

C O L L E G E • A N D • U N I V E R S I T Y

DIALOGUE

**Do Genes Determine
Morality?**

**70 Years
of Adventist Radio**

**Armageddon:
Changing Views on
the Final Battle**

**Hope, Christianity and
Mental Health**

VOLUME 5: No. 3



PUBLISHED IN
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French
Portuguese
Spanish

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This issue will again provide you with an international menu of articles and reports. First, our entrées. Ronald Carter explores the challenges and implications that the new discipline of Sociobiology presents to Christians. Writing from Germany, Andrea Steele celebrates 70 years of Adventist involvement in radio and brings us up-to-date on the global impact of Adventist World Radio. Next Don Mansell reviews how Adventists have understood the meaning of the battle of Armageddon, mentioned in Revelation as being one of the climatic events of earth's history. The fourth essay, written by psychologist Mario Pereyra, reports on a field survey that brings to light the connection between biblical Christianity and hope.

We are also pleased to present a variety of intellectual appetizers and spiritual side orders. In our Profiles, you will meet two dynamic Seventh-day Adventists: the director of cultural affairs of a young republic in the Indian Ocean and a skilled pediatrician with a strong sense of mission.

Dwight Hornbacher's devotional piece offers a reflection on what it means for the true follower of Jesus to be "Number One." In an insightful poem, Ruth Senter proposes a practical understanding of what God's will is for us as we face decisions. Our Campus Life article underlines the characteristics of a successful church-based ministry on behalf of young adults.

Few areas of the world have as many Adventist college and university students as the island of Mindanao, in the Philippines. Our AMiCUS representative describes their varied nurture and outreach activities.

We were delighted to learn that leaders of our theological seminary in Russia decided to launch a new journal similar to *Dialogue*. Mikhail Kulakov, its founding editor, reports on the objectives of *Obraz i Podobie*, our Russian "cousin," and the efforts involved in producing this publication.

Three reviewers evaluate for us books dealing with the growth of the Advent Movement in Latin America and the Caribbean, our fascination with television, and an Adventist perspective on educational philosophy.

Finally, first-year medical student Gisele Rostan tells us of her brief but exciting experience at an ADRA clinic in war-torn Somalia.

With this issue we bid farewell to Elder Israel Leito, co-founder of the Committee on Adventist Ministry to College and University Students (AMiCUS) and associate editor of this journal. We will miss his broad smile, encouraging advice, and deep commitment to this ministry. As of January 1, 1994 he will begin serving as president of the Inter-American Division. We wish him success in his important assignment as he leads, with God's guidance, the Adventist world division with the largest membership.

As a result of this change, you will notice several new names in our masthead. Elder Ron Flowers is the new vice-chairman of the AMiCUS Committee, while *Dialogue* gains three associate editors: Richard Barron, Richard Stenbakken, and David Wong. They will strengthen our team with their broad experience and multi-cultural perspectives.

So, sit down in a comfortable place and get ready to partake of this issue's varied and nutritious repast!

HUMBERTO M. RASI
Editor

Accessible to the General Reader

We, the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Youth Society (SDAYS) of Mindanao State University-Tambler, are very grateful for *Dialogue*, a journal that we find informative and encouraging. We hope to continue receiving future issues, with articles that will help us broaden our intellectual horizons and become more faithful and active church members. We are placing copies of *Dialogue* in the periodical section of the university library, to make the journal accessible to the general reader. Keep the issues coming!

LETTY A. CORTEZ
Mindanao State University-
Tambler
General Santos City,
PHILIPPINES

Wanting to Know More

I'm very glad that my friend Bob gave me a copy of *Dialogue* last year, here in China. It was he who led me to know Christ and to become a Christian. I really appreciate the articles that appear in this journal. They help me to learn many things about the world outside. Now that Bob has gone back to the United States, I don't have anyone around here with whom I can discuss the real meaning of Christianity. For that reason I'm writing to the persons listed in "Interchange," hoping to establish some friendships and to expand my knowledge. Would you kindly list my name in that section? Would you also send me more recent copies of *Dialogue* and other Christian reading material? Thank you!

CHEN HANG
Jinshou Oil Refinery
Liaoning, CHINA

Encouragement for the Christian Life

As an Adventist student pursuing a degree in Engineering at a non-Adventist university, I want to thank the leadership

of our church for publishing *Dialogue*. In fact, I would appreciate knowing how to receive this journal regularly and how to obtain other materials that can help me to represent Christ in the university campus. I also wish to encourage other Adventist students by sharing with them one of my favorite Bible promises: "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10 NIV).

SONIA MABEL KIDRUK
Obera, Misiones,
ARGENTINA

Thank you, Sonia, for your kind letter! Adventist students in non-Adventist colleges and universities can receive Dialogue regularly and free of charge. Contact our regional representative for your area, listed on page 2 of this issue. You may also subscribe to the journal for US\$10 per year, using the coupon that appears on page 29. The AMiCUS Committee has published a handbook on Adventist Ministry on the Secular Campus, which we are mailing to you. You will find in it many ideas on how to organize a fellowship of Adventist students in your area. May the Lord continue to guide you as you develop your talents and seek to serve Him to the best of your ability!

Advantages of a Vegetarian Diet

After a semester's absence from the Adventist College and University Students Group, I rejoined their activities. A fellow Adventist student welcomed me back warmly and gave me a copy of *Dialogue* 5:1. Without wasting time, I went through the journal and was particularly interested in the article "Me, A Vegetarian?" by Heather M. Bowen. I was impressed by the way she outlined

the reasons for having chosen a diet that excludes animal meats. In fact, her analysis helped me to clarify my own thinking on the subject. In a future issue I would appreciate reading about how a vegetarian diet compares nutritionally with a diet based on meat. My congratulations to the entire *Dialogue* staff for your excellent work.

MOSES MAJIWA, J.K.U.C.A.T.
Nairobi, KENYA

Correspondence Requested

The Kenyatta University SDA Group (KUSDA) is interested in exchanging correspondence with other associations of Adventist university students regarding plans, activities and experiences. Our group includes 150 members and its current leadership consists of Samuel Mwaniki, chairman; Dr. Azinuth Omwega, patron; and W. Ray Ricketts; chaplain. Address your correspondence in English to Kenyatta University SDA Group; P.O. Box 42276; Nairobi; Kenya.

SAMUEL MWANIKI
Kenyatta University
Nairobi, KENYA

Adventists and Politics

I recently read Tobias Schwarz's article, "And the Walls Came Tumbling Down" (*Dialogue*, 4:2), in which he described as a Christian the events leading to the collapse of the German Democratic Republic and its aftermath. We South Africans are also experiencing momentous change. The state of disenfranchisement, institutionalized discrimination, and widespread abuse of human rights (perpetrated by too many parties) will hopefully soon become a thing of the past. The upcoming election, in which all South Africans will be able to participate, portends the ushering in of an era of positive change. At a recent meeting, a church leader spoke on the relationship between the Seventh-day Adventist Church and politics. He stressed that, as Christians, we are to

remain apolitical although not unsympathetic to human cries for help. By being principled and yet maintaining a view that is not colored by a specific political orientation, our witness for Christ will be more effective. Are we to be outspoken only when our ability to worship and to proclaim our beliefs are being harshly impeded? Is the government of the day merely to be tolerated? Could somebody address this subject in *Dialogue*? Many thanks for a great magazine!

ALEX PHIRI, MAFIKENG
Bophuthatswana
SOUTH AFRICA

Delighted to Know Dialogue

I'm a 21 year-old Adventist university student. Providentially I received a copy of your attractive journal and was delighted to learn that there are Adventist students in many parts of the world, who receive encouragement and support through the AMiCUS Committee. Our church in Plovdiv has approximately 30 members, eight of whom are university students like me. On Sabbaths we invite our friends, and attendance reaches 40 or more. Our youth group is quite active, particularly in the distribution of Adventist publications. We thank God for the religious freedom we now enjoy. I would be happy to correspond in French with other Adventist university students. My address: Rue G. Karaslavov, 26 - vx. D, Apt. 23; Plovdiv 4000; Bulgaria.

THEODORA RANGUELOVA
Plovdiv, BULGARIA

Letters

We welcome your letters, but limit your comments to 200 words. Address them to: Dialogue Letters, 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring; MD 20904-6600; U.S.A. If selected for this section, your letter may be edited for clarity or space.

What is love? How does one define beauty? Are hope and faith related? Is altruism inherited or cultivated? Who or what decides issues of morality and questions of value?

Time was when such concerns were the uncontested responsibility of philosophers and theologians. Christians, for example, looked at love, faith, hope, and moral values as uniquely human qualities that were evidence of God's special creation of humanity. Those who believed in a personal God took solace in the fact that science held little authority in the study of the origin of human values and faith.

But today, the ground seems to be shifting. The theory of organic evolution has affected society in profound and fundamental ways. Deeply rooted as it is in the paradigm of naturalistic evolution, modern science ventures into areas that were once the primary responsibility of metaphysics or religion. Evolutionary biologists, particularly those who specialize in sociobiology, propose purely naturalistic theories of how social and "moral" behavior have evolved.

For example, sociobiologists claim to understand the genetic nature of altruistic (selfless) behavior. Some even propose the evolutionary steps that supposedly produced the human concept of "righteousness" and triggered the human need for religion.

A biological basis for social behavior?

In 1975, Edward O. Wilson, a Harvard University entomologist, published his now famous book, *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*.¹ Wilson defined sociobiology as the "systematic study of the biological basis of social behavior and the organization of societies in all kinds of organisms, including human beings." This definition combined genetic concepts from the 1930s and fitness concepts from Hamilton² and Williams³ in a creative and comprehensive manner. Wilson's new synthesis precipitated a surge of interest in social behavior. It fired the imagination of behavioral scientists and became a popular topic for discussion and debate. The discussion on this subject in the late 1970s and early 1980s was quite contentious. Many laypersons as well as scientists, especially anthropologists and

social scientists, reacted violently to Wilson's book. Their concerns were tinged by fears that such sociobiological reasoning would revive forms of racist social Darwinism.⁴

The debate created confusion primarily because it proposed evolutionary mechanisms that seemed to threaten aspects of Darwinian evolution, which viewed the action of natural selection to be primarily focused at the level of the

Do Genes Determine Morality?

An Adventist scientist examines the challenge of sociobiology to Christian concepts of values and behavior.

by
Ronald L.
Carter

individual organism. Darwin's theory had become synonymous with the phrase, "survival of the fittest." Sociobiology appeared to challenge this interpretation by promoting the idea that the gene, not the individual, is the primary unit of evolution. Thus, from this perspective the individual is just a vehicle to transfer genetic material from one generation to another.⁵

Rather than destroying Darwinian evolution, as some predicted, sociobiology in a sense came to the rescue of natural selection theory for selfless behaviors. Curious and bizarre behaviors that perplexed Darwin and his followers came to be interpreted in the light of sociobiology.

The role of genes in behavior

The centerpiece of sociobiological theory integrated an understanding of altruistic and cooperative behaviors into three concepts: inclusive fitness (Hamilton⁶), kin selection (Maynard-Smith⁷), and reciprocal altruism (Trivers).⁸ Hamilton first enunciated the general principle that natural selection tends to maximize not individual fitness but inclusive fitness; that is, the probability of a gene being passed on depends not only on the survival of a specific individual carrying the gene, but on the total number of copies of the gene that may be transmitted by an entire group of related individuals. Kin selection, or the ability to perform acts of altruism to benefit close relatives, is an important part of the inclusive fitness theory.

According to this concept, it would be adaptive for an individual to lay down its life for two or more brothers or eight or more first cousins. Brothers share, on the average, half of their genes, and first cousins share one-eighth of their genes. Altruistic acts are adaptive only if one's inclusive fitness produces a net gain for a particular gene.⁹ Thus, the inclusive fitness of an individual depends not only upon the survival of its descendants but also of its close relatives.

If one assumes that behavior is genetically caused, altruism towards kin can be regarded as selfishness on the part of the genes responsible, because copies of the same genes are likely to be present in close relatives. Altruism could also be regarded as a form of gene selfishness if by being altruistic an individual could ensure reciprocal altruism at a later date. The concept of genetic altruism, along with various forms of "cooperation," provides examples of ways in which non-kin "altruism" can result from selfish genes that seek to increase their probability of perpetuation.

One animal's risking its life for another or giving up its reproductive opportunities to assist other adults in care of young appeared to Darwin to be against the "survival of the fittest" concepts that he had so carefully documented. A mother bird feigning a broken wing to lead a predator away from its chicks; a prairie dog acting as a sentinel to stand watch for other prairie dogs; adult Florida jays forgoing their own breeding while assisting other adults in nest care are but a few examples of behaviors that were inexplicable by Darwinian concepts of survival of the fittest.

By applying inclusive fitness concepts, sociobiology has provided answers to these and many other apparent dilemmas for Darwinian concepts of selection. For example, the prairie dog giving an alarm call when a predator appears may decrease its individual fitness or survival, but may increase its inclusive fitness by helping its close relatives. Behavior and genetic studies have discovered that when young ground squirrels mature, the males disperse to distant places before they settle down and choose a territory. Young females don't disperse, but set up territories nearer home. Consequently females have many close relatives living near them, but males do not. Just as the theory predicts, it is the females who give the alarm calls and therefore risk their lives.¹⁰ The altruistic acts of "helper" Florida scrub jays as well as many other acts of apparent selflessness have been shown to be genetically consistent with kin selection predictions.¹¹

Within insects Wilson observed forms of social behavior ranging from hermit-like solitary behavior to fully developed caste systems where complex societies divide labor and enslave other species to work for them. He combined his observations on the evolution of various forms of social behavior with the new understanding of altruism (true genetic selfishness) and proposed these mechanisms as the seed from which human morality and religion grew. In his view, kin groups cooperating for mutual aid and inclusive fitness maximize

behaviors that help each other, not out of "brotherly" love, but because their genes have been selected to produce behavior that maximizes the probability of their transmission to succeeding generations.

Implications for Christians

While sociobiology has proven to be a useful theory in the study of behavior ecology and social behavior, its logical conclusions when applied to human behavior have very troubling implications for Christians.

Sociobiology advances the belief that human and animal behavior results solely from interaction between genes and environment under the forces of natural selection and chance. Wilson says that "no species, ours included, possesses a purpose beyond the imperatives created by its genetic history" and that the human species "lacks any goal external to its own biological nature." Our selfish genes have therefore created "the human mind as a device for survival and reproduction."¹² Essentially this makes us selfish gene producing machines.¹³

Naturalistic evolutionary biology leaves no room for God or moral absolutes. From this perspective, right and wrong can be measured only in the context of evolutionary outcomes. "Innate sensors and motivators exist in the brain that deeply and unconsciously affect our ethical premises; from these roots, morality evolved as instinct."¹⁴

Morality in the Christian or in the traditional sense is absent from evolutionary theory. Even in the concept of Darwinian fitness—that which is "best" or "fittest"—can only be defined and said to be true for a particular set of ecological conditions at any particular time. Therefore any attempt to draw a set of ethical standards from evolutionary theory will at best be relativistic and conditional.

Sociobiologists have applied their theories to a wide range of social issues. They have developed ideas based on inclusive fitness to answer questions regarding rape, homosexuality, infanticide, incest taboos, sexual dimorphism, polygamy, and monogamy. Their explanations are rooted in the belief that our selfish genes have made us what we are, because any behavior fixed into our gene pool must have been advantageous for survival.

Sociobiology has attempted to put the study of morality and ethics on a purely materialistic basis. Wilson says that science "may soon be in a position to investigate the very origin and meaning of human values, from which all ethical pronouncements and much political practice flow."¹⁵ He further suggests that scientists and humanists should together consider the possibility that the time has come for ethics to be removed temporarily from the hands of philosophers and theologians and entrusted to biologists.

Although most scientists disdain this suggestion, in reality this is exactly what has happened.¹⁶ Sociobiologists who speak out on the subject of morals and altruism are often accused of committing the "naturalistic fallacy" (is/ought fallacy), which was made famous by social Darwinists who attempted to justify a survival of the fittest-based natural theology or rationale. Wilson and other leading sociobiologists are not advocating that we create ethics based on what is in nature. Many of them believe humans should use their highly evolved brain to go beyond instinct. In their view, the use of intellect and group consensus can lead to a higher ethic through cultural evolution. Wilson believes that religion evolved via natural selection and is therefore useful for our survival, but that it is now time for science to help create religious expression that will contribute to preserving life on earth.

Says Wilson: The "principal task of human biology is to identify and to measure the constraints that influence the decisions of ethical philosophers and everyone else, and to infer their significance through neurophysiological and phylogenetic reconstructions of the mind.... In the process it will fashion a biology of ethics, which will make possible the selection of a more deeply understood and enduring code of moral values."¹⁷

A Christian Response

Any attempt to define morals and ethics on the basis of evolutionary theory clearly challenges core beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Christian community at large. How should we respond? Some students confronted with the logic of sociobiology and its utility in the study of animal behavior have abandoned faith in the Bible. Others have rejected all forms of evolution. At first it may seem that sociobiology requires a choice between the Scriptures and evolution theory.

Certainly, theories of naturalistic evolution that reject God are incompatible with the Bible, but this does not mean that the Scriptures and aspects of sociobiological reasoning are incompatible. Most of what is known about the evolutionary process, its mechanisms and selection forces are understandable with even a conservative reading of the Scriptures. The Bible tells us that since

the beginning great changes have occurred within God's creation, particularly as a result of the Fall, and that these changes have been passed down from generation to generation.

I believe that God's laws of nature apply to both human and other creatures and that organisms were created with behaviors as well as morphologies that have since undergone generations of change driven by mutations and recombination and have been shaped by natural selection. As a result, part of human character reflects generations of natural selection that has emphasized the selfish side of our nature. The Bible tells us that humans are not totally biologically determined but have a measure of free will that allows them to seek the ability from God to act in ways that are truly altruistic. Such behavior is not just the result of gene modification and biological determinism.

It is possible that the basic process of kin selection and its effect on inclusive fitness has operated within humans and within the other created groups of organisms. Acceptance of this notion does not require that one assume that all of life has evolved from one cell or that evolution has created morality.

Having said all that, the Christian response to the challenge of science in the arena of morality and values remains inescapable.

First, a commitment to truth. More than ever before, it is necessary for

Pontius' Puddle



Christians to develop ways to integrate truths that are revealed from a variety of sources, biblical as well as scientific while maintaining a high view of Scripture. A commitment to one need not imply a denial of the other.

Second, a more active involvement in developing values. There is much that Christians can learn from other methods of inquiry, including sociobiology, about how values are learned, developed, and nurtured, and how moral development takes place. At a time when humanity, including the scientific community, is searching for ways to replant the seeds of morality and values into society, and at a time when once cherished moral and value systems seem to be collapsing all around, the Christian has both a religious and sociological duty. Surely Christians, particularly Adventists, who have a compelling commitment to an objective value system and unshakable faith in God's power to transform human beings, must not shirk their responsibility to society in fostering the development of solid values.

Third, a challenge to life-style. Ultimately the belief that God is the Giver of all moral laws and the Enabler to keep them will be tested in the court of human life-style. Do we in our conduct show evidence that, because of our trust in God, are able to be self-interested and at the same time selfless? □

Ronald L. Carter (Ph.D., Loma Linda University) is a researcher and an ordained minister who teaches Biology at his alma mater, with emphasis on Molecular Systematics. His field work has taken him to the heart of the Amazon jungle.

Notes and References

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17. Wilson, 1978, p. 196.

Guidelines for Contributors

College and University Dialogue, published three times a year in four language editions, is addressed to Seventh-day Adventists involved in postsecondary education either as students or teachers, and also to Adventist professionals and campus chaplains around the world.

The editors are interested in well-written articles, interviews, and reports consistent with *Dialogue's* objectives: (1) To nurture an intelligent, living faith; (2) to deepen commitment to Christ, the Bible, and Adventist global mission; (3) to articulate a biblical approach to contemporary issues; and (4) to offer ideas and models of Christian service and outreach.

Dialogue usually assigns articles, interviews, and reports for publication. Prospective authors are urged (a) to examine previous issues of our journal, (b) to carefully consider these guidelines, and (c) to submit an abstract and personal background before developing a proposed article.

- **Essays:** Well-researched and stimulating feature articles that focus, from a biblical perspective, on a contemporary topic in the arts, the humanities, religion, or the sciences.
- **Profiles:** Biographical sketches of Adventist men and women who are outstanding in their careers or professions, and who are also active Christians. Recommendations are welcome.
- **Logos:** A fresh look at a Bible passage or theme that offers insights and encouragement for the life of faith in today's world.
- **Campus Life:** Practical ideas for the college or university student, chaplain or teacher who seeks to integrate faith, education, social life, and outreach in an academic setting.
- **Action Report:** News of activities by Adventist students, chaplains, and teachers, on a regional basis.
- **Books:** Reviews of significant books by or about Seventh-day Adventists, published in either English, French, Portuguese, or Spanish. Recommendations are welcome.
- **For Your Information:** Reports on events, activities or statements relevant to Adventist students and professionals.
- **First Person:** Individual stories of experiences by Adventist students or professionals that will inspire and encourage their peers.

Address your correspondence to: *Dialogue* Editors; 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; U.S.A. Telephone: (301) 680-5060. Fax: (301) 622-9627.

April 29, 1923. The Adventist community at Emmanuel Missionary College, Berrien Springs, Michigan, woke up that spring morning in anticipation of something new. Just three years after the first radio broadcast in the United States, Adventists had installed their first radio station KFGZ, authorized to broadcast on 360 meters, 833 kilohertz. From a room on the college campus, the Seventh-day Adventist message was broadcast over the air for the first time.

From that early beginning, Adventists have captured the radio waves to accomplish a global mission. Seventy years later, Adventist World Radio today broadcasts around the world nearly 1,000 hours each week in 32 languages. God's Word is in the air non-stop every day and every night throughout the year.

Twelve years after the Berrien Springs start, W. H. Branson, vice-president of the General Conference, met with the General Conference Committee to alert the world church to the "immensity of the task of reaching the millions of people in our large cities" through radio—"one of the greatest single means of presenting the Bible truth." He pleaded for the "larger use of radio" and for establishing "a nationwide network."

Up until that time the use of radio by our church was sporadic. Allentown, Pennsylvania, set up a 15-watt transmitter in 1924 for H. A. Vandeman's airwave evangelism. The New York Temple broadcast in 1925 over WSDA. Pacific Union College established its station in 1927. In 1929, the church in Canada began the Voice of Adventist Radio in Newfoundland, now the oldest continuously broadcasting Adventist station in the world. Down under in 1928 Adventists were on the air in Perth, Melbourne, and Sydney. By 1935, 40 North American conferences had embraced radio evangelism and were baptizing hundreds.

But the initiative of the General Conference set a new tone. In France, Charles Winandy presented the message over Radio Normandie in 1938. In Australia, evangelist L. C. Naden started the Advent Radio Church in the Sydney area. Meanwhile World War II came, and radio became the global tool of communication. Sensing the importance of this medium, the Church's Radio Commission, set up in 1936, recom-

mended in October 1941 "that immediate arrangements be made for a national [U.S.A.] hookup of 80 stations for a weekly 30-minute broadcast during the year 1942." The church leadership commissioned H. M. S. Richards, the young and dynamic evangelist who founded the Voice of Prophecy radio program in 1930, to be the speaker for the national broadcast. The Mutual

Let the Earth Hear His Voice:

Seventy Years of Adventist Radio

Broadcasting system carried the program over 89 stations each week.

The 1940s were a banner decade for the radio ministry. In May 1942 the church leadership authorized a Latin American Radio Commission, and in October the use of the Bible correspondence course in conjunction with radio broadcasts was approved.

While the Latin American Commission, under the direction of H. G. Stoehr, immediately set out to produce programs in Portuguese and Spanish, L. C. Naden by 1943 was preaching in Australia over 24 stations. The year 1948 saw Adventist radio waves broadcast across the South Pacific islands from Suva, Fiji. Back in Europe, in May 1947, Victor Cooper

by
Andrea
Steele

arranged programs over Radio Luxembourg and in April 1948 over Radio Monte-Carlo. In the same year, *La Voix de l'Espérance*, the Voice of Hope, was first launched in France, and the name stuck to all broadcasts in French-speaking countries. In 1953 French and Tahitian programs were broadcast from French Polynesia and New Caledonia.

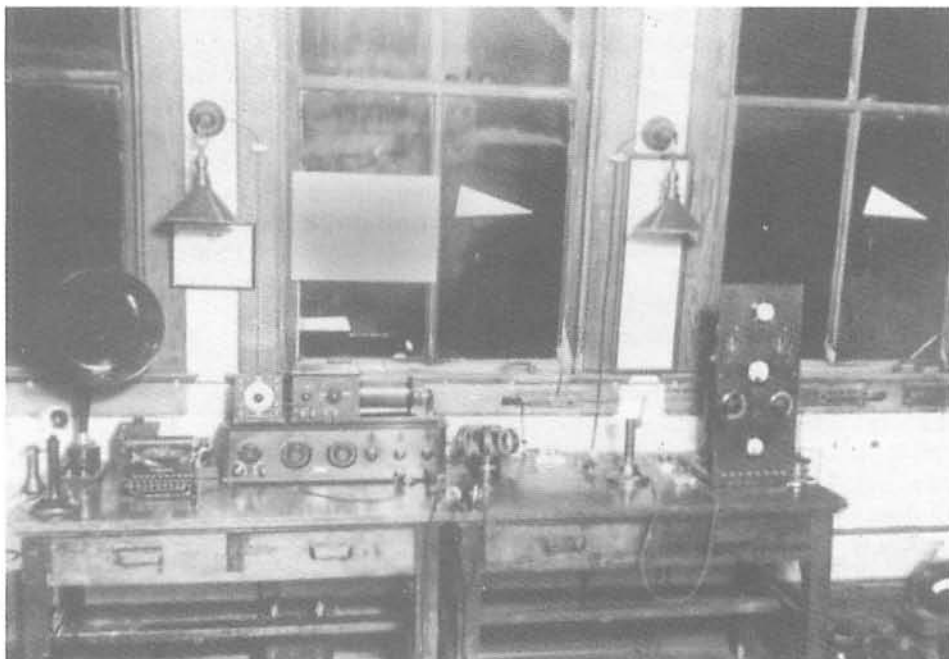
The year 1948 was a key date in the history of Adventist broadcasting. Twenty-five years after the first small step taken in Berrien Springs, the General Conference gave a new status to radio ministry by organizing the Radio Department, with Paul Wickman as its first secretary.

Enter Short Wave

Meanwhile, the church was entering short-wave broadcasting around the world. The war years had made short wave popular, and the Voice of Prophecy was ready to use it. The U.S. Armed Forces Radio and Television Service carried this program on its shortwave during World War II. Radio Australia's short wave carried the voice of L. C. Naden to the Middle East.

Adventist short-wave programs were also broadcast for various lengths of time during the next 30 years from stations in Goa, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Jakarta, the Maldives Islands, Pitcairn Island, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and even Radio Afghanistan. About 1980, Bhutan Radio, the smallest station in the world, broadcast Nepali programs supplied by the Southern Asia Division. From 1975 AWR-Asia became the primary broadcasting agency for the Adventist Church in Southern Asia, with programs produced by its own studios in Poona and broadcast over the commercial station of Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation.

The 1950s and the 1960s also saw a network of college radio stations. Today, the Adventist Radio Network in the United States has 15 stations.



From this studio at Emmanuel Missionary College, Michigan, the first Adventist radio broadcast was heard in 1923.

Adventist Radio Comes of Age

The 1970s were the decade of expansion and consolidation in Adventist global broadcasting. The consolidation began in 1971 with the General Conference approval of the construction of the Adventist Media Center in Thousand Oaks, California. The expansion was seen around the world. In 1971 the South Pacific Adventist radio network reported 27 local mission broadcasters producing 31 programs over 19 stations on a weekly or semiweekly basis. The same year, the General Conference Communication Department started the "Pastor's Script Service" making available to Adventist ministers five-minute daily and 15-minute weekly script formulas to be adapted for local broadcasts.

In 1972 the Southern Asia Division expanded its studios in Poona, India, to produce programs in six languages for broadcast over Radio Sri Lanka. In 1974, Lesotho and Swaziland in Southern Africa began broadcasting "The Quiet Hour."

By 1973 our church was broadcasting on 2,779 stations each week in 42 languages in 72 countries. Adventists were also operating 194 Bible correspon-

dence schools with courses in 80 languages. That year alone, 593,948 people enrolled in Bible courses, and, as a result, 19,735 people were baptized.

The Leap of Faith

The denomination in 1971 took a leap of faith in stepping forward to establish the largest single endeavor the church has ever made in international broadcasting. Adventists leased time on a privately owned short-wave station in Portugal to broadcast to countries of Western and Eastern Europe. Called Adventist World Radio-Europe, the first program was heard in Italian at 11:30 a.m. Greenwich Mean Time on Friday, October 1, 1971.

This, too, was a small beginning. In 1971 the church leased 20 hours of time for 12 languages. Today, AWR broadcasts in 32 languages for nearly 1,000 hours a week from 16 transmitters in strategic locations around the world: Gabon, Africa; Costa Rica and Guatemala, Latin America; Guam in the Western Pacific; Italy across Western Europe; and since March 1992 from transmitters in Russia. We have recently received a license to broadcast from two transmitters located in Slovakia. Together these stations carry the gospel to Europe, the Middle East, Latin America,



This studio in Poland is typical of the radio studios creating programs for local stations and AWR around the world.

Southern Asia, China, and Africa.

In 1978 plans were made for broadcasting to Africa, using facilities located at Middle East College in Beirut, Lebanon. However, war got in the way. Tentative searches continued for a few years for a site on the continent itself, without success. When leased time was made available on a 500-kilowatt transmitter of Africa Number One station in Gabon, the General Conference Communication Department asked WAUS of Andrews University to prepare programs for the one-hour-a-day broadcasts.

Utilizing the talents of students from French-speaking Africa, Andrews University radio station created 156 one-hour programs. The broadcasts began on October 31, 1983, and continue till today to reach the countries of northwest Africa, resulting in baptisms and new congregations in many places.

AWR-Latin America, with headquarters in Alajuela, Costa Rica, first began in Guatemala City in 1980, with broadcasts from a 10-kilowatt transmitter. Programs continue from this site, as well as six other transmitters located in Costa Rica. These broadcasts in Spanish

and English cover the island nations of the Caribbean, reaching as far north as Canada, and as far south as Rio de Janeiro.

Voice of the Global Mission

With the launching of Global Mission in 1990, AWR's role and importance in international outreach was further accentuated. In January 1993 AWR began to broadcast in Arabic to reach the vast populations of the Middle East. A studio in Cyprus, built in honor of Neal C. Wilson who as president of the General Conference played a crucial role in the establishment of AWR, took charge of Arabic broadcasts.

Meanwhile in Europe, with governmental deregulation of radio, new broadcasting opportunities were available for the church. Today, more than 50 local stations in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Italy, France, Croatia, and Rumania broadcast the Adventist message. These small, mostly volunteer-operated stations not only broadcast but also get involved in many community needs. Recently, in Goteborg, Sweden, the Adventist Church was overwhelmed when 2,000 people showed up for an biblical archaeology seminar. Many of those attending said they had been long-time listeners of Radio Adventkyrkan.

In Stockholm as many as 28 new church members say they were introduced to the church through the station's Swedish and Spanish broadcasts. In France, one woman's anxious letter about her search for truth ended with a request for the Bible correspondence course.

Paolo Benini, president of the Italian Union, reports that the local church-owned two-kilowatt station in Rome, two kilometers from the Vatican, has a range of 40 square kilometers, with 4,500,000 potential listeners. Of the four or five people who call in each week, at least one signs up for the Bible course.

The Ultimate Dream

But the ultimate dream of Adventist pioneers was realized in 1985, when broadcasts to the vast hinterland of China were made possible by the construction of AWR-Asia on the island of Guam. Of its 235 hours of broadcasts each week, 128 hours are in Mandarin,

Cantonese, Fujian, and Hakka. Another major world short-wave broadcaster broadcasts only 35 hours a week to China!

The China broadcasts have done more than just plant seeds. Thousands of baptisms can be ascribed to a first contact through AWR, and in dozens of locations around China, groups of 20 to 200 people gather together each Sabbath for "church." The entire service is what they hear on radio: the songs, the Sabbath school lesson, and the worship service.

Some of the most inspiring stories come from those who left their faith during political upheavals. Now they rejoice in their renewed relationship with Jesus, and attribute this to the programs heard on AWR.

Projections

What of the future? One has only to look at the Voice of Prophecy for an answer. For 60 years this organization has been broadcasting regularly over 1,100 stations. The 133 Voice of Prophecy Bible correspondence schools in 66 languages, so closely associated with broadcasting, also speak volumes about the future of radio in religious proclamation. Radio is still the cheapest, most private, and portable tool of communication we have, and its role cannot be minimized.

Even in television-saturated North America, radio still plays a vital role in conveying a caring ministry. Jennifer Schooley, of KCDS at Pacific Union College, shares the challenge: "We get calls from listeners who are going through incredible traumas. We have a directory of crisis phone numbers, but when you have someone on the line who has a hand full of pills, and this by every intent is their last phone call, you have to listen and be compassionate, think clearly and quietly, call 911 [the emergency number] on another line and carry on two conversations at once."

Broadcasters in other areas also display a single-minded commitment to radio for evangelism. One layman in

For More Information About...

- **Adventist radio stations in your area:** Contact the communication director of your conference or mission.
- **Bible correspondence courses for you or a friend:** Contact the communication director of your conference or mission.
- **Serving as a student volunteer at an Adventist World Radio station:** Contact the chaplain's office of an Adventist college/university or the GC Student Volunteer Office at 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, U.S.A. Applicants must have English fluency, must have completed at least two years of college, and must have some experience in a production studio or radio station.
- **Adventist World Radio (AWR) programs or a brief history of AWR:** Write to Program Director, AWR, Heidelberger Landstrasse 24, Darmstadt 64297, Germany.
- **Directory of Adventist Radio Network stations in the U.S.A.:** ARN Director, c/o KCDS FM; Angwin, CA 94508; U.S.A. The cost is U.S.\$15.00.

South America is on 610 radio stations every week with his own program. His wife is a teacher, and he receives only a monthly stipend; from this he purchased the equipment to do the recording.

Another layman in South America left his conference Bible worker position to go into an area where there were no Seventh-day Adventists. He began his



The new Adventist Media Center in Tula, Russia, is the only privately-owned media center in the country.

missionary work with a weekly radio program and now pastors a church of more than 100 members.

But there are challenges along with joys. Technological changes as far reaching as the invention of the transistor don't happen every year, but the advent of Direct Satellite Broadcasting (DSB) will probably change the face of broadcasting during the first decade of the new century. It will mean changes in receivers (radios) as well as transmission equipment.

A second challenge is programming. Some industry estimates say it can take, on an average, up to 40 hours to prepare one hour of certain types of radio programs. The actual time depends on several variables, but it does require considerably more than an hour to make an hour-long program.

The problem is multiplied by different languages and cultures, and the need to transcend these to bring the message of Jesus Christ to the hearers. Availability of resources varies from country to country, and for those countries where there are few or no Adventists, appropriate programming is difficult to obtain or produce.

The third challenge, as ever, is cost. But cost of broadcasting should be seen

in relationship to potential and actual audiences. For example, AWR-Asia's annual budget is U.S.\$1.2 million a year. For that amount, the station broadcasts 235 hours a week in 19 languages, and its potential audience is half the world's population! But that's potential; what about reality?

AWR-Asia received 20,365 letters in 1992. A formula used by major short-wave broadcasters calculates 600 listeners for each letter received; in some very closed countries the figure is as high as 1,000 listeners per letter. Taking the smaller figure, AWR's audience in Asia is about 12 million people. The yearly cost per person is just under 10 cents, and certainly justifies General Conference President Robert Folkenberg's statement that "AWR is one of the most direct ways to turn cash into mission."

And that's the whole purpose of Adventists using radio everywhere in the world: mission. Adventist broadcasters are united in their determination that this message of the Gospel will be "preached unto all the world." Maranatha! □

Andrea Steele is director of public relations and development for Adventist World Radio. She and her husband, Allen, reside in Germany.

Among Seventh-day Adventists, probably no discussion has produced more heat and less light than the various interpretations of the prophetic battle of Armageddon and the apocalyptic “king of the north” usually associated with it.¹ Yet most Adventists would agree that, unlike the doctrine of the second coming of Christ, these are not vital teachings of our church. Then why has the matter been so controversial and why discuss it now? The reasons are simple: As a people, we are committed to the Bible and deeply interested in its prophecies; however, our history can provide lessons to help us avoid getting entangled in needless controversies or sidetracked in futile speculations.

Millerite Background

To understand Adventist prophetic teachings, we must begin with our Millerite roots. When William Miller, an early 19th century Baptist preacher, focused on prophecies, he followed for the most part the then-prevailing Protestant interpretation, seeing in current events the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Miller agreed with the Protestant view on the seven vials of Revelation 16: that five of these were in the past, the sixth was in the process of fulfillment, and only the seventh was in the future. The Euphrates represented the Turkish Empire, or Islam. However, Miller differed from his Protestant contemporaries in regard to other symbols of Revelation 16:12-16.

Accordingly, “the kings of the east” were, in his interpretation, the nations of Europe; the “three unclean spirits” were three wicked political powers: “the dragon” represented the kings of the earth, “the beast” the church of Rome, and “the false prophet” Islam.

Miller taught that these three entities would rally all nations to Armageddon, a battle that would involve religious as well as political strife. He believed that the battle would be fought mainly in the United States. At the climax of this struggle Christ would come, vanquish His enemies, and separate the wicked from the just. As for the last power of Daniel 11, Miller believed it represented Napoleon Bonaparte.²

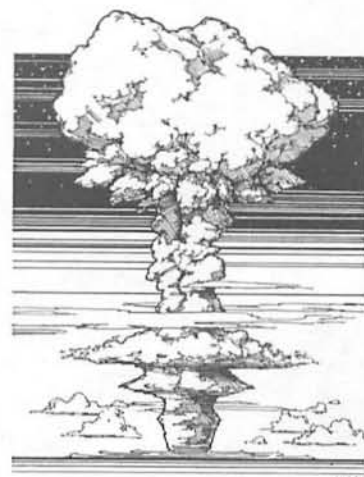
Not all the Millerites agreed with Miller’s interpretation. Josiah Litch, one of Miller’s chief lieutenants, was one of

those. Litch believed that at the Second Coming the righteous would be taken to the sea of glass (not heaven). There Christ would organize His kingdom. After the Second Coming the plagues would fall on the wicked.

Under the sixth plague, Litch said, the Euphrates would literally dry up to prepare the way for “the kings of the east.” Following this, the three “unclean spirits” (Islam the dragon, papacy the beast, and infidelity the false prophet) would gather the literal kings of the earth in Palestine to fight Christ in the battle of Armageddon. The battle would be fought under the seventh vial and would result in the wicked being driven out of Jerusalem by Christ and His saints. As for “the king of the north” of Daniel 11, Litch agreed with Miller that he was Napoleon Bonaparte.

Early Adventist Views

When the Seventh-day Adventist Church emerged out of the Millerite disappointment of 1844, Adventists did



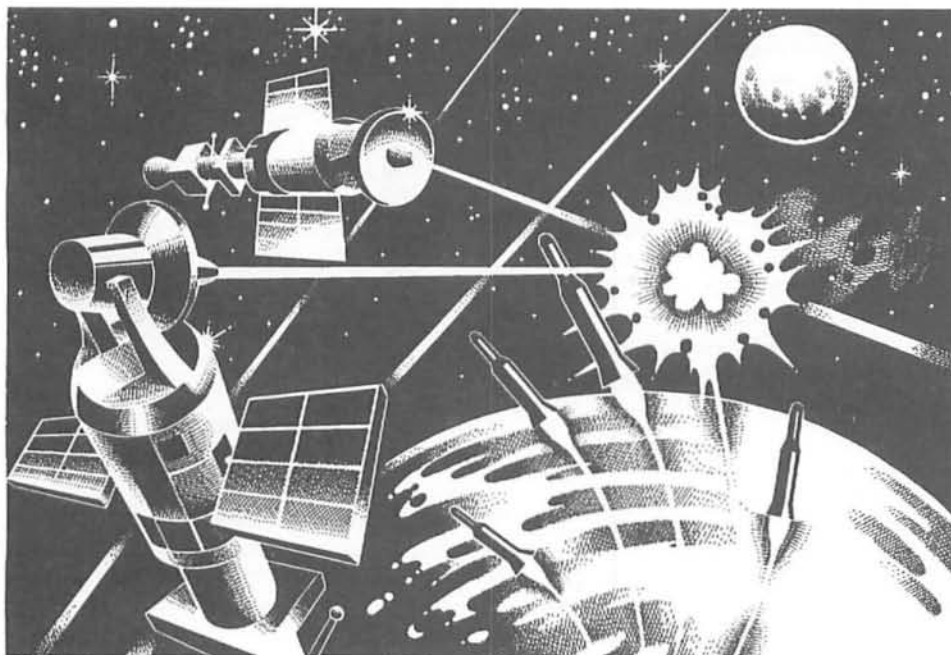
Armageddon:

Changing Views on the Final Battle

by
Donald E.
Mansell

not consider Armageddon and the king of the north as vital issues. However, the time for the plagues was the subject of earnest study and discussion. Thus, early in 1846, probably because of the visions of Ellen Harmon (later White), Adventists considered the plagues as future but pre-Advent events. This interpretation, different from that of both Miller and Litch, has remained standard with Seventh-day Adventists ever since.

But on Armageddon different views prevailed. As early as 1847, Joseph Bates taught that the future “mighty struggle [was] about restoring and keeping the seventh day Sabbath.”³ In 1848 the rise of Spiritualism impacted



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Adventist interpretations. A year later Ellen White was shown in vision that Spiritualism was of satanic origin. In 1852, George W. Holt identified Spiritualism as the force that would gather the kings of the earth to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.⁴

But the question arose: If the spirits of devils are now fulfilling the events of the sixth plague, how can the plagues be future? Uriah Smith answered that the present work of Spiritualism was preparatory. Before the spirits could have such absolute control over the wicked as to induce them to fight against God, they must first win their way among the nations, and this they were presently doing.⁵

In 1853 Otis Nichol, one of the early pioneers, identified the papacy as the power of Daniel 11:45.⁶ This continued to be the Adventist interpretation for almost two decades.

Virtually all our pioneers held that Armageddon was the culminating clash between the forces of good and evil over the Sabbath question. At the climax of the battle, Christ would intervene and rescue His beleaguered people.

This view, however, underwent a gradual shift in 1857, with Uriah Smith interpreting the Euphrates to be the country through which that river flows; that is, the Turkish Empire. Smith did admit that this view "will not help" many.⁷ This interpretation laid the groundwork for believing that under the sixth plague the nations would assemble for the final battle in Palestine.

In 1862 Smith was teaching a Sabbath school class in the Battle Creek church. James White was a member of this class. The lessons studied were from the book of Revelation. White, editor of the *Review* at the time, reported on the

class discussions in his magazine, saying that "all . . . [came] to almost the same conclusion on almost every point."⁸ Soon after this, White wrote in the *Review* a series of verse-by-verse comments on Revelation. As time went on, the comments became sketchy due to White's heavy responsibilities and health problems. In October 1862, he turned over the series to Smith.

The New View of the King of the North

Smith completed the series in 1865, and two years later published them as a book, *Thoughts, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Revelation*. So popular was the book that he took up similar work on Daniel. He completed the Daniel series in the *Review* by mid-1871, and later published them as a book.

Until November 1867 Smith held the generally accepted Adventist interpretation that papacy was the king of the north.⁹

But in an editorial published that month, he began to waver and stated that the king of the north could be either the papacy or Turkey. This ambivalence manifested itself again in March 1871 in his commentary on Daniel 11:40-45. However, a few weeks later, commenting on Daniel 12:1, he concluded that Turkey was the king of the north.

By 1873 Smith held that the papacy would never again play a significant role in earthly affairs.¹⁰ The absorption of the Vatican state into Italy and the "moribund" condition of Turkey led him to this decision. From then on, he began to "look for significant events" in the Middle East as fulfillment of Daniel 11. Before long he began to predict that Turkey's end was imminent; and with Turkey's demise would come the "standing up" of Michael (Daniel 12:1). That would mean the close of probation, to be followed by the second coming of Christ.¹¹

Smith's views and predictions concerning Turkey distressed James White. Having gone through the disappointment of 1844, he was cautious about making detailed forecasts based on unfulfilled prophecies. Repeatedly he cautioned Adventists to be careful.¹² In 1877 Russia declared war on Turkey, that was considered the "sick man of the east." In June 1878 Smith wrote that "we have reached the preliminary movements

of the great battle of Armageddon."¹³ This was too much for White. The clash between the two occurred during the camp meeting preceding the 1878 General Conference session.

Smith told the camp meeting audience that the Russian-Turkish war then in progress would develop into the long-expected Armageddon. When Smith finished his discourse, James White spoke for 70 minutes rebutting Smith's view. White argued that if Daniel 2, 7, and 8 are parallel prophecies, ending in the destruction of pagan-papal Rome, and the first part of Daniel 11 recapitulates chapters 2, 7, and 8, then the last power of Daniel 11 must also be pagan-papal Rome, not Turkey.

White published his rebuttal in the *Review*, October 3, 1878, under the title "Where Are We?" It was to have been "continued," but it was not. William C. White related later that a day or two after his father's rebuttal was published, his mother was shown in vision that her husband had erred in disagreeing publicly with Smith. She counseled her husband on the matter. James accepted her rebuke as from God and discontinued his articles.¹⁴ This did not mean, however, that Ellen White approved Smith's position, but only she disapproved the public disagreement on this issue expressed by James White.

Smith's Views Become Ascendant

James White died in 1881. The same year Smith's books *Daniel and the Revelation* were published as one volume. Smith's view of Armageddon and the king of the north, with certain modifications, became the denomination's accepted teaching until 1952.

Smith died in 1903. A little later George I. Butler, a former General Conference president, advanced the idea that Armageddon would be a battle of the east against the west. His reason? Japan's victory in the Russian-Japanese War of 1904-1905. This view, however, was not very popular until the 1920s.

View from World War I to 1923

During World War I and for several years after, the spiritual nature of Armageddon was almost completely eclipsed by an emphasis on a military

engagement in Palestine. Many statesmen and political analysts referred to the war as Armageddon. At first Adventists rejected such identification for the simple reason that the plagues had not begun to fall and this could not happen until Turkey came to its end.

However, when it appeared late in 1914 that Turkey's entrance into the war was imminent, and British Prime Minister Lord Asquith declared that Turkey had rung her own death knell, some Adventists began to preach that the war would develop into Armageddon. Arthur G. Daniels, then president of the General Conference, went so far as to predict that the end of the war would see the demise of Turkey.¹⁵

Events of the latter half of 1917 made it seem that these predictions would come to pass very soon. The war was going badly for the Turks and a battle was shaping up around Jerusalem. There were rumors that the Turks planned to move their capital from Constantinople to Jerusalem. The intense expectancy of some Adventists that the Lord's coming was just around the corner was evident in our publications of the time.¹⁶

But on December 9, 1917, the British forces took Jerusalem without a shot, and it became apparent that the Turk was not going to set up the "tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain."

The 1919 Bible Conference

In 1918 the war came to an end. But hostilities soon broke out between Turkey, Greece, and some of the Allies. It appeared that the "sick man of the east" was in his death throes, but Turkey fought on. In the shadow of these events, the General Conference convened the 1919 Bible Conference in Takoma Park, Maryland. Although other important matters were discussed, the so-called Eastern Question was the overriding issue. As one participant, H. Camden Lacey, a Bible teacher at Columbia Union College, put it: "[The interpretation of] Daniel 11 is the biggest thing among us at the present time." Most of those who spoke at the conference

favored the view that the papacy was "the king of the north." The General Conference president, however, was convinced that Greeks would still defeat Turkey, and was able to persuade those present to maintain the current view. The church held that view for many years.

Interpretations in Disarray

In October 1922 the Ottoman Empire collapsed, and out of its ashes arose a vigorous and defiant Turkish Republic, which fought on to victory and in 1923 dictated the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne to the humiliated allies. Adventists were chagrined. But worse was to come. In March 1924 Turkey abolished the caliphate. Henceforth she no longer claimed to be the spiritual leader of Islam. In spite of this, most Adventists continued to cling to the view that Turkey was to play a role in the prophetic fulfillment of Revelation 16:12. After all, she still controlled the headwaters of the Euphrates!

These disconcerting reversals led some Adventists to question the church's traditional interpretation of Armageddon and the king of the north. As they studied the writings of Ellen White, they came to the conclusion that Armageddon is a battle between Christ and Satan and their followers over spiritual issues, and that this battle was closely related to Christ's second coming. Most Adventists, however, continued to hold the military view, but now, due to tensions brought on by the rise of Japan as a naval power and the spread of Russian Communism there was a turning to Butler's East-versus-West interpretation.¹⁷

Moreover, World War II defined the lines of cleavage between world powers as not East versus West, but Axis versus Allies. This had its effect on prophetic interpretation, as Adventists began to see Armageddon as a conflict not between world powers, but between Christ and Satan. Eventually some excluded a military conflagration and stressed a spiritual struggle between Christ and Satan and their followers. Although tensions marked the debate between

those who held these opposing views, gradually the "spiritual," or "new view" gained ascendancy, with some modifications, as was evident at the 1952 Bible Conference.¹⁸ The modification stressed that while the battle was between Christ and Satan, Armageddon included physical aspects as well.

While the 1919 Bible conference articulated one view, the 1952 conference focused on the other. These conferences were significant landmarks in defining the Adventist position. For the next 25 years most Adventists looked at Armageddon as the final battle between Christ and Satan, some stressing the physical, others the spiritual dimensions of the conflict. Those who stressed the physical aspect of Armageddon usually saw a global military struggle in Palestine prior to or at the Second Coming, with Christ intervening to bring about a victory for the forces of righteousness. Those who stressed the spiritual dimension saw the ultimate vindication of Christ over the wicked ones.

The Present View

Since about 1975 fewer and fewer Adventists have emphasized the military interpretation, and more and more have stressed the view that the conflict is over the final resolution of the Sabbath-Sunday question—a matter of human allegiance to God or to the Enemy.¹⁹ We have come full circle. But there are exceptions. Because of current tensions in the Middle East some have recently reverted to making predictions that

Armageddon will involve a colossal military conflict in that region of the world.

We as students of prophecy have done well whenever we have been careful exegetes of Bible prophecy and followed the counsels of Ellen White. But we have done less admirably when we have ventured into becoming prophets.

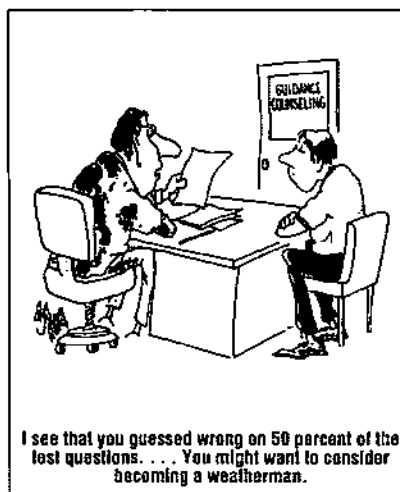
If we can learn from our history, we can continue to proclaim with confidence the imminence and literalness of our Lord's return, while avoiding our past interpretative mistakes on secondary issues. Jesus Himself said that one of the main purposes of prophecy was confirmatory—assuring His followers that human history was steadily moving toward its culmination (see John 14:28, 29). James White's caution, uttered over a century ago, is still relevant: "We should tread lightly, and take positions carefully," when it comes to unfulfilled prophecy.²⁰ □

Don Mansell has served as missionary and editor in Latin America, Asia, and the United States. The author of numerous articles and several books, he resides in Nampa, Idaho, where he continues to write and to provide editorial services.

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The Bible presents hope as an essential ingredient of human life. It is a magnificent rainbow after a devastating deluge. It is a promise to an aged Abraham that he will be the father of many nations. It is courage to affirm meaning in Job's terrible suffering. It is a guiding light to God's people on the march to the promised land. It is an anchor of safety to the missionary ship of Paul. The biblical hope is divine power, divine promise, and divine love provided for human living.

Rudolf Bultmann² summarizes the biblical concept of hope in terms of six principles:

- Hope is constantly longing for something to happen.
- Hope means to have a future.
- Hope identifies with trust.
- Hope's main object is God.
- Hope includes suffering, perseverance, and willingness to bear everything.
- Hope makes a person open to change, even in desperate situations.

Shifting Perspectives

Traditionally, hope has been considered a component of religious faith. The book of Hebrews defines faith

as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Paul considered hope as one of the three abiding virtues (1 Corinthians 13:13), basing it on what God can do now (1 Timothy 5:5), and on what He plans to do in eschatological fulfillment (2 Corinthians 3:12; Romans 8:18-23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13).

The Protestant reformers identified human hope with a strong confidence in God and His saving grace. The 17th and 18th centuries saw a gradual shift from faith to reason. By the 19th century, a stronger emphasis was placed on pessimism and hopelessness, particularly by influential authors like Kierkegaard, Schopenhauer, and Unamuno. This philosophic slide reached its lowest point by the mid-20th century, with its main proponents being Heidegger and Sartre. More recently, however, Western theology is again highlighting the religious dimension of hope, particularly in the works of J. Moltmann, J. B. Metz, E. L. Fackenheim, and H. Cox.

Hope and Mental Health

Researchers have long seen pathogenic implications in hopelessness. What Engel called "The Giving Up—Given Up Complex"³ often leads to strong feelings of helplessness and renounce-

ment, impotence, the inability to accept help, and loss of confidence in interpersonal relationships. Such feelings affect the biological system, and cause one to seek refuge in the past, setting aside concerns for the future. Some authors associate hopelessness with pessimism,⁴ while others (the cognitive group, for example) describe the situation as "learned helplessness."⁵ Hopelessness is related to depression, melancholy, schizophrenia, alcoholism, drug addiction, anti-social behavior, and suicidal tendencies.

Meanwhile, research on the role of hope in the development of mental and physical health has proved rewarding. Snyder and others have shown that people with a high degree of hope have low levels of psychological problems and possess a positive perception of life.⁶ However, despite recent studies, literature and research findings are still limited in this area.

Hope and Mental Health in Elderly People

In order to study the relationship between hope, Christianity, and mental health, we designed a research project to be carried out locally. We selected elderly people for the study because they are in a more vulnerable stage in terms of hopelessness, as has been pointed out by Farran and Popovich.⁷

We chose a Seventh-day Adventist population (n=61), because of the high degree of hope embodied in the Adventist belief system. Our research centered on the community of Villa Libertador San Martín (Entre Ríos, Argentina), an established and important denominational center in South America. We compared this group with a nearby non-Adventist population (n=65). We applied the Hope-Hopelessness Test (TED) that the author developed,⁸ along with the Herth Hope Index (HHI),⁹ the Hopelessness Scale (HS) of A. Beck,¹⁰ the Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale (IRM) of Hoge,¹¹ and the Symptom Questionnaire for the Detection of Mental Problems in Adults (SQD) of C. Climent and others.¹² All these measures proved useful, consistent, valid, and reliable.

The sample consisted of 126 individuals (72 female= 57.1 percent and 54 male= 42.9 percent), between 65 and

T rue religion brings man into harmony with the laws of God—physical, mental, and moral. It teaches self-control, serenity, temperance. Religion ennoble the mind, refines the taste, and sanctifies the judgment. It makes the soul a partaker of the purity of heaven. Faith in God's love and overruling providence lightens the burdens of anxiety and care. It fills the heart with joy and contentment in the highest or the lowliest lot. Religion tends directly to promote health, to lengthen life, and to heighten our enjoyment of all its blessings. It opens to the soul a never-failing fountain of happiness.

— ELLEN G. WHITE

70 years old, most of them married, in retirement, all with at least a primary school education. The results were as follows:¹³

1. The Adventist population had a significantly higher score of hope than the non-Adventist.
2. The higher the degree of hope (TED), the lower the amount of mental disorders.
3. A significant relationship was found between intrinsic religion (internalized faith and values rather than legalistic rituals) and mental disorders (49, p<.001)
4. Age, sex, marital status, and education did not show any significant relationship to hope and mental health.

To summarize, all the data point to the fact that hope—and, in our study, Adventist hope—is a strong factor in contributing to good mental health. In the same way the intrinsic religious convictions (rather than extrinsic motivations such as merely following rules and rituals) were closely related to hope and mental health. These results are consistent with other studies on religion and hope among elderly people,¹⁴ as well as with patients suffering from AIDS.¹⁵

Thus the Christian hope, anchored in the promises of a God who loves and cares for us individually, constitutes a key factor in mental health, providing meaning and emotional balance even at an advanced age. As Paul wrote to an early group of Christian believers, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him" (Romans 15:13, NIV). □

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"IF IT'S THIS GOOD HERE, I WONDER WHAT IT'S LIKE IN HEAVEN ON A DAY LIKE TODAY?"

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Flavie Jackson

Dialogue With the Director of Cultural Affairs of the Seychelles



Mrs. Flavie Jackson carries with her an aura of gracious self-assurance and dynamic conviction. Speaking in fluent English, with a slight French accent, she talks rapidly and with enthusiasm about her homeland, her husband and children, and the various occupations in which she has engaged. Teacher, literature evangelist, executive secretary, hairdresser, archivist, librarian, director of cultural affairs. . . Here is a successful Christian woman who has raised a family, traveled extensively, and has served her homeland with distinction. She tells us that throughout her life she has felt God's guiding hand and, in turn, has sought to serve Him with integrity. Our dialogue took place in the city of Bangalore, India, while Mrs. Jackson was attending the Annual Council of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as the lay representative from the Africa-Indian Ocean Division.

■ *What can you tell us about the Seychelles?*

They are an archipelago of 92 small tropical islands located in the Indian Ocean, approximately 1,000 miles (1,600 km) east of the African mainland. The population stands at 70,000, with most of the Seychellois living on Mahé, the largest island.

The Seychelles were discovered in the early 1500s by the Portuguese and claimed by France in 1756. The British ruled the islands between 1814 until 1976, when our country became a republic. Our economy is based on tourism, fishing, and agriculture. I'm proud to be Seychellois and to live in one of the loveliest spots on earth!

■ *What is special about your homeland?*

First, the harmonious mixture of races and nationalities—from Africa, Europe, China, and India—all united by our Creole language and culture. In addition, most Seychellois also speak French and English. Second, the beauty

of the environment: the white sands, the blue-green sea, and the life-giving tropical sun. Third, some of our unique products—such as the *coco de mer*, a double coconut that can weigh as much as 50 pounds (24 kgs), giant tortoises, and unusual species of plants and birds.

■ *How did you come in contact with the Seventh-day Adventist Church?*

Like most of the people in the Seychelles, my grandparents were Catholic. However, just after I was born my mother became a Seventh-day Adventist. I attended the only Adventist school in the Seychelles and was baptized when I was 13 years old in the sea, off the island of Cerf.

■ *Where did you spend your youth and early adulthood?*

After my parents migrated to Kenya, I joined them and continued my studies in Nairobi. When I completed my schooling, I was invited to teach in an elementary school for Moslem girls there. At that time I met Wilfred Jackson, a former British Army officer and who later became my husband. Bill had been raised in the Anglican faith and I began to pray that God will lead him to

become a Seventh-day Adventist. Slowly he started to change his life-style, to study the Bible, and to enjoy attending church meetings. By then we had moved to Tanganyika (now Tanzania), where he worked for the prison system. What a joy it was to see him join our church by baptism!

■ *Where did you go next?*

We moved to Kampala, Uganda, where my husband served for five years as the director of an agricultural school for the blind. In the meantime I began to work as a literature evangelist, distributing Adventist publications. We were both very involved in church activities. It was a very rewarding experience! By then our children started going to school. I decided to develop my skills and became executive secretary of the Uganda Council on Women. Later, thanks to my ability to communicate both in English and French, I joined Air Congo. I had been away from my islands for more than 20 years and I was beginning to feel homesick. So I convinced Bill to move back to the Seychelles.

■ *What did you do when you went back to your homeland?*

In 1971 Bill began working as an accountant in Victoria, the capital. I was

invited to serve as chief clerk in the national archives and eventually became the director under the last British governor. In 1976, as our country became an independent republic, I began working at the Carnegie Public Library. Two years later I went to England to study the operation of several major libraries. Upon my return, we reorganized our national library and started a mobile library to make our collections accessible to more people. Between 1979 and 1987 I was the chief librarian.

■ *Tell us about your children.*

We value Adventist education and for their secondary studies both attended our Stanborough School, located in the outskirts of London. Our daughter Georgette is now married to a civil engineer, and they have two children. They live in England, where she works as a secretary with Air Seychelles. Our son Francois is a pilot for Air Seychelles. He and his wife have a baby daughter.

■ *What are your current responsibilities?*

Since 1987 I have been serving as director of the Department of Cultural Affairs. This involves supervising and coordinating, for the national government, the library, archives and museums, the national heritage, the office of copyrights, the art associations, and the Conservatory for Music and Dance.

■ *Do you find rewarding your government work?*

I consider it an honor to serve my homeland. In addition, it has allowed me to expand my knowledge and skills. I have represented my country in various ways in many parts of the world: in Canada, China, Kenya, Russia, and the United States.

■ *What can you tell us about the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Seychelles?*

Adventist work in the Seychelles began just a few years before I was born. The first pastor came from the island of Mauritius. As a result of his faithful work, an Adventist congregation was established. Soon afterwards the first little church in the city of Victoria was built. Our first believers had to endure ridicule and harassment—stones thrown on the church's roof during the meetings and loud noises to drown the members' singing during the Sabbath services. In spite of the opposition, our church has grown, and we now have three congrega-

tions on the islands, with a total of 200-250 baptized members. Several hold positions of responsibility in government and business. At present there is one Seventh-day Adventist for approximately every 300 Seychellois.

■ *Describe a typical day in your life.*

I get up very early in the morning, usually at 4:30 AM, and my first activity is to spend some devotional time. I always ask the Lord to guide and inspire me during the day. Then I work on reports or write letters. At around 6:30 my husband and I have breakfast. By 7:30 both of us are at work in our respective offices. I spend almost the whole morning in meetings or discussions regarding the coordination of the various divisions in our ministry. At noon we might have a business lunch or meet with one of the cultural groups that visit our country. In the early afternoon there may be more meetings or planning sessions. By 4:00 I take care of the office paperwork and by 4:30 I'm on my way home. There I may work in the garden or attend to other tasks. After supper I devote time to my church responsibilities: preparing the Sabbath school program, as superintendent, or writing a sketch for the youth meeting.

■ *Do you have any hobbies?*

I used to do needlework and to embroider very well. In fact, when I was a school girl in Nairobi I was selected to embroider a table-runner for Princess Elizabeth—now Queen Elizabeth—when she came to Kenya. But now I concentrate on the garden, in which I have many flower plants that my mother left me when she died.

■ *What gives you the most satisfaction in your professional work?*

To have a project well-planned and successfully carried out.

■ *Can you share your faith as you fulfill your current responsibilities?*

There isn't a day in which I don't have the opportunity of witnessing for my faith. All those who know me are acquainted with my Adventist convictions and respect them. Through my work I meet government officials, ambassadors, and ministers. Frequently I

can share my beliefs with them. Those who plan the meetings or receptions know that they can't count with me on Friday nights or on Saturdays until sunset. They also respect my principles regarding food and drink.

■ *What does it mean to you to be a Christian and a Seventh-day Adventist?*

To think and feel that I am child of God and that the Lord has always something for me to do. To know by experience that God listens to my prayers. I was barely four years old when I fell into a pan of boiling water and was very badly burned. At the hospital I was for an entire month on my back, naked, unable to move. When the nurse tried to make me walk, I would scream in pain. One day my mother spent the entire night with me and we both prayed that God would allow me to walk again. The next morning the nurse took me across the ward to be with another lady who was very fond of talking with me. As the nurse went away, the lady asked me to walk back to my room by myself. I slowly got down and walked across the ward! Since that day I have marveled at God's answers to my prayers.

■ *How would you summarize your philosophy of life?*

I owe much to my parents, teachers, and ministers. The values I received from them I have sought to pass on to my own children and to the youth of my church. Two Bible passages have inspired me through the years: "Don't be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow too. Live one day at a time" (Matthew 6:34, LB). "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today" (Exodus 14:13, NIV). □

Interview by Humberto M. Rasi

Patrick Guenin

Dialogue With an Adventist Pediatrician in France



Patrick Guenin was born in London, England, of immigrant Swiss parents. He studied at the Institut Adventiste du Salève, in France, and then from 1955 to 1966 at the renowned medical school of the University of Montpellier. He is now a pediatrician in the beautiful city of Annecy, located 40 miles from Geneva, Switzerland. In addition, Dr. Guenin serves as director of the Health and Temperance Department for the Franco-Belgian Union and president of the French-Speaking Adventist Medical Association (AMALF). His professional and service activities are well known in the area where he lives and also among Adventists in other parts of Europe. At present he is a lay member of the General Conference Committee, representing the Euro-Africa Division. Dr. Guenin and his wife, Dany, have four children—two daughters and two sons.

■ *Dr. Guenin, why did you become a physician?*

I am a son of Adventists, and for me three careers seemed to represent best my ideals: minister, teacher, or physician. Since my youth I have felt a real passion for medicine. It has offered me an extraordinary opportunity to live my Christianity in the real world. It has allowed me to serve, to help my fellow human beings, and to alleviate much suffering.

■ *What persons have had the strongest influence on your life?*

My father died when I was only 10 years old and my family sent me to study at our school in Collonges-sous-Salève. I believe that having been educated in an Adventist school for nine years influenced me for the rest of my life. All the teachers—and particularly Mrs. Talle—served as Christian models and provided me with valuable orientation in my choices.

■ *You chose pediatrics as a specialty; was it because you love children?*

Originally I wanted to be a gynecologist, but during my internship in pediatrics I discovered my true vocation.

■ *Pediatricians have a reputation, according to some research, of being kind and gentle. You fit the profile! Why did you settle in Annecy?*

For the proximity of an Adventist church and the Institut Adventiste du Salève, our major educational institution in this area. When I arrived in Annecy, I was the fourth pediatrician in the city. Today, there are 30!

■ *Your influence in the city is well known. Did you want to have a part in its life as soon as you arrived?*

I had not thought about it. Being the son of Adventists, educated in an Adventist school, my wish didn't go any farther than to practice my profession well and to be a good church member. One day in 1970, pastor Paul Tièche insisted on my leading a Five-day Plan to Stop Smoking. The experience was a revelation for me! I discovered that I could help people as a physician and also make my church and its message known. A few years later, the same Paul Tièche,

when he became the Franco-Belgian Union president, established the Health and Temperance Department and asked me to serve as its director.

■ *You accepted, I assume, with enthusiasm?*

Not really. I am a rather shy person, and this responsibility demanded a great deal of public activities. But I accepted. In 1979 we founded the French-Speaking Adventist Medical Association (AMALF) with 25 physicians as members. Today, the association is open also to other medical personnel and has reached a membership of approximately 500.

■ *What were your objectives when you started this association?*

Basically three:

- To bring together Adventist health professionals from French-speaking countries and to better integrate them into the life of the church;
- To provide our members with an Adventist post-university education;
- To further Adventist mission in the developing countries.

■ *That's why each year you send teams to Africa.*

Right. I was part of the first medical group that went to the Songa Hospital in Zaire in 1987. We were three physicians—a surgeon, a family doctor, and a pediatrician (myself)—and three experienced nurses. You would call it a perfect team! We established a clinic at Kitengué, in a zone without medical services. Today, there is a 300-member church and a maternity clinic in that locality, and we hope that soon a hospital will be built there.

Our association continues to support the Songa Hospital. Every year we send to Songa 40 cubic yards of material and medicines. One of our colleagues, Dr. Delgado from Argentina, now the surgeon there, is doing an outstanding job.

■ *What memories do you have of your mission trip?*

It was a most thrilling experience! It completely changed my perspective on life. In fact, I believe that every Adventist health professional should spend some time serving in an area of the world where there are acute needs.

■ *What is the status of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in France?*

We are less than 10,000 Adventists in a country of approximately 60 million inhabitants. Our membership is growing, but very slowly. Religion does not seem to interest most French people anymore. The population is mainly Catholic, but churches are quite empty. It seems that we have not yet learned how to communicate the Adventist message to modern men and women, to make it relevant and attractive to them. And yet we have to go on, using the talents that God has entrusted to each one of us!

■ *In your region, you have become known as "Monsieur Prévention anti-tabac" (Mr. Tobacco Prevention).*

There is some truth in that! The League for Life and Health over which I preside is an organization much appreciated by the authorities in our area. We are the main leaders in planning the activities for the Non-Smoking Day. Through that program there is an increased awareness of the health risks caused by the use of tobacco, and our church is seen as providing a positive service. In addition, the league sponsors

informative lectures on tobacco in the elementary schools of the area. Thanks to the contributions received from league members and other sources, our programs have a sound financial base. We have built a social center where we hold church services and operate Radio Semnoz.

■ *So radio is another facet of your activities.*

In reality it is Dany, my wife, who is the cofounder of this local radio station. Started in 1982, it is today one of the most appreciated in the area for its programming. Of course, from the beginning, I was supportive of the project and much involved on behalf of our League for Life and Health. I was surprised to discover that many people recognized my voice in the broadcasts. Radio Semnoz is a collective project. Thirty persons form our team, of whom 12 are involved in program production and three work full-time.

■ *Radio Semnoz is an Adventist radio broadcasting in a strongly Catholic area. What is the reaction of your listeners?*

Everybody knows we are Adventists! People like our programming and, in fact, there is a listeners' association that sponsors Radio Semnoz. We also publish a magazine for members of the association. Our station, through its local broadcasts, contributes to creating a positive image for the church. According to recent polls, 8,000 persons listen more than one hour per day.

■ *Remarkable! What activities do you envision for the future?*

Our League for Life and Health is now officially recognized at the regional level. It has six local affiliates. Through them we are planning to expand our health prevention campaigns in the schools.

■ *How do you personally keep your spiritual life strong?*

I am very busy person, but I look forward to each Sabbath, knowing that in church I will find Christian fellowship and spiritual nurture. We live in a beautiful area of the French Alps and the nature that surrounds us reminds me every day that God is our Creator and we are His creatures. Helping people in need and cooperating with my colleagues in worthy projects also strengthens my spiritual life.

■ *What advice would you give to Adventist medical students in non-Adventist institutions of higher learning?*

Preparing to become a health professional is an exciting experience. Of course, studying in a non-Adventist university presents certain challenges, some of which I have myself experienced—keeping the Sabbath, maintaining Christian moral standards. . . My best advice is to encourage Adventist students to get together whenever possible. Form an association. Go to church regularly. The church needs you and you need the church! We were a lively group of students at Montpellier University, involved in religious, social, and outreach activities. The challenge is greater, of course, if you are the only Adventist student in the school and there is no Adventist church in town. But God will strengthen you if you stay close to Him.

■ *Are you happy as an Adventist physician?*

Happy and proud, because health is part of our message. An Adventist physician is encouraged by his faith to fight against sickness both through prevention and through healing. He or she can play an important role in the church and in society at large. Today, science confirms the validity of the Adventist health principles and life-style. This gives us a tremendous advantage and enhances our credibility. Adventists should be known the world over as balanced people, loving what is healthy and doing all they can to improve the lives of their fellow human beings. This vision is a great encouragement in my ministry. □

Interview by John Graz

Dr. John Graz serves as Youth and Communication director for the Euro-Africa Division in Bern, Switzerland.

Dr. Patrick Guenin, president of the Association des Médecins Adventistes de Langue Française (AMALF), can be contacted through his address: 1, Rue du Lac; 74000 Annecy; France. Phone and fax: (33) 50 52 9265.



After three and half years with Christ, the disciples still expected Him to establish an earthly kingdom exclusively for the Jews, with the Gentiles serving as their slaves. Not surprisingly, many of the disciples' arguments revolved around who would occupy the positions of privilege and power in the coming kingdom.

That Passover night was no exception. Their mutual jealousies were running deep as a result of the pointed arguments on the way. When they arrived at the upper room and discovered that there was no servant to wash their feet, none of the disciples would

The Art of Being No. 1

by
Dwight
Hornbacher

suffer the indignity of performing this service for the others—much less for their potential rivals! Each one sat by himself, sour and unmoving.

Into this charged atmosphere Christ entered, carrying alone the burden of the sins of the world, facing His impending torture and death. But instead of condemning or complaining, He demonstrated the attitude required for citizens of the forthcoming kingdom and revealed the essence of the power behind God's authority.

Removing His cloak, He placed a towel about His waist, and proceeded to wash the dusty feet of His disciples. Astonished and ashamed, they watched silently until Christ got to Peter, who exclaimed, "You shall never wash my feet!" (John 13:8, NIV). He could not understand how the King of the universe could perform the task of a slave.

Christ did not remonstrate with Peter but simply replied that the disciple did not understand what He was doing: "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me" (v. 8). Unable to bear the thought of being separated from Christ and excluded from His kingdom, Peter wanted the Master to

wash also his hands and head. Whereupon Christ replied that those who have had a bath needed only to have their feet washed.

When He finished, Christ sat down and explained what He had done: "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example" (vs. 14, 15). He was thus restating the basic operative principle of His new kingdom.

Later that evening, Christ suggested to Philip that this principle was also the motivating factor behind the actions of God the Father: "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.... The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work" (John 14:9, 10, NIV). This statement portrays the true nature of the Godhead and their relationship to the inhabitants of the universe. All their actions are motivated by selfless love.

When we practice the ordinance of foot washing, we are identifying ourselves with Christ and His mission, a servant to all. We seek to follow His example of self-denying service to our fellow human beings. This is done by following the lead of the Holy Spirit who will cleanse us of our natural selfishness and direct us to those who need our help.

What does servanthood mean in practical, 20th-century terms?

Christian health specialists can have the greatest impact on their communities if they learn from the Master's principles and methods. There was no disease, no malady, no hurt that He did not attend. None were turned away because of an inability to pay; their need was the only requirement. Some took advantage of His generosity, such as the 10 lepers of which only one returned to thank Him, yet Christ did not refuse their cry for healing. In a time when the disease of leprosy was rampant and lepers were outcasts, He responded with compassion. To the leper who pleaded for healing, Christ responded by touching him and commanding, "Be clean!" (Mark 1:42, NIV). The man was immediately cured.

Teachers, counselors, psychologists, and others in related fields can exert a powerful influence for good on the young if they imitate the master Teacher and Counselor. The manner in which they respond to the needs of those assigned to their care will determine their charges' future on this earth and beyond. The apparently dumb student or

the difficult patient need as much, if not greater, attention as does the brilliant student or the "normal" patient.

Christ's example speaks powerfully to all of us, regardless of our chosen field of studies or profession—the arts, business, law, technical fields or scientific research. He challenges us to serve other people's real needs and to lead them to an encounter with their Creator. It also places before us a high standard of integrity and thoroughness.

The basic principle of God's kingdom applies especially to the family circle. Christ asks husbands to treat their wives with the same self-sacrificing love with which He treats His church (Ephesians 6:25-33). Wives, for their part, are asked to be the helping companion that God envisioned at the beginning (Genesis 2:18). Contrary to the contemporary emphasis on what each spouse can get out of the marriage, Christ encourages His followers to approach marriage with the purpose of serving each other and contributing to their partner's happiness. In such a context we can then teach and prepare our children for a life of service prompted by love.

Most of us are far from that high ideal. Yet Christ took imperfect individuals and through them, changed the world. The initial results of His tutelage were not promising. James and John wanted to call down lightning from heaven to destroy those who ignored Christ. Philip, even after the Resurrection, found it hard to believe. But Christ patiently worked with each. He prepared the disciples for the work they would do.

In the end it will really come down to just two groups of people: those who have learned to minister to the needs of others and those who have refused to learn; those who are servants and those who are not (Matthew 25:31-46). In this life we are in training for the highest calling in God's universe—service to others motivated by love. □

Dwight Hornbacher is working on a doctoral degree in Structural Geology at Texas A&M University. In addition, he breeds and trains horses at Desert Star Arabians Ranch: 3740 Fickery Road; Brian, TX 77808; U.S.A.

Driver's Ed & the Will of God

by Ruth Senter

Lord,
there are too many options:
colleges, careers,
people I could marry,
places where I could live someday.
How will I ever know which one is for me?

All the possibilities seem good.
They lead somewhere I'd like to go,
and could be right for me.
I glance one direction and say,
"This is the way I should go."
But the next time I look,
I see new opportunities
down another road.

How do I know the will of God?

One day
I stumbled on an image that helps me
understand.
It is the first day of driver's ed,
sophomore year.
I take my place in the driver's seat
of the white Ford Tempo
and grip the wheel as though
one false move would send us
over the brink.
"Relax," says my instructor.
"A road gives you a certain margin of
error.
That's what shoulders and medians are
for."

I cautiously pull onto the street,
my fears somewhat relieved.
The lane is wider than I thought.
"Choose the route,"
Mr. Gibson says as I come to a four-way
stop.
"There is more than one way to get there."
I turn left.
At least I'm heading in the right direction—
toward the county courthouse where we'll
practice parallel parking.

Today,
as I sit squarely in the middle of indecisions
with good options spread out before me,
I remember Mr. Gibson's words:
"Choose your route.
There's more than one way to get there."

I am somewhat relieved;
maybe God's will is wider than I thought.
I stop trying so hard to figure it out
and instead concentrate on doing
what I've always done:
Get up,
go to school,
go to practice,
come home,
do homework,
go to bed,
get up. . . .
I stay in touch with God.

(If I know what he wants me to do today,
I will know what he wants me to do
tomorrow.)
I follow the signposts I can see
rather than worry about the ones I can't;
I am rejected by a certain college;
accepted by another.
The person I thought I loved breaks up
with me;
my best friend introduces me to her
cousin and
we click immediately.
My boss in my part-time job—the kind
of work
I thought I might want to do forever—
tells me he doesn't need me anymore.
My uncle offers me summer work and,
to my surprise, I like it.

Then one day,
after I've made a few major decisions
which have turned out well,
I look back and realize God's will
was something I did every day.
As for the options:
God designs the map,
but he leaves it to me
to figure out the route.

Ruth Senter is a magazine editor and the author of eight books. This poem is reprinted with permission from Campus Life magazine.

In the 1960s, Adventist college and university students on the island of Mindanao, South Philippines, were strong in their faith and willing to suffer penalties for non-attendance at academic activities during the Sabbath. School authorities, observing their commitment and determination, granted them Sabbath privileges or assigned to them make-up work. There was no need then for the church leadership to intervene on the students' behalf.

However, a few years later the situation changed. As larger numbers of Adventists

work, church visitations, fellowship meetings, and retreats. These programs were enthusiastically embraced by our students on several campuses. It was during this time that the General Conference established the Committee on Adventist Ministry to College and University Students (AMiCUS), with representatives in all the world divisions. The South Philippine Union immediately appointed a coordinator to represent this ministry and provide support to Adventist students attending non-Adventist colleges and universities. Coordinators for this ministry in the missions and conference, cities, towns, and districts were also chosen. New chapters were organized, and existing ones were revitalized. At present, 62 local AMiCUS-MAS chapters minister to close to 10,000 members in Mindanao.

Eventually, campus evangelism became a central activity of the MAS program. Students were taught to give Bible studies and share practical methods of health care. As a result, at Central Mindanao University, Musuan, Bukidnon, four professors with their families and some staff members were baptized. At present, about 100 students, faculty, and staff attend regular church services at that university. In the Southern Mindanao Mission territory, six simultaneous Voice of Youth crusades were conducted last summer by MAS members and professional groups. These served as practicum for those who attended youth evangelism seminars. One hundred thirty-seven were baptized as a result of these crusades.

At Mindanao State University, Central Santos City Campus, the MAS gained recognition as the most outstanding student association for exemplary behavior of members and extraordinary contributions to the school community. Engr. Hayde Bustamante, a former MAS officer and now a professor and active sponsor of MAS at that university, reported that last July during a social party more than 50 students were injured by a bomb explosion. However, not one Adventist was injured because nobody attended when they had learned that the program would include dancing and other activities they considered contrary to their convictions. "We praise the Lord for the commitment of our youth to the Adventist social standards," she concluded.

In the Davao, Northeastern Mindanao, and Western Mindanao mission territories,

Brilliant Stars in the South Philippines

by
Jonathan C.
Catolico

enrolled in colleges and universities, a few of them began attending classes or taking exams on the Sabbath. As a result, some university administrators withdrew the Sabbath privileges granted to all Adventists on their campuses. This move concerned many faithful Adventist students and led them to organize student associations through which they approached university authorities, requesting exemptions that would allow them to remain true to their religious convictions.

Thus, the Movement of Adventist Students (MAS) was born in Mindanao and became a strong unifying force. However, when martial law was imposed in the country, student organizations were disbanded. After a few years of martial rule, university authorities again allowed student organizations, and the MAS resumed its activities on several public campuses.

During the mid-eighties, MAS objectives were expanded to include campus ministries and outreach activities, social

Voice of Youth Crusades were also conducted last summer. The Bible seminar presented in Misamis University, Western Mindanao, resulted in a dozen baptisms. Additional crusades are planned for future school breaks. Part of the planned activities are temperance parades and rallies, and a health expo.

Other activities sponsored by the AMiCUS groups in the South Philippines include holding consecration and baccalaureate services and a tribute to parents by graduating students, mission-wide conventions and retreats, Bible conferences, health and temperance rallies, religious film shows, and weeks of prayer. The union and mission papers provide space for news and articles about these student activities.

MAS members who complete their studies and become professionals are invited to join the Association of Adventist Professionals (AAP) after graduation. This association was established to provide professional fellowship and support, foster outreach among their peers, and assist student organizations in their financial needs. At times, MAS and AAP co-sponsor city-wide health expositions, providing education on prevention and a healthy lifestyle. The assumption that a student who is active in evangelism will become a successful professional and a strong leader in the church has proved true. We can count on his or her involvement and leadership in spite of the worldly influences that pervade academic and professional life.

The AMiCUS program in the South Philippine Union faces several challenges, among them the need to provide adequate support to the ever-increasing number of Adventist youth who, for a variety of reasons, are not able to enjoy the benefits of an Adventist college or university education. Despite the obstacles and pressures they face, thousands of Adventist students continue to let the light of Christ shine brightly in their lives as they advance toward their professional goals at public and private universities. □

Jonathan C. Catolico (Ph.D., Central Mindanao University) serves as AMiCUS coordinator and director of the departments of education and communication for the South Philippine Union. Address: P.O. Box 208; 900 Cagayan de Oro City; Philippines.



These MAS members in Kidapawan, North Cotabato, Philippines, sang for a Voice of Youth crusade.



Other MAS members helped in the construction of a public basketball court in the town plaza of Libas, South Cotabato, Philippines.



Adventist students and faculty at Central Mindanao University pose for this photo during a break in their Sabbath worship program on campus.



The Russian Adventist Seminary has published the first two issues of *Dialogue's* "cousin" under the name of *Obraz i Podobie* (*The Image and the Likeness*). Why did we decide to launch this new publication?

The ideological vacuum brought about by the collapse of communism in the former USSR has been quickly filled by various kinds of eastern and western religions and cults, eccentric political ideas, witchcraft, black magic, and other questionable concepts. Post-soviet society resembles a curious teenager who escaped his strict, domineering parents to explore the mysteries of the forbidden. These unexpected and frightening expressions of longed-for freedom have challenged Christians in general, and Adventists in particular, to find new ways of communicating God's message of love and hope.

Dialogue's Russian Cousin

by
Mikhail M.
Kulakov

The new journal seeks to provide biblical answers to fundamental questions such as: What is the role of religion in the life of the individual and in society at large? Why should biblical Christianity be given a serious hearing? How do Christianity and culture interface? What do the Scriptures say about our origins, the meaning of life, and the future of human civilization?

Following an approach similar to *Dialogue*, *The Image and the Likeness* is addressed to university students, young professionals, and in general to the

intelligentsia of the Confederation of Independent States (CIS). The first issue included several articles written by national authors, who dealt with subjects such as nature's moral lessons, world history through the eyes of biblical prophets, and the debate surrounding the new Russian novel on the Apostle Paul, by Ion Drutse. Other articles were translated from *Dialogue*: one dealing with how a Christian should relate to his Buddhist friends (a lively issue for many Russian Christians today) and "The Jonah Syndrome," on our responsibility toward those in need.

At this time of dramatic socio-economic upheaval in our country, to be able to launch and maintain a new journal is a major feat. In August 1993, 5,000 copies of our first issue were printed and distributed throughout the CIS. Soon we began receiving comments and questions from our churches: "This journal is a good evangelistic tool, but why did you send so few copies? We need more!" In late November 1993 we published the second issue, which included encouraging letters from our readers. Unfortunately, this could be our last issue. Although the material for the next issue is ready, we are short of funds and cannot keep up with the cosmic speed of Russian inflation. Our readers are supportive and generous, but outside help at this stage is crucial.*

Our dedicated staff, comprising Valery Demidov (managing editor), Oleg Grishutkin (layout, correspondence, distribution), and Larisa Turkova (computer typesetting), are determined to make sure that this young journal lives on. □

Mikhail M. Kulakov served until recently as dean of Zaoski Theological Seminary, in Russia, and is now studying toward a doctoral degree at Oxford University. In 1991 we published his first-person article, "Growing Up Adventist in the Soviet Union" (Dialogue 3:1), which later became part of his fascinating book God's Soviet Miracles (Pacific Press, 1993).

() If you wish to make a contribution in support of this important project, send it to our editorial office and we will be delighted to pass it on to the team responsible for The Image and the Likeness.*

The Mission of Our Church

Do you know the purpose for which the Seventh-day Adventist Church exists? If you were asked to define its mission, what elements would you include?

For many years we have carried out our worldwide activities guided by a succinct statement of purpose that appears as Article II of the *Constitution and Bylaws of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*, which reads: "The purpose of the General Conference is to teach all nations the everlasting gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and the commandments of God."

In recent years, however, several leaders and members felt that it was necessary to draft a more comprehensive statement that would emphasize our specific mission as a church. Such a document was adopted by the world delegates attending the Spring Meeting of the General Conference Committee in April of 1993. *Dialogue* publishes it here to stimulate reflection, discussion, and positive action by our readers.

Mission Statement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Our Mission: The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to proclaim to all peoples the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as personal Savior, and to unite with His church, and nurturing them in preparation for His soon return.

Our Method: We pursue this mission under the guidance of the Holy Spirit through:

- **Preaching:** Accepting Christ's commission (Matthew 28:18-20), we proclaim to all the world the message of a loving God, most fully revealed in His Son's reconciling ministry and atoning death. Recognizing the Bible to be God's infallible revelation of His will, we present its full message,

including the second advent of Christ and the continuing authority of His Ten Commandment law with its reminder of the seventh-day Sabbath.

- **Teaching:** Acknowledging that development of mind and character is essential to God's redemptive plan, we promote the growth of a mature understanding of and relationship to God, His Word, and the created universe.
- **Healing:** Affirming the biblical emphasis on the well-being of the whole person, we make the preservation of health and healing of the sick a priority and through our ministry to the poor and oppressed, cooperate with the Creator in His compassionate work of restoration.

Our Vision: In harmony with the great prophecies of the Scriptures, we see as the climax of God's plan the restoration of all His creation to full harmony with His perfect will and righteousness.

Pontius' Puddle



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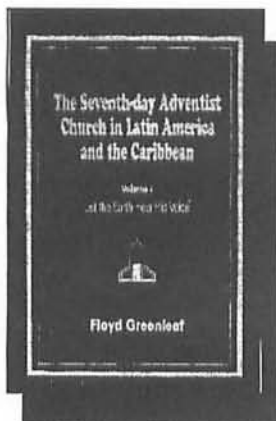
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The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, by Floyd Greenleaf (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1992; vol. I, 470 pp., vol. II, 542 pp.; hardbound).

REVIEWED BY JUAN CARLOS VIERA.

Floyd Greenleaf, vice president for academic affairs at the Southern College of Seventh-day

Adventists in Tennessee, explains in the preface the purpose and approach of this study: "My narrative follows the administrative and institutional evolution of Adventists in the American hemisphere outside the North American Division. . . . Without any apologies I admit I have written a sympathetic account" (p. i).

The narrative style selected by the author in presenting a history of the beginnings and development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Latin America and the non-Latin islands of the Caribbean leaves it up to the reader to evaluate the record and come to corresponding conclusions.

Greenleaf pored over hundreds of committee minutes, magazines, and bulletins, whose pages were well-worn by time rather than by the perusal of historians' hands. However, contrary to what one might expect, this work does not end up being a boring presentation of records and decisions. Through the author's narrative, documents and decisions come to life, and the people behind them are seen with their sentiments and emotions, with their successes and frustrations, with their hopes and disappointments. As a result Greenleaf's history takes on some of the characteristics of an adventurous Christian saga.

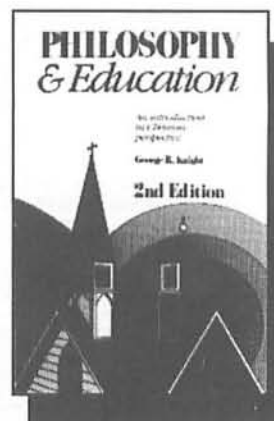
The author is justified in his favorable bias toward Latin American Adventism. In view of the extraordinary growth experienced by the the Inter-American and South American divisions of our church, and the relative stability achieved by our institutions amidst serious socioeconomic and political disruptions, we can do no less than praise God and rejoice with the church leaders and members in that part of the world.

The history of our movement in Latin America and the Caribbean is presented from three perspectives: chronological, geographic, and organizational. Chronologically, the period covered by his books extends from 1890 to 1980. From the geographical point of view, the author distinguishes clearly between the various regions of Inter-America and South America. Readers interested in a specific area can find chapters dedicated exclusively to that territory. On the other hand, if the reader looks for the development of the church's work in

education, publishing, health, or evangelism, he or she can find chapters that focus on the history of that denominational ministry and its supporting institutions.

Greenleaf's study constitutes an extraordinary contribution to our understanding of denominational history in Latin America and the Caribbean. Those who by reason of nationality, culture, or missionary service feel an affinity for this area of the world, will find that this book revives their desire to finish the work commissioned by Christ to His church. Those who read it from a non-Latin American perspective will feel motivated and challenged to reach the same or better results in their respective area of influence.

Born in Uruguay, Juan Carlos Viera (D.Miss., Fuller Theological Seminary) served as minister and administrator in the South American Division. He is currently an associate secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



Philosophy and Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective, by George R. Knight (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1989, 2nd. edition; 258 pp.; paperback).

REVIEWED BY CARLOS A. ARCHBOLD.

This book is based on Knight's many years of experience as a teacher of history and philosophy of Christian education, and on his research in Adventist educational history. The author states that his intention is not to provide final solutions for philosophical or educational problems, but to survey relevant issues and motives for deeper thought regarding educational practice.

The book is divided into three major sections. The first part defines and discusses both education and philosophy. It also highlights the relationship that should exist between educational goals and the concepts of reality, knowledge, and values in the educational process.

The second part of the book synthesizes the basic premises of Idealism, Realism, Neo-scholasticism, Pragmatism, and Existentialism. This is done within an educational context, relating philosophy to the nature of the student, the role of the teacher, the curriculum, the method of instruction, and the function of the school in society. A considerable portion of this section is a survey of contemporary educational theories such as Progressivism, Perennialism, Essentialism, and others, and the influence that the various philosophies has had on them.

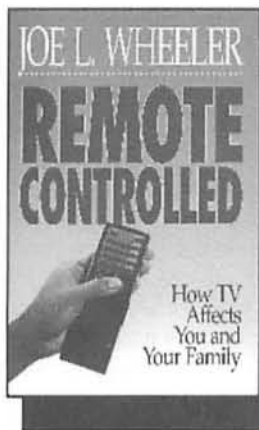
In part three, Knight discusses the major questions of philosophy from a Christian perspective. He also explores some

of the major issues of education from a Christian's point of view. The role of the Bible in the curriculum and the teacher as an agent of salvation are examples of the topics covered.

As the reader moves from section to section, the relationship between philosophy and education becomes clearer, and the reader becomes aware of the author's main concern: "What is needed by Christian institutions is a thorough and ongoing examination, evaluation and correction of their educational practice in the light of their basic philosophic beliefs" (p. 148).

Any person with a genuine interest in the present and the future of Seventh-day Adventist education will benefit from this book. The author has done a remarkable job in simplifying complex concepts of philosophy and education. He expresses them with such clarity that even a reader without extensive knowledge of philosophy can appreciate the relationship between the concepts and their implications for Christian education.

Born in Panama, Carlos A. Archbold (Ph.D., Andrews University) has been involved in research and education in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Costa Rica. He currently serves as vice president for academic administration at Antillean Adventist University in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico.



Remote Controlled: How TV Affects You and Your Family, by Joe L. Wheeler (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1993; 191 pp., paperback).

REVIEWED BY BRIAN E. STRAYER

"Television is the chief gremlin in the conversational machinery of life" (p. 163), states Wheeler, Communications/English

Department chair at Columbia Union College. *Remote Controlled* is the latest in a genre of Adventist TV studies including H. M. S. Richards' sermon pamphlet *Televiolence* (1978); Marvin Moore's activist booklet *Television and the Christian Home* (1979); David Schwantes' journalistic focus in *Taming Your TV and Other Media* (1979); and Lonnie Melashenko's statistical emphasis on sex and violence in *The Television Time Bomb* (1993).

Wheeler's book is unique in length, depth, and breadth. "This book started out being a book about the media; it ended up being a book about life itself" (p. 191), he writes. Its 23 chapters offer a menu of TV's historical milestones from 1957 to 1993 (pp. 85-104); pithy, boxed quotes; 12 delightful TV cartoons; a smattering of poems and literary allusions; and a list of 30 activities to substitute for watching television (pp. 143-

46). Wheeler cites dozens of educational, psychological, and scientific studies regarding television's mental, spiritual, and physical effects on children (seldom adults). To a lesser extent than other books, *Remote Controlled* examines biblical principles related to TV viewing; to a greater extent than some, chapter 17 analyzes good and bad Hollywood movies.

Liberals will take offense at Wheeler's occasional anti-feminism (pp. 9, 11) which at times distorts his historical view. During what he calls the "Golden Age of Childhood" (1860-1960) there was child labor exploited in America's mines, factories, and sweatshops. In the United States the "pre-TV era" was neither so law-abiding nor so peaceful as Wheeler believes (Indians starved, blacks lynched, strikers shot). Media advocates will disagree with his tone: TV is an alien presence (p. 21), a flickering blue parent (p. 23), a drug (p. 33), a brain rotter (p. 40), and the greatest time waster ever invented (p. 48).

Although *Remote Controlled* reflects much thought, it reads like a rambling "scissors-and-paste" compilation of others' research. Individual gems sparkle but need smoother transitional settings. On a few occasions, Wheeler generalizes from limited evidence (p. 19), and makes grammatical or stylistic errors (pp. 10, 74, 131). As an English professor and camp meeting speaker, he knows how to use anecdotes to advantage.

The book, replete with catchy chapter titles and contextual notes, is divided into two sections: "What We Have Become" (14 chapters on how TV has changed the family) and "What We Can Do About It" (a nine-chapter nostalgic look at the pre-TV era and how to restore its innocence today).

Remote Controlled is primarily for parents with children and teens at home, but also for thinking, concerned adults. Wheeler does not address the watching of movies on video cassettes or theater attendance. He does, however, recommend reading books early. "Unless children fall in love with reading during this early period (1-6 years), that romance is statistically unlikely to occur. Abstract print is just too plain to compete on equal terms with her gorgeous sister celluloid (p. 139)." The final chapter ("The Springs of Wonder") is an allegory addressing the need to preserve that wonder, awe, and creativity in children that TV appears to destroy.

While at times a jeremiad against television, *Remove Controlled* more often evokes a Norman Rockwell nostalgia for the "good old days" of family togetherness. Readers over 40 will enjoy this "back to the future" trip.

Brian E. Strayer (Ph.D., University of Iowa) has published two books and teaches history at Andrews University, in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

I was raised in a missionary home and always dreamed of helping people in a needy country. My parents had already worked as medical missionaries in Lesotho, when in 1991 they accepted a call to serve in Sierra Leone. I decided to go with them to finish secondary school at Kenya's Maxwell Adventist Academy.

As my graduation approached, I began thinking that it would be great to have a missionary experience before starting college. I was a bit discouraged because many told me that I was either too young or that it was too late to process the proper paperwork. However, I claimed God's promise, "Give yourself to the Lord; trust in him, and he will help you" (Psalms 37:5, TEV), and He took care of things. Shortly before graduation, Haroldo Seidl, one of the leaders of Adventist Development and Relief

tion and thousands of violent deaths. Many more people had died of starvation, not so much due to lack of food but to irresponsible management of the supplies and looting. Fortunately, by the time I arrived in June 1993, food and medicine were reaching many of the neediest people.

From the moment the plane landed in the southern airport of Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, I could see that life was going to be very different for the next two months. There were soldiers with machine guns, tanks, and helicopters everywhere. I was happy to see Hawa, a woman with a commanding presence, waiting for me. We got into a very old car and drove off, accompanied by two armed escorts. The driver honked the horn continually as we sped down the streets. I was told that the speed, horn honking, and armed guards were necessary to ward off aggressive car thieves.

As we drove to the ADRA headquarters in northern Mogadishu, I began seeing the terrible effects of the war. Buildings, monuments, and mosques that had been beautiful were now scarred by bullet holes. What the bullets and bombs had not destroyed, the looters had taken, including the light bulbs from the traffic signals. Despite the armed men, children played in the street. They waved at us as we made our noisy way past, and many smiled at us.

I spent my first night in Mogadishu hearing the frequent drone of helicopters overhead and occasional distant gunshots. I can truly say that God was with me, because in spite of what I had seen earlier and what I was hearing that night, I wasn't afraid. Instead, I felt excited to be somewhere where I could help.

The next morning, we continued our trip down a bumpy road to the clinic, which is located in the small town of Cadale, about 90 miles (150 km) north of Mogadishu. The clinic had once been an oceanside fish factory, but the war had forced it to close. The scenery was deserts and the wind constantly blew over the dunes. I was warmly welcomed by everyone. Despite the language barrier, by the second day at Cadale I felt as if I were among friends.

Since this part of Somalia had once been an Italian colony, our meals often included an Italian basic: pasta with tomato sauce. In the villages, the people eat rice and goat meat. The local specialty

Mission to Mogadishu

by
Gisele
Rostan

Agency (ADRA), visited my school. He had just been to Somalia, so I asked him if there was anything I could do there. Mr. Seidl said, "There sure is!" Soon after graduation, I was on my way to Somalia on a two month assignment.

Somalia is the easternmost country on the "horn" of the African continent, located east of Ethiopia. It has a territory of more than 637,000 sq. km (240,000 sq. mi.). The approximately six million inhabitants speak the Somali language, and the large majority are Sunni Muslims. Somalia became independent from Great Britain and Italy in 1960. Although about 95 percent of the people share the same language, culture, and religion, clan allegiance is their most important identification.

I was aware of the Somali civil war that began in 1991. Fierce clan loyalties and the vengeful policy of "an eye for an eye" had resulted in widespread destruc-



The ADRA Clinic in Cadale, Somalia.

is *muffo*, a round, flat cornmeal bread served with goat stew. The ingredients are mixed and eaten with the hands.

The ADRA clinic has a laboratory, a pharmacy, two examination rooms, and space for 15 patients at a time. The clinic team I worked with was composed of two Somali doctors, three Somali nurses, two American nurses, and two laboratory technicians. In addition to this team, eight ADRA health directors in the Cadale district provide health care and education to the people. About once a week, we delivered medicine to them and brought very sick people to our clinic. Many of these villages are not permanent, however. More than half of the Somalis are nomads, moving around with their cattle and small collapsible round huts made from mats braided from straw.

My assignment was dispensing prescriptions in the pharmacy. I sometimes helped in emergencies. One night, a woman came in, bleeding from a deep cut in her scalp. She had been fighting with another woman, apparently over a man. We stitched her up and hoped that this would be her last quarrel.

Because few of the people who came to the clinic spoke English, translators were a necessity. One of the best was a blind man who had been a school principal before the war. Although a disease had claimed his sight, he managed to keep cheerful and was a great help. Since the clinic staff needed the translators the most, I quickly learned to say things like "take two pills each day" in Somali. Many of the patients who had learned Italian during Somalia's colonial period found that I spoke Spanish, so we were able to communicate in these languages as well.

Although the clinic was located a

good distance from Mogadishu, there was still some danger where we were. One day while I was in the compound, I heard shooting that lasted about four minutes. We later learned that looters had tried to steal a car, but two had been shot dead and the rest had fled. Another time we learned that looters had shot at one of our cars returning from Mogadishu with supplies. The driver is always the prime target, and our poor driver lost a finger in the unsuccessful attack. The other passenger was a thin young woman who had thrown herself to the floor as soon as the shooting began. A bullet hole through the door on the passenger side of the car showed us she had done the right thing at the right time!

What amazed me the most was the Somali people's spirit. Although they live every day knowing it might be their last, they have learned to cope. In the evening, the villagers sit together and share the news of the day. They have to walk long distances to get water, but they rarely complain. The wealthier Somalis carry their water by camel, but the poorer ones carry it on their backs. ADRA is building deeper wells to replace the current wells, which provide salty water contaminated with animal excrement. The buckets made out of old car tires will be replaced by pumps.

Up to the time I arrived, the only entertainment children had had was playing around soldiers, guns, and dead bodies. Fortunately, some primary schools were starting to re-open.

Another important activity carried out by ADRA is food and clothing distribution. Soldiers supervise the distributions; otherwise many of the needy people become violent. Our clinic also distributed clothes in outlying villages. The village people live in the most miserable condi-

tions and are most in need of help. The village elders were always very helpful, directing us to the most needy people.

The Somalis are proud of their culture. They are a very good-looking people. Their features often show evidences of their mixed blood with Arabs centuries ago. Somalia is quite a strict Muslim country. Men are allowed up to four wives and can divorce them whenever they want to. Women do not have a say in anything and live in submission to their husbands. ADRA is working with another aid agency directed by women, called SACCID ("help" in Somali). Their goal is to help Somali women by improving their opportunities for work and education.

As for the civil war, I believe that only the Somalis will be able to stop it. One of their sayings is telling: "Me and my brother against the world. Me and my brother against the clan. Me against my brother."

Despite many sad things that I saw, I was impressed by the dignity and goodness of the Somali people. I learned that the old saying is true: In giving yourself to others you receive much in return. My two-month experience in Somalia taught me to value things that I had taken for granted in the past—simple things like water, as well as important things like life and freedom. I thank God for giving me this chance to help my neighbors in need.



The author (left) and a friend show decorative dance shields and head gear.

Born in Argentina, Gisele Rostan has accompanied her missionary parents to Paraguay and to Africa. She plans to study medicine in her homeland and eventually serve as a medical missionary.

Readers interested in volunteering their services through ADRA should write to: ADRA Volunteer Coordinator; 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; U.S.A.

Young Adult Ministry Essentials

by
A. Allan
Martin

Few age groups in our urban congregations present a bigger challenge to effective ministry than those members who are between 18 and 35—the young adult years. Situated beyond the youth group but not quite comfortable with the mainstream adult scene, college/career young adults often have difficulty finding a place in a church that has not created a natural niche for them.

Although Adventist young adults come to church with a variety of attitudes and perspectives, they share certain characteristics. In general, they are better educated than the average church member, usually single or recently married, highly mobile, progressive in their thinking, aware of and sensitive to social issues, and looking for a congregation that will provide a varied, quality program of meaningful activities. A certain number within this age group are pursuing college or graduate degrees, commonly in non-Adventist institutions.

A congregation with vision will be able to tap young adult energies and resources, and integrate them into the core of their ministry. The church with a “young adult vision” and willingness to minister to this important sector of their membership can key in on these ministry essentials:

1. Intentionally create a community of acceptance and safety. Relationship is not only a buzz word among young adults; it is also one of the primary needs that they willingly express. Plan ways for your congregation to create a safe haven in which they can build relationships with church leaders and one another. Limit criticism and stress affirmation. For example, instead of expressing disapproval for the young adult’s earrings, appreciate the fact that he or she has joined your group tonight.

3. Reach out into their world, making ministry accessible. Take the initiative in approaching them, rather than waiting for them to come to you. For example, organize small group sessions on the university campus or hold an informal meal at the apartment complex clubhouse in which several of them live. Build your ministry around their timetable instead of demanding that they conform to yours.

3. Identify their spiritual gifts and nurture their leadership abilities. Young adults are multi-talented. The world is making full use of their resources; it is about time we tapped into their giftedness. Create niches that maximize their spiritual gifts. For example, use young adult talents at videography for a creative discussion starter. Consider the value of Sabbath school discussion groups especially by and for them. Mentor young adults into leadership through relationships and take the time to allow them to develop.

4. Foster young adult ownership. Empower mature young adults to minister to their peers, and allow them latitude to succeed and/or fail. At times, we crowd young adults into feeling like puppets of the church. Give them room to grow and learn. We must solidify their trust in us by placing our trust in them. For example, avoid the trap of saving a failing program. Allow them to regroup and try again. This builds responsibility and a sense of accomplishment in young adult leaders.

5. Use change as your ally, calling young adults toward Christian transformation. Status quo is a sign of stagnation. Through the spiritual disciplines, continue to challenge your young adults to follow the higher call of Christ. It’s so easy to fall into the rut of just doing social gatherings and labeling

it “young adult ministry.” Keep looking for ways to mature your young adults in Christ. For example, apply the gospel call to action by involving your young adults in ministries that help the needy.

6. Move young adults toward the core of church life by fostering a sense of belonging. Young adult leadership should naturally develop into church leadership. Being involved with the young adult ministry should naturally develop into involvement with the whole church community. Based on their giftedness, both young adult women and men should be among the church officers, participating up front at services, and being integrated into the heart of church life.

7. Systematically evaluate your ministry and refocus your young adult vision. Never stop honing your efforts to reach young adults. Intentionally plan annual leadership retreats, take surveys quarterly, and conduct program evaluations monthly to stay in tune with your their needs. Don’t assume anything. One year your ministry may call for a ski trip combined with a spiritual retreat, the next year it may call for parenting classes and child care at programs.

8. Let God do His job. Establish personal boundaries to keep ministry in check. You are not the center of the ministry. Develop a Christ-centered young adult ministry. If Christ is still Lord (and He is!), then He will play the primary role in the spiritual transformation of your young adults. Sometimes that may mean “taking the long route from Egypt to Canaan.” Also, acknowledge your own personal limits and respect the ability of young adults to choose. Establish boundaries for personal and ethical reasons.

Young adults are searching and shopping for a religious experience that will truly respond to their needs. But beyond their self-centeredness (which we seem so quick to sense in them, forgetting our own), young adults have a void that only Christ can fill. Hopefully your vision of young adult ministry will allow you to be part of Christ’s work in their lives.

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