in the 1700s, fear, envy, and distrust were encouraged as tools to make slaves. These elements are also evident in this narrative.

### Fear

The instilling of fear is a way of teaching slaves to be submissive. (Lynch, 2011) Jackson proposed that, "a culture of fear defined the world of African Americans



from the time of slavery ... continuing to some degree today”(Jackson, 2008). Various forms of fear are used for enslavement: One of which is *fear of God*. Often times, how individuals view fear of God can be a false interpretation of His authority. Fear of God can make us believe God is an angry giant power waiting to punish us if we are not submissive. Furthermore, individuals’ concept of God’s expectation can evoke fear and distort the meaning of Scripture. Paul wrote, “Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ” (Ephesians 6:5). Hence, the fear of being disobedient to God potentially traps many into submission.

There is the *fear of separation*, as introduced in the Garden of Eden. Adam believed Eve was going to die and he did not want to be separated from the woman he loved. Fear broke Adam and Eve’s connection with God— their Creator. Adam told God “I heard your voice and I was afraid” (Gen 3:10). Consequently, they were displaced from their natural habitat. Lynch (2011) proposes that you can break humans from one form of life to another by reducing them from their natural state in nature, similar to what you do to a horse. Like Adam and Eve, Hagar was taken from her natural habitat. There are indications that Hagar was an Egyptian princess, who was given as a gift of honor to Sarai. In the process, she became separated from her family and culture. It is important to note also that sometimes, in the duration of being a slave, fear of separation causes slave women to succumb to being victims of sexual exploitation as a means of protecting, or procuring favor for, their families.

## Envy

Envy can be demonstrated in various contexts, including being covetous of other people’s socio-economic status, abilities, families, possessions, fame, physique, to name a few. Envy can become ingrained because of personal indoctrination, cultural expectations, and ethnic nuances such as the pigmentation of individuals’ skin. Ironically, light-skinned slaves were pitted against dark-skinned slaves, as well as young against old and vis-à-vis. Distrust between White servants and Black slaves was practiced and encouraged. Lynch (2011) remarked:

The Black slave after receiving this indoctrination shall carry on and will become self re-fueling and self generating for hundreds of years, maybe thousands. Don’t

forget you must pitch the old Black male vs. the young Black male, and the young Black male against the old Black male. You must use the dark skin slaves vs. the light skin slaves and the light skin slaves vs. the dark skin slaves. You must use the female vs. the male, and the male vs. the female. You must also have your white servants and overseers distrust all Blacks, but it is necessary that your slaves trust and depend on us. They must love, respect and trust only us. (Lynch, 2011)

## Distrust

Distrust is defined as “Confident negative expectations regarding another’s conduct that manifest themselves in fear, vigilance, or suspicion.” (Vlaar, Van den Bosch, & Volberda, 2007). It is most manifest when we are suspicious of others’ behaviors, and tend to doubt their intent toward you. Distrust will destroy your passion, your marriage, your relationships, your sexuality, your heritage, your creativity, your productivity, and identity.

Distrust created tension in Sarai, Hagar, and Abram’s relationship. Presumably, “distrust is a stronger emotion than trust.” According to research, trust facilitates open communication and positive relationships in organizations, whereas distrust breaks down communication at a faster rate and annihilates intimate relationships instantly (Vlaar et al., 2007).

Deceit generates distrust that is intended to destroy. Scripture declares, “But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be

led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3). Deceit manufactured distrust in the Garden of Eden, and ultimately disintegrated the relationship between God and man; taking them from their natural state into an unnatural state, which is said to be an easy breaking point of enslavement. Evidently, there is nothing constructive about the strategy of distrust that was entrenched in slaves by their masters.

## Liberation

While the elements in the making of a slave are lethal to development and wellbeing of relationships between individuals in society, there are counter elements that are potent, eliminating the chasm created in the making of a slave. These means are to counter the elements of fear, envy, and distrust, that have been imposed on us, and which continues to keep us enslaved. Liberation comes by:

**Replacing Fear with Love:** “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.” 1 John 4:18



Phillip (2015) proposes that “fear and love are at war with one another.” We cannot, on one hand, proclaim the all-encompassing love of God, and on the other hand—whether consciously or subconsciously—drown ourselves with worry that we are beyond the reach of His compassion and doomed to eternal punishment. What we should fear is ourselves removed from that love. Not because God will abandon us, but because we have the free will to drift away from Him (J., 2015) What is this (J., 2015)? Further, Scripture states that “You did not receive a spirit of slavery that returns you to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” (Rom 8:15) and that God “love[s] with an everlasting love [and draws us] with loving-kindness” (Jer 31:3).

The process of replacing fear with love is simple, but a delicate operation. It is a choice. A choice we make in every aspect of our lives. Opportunities provide the framework to fear or to love. Presumably, fear and love are two of the most powerful emotions in human beings, and we cannot feel both at the same time. Furthermore, “In the same way that light removes darkness love can remove fear” (Collier, 2018). We must choose to believe that “nothing can separate us from God’s love.”

**Replacing Envy with Admiration:** “Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves” (Phil 2:3).

Admiration requires confidence in your identity, and faith in God’s provision. It replaces envy when we use it as a motivating factor for development and growth. Pschreiner states, “Having people to look up to gives us a clear idea of the traits and talents we value and these people often point the way for our own growth and development” (Pschreiner, 2014). When you admire someone, you see the good in them; you see ideals to which you may want to aspire; you want to support and help him or her to be their best selves. You will support instead of sabotage; love instead of hate; empower instead of envy; lift up instead of tear down.

**Replacing distrust with trust in God and His Words:** “For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12 see also 2 Timothy 3:16-17 & Psalm 119:9).

And there we have it: Replace what we have been fed with the law: “The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple” (Psalm 19:7). God’s law is His character. We are all sinners fallen from grace. Our nature was changed from God’s character, so we can be enslaved forever.

In reviewing the making of a slave, note that a slave is someone who is held in servitude as the chattel of another; one that is completely subservient to a dominating influence. The underlying factor is that we were

all made into slaves. There are two dominating influences: our Savior and Satan. Satan uses hatred, punishment, force, deceit, destruction, fear, envy, and distrust to enslave us. Our Savior uses love, free will, loving-kindness, mercy, grace, and even weakness to free us, for, while He appeared to be weak, He was strong. His seeming weakness won the battle against evil. Christ was lynched (so to speak); He sacrificed His body so we don’t have to sacrifice ours.

The resurrection testifies that Christ overcame slavery. He took upon Himself all the shame and humiliation. Being nailed on the cross is God’s ultimate weapon offered to us to combat slavery. We don’t have to be slaves of society’s expectations. We don’t have to be slaves of our circumstances and we certainly don’t have to be slaves of manipulation because we have been liberated by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Liberated in the truest sense of the word, since it represents freedom from sin and the power of death.

### Works Cited

- Collier, N. (2018). Choosing love not fear. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/inviting-monkey-tea/201802/choosing-love-not-fear>.
- Durant, E. (2015). It’s complicated: power and complicity in the stories of Hagar and Sarah. *Conversations with the Biblical World*, 35, 78-93.
- Jackson, B. L. (2008). Race, education, and the politics of fear. *Educational Policy*, 22(1), 130-154. doi:10.1177/0895904807311300
- Lynch, W. (2011). *The Willie Lynch letter and the making of a slave*: Ravenio Books.
- Pschreiner, M. (2014). Admiration and envy.
- Vlaar, P.W.L., Vanden Bosch, F.A.J., & Volberda, H.W. (2007). On the Evolution of Trust, Distrust, and Formal Coordination and Control in Interorganizational Relationships: Toward an Integrative Framework. *Group & Organization Management*, 32(4), 407-428. doi:10.1177/1059601106294215
- Weems, R. J. (1991). Do you see what I see: Diversity in interpretation. *Church & Society*, 82(1), 28-43.



**Everette B. Samuel**, a graduate of the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary, serves as pastor in New York City for the Greater New York Conference. She is a devout church planter, committed mentor and motivator who is currently a candidate for PhD in leadership at Andrews University. Her electrifying love for God and man is inspiring. She enjoys poetry and traveling.






March  
29-31

# READY TO SERVE MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY DAYS 2020

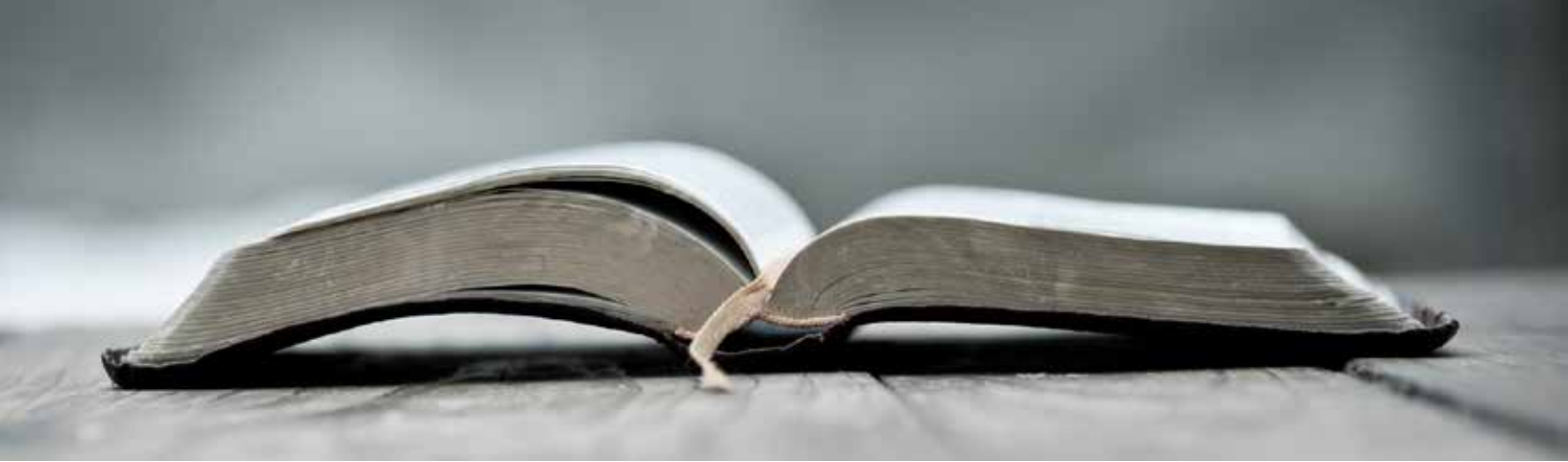
## *Save The Date*

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary  
4145 East Campus Circle Dr., Berrien Springs, MI 49104

nadMinisterial

 Seventh-day Adventist  
Theological Seminary





# PSALM 73—ITS STRUCTURE AND THEOLOGY:

## I Delight in God's Goodness in Spite of Devastating Problems

By Jiří Moskala

### Introduction

It is easy to relate to and be captivated by the thoughts of Psalm 73, because it openly spells out our reasoning regarding life's puzzling injustices. The association is obvious, for we too question God's goodness and justice in view of the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of the righteous. This riddle closely resembles the theology of the book of Job who struggled with understanding God's character and His involvement and visible presence in real life. The ideas found in Psalm 73 are also represented by the frustrating questions of the prophet Habakkuk who is asking "Why?"<sup>1</sup> The profound issue of theodicy preoccupies the minds of many, and some thinkers have even lost their faith due to these difficulties.<sup>2</sup> Three psalms, namely Psalms 37, 49, and 73, belong

thematically and theologically together, so some commentators discuss them together.<sup>3</sup>

We live in a post-modern and post-Christian world where lies, fake news, propaganda, and deception prevail. It is extremely difficult to navigate through the storms of life and correctly interpret the facts of life. According to the editors of the *Oxford English Dictionaries*, the chosen "word of the year" for 2016 is "post-truth,"<sup>4</sup> thus reminding us that we live in the post-truth era. Truth is in jeopardy as never before; the possibility of knowing the objective truth is denied. Dictionary.com's voted word of the year is "xenophobia,"<sup>5</sup> namely "the fear of the other." We are irritated by issues we do not understand, by the differences of others, and we fear things we cannot control. Asaph, the author of Psalm 73,

had similar feelings. The deep desire to understand the enigmas of life is an essential human need, and Psalm 73 profoundly contributes to this objective. McCann calls this Psalm "a microcosm of the Old Testament theology,"<sup>6</sup> Grogan states that it is the "summing up the whole Psalter,"<sup>7</sup> and Brueggemann characterizes it as "the most remarkable and satisfying of all the psalms."<sup>8</sup>

Life is complicated and poses plenty of unsolvable difficult questions; it is not simple to cope with our unanswered questions and be surrounded or even affected by devastating problems. Obstacles meet people everywhere. Life often does not make any sense. Our experience runs contra to God's explicit teaching as presented in the book of Deuteronomy where Moses clearly proclaimed that

<sup>1</sup> The biblical books of Ecclesiastes and Lamentations are also close to this genre of literature with their quest for the meaning of life.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, a study by Bart D. Ehrman, *God's Problem: Why the Bible Fails to Answer Our Most Important Question—Why We Suffer* (New York: HarperOne, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Theologie der Psalmen* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979), 212.

<sup>4</sup> <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/word-of-the-year/word-of-the-year-2016>.

<sup>5</sup> <http://blog.dictionary.com/xenophobia/>.

<sup>6</sup> J. Clinton McCann, Jr., "Psalm 73: A Microcosm of Old Testament Theology," in *The Listening Heart: Essays in Wisdom and the Psalms in Honor of Roland E. Murphy*, ed. Kenneth G. Hoglund (Sheffield: JSOT, 1987), 247–257.

<sup>7</sup> Geoffrey W. Grogan, *Psalms* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 133.

<sup>8</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1984), 115.

the righteous will enjoy abundant blessing, but curses await the wicked (Deuteronomy 27–30; cf. Leviticus 26). The Psalter actually begins with the same affirmation. Psalm 1–2 affirms that the person who runs from evil and stays with the Lord and meditates on His law will be “like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season” and will prosper in whatever he does, but that the way of the wicked, on the other hand, will not stand and perish (Ps 1:3, 5–6 NIV).<sup>9</sup> People who in their path cultivate a relationship with God, trust the Lord, and “kiss” His son, the Messiah, will be blessed: “Blessed are all who take refuge in him,” but with the others He “will be angry” and their “way will lead to” their “destruction” (Ps 2:12).

Martin Buber explains why he is so attracted to this Psalm: “What is it that so draws me to this poem that is pieced together out of description, report and confession, and draws me ever more strongly the older I become? I think it is this, that here a person reports how he attained to the true sense of his life experience and that this sense touches directly on the eternal.”<sup>10</sup> I am always touched by the deep wisdom of Psalm 73; it is no wonder that it is usually characterized as a wisdom Psalm even though it is not directly designed as a *maskil* Psalm. Asaph honestly and candidly describes his own perplexities with life and search for its meaning. He reflects on the struggles of the believer, because it seems that the simple reading of life does not work; it is very complex. The easy definition that the righteous prosper and the wicked encounter problems is contradicted by the facts of our human experience. Reality is different. Even though laws of sowing and reaping, blessings and curses, are valid, nevertheless they are not always obvious. Life is full of contradictions, paradoxes, and tensions. It looks like another law governs which I would like to identify as the law of God’s grace with His sustaining power, patience, and long-suffering.

## Position and Literary Structure

Psalm 73 lies at the theological heart of the book of Psalms as an existential cry to God and a search for meaning in life. In the opinion of Walter Brueggemann, “in the canonical structuring of the Psalter, Psalm 73 stands at its center in a crucial role. Even if the Psalm is not literarily in the center, I propose that it is central theologically as well as canonically.”<sup>11</sup> Its central theological position is strengthened by the fact that Psalm 73 is the first psalm of the middle section, namely the third book of Psalms (Psalms 73–89). The two foundational Psalms 1 and 2 are put in the beginning of the Psalter and underline the cruciality of God’s path with respect to divine instructions (Psalm 1) and to trust in the Messiah (Psalm 2), thus the promise of prosperity and blessing for the righteous and the destruction and problems for the wicked are underlined in both introductory Psalms. Finally, the whole collection of psalms culminates with the doxology, with several hallelujah Psalms (Psalms 146–150), and at the center of the Psalter is Psalm 73 providing correction and balance to the temptation to have a simplistic and mechanistic biblical worldview.

The literary structure of Psalm 73 is a masterpiece. The poetic meter is quite symmetric with 4–4–3 strophes (vv. 1–12, 13–22, 23–28).<sup>12</sup> Asaph consistently employs the bicola except the culminating tricolon in v. 28. Three times the word “surely, indeed” (Hebrew: *‘ak*) is used (vv. 1, 13 and 18), and four times the expression “but I”/“but as for me”/“for I” (Heb. *wa’ani*) is articulated (vv. 2, 22, 23, and 28). The key word “heart” (Heb. *lebab*) is uttered 6 times (vv. 1, 7, 13, 21, 26 [twice]), and reveals that Asaph points to the inner, decisive, and fundamental attitudes and thinking in life, not merely the center of the intellect. The state of the heart is at stake, the way of thinking, feelings, and making decisions.<sup>13</sup> Besides the heart, Asaph makes rich allusions to different parts of the body, such as hands (vv. 13, 23), feet (v. 2), eyes (v. 7), mouth (v. 9),

tongue (v. 9), kidneys (v. 21), and flesh (v. 26). It means that the whole person is involved, and the stress is on what people feel, see, and touch, but it goes also beyond the physical realm (for example, kidneys represent the inner being of a person).

I propose that Psalm 73 is written in a chiasmic structure that can be summarized in the following way:

- A.** 1–2 Surely God is good, but I almost slipped (thesis, determination).
- B.** 3–6 I envied the wicked who prosper in spite of God’s absence in their life (experience)
- C.** 7–10 Life without God—the arrogant life style (description)
- D.** 11–12 How can God know? Carefree and wealthy life (puzzle)
- E.** 13–14 Surely I suffered (contrast)
- F.** 15–17 Center:
  - (A) I will not betray God’s people;
  - (B) In God’s sanctuary I found understanding: the decisive perspective from the end, the Divine Judgment
- E.** 18–20 Surely the wicked will slip and perish (contrast)
- D.** 21–22 How can I know? Life in bitterness and without understanding (puzzle)
- C.** 23–24 Life with God: I will stay with you, because He holds and guides me (description)
- B.** 25–26 I delight in God and enjoy His renewing presence (experience)
- A.** 27–28 But as for me, it is good to be with the Lord, I firmly trust in Him and will speak about His work (thesis, determination)

<sup>9</sup> Unless otherwise noted, biblical quotations are from the New International Version (NIV).

<sup>10</sup> Cited in J. Clinton McCann, Jr., *A Theological Introduction to the Book of Psalms: The Psalms as Torah* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2011), 144.

<sup>11</sup> Walter Brueggemann, “Bounded by Obedience and Praise: The Psalms as Canon,” *JSOT* 50 (1991) 81.

<sup>12</sup> For details, see Samuel Terrien, *The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 523–528.

<sup>13</sup> See Martin Buber, “The Heart Determines: Psalm 73,” *Theodicy and the Old Testament*, ed. J. L. Crenshaw (Philadelphia, PA: SPCK, 1983), 100–108.

The principal thoughts can be thus outlined in this way:

Introduction (main motto and challenge): God is good toward His people who are pure in heart—Asaph's creed—v. 1

- A. I envied the prosperity of the wicked—vv. 2–3
- B. Description of this prosperity (shalom)—vv. 4–11
- C. Summary observation on the wicked: they are carefree and rich—vs. 12
- D. Is being pure meaningless, in vain?—v. 13
- E. Contrast to the wicked—the pure in heart (righteous) is afflicted and chastised—v. 14
- F. Nevertheless, I will not complain against God, I belong to God's people—v. 15
- G. I tried to understand, it was impossible—v. 16
- H. But in the sanctuary is understanding: perspective from the end—v. 17
- I. The wicked are on slippery ground and suddenly destroyed—18–19
- J. Bitterness and logic do not help to understand—vv. 20–22
- K. I am with you, because you hold me—v. 23a
- L. You guide me and finally take up into glory—vv. 23b–24
- K. Confession: Whom have I in heaven or earth but you, you are my strength—v. 25–26
- L. Those far from you will perish—v. 27

Conclusion: Final Decision—It is good to be near God who is my refuge, therefore I will tell of all His deeds—v. 28

Thus, the flow of thoughts is transparent: God's goodness (main theme) leads to personal despair (vv. 1–2) because of the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of the believer (vv. 3–12), thus the fragile faith almost collapses (vv. 13–16), but then comes the turning point: entering into God's sanctuary (v. 17), where God's judgment is revealed (vv. 18–22) and faith triumphs (vv. 23–28).

## Exposition and Theology

"A psalm of Asaph. 'Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold'" (Psalm 73:1–2).

This Psalm introduces the third Book of Psalms (Psalms 73–89). Out of 17 Psalms in this third compilation of Psalms, 11 of them are attributed to Asaph (73–83), four to the Korahites (84, 85, 87, and 88), only one to David (86), and one to Ethan the Ezrahite (89). It is interesting to note that in this third collection, all Psalms are ascribed to a particular author. Psalm 73 begins the Asaphite collection of songs which together with Psalm 50 form an anthology of 12 songs.



In the Psalter, Psalm 73 is the second Psalm of Asaph who was a Levitical music leader appointed by David to the temple (1 Chronicles 6:31–32, 39; 16:7, 37; Nehemiah 7:44). He is called "the seer" (Hebrew word *chozeh* is derived from the root *chazah* meaning to have a vision, see, gaze, have insight) in 2 Chronicles 29:30, which means that he had a special view into things no one else saw because of God's revelation. He had the prophetic insights to interpret from God's perspective

the past, present, and future.<sup>14</sup> Asaph begins his meditations with the success of the wicked while affirming God's goodness, which is not defined but must be stressed because it is not so obvious. Only those who have a pure heart can see the goodness of God. This affirmation of faith is the main theme of the poem. Crenshaw argues that the psalmist's first sentence, "Truly God is good to Israel, to those hearts are pure" is "stated in the form of a creed."<sup>15</sup> Asaph's first word is *surely*, he strongly believes in God's goodness, but paradoxically, this divine characteristic constitutes for the author his principle problem. This crucial and basic religious affirmation creates a huge difficulty, because the realities of life seem to contradict the plain statement regarding God's kind-

ness. The successful behavior of the wicked complicates the whole situation because the wicked flourish, but worse than that, the righteous suffer and go through hardships. This is in contradiction with what a faithful follower of God expects. This penetrating insight into the problems of evil and the existence of suffering lead him to doubts, and it creates the agony leading him to a fragile faith. The life's experience seems different than the law of blessings and curses presented

<sup>14</sup> It is important to add that some Psalms ascribed to Asaph may be composed and handed down within the school, guild, or choir bearing his name only, because some of them were written in the later period, as for example, Psalms 74 and 79 which are actually from the exilic time when the Temple was destroyed.

<sup>15</sup> James L. Crenshaw, *The Psalms: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 112.



in Deuteronomy and also confirmed by the Psalms. By his long description of the prosperity of the arrogant, Asaph emphasizes that it is the main issue for him. He compares it with his own experience of chastisements, punishments, and sufferings every day, and this looks to him far from being right and fair.

This clear observation brings a deep crisis to his faith. God's firm word with His promises is shaken and with it one's whole life is on a slippery slope (behind is the imagery of slipping or sliding feet). Problems of life seem greater than can be endured. The suffering of the pure in heart or upright, i.e., the righteous, is a fact which is extremely difficult to accept and swallow.

"For I envied the arrogant when I

new and valuable be realized, and thus He can help and transform the life of such a person. The fire of crisis can accelerate spiritual growth if we let God lead us.

Asaph declares that he envied the *shalom* (peace, prosperity, success) of the arrogant and the wicked. With this background, how can a good God allow the pure in heart to suffer? This fundamental question underlies Psalm 73 and its desire to understand this enigma of life. It is true that this question has puzzled believers and pleased skeptics for a long time. The prosperity (lit. *shalom*) of the wicked and the evil, as well as the suffering of the innocents, is one of the deepest mysteries of life. In confrontations with such riddles, faith is shaken.

The notion of *shalom* has religious

Asaph observes all these good things among the ungodly, and it is the cause of his faith struggle. He begins to envy them for these blessings. Notice that he "envied" the arrogant.

The cause of his instability is envy. Envy is our enemy; it sucks life from us. Comparing ourselves to others is always a dangerous path. Consideration of the "prosperity of the wicked" and "the suffering of the righteous" is always a very difficult subject with plenty of headaches. This is why God's revelation strongly warns against this spiritual and religious envy and jealousy. It is interesting that for God it is okay to envy (Exodus 20:5; Ezekiel 16:42; 23:25; 36:5; Zephaniah 3:8; Zechariah 1:14; 8:2), for husbands (Proverbs 6:34; 27:4) as well as for those who are concerned with God's honor and His law (Numbers 25:11; 1 Kings 19:10, 14; Psalm 119:139). On the other hand, we should stand on guard not to envy the success of people. Goldingay rightly explains that in the Old Testament there is "no sympathy for jealousy toward people who do well in life through dishonesty."<sup>16</sup> Such envy, jealousy, and fretting one needs to give to God so He can help His people transform their negative emotions into positive actions and feelings. The Word of God powerfully counsels: "Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture" (Psalm 37:1–3). The book of Proverbs admonishes to not envy the ungodly: "Do not envy the wicked, do not desire their company" (Proverbs 24:1) and "Do not fret because of evildoers or be envious of the wicked, for the evildoer has no future hope, and the lamp of the wicked will be snuffed out" (Proverbs 24:19–20). It wisely admonishes: "Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the LORD" (Proverbs 23:17) because "envy rots the bones" (Proverbs 14:30). It is one thing is to observe the prosperity and wealth of the wicked, but another is to envy this careless life. Proverbs 30:7–9 teaches great wisdom: not to desire to be rich or poor but to cultivate a balance in order to serve God faithfully.

In the New Testament envy is among the lists of enumerated sins (see Mark 7:21–22; Romans 1:29; Galatians 5:19–21). In the love chapter, we read that

saw the prosperity of the wicked. They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills. Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence" (Psalm 73:3–7).

The honesty of Asaph is impressive. He has personal and theological problems, but he deals with them openly and sincerely, expressing his frustrations and formulating his disappointments. God longs for this kind of transparency because only in this existential struggle can something

significance, because it means a complete well-being, good health, peace, harmony, completeness, cessation from hostility, tension, and war. Such good things are considered to be the result of God's faithfulness to His covenant and are signs of the Lord's blessings: "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24–26). God was viewed as the source of Israel's *shalom*. He would speak words of *shalom* to His people (Psalm 85:8), and God's people were encouraged to pray for the *shalom* of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6).

<sup>16</sup> John Goldingay, *Psalms—Volume 2: Psalms 42–89* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 403.

true love does not envy (1 Corinthians 13:4). James warns: “For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice” (James 3:16). “Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind” (1 Peter 2:1).

Faith is tested as the temptation to look around and compare oneself with others (especially those who are more successful) is enormous. Asaph’s experience is disturbing, because the description of the wicked should look different. They should be associated with problems, troubles, hardships, disappointments, suffering, ruin, and destruction. Nevertheless, the opposite is true, and the evidence to the contrary is strong. It seems that wicked people thrive and have an easy life (however, David states that they experience many woes and sorrows, see Psalm 32:10). Asaph with great detail describes the good life of the wicked. The godless have no struggles, are healthy, have plenty to eat and drink so they are fat, do not have a lot of pain like other people, do not go through troubles or punishment, like to show their importance and positions, their status is associated with pride and violence (necklace and clothes are poetic symbols describing their visible overwhelming misbehavior), and are not kind to people but oppress them.

“From their callous hearts comes iniquity; their evil imaginations have no limits. They scoff, and speak with malice; with arrogance they threaten oppression. Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth. Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance” (Psalm 73:7–10).

The description of the wicked persons continues. The psalmist is confused, because the arrogant behave like everything belongs to them, and no one is able to stop it. Their thinking is evil as well as their plans which are reflected in their bold words and actions. Their mouth speaks from the abundance of their heart (Luke 6:45). Nothing is sacred to them; they have lost the sense of respect because they do not fear God. They are selfish in their claims and think that they may possess anything, that they are

owners of all riches. Their self-centeredness and egotism is remarkable, and they are only using others for their selfish gains.

Verse 10 is ambiguous, because it is written in high poetic idiomatic and imaginary way. It may read that the wicked and arrogant people have influence on many; thus, people follow them in order to benefit from their success: “Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance” (see also NASB, NAU, NKJV, ESV). An alternative reading stresses the thought about the oppression and violence by the ungodly: “This is why they extort pressed grapes from their people, and sip their wine until they are drunk.”<sup>17</sup>

***...Paul stresses  
that the root of  
all evil is selfishness which is  
expressed in love  
for richness...***

“They say, ‘How would God know? Does the Most High know anything?’ This is what the wicked are like—always free of care, they go on amassing wealth” (Psalm 73:11–12).

The arrogant do not know limits. They even question God’s knowledge of earthly things from a very rational position. They are ignorant of who God is. They do not deny God’s existence but His care and involvement in the everyday affairs of the world. God is the Most High (Heb. Elyon), abiding so high and so far away that He does not know what is going on down here. They practice a pragmatic religious atheism. If God is not active but distant, it seems that they can do what they like.

Verse 12 summarizes the wicked in one sentence: they are carefree and wealthy. They forgot that it is God who gives them strength and riches (Deut 7:17–18), and that they are only stewards of His blessings (1 Cor 4:2; Titus 1:7). They claim that heaven does not matter, because they want to be in charge. Asaph is upset with his

observations that the arrogant people are successful and pervert values; they are evil even though they claim to be good.

Being rich is not something sinful. Job and Abraham were rich (Genesis 13:2; Job 1:1–3) and it was not morally wrong. What people do with their possessions is what counts. The Apostle Paul stresses that the root of all evil is selfishness which is expressed in love for richness: “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil” (1 Timothy 6:10). The evil-rich person thinks only about his gain; he wants to have more and more. The rich may be influential, famous, and their popularity may rise. This is not something evil *per se*, but when accumulating wealth is the goal by itself and is used for egocentric purposes, then fortune becomes a problem.

Asaph observes that the general population may be attracted to the wicked-rich people in order to benefit from their riches, happiness, and position. It may be that they even wonder if God is not with them giving them all these blessings. When they do wrong things, people try to find an excuse to defend their leaders and reason as the arrogant do: Does the Most High care? Does God know what is going on? Is He concerned with how we live?

“Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and have washed my hands in innocence. All day long I have been afflicted, and every morning brings new punishments” (Psalm 73:13–14).

For the second time the word “surely” occurs, but this time in a negative way in order to stress the vanity of staying pure and close to the Lord. What is the point to be committed to God? Does it make sense to serve Him when seemingly He is not good and just? Is it useful to be pure in heart when people with a pure heart experience harshness of life and the arrogant prosper? The wicked have all the attractive things, yet Asaph experiences only problems, so he is asking: “What good is it to repent and follow God? Does He reward the faithful?” A legalistic overtone can be detected behind his statement. It is expected that obedience brings positive results: God’s rich blessings. However, life proves the ineffectiveness of staying pious, because the righteous experience afflictions and punishments every day (v. 14). Asaph went through hardship in life: he was

<sup>17</sup>Terrien, 524, 529.

plagued (stricken, afflicted) and chastened (rebuked, corrected, punished). The term “affliction” is the same word used to describe the suffering of the Servant of the Lord (Isaiah 53:4) and of Job (Job 1:11).

It is interesting to observe that Job asks analogous questions about the profit and gain of trying to please God by not sinning (see Job 34:9; 35:3) and the prophet Malachi employs similar words to describe the reasoning of unfaithful religious people who argue that there is no gain in serving the Lord and that it is futile to observe His law, because the evildoers prosper (Malachi 3:14–15). On the other hand, Psalm 24:3–6 pronounces God’s blessings which fall upon those who have a pure heart and clean hands. Jesus Christ declares that those who have a pure heart will see God (Matthew 5:8).

Thus, Asaph observes that staying with the Lord does not help with his own personal illness and suffering. The righteous encounters difficulties: he is afflicted and each day brings new problems. It is not clear what precise problems Asaph experienced, if related to his health, poverty, or pain. Nevertheless, God worked in his life, because he was living a life of repentance: keeping a pure heart and clean hands.

“If I had spoken out like that, I would have betrayed your children. When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny” (Psalm 73:15–17).

This is the core and central passage of the Psalm with three most important points:

1. Verse 15: First, Asaph is concerned about his influence on God’s people. He does not want to cause them to lose their faith if he shared his thoughts with them. His sincere and honest reasoning may be understood wrongly, as rebellious thoughts, and could injure people. He struggles in his own mind with his questions about God and does not want to spread it. He is aware that expressing his doubts and disappointments publicly may discourage others and rob them of their vitality and good focus. He does not want to harm anyone. Speaking about

his faith problems may betray God’s children. It is better to find someone who is strong in faith and share our questions about God with that person.

It was the community of faith (lit. generation; Hebrews *dor*; cf. Psalm 24:6) who took care of Asaph, and they carried him through the different difficulties of life. He belonged to that community of faith. Maybe some were going through life’s hardships such as sickness, famine, poverty, and they were good examples by their staying faithful to God. Asaph would betray them if he should rebel, lose faith and go ahead with an easy life. A relationship and faithfulness to God’s community of faith helped him to overcome doubts and saved his spiritual life. Robert Davidson appropriately remarks: “To continue along the path his thoughts are taking him would be to become a traitor to the community of faith that had nurtured him. Others must have found life difficult and wrestled with their doubts, but they hadn’t given up. They still belonged to the people of God. His own faith may be fragile, but he begins

***Pure logic and reasoning is insufficient to unlock the difficulties of life. Deeper insight is needed.***

to draw support from the faith of others. That is one very good reason for belonging to the church. There we learn that God never asks us to go it alone. When the going gets tough, we can draw strength from others.”<sup>18</sup>

By expressing his doubts and forsaking a godly life, Asaph would disqualify himself from being a faithful witness of God’s goodness in life. He could thus be responsible for the fall of God’s people and unwillingly

encourage others to follow his step of discouragement. This is a valuable lesson for us: our words and actions have a profound impact on others. Our dubious attitude may effect especially those who are weak or new in faith. Goldingay aptly comments that God’s community needs “people to stand firm in faith when under pressure as a testimony to the truth of the faith even in those circumstances and as an inspiration.”<sup>19</sup>

2. Verse 16: Asaph confesses that he tried to understand the fact that the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer, but it was impossible. The verb “understand” (Heb. *yada’*) points to a holistic understanding, intellectual, cognitive, logical as well as experiential. He wanted to know but the realities of life were beyond his capacity to understand; it was troubling, wearisome, painful, and like a heavy burden for him. Pure logic and reasoning is insufficient to unlock the difficulties of life. Deeper insight is needed.

3. Verse 17: This is a crucial message which explains the turning point in Asaph’s life and thinking. This change happened when he entered the sanctuary of God (lit. the word “sanctuary” is in plural, so it means the author had in mind a specific sanctuary complex, namely the temple in Jerusalem; see Psalm 68:35). Isolated observations, empirical realities of life may mislead (vv. 2–12), human reasoning is not sufficient (vv. 16, 21–22). Pure reason cannot comprehend truth in its entirety, but God’s revelation brings new insight and thus a solution. True revelation comes from God, from the place where He resides, from His sanctuary. Every being in the whole universe is dependent upon Him, because He is a living God (Deuteronomy 5:26; Joshua 3:10; Psalm 84:2; Daniel 6:20) and from Him comes life (John 11:25; 14:6; 17:3; Romans 6:23; 1 John 5:11) and wisdom (1 Kings 4:29; Job 12:13; Ecclesiastes 2:26; Daniel 1:17; 2:21–22).

Why is the sanctuary such an important place? The heavenly sanctuary is the cosmic command center, place of worship and doxology, palace of God’s residence where a resolution of sin occurs, and the plan of salvation is implemented. In the sanctuary one discovers God, His character, who He is and what He is doing. David states that in God’s temple he discovers the beauty of the Lord, searches for the truth and learns about God’s goodness (Ps 27:4, 13). Ultimately, the

<sup>18</sup> Robert Davidson, *The Vitality of Worship: A Commentary on the Book of Psalm* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 234.

<sup>19</sup> Goldingay, 409.



face of God is seen, and in His presence the glimpses of His loving and holy being are discerned (Psalms 11:7; 27:8; 63:2; 77:13; Isaiah 6:2–3). Thus, God’s sanctuary provides answers to the problems of life (deception is outside of God’s presence), because God’s plan of salvation reveals things not from the momentary position of now but from the end (Heb. *Akharit*; end, final moment; fig. destiny), the ultimate destiny at God’s judgment. Divine judgment is the revelation of God’s eternal values; it reveals what really matters. So the sanctuary brings answers to Asaph that he could not otherwise figure out, because it reveals God’s plan for dealing with sin and sinners and presents the way

know our Maker, the more we will know ourselves. There in the sanctuary the solution to theodicy is given. No wonder David desired to stay in the sanctuary all his life (Psalm 27:4) and states that “better is one day” in the sanctuary “than a thousand elsewhere” (Psalm 84:10), and that he will “dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Psalm 23:6).

We need God’s revelation as we are totally dependent upon it (Deuteronomy 29:29; Ecclesiastes 3:11–14; 6:11–12; Matthew 16:23b). Without the divine truth, we are in darkness and do not know how to discern between right and wrong, light and darkness. Worship plays an important role in understanding real-

prosperity, health, and wealth is not a sign of God’s favor but of His patience and grace. At the end, judgment will reveal who is who, and ultimately all the wicked will perish. Destroyers of good will be indeed destroyed.

Asaph learns that the prosperity of the wicked is only apparent and temporal. God has the final word in His judgment. The end of things provides value to the present life. Current success may delude and mislead. We should not fool ourselves. Destruction strikes the ungodly suddenly and without mercy; they have no foundation.

This psalm should also help the people of God to face judgment and know the fate of the wicked (vv. 17b–20, 27) in contrast to the glorious eternal destiny of the righteous (vv. 23–26). The Day of Judgment comes, and only when individuals stay with the Lord can they be assured that their sentence will be positive. The Lord will arise to judge (Psalm 82:8) and then all the wicked will be gone like a dream, like fantasies which can entertain people for a while but then nothing is left, only emptiness. We can have confidence that God will sort everything out correctly in the judgment. We may find life unfair, but if we cling to God, He has promised that everything He works out will be “for the good of those who love him” (Romans 8:28). His judgments are right and just (Revelation 15:3–4). God’s goodness and justice go together (Psalms 11:7; 40:10–11; 45:4; 61:7; 86:15; 89:14; 138:2), and they kiss together (Psalm 85:10). God loves righteousness and judgment (Psalm 33:5) as well as He loves to show His mercy and love (Micah 6:8; 7:18–20), and His love endures forever (Psalm 136).



of forgiveness or judgment. Asaph is reminded by the sanctuary message that the divine judgment is coming.

Asaph explains that when he “entered the sanctuary” he received a clearer understanding (Hebrew verb *bin* means to discern, perceive, consider), i.e., he gained new insight. The psalmist more fully understood the puzzles of life in the sanctuary where the truth about the wicked was revealed. Through the sanctuary services God teaches the plan of salvation, His attitude toward sin, and how He saves sinners. Meditation on God’s instructions is important in order to receive a correct understanding of life from the perspective of the end. To view the final destiny of the wicked opens a new horizon. The better we

ity for worship teaches us about God’s majesty, sovereignty, and holiness.

“Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! They are like a dream when one awakes; when you arise, Lord, you will despise them as fantasies” (Psalm 73:18–20).

For the third time the term “surely” is used. It is certain that the wicked are on a slippery slope, compared to the upright (v. 2). The ungodly have no future. They are surrounded by fear and their end is sudden. Their ruin and destruction is inevitable. The present moment of success or even longer

“When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you” (Psalm 73:21–22).

The psalmist confesses that without God’s special revelation he was embittered, senseless, and ignorant, i.e., blind. He was grieved and his being vexed (lit. pierced). He acted like the brute beasts which live only for the present moment—for the enjoyment of eating, drinking, and sleeping. This is the life of the ungodly, they live only for the physical and temporal things (1 Corinthians 1:20; Isaiah 55:9). *Carpe diem*, “seize the day,” is their slogan. They live for the now; the dimensions of the past and future are missing.

Asaph expresses his disappointment with himself. He feels sorry and is disgusted with his own inability to discern things. He admits his stupidity. He knows that he does not know, and this is a humbling experience. He bluntly proclaims that he was actually embittered. He was like a wild animal judging things from a present perspective, seeing mainly physical things. His mind (lit. heart) and his spirit (lit. kidneys) were darkened, but it was all his fault.

"Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory" (Psalm 73:23–24).

Asaph voices his thinking and addresses his hard feelings and objections to no one other than God. His meditation and lament changes into a dialogue of intimacy and close relationship with the Lord. The encounter with God in the sanctuary flows into conversation and magnificent statements. God is addressed personally and confidently as "You." When we struggle with God, we find Him, because He first found us.

In v. 23 begins one of the most beautiful and stunning confessions of faith in the entire Bible (vv. 23–28). It starts with "adversative waw" ("yet," "nevertheless," "in spite of," "but"), *wa'ani* ("yet, I") signalling a change, a reverse of the flow of actions. The change of thinking and attitude is now present. The decision is made and personal faith triumphs over doubts and empirical truth. This victorious crisis of faith helped him to grow and make the right decision. He will trust the Lord no matter what. He realizes that God was with him all the time and that was the most important thing he could experience. Man has too weak a hand to hold on to God, but God's hand is strong and never lets people go (see Ps 63:8; Isa 41:13; John 10:28–30).

Asaph decides for God, but the Lord is already with him, because God is holding him by His right hand. Robert Davidson fittingly articulates: "Faith depends not on his fragile, often vulnerable grasp of God, but on God's grasp of him."<sup>20</sup> Asaph follows God, because He first was upholding him, as John aptly states: "We love [God] because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19 NIV; see also 4:10).

In these verses, Asaph now speaks about his personal relationship with God. He addresses Him as "You." God is presented in this psalm in a different way, usually as Elohim, but the God of Asaph is described also as the Most High, the Lord and the Sovereign Lord. This progression in his relation to the Godhead is indicated by those designations for the Deity. The mighty God becomes at the end the Lord, Yahweh (v. 28), a close covenant Friend, and His Presence upholds, guides, provides counsel, and comfort.

The future of the upright is bright. The psalmist proclaims: "Afterward you will take me into glory" (v. 24). Literally, "after you will take me up into glory." The Hebrew verb "take up" (Heb. *laqakh*) is used in Scripture for the resurrection or translation (see, e.g., Gen. 5:24; 2 Kgs 2:3; Ps 49:15).<sup>21</sup> He does not state exactly what this time indicator "afterwards" means, whether it refers to after his period of troubles or death. However, the word "after/afterward" (Heb. *'akhar*) echoes the term "end" (*'akharit*) mentioned in v. 17, and the intertextual context indicates that Asaph alludes to the resurrection. The Hebrew term *laqakh* ("take" or "take up") is used in the case of Enoch when God took him to Himself. God overcomes death because of His Presence. It is God who guarantees the glory. The hope of resurrection or translation (like in the case of Enoch or Elijah) is in focus. To be "taken up into glory" is the ultimate hope of the psalmist. This mystery is the essential mark of the author's faith. God will

be his portion forever, thus his life will gain an eternal dimension (v. 26). The Sons of Korah in Psalm 49 powerfully confess about the difference between the righteous and the wicked: "This is the fate of those who trust in themselves, and of their followers, who approve their sayings. They are like sheep and are destined to die; death will be their shepherd (but the upright will prevail over them in the morning). Their forms will decay in the grave, far from their princely mansions. But God will redeem me from the realm of the dead; he will surely take me [Heb. *lakhach*] to himself" (Psalm 49:13–15). The psalmist states that death shall feed on the wicked and their body will decay, but God will resurrect the righteous from the grave. Thus, death will be defeated as an enemy.<sup>22</sup>

God does not necessarily give us wealth and success but His presence. God guides those who rely on Him and follow His counsel, and He will ultimately take them up on the resurrection day. The ultimate, splendid future of the pure in heart is guaranteed by Jesus: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Matthew 5:8).

"Whom have I in heaven but you?  
And earth has nothing I desire  
besides you. My flesh and my heart  
may fail, but God is the strength of  
my heart and my portion forever"  
(Psalm 73:25–26).

Situations may be complicated in our lives but relying on God is the best decision we can make. He is our gracious and righteous Judge, and He saves, gives new power, and encourages. "We may indicate the distinctive nature of the solution offered in this psalm by noting that it penetrates deeper than does any other that has ever been attempted on the Old Testament level. It mounts to the very presence of God, holds close to Him, and then views the situation from that vantage point."<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Davidson, 235.

<sup>21</sup> In the Elijah story of being taken up to heaven, the verbs *laqakh* "take, take up" and *'alah* "go up, bring up, take up" are synonymous (see 2 Kgs 2:1, 3, 11).

<sup>22</sup> Psalm 49:15 clearly states that God will redeem my soul [i.e., life, person] from the power of the grave. Literally, "from the power of Sheol." The best translation of the term "Sheol," which occurs 66 times in the Old Testament (16 times in Psalms), is "grave." The wicked rich and self-confident will perish and end in Sheol, whereas the righteous who trust in the Lord will ultimately be redeemed from it. Dead people sleep in the grave from where believers are resurrected to eternal life at the second coming of Christ (John 5:28–29; 1 Cor 15:51–54; 1 Thess 4:13–18; Phil 3:20–21; Titus 3:13; Heb 9:28). The hope in a personal resurrection is already pronounced in the Old Testament (see especially Job 19:25–27; Isa 26:19; Hos 13:14; and Dan 12:2, 12). The Psalmist also proclaims that God will redeem. Literally, "God will ransom." A metaphor of ransom describes a process of being rescued from the power of death (in contrast to v. 7). This is solely, uniquely, and exclusively God's activity. God is our Redeemer. The Hebrew term *nefesh* means "person," "human being," "self," "me," "soul," "life" and here describes the whole person who is rescued from the dead: "God will resurrect my person," i.e., me, "from the power of the grave" (Sheol).

<sup>23</sup> H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Psalms* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1969), 523.

We can easily deceive ourselves by becoming distracted over the wrong or even right things. “Whom have I in heaven but you?” is not a rhetorical question but one of the best confessions (similar to John 6:68). God is the only desire, delight, passion, and hope for the believer. The present joy in life springs from the fellowship with God. The stress on God is a splendid feature of this poem. As long as I have God, I wish for nothing else in heaven or on earth. Jesus, our High Priest, is acting on our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary. “Heaven is heaven because God is there.”<sup>24</sup> Everything looks dim and dark compared with the delight to be in God’s Presence and in friendship with Him. A close walk and relationship with God cannot be replaced by anything.

God is gracious to His followers. Asaph assures that his God holds him in His hand, is his guide, takes him up to glory, gives him everything he needs and makes him strong. “God is the strength of my heart” (v. 26) means literally that God is the Rock of my heart. God gives courage to live in the midst of our problems and in spite of our questions. He helps us to carry on. “Nowhere else in the Old Testament is the power of faith in God to master life so profoundly grasped in such purity and strength, nowhere so forcefully formulated, as in the ‘nevertheless,’ uttered by faith, by which the poet of Psalm 73 commits himself to God.”<sup>25</sup>

Verse 26 in an extraordinary way stresses the centrality of God in the life of Asaph. Even though his body may fail and be weak, yet: (1) God is the strength (lit. rock) of my heart, and (2) He is my portion forever. God is the source of power, vitality, and strength. He is the rock on which one can safely build. In contrast with a feeble body, this strength must be a spiritual power of God’s presence and nearness. The term “portion” means “lot.” In our pilgrimage, the Lord is our safe territory where we can rest. He is our place, our portion, our lot, our security, we can rely on Him, hide, and stay in Him eternally, because He gives eternal life.

“Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds” (Psalm 73:27–28).

Verses 27–28 sum everything up. Truly, where there is the absence of the living God, death and destruction are present. Apart from God, people perish. Their unfaithfulness (Heb. *zoneh*, lit. [spiritual] harlotry, fornication, prostitution, apostasy, infidelity), always brings disaster (see especially how the prophets Jeremiah and Hosea speak against such wicked behavior).

Only the culminating and concluding v. 28 uses a tricolon in the whole Psalm. Three important thoughts underline Asaph’s final personal decision regarding his relationship with the Lord: (1) “But as for me, it is good to be near God”; (2) “I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge”; and (3) “I will tell of all your deeds.” Though the riddles of life may remain, nothing can replace the personal experience and vivid relationship with God. Nearness with God brings happiness and vitality. “The nearness of God becomes the supreme good.”<sup>26</sup> His presence refreshes and revitalizes. The decision to stay with God brings joy and certainty in life. The reality of God is lived and experienced.

“To take refuge in God” is an idiomatic phrase which conveys the idea of trusting in God. The Hebrew verb is *hasah*, “to seek” or “take refuge,” i.e., “trust.” It is often used in Psalms and translators sometimes render this special tangible imagery as “taking refuge” or “trusting” in God (see, for examples, Psalms 2:12; 5:11; 7:1; 11:1; 16:1; 34:8). The author of this psalm made God his “refuge” (v. 28). Refuge is a “safe place.” It is a place where you can find shelter. In a storm, a shelter will keep the wind and rain off you. In the storms of life (the bad things that happen) God will keep you safe. This is what the psalmist believed. It is better to be near to God than to have plenty of possessions and material things. In a moment one can lose all, but God will always be with His people. Asaph utters profound truth: “It is good to be near God.” The struggling person hangs on to God’s goodness, and then he may understand more and more of His purposes. The goodness of God is finally defined as the Divine Presence in life, not as material possessions or prosperity.

There are a variety of names and titles used for the Deity in this Psalm: God (*Elohim*, vv. 1, 26, 28 [*Elohim* is the typical designation for God in the

third book of Psalms]; El, vv. 11, 17); the Most High (*Elyon*, v. 11); the Lord (*Adonay*, v. 20); and the Sovereign God (*Adonay YHWH*, v. 28). These names are intentionally placed to stress the theological points. At the end of the psalm, God is designated as *Adonay YHWH* (v. 28), not only a strong God, Ruler of the Universe, but the Lord of the household, a personal and covenantal Lord who takes care of everything in the believer’s life. This collocation of *Adonay* and *Yahweh* is a powerful theological apex to understanding who God is. This climax demonstrates that Asaph can put his trust in God who is always faithful, because He is always for people and does everything to save them. Regarding this awesome covenant relationship with his Lord, Asaph will speak, he will proclaim His deeds, testify about His wonderful work. He will speak about God’s past, present as well as future work. Excellent examples of Asaph’s testimonies about God’s mighty acts are the other 11 psalms ascribed to his name (50, 74–83).

## Conclusion

This wisdom Psalm, the agonizing search for meaning in life, expresses a crisis of faith. The psalmist reveals struggles with his doubts, envy, and faith in God. Although envy creates doubts, through this wrestling, his trust in God grew stronger. His questions become a catalyst for his growth, because he brought them to God.

The whole personal experience described in this psalm can be transformed into the collective walk of God’s people. In summary, the following can be said: God is surely good, however, when we see the prosperity of the wicked, our faith may be shaken. We try to understand it, but humanly speaking it is impossible as our observations and logic fail us. Nevertheless in God’s sanctuary lies the solution, there we can find answers to our difficult questions by seeing God’s goodness and the beauty of His character, understanding the destiny of the wicked and the present and future life of the pure in heart, because all are under God’s judgments. There our theodicy questions find unique and irreplaceable insights. Without God’s

<sup>24</sup> Donald Williams, *Psalms 73–150*, The Preacher’s Commentary (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989), 21.

<sup>25</sup> Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (London: SCM Press LTD, 1962), 515.

<sup>26</sup> Terrien, 534.



revelation, we grope, yet God holds us and guides His people, so it is good to stay with Him. Thus at the end we desire no One but Him, and about His good deeds we want to testify.

God's judgment is the key element for understanding the puzzles of life. It reveals the end of all things from the sanctuary's viewpoint. The psalm has three main players: (1) the "wicked" (arrogant, they, pride, those far from God, unfaithful) who prosper; (2) the "pure in heart" (Asaph speaks about himself as "I"; it is interesting that Asaph does not use the term "righteous"—"upright" or "faithful") who suffer; and (3) "God." The psalmist declares at the end that it is good to stay with the Lord because He is good and the strength of his life. Asaph describes his victorious crisis of faith where his bitter lament changes into one of the most beautiful and powerful confessions of faith. Doubts are replaced with trust! Looking around himself is transformed into looking up to God. The psalmist's monologue and meditation becomes a dialogue with the Lord. "At the center of every facet of experience stands God."<sup>27</sup>

It is true that the wicked may temporarily prosper (2–15), but this success must be seen from the bigger perspective and can only be rightly understood

from the light which streams from the sanctuary where God's revelation sheds light about the end of the arrogant. The divine judgment, not merely the observations of life and simple logic and reasoning, has the last word as human deductions are powerless (16–22). The righteous, on the other hand, will stay with the Lord who holds him, and the believer will enjoy His Presence, because God is the source of life and all blessings (23–28). Verse 1 declares the goodness of God and the rest of the psalm confirms this main thesis in spite of the fact that the pure in heart may suffer and the wicked can enjoy wealth, health, and prosperity. Empirical assumptions with its rationality and intellectual conclusions are not enough to discover the whole truth. In order to understand, one needs God's revelation, insight from outside of us, from God above us. The best a person can do is to stay with the God of love, truth and justice, because His Presence completely satisfies all of humanity's deepest needs.



**Jiří Moskala** is dean and professor of Old Testament exegesis and theology at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews

University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. Moskala received his ThD in 1990 from the Comenius Faculty of Protestant Theology, which is now renamed the Protestant Theological Faculty of Charles University, Czech Republic. His dissertation was titled "The Book of Daniel and the Maccabean Thesis: The Problem of Authorship, Unity, Structure, and Seventy Weeks in the Book of Daniel (A Contribution to the Discussion on Canonical Apocalypics)" and was published in the Czech language. In 1998 he completed his PhD from Andrews University. His dissertation was titled "The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals of Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale (An Intertextual Study)" and has been published under the same title. Moskala has authored several books and articles in the Czech and English languages.

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE ANDREWS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# MENTORSHIP

## EXPERIENCE FOR MDIV STUDENTS



5  
BENEFITS  
FOR  
MENTEES

1. Christ-centered mentoring
2. Encouraging active listening
3. Assistance in personal and professional development
4. Honest and confidential relationships
5. Advice on balancing responsibilities and setting priorities

For more information, contact  
Hyveth Williams at 269-471-6363 or  
visit [andrews.edu/sem/mentorship](http://andrews.edu/sem/mentorship)



# 17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL ANDREWS UNIVERSITY MUSIC & WORSHIP CONFERENCE

February 13-15, 2020 // Andrews University

*"God's Love and the Heart of Adventist Worship & Music"*

The Andrews University Music & Worship Conference seeks to provide a forum for scholarly and professional dialogue, the advancement of knowledge, and the promotion of best practices in Christian worship and music.

The Conference welcomes scholarship from a diversity of perspectives, including, but not limited to: biblical studies, theology, history, liturgical studies, sociology, ritual studies, homiletics, and musicology.

At the Conference, presenters and participants interact to learn principles and practices for incarnational worship ministry that glorifies God, transforms worshipers, and changes the world.

To register for the  
conference, visit:

[andrews.edu/icwm/conference/](https://andrews.edu/icwm/conference/)

Presented by





# RELEVANT REVELATION

*By Latoya Wright*

The book of Revelation is mysterious, and, at times, daunting to read, but I believe it's because of the lens through which we read this book. I also believe that culture, religious motives, interpretation, and rules all play a role in the administering of the messages and interpretation of the symbolism presented throughout the book. It reminds me of some books and films I have read and seen in which some people will never indulge because of the dark overtone, gory details, monsters, mythical creatures, and the plot of evil vs. good. I used to be one of those people because the primary fear of darkness and evil scared me. I didn't like to hear about it because it made me feel overwhelming anxiety while watching or dreaming about these monsters, especially at night.

Much of those preconceived emotions and reactions came from my culture of voodoo stories, folklore, and parents sharing cultural and historical accounts of my ancestors' journey. But as we see, in the world, my culture shares the same space with their own stories of evil, monsters, and folklore which shape their history. This is one of the reasons many children grow up with uninhibited and uncontrolled fear of things in the dark. No wonder in all age groups, one will find people who will not read the pages of Revelation

because of the scenes they are told are there. They hear about monsters, dragons, bloodshed, anger, wrath, beasts, strange and frightening creatures, attacks, trampling, horsemen, plagues, gnashing of teeth, wails, fiery deaths, lake of fire, besieging of cities, conquering, cries from the grave, war in heaven and on earth, and they cringe at the imagery which can incite feelings of fear and anxiety.

No one can blame someone for protecting their emotional and mental safety from things that may trigger a sense of doom and despair. However, the ideals of society and also the framework of a community, with its rules of governance, play a crucial role in the application of interpreted themes and messages, even directives on conduct for the believer. Those reasons are understandable, yet stand, in many instances, in contrast to the factual messages the writer hopes to convey.

The book of Revelation has been given a "bad rap" and has caused many people to miss out on a beautiful story of a God who loves His family so much that He did everything in His power to save them. He did that by dying for them and then avenging all the wrong which had been done to them, and, in the end, earns the respect of all of the universe through these actions. And, in

addition to that, He restored His family back to their rightful place with Him.

This same book of Revelation has become, to me, a beautiful love story filled with love letters that I swoon over; not just read as sentence structure. But this did not occur overnight. It took me years of avoiding Revelation and trying to see Jesus only as a loving Savior through the rest of the Bible. I sought to gain the confidence of knowledge and salvation by digging deeper into the stories of the Bible and only those messages they provided. At times, I even forgot that Revelation was a book to be read as part of the whole narrative. I clumped it with the prophecies of Daniel, as they mirror each other, and placed them in a DO NOT read mental and emotional box—until an assignment for class had us read or listen to the entire book before we began our studies. I was forced to engage with this dragon filled, dark book in order to do my work properly. The anxiety began to build immediately and I found myself creating a mind block in advance and a rejection of all the monsters, death, torture, and evil imagery which might draw me further away from wanting to be alive for the return of Jesus. My heart just could not bear to read all of these painful last moments of Earth's history, especially since life feels like we are in those last



chapters right now. I needed comfort as I began this journey.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4: 16–18

This message began the journey to seeing Revelation as a love story of family, triumph, and justice. The subplot of any story is the journey of a problem being resolved. The roller coaster ride of emotions and suspense is what makes the ending grand and satisfactory. Generally, stories don't have a bed of roses as the middle of the story line, so if one does not understand the purpose of the ending, the entire message will be lost.

The scripture guides our minds to Jesus' second coming, which many Christians see as the end of their suffering. This is comforting indeed but does not fully satisfy the need for restoration or the promise of redemption found in the pages of the rest of the Bible. Another scripture, Psalm 23:4–6, gives hope and more comfort for the journey of reading Revelation;

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

These promises gave a clearer picture and added to the experience and events which would take place after the great Second Coming. I began to contemplate that maybe this Revelation was not so dark after all and maybe it contained the in-between journey to this Promised Land that we are so desperately, by faith, hoping to be saved to—like yesterday! But the issue still remained: how can I see God as anything else but a terrible judge on a throne spewing plagues, fire and brimstone, and horses to trample evil mankind. How can I see what I want to see, a God who is love?

The answers began to come when I had to read the entire book in one session. I first listened to it in its entirety using a dramatization with all the sound effects and clashes bringing my imagination to the place of painting the story as it was told. Then the plan was to just read as I studied, but as I read, I believe my mind was ready to see the truth of this forsaken book. The very first chapter presented items which challenged even how I read the book. Words that painted a different picture of Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Words that created feelings of warmth, calm, joy, validation, worth, family, and love. Words that overrode all of the fear of events, but focused my mind on a loving God who did all of these things because of what was done to us by Satan, the enemy who tried to kill us all.

## ***"How can I see what I want to see, a God who is love?"***

This, then, took on a whole other tone when realizing that this book was really about what Jesus, with whom I had fallen in love in the other books of the Bible, did for me in detail to make sure that I would live with Him forever. Phrases such as;

- Testimony and God sees all— "Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw." Revelation 1:2
- Blessed—"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Revelation 1:3
- Grace and peace—"John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;" Revelation 1:4
- Faithful, loved, washed— "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of

the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," Revelation 1:5

- Kings and priest— "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Revelation 1:6
- Alpha (beginning) and Omega (end)— "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Revelation 1:8
- Patience— I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. Revelation 1:9
- Do not fear— "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last." Revelation 1:17
- Keys to death and hell— "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Revelation 1:18
- Jesus sends me messages— "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." Revelation 22:16
- Living waters— "The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price". Revelation 22:17

These words created a thirst in my heart to know the entire story of redemption, the beginning, middle, and end. These words became the foundation for the love I have for the book of Revelation. It contains the journey of the entire Bible, the details of the family of God and His love, which runs so deep for us. That love is who He is. His love that would not allow us to perish because of our sinful state. His love which looked way beyond our faults and saw that we needed Him more now than ever. His love which gave up all of Heaven to secure our freedom and restore the original plan He had for us to be a family living in harmony here on Earth now and in the future for eternity.

Recently I lost two very important

people in my life. My mentor/mother figure, Carrie, who called me out to pass her mantle for ministry for women and girls when I was a blind young woman. She saw something in me and looked past what I saw, staying relentless in her pouring in to me all that she knew about Jesus' love for the broken. Her early days were filled with trauma, her middle days were filled with the joys of ministry, but her latter days were riddled with pain and the end was at the hands of cancer. The second was my biological father who, although he was absent for most of my life, taught me some of the most profound lessons which I cherish today. His life was mostly consumed by drugs and alcohol, but in his latter days he could be found committed to the local church where he was converted.

They died two days apart from each other and their deaths sent me searching for answers. The question was why now? Why, when they could be experiencing the best days of their lives and, more selfishly for me, why now when I was back in their lives, did they have to be taken from me? The only answer was found in this book which spoke so much about death. I was angry because time stole memories, but Revelation revealed the most beautiful and restorative balm which I believe we all need to help bring closure to those difficult and painful experiences. I learned one simple truth about these two deaths in the book. At the end of the day, I could not possibly love these two people more

that God does, and in His sovereignty, He has the final say in their journeys. I had to relinquish my need for them to Him, but because He promised in Revelation 21:5, *"And he who was seated on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true'"* I have the best news within my grasp. The news that, although I may not understand or even like His decision to allow them to sleep, that is still all it is--sleep. As a matter of fact, they are His children and He saw best how to address their pain. He attended to their needs and expressed His total love for them. But their journey only ended in their humanity. God reveals the plan for them which did not die. He will make all things new, including a brand new start for them and us, if we choose, on resurrection day. I could never have experienced the shedding of the burden of grief over these incomprehensible losses had it not been for the grace and love of God through His messages about how He deals with death in Revelation.

Now I have a joyful and quite ecstatic, even impatient urge at times, to share the beautiful journey on which Revelation takes us. The experience was like tasting a new cupcake for the first time, experiencing the sheer joy as it melted in my mouth. Asking where had it been all of my life because, in the history of cupcakes, it was the most delicious one I have ever had. Seeing the popularity of this company and all of the individuals who

had found this amazing place, so that an hour before the shop opened there was a line around the block. Within an hour of their opening, they were sold out. This store never closes at the listed closing time because they are always sold out by mid-day. There is no marketing because they speak for themselves! This is what really experiencing Revelation and its message of God's love did for me. I wondered in dismay where I've been all along; how had I missed out on it for years. The colors of this book have changed from dark and gloomy to a book filled with nature, creation, heavens, beings, and a world in which peace reigns unapologetically. There, all of creation lives in harmony with each other! It is a world this earth craves. A world which is the answer to the prayers of humanity.



**Latoya Wright** is an author, advocate, speaker and mom. She is enjoying her time being equipped for ministry in her second year at the Seminary. She

enjoys the adventure God has been taking her on as she shares His heart nationally and internationally. Her quest for justice through the expounding of God's truth, the love for her family, and the bounty of meaningful relationships she has formed bring her the greatest joy.



## PREACHING CONCENTRATION

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BE PART OF THE NEW COHORT  
LAUNCHING IN 2020!

Application Deadline:  
May 13, 2020

Ready to start your application?

Visit [andrews.edu/apply](https://andrews.edu/apply)

CONTACT: | 1-269-471-3552 or  
dmin@andrews.edu | 1-269-471-3544  
[andrews.edu/dmin](https://andrews.edu/dmin)



# Church Leadership, Politics, AND Social Media

By Cedric Vine

**T**wo of the twelve disciples of Jesus held contradictory visions for the future of Israel. The first was Simon, nicknamed 'The Zealot' (Luke 6:14), who, if we assume his nickname reflected his association with the party of the Zealots, would have resisted cooperation with Imperial Rome and advocated military action. Matthew, the tax collector (Matt 10:3), on the other hand, represents a more accommodating stance towards Rome, a willingness to work within the system, to make the best of a difficult situation. Jesus' willingness to disciple potential leaders from both political wings of Judaism models for us the requirement that all, whatever their political allegiances, find a welcome within the kingdom of God.

We live in highly polarized times when Seventh-day Adventists frequently adopt sharply divergent positions on current hot issues, whether it be the nature of healthcare provision, the free movement of people and border controls, or gun rights and regulation. Both zealots and tax collectors are found in the seminary. Both Republicans and Democrats enroll in our programs. They are employed as faculty. This is a good thing and strengthens our community. Right-wing or conservative parties typically affirm what is currently good in society and seek to preserve it. In contrast, left-wing parties focus on what is wrong in society and seek to change it. Both positions have their time and place and can draw on Scripture for justification. It is important that the good in both positions be affirmed in our classrooms.

As spiritual leaders, we need to ensure that the values of our church are not high-jacked by narrow partisan political positions; that neither the church nor the seminary is dominated by either zealots or tax collectors. Identification with a specific political agenda frequently comes at a high cost. In Roy Williams's book, *Post-God Nation? How Religion Fell Off the Radar in Australia—And What Might Be Done to Get it Back On*, he describes how Christianity in post-war Australia became increasingly identified in the general public's perception as supporting a right-wing agenda. This alienated more liberal voters. A similar phenomenon

has occurred in the UK. The result is that one half of the political spectrum remains particularly hostile towards Christianity. It is important that the church remains a broad church and that it is perceived to be a welcoming place for both zealots and tax collectors alike. Both groups, after all, need a saviour.

## Faculty and Student Use of Social Media

Creating a space where both Simon and Matthew can grow together requires intentional action. This is not to argue for "safe spaces" in that ideas and beliefs need to be constantly scrutinized and assessed in light of biblical principles. It does require, however, that faculty and students model for the church and wider society how those holding different views can converse in an atmosphere of respect, interest and even, dare I say it, love. A place where partisan agendas can be transformed in the light of kingdom values.

This concern to model good conversational practices especially impacts our use of social media. Often social media encourages the polarization of views, the denigration of others, and the adoption of, well let's just say, less than charitable language. To avoid these practices entering our community, the University developed a Social Media Policy that includes guidelines for faculty use of social media. These include the following:

- Be aware that even while posting on your personal page you are a representative of your employer and your employer's values.
- Observe principles of impartiality and avoid posts that conflict with the University's official position on matters.
- Avoid conflict—when dealing with complex or emotive issues, frame them in a positive way.
- Avoid publicly discussing controversial topics and politics where emotions can run high and can result in inflammatory or inappropriate discussions.
- Avoid using your channels as a sounding board for the problems you see in the University or church.



Such faculty guidelines are equally applicable for those preparing for service within the church. As church leaders, we are to uphold the reputation of the church in that the church bears the reputation of Jesus. If we spend our time talking down the church (or the seminary for that matter), we shouldn't be surprised when outsiders dismiss the church and, by extension, Jesus, as irrelevant. My prayer is that Simon and Matthew find a home in our seminary and that together they can contribute to the furthering of God's kingdom.

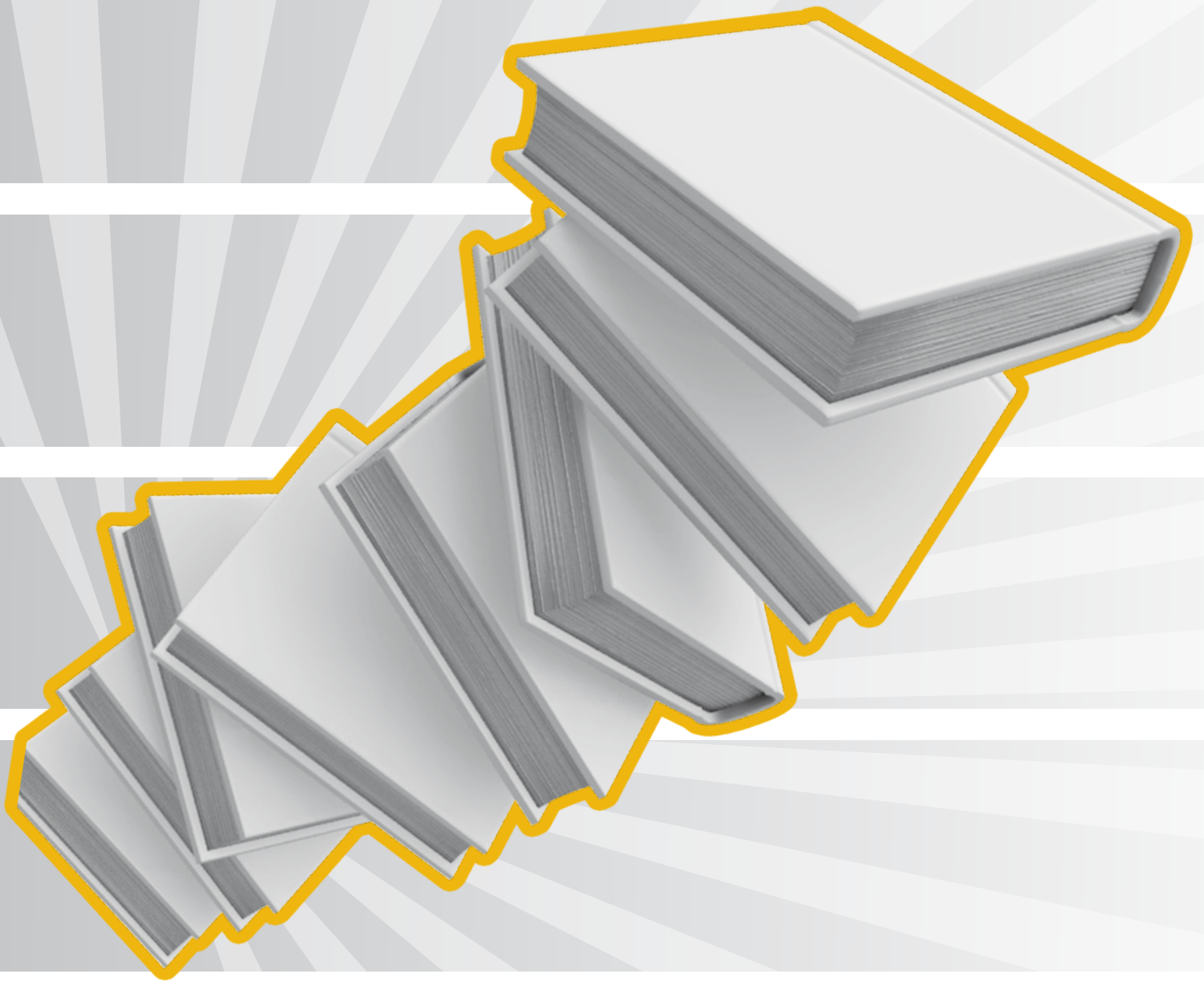


**Cedric Vine** is associate professor of New Testament at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. He originates from the UK where he served as a pastor for nine years and taught New Testament at Newbold College for eight years. He completed his PhD at the University of Sheffield, UK, on the topic of the Gospel of Matthew. He is married to

Tserha with whom he has two sons, John (14) and Mark (12).



# 2019 PUBLICATIONS BY PROFESSORS\*



*\* This is not a complete list of professors' publications for 2019*

- Bauer, Bruce L., and Kelvin Onongha, eds.** *Dealing with the Demonic in the African Context*. Berrien Springs, MI: AU LithoTech, 2019.
- "Demonization and Protection from Evil Spirits in the Writings of Ellen G. White with Missiological Implications. Pages 10–36, in *Dealing with the Demonic in the African Context*. Edited by Kelvin Onongha and Bruce L. Bauer. Berrien Springs, MI: AU LithoTech, 2019.
- Činčala, Petr.** "Childhood Adverse Experiences, Mental Health, and the Adventist Church." Institute of Church Ministry/Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research Blog (April 2019). Online: <https://www.adventistresearch.org/blog/2019/04/childhood-adverse-experiences-mental-health-and-adventist-church>.
- "Global Survey: Sabbath School Habits." Institute of Church Ministry/Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research Blog (February 2019). Online: <https://www.adventistresearch.org/blog/2019/02/global-survey-sabbath-school-habits>.
- "Global Trends on Family Worship and Prayer Meeting Attendance." Institute of Church Ministry/Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research Blog (March 2019). Online: <https://www.adventistresearch.org/blog/2019/03/global-trends-family-worship-and-prayer-meeting-attendance>.
- "Global Views on the State of the Dead." Institute of Church Ministry/Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research Blog (January 2019). Online: <https://www.adventistresearch.org/blog/2019/01/global-views-state-dead>.
- "Global Views on Sabbath." Institute of Church Ministry/Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research Blog (January 2019). Online: <https://www.adventistresearch.org/blog/2019/01/global-views-sabbath>.
- "New Data from Global Church Member Survey: Views on State of the Dead." Institute of Church Ministry/Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research Blog (February 2019). Online: <https://www.adventistresearch.org/blog/2019/02/new-data-global-church-member-survey-views-state-dead>.
- "New Data: Views on the Doctrine of the Sanctuary." Institute of Church Ministry/Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research Blog (March 2019). Online: <https://www.adventistresearch.org/blog/2019/03/new-data-views-doctrine-sanctuary>.
- Cortez, Felix.** "How Do We Read Scripture?" *Perspective Digest* 24, no. 2 (Spring 2019). Online: <https://www.perspectivedigest.org/archive/24-2/how-do-we-read-scripture>.
- Davidson, Jo Ann.** "An Atheist Confirms Ellen White's Counsel." *Adventist World* (March 2019): 22–23.
- "The Aesthetic Nature of God." *Perspective Digest* 24, no. 3 (2019). Online: <https://www.perspectivedigest.org/archive/24-3/the-aesthetic-nature-of-god>.
- Review of Douglas J. Moo and Jonathan A. Moo, *Creation Care: A Biblical Theology of the Natural World*. AUSS 56, no. 2 (Autumn 2019): 371–372. (Released 2019)
- Fortin, Denis.** "Reflections on the Institutional Church." *Adventist Today* 27, no. 1 (2019): 6–9.
- Review of A. Edward Siecienski, *The Papacy and the Orthodox: Sources and History of a Debate*. AUSS 56, no. 2 (Autumn 2019): 376–378. (Released 2019)
- Review of Peter B. Ely, *Adam and Eve in Scripture, Theology, and Literature: Sin, Compassion, and Forgiveness*. *Augustinian Studies* 50, no. 1 (2019): 95–98.
- Gane, Constance E. C.** "Tall Jalul: A Look from Behind the Jordan." *Biblical Archaeology Review* (January/February 2019): 58, 60.
- Gane, Roy E.** "Purification Offerings and Paradoxical Pollution of the Holy." Pages 115–125, in *Writing a Commentary on Leviticus: Hermeneutics-Methodology-Themes*. Edited by Christian A. Eberhart and Thomas Hieke. Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2019.
- *The Sanctuary and Salvation: The Practical Significance of Christ's Sacrifice and Priesthood*. Madrid, Spain: Editorial Safeliz: Madrid, Spain, 2019. (Translated into Spanish as *Santuario y Salvación: El Significado Práctico del Sacrificio y Sacerdocio de Cristo*, and into French as *Sanctuaire et Salut: La Signification Pratique du Sacrifice et du Sacerdoce du Christ*.)
- "Theology Enshrined in the Israelite Sanctuary." Pages 3–14, in *Sacred Space, Sacred Thread: Perspectives across Time and Traditions*. Edited by John W. Welch and Jacob Rennaker. Eugene OR: Pickwick: Eugene, 2019.
- Hucks II, Willie Edward.** "Jornada completa: Um sermão sem apelo eficaz é semelhante a uma viagem quenão alcança seu destino." *Ministério* (January/February 2019): 20–22.
- Jerončić, Ante.** "The Truthful Self: Subjectivity, Truth, and Hermeneutics in Dialogue with Michel Foucault." AUSS 56, no. 2 (Autumn 2018): 257–277. (Released in 2019.)
- Kaiser, Denis.** "Jesus kommt—bald: Eine Geschichte des aktiven Wartens der frühen Adventisten." *Adventisten Heute* (February 2019): 11–12.
- Kidder, S. Joseph.** "Celebration of Diversity." Co-author Katelyn Campbell. *Ministry* 91, no. 5 (2019): 6–9.
- "O altar da família." *Ministerio* (March–April 2019): 17–20.
- "Connecting to God through Giving." *Elder's Digest* (January/March 2019): 28–29.
- *Moving Your Church*. Pacific Press: Nampa, ID, 2015. (Translated into Russian in 2019.)
- Kidder, S. Joseph, and Jonny Wesley Moor.** "Finding God in Community." *Ministry* (January 2019): 9–13.
- Kidder, S. Joseph, and David Penno.** "Keeping Your Spirituality Alive." *Elder's Digest* 25, no. 2 (2019): 26–28.
- Miller, Nicholas P.** "Let's Reason Together: Dialogue about Biblical Justice Today." *Lake Union Herald* (January 2019): 14–17.
- Moskala, Jiří.** "Are Good Deeds—Well, Good?" *Ministry* 91, no. 5 (2019): 5.
- "Education et eschatologie. Pourquoi l'éducation théologique est-elle nécessaire?" *Sevir* 4 (2019): 77–96.
- *El Juicio y la salvación: El significado del ministerio de Cristo en el santuario celestial*. Translated by Joel Iparraguirre. Lima, Peru: Adventist Theological Society, 2019.
- *Ezra and Nehemiah*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2019.
- *Ezra and Nehemiah*. Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guild (October–December 2019). Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2019.
- *Ezra and Nehemiah*. Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide (October–December 2019). Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2019.
- *The Doctrine of God: Introducing the Big Questions*. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2019.
- *Theodicy of Love: Cosmic Conflict and the Problem of Evil*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018.
- "“¡Temed a Dios!”: El primer imperativo del evangelio." Pages 137–154 in *Apocalipsis: El evangelio del tiempo del fin*. Edited by Roy E. Graf, Alvaro F. Rodriguez, and Sergio Celis C. Nana, Peru: Universidad Peruana Unión, Ediciones Teologika, and Centro de Aplicación Editorial Unión, 2019.
- *Os Restauradores: A luta de Esdras e Neemias pelo reavivamento do povo de Deus*. SP, Brazil: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 2019.
- *Příběhy boží milosti: Evangelium podle Ezdráš a Nehemjáše*. Praha, Czech Republic: Advent-Orion, 2019.



**Peckham, John C.** "Love and Justice: Combating the Two Greatest Sins." *Lake Union Herald* (January 2019): 18–21.

**Penno, David.** "'Whosoever will . . .': Embracing Everyone." *Ministry* (March 2019): 12–14.

**Sanou, Boubakar.** "Towards a Scripture-shaped Discipleship: A Wholistic Use of the Truth, Allegiance, and Power Dimensions of the Gospel." Pages 46–64, in *Dealing with the Demonic in the African Context*. Edited by Kelvin Onongha and Bruce L. Bauer. Berrien Springs, MI: AU LithoTech, 2019.

**Sedlacek, David, and Beverly Sedlacek.** *Cleansing the Sanctuary of the Heart: Tools for Emotional Healing*. 3rd edition. Buchanan, MI: Restful Heart: Buchanan, MI, 2019.

**Stefanovic, Ranko.** *The Book of Revelation*. Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2019.

**Williams, David A.** Review of Dirk R. Ellis, *Holy Fire Fell: A History of Worship, Revivals, and Feasts in the Church of the Nazarene*. AUSS 56, no. 2 (Autumn 2019): 349–351. (Released 2019)

**Williams, Hyveth.** "The Good Fight." *Adventist Review* (April 2019): 61.

----- "Liars and the Lies They Tell." *Adventist Review* (February 2019): 45.

----- "Women in the World." *Ministry* 91, no. 5 (2019): 16–19.

Changing  
the  
**People**  
who Change  
the  
**World**

# LEADERSHIP CONCENTRATION

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY  
**DOCTOR OF MINISTRY**

**BE PART OF THE NEW COHORT LAUNCHING IN 2020!**

**Application Deadline: January 24, 2020**

Ready to start your application? Visit [andrews.edu/apply](https://andrews.edu/apply)

**CONTACT:** 1-269-471-3552 or  
1-269-471-3544  
[dmin@andrews.edu](mailto:dmin@andrews.edu)  
[andrews.edu/dmin](https://andrews.edu/dmin)

 **Doctor of  
Ministry Program**



# *Cast your net* **wider!**

Get your MDiv and amplify it with a dual degree from the  
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

---

## DUAL DEGREES

### Master of Divinity with:

Master of Social Work (MSW)  
Master of Public Health (MPH)  
MA in Communication  
MA in Community & International Development

## CONCENTRATIONS

Chaplaincy  
Youth & Young Adult Ministries  
Marriage & Family Life

---

Try our new Hybrid MDiv – it allows you to begin or finish your degree from the comfort of your own home.  
If you wish to take a year of either prerequisite or degree credits prior to starting on campus, we make it easy for you.  
Contact the MDiv office for more details.

**NOT JUST A DEGREE BUT A LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE!**

FIND OUT  
MORE  
HERE

Email | [Mdivadmissions@andrews.edu](mailto:Mdivadmissions@andrews.edu)  
Call | 269-471-3984  
Online | [andrews.edu/mdiv](http://andrews.edu/mdiv)



Seventh-day Adventist  
Theological Seminary  
Andrews University

# Seminary Directory

## Seminary Program Directors and Support Staff

### Doctor of Ministry (DMin)

Director: Kleber Gonçalves, S205, 269-471-3190  
kleber@andrews.edu

Project Coach: David Penno, S207, 269-471-6366  
penno@andrews.edu

Project Editor: Dionne Gittens, S203, 269-471-6594  
dionne@andrews.edu

Administrative Assistants for  
Enrollment & Learning: Rita Pusey, S204, 269-471-3544  
rita@andrews.edu

Admin. & Financial: Diana Rimoni, S203, 269-471-6130  
rimoni@andrews.edu

Marketing & Assessment: Jessica Jun, S203, 269-471-3552,  
dmin@andrews.edu

### Doctor of Missiology (DMiss)

Director: Bruce Bauer, S210, 269-471-6373  
bbauer@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Daniel Duffis Gordon, S203, 269-471-6505,  
dmiss@andrews.edu

### Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry (MAPM)

English Track Dir.: Esther Knott, N208, 269-471-3353  
eknott@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Irmgard Gallos, N206, 269-471-3514  
inministry@andrews.edu

Hispanic Track Dir.: Ricardo Norton, S233, 269-471-8318  
ricardo@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Sonia Wilches, S221, 269-471-6170  
ihm@andrews.edu

### Master of Arts (Religion) (MA [Rel])

Director: Cedric Vine, N126, 269-471-3294  
cvine@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Glenda Patterson, N124, 269-471-3218  
mareligion@andrews.edu

### Master of Arts (Religious Education) (MAREd)

#### MAREd/Master of Social Work (MSW)

Director: John Matthews, N214, 269-471-6499  
johnmatt@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Melissa Alexander, N210, 269-471-6186  
amelissa@andrews.edu

### Master of Arts in Youth & Young Adult Ministry (MAYYAM), MAYYAM/Master of Science in Community and International Development (CIDP), MAYYAM/Master of Social Work (MSW)

Director: David Sedlacek, N216, 269-471-6375  
sedlacek@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Ashley Reddy, N210, 269-471-6186  
reddy@andrews.edu

### Master of Divinity (MDiv), MDiv/MA in Communication (MA) MDiv/Master of Public Health (MPH)

#### MDiv/Master of Social Work (MSW)

Director: Fernando Ortiz, N209, 269-471-3416  
ortizl@andrews.edu

Admin. Assists.: Mona Sarcona, N212, 269-471-3538  
mdiv@andrews.edu

Keila Diaz-Hernandez, N210, 269-471-3984  
mdivadmissions@andrews.edu

### PhD (Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Archaeology)

Director: Randall Younker, HM206, 269-471-6183  
younker@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Trisha Robertson, N320, 269-471-6002  
phd@andrews.edu

### PhD (Religion)

#### Doctor of Theology (ThD)

Director: John Reeve, N325, 269-471-3418  
jreeve@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Trisha Robertson, N320, 269-471-6002  
phd@andrews.edu

### PhD (Religious Education)

Director: John Matthews, N214, 269-471-6499  
johnmatt@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Melissa Alexander, N210, 269-471-6186  
amelissa@andrews.edu

### Postdoctoral Fellowship

Director: Wagner Kuhn, S211, 269-471-6973  
kuhn@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Daniel Duffis Gordon, S203, 269-471-6505

## Seminary Department Chairs and Assistants

### Christian Ministry

Chair: Willie Hucks II, S228, 269-471-6383  
hucks@andrews.edu

Office Manager: Sylvie Baumgartner, S220, 269-471-6371  
sylvie@andrews.edu

### Church History

Chair: Trevor O'Reggio, N332, 269-471-3572,  
toreggio@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Janine Carlos, N327, 269-471-3541  
janinec@andrews.edu

### Discipleship & Religious Education

Chair: Allan Walshe, N218, 269-471-3318  
walshe@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Ashley Reddy, N210, 269-471-6186  
reddy@andrews.edu

### New Testament

Chair: Richard Choi, N128, 269-471-6573  
choir@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Rachel, Sauer, N125, 269-471-3219  
sauerr@andrews.edu

### Old Testament

Chair: Paul Gregor, N114, 269-471-6344,  
pgregor@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Katie Freeman, N111, 269-471-2861,  
katie@andrews.edu

### Theology & Christian Philosophy

Chair: Ante Jerončić, N315, 269-471-3198  
jeroncic@andrews.edu

Admin. Assist.: Pamela Climaco, N311, 269-471-3607  
pamelagail@andrews.edu



## World Mission

Chair: Wagner Kuhn, S211, 269-471-6973  
kuhn@andrews.edu  
Admin. Assist.: Daniel Duffis Gordon, S203, 269-471-6505  
dmiss@andrews.edu

## InMinistry Center

Director: Esther Knott, N208, 269-471-3353  
eknott@andrews.edu  
Admin. Assist.: Irmgard Gallos, N206, 269-471-3514  
inministry@andrews.edu

## Deans' Office

Dean: Jiří Moskala, N228, 269-471-3205, moskala@andrews.edu  
Director of Seminary Business Administration:  
Steve Nash, N225, 269-471-3175, snash@andrews.edu  
Executive Assistant:  
Dorothy Show, S229, 269-471-3536, showd@andrews.edu  
Associate Dean:  
Teresa Reeve, N227, 269-471-3418, tlreeve@andrews.edu  
Administrative Assistant:  
Ada Mendez, N230, 269-471-6941, mendeza@andrews.edu

The views and opinions expressed in these articles are solely those of the original authors and do not necessarily represent those of Andrews University nor the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. All authors assume full responsibility for the accuracy of all facts and quotations in their articles.

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGE-CREDIT:

©EujeneChoi/Shutterstock.com	Cover image
@delcarmat/Shutterstock.com	Page 8
Photo by Soul devOcean on Unsplash	Page 12
©Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock.com	Page 16
@saranya33/Shutterstock.com	Page 18
©Zhigulina Oksana/Shutterstock.com	Page 23
Photo by Melanie Wasser on Unsplash	Page 31
@Benjavisa Ruangvaree Art/Shutterstock.com	Page 36-37
@The_Molostock/Shutterstock.com	Page 40
@Bruce Rolff/Shutterstock.com	Page 45 & 47
@Robin Worrall/Shutterstock.com	Page 49

"May the Lord help his people  
to realize that there is earnest  
work to be done.  
May he help them to remember  
that in the home in the church  
and in the world, they are to  
work the works of Christ.  
They are not left to labor alone.  
The angels are their helpers.  
And Christ is their helper.  
Then let them labor faithfully  
and untiringly. In due season  
they will reap if the faint not."

*E.G. White*

(Testimonies, vol. 8, page 18)

## CURRENT Editorial Board



### Jiří Moskala Consulting Editor

Seminary dean, professor of Old Testament exegesis and theology. Previously a pastor, administrator and teacher in the Czech Republic.



### Hyveth Williams Managing Editor/Writer

DMin, professor and director of homiletics. She also serves as founder and pastor of The Grace Place in South Bend, Indiana.



### Amy Rhodes Graphic Designer

A graduate of Andrews University with a BFA in art direction, emphasis in advertising. Employed by the Seminary deans' office since 2014.



### Bonnie J. Beres Copy Editor

Served in the Seminary for 45 years, received BA in English from Andrews. Currently administrative assistant in the Dept of Christian Ministry.



### Dorothy Show Editorial Assistant

Executive assistant, Seminary deans' office.



### Pat Spangler Assistant Copy Editor

Director and associate FOCUS editor at the Office of University Communication.

# Natural Interventions for Lifestyle Diseases and Hydrotherapy

- 30 hours of classroom & practical application  
—6 hours in hydrotherapy lab
- Cutting-edge, evidence-based science
- Practical information and application
- Go from knowing it to doing it
- Seventh-day Adventist lifestyle health principles
- Fun, inspirational and interactive Q & A

**Where** | *Andreasen Center for Wellness*

**When** | **May 4–8, 2020**  
*Monday–Friday*  
*8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.*

**Cost** | \$350

**Info** | [andrews.edu/go/nrhwh](https://andrews.edu/go/nrhwh)  
269-471-3541  
[chis@andrews.edu](mailto:chis@andrews.edu)

**Seminary Credit Offered! GSEM 648**

## PRESENTERS

John Kelly MD  
David DeRose MD  
Alina Baltazar MSW, PhD  
Dominique Gummelt, PhD  
Vicki Griffin, MS, MPA  
Susan Pallendine, RDH, CMT  
Evelyn Kissinger, MS, RDN

