

# Adventist World

06/2021

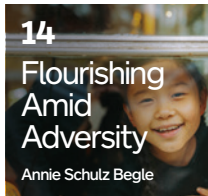
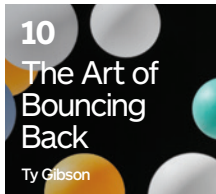
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## Bouncing Forward





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The next issue of *Adventist World* will be a combined July-August edition and should arrive in your home by mid-July.

## Flourishing in Grace

BY BILL KNOTT

Long before I learned to read, I heard in Sabbath School that heaven was a place with trees. That was enough for me. I decided I would go there.

Trees were the most benevolent growing things I knew—not fragile like the flowers, or changeable like brothers. A tree could be counted on for cool, green shade on blistering hot afternoons; for shelter when a cloudburst drenched the ball field; for sharing silent moments when I needed solitude. And then there were those wild, joyous climbs to where the branches barely supported my stocky frame—up where the winds moved me and what I clung to.

I've wandered through the giant maples planted in New England lanes by long-gone farmers two centuries ago. They saw the day—decades away—when their grandchildren and *their* grandchildren would be delighted by the rising sap in spring; the great, green tent of summer; and the brilliant reds and oranges of the autumn. They invested in a future they would never see, yet they found satisfaction in it.

And as I grew up in the Lord, I came to understand the psalmist's righteous comparison between God's people and life-giving trees: *"They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither"* (Ps. 1:3).<sup>1</sup> I knew such rich, well-watered souls—men and women who dealt with adversity and pain like great old gum trees do with fire: *"The holy seed is in its stump"* (Isa. 6:13). By daily drinking in the Spirit, they found fresh sources of renewal—courage facing cancer; trust when all around them were distressed; kindness when the mob was grabbing clubs.



In a word, they were *resilient*, humans learning how to live the qualities of kingdom life while growing here below. Their poise and graciousness reminded me that the most effective witnesses to the resurrected life don't always rush about in zealous haste. Sometimes they simply grow and shelter, creating sanctuaries for those who need the peace that passes understanding (Phil. 4:7):

*"They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God.*

*They still bring forth fruit in old age, they are ever full of sap and green"* (Ps. 92:13, 14, RSV).<sup>2</sup>

As our world still wrestles with a deadly plague that never seems to end, we look to strong, well-watered souls to guide us in these troubled times. Their faith, their fruitfulness, their rootedness in Scripture, are just the qualities of those who will one day camp beneath the tree of life (Rev. 22:2).

Decide today that by grace you will live resiliently until we live beneath that healing tree through which flows water from the throne. "Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12).

<sup>1</sup>Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

<sup>2</sup>Bible texts credited to RSV are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1946, 1952, 1971, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

We believe in the power of prayer, and we welcome prayer requests that can be shared at our weekly staff worship every Wednesday morning. Send your requests to [prayer@adventistworld.org](mailto:prayer@adventistworld.org), and pray for us as we work together to advance God's kingdom.





**Adventist volunteers serve hot meals as part of the feeding program run by the church in the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Mission in old Montrose, Kingstown, on April 18, 2021. Through ADRA and its volunteers, the church prepared 1,200 meals daily for distribution to shelter residents in the city after the eruption of the La Soufrière volcano.**

Photo: Peter Kerr, Inter-American Division News

**“As [the Bibles] go forth, may they be a wonderful light so many people might know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and prepare for the great, soon coming of Christ.”**

—David Weigley, president of Columbia Union Conference (CUC), during a dedication event. Pastors and Hispanic coordinators gathered at the CUC headquarters in Columbia, Maryland, United States, to collect and then distribute more than 13,600 Bibles and 100,000 copies of Ellen G. White’s book *Steps to Christ* in English and Spanish.

# 110 Years

The first Seventh-day Adventist church in the Philippines recently remembered God’s guidance as it marked its 110th anniversary. Under the theme “Celebrating God’s Providence,” church members and leaders of the Santa Ana Seventh-day Adventist Church commemorated the humble beginnings of the church and where the Lord has led them in this generation.

**“They see themselves as missionaries to their fellow citizens and community. My feeling is that it is the basis of their resilience.”**

—Lisa Roberts, lead author and a professor and research director for Loma Linda University School of Nursing, about a study published in the *Journal of Christian Nursing*. A team of faculty and a Ph.D. student at LLU School of Nursing studied how nurses working in Haiti manage to sustain resilience and display exemplary dedication toward patient care amid difficult working conditions.

## Coping With Stress

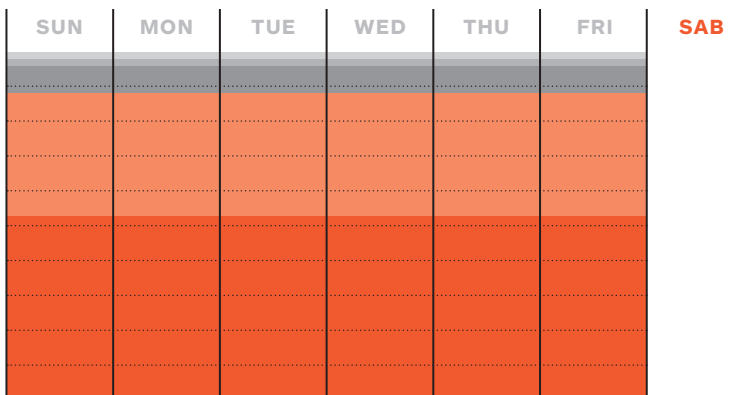
As part of the 2017-2018 Global Church Member Survey, members around the world were asked if they could cope better with the stresses of the week when they kept Sabbath regularly. Here is the response from 58,169 members.

Source: ASTR Research and Evaluation Team in collaboration with Andrews University Research Team, n = 58,169



QR Code link:  
<https://bit.ly/3dUusc0>

- 2% Strongly Disagree
- 2% Disagree
- 8% I’m not sure
- 35% Agree
- 53% Strongly Agree



# 49,058

The number of new members that joined the Adventist Church in 2020 in the South Pacific Division (SPD). Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the division experienced a significant increase in baptisms. In 2019 the total recorded number of new members to the SPD was 34,857. “The Holy Spirit is working in many different ways; we just need to join Him. With this theme of ‘I Will Go,’ our people are committed to go! We must not allow COVID-19 to stop us,” said Maveni Kaufononga, president of the Trans Pacific Union Mission, which saw significant growth in 2020.



**“Adventist education is the longest and largest evangelistic event in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This means a total of 9,489 evangelistic sites, with 111,360 evangelists, and 2,044,709 attendants.”**

—John Wesley Taylor V, associate education director of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, during a General Conference Executive Committee meeting on April 14. His presentation, entitled “Joining and Remaining: A Look at the Data on the Role of Adventist Education,” reviewed multiple studies that identify Adventist education as a redemptive enterprise.

**“No one has escaped the assault of the volcano, for the entire country has been blanket-ed with dust, ash, and rubble. . . . We don’t know what is going to come out of this, but take your eyes off the environment you are in and see God lifted up.”**

—Dermoth Baptiste, president of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Mission, headquartered in Kingstown, in response to the volcano eruption. More than 20,000 people have been displaced from their homes, and nine Adventist churches and one secondary school are being used as shelters.

## 20 Plus

More than 20 Master Guides from Seventh-day Adventist churches in eastern El Salvador joined the effort to battle forest fires that spread across the mountainous region of Arambala in the northern part of Morazán state, El Salvador, in March. Hundreds of acres of forest terrain were destroyed by the fires. The group made the journey to transport water to firefighters, national police, civil protection agents, and other volunteers who were working to contain the fires. ➔



Photo: El Salvador Union

# Church Leaders Vote Special One-Day GC Session for January 2022

By *Adventist World* and Adventist News Network

**Event will discuss a constitutional change to allow virtual attendance.**

On Tuesday, April 13, 2021, members of the General Conference Executive Committee (GC EXCOM) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church voted to hold a special General Conference (GC) Session on January 18, 2022.

The vote took place on the opening day of the 2021 Spring Meetings, one of the two annual business meetings of the denomination's top governing body between world sessions. This year's meeting took place virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The special one-day, one-item GC Session at the world church headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, is being called for the sole purpose of amending the GC Constitution to allow delegates to participate by digital means in a future GC Session in the event that unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances arise.

Before the vote, Adventist Church undersecretary Hensley Mooroooven detailed some of the factors considered in presenting this proposal to the GC EXCOM members. He reminded the com-

mittee that the church's constitution stipulates that GC sessions and all voting must take place in person and onsite. Additionally, Article V, section 1, of the constitution states that postponing a GC Session should not "exceed two years" beyond a regularly scheduled date. Mooroooven then explained that amendments to the GC Constitution and Bylaws can be done only by the delegates at a regular or special GC Session.

"Our goal was to be transparent at each step of the process," Mooroooven said. "The proposal we bring today is the more plausible solution." This solution would allow delegates to participate in the upcoming GC Session June 6-11, 2022, in St. Louis, Missouri, United States, even if they could not physically travel to St. Louis because of the pandemic.

GC administrators, though planning for an in-person GC Session, felt it prudent to work on an alternate solution. The GC EXCOM would still have to make a decision at the appropriate time based on the then circumstances

whether the GC Session would be held virtually, in person, or a hybrid of the two.

Based on the authority granted to it in Article V of the Constitution to reduce the total number of delegates to a GC Session for reasons of a "major crisis within the church or international arena," GC EXCOM also voted to reduce the total number of delegates to the January special GC Session to 400 people for this specific meeting. The motion included a request that divisions unable to send their allotted quota of delegates because of travel restrictions or other reasons be allowed to reallocate their unused quota back to the GC. The GC Administrative Committee would then designate these positions to individuals currently working at the GC headquarters, primarily from the divisions that shared their quota. A final element in the voted motion was to request all 13 world divisions and 137 union executive committees to discuss and vote on the proposed constitutional amendment and to report back to the GC Secretariat by August 31, 2021.

After discussion, the three motions passed with overwhelming majority support.

The first motion, to approve the special General Conference Session proposal, was approved by a vote of 169 to 3. The second motion, to convene a special General Conference Session on January 18, 2022, was approved 168 to 3. The final motion, to reduce the total number of delegates to the January 18, 2022, special General Conference Session to 400, was also approved by a margin of 170 to 1. ©



Photo: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

# Adventist Leaders Elect New Secretary and New Treasurer-Elect

By Marcos Paseggi, *Adventist World*

**Erton Köhler and Paul H. Douglas will replace G.T. Ng and Juan Prestol-Puesán, respectively.**



Erton Köhler (left) was elected the new secretary of the General Conference. Paul H. Douglas is the treasurer/chief financial officer-elect, to take over his new position on August 1.

Photo: Photos: Tor Tjeransen and Ansel Oliver / Adventist Media Exchange (CC BY 4.0)

Members of the General Conference Executive Committee (GC EXCOM) elected South American Division president Erton Köhler as the new secretary of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on April 14, 2021. They also voted Paul H. Douglas, director of the General Conference Auditing Service (GCAS) since 2007, as the treasurer/ chief financial officer-elect of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

## NEW SECRETARY

"I feel humbled and honored by your confidence," Köhler told the hundreds of church leaders who met through Zoom this year. "I am praying for God to give me the skills that I need."

Köhler was born in southern Brazil and has been president of the South American Division since 2007. He has extensive experience in church leadership positions, including as secretary and youth leader. He is married to Adriene Marques, a nurse, and the couple has two children.

Adventist Church president Ted N. C. Wilson highlighted some of Köhler's characteristics as a leader. "He is a very professional person,

a very mission-focused person, a very skilled administrator," Wilson told the GC EXCOM members. "He knows how to approach things in a very articulate and systematic way."

After a 197-to-16 vote confirmed Köhler as the new secretary, effective immediately, he thanked his predecessor, G. T. Ng, who announced his retirement. Köhler promised to do his best to learn from Ng's "great and superb work."

He vowed to be available, serving with a heart "completely focused" on the mission of the church. "I will be open to [listen] and to learn," he said. "My job is to build bridges, not walls."

## NEW TREASURER-ELECT

Members of the GC EXCOM also voted on another Nominating Committee recommendation and elected Douglas as General Conference treasurer-elect.

"I am honored but, more so, humbled by the decision of this body and the leading of the Lord today," Douglas told the hundreds of GC EXCOM members from around the world. "I am not worthy, but I am willing," he emphasized minutes after leaders shared the results of the vote (204 to 10 in favor of the motion).

Jamaican-born Douglas has served in various capacities at GCAS since 1986, including as associate director before becoming director in 2007. In 2020 he developed a Road Map to Resilience for church leaders and their governing committees. This initiative seeks to help leaders be prepared "to sustain mission in times of crisis and provide an agile response to rapidly emerging realities."

Before the GC EXCOM vote, Adventist Church president Ted N. C. Wilson said that Douglas "has distinguished himself in so many ways, including [in his] very high caliber of Christian ethics. He is always striving for the best."

Wilson noted that in 2018 and 2019 Douglas helped to plant a church and led evangelistic meetings. "He is a humble servant of God; he brings an international perspective," he said.

Douglas also expressed a word of thanks to his predecessor, Juan Prestol-Puesán, who will stay as treasurer until the end of July. "It is my desire to continue his legacy of stewardship in our church," Douglas said. "And to our world family, let us work together so God can come." ©



## Leaders Elect Church President for the South American Division

By Marcos Paseggi, *Adventist World*



The Executive Committee of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church voted to elect Stanley Arco as the new president of the South American Division (SAD) on April 22, 2021.

Photo: Gustavo Leighton, South American Division News

Stanley Arco, an experienced leader in both Spanish and Portuguese-speaking regions of the South American Division (SAD) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, was elected as the new president of that 2.5-million-member, eight-nation division on April 22, 2021.

The Executive Committee of the General Conference (GC EXCOM) voted to accept the SAD Executive Committee (SAD EXCOM) recommendation of Arco for the top leadership position during a special virtual session. He will replace Erton Köhler, who was recently elected secretary of the Adventist Church after 14 years as SAD president, in the region that includes Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.

After the SAD EXCOM recommendation on April 16, Köhler commented on the decision to send Arco's name for a confirmation vote.

"Pastor Stanley Arco is an experienced and balanced leader with a wide-ranging vision of the [Adventist] Church in South Amer-

ica," Köhler told *Adventist Review*. "He is a man of prayer, biblically sound, and well grounded in the guidance of the Spirit of Prophecy," he said, referencing the writings of Adventist Church cofounder Ellen G. White. "He is a leader open to dialogue, respectful, conciliatory, and notably focused on mission."

During the April 16 session SAD EXCOM members also thanked Köhler for his years serving the Adventist Church in the region. It was an emotional moment for Köhler, who emphasized that he is confident about the future and Arco's leadership across the region.

"[Arco's] vision is that of a healthy church that grows not only in quantity but also in quality," Köhler said. "I believe the South American Division will be in good hands."

"This assignment is a joy, a privilege, and a huge responsibility," Arco told SAD EXCOM members after they recommended his name for the top leadership post. "I ask for the prayers of every member, of every person wishing for Jesus to come soon," Arco said.

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**Stanley Arco will replace Erton Köhler.**

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Arco was born in southern Brazil and has an extensive experience as church leader across South America. In addition to being a church pastor in Brazil, he served as a youth ministries leader across several church regions for 17 years. Arco also worked as conference secretary and as assistant to the SAD president. In 2011 he was elected president of the Bolivia Union Mission, and in 2015 he became president of the Chile Union Mission. In August 2020 he was elected vice president of SAD.

Arco is married to Regiane dos Reis Arco, and the couple has three daughters.

Before the vote Adventist Church president Ted N. C. Wilson reminded members that according to working policies, the new president would also become a vice president of the world church. "No matter what leadership position a person is in, he must ask God always to be part of this great mission of preaching the gospel," Wilson said.

During the April 22 session that elected Arco, several GC EXCOM members spoke in support of the motion. "I believe Elder Arco is an excellent person to be considered for this position," said Gerson Santos, an associate secretary of the General Conference. "I really appreciate that his name [was] recommended."

Elbert Kuhn, another associate secretary of the General Conference, affirmed the motion. "It is a pleasure for me to support Pastor Stanley's name," Kuhn said. "I have known him for many years. He is a Bible-based and a mission-driven person. Praise the Lord for this recommendation!" ☺

# 287,255

Membership of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD) as of December 31, 2020

## 9 Missionaries

The division's public campus ministries department conducted intensive training for their third group of missionaries at the NSD Leadership Training Center on Jeju Island and through Zoom. This training session was held with missionaries from other mission projects serving in Korea and Taiwan. While each group focuses on different areas, the overall perspective is the same: to preach the love of God.

**“When I first came to Korea, I didn't know how God was leading my life in Korea, and I can't imagine what God has prepared for my future. After going back to my country, I just want to tell the gospel to people around me. I also have a plan to be a missionary and do volunteer work.”**

—Inoue Ami, Japanese exchange student attending Sahmyook University in Korea, during her baptismal service.

### Read more NSD-specific news

[http://www.nsdadventist.org/news/news\\_1.html](http://www.nsdadventist.org/news/news_1.html)



**“Let us be of good courage with [the Bible's and the Spirit of Prophecy's] promises. Everything is in God's control. The COVID-19 pandemic crisis is a wake-up call for each of us to be ready for the second coming of Jesus Christ.”**

—Si Young Kim, president of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division, during a video conversation with the region's church leaders and members in 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

# Seven

Two pastors from Mongolia and four pastors from Taiwan were recently ordained to the gospel ministry. In addition, a pastor from Korea serving as a missionary in Mongolia was also ordained at the request of the Korean Union Conference. Each ordination service had a few people present, but most people participated virtually. The services showed the ministers, their families, and their constituents full of joy and gratitude for the blessing of the Lord. ⬇️



Photo: Taiwan Conference

Focus

# The Art

of

# Bouncing

# Back

Three biblical strategies for cultivating resilience

**B**alls bounce. That's what makes them so fun. But the fun is grounded in science.

A ball is designed to absorb energy upon impact and then transfer that energy in the opposite direction. As the ball hits the ground, it "deforms temporarily and shoots back up. The air in the ball acts like a spring—it gets compressed and expands again."<sup>1</sup>

This phenomenon is called resilience, which can be defined as the capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation caused especially by compressive stress.

Not only do balls bounce upon impact—people do as well. At least they should, because if they don't cultivate the ability to bounce back from the impact of adverse experiences, they will break.

No matter who you are or where you live in the world, one thing is certain: right now you either just came through a difficult experience, you are in the midst of a difficult experience, or you are about to enter into yet another difficult experience.

Life can be difficult.

Jesus plainly stated, "In this world you will have trouble" (John 16:33, NIV).

Not "you *may* have trouble," but rather "you *will* have trouble."

Peter said, "Do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you" (1 Peter 4:12, NKJV).

It is an absolute certainty of life that we will face troubles and trials, perplexities and problems. The question is never "Will my life be impacted by difficulties?" but rather "How can I be so resilient that I will bounce back from the difficulties



## The weakest form of gospel witness is an orator on a stage, and it is easy to fake.

that will inevitably come my way?” We need to cultivate the ability to absorb the energy of life’s blows and bounce back without being crushed.

But how?

Here are three biblical strategies for cultivating resilience in a world that often hits us with trouble:

### 1. CENTER YOUR DEPENDENCE IN CHRIST

Certainly you have noticed that Christianity has become the domain of religious celebrities. But when we cultivate starstruck dependence on “rock star” megachurch pastors or charismatic evangelists, we are vulnerable to devastation if and when they fall. We may even turn away from Jesus because of our disappointment with someone who claimed to speak for Him: a pastor or an elder, a father or a mother, a friend in whom we placed a high level of confidence. The recent scandal regarding Ravi Zacharias presents to us a case study in the folly of trusting in any human being, no matter how apparently righteous, talented, intelligent, or charismatic.

The weakest form of gospel witness is an orator on a stage, and it is easy to fake. Literally anybody with a good brain-mouth connection can pull it off, no matter what their motive happens to be. By contrast, the strongest gospel witness is a loving family and a loving local church, in which there is transparency, accountability, and a constant redemptive process of truth-telling and grace. When the primary witness to the gospel is a loving community of truth-telling, grace-giving people, if the man with the mic turns out to be a predator or a shyster, nobody’s faith need be devastated, because it was never about the person on the stage anyway.

The follower of Jesus is called upon to cultivate the habit of “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:2, NKJV). If we lock our eyes upon Jesus, we will find ourselves bouncing back with resilience from the disappointment we experience when someone we look up to fails us. That brings us to the second strategy for cultivating resilience.

### 2. REMAIN IN COMMUNITY

Our world is designed to divide people while creating an illusion of connection. Perhaps the most colossal misnomer of our time is the use of the word “friends” to describe those who follow us on social media. As followers of Jesus, we are called upon to live our lives in genuine “fellowship” with one another in order to cross-pollinate our knowledge of Jesus and the “joy” we derive from “fellowship” with Him (1 John 1:1-4).

As tempting as it may be simply to stay home and watch online sermons and call that your “church,” it is vital to our spiritual health to be an active member of a local church body. People need people. When the troubles of life pounce upon us, our likelihood of bouncing back with resilience will be significantly increased when we are surrounded by people who love us.

### 3. LIVE TO GIVE

The best remedy for bouncing back from any difficulty is to channel the negative energy of our pain into the positive pursuit of serving others. When tragedy strikes, we can move in one of two directions: inward or outward. The energy generated by any adverse event has to go somewhere. If I channel my energy toward myself by obsessing over my problems and pains, they will tend to be magnified and take up more and more emotional space inside of me. But if I channel my energy into serving the needs of others, I will tend to lose sight of my troubles in the joy that is always the byproduct of giving. “Give,” Jesus admonished, “and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back” (Luke 6:38, NLT).<sup>2</sup>

As followers of Jesus, we are called upon to bear the fruit of “self-control” (Gal. 5:23; 2 Peter 1:6), to cultivate the habit of telling ourselves no. But self-control isn’t a negative discipline. It is, in fact, a positive discipline, because saying no to myself allows me to say yes to the needs of others. John Wesley’s old financial admonition is still brilliant: “Earn all you can, save all you can, give all you can.” The Christian is, by definition, a channel of benevolence to the world. Cultivating the habit of self-control is the precursor to benevolence. We say no to our indulgent wants, so we can say yes to other people’s legitimate needs. Givers are resilient because their focus is outward rather than inward. They bounce back from the setbacks of life by helping others overcome their setbacks.

Balls bounce.

Do you? ☺

<sup>1</sup> Sabine De Brabandere, “Energetic 2-Ball Bounces,” *Scientific American*, April 13, 2017, online at <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/energetic-2-ball-bounces/>.

<sup>2</sup> Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

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Focus

# Resilience Is More Than Coping

A

few years ago my wife and I were privileged to visit the sequoia forests in northern California. We stood in awe among those massive trees. Those trees had lived through

centuries of time, weather, and ecological circumstances. Forest fires, droughts, and pestilences have not stymied their growth. Those trees coped with the times that they had witnessed. They not only coped; they thrived resiliently and grew.

The past two years have been a laboratory in the alchemy of human resilience. Violence, social unrest, political upheaval, and cultural shifts born of the pandemic have exacted a multifaceted toll upon the world. Each nation, kindred, tongue, and people has been impacted by the scourge of COVID-19 and the ensuing quarantine. The immediacy of worldwide news coverage displays, in contrast, the depths of depravity among some citizens and leaders against the valor of first responders and people of conscience. We have coped and survived, and in many cases we have thrived.

## **MORE THAN SURVIVING**

How we respond under duress as individuals, communities, and cultures gives a glimpse into the difference between coping and resilience. Coping as a stand-alone element is insufficient because merely coping can lead to the hopeless and mindless mining of a rut. Coping is often the reflexive recognition of an injury that may be moral, emotional, or physical. Repression is often the first medication to numb the pain. Coping, therefore, is the management of reactions that rarely ameliorate the wound or wounding circumstance.

Stress is everywhere. Good stress enhances our lived experience. Distress challenges us or is caused by the events and circumstances that we face. Our hopes, dreams, aspirations, and capabilities do not change. They may become frustrated and delayed, but their existence persists. A flat basketball is still a basketball, even if it won't bounce. A stopped clock is still right twice every day.

Resilience, on the other hand, is resolve-



deployed and resolution-employed. Resilience is vision-pursued and the construction of new realities from the ashes of our phoenix-like experiences. Resilience is finding a way to fix the flat basketball in order to dribble and play again.

“Resilience is the psychological quality that allows some people to be knocked down by the adversities of life and come back at least as strong as before.”<sup>1</sup> While resilience does include coping, it is only one of the ingredients.

Resilience is more than surviving. It is the art of bouncing forward. Most people are born with the innate capacity to fall, fail, regroup, and master new skills. That is how we learn to walk, talk, play, sing, and socialize. Failing forward is the end result of a resilient personality.

#### A BIBLICAL CASE STUDY

The biblical character David is a good example of a person who learned how to be resilient. A reflective assessment of King David shows that he experienced marginalization, he was charismatic and could be manipulative, he was not risk-averse, he was familiar with violence, and he struggled with adultery. Yet he maintained a heightened sense of justice and righteousness.

David grew up in a household in which he was the youngest and least among his siblings. Relegated to the dirty chore of shepherding, he spent a lot of time in isolation.

As his story unfolds, life added adventure, adversity, risk, and danger to his isolation. The sheep that he was caring for and guarding were attacked. No doubt he had been trained to watch out and guard against predators. Something within him—courage—drove him to confront and conquer the threats.

Though David was the youngest and least among his siblings, he had stability. He was gifted with opti-

mism. After Goliath he went back to the field of battle again and again.

The first step in the construction of a resilient character is a healthy self-image seasoned with faith, spirituality, and optimism. That is developed by early immersion in a crucible of secure identity formation.

Failure, adversity, and unrelenting stress can chip away at a person’s sense of self. Implicit in the self-care regimen is an embrace of the Sabbath and sanctuary principles.

Sabbath is the divine elixir for restoration of the *imago Dei*, the “image of God.” God reminds us weekly that everything required for humanity to survive was provided before we were created.

The sanctuary reminds of God’s desire and intent to dwell, not just among us, but within us. David embodied the prophetic exhortation that “we have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us.”<sup>2</sup>

David’s confidence in challenging Goliath was the fruit of his post-traumatic growth. In the storytelling he extolled the presence of God and faith in divine deliverance more than his own prowess.

The story does not tell us about David’s emotions after the victory celebrations had ended. Dave Grossman, in his seminal book *On Killing*, tells us that the backlash of the parasympathetic system occurs as soon as the danger and excitement is over, and it takes the form of an incredible weariness and sleepiness on the part of the soldier.<sup>3</sup>

Rest is an essential ingredient to resilience. It is in rest, reflecting, dreaming, telling, and retelling the crisis story that homeostasis and balance are achieved. Such calming techniques as music, meditating, exercising, and reading help the brain to adapt to stressors. Psychological parlance calls this neuroplasticity. It is defined simply

## The sanctuary reminds of God’s desire and intent to dwell, not just among us, but within us.

as “your brain’s ability to grow, adapt, and change in response to experiences.”<sup>4</sup>

In the trenches of warfare, subterfuge, and sabotage, David demonstrated grit. His psalms and songs give evidence of his fatigue, fallibility, and faith. As we, the believers in a loving God, who are living in societies marred by sin, live on, we would do well to learn, employ, and teach others the science of resilience.

Optimism can be learned. We must learn and pair it with passion and perseverance as we prepare for the future and final crisis. The preparation of our characters to reflect Christ is of far greater value than the material that we may store for times of trouble.

The key theme in the quest for resilience is not perfection or bravado. It really is the intent to fail forward and to bounce back, better. ☺

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/resilience>, Mar. 13, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2009), p. 94.

<sup>4</sup> J. Suttie, “Building Resilience,” *Greater Good*, Apr. 16, 2013, [greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/building\\_resilience](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/building_resilience).

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A young girl with dark hair, smiling broadly, looking out from a window. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a similar setting.

Focus

# Flourishing Amid Adversity

Helping children grow resilient

**H**ave you noticed how some people undergoing great trauma or difficulties can get up again while others remain defeated and broken after similar experiences? The difference between these people is their resilience. Some of the best examples of resilient people in the Bible are Joseph, Job, Ruth, and Paul.

Resilience is the ability to bend and not break when under pressure. Although this concept originally comes from the study of engineering, what it means for human beings is the capacity to deal with, overcome, learn from, transform, or even flourish, when faced with the inevitable adversities of life.<sup>1</sup>

These difficulties do not need to be circumstances of catastrophic proportions, such as a global pandemic. For children, adversity can look like not having anyone to play with during recess, or the loss of a pet, etc. What is experienced as a difficulty by one may not be a challenge for another.

## WE LEARN TO BEND

Resilience is not a static trait that one is born with. Although personality and temperament play a part in becoming resilient, it is a dynamic process. But it can be learned, improved, even developed. Think of Moses and Jacob. Neither of them was very good in coping with problems in their youth, and yet, God helped them learn to rise above great adversity through their life experiences.

Resilience is not one single attribute, but a constellation of personal resources and strengths that promote well-being, protect us in adverse or risky situations, and help develop a healthy problem-coping style. This concept emerged from the branch of positive psychology that focuses on strengthening positive resources and processes to enter a virtuous cycle of healthy development. Thus, resilience can be developed by making these underlying personal

resources stronger and by making good use of them.

As parents, teachers, and role models in our churches and communities, there is plenty we can do to improve our children's ability to bend and bounce back. Most experts in this field indicate that the influence of significant adults (either within or outside the family) is the most important factor in determining how resilient a child will be. It is closely related to the experience of respect and good relations within the family or with other significant adults. Knowingly or inadvertently, adults model resilience to children, either by teaching them or by example.

One does not need to have a complete package of strengths to be resilient, but there are ways we can grow in several areas. Try to invest your efforts in strengthening or developing some of the factors in each of the following:

## → 1. START WITH YOURSELF

When experiencing oxygen loss while flying, adults are instructed to put on their oxygen masks before their kids. The same is true of resilience. It is important to work first on your own abilities in order to help your child. What resilient characteristics can you count within yourself and which of them need work? Even better, try identifying which ones you can learn along with your child, which may serve to strengthen your relationship. Some characteristics of ideal resilient mentors are flexibility, the ability to cope with and resolve problems, good communication skills, having a good support network, and, of course, having a healthy and close relationship with the child.

## → 2. SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS<sup>2</sup>

Spend quality time with your child by connecting, showing affection, talking, teaching them about emotions, and doing activities that facilitate their development.

Support your child in building relationships with other significant adults. Without intruding, monitor those relationships with other adults to ensure the safety and well-being of your child.

Help your child develop social skills and friendships with peers by encouraging socialization and play (even if it is virtual), teaching the child to support others and to be forgiving.

You can help your child develop empathy by role-modeling positive relationships, talking about other people's feelings, validating and feeling with the child's emotions, and letting them take on other people's tasks.

## → 3. AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

It is important not to shield our children from life's challenges. Instead, teach your child about

problem-solving, reinforce independence, and role-model responsibility. Provide opportunities for free play (it allows children to make mistakes in a safe environment while developing problem-solving skills), encourage the child to make their own decisions, teach them self-care, and let your child come up with new ideas while encouraging creativity.

## → 4. HANDLING EMOTIONS

Being resilient is about managing emotions healthfully and positively. You can promote this behavior by using open-ended questions or encouraging the child to talk about their feelings. It is good to promote the experience of positive emotions (see Prov. 17:22) and acknowledge and validate feelings of distress. This is one practical way of teaching children how to regulate emotions, and helping them accept that difficulties are part of life.

## → 5. OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONAL CHALLENGE

Don't be afraid to let children experience failure, for they must learn to accept changes and challenges while experiencing small doses of "everyday adversity." Teach your child to plan and prepare for all events (especially those that provoke anxiety). Allow the child to deal with difficult situations while guiding them as necessary. ©

<sup>1</sup> E. H. Grotberg, *Resilience for Today: Gaining Strength From Adversity* (Greenwood, S.C.: Praeger Publishers, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> For specific examples about each of these tips at each age stage, follow links to each area of resilience and age group in <https://healthyfamilies.beyondblue.org.au/healthy-homes/building-resilience>. For additional resources and information see <https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience/guide-parents-teachers> (Spanish version: <https://www.apa.org/centrodeapoyo/guia>).

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# Resilient characteristics can be organized in many ways.



## The child has... (External Supports)

- One or more persons in the family they can trust and who love the child unconditionally.
- One or more persons outside the family they can trust without reservation.
- Limits to the child's behavior.
- People who encourage the child's independence.
- Good role models.
- Access to basic services (health, education, social, security).
- A stable family and community.



## The child is... (Internal Strengths)

- A person most people like.
- Generally calm and good-natured.
- Respectful of self and others.
- Responsible for own behavior and accepting of consequences.
- Confident, optimistic, hopeful person.
- Faithful and has a spiritual relationship with God.



## The child can... (Interpersonal/ Problem-solving Skills)

- Generate new ideas and ways to do things.
- Finish what they start.
- Find humor in life.
- Communicate thoughts and feelings.
- Solve problems in different settings.
- Manage their behavior and emotions.
- Reach out for help when needed.

Adapted from E. H. Grotberg, *Resilience for Today: Gaining Strength From Adversity* (Greenwood, S.C.: Praeger Publishers, 2003).

# Growing Together— Not Apart

Resilience in  
marriage

## 47—Enough For a Testimony

How good is God!

**W**e have been married for 47 years! Just to say that is a testimony in itself. It is to me. A testimony to God's goodness and grace. A testimony to our willingness not only to submit to God but secondarily to each other.

One of the main concepts that has kept us together is that failure was never an option for us. Divorce was not an option. With this in mind, whenever we met a hurdle, whenever we hit a wall, the energy was put into how we would get over the challenge.

Our 47 years of marriage were not always a smooth, straight, or untroubled road. But they have been rewarding and growth-producing. I am a better person because of the journey. I sincerely believe that God used our marriage to help rid us of the blighting plague of selfishness that troubles humanity. Now that I can look back, I chuckle at the childish and often selfish thinking that threatened to crash our relationship.

A single example: I remember being shut out of our bedroom many a night because I stayed downstairs too late looking at some interesting television program. I could have taken the position that I was the man in the house and insist the door be opened; or break it down. That would have escalated the situation and made reconciliation more difficult. What I did instead was calmly go to another room to sleep. Later in the night I would try again and find the door unlocked. Furthermore, the next morning I would smile as I told the story of how I was shut out.

With time we both compromised: I recognized that my wife's idea of marriage was that we both go to bed together each night except when it could not be helped. She on the other hand began to understand that my not coming to bed when she was ready to sleep was not an indication of lack of love. By compromising on the issue, we found that it ceased to be a source of disagreement. As Amos states: agreement is the basis of walking together (Amos 3:3). ©

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**Hamilton Williams** lives with his wife, Julie, in **Phoenix, Arizona**, where he pastors the Beacon Light Seventh-day Adventist Church.

## Our Decade Of Trust

God helps us help each other.

**T**hirteen years ago we both were going through difficulties. As fate—or faith—would have it, we crossed paths and developed a friendship that grew into our love story. We later learned that both of us were earnestly praying to God for a breakthrough in our struggles. Since that time God has used us to help each other navigate through many difficulties we have faced along the way.

During our time together we have proven God's faithfulness in diverse ways. We recall the time we were struggling to cope with the psychological and financial impact of having to experience two surgeries in one year. We made a decision to honor God and prove His faithfulness by returning our faithful tithe and offering. At the end of one specific month we found ourselves not having enough to make it to the next paycheck. We prayed and encouraged each other, but still, being parents with a newborn baby, we were very worried.

We decided to get the essential baby items with the little we had, and continued to pray for a breakthrough. We knew that





our only source of income was to come on payday, and as such we waited on God. A few days into this grueling ordeal, we decided to do housecleaning on the weekend. While going through one of the top compartments of our dresser, an envelope was discovered. In it we were so shocked to find an amount of money carefully stored away. We immediately turned to God to give Him thanks, for it was indeed a miracle! We made it to the next month without having to ask anyone for assistance because our God provided in the most amazing way. We later found out that this was part of our savings that we had somehow lost track of, but God was using this to remind us to always be faithful.

From this experience we have learned to trust God even when we have nothing and cannot see the light at the end of the tunnel. We have faced many challenging situations during our years of marriage, but we have proved time and again that if we remain faithful to God, everything else falls into its rightful place. ©

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**Marvin Samaroo** is an elder of the Family Fest Fellowship Seventh-day Adventist Church, **East Coast Demerara, Guyana**, where he and his wife, Catherine, are members.

## Everything Together

### 20 years of joy and pain

**M**y husband and I have been for one another a listening ear, fighting each other's battles, laughing together, and walking alongside each other for more than 20 years. Our desire to spend the rest of our lives together pursuing our dreams motivated us to marry very young and leave our home country.

In our journey through different countries, our faith, love, and fidelity were tested to their limits. Working in agriculture, cleaning cemeteries and homes, being thrown out of a kibbutz while living in Israel for refusing to work with cigarettes and alcohol, was just a preparation for what was yet to come.

When we found out that Danielle was pregnant, it was time to move on and leave Israel. We were so excited to finally go to England, where my husband could immerse himself in his graduate studies in theology. Despite financial struggles, things seemed to be working out well for us, when our life was suddenly torn apart as we held our stillborn baby girl in our arms.

The pain was unbearable. In my urge to prove that I was coping well with grief, I denied my emotions and blamed myself for my lack of faith. The outcome of such a disruptive

experience caused amnesia, which later led to severe depression and suicide attempts.

My husband kept trying to juggle work, study, and caring for my safety. A friend offered what he thought to be a reasonable bit of advice: "Why don't you send Dane back to her parents?"

What a tempting solution! In the midst of our sadness and confusion my husband decided to be faithful to his commitment and care for me even when I was incapable of coping as his wife. With patience, love, professional care, and divine intervention, we worked through that experience and saw a bright future ahead of us.

God blessed us with three handsome and healthy boys. But the trials came again: Danielle, a fit, active, homeschooling mom, was reduced to a wheelchair by Lyme disease which obliged Theo to be caregiver and advocate. In spite of these challenges we kept looking back to significant milestones, and trusted that the Lord would fight again on our behalf.


We fight our battles every day with love, faith, and trust, looking forward to the day of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1), where such painful experiences will be no more. ©

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**Danielle and Theo Rios** currently live and study at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the **Philippines**, and are proud parents of three boys: William, Raphael, and Benjamin.

# Pressing Toward the Mark

Never giving up



**T**he year was 1523, and the Protestant Reformation was well underway. Martin Luther, recognizing the importance of people having the Scriptures in their native tongue, published a German translation of the New Testament in 1522, and would publish the entire Bible in 1534.

William Tyndale, an English scholar proficient in multiple languages, longed to do the same for English speakers.<sup>1</sup> More than a century earlier, in 1382, John Wycliffe translated the Bible into Middle English from the Latin Vulgate. The translation made such an impact that in 1408 a law passed, requiring permission from church authorities to translate, or even read, the Bible in English.

But by the early sixteenth century, Middle English was difficult for the common person to understand. Furthermore, Tyndale desired to translate from the original Hebrew and Greek. Because of the 1408 law, however, he was required to receive permission from an ecclesiastical authority. Tyndale

approached Cuthbert Tunstall, the bishop of London, for support. Arriving at the bishop's palace in July 1523, he was disappointed. Permission was denied.

## “FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL EDIFYING”

Driven by the desire to provide English speakers with a Bible they could read, Tyndale pressed on. Going to Germany in the spring of 1524, he met William Roye, a recent graduate of Wittenberg University and a competent linguist who supported Tyndale's vision. Using a newly available Greek New Testament<sup>2</sup> as their primary source, the two worked tirelessly, producing the first translation of the New Testament into common English. They went to Cologne and presented the manuscript to Peter Quentel, a renowned German printer, for publication.

In the prologue to the first printed English New Testament, William Tyndale explained (using the spelling of the time): “I have here translated (brethern and sisters moost dere and tenderly beloved in Christ) the newe Testament for youre spirituall edyfyng, consolacion, and solas.”<sup>3</sup>

Word of the new translation quickly spread, and authorities arrested Quentel. Miraculously, Tyndale and Roye rescued their New Testament manuscript and fled to Worms, a city sympathetic to the Reformation. There, numerous copies of Tyndale's New Testament were published. This edition was much smaller than what had been produced in Cologne, making it easier for merchants to hide copies of the precious book in goods they shipped to England.

## BOOK BURNINGS

The common people were delighted, but church officials



were furious! Cardinal Wolsey, the powerful overseer of the Catholic Church in England, gathered all of the bishops together, declaring “untrue translations” should be burned and translators punished. Stacks of Tyndale’s New Testament were confiscated and burned near St. Paul’s Cathedral by Bishop Tunstall.

But that didn’t stop William Tyndale, nor did it stop the spread of God’s Word, fueled on by the very ones trying to arrest it!

Determined to wipe out all traces of this “troublesome book,” Tunstall traveled to the city of Antwerp, where Tyndale’s Bible was readily available. Paying a large sum of money to obtain all known copies, Tunstall returned to London for another book burning. But unbeknownst to him, his money paid Tyndale’s debts and financed the revision of the 1526 New Testament! When the 1534 revised translations began showing up all over England, Tunstall was shocked, not realizing he had financed the project!

## BETRAYED

William Tyndale persevered, not only providing a readable English translation of the New Testament, but also translating much of the Old Testament, even though he knew it could cost him his life.

While in Antwerp, Tyndale was befriended by Henry Phillips, an Englishman hired to betray him. The faithful Bible translator was thrust into a damp, dark prison, where he suffered for one year and 135 days.<sup>4</sup> In August 1536 he was found guilty of heresy and sentenced to death. On October 6, 1536, this faithful Christian was tied to the stake. He was first strangled to death; then his body was burned. His last words were “Lord! Open the King of England’s eyes.”

Just four years later that prayer

was answered, when, at the king’s request, four English Bible translations were made available to the people, all based on Tyndale’s work.

What makes one persevere with such determination? To push ahead despite obstacles, threatenings, betrayal, and even death?

## PERSEVERANCE

We see this type of perseverance in the lives of God’s faithful ones, recorded in the very Scriptures that Tyndale, Luther, and others were so determined to place in the hands of the people.

Consider the life of Paul, persecutor turned gospel promoter, determined to know “anything . . . except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2). Paul’s perseverance to follow his God-given mission is outlined vividly in 2 Corinthians 11:24-28:

“Five times I received from the Jews forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with a rod. Once I received a stoning. Three times I suffered shipwreck. A night and a day I spent adrift in the open sea. I have been on journeys many times, in dangers from rivers, in dangers from robbers, in dangers from my own countrymen, in dangers from Gentiles, in dangers in the city, in dangers in the wilderness, in dangers at sea, in dangers from false brothers, in hard work and toil, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, many times without food, in cold and without enough clothing. Apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxious concern for all the churches” (NET).<sup>5</sup>

What was Paul’s motivation to “press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:14)? Near the end of his life he wrote: “For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep

what I have committed to Him until that Day” (2 Tim. 1:12).

Paul was sure of his calling, sure of his purpose, and sure of His Savior. And with this assurance he was able to persevere.

Down the ages we see God’s people persevering. Hebrews 11 lists many of these faithful witnesses, and chapter 12 encourages us to carry forward the torch.

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:1-3, KJV).

Martin Luther, William Tyndale, and many others sacrificed so that millions of people could read God’s Word in their own languages and be encouraged to persevere until the end. Let’s take the time to read and treasure these precious Scriptures, keeping our eyes upon Jesus and persevering until the end. ©

<sup>1</sup> Much of the historical information for this article comes from Ray L. Huntington and W. Jeffrey Marsh, “Revisiting William Tyndale, Father of the English Bible,” *Religious Educator* 12, no. 2 (2011): 13-33, [https://rsc.byu.edu/vol-12-no-2-2011/revisiting-william-tyndale-father-english-bible#\\_edn23](https://rsc.byu.edu/vol-12-no-2-2011/revisiting-william-tyndale-father-english-bible#_edn23).

<sup>2</sup> The *Textus Receptus* (1516), a Greek New Testament based on original manuscripts, compiled by Desiderius Erasmus, a Dutch philosopher and Christian scholar.

<sup>3</sup> William Tyndale, prologue to the 1525 Cologne New Testament, in *The First Printed English New Testament*, ed. Edward Arber (London: Bloomsbury, 1871), p. 1, cited in Huntington and Marsh.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Demaus, *William Tyndale: A Biography; Being a Contribution to the Early History of the English Bible*, popular edition, rev. Richard Lovett (London: Religious Tract Society, 1904), p. 483, cited in Huntington and Marsh.

<sup>5</sup> Scripture quotations credited to NET are from the *New English Translation Bible*, copyright © 1996-2021 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. All rights reserved.

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## Millennial Voices

# Embracing Change With Courage



**What unknown terrain have you faced before? What stories remind you of God's guidance and faithfulness?**

I stepped off the plane and felt a wall of heat hitting me. Airport signage in an unfamiliar, curling script pointed the way through security, and people around me chatted in a language I couldn't understand. In the airport lobby a smiling group of people waved enthusiastically to welcome me. A few minutes later I found myself riding on the back of a motorcycle for the first time, wide-eyed at all the unfamiliar scenes flashing past as my driver whisked me through the traffic to my new home.

This was the beginning of my student missionary experience. I was excited; I knew this was where God wanted me to be. But I was also terrified, knowing that there were many more "firsts" and changes to come. The next 18 months did indeed stretch me as I adapted to a new life. Yet that process ultimately brought me joy and enabled me to experience God in new ways.

Saying yes to God often requires some kind of change. It may be as dramatic as moving abroad, or it may be something much closer to home. But no matter the potential for good, change is still challenging. I find courage for navigating change in several ways.

I look back on my previous experiences, such as my time as a student missionary. Ellen White writes: "As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in

Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."<sup>1</sup> Although she was writing specifically about the Advent move-

ment, I believe the principle can apply to our personal lives too. What unknown terrain have you faced before? What stories remind you of God's guidance and faithfulness? By remembering my own history, I can see that embracing new experiences with God has led to beautiful growth and opportunities, as well as making me more resilient. Thus, my confidence for the next step grows.

Besides looking back, I also find strength by focusing on what doesn't change. For example, scattered throughout my journals, or stuck to my walls, are certain Bible verses:

"I trust in your unfailing love" (Ps. 13:5).<sup>2</sup>

"Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life" (Ps. 23:6).

"Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand" (Isa. 41:10).

God's unfailing love and help is a firm foundation I can rest on, no matter what else is shifting in my world. By actively remembering His promises, I experience more peace in times of transition.

If God is inviting you into something new, I encourage you not to fear. Remember your history with God. Remember His promises. And then embrace the change. ©

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> All Scripture quotations are from the *Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

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**Lynette Allcock**, a graduate of Southern Adventist University, lives in **Watford, United Kingdom**.



Earley Simon

- ← Matthieu Koulété now serves as secretary of the Benin Mission in Cotonou, Benin.
- ↓ Each Sabbath, using crutches, Valerie walked six hours to church and back. She led many to Jesus.



Gary Krause

Faith In Action



# Pioneering the Gospel

**W**hen French missionary Henri Kempf went to Upper Volta in 1971, there wasn't even one Seventh-day Adventist in the entire country. This was nothing new for him. A few years earlier he and his family had started Adventist work in the bordering country of Togo.

"To open a new mission is a very exciting experience," Pastor Kempf said, "but a hard task!"

Upper Volta, now known as Burkina Faso, proved a hard task indeed. Twenty-four years later, when Global Mission was established, there were only 28 Adventist church members and two companies.

Today there are 12 established churches and 65 companies, with five ordained pastors and 2,358 members. There are also 10 Adventist schools and a dental clinic. The church isn't rich, but it's alive and growing. How did this happen? The answer is simple: The Holy Spirit used people who were willing to say, "I will go!"

### WILLING HEARTS

One of those people was Matthieu Koulété, a young Adventist from Togo whom I met 25 years ago. Despite coming from an animist family with a father who practiced voodoo, Matthieu had fully committed his life to Jesus. Nothing could hide his joy as he introduced me to some of the new groups of believers he had started.

Matthieu Koulété and his family served 10 years in Burkina Faso. They started 12 new Adventist groups, and several are now large churches. In each place Matthieu studied the culture of the people, trying to find links he could use to approach them with the Bible.

In one of those new groups a young boy decided to commit his life to Jesus. As he grew up, that boy led his family to become Adventists.

He then decided to become a pastor and went to Cosendai Adventist University in Cameroon for pastoral training. Today he serves as a pastor in Burkina Faso, working from the foundation built by Pastors Kempf and Koulété before him.

Matthieu planted a church in Koudougou. Among these new believers was Valérie, who couldn't walk without crutches. Yet each Sabbath she walked three hours to church and three hours home again—all under a blistering African sun. She led many others to Jesus.

Matthieu Koulété, who pioneered the gospel in Burkina Faso, now serves as secretary of the Benin Mission in Cotonou, Benin. ©

\* Henri Kempf, "In the Homeland of the Voodoo Cult," *Missions Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (1967): 4, 8.

**Gary Krause** is director of the Office of Adventist Mission at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. To watch an interview with Matthieu Koulété, visit <https://m360.tv/i23041>.



# Living Without an Intercessor

Ellen White makes a number of significant theological statements concerning the cessation of Christ's mediation on behalf of sinners in the heavenly temple shortly before His return in glory.<sup>1</sup> Some interpret them to mean that believers will live during the time of trouble without access to the all-sufficient grace of Christ.

This interpretation creates fear and even anxiety by destroying the certainty of salvation. The gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus is almost set aside, and instead the emphasis is placed on human achievements. A detailed study of Ellen White's statements<sup>2</sup> indicates that during the time of trouble God's people will be relying entirely on the atoning power of the cross of Jesus.

## CLARIFYING THE ISSUES

Perhaps we should begin by stating what Ellen White does not say about what will happen after Christ finishes His mediation in heaven. First, she does not state anywhere in her writings that God's people will no longer battle against their sinful natures. On the contrary, she states, "We cannot say, 'I am sinless,' till this vile body is changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body."<sup>3</sup>

Second, she does not say that when Christ ends His work in heaven, the mantle of His imputed righteousness is removed from the believer. Third, she does not state that at that moment Christ and the Holy Spirit will abandon God's people or that we will have to survive on our own. Rather, she writes, "I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble; and every soul that was decided on the truth and was pure in heart was to be covered with the covering of the Almighty."<sup>4</sup>



As Christ concludes His heavenly sanctuary work, He provides “full and complete” “pardon and justification” to His faithful followers.<sup>5</sup> During the time of trouble God’s people will still be dependent on Christ’s atoning work.

### EXPERIENCE OF GOD’S PEOPLE

The end of Christ’s intercessory role in the heavenly temple means that the Spirit will be withdrawn from the wicked, they will be abandoned into the hands of Satan, the seven last plagues will be falling, and Satan will attempt to exterminate God’s people.<sup>6</sup>

At that time God’s remnant people will go through a period of anguish, fearing that they will be exterminated, feeling that God has abandoned them, and concerned about their spiritual unworthiness.<sup>7</sup> God uses their experience to refine them. “It is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.”<sup>8</sup>

God’s people pray day and night for deliverance. Satan will insinuate to them that their case is hopeless because of their many sins. They will look at themselves and “as they review their past, their hopes sink; for in their whole lives they can see little good. They are fully conscious of their weakness and unworthiness.”<sup>9</sup> They choose, however, to rely on the atoning work of Christ for them.

Like Jacob, when wrestling with the Angel, they will have to “depend solely upon the merits of the atonement. We can do nothing of ourselves. In all our helpless unworthiness we must trust in the merits of the crucified and risen Saviour. None will ever perish while they do this.”<sup>10</sup>

Notice carefully: while those “who will be found faithful” “would rather die than perform a wrong act,”<sup>11</sup> it is not their perfection of character that gives them assurance of salvation and makes them victorious. This is accomplished only by Christ’s sacrificial death for them—the eternal gospel.

They will find refuge in the Lamb that was slain for them (cf. Rev. 14:1). The sense of unworthiness remains with them up to the time of the Second Coming. When they see Jesus coming they exclaim: “Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?” and Jesus answers back, “My grace is sufficient for you.”<sup>12</sup> Grace is still available for God’s people during the time of trouble, meaning that Christ’s atoning work for them is still effective.

### PREPARATION FOR THE TIME OF TROUBLE

Ellen White encourages us to learn to live now in the way we will have to live during the time of trouble. In this connection, she speaks about Christian perfection

**“Our salvation is not our own doing but the result of the sacrifice of Christ.”**

as the work of “putting away of sin.”<sup>13</sup> Ellen White adds that “this work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14.”<sup>14</sup>

In order to achieve this purpose, the messages are to be accepted, put into practice, and shared with others. These messages are designed by God to prepare us and the world for the second coming of Christ.<sup>15</sup> More specifically, she states that we put sin away by being justified by faith in Christ and through obedience to God’s commandments (Rev. 14:12).<sup>16</sup>

Christian perfection consists in the daily submission of our will to God’s will while constantly relying on Christ’s forgiving grace (1 John 2:1, 2). The purpose of Christian perfection is not to enable us to be victorious in the absence of Christ’s mediation, but to enable us to be more effective in our service to others. Christian perfection seeks, through the power of the Spirit, to transform us into the likeness of Jesus, enabling us to be God’s effective servants on behalf of others. Our salvation is not our own doing but the result of the sacrifice of Christ. ©

<sup>1</sup> E.g., Ellen G. White, “Dear Brethren and Sisters,” *Present Truth*, September 1849, par. 7; *Early Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1882, 1945), p. 280; *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 425; *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1890, 1908), p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> See Angel Manuel Rodríguez, *Living Without an Intercessor in the Writings of Ellen G. White*, Biblical Research Institute Releases 17 (Silver Spring, Md.: Biblical Research Institute, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, in *Signs of the Times*, Mar. 23, 1888 (see also Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958, 1980], book 3, p. 355).

<sup>4</sup> E. G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 43.

<sup>5</sup> E. G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 484.

<sup>6</sup> E. G. White, *Early Writings*, pp. 279, 280.

<sup>7</sup> E. G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 616-619.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 621.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 618, 619.

<sup>10</sup> E. G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 203.

<sup>11</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, p. 53.

<sup>12</sup> See E. G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 641.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 425.


<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 435.

<sup>16</sup> Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases* (Silver Spring, Md.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1981-1993), vol. 12, p. 193.

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**Ángel Manuel Rodríguez** is a Seventh-day Adventist theologian and was the director of the Biblical Research Institute before his retirement.

A woman with her hair in braids is sitting on a light-colored sofa, looking out a window. She is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and light-colored pants. The room is dimly lit, with light coming from the window behind her. The window shows a view of a building with a balcony.

Devotional

# Lonely or Alone?

Learning to hang on to the God who loves us

**23** long days. *I'm staying at home. No signs of COVID-19, yet there are signs of loneliness.* That's what many have been experiencing during this pandemic. What should we hold on to? What should we disregard under these circumstances?

## APRIL 2020

*Several weeks have passed since my social life has been turned upside down. Lockdown, restrictions, home office, and isolation have marked these past weeks. I go out only once a week to shop for groceries. Yet even that is quickly taken care of without really meeting people. Most people won't even look at me while shopping, and as useful as video calls may be, they can never replace eye contact or the feeling*

*of physical touch. Deeper questions rise to the surface: Who are the people most dear to me? What do I hold on to in life? Why am I alone? What awaits me tomorrow? Where will I find the strength to meet the new day? What shall I do with myself the whole time?*

I jotted these lines into my prayer journal. As a young adult I'm emotionally affected by COVID-19. Instead of ignoring emotions I try to take a closer look. *How is it going? Not too well.* I miss hanging out with friends and talking to colleagues.

The Bible actually states that it's not good for humanity to be alone (Gen. 2:18), and once we're alone we realize just how true that is. We were made to be in relationships. We need one another. And in such a crisis our need surfaces.

## LONG AGO

I remember an old Bible story. He was a successful and very influential man. He wasn't only rich but also God-fearing, blameless, and upright. A man of honor. Suddenly, though, the tables were turned: his livestock was stolen or destroyed by natural disasters, and all his children died. Within days he lost everything he had loved. As if that wasn't enough, he fell ill with a painful disease. This was too much for his wife. She told her husband to curse God and die.

How was Job dealing with these hardships? "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth" (Job 19:25). Where did his confidence come from? What gave him the strength





to stay faithful and live his faith under these circumstances?

Job is a great role model. He knew how to deal with suffering. “You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful” (James 5:11).

### **PERSEVERANCE**

When there is no easy solution, we need patience. Job had to be patient to experience the end of his story. His faith in God gave him the strength to endure. He was hoping against hope that his story would turn out well, for he knew whom he believed in. He knew God to be merciful and compassionate.

### **WHO IS GOD REALLY?**

Job didn’t take his riches for granted. He considered them a blessing from above: “The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away” (Job 1:21).

Do we thank God for our income, possessions, friends or family? Some come to God only when problems arise. Job’s faith in God began when everything was fine; he was already close to God and lived a righteous life. His suffering strengthened his relationship with God, for in the end he proclaimed: “I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear. But now my eye sees You” (Job 42:5). God revealed Himself anew to Job through this experience.

### **NOT FROM WITHIN BUT FROM GOD**

Left with nothing, Job experienced God’s power. Like him, as we cannot find strength within us, we can experience God’s supernatural power. In 2 Corinthians 12:9 we are told, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Our suffering and problems are God’s opportunities to fill us with His grace. As we accept and claim God’s power, our hearts get stronger. God can’t get sick or grow weary. He is the same as He was in Job’s times.

### **WRAP-UP**

This pandemic has challenged many relationships, but Job teaches me that it’s also a great opportunity to deepen my relationship with God because I need Him. God understands loneliness. “What a wonderful thought it is that Jesus knows all about the pains and griefs we bear. In all our afflictions He was afflicted. . . . Jesus is touched with the feeling of our infirmity.”

I find comfort in the fact that Jesus spent time alone to speak to His heavenly father. Jesus sought

## **My lonely moments teach me to feel more deeply how needy I am.**

solitude to be able to deal with His own suffering. This time of solitude strengthened and enabled Him to serve others. Solitude is a condition that differs from feeling lonely. Loneliness focuses on what is missing, whereas solitude serves as a frame to do things by oneself. My experience is that loneliness fades when I accept being alone. It’s a critical step toward regaining control over my circumstances.

I’ve learned and still am learning that my lonely moments teach me more deeply how needy I am. However, God will supply all my needs according to His riches in glory (cf. Phil. 4:19). The year 2020 taught me also that it’s time to set community-friendly goals, such as creating new bonds, choosing “staying in touch” over isolation, and strengthening relationships. Let’s ask ourselves, “Who needs help? Who needs attention?” It’s more viable to find a way to deal with this crisis than to hope that COVID will miraculously vanish.

There will be a time when we will have unrestricted fellowship with each other. I wish it would be very soon. “Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (Rev. 22:20, 21). ☺

\* Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958, 1980), book 2, p. 237.

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# Keeping the Faith of Jesus

Q

**What does the phrase they “keep . . . the faith of Jesus” mean in Revelation 14:12?**

A

This biblical verse, together with verse 13, closes the three angels’ messages and contrasts those who submitted to the agenda of the dragon and his allies (verses 9, 11) with God’s remnant people who are loyal to Christ. Concerning the phrase “the faith of Jesus,” the original Greek text is ambiguous and lends itself to different translations.

## 1. DIFFERENT POSSIBILITIES

It could be argued that in the phrase under discussion the noun “faith” refers to the teachings of Jesus. Revelation 2:13 seems to support this reading—the church in Pergamum “did not deny My [faith/teachings].” John would then be saying that God’s people are characterized by following the teachings of Jesus. The second possibility is to take “faith” as meaning “faithfulness” and to render the phrase as “the faithfulness of Jesus,” possibly meaning that Jesus’ faithfulness to God inspires believers to be also faithful. The third possibility is to understand “faith/faithfulness” as designating the faith of the believers and translate it as they “keep/remain faithful to Jesus,” which could mean both being loyal to His teachings or to be as faithful to God as was Jesus. This suggestion is not significantly different from the other two. The fourth possibility is to translate the phrase as “they keep their faith in Jesus.” In this case faith in Jesus would be pointing to their faith in Jesus as Savior. This is supported by the fact that in Revelation God’s people were cleansed from their sins and redeemed through the blood of Jesus (Rev. 1:5; 5:9; 14:3, 4).

## 2. JOHN’S INTENTION

The ambiguity of the Greek phrase makes it difficult to identify John’s intention. In cases like this the tendency of some interpreters is to suggest that John may have had in mind all four possible meanings. I will not necessarily argue against that view, but I would like to point to what I think is John’s main point—what he is aiming at. His main intention seems to be to emphasize that God’s people placed their faith in Jesus as their Savior and that this faith commitment is unmovable. They decided not to place their faith on the alleged power of the dragon to preserve human life (cf. Rev. 13:15). Relying on Christ for salvation is unquestionably at the heart of the teachings of Jesus. If we ask about the meaning of the phrase “the faithfulness of Jesus,” the most obvious answer would be that it refers to His faithfulness to the saving will of the Father—He was faithful to the point of the cross to save us. It does not matter how we translate the phrase “the faith of Jesus”—they all seem to have in common the idea of Christ’s death as the source of saving faith.

Let me add one more contextual piece of evidence supporting the idea that John is primarily referring to the believer’s saving faith in Christ. In Revelation 14:13 we read about “the dead who die in the Lord.” These are the believers who persevere and who are ready to die for the Lord. Notice that they “die in the Lord.” The phrase “in the Lord” is theologically rich. To be in the Lord means that we found in Him our Savior and that by faith we have been incorporated into His redemptive work and to His people. It appears that it is to this redemptive event that the phrase “the faith of Jesus” is primarily pointing. If I am correct, Revelation 14:12 is describing God’s people as those who keep together, in their personal experience, salvation by faith in Christ’s death and obedience to God’s commandments as their response to such manifestation of divine love: gospel and law. ©

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**Angel M. Rodríguez** served as director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference before his retirement.



## Health & Wellness

# COVID-19 Safety Protocols

## Must we still live restrictively?

*The pandemic has caused much disruption, and we're growing weary and impatient to get back to normal living. We're struggling with how to reintegrate not only work and school but also worship protocols. Do you have advice/guidelines that might help?*

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic has changed, in unprecedented ways—through death, illness, and economic woes—our lives *and* the ways we worship, work, study, and play. We long to get back to in-person meetings and celebrations. We are well into the second year, and although vaccines have decreased infection rate and spread, we face the difficulties of disparities and inequities of ensuring vaccine availability to the global population, as well as regional rollout challenges.

As we together await the time for us to worship and fellowship in personal safety, we need to continue to practice an abundance of caution for the safety of our congregations and the communities we're privileged to serve (in effect, being our brother's and sister's keepers).

All church activities, initiatives, and endeavors should be undertaken within the safety framework of prevailing local, state, and national government directives and regulations, as well as public health recommendations/restrictions in the jurisdictions in which the programs are promoted and implemented. General guidelines are issued by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and country-specific disease control centers.

As circumstances vary, so do the guidelines. It's for these reasons that the Adventist Church hasn't issued global guidelines. We're grateful that our division and union health directors are in close communication with their territories, sharing responsible, regionally sensitive information and guidance. Guidelines such as those listed here will help direct the safety protocols of conducting meetings:

■ **Physical (social) distancing** is still needed, and where possible and when weather permits, outdoor meetings can be a meaningful and safer option.

■ **Mask wearing** has been shown to protect our contacts and even ourselves. The countries that have most effectively kept case numbers down have encouraged the use of masks.

■ **Singing** should be exercised with caution. Wear masks and maintain two-meter/six-foot distancing.

■ **The foot-washing service**, if possible, should be done in the home setting; otherwise, defer until safe if physical distancing cannot be practiced.

■ **Stagger baptism events**, avoiding mass baptisms with large numbers of attendees. Use masks, screen (read temperatures), and, if feasible, ask participants to get tested for COVID-19 before the event. Avoid hugs and embracing.

■ **Temporarily replace fellowship meals** with virtual support-group meetings (phone calls, text messages, Zoom, or other virtual methods) to maintain social connectedness and check on the well-being of church members.

■ **Handwashing/hand sanitizing should be encouraged.** Ensure adequate facilities/supplies are available.

■ **Building/toilet cleanliness** should be carefully maintained.

■ **Stay home if ill.** Don't attend any gatherings if you feel unwell or have a fever or a cough.

You can find additional helpful information, guidance, and links to other reliable resources on the Adventist Health Ministries website at <https://www.healthministries.com/coronavirus/>. Immunization information can be found at <https://www.healthministries.com/covid-19-vaccines-addressing-concerns-offering-counsel/>.

Through this all, we “pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well . . . , even as your soul is getting along well” (3 John 2, NIV). ☺

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# Precious Wentletraps



“May I Tell You a Story?”

BY DICK DUERKSEN

It was Sabbath, a hot day on the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico. We had attended church and eaten peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches Mom had packed for the trip. Not a long trip, just slightly more than an hour north from our home at Bella Vista Hospital on the hill above Mayagüez. Now we were living Mom’s favorite Sabbath afternoon dream. We were hunting for precious wentletrap shells in the tide pools near the fishing village of Isabela.

Mom loved this place. Everything about it was special to her: the long rows of coconut palms bordering the beach; the hidden sandy coves where the sand was often covered with storm-tossed seashells; the tall black cliffs that fought majestically against the ocean. It was a magical place.

Her favorites were the rough-edged rock formations that jugged out into the ever-pounding surf. That’s where we might find precious wentletraps. *Epitonium scalare*, she called them, referring to their Latin name. “Rare, delicate, about the size of a large peanut, crystal

white, exquisite, expensive.”

Mom was a professional shell collector, loving shells like a teacher loves books. Each of her treasures was catalogued boldly according to its Latin name, with the common name typed in lowercase. She kept only the finest specimens.

Her *Epitonium scalare* were kept in a special plastic box close beside her sewing machine. They were her favorites.

\*\*\*

Father had other Sabbath afternoon responsibilities, so Mom gathered me, my brother Jack, and Nurse Jeannie, and drove our old station wagon up the asphalt to Isabela, and down the dusty trail through the coconut plantation to the beach trail.

“Be careful,” she warned us. “The tide is out, and the lava rocks that are exposed are sharper than knives. Keep your tennis shoes on and watch the waves.”

Mom was always warning us about something, but we knew she was right about the rocks and the waves.

The precious wentletraps would be found in the rocky shelves that stuck out

into the water at the base of the cliffs. From a distance these pools looked like calm flat mirrors lying just above the ocean. But when you got there, it was like walking on the surface of the moon! Centuries of ocean waves had worn away the softer rock, leaving a million watery pockets ringed with lava knives.

Wentletraps live in the lava pockets and are usually deep in the water attacking sea anemones, small shells, and anything else that might be edible to a rare, delicate, exquisite mollusk. We had been here before and had come home with only torn feet and a few coconuts. Today, we hoped, would be better.

It was Nurse Jeannie's first trip to Isabela, and she was excited, staying close to Mom, watching the waves, peering into each water-filled stone pool, eager to find a wentletrap for her collection.

Every few moments Mom would look up and shout a warning to me and Jack, and then lean over and look into another silvery pool.

"Watch the waves!" "Be careful not to trip. You could cut your legs on the rocks." "The tide will be coming in. Watch the waves!"

We laughed and ignored her, hoping to find a wentletrap before she did.

\* \* \*

The waves were large, at least some of them, rising from deep in the sea to wash across the lava shelves, refreshing the thousands of small tide pools.

Jack found the first shell, a small wentletrap wedged between a starfish and an anemone. Then Mom found one, larger, bright white, perfect. She was ecstatic, almost falling as she held her treasure high and shouted her success to us.

By now we were scattered all across the tide pools, heads down, focused on wentletraps, waves forgotten.

That's when *the big one* hit. A "sleeper wave," some call them. Slinky monsters that grow from deep in the Atlantic trenches, swell tall and unbreaking until they are towering above you. Almost alive. About to snatch you away from wentletrapping.

The big one caught Nurse Jeannie. We all saw it happen. She had wandered away from Mom out toward the edge of the tidepools, completely forgetting to watch the waves. She looked up just in time to see and scream and throw her shell basket toward the sky. Then she was gone, lost in the wave, swept off to the sea.

Jeannie tried to swim, but the wave was winning.

"Come! Pray! Hurry!" Mom shouted. Jack and I came. Quickly. Sprinting toward Mom and back up the hill to the car. Looking back toward the ocean. Watching Nurse Jeannie try to swim.

"Quick!" Mom said. "Get in the car. We're going to Isabela. Pray we find a fisherman who can go get her right away. Please, Lord, keep Jeannie safe. Please! Please!"

That was the fastest I ever remember Mom driving.

There were no fishermen at the Isabela fishing dock, but Mom's shouting brought several men sprinting from a beach bar. Several ran toward their boats, organizing a rescue flotilla on the way. One of the fishermen waved for us to get in his boat, and we prayed him toward wherever Nurse Jeannie might be.

As our boat turned into the open sea we met an incoming boat. Seeing us, the pilot began blowing his foghorn and waving.

Sitting on a bench beside the fisherman, wrapped in several blankets and waving frantically, was Nurse Jeannie! Alive! Safe!

"God answered our prayers!" Nurse Jeannie shouted above what quickly became a foghorn victory chorus.

Nurse Jeannie was so cold that her teeth chattered all the way home from Isabela. Jack and I listened as Nurse Jeannie told her story again and again.

"I prayed," she said. "I was drowning, going under and praying harder than I had ever prayed before! God heard me, way out there in the waves. And He brought me home!" ©

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## **Publisher**

The *Adventist World*, an international periodical of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The General Conference, Northern Asia-Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists, is the publisher.

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E-mail: [worldeditor@gc.adventist.org](mailto:worldeditor@gc.adventist.org)

Web site: [www.adventistworld.org](http://www.adventistworld.org)

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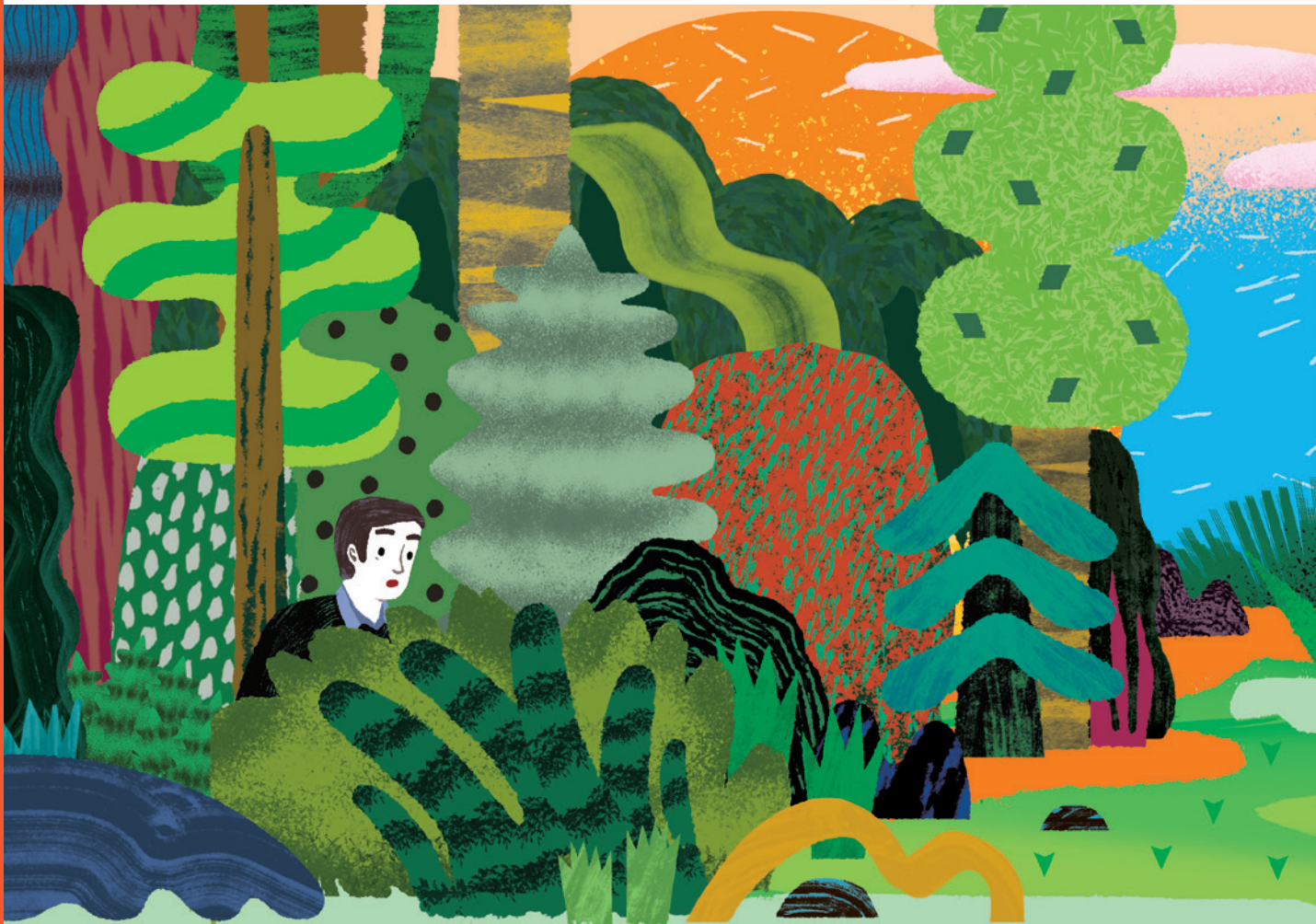
*Adventist World* is published monthly and printed simultaneously in Korea, Brazil, Indonesia, Australia, Germany, Austria, Argentina, Mexico, South Africa, and the United States.

Vol. 17, No. 6



Seventh-day  
Adventist Church





## Sabbath, a Snake, and Some Wolves—Part 2

*The following story was published in KidsView, Summer 2011. This concludes the series we started last month, so make sure you read last month's first part before this one—Editor.*

**M**erritt began to walk in the direction the wagon train had gone. It was about two hours before sunset. Suddenly he saw a wolf. He could see it at a distance, but he knew that if the wolf continued on its path, it would soon pick up his scent. Merritt decided to hide in the bushes and hope that the wolf would change direction. The wolf sniffed the air and then the

ground. It began tracking Merritt, coming closer and closer. Even though Merritt was completely hidden, the wolf seemed to know where he was. Closer. Sniff. Closer. Soon the wolf was almost in front of where Merritt was hiding. Thinking fast, Merritt jumped out of the bushes and fired his gun.

Startled, the wolf ran a short distance and then stopped and looked back. Merritt was so

nervous that he shot his gun into the air again. This time the wolf ran off out of sight. Heart pounding, Merritt sank to the ground in relief. First a snake, then a wolf. He decided just to stay hidden until the Sabbath ended. It would be safe that way, he hoped.

An hour later two more wolves picked up his trail, and they also began to track toward Merritt's hiding place. This time he didn't let them get close. Firing his gun into the air, both wolves bolted for the woods. Merritt bolted too, but in the opposite





## Bible Treasure

The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them. Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him. Fear the Lord, you his holy people, for those who fear him lack nothing. (Psalm 34:7-9, NIV)

direction. Reaching the road just as the sun was setting, he took off running and didn't stop until he had caught up to his wagon train about 10:30 that night.

Captain Parks never asked Merritt to travel on the Sabbath again, and everyone in the wagon train camped during the Sabbath hours. Merritt was glad he was able to share the importance of the Sabbath with those he traveled with during that journey. He eventually reached the state of California and became the first Adventist to live there.

Years later Merritt went back East to become a doctor. While he was there, he asked the church to send missionaries to California. They did, and Merritt soon joined them. They held many tent meetings, and Merritt also spoke to the people about healthy living. Many were baptized, and a new Seventh-day Adventist church was started.


Merritt Kellogg was one of the Adventist Church's first pioneers. He was one of 16 children, and two of his brothers are probably more widely known. His brother John Harvey was

a doctor who built a very large hospital in Michigan in the early 1900s that many famous people went to for better health. John, along with another brother, Will Keith, invented cornflakes. Will began the Kellogg cereal company—the same company that makes all kinds of cereal today, including cornflakes. ©

*If you missed the first part of this story, scan the code with your smartphone to visit [www.adventist-world.org/sabbath-snake-wolves](http://www.adventist-world.org/sabbath-snake-wolves).*







July 3, 2021

October 2, 2021

January 1, 2022

April 2, 2022

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