
**The challenge of
postmodernism**

**A Christian view
of sex**

**The search for
Adam's ancestors**

**Rembrandt:
The spiritual journey
of an artist**

VOLUME 8: No. 1



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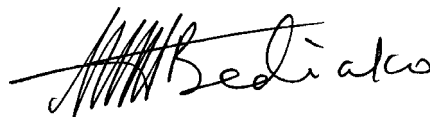


I am writing this as I fly to South Africa. There I will have the opportunity to speak to students of Bethel College and Helderberg College. I really enjoy exchanging ideas with Adventist students on our church—its advances, challenges, and its future. I also wish I had similar opportunities to meet and fellowship with thousands of Adventist students who attend public colleges and universities. These young people are extremely valuable to God and to His church. They are always present in our dreams, our plans, and our prayers. That is why I am so pleased we have *Dialogue*. Through this international journal in four languages, we can reach and keep in touch with Adventist young people on secular campuses, studying and preparing for a career or profession.

As chairman of the AMiCUS (Adventist Ministry to College and University Students) Committee, let me inform you of some recent changes that will further strengthen the ministry of *Dialogue*. Dr. Humberto M. Rasi, who founded the journal eight years ago and has edited it since then, now becomes editor-in-chief. Dr. John M. Fowler, who has been associate editor of *Ministry* magazine and was recently elected associate director of the General Conference Education Department, becomes the editor of *Dialogue*. Drs. Richard Stenbakken and David Wong, representing Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries and the General Conference Youth Department, respectively, will be associate editors of the journal. Julieta Rasi, managing editor, will now serve full time, thus enabling her to care for the expanding ministry of *Dialogue* in its four parallel editions and the growing volume of correspondence with our readers worldwide.

The October 1995 Annual Council of the General Conference approved comprehensive “Guidelines for Adventist Ministry to College and University Students” (see pages 32-34). Qualified persons to lead out in this important ministry will be appointed at each level of church administration—General Conference, division, union, conference/mission, and local church or district. I encourage you to contact the nearest Adventist administrative center and inform the AMiCUS representative about your needs and plans. You may also share with me your ideas.

The apostle’s counsel was never more timely than now: “Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands, and moves toward the goal of true maturity” (Romans 12:2, Phillips). Paul is writing about the peer pressure that all Christians, particularly young people, experience in this world. The pressure to conform to secular ideas and unhealthy practices is strongest when most of our associates do not share our convictions. The only way to withstand these challenges is to be totally committed to Christ and maintain a close friendship with Him. In addition, we must study His Word and seek the support of our faith community. God is counting on you to find ways for sharing your faith and helping others.



Matthew A. Bediako
Vice President, General Conference

Inviting Adventist musicians

I appreciated Dr. Robertson’s thoughtful approach in the article, “Are Music Choices Really Important?” (*Dialogue* 6:1). Rock music’s inroads into some of our worship services—with, of course, “Christian” lyrics—are cause for concern, especially since music is so much a part of young people’s life.

Readers who care about music in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and are interested in their own professional growth are invited to become members of the International Adventist Musicians Association (IAMA). In addition to publishing a journal in English—*Notes*—the association offers specialized subdivisions for artists, choir directors, composers, music teachers, and musicologists. We welcome students as members, with reduced membership dues. For information and an application, write to: IAMA, P.O. Box 476, College Place, WA 99324, U.S.A.

ELSIE BUCK, IAMA PRESIDENT
Berrien Springs, Michigan,
U.S.A.

Permission to use in class

May I have permission to include a copy of Richard Davidson’s article, “In the Beginning: How to Interpret Genesis 1” (*Dialogue* 6:3), in my syllabus for the class “The Bible as Story and Literary Source”? The article is a fine one, well argued, and I think my students would benefit from reading it when I teach creation.

Besides teaching at this 7,000-student state university, I am a church elder and a lay preacher for the Pennsylvania Conference. The Bible class I teach is quite popular and always full. I also serve as faculty sponsor for a student club that brings in speakers on creation and science.

ED CHRISTIAN
Kutztown University
Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

The editors respond:

After consulting with the author, we are happy to grant your request. Several teachers in Adventist colleges and universities are using articles from *Dialogue* as supplementary reading for their classes. We are delighted that you have also found one of them useful for your course at a public university. May God bless your teaching ministry.

Counsel appreciated

As a teacher at an Adventist high school, I want to congratulate you for publishing this fine journal. The practical counsel you give in articles such as "How to Make the Most of Your College or University Experience" (*Dialogue* 6:3) is much appreciated. All of us should reflect our Christian beliefs through our lifestyle and in the integrity of our actions. I'm concerned that some Adventist students take examinations or participate in worldly social activities on the Sabbath. This creates problems for other students who want to remain faithful to God in everything. I suggest that in the future you publish articles on courtship, Christian sexual mores, and how to help us all to be less critical of each other within the church family.

ANA CRUZ U.
Puerto Maldonado, PERU

The editors respond:

Thank you, Ana, for your appreciation. We have already published two articles on courtship that you may have missed: "When the Right One Comes Along: Choosing Your Life's Companion," by Delmer and Betty Holbrook (*Dialogue* 3:1) and "Preparing for a Happy Marriage," by Emilio and Ada García-Marenko (6:2). Check them out and expect more articles on this important subject. We also approached sexual mores in "Is Chastity Obsolete?" by Alberta Mazat (4:2) and again in this issue, "A Christian View of Sex," by Samuele Bacchiocchi. We will keep in mind your suggestions as we plan our future issues.

Likes AMiCUS logo

I'm a pastor and departmental youth leader in the State of Sao Paulo, and also a faithful reader of your journal, whose content I find truly fantastic! In *Dialogue* 7:1 I saw the new AMiCUS logo. How can I obtain a camera-ready copy to use as a symbol for the Adventist student fellowship we are organizing in our area? We really like it!

JOSUÉ DANTAS
West Paulista Conference
S. José do Rio Preto,
BRAZIL

The editors respond:

We are glad to learn that you like *Dialogue* and the new AMiCUS logo. Several student associations are beginning to use it to identify their activities. We suggest that you first contact our regional representative (see page 2) to obtain a copy. If you are not successful, let us know, and we will be happy to supply you with one free, ready to use on stationery, T-shirts, and posters. Our best wishes as you get a student fellowship going!

Informative and encouraging

Writing on behalf of my friends and fellow students, we want you to know that we find the contents of *Dialogue* both informative and encouraging. In fact, we are always anxious to get hold of the next issue! In addition, we would like to inform readers in other parts of the world that we belong to the Kingston School of Nursing Advent Fraternity, with approximately 50 members. We are interested in exchanging information on activities with other Adventist student associations. Address of our fraternity: Half Way Tree Road; Kingston 5; Jamaica.

JANICE JAMES
Kingston School of Nursing
JAMAICA

A sense of belonging

For some time I thought of writing a long letter to tell you how much we

enjoy each issue of *Dialogue* in Australia. Until that day comes, I just want to say that your selection of articles is great. In addition, the journal gives readers a sense of belonging. Keep publishing, and we will keep on reading. God bless!

MARK KOCHANSKI
Blacktown, N.S.W.
AUSTRALIA

Balance and depth

I have recently become acquainted with *Dialogue* and am impressed by the balance and depth of its articles and by the human quality of the Adventist professionals profiled. After attending a public university for some time I had to interrupt my studies. My plan is to start again and, as I do it, I will feel supported and encouraged by your journal. I'm intrigued by extraterrestrial intelligent life. Could you address this topic in a future issue? How do we explain the increasing frequency of reports on UFOs? What does the Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy, and science say about it?

FRANK DE SOUZA MANGABEIRA
Siqueira Campos
Aracaju, Sergipe, BRAZIL

The editors respond:

Thank you for your interesting questions, Frank. We will include them, along with a brief answer, in our new section "Open Forum." When they are published in a future issue, you will receive a book as a gift.

Continued on page 24

Write to us!

We welcome your letters, with reactions and questions, but limit your comments to 200 words. Address them to *Dialogue Letters*: 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, U.S.A. You can also send them via fax: (301) 622-9627, or E-mail (via CompuServe): 74617,1231. If selected for this section, your letter may be edited for clarity or space.

God is dead! Behold I show you the superman. Thus said Nietzsche, the 19th century German philosopher, as he set out his charter to postmodernism.

What is postmodernism? Even before we can define the term, we need to understand modernism. Briefly, modernism is that movement that emphasized reason and expressed itself most fully through science. Beginning with philosophers like Locke, Kant, and Hegel, modernism sought to understand the world through reason. Scientists like Bacon and Newton regarded physical reality as operating on the basis of natural laws. They shaped a modern science that is empirical in methodology and rational in interpretation. The 18th-century Enlightenment sought to apply reason and science to all of reality, an attempt postmodernists pejoratively refer to as the “Enlightenment Project.” The 19th century witnessed the efforts of Henry Buckle, August Comte, and Karl Marx to turn the study of human society, both past and present, into disciplines that would discover laws similar to those found in the natural world. The 20th century emphasized the application of scientific methodology to academic disciplines. In the process, modernism has brought environmental degradation, totalitarianism in the name of science, global wars using the most advanced technology, and atomic destruction.

Thus, reason and science did not lead to an utopia. No wonder reactions arose against modernism. One of these reactions is postmodernism.

Postmodernism: the background¹

Nietzsche: reality is what you create. Nietzsche is often regarded as the father or forerunner of postmodernism. Announcing that God is dead, Nietzsche stressed that there was no longer any fundamental basis to things, no foundation on which to rest one’s beliefs. Therefore, human beings have both the opportunity and responsibility to create their own world.

But there’s a problem. Nietzsche said that knowledge of things as they actually exist is impossible. What we think of as knowledge is a human creation, an illusion, or artistic construct. The language through which we express our knowledge is a self-contained world,

entirely separate from external reality and purely arbitrary in its formation. What we call truth, therefore, is a human invention.

Heidegger: reality is being. A second major figure influencing postmodernism was Martin Heidegger, the 20th-century German philosopher. Agreeing essentially with Nietzsche’s view that language creates reality, Heidegger built much of his understanding of language from artistic examples

The challenge of post-modernism

Postmodernism has its pitfalls and its challenges. How should a Christian respond?

and held a mystical, perhaps even religious, stance toward language. Rather than analyzing language, he ultimately wanted to experience it and through that experience come into contact with “being.”

Foucault: reality is a continual liberation. In the post-World War II period, a number of French thinkers were attracted to the ideas of Nietzsche and Heidegger. Of these, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida are the most significant for the development of postmodernism. Because knowledge is the attempt to control and subject, Foucault argued, it cannot be objective. Therefore, Foucault argued, the intellectual must challenge this order in a continual program of liberation. The language through which knowledge is expressed is only discourse—words and ideas interacting with other words and ideas, rather than with things in them-

by
Gary Land

selves; thus, it allows an existing discourse to challenge an opposing discourse. Therefore, Foucault sided with excluded or marginal groups, particularly homosexuals, to subvert the existing order. But if one of these marginal groups were to become dominant, he was ready to ally himself with another marginal group to oppose the newly created oppressive order.

Derrida: no self-evident meaning.

Jacques Derrida is also preoccupied with language. Because we have no immediate vision of reality, we are dependent upon speaking and writing. But speaking and writing are ambiguous and do not necessarily convey what we wish them to. Therefore, Derrida proposed “deconstructing” texts, which includes analyzing word etymologies, unintended puns, and Freudian slips in an effort to show that they do not contain any self-evident meaning.

Despite the important differences among these four thinkers, they laid the philosophical foundations for postmodernism through three primary contributions. First, human beings have no access to reality and, therefore, no means of perceiving truth. Second, reality is inaccessible because we are caught up in a prison-house of language that shapes our thought before we think and because we cannot express what we think. Third, through language we create reality, and thus the nature of reality is determined by whoever has the power to shape language.

Postmodernism and the humanities

As a recognized intellectual movement, postmodernism began in the late 1960s and early 1970s.² An examination of the writings both of and about postmodernism strikingly reveals the emphasis on the changing and fragmentary nature of the movement. Some of the effects of these emphases on the humanities may be summarized as follows.

Anti-foundationalism. Postmodernism is in fact often referred to as anti-foundationalism. It arises out of an understanding of language as a self-containing reality. Thus Jean Baudrillard can say that we must allow “for all the possible interpretations, even the most contradictory—all are true, in the sense that their truth is exchangeable.”³ Reflecting Foucault, Zygmunt Bauman says,

“Truth is ... a *social relation* (like *power, ownership, or freedom*): an aspect of a hierarchy built of superiority-inferiority units; more precisely, an aspect of the hegemonic form of domination or of a bid for domination-through-hegemony.”⁴ Hence, postmodernists frequently speak of “privileged” texts, ideas, and languages, whose importance, they believe, arises not out of inherent qualities but from hierarchical power relationships.

Emphasis on the “other.” Because it sees truth as a symbol or expression of power, postmodernism emphasizes what it often calls the “other,” marginal groups such as people of color, women, homosexuals, and third-world peoples who can challenge the “center” or locus of power. In one typical statement, Henry Giroux asserts, “In challenging the notions of universal reason, the construction of a white, humanist subject, and the selective legitimation of high culture as the standard for cultural practice, postmodern criticism has illuminated how Eurocentric-American discourses of identity suppress difference, heterogeneity, and multiplicity in its efforts to maintain hegemonic relations of power.”⁵

Expression in literary criticism.

With its emphasis on language, it is not surprising that postmodernism has probably experienced its greatest expression in literary criticism. Stanley Fish is one example. He has been a leader in the approach to literature known as “reader-response” theory. In his book *Is There a Text in This Class?*, he takes up the modernist assumption that a literary text has a fixed identity that the critic must uncover. In his intellectual development, Fish first argued that the text has a structure that is the same for all readers but that the work’s meaning lies in the reader’s experience. However, after further examination, he determined that it is the reader who decides what formal patterns are important. Later, he found that the reader supplies the formal patterns. Finally, he concluded that the reader does not act independently but is a member of an interpretive community that shapes the way the reader understands the text.⁶

Other critical schools, including formalism, semiotics, deconstruction, feminism, and neo-Marxism, have also in various ways decentered the author and the text. The critic pursues criticism as another art form—as one text interacting with other texts—because it is no longer

possible to identify the “meaning of the text in reference to any generally valid criterion of value, knowledge, and truth.”⁷

Such a theoretical approach underlies the attacks on the so-called “canon” of Western literature. While some simply want to expand the canon to include “other voices,” namely women and ethnic minorities, others have attacked the very notion that the classics are in any way superior works. Rather, in their view, such writings have been considered classics because a white, male, heterosexual power structure has posited them as such.

Postmodernism and history

History was slower to respond to the postmodernist impulse, partly because historians have been largely uninterested in the discipline’s theoretical underpinning.⁸ Hayden White, however, argued in the early 1970s that considerable similarity existed between literature and history in both form and purpose. Furthermore, he observed, there appears “to be an irreducible ideological component in every historical account of reality.”⁹

Other historians, particularly those working in cultural and intellectual history, picked up this theme. Dominick LaCapra described the historian as one in dialogue with the past, deciding “what deserves to be preserved, rehabilitated or critically transformed in tradition.”¹⁰ Along with the influential philosopher Jean-Francoise Lyotard, who challenged the possibility of all-inclusive interpretations of history, historians increasingly rejected the notion of objectivity. “History—like myth, powerful, suggestive, and inevitably fragmentary—,” Henry Glassie writes, “exists to be altered, to be transformed without end, chartering social orders as yet unimagined.”¹¹

As in literary study, historians increasingly have sought to bring new voices and perspectives—African-Americans, Native Americans, women, homosexuals, non-elite classes such as workers, storekeepers, peasants, and colonized peoples—into their accounts. They have frequently pursued the theme of oppression, particularly in connection with the spread of Christianity and Western colonialism. Beyond simply bringing in new voices, however, historians also now seek to decode language to reveal the relationships of power and gender or the psychological realities that lie behind events. And similar to some

literary critics, they seek to topple historical hierarchies.

Commenting on the debate raging over these new thrusts in historical scholarship, feminist historian Joan Wallach Scott describes the postmodernist approach to history and applies its methodology: "The knowledge we produce is contextual, relative, open to revision and debate, and never absolute." She continues: "There is no denying the partiality and the particularity of the stories, and, by extension, of all stories historians tell. It is finally the plurality of stories and of the subjects of those stories, as well as the lack of any single narrative that conservatives find intolerable because it undermines the legitimation of their quest for dominance."¹²

We must recognize that postmodernism is not all of one piece. While on the one hand some argue that scholarship is fiction, others suggest that there is a connection between knowledge and the real world. In other words, there are both more conservative and more radical versions of postmodernism. But this very pluralism in the postmodernist mindset suggests its fundamental nature. "Properly speaking, therefore, there is no 'postmodern world view,' nor the possibility of one," writes Richard Tarnas. "The postmodernist paradigm is by its nature fundamentally subversive of all paradigms, for at its core is the awareness of reality as being at once multiple, local and temporal, and without demonstrable foundation."¹³

Responding to postmodernism

How shall we respond to postmodernism? Clearly it challenges

nearly all the concepts that have guided Western civilization for 400 years or more. Its spread throughout academia and the general culture demands that we take postmodernism seriously.

Self-contradictions. First of all, postmodernism has a number of self-contradictions. Although many postmodernists assert that we have no contact with reality and therefore cannot establish truth, this argument itself puts forward a truth statement about reality.

Also, in its belief in crisis, its historical account of the passage from modern to postmodern, and its critique of the "Enlightenment Project," postmodernism writes its own meta-narrative of Western culture that appears not to take into account the very pluralism it believes lies at the heart of the historical process. Romanticism, traditionalism, and religion have all both challenged the supremacy of reason and played important roles in shaping our culture, yet they seem to disappear amid the "Enlightenment Project" paradigm postulated by postmodernists.

Despite its denial of absolutes, postmodernism's concern with dominance and oppression reveals its own set of moral absolutes. Terms such as tolerance, justice, and democracy appear frequently in postmodernist writing as moral values by which to judge existing society. But if we cannot know any absolutes, there seems to be little reason other than preference to choose these particular values and, if preference determines our values, then those values would seem to lose their moral force.

These internal contradictions of postmodernism support the view held by many scholars that rather than being a

new worldview—or anti-worldview—postmodernism is actually the logical conclusion of modernism. If this is so, it is not surprising that postmodernism still holds dear some of modernism's values, even if it has undercut the bases of those values.

Practical problems. Postmodernism also poses some practical problems. Although most postmodernists believe that language separates us from reality, this does not adequately account for the totality of human experience. Allan Megill, a sympathetic historian of postmodernism, writes: "One can call everything 'illusion' if one wishes, just as one can call everything 'discourse' or 'text.' But this does not abolish the distinction between, say, an interpretation of the experience of being run over by a truck and the experience itself—a distinction which every language, if it is to function on something other than a purely fantastic level, must somehow accommodate."¹⁴

In other words, there is some connection between language and external reality that postmodernism does not seem to acknowledge sufficiently. For example, feminist historian of science Evelyn Fox Keller argues that modern science must be understood as the product of a privileged male hierarchy. Nonetheless, she puzzles over the fact that this gendered knowledge has worked so well. "Whatever philosophical accounts we might accept," she writes, "the fact remains that the particular vision of science that men like Bacon helped articulate has, over the course of time, more than fulfilled Bacon's prophecies, yielding a kind and degree of power that surpasses his wildest dreams. Science, as we know it, works exceed-

Nery Cruz, Puerto Rico

Campus Graffiti



ingly well.” Although Keller acknowledges that there is a “loose” connection between science and physical reality, she regards this as very limited and argues that we need “a better understanding of what it means to say that science ‘works,’ above all, of what it is that science ‘works’ at. What is needed is a reexamination of the meaning of success.”¹⁵

Another, and possibly the most important, practical problem posed by postmodernism is whether a functioning society or civilization can be built without a foundation or absolutes. One of the foremost U.S. postmodernist philosophers, Richard Rorty, argues that in a world where truths do not and cannot exist, all we need is mutual tolerance.¹⁶ But is mutual tolerance of sufficient moral force to preserve a society challenged either within or without by dissenting voices that put forward a different vision, perhaps one based on absolutes? Is mutual tolerance sufficient to motivate future generations to maintain a civilization with no surer foundation than preference?

The Christian concerns. Some Christians have seen postmodernism with its interest in the “other,” its concern for a plurality of choices, and its rejection of the domination of reason and science as presenting a more favorable situation for Christianity than did modernism. Arthur J. DeJong, for instance, states that postmodernism “emphasizes openness and diversity, it reintroduces awe and mystery. While it does not demand transcendence, it allows, perhaps even suggests, transcendence.”¹⁷

While this argument is correct to some extent, it also appears to be naive. The reason postmodernism allows awe, mystery, and transcendence is because it accepts no account as truthful or, to put it in other terms, it considers all accounts as equally truthful. Christianity can be allowed into the discussion or discourse only if it drops any claim to absolute truth.

As Christians we can agree with and learn much from postmodernism in its assertions that our knowledge is limited, that reason is an inadequate path to the absolute, and that language both shapes and confines thought. After all, Paul stated that “we see through a glass, darkly” (1 Corinthians 13:12). The issue

is that as Christians we believe in revealed absolutes, while postmodernists do not. Gene Edward Veith observes, “Modernists would argue in various ways that Christianity is not true. One hardly hears this objection any more. Today the most common critique is that ‘Christians think they have the only truth.’”¹⁸

In contrast to postmodernism’s denial of meta-narrative, Christians believe that the “*petit-histoire*,” to use Lyotard’s terminology, of Jesus’s birth, crucifixion, and resurrection not only actually occurred but is itself the key element in the meta-narrative of cosmic history—what Adventists call “the Great Controversy.” Furthermore, Christians assert that our personal relationship to this totalizing story determines our individual eternal destiny.

The problems listed above should not be interpreted to mean that we should reject postmodernism out of hand. We are undoubtedly and inescapably influenced by the culture in which we live. But we also must strive to be counter-cultural, to stand outside both modernism and postmodernism, evaluating them critically and identifying points of agreement where dialogue can begin. With postmodernism such elements as the limitations of reason, acceptance of non-rational paths to knowledge, and concern for justice, among other features, can provide common ground for conversation. But we enter this dialogue with our postmodernist friends knowing that our discourse is not just intertextual—to use postmodernist terminology—but is built upon faith in the God who revealed Himself to us both through the written Word and the “Word...made flesh” (John 1:14). 🙏

Gary Land (Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara) is chairman of the Department of History, Andrews University. He has edited *Adventism in America (Eerdmans, 1986)* and *The World of Ellen G. White (Review and Herald, 1987)*, and published several articles in professional journals. His address: Andrews University; Berrien Springs, MI 49104; U.S.A.

Notes and references

1. The following survey is based on Allan Megill, *Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

2. For helpful surveys of postmodernist thought, see Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991), pp. 395-413; Marvin Perry, *An Intellectual History of Modern Europe* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992), pp. 471-485.
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Society's attitude toward sex has swung from one extreme to another. "The Victorian person," writes Rollo May, "sought to have love without falling into sex; the modern person seeks to have sex without falling into love."¹ From the Puritan view of sex as a necessary evil for *procreation*, we have come to the popular *Playboy* view of sex as a necessary thing for *recreation*.

Both extremes are wrong and fail to fulfill God's intended function of sex. The negative view makes married people feel guilty about their sexual relations; the permissive view turns people into robots, engaging in sex with little meaning or satisfaction.

How should Christians relate to sex? What does the Bible say about sexuality? As a Bible-believing Christian, I have found the following seven principles helpful in understanding how we ought to relate to sex.

Principle 1: The Bible speaks of human sexuality as good.

Let's begin with the beginning: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27).^{*} After every previous act of creation, God said that "it was good" (Genesis 1:12, 18, 21, 25), but after the creation of humankind as male and female, God said that "it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). This initial divine appraisal of human sexuality as "very good" shows that Scripture sees the male/female sexual distinction as part of the goodness and perfection of God's original creation.

Note also that human sexual duality as male and female is related explicitly to having been created in the image of God. Since Scripture distinguishes human beings from other creatures, theologians have usually thought that the image of God in humanity refers to the rational, moral, and spiritual faculties God has given to men and women.

However, there is another way in which we can understand the image of God, implicit in Genesis 1:27: "In the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Thus the human maleness and femaleness reflect the image of God in that a man and a woman have the capacity to experience a oneness of fellowship similar to the one existing in the Trinity. The God of biblical revelation is

not a *solitary* single Being who lives in eternal *aloofness* but is a *fellowship* of three Beings so intimately and mysteriously united that we worship them as one God. This mysterious oneness-in-relation-ship of the Trinity is reflected as a divine image in humanity, in the sexual duality of maleness and femaleness, mysteriously united in marriage as "one flesh."

A Christian view of sex

Principle 2: Human sexuality is a process whereby two become "one flesh."

The intimate fellowship between a man and a woman is expressed in Genesis 2:24: "Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and *they become one flesh*." The phrase "one flesh" refers to the total union of body, soul, and spirit between marital partners. This total union can be experienced especially through sexual intercourse when the act is the expression of genuine love, respect, and commitment.

The phrase to "become one flesh" expresses God's estimate of sex within marital relationship. It tells us that God sees sex as a means through which a husband and a wife can achieve a new unity. It is noteworthy that the "one flesh" imagery is never used to describe a child's relationship to his father and mother. A man must "leave" his father and mother to become "one flesh" with his wife. His relationship to his wife is different from the one to his parents because it consists of a new oneness consummated by the sexual union.

Becoming "one flesh" also implies that the purpose of the sexual act is not only *procreational* (to produce children) but also *psychological* (fulfilling the emotional need to consummate a new

by
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oneness-relationship). Oneness implies the willingness to reveal one's most intimate physical, emotional, and intellectual self to the other. As they come to know each other in the most intimate way, the couple experience the meaning of becoming one flesh. Sexual intercourse does not automatically ensure this oneness. Rather, it consummates the intimacy of perfect sharing that has already developed.

Principle 3: Sex is knowing each other at the most intimate level.

Sexual relations within marriage enable a couple to come to know each other in a manner that cannot be experienced in any other way. To participate in sexual intercourse means to uncover not only one's body but also one's inner being to another. This is why Scripture often describes sexual intercourse as "knowing" (See Genesis 4:1), the same verb used in Hebrew to refer to knowing God.

Obviously Adam had come to know Eve before their sexual intercourse, but through the latter he came to know her more intimately than ever before. Dwight H. Small aptly remarks: "Self-disclosure through sexual intercourse invites self-disclosure at all levels of personal existence. This is an exclusive revelation unique to the couple. They know each other as they know no other person. This unique knowledge is tantamount to laying claim to another in genuine belonging. . . . The nakedness and physical coupling is symbolic of the fact that nothing is hidden or withheld between them."²

The process that leads to sexual intercourse is one of growing knowledge. From the initial casual acquaintance to dating, courtship, marriage, and sexual intercourse, the couple grows in the knowledge of each other. Sexual intercourse represents the culmination of this growth in reciprocal knowledge and intimacy. As Elizabeth Achtemeier puts it: "We feel as if the most hidden inner depths of our beings are brought to the surface and revealed and offered to each other as the most intimate expression of our love."³

Principle 4: The Bible condemns sex outside of marriage.

Since sex represents the most intimate of all interpersonal relationships, expressing a "one-flesh" unity of total commitment, such a unity cannot be expressed or

experienced in a casual sexual union where the concern is purely recreational or commercial. The only oneness experienced in such unions is that of immorality.

Sexual immorality is serious because it affects the individual more deeply and permanently than any other sin. As Paul states: "Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body" (1 Corinthians 6:18). Some may say that even gluttony and drunkenness affect a person inside the body. Yet they do not have the same permanent effect on the personality as does sexual sin.

Indulgence in eating or drinking can be overcome, stolen goods can be returned, lies can be retracted and replaced by the truth, but the sexual act, once committed with another person, cannot be undone. A radical change has taken place in the interpersonal relationship of the couple involved that can never be undone.

This does not mean that sexual sins are unforgivable. Scripture reassures us by example and precept that if we confess our sins, the Lord is faithful and just to forgive us all our sins and "to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). When David repented of his double sin of adultery and murder, God forgave him. (See Psalms 51 and 32).

Principle 5: Sex without commitment reduces a person to a thing.

Sex outside marriage is sex without commitment. Such casual relationships destroy the integrity of the person by reducing him or her to an object to be used for personal gratification. Some who feel hurt and used after sexual encounters may withdraw altogether from sexual activity for fear of being used again or may decide to use their bodies selfishly, without regard to the feelings of others. Either way, one's sexuality is distorted because he/she has destroyed the possibility of using it to relate genuinely and intimately toward the one he/she loves.

Sex cannot be used as a means for fun with one partner at one time and as a way to express genuine love and commitment with another partner at another time. The biblical perspective of oneness, intimacy, and genuine love cannot be realized in sex outside of marriage or in sex with multiple partners.

Engaged couples will probably say that they are expressing genuine love when

they engage in premarital sex. From a Christian perspective, an engaged couple will respect each other and look at engagement as preparation for marriage, and not as marriage. Until the wedding vows are taken, the possibility of breaking up a relationship exists. If a couple has had intercourse together, they have compromised their relationship. Any subsequent break-up will leave permanent emotional scars. It is only when a man and a woman are willing to become one, not only verbally but also legally by assuming responsibility for his/her partner, that they can seal their relationships through sexual relations.

Nowhere has Christian morality come under greater attack than in the whole area of sex outside marriage. The biblical condemnation of illicit sexual acts is clear, but ignored by the introduction and use of "softer terms." For example, fornication is referred to as "premarital sex" with the accent on the "pre" rather than on the "marital." Adultery is defined as "extra-marital sex," not a sin against God's moral law. Homosexuality is softened from serious perversion through "deviation" to "gay variation."

More and more, Christians are giving in to the specious argument that "love makes it right." If a man and a woman are deeply and genuinely in love, it is claimed, they have the right to express their love through sexual union without marriage. Some contend that premarital sex releases people from their inhibitions and moral hang-ups, giving them a sense of emotional freedom. The truth of the matter is that premarital sex adds emotional pressure because it reduces sexual love to a purely physical level without the total commitment of two married people.

Principle 6: Sex is both procreational and relational.

Until the beginning of our century, Christians generally believed that the primary function of sex was procreative. Other considerations, such as the unitive, relational, and pleasurable aspects of sex were seen as secondary. In the 20th century the order has been reversed.

From a biblical perspective, sexual activity within marriage is both procreational and relational. As Christians, we need to recover and maintain the biblical balance between these two functions of sex. Sexual intercourse is a pleasurable act of perfect sharing that engenders a sense of oneness while offering the possibility of

bringing a new life into this world. We need to recognize that sex is a divine gift that can be legitimately enjoyed within marriage.

Paul urges husbands and wives to fulfill their marital duties together, because their bodies do not belong to themselves alone but to each other. Therefore they should not deprive each other of sex, except by mutual agreement for a time to devote themselves to prayer. Then they should come together again lest Satan tempt them through lack of self-control (1 Corinthians 7:2-5; see also Hebrews 13:4).

Principle 7: Sex enables men and women to reflect God's image by sharing in His creative activity.

In the Bible, sex serves not only to engender a mysterious oneness of spirit, but it also offers the possibility of bringing children into this world. "Be fruitful and multiply," says the Genesis command (Genesis 1:28).

Of course, not all couples are able to have or are justified in having children. Old age, infertility, and genetic diseases are some of the factors that make childbearing impossible or inadvisable. For the vast majority of couples, however, having children is a normal part of marital life. This does not mean that every act of sexual union should result in conception.

"We are not meant to separate sex from childbearing" writes David Phipps, "and those who do, totally and finally, purely for personal reasons, are surely falling short of God's purpose for their lives. They run the risk that their marriage and sexual activity may become self-indulgent. They will only look inward to their own self-satisfaction, rather than outwards to the creative experiences of bringing new life into the world and nurturing it to maturity."⁴

Procreation as part of human sexuality raises the important issue of contraception. Does the command to be fruitful and multiply mean that we should leave the issue of family planning to the mercies of God?

No explicit answer can be found in the Bible. We have seen that sex is both relational and procreational. The fact that the function of sex in marriage is not only to produce children but also to express and experience mutual love and commitment, implies the need for certain limitations on the reproductive function of sex. That is to

say, the relational function of sex can only remain a viable dynamic experience if its reproductive function is controlled.

This leads us to another question: Do we have the right to interfere with the reproductive cycle established by God? The historic answer of the Roman Catholic Church has been a resounding "NO!" The Catholic position has been tempered by Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (July 29, 1968), which acknowledges the morality of the sexual union between husband and wife, even if not directed to the procreation of children.⁵ Moreover, the encyclical, while condemning artificial contraceptives, allows for a natural method of birth control known as the "rhythm method." This method consists of confining intercourse to the infertile periods in the wife's menstrual cycle.

The attempt of *Humanae Vitae* to distinguish between "artificial" and "natural" contraceptives, making the former immoral and the latter moral, itself smacks of artificiality. In either case, human intelligence prevents the fertilization of the egg. Moreover, to reject as immoral the use of artificial contraceptives can lead to rejecting as immoral the use of any artificial vaccine, hormone, or medication that is not produced naturally by the human body.

"Like most other human inventions," writes David Phipps, "contraception is morally neutral; it is what we do with it that counts. If we use it to practice sex outside marriage or selfishly within marriage, or if through it we invade the privacy of others' marriages, we may indeed be guilty of disobeying the will of God and of distorting the marriage relationship. However, if we use it with a proper regard for the health and well-being of our partners and our families, then it can enhance and strengthen our marriages. Through contraception we can protect our marriage from the physical, emotional, economic, and psychological strains they might suffer through further pregnancies, while at the same time we can use the act of marriage, reverently and lovingly, as it was intended, to bind us together in lasting union."⁶

Conclusion

Human sexuality is part of God's beautiful creation. There is nothing sinful about it. However, like all God's good gifts to human beings, sex has come under Satan's pervasive plan to lead humanity

away from God's intentions. The function of sex is unitive and procreative, within the relationship of the male and the female coming together to form "one flesh." When that relationship is breached, when sex occurs outside of marriage, either premaritally or extramaritally, we have the violation of the seventh commandment. And that is sin, a sin against God, against a fellow human, and against one's own body.

But the Bible does not leave us without hope. It presents us with God's grace and power to overcome every besetting sin, including the sexual. Even though sexual sins leave a scar on the conscience and causes hurt to another person, true repentance can open the doors of God's forgiveness. No sin is so great that God's grace cannot bring about healing and restoration. All we need to do is reach out for that grace, for it is that grace that enables us to realize within us each potential the Creator has placed within us.

And that applies to sex as well. At a time when sexual permissiveness and promiscuity prevails, it is imperative for us as Christians to reaffirm our commitment to the biblical view of sex as a divine gift to be enjoyed only within marriage. 🙏

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**All Scriptural passages are quoted from the Revised Standard Version.*

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Evolutionary biologists are convinced that humans are descendants of ape-like creatures. In spite of a number of disputes over theories of ape-human lineages, paleoanthropologists concur. Christian response to these assertions has been varied. Some Christian organizations agree with the scientific community about the origin of humans but maintain that at some time in

The search for Adam's ancestors

by
Elaine
Kennedy

the past human beings acquired an immortal soul, moral sense, and/or the ability to reason. Others, including Seventh-day Adventists, accept the Genesis account as the record of a historical event.

Where did Adam come from? Was he fashioned from the dust of the ground by an intelligent Creator, or did he descend from an ape-like creature? We know what the Bible says. Does the "book of nature" agree?

Determining what is human

Although some pet owners might argue the point, traits such as esthetics and moral sense, free choice, and complex speech set humans apart from animals.¹ Extinct human-like skeletons cannot provide us with this type of information. Since scientists are not able to talk to the organisms that are alleged to be our ancestors to determine just how human they were, researchers rely on structural features of the fossil bones and genetic information in modern apes and humans.

Modern humans are distinguished by several skull features. Three notable

characteristics can be easily recognized: (1) At the front of the lower jaw, modern humans have a part of the jaw bone that protrudes to form the chin. (2) The angle of the face is very flat because modern humans lack a muzzle and have a non-receding forehead. (3) The upper portion of the skull in modern humans is wider than the base of the skull. Determining whether a fossil skeleton is a modern human does not appear to be too difficult.

The hominids

Hominid is the name given to the bipedal primates, including all of the species in the genera *Australopithecus* and *Homo*. The australopithecines include the genus *Australopithecus* and, for some researchers, *Paranthropus*. The hominines refer to the members of the genus *Homo*.

The australopithecines are divided into two groups, based on body type: (1) The gracile, small-boned, more fragile ape-like forms include *A. ramidus* (the most recent australopithecine find, currently proposed as the fossil closest to the "missing link" or common ancestor of apes and humans); *A. afarensis* (a "community" of fossils has been found; one 40 per cent complete skeleton is popularly known as "Lucy"); and *A. africanus* (the "Taung Child," named for the locality near which it was found).

(2) The robust ape-like forms include *A. aethiopicus* (a skeleton with some distinct traits found in *A. afarensis*, known as "Black Skull"), *A. robustus*, and *A. boisei*. Some researchers place all of the robust forms in the genus *Paranthropus*.²

The genus *Homo*, to which humans belong, has a number of species assigned to it: *H. habilis* (fragmentary material of a small species found near stone tools, known as "Handy Man"); *H. rudolfensis* (gracile skull and bone material notably larger than *H. habilis*, even though it was formerly assigned to that species); *H. erectus* (more than 200 fossil individuals popularly referred to as erectines, including Java Man and Peking Man); *H. ergaster* (skull and bone material formerly assigned to the erectines and now distinguished by lower jaw and tooth structure as a separate species, known as "Turkana Boy"); *H. heidelbergensis* ("Rhodesian Man", an archaic *H. sapiens* previously identified

as an erectine, sometimes listed as *H. sapiens heidelbergensis*, a subspecies of *H. sapiens*; the species has a larger cranial capacity than the erectines); *H. neanderthalensis* (a robust species commonly pictured as a “Cave Man”, skeletal remains frequently display evidence of trauma, sometimes listed as *H. sapiens neanderthalensis*); and finally, *Homo sapiens* or *Homo sapiens sapiens* (modern humans).³

Research approaches

In the search for human origins, three major groups of scientists—paleoanthropologists, evolutionary phylogeneticists, and molecular anthropologists—approach the problem from three very different perspectives. Paleoanthropologists focus on physical features of the hominid skeletons and on tool use. Evolutionary phylogeneticists describe the similarities or relatedness of organisms. Molecular anthropologists emphasize protein and DNA similarities among the hominids.

Some hominid physical features.

Paleoanthropologists are scientists who study exclusively human origins. In comparisons of skeletal structures or morphological traits in the hominids, they believe they have found several hominine and ape-like features in these fossils. One of the most important species of the australopithecines, *Australopithecus afarensis*, exhibits these features.

Australopithecus afarensis, a hominid also popularly known as “Lucy,” has a hip joint, that is not quite ape-like, not quite human. While it seems clear that the australopithecines were not knuckle-walkers like modern apes, the hip joints were rotated forward enough that they are not confused with modern human hip joints. (One of the criteria that has been used to identify the genus *Homo* is a fully upright walking posture.) Another structure pointed out by paleoanthropologists as evidence for an australopithecine link between apes and humans is the curvature of the finger and toe bones. The australopithecine fingers and toes are not as straight as human fingers and toes but the knuckle is not as simple as the chimpanzee’s.⁴ A number of these somewhat simian, somewhat human features in the limbs of the australopithecines have been identified. In addition, the decrease in the size

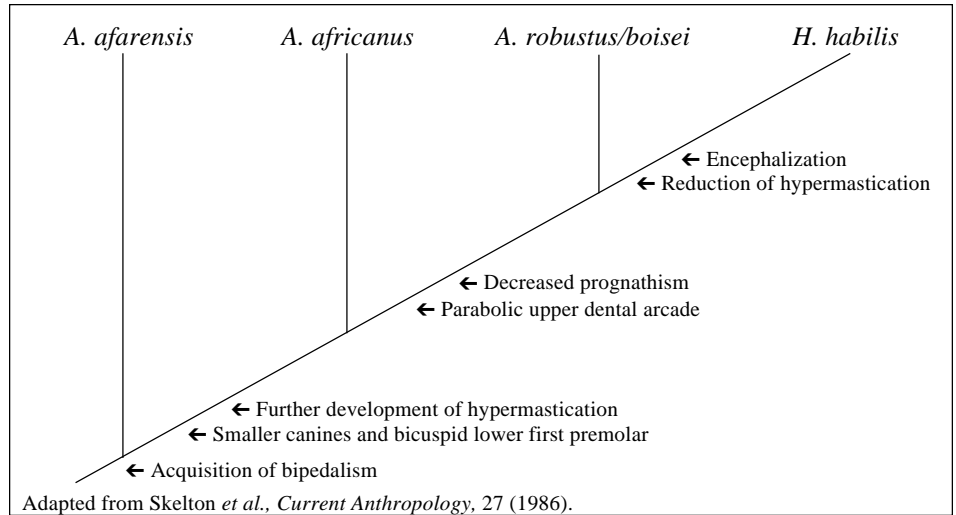


Figure 1 - Simplest cladogram, based on 45 of the 69 traits, and the derived conditions characterizing each branch.

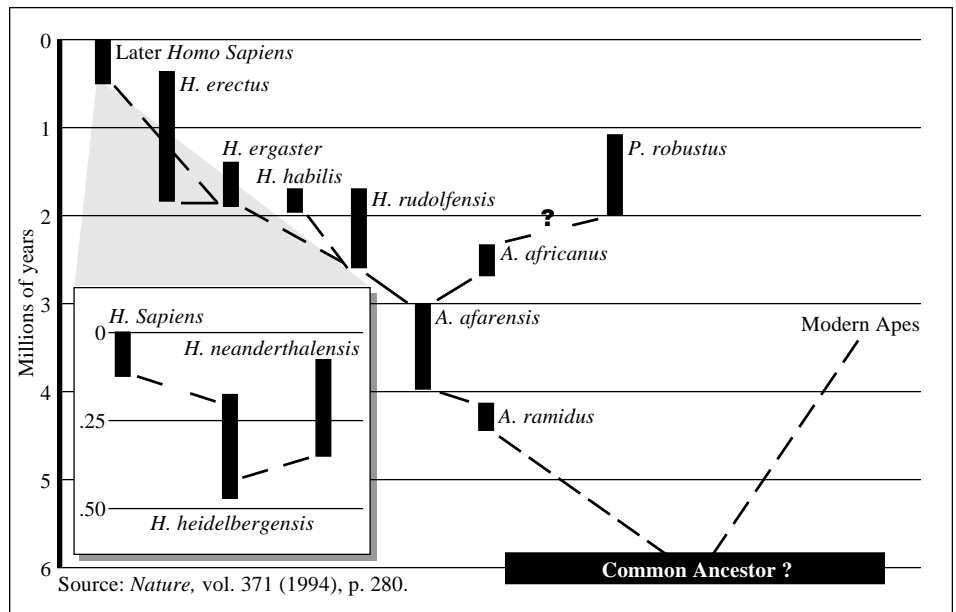


Figure 2 - A suggested human tree by evolutionist scientists.

of the teeth from the front of the mouth to the back is a trait similar to the arrangement of teeth in the hominines.⁵

Human/ape-like features also are found in the genus *Homo*. *Homo habilis*, or “Handy Man,” is included in the genus *Homo* primarily because the fossil material was found associated with “tools.” In addition, *H. habilis* has a jaw that is very human-like; however, its body skeleton resembles an australopithecine. The specimens assigned to *Homo rudolfensis* are included in the genus *Homo* because the skeletal structure is very human-like; but the face and teeth look like robust australopithecines.⁶

Paleoanthropologists divide the erectines into two species, based on the jaws and teeth, African location, and smaller brain capacity of *H. ergaster* relative to the erectines from Asia.⁷

Several diagrams have been constructed to demonstrate the proposed ancestral lineage of the hominids. The diagrams differ because the paleoanthropologists do not agree on the specific physical features that should be used to identify ancestral relationships, timing of divergence, and placement of new skeletal finds.⁸

Hominid relationships. Phylogeneticists use cladistic methods (cla-

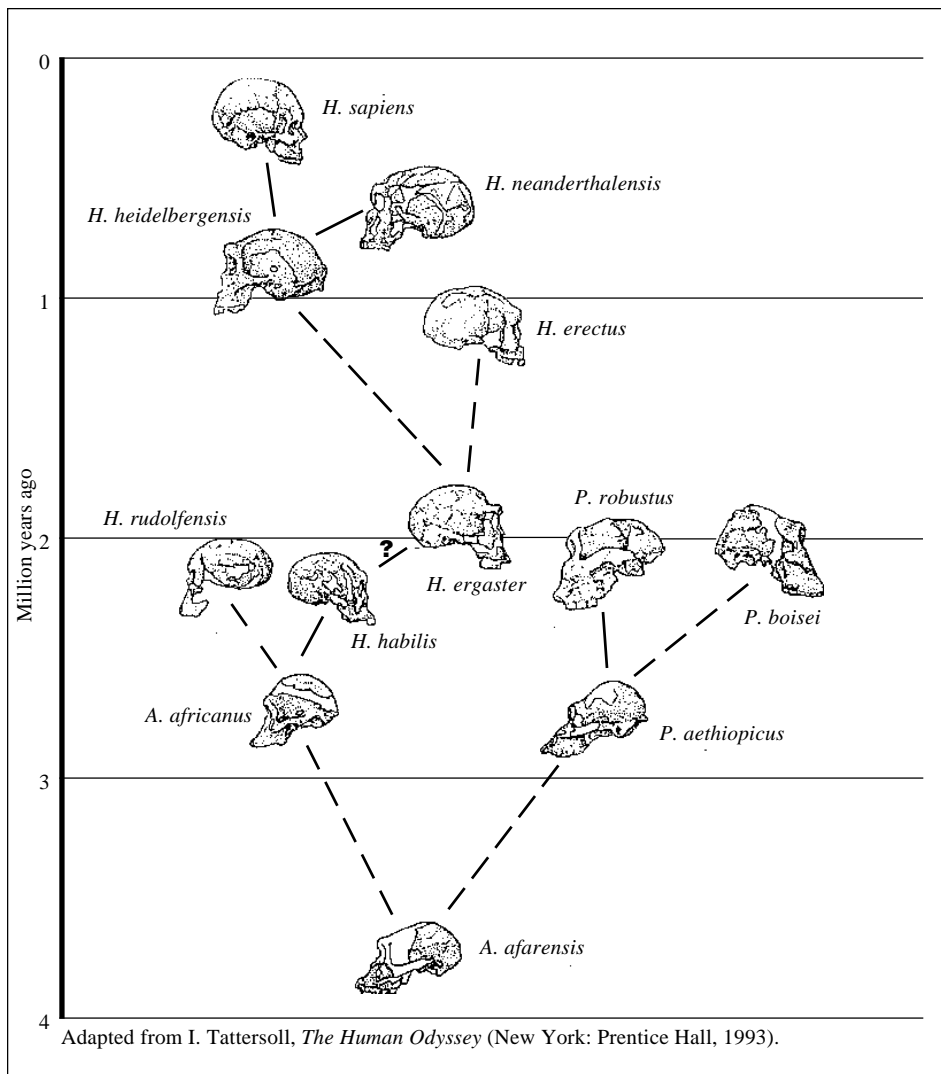


Figure 3 - Human evolution, as outlined by I. Tattersoll in *The Human Odyssey* (1993).

dograms) to describe relationships among organisms. Cladograms are diagrams that arrange organisms in groups having shared characters, describing organisms in terms of sister rather than ancestral relationships, in a hierarchical form. In developing cladograms, phylogeneticists make three basic assumptions: (1) The features or characters that make up the database can be arranged in a hierarchical structure; (2) the data or characters selected accurately represent the organisms; and (3) there has been little or no loss of defining characters.⁹ A cladogram describing possible relationships among hominids is shown in Figure 1.¹⁰

Some characters used to develop the cladogram appear in species in a different order than the majority of the characters defining the cladogram.

Phylogeneticists select the cladogram with the least number of out-of-order characters to develop “best fit” diagrams; consequently, there is some disagreement over which characters best describe the organisms and how they should be arranged in the hierarchy.

After using cladistics to identify hierarchical relationships, numerous researchers incorporate this information into hypotheses and develop phylogenetic schemes depicting ancestral relationships for hominids. By 1993, at least six major phylogenetic schemes had been proposed for the hominids. Since the discovery of *A. ramidus*, a seventh scheme has been proposed. Much of the shuffling of species in these diagrams represents disputes over the validity of attributing to human evolution the various traits found in the skulls and teeth of the specimens.

The hominid molecular relationships. Some anthropologists have studied molecular similarities among modern apes and humans to develop hypotheses about hominid lineages. Some of these researchers assume that mutations and changes occur at a constant rate in DNA. Numerous studies, spanning more than 30 years, have tried to determine when various living species diverged from related species, based on the assumption of relatively constant rates of change in DNA, a “molecular clock.”¹¹

Interpretations based on the “molecular clock” imply human origins occurred millions of years ago and assume that there is a link between apes and humans. The time spans postulated for the ape-human divergence range from 5 to 7 million years ago. However, the assumed mutation rates used to calculate these ages were challenged more than 30 years ago by Morris Goodman and more recently by Wen-Hsiung Li.¹² The issues they have raised allow one to question the validity of the method.

Others have narrowed their field of inquiry and compared the mitochondrial DNA among human races, hypothesizing that the human line can be traced to a single African population.

The hominid “lineage”

Australopithecines. In the australopithecine group, *A. ramidus* (the most recent find) and *A. afarensis* (Lucy) are both considered ancestral (Figure 2), whereas *A. africanus* (Taung Child), listed as recently as 1993 as ancestral (Figure 3), continues to be disputed as part of the direct line.¹³

Hominines (See Figure 2). In the *Homo* genus, *H. habilis* (Handy Man) remains problematic but is listed outside the human line by Wood, and inside the human line by McHenry.¹⁴ The gracile form of *H. rudolfensis* once replaced *H. habilis* in the human lineage but now is also excluded by some workers. *H. erectus* (Peking Man, Java Man) should be currently listed as “offline” according to Tattersoll (see Fig. 3)¹⁵ due to the fact that a portion of its skull structure is too robust.¹⁶ Some researchers list *H. ergaster* as one of the preferred “links,” although others still consider *H. ergaster* as a separate species and continue to include these organisms with the

erectines and in the ancestral line. Finally, *H. heidelbergensis* is regarded as ancestral to both modern humans and the neanderthals (Figs. 2 and 3).¹⁷

Evolutionary hypotheses falsified

Figure 2 illustrates some current paleoanthropological conclusions in regard to ancestor-descendent relationships for hominids. The common ancestor for hominids and apes is still missing. *A. ramidus*, *A. afarensis*, erectines and *H. heidelbergensis* are all clearly listed as “links” in the lineage.

Using standard scientific methods, researchers test their hypotheses, rejecting those ideas shown to be false. In studies of human evolution, standard scientific methods may not be adhered to by some workers. For example, *A. afarensis* has unique traits that actually preclude them from being included among our ancestors. One cladistic study identified 69 traits that are expressed differently among the species in the “human lineage.” Of these, only 45 support the preferred evolutionary hypothesis.¹⁸

The remaining 24 characters contradict this preferred evolutionary hypothesis. The preferred hypothesis was selected by the researchers as representing the probable path of “human evolution” because it had been falsified the least number of times. As a result—and to their credit—other researchers have questioned the validity of *A. afarensis* as a human ancestor.¹⁹ The reversal in robustness that occurs with the inclusion of *H. erectus* in the “lineage” is another factor that is inconsistent with the current hominid evolutionary hypothesis.

Conclusion

What does the “book of nature” tell us? All hominid evolutionary hypotheses have been falsified. To be fair, this does not rule out the evolutionary theory (new specimens may be discovered to resolve the conflicts); therefore, it is not appropriate to announce to the world that “Evolution has been refuted,” based on the incongruence of current hypotheses.

If all of the hominid evolutionary hypotheses have been falsified, how does one interpret the fossil material? Comments by Wood illustrate what can be perceived as a blending of characters: “Whereas *H. habilis sensu stricto* [in the

Evolution and salvation

by Richard Rimmer

Who was the first person to whom God promised salvation?

For most Bible-believing Christians the answer is quite simple. But if you are a Christian who believes in evolution, then you are in a predicament. Evolutionists say that species developed over the ages—that there were progressive changes that finally produced modern humans. If evolution really occurred and human beings evolved from lower life forms, was there a cut-off time between hominids and modern humans when God began to hold them accountable for their actions? Did God save early humans half a million years ago, but not ape-like creatures a million years ago? When was the precise moment they became people, and ceased to be animals?

Remember, God saves *individuals*, not groups. If you were God, you would have had to decide when to begin saving individuals, *and not their fathers and mothers*.

If you’re a theistic evolutionist, you’ve put God in the position of making an arbitrary decision about individuals. Christ has told us that *whoever* believes in Him can be saved (John 3:16). This implies personal choice. Besides, our God is a reasonable God (Isaiah 1:18). He cannot be arbitrary in defining when a being in the long evolutionary process is savable.

Then, there’s the question of how, when, and why the plan of salvation was

introduced to these developing creatures. Is the story of Adam and Eve, as presented in Genesis, all a big lie? How can these biblical perspectives be compatible with evolution?

It wasn’t a matter of development that determined when people were fit to save. There was a created pair of humans who didn’t need salvation, but who sinned by disobeying God. From then on it was, and is, a matter of accepting Christ as our Savior.

If you are a Christian, why not accept the reasonable view that God created humans and endowed them with the ability to make moral choices? Doesn’t this make more sense than forcing God to decide when evolving hominids became morally accountable and were advanced enough to save?

There’s also the question of sin. What relevance does sin have for people if they descended from lower animals and inherited moral deficiencies? Wouldn’t this make God responsible for our sins? Wouldn’t it make it unreasonable for Him to ask us to overcome? If God created basic life forms (as theistic evolutionists claim) but then left them to develop through millions of years as lower animals with deficiencies, couldn’t we accuse God of creating us sinful?

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strict sense] is hominine with respect to its masticatory complex [mouth or jaws], it retains an essentially australopithecine postcranial skeleton [body]. *Homo rudolfensis*, on the other hand, apparently combines a later *Homo*-like postcranial skeleton [body] with a face and dentition [teeth] which are adaptively analogous to those of the ‘robust’ australopithecines, especially *P. boisei*.” Many characters that occur together in the australopithecines and in the hominines represent a mosaic of

traits. Some Christians would interpret these organisms to have resulted from degeneration of the human form due to the entrance of sin. Another interpretation restricts the term *human* to anatomically modern humans and assigns the rest of the fossils to non-human created kinds. A broader interpretation of the term *human* would accept at least some of the fossils as other created subspecies of humans. Whatever these creatures

Continued on page 34

Rembrandt is a name to remember. Not just because he was a great artist of the 17th century, but because behind his art lies a spiritual journey. Numerous artists since the Renaissance have represented biblical themes, but Rembrandt stands among the select few who have combined those

Rembrandt: The spiritual journey of an artist

by
Jon A.
Carstens

themes with a spiritual yearning innate to the human heart. As David gave expression in poetic form to God's saving and sustaining grace in the midst of intense suffering, Rembrandt left for history a profound portrait of his spiritual struggles in the form of timeless art.

The eighth child of a financially successful miller, Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) was born in the university city of Leiden, not far from Amsterdam in the Netherlands. His mother, a member of the Dutch Reformed Church, raised him to be a devout Calvinist Protestant. This devotion was reinforced between the ages of seven and fourteen when Rembrandt attended Latin School, with its heavy emphasis on religious studies.

By age 14, Rembrandt showed that his primary interest was art. Unlike many contemporary, aspiring artists in Europe, he showed little interest in classical modes and refused to make the customary trip to Italy. Instead, he enrolled at the University of Leiden, and after a

brief attendance he dropped out of formal education. For the next three years, he studied art under Jacob Isaacszoon van Swanenburgh, a specialist in rendering architecture and scenes of hell. He then went to Amsterdam to study under Pieter Lastman, a painter of history, through whom he probably became familiar with the art of the Italian painter Caravaggio.

In Amsterdam, Rembrandt's status as an artist continued to rise due to his command of portraiture. Complex group portraits such as *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* (a public dissection of an executed criminal) of 1632 brought him national prominence and a great fortune. Such was his reputation as a portrait artist that he received more commissions than he could complete, leading him to establish a workshop of more than 50 pupils.

Early in his career, Rembrandt demonstrated what would become a lifelong love of drawing and painting biblical subjects. His initial religious works (such as *The Blinding of Samson*, 1636), often appeared to have been made to appeal to the avid tastes for violence or sensuality of the high baroque. The overtly dramatic presentation reflected an influence of Caravaggio's *tenebrism* (painting in a dark manner with strong directional lighting), combined with the spiraling forms and emphatic diagonal line movements of the Flemish master Peter Paul Rubens.

In 1634, Rembrandt married Saskia van Uylenburgh, the daughter of a wealthy burgomaster. She brought Rembrandt a large dowry. The couple had four children, and the family lived in a fashionable townhouse in the Jewish quarter of Amsterdam, where the artist had many friends and continued to be acknowledged as the city's pre-eminent painter.

Beginning in 1635, Rembrandt was hit with an almost unbelievable sequence of tragic happenings. The next seven years saw the death of three of his infant children, his mother, his favorite sister-in-law, and finally his wife in 1642. In addition to these personal tragedies, his professional life also took a heavy blow. His popularity as an artist began to wane. After painting his masterpiece *The Night Watch* (the formation of a company of Dutch militia under the command of Captain Banning Cocq) in 1642, his work found less acceptance in a Dutch society that largely favored elegant genre or splendid landscape paintings.

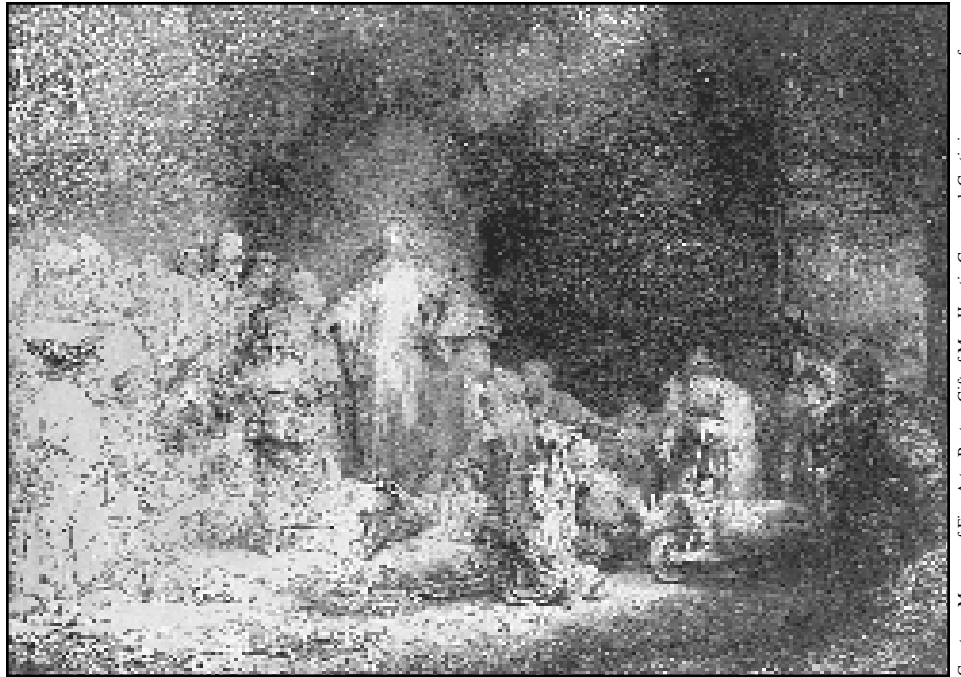
By now, Rembrandt found himself in financial difficulties. One particular burden was hard to bear both financially and emotionally. Geertghe Dirckx, his son's nurse for seven years, sued him for a breach of promise. Despite his denial that he ever promised to marry her, the court ordered Rembrandt to pay her 200 guilders a year in support.

Although these crises apparently resulted in periods of depression and introspection, by the mid-1640s the artist emerged wiser and more determined. His art was less melodramatic and more restrained, with an undercurrent of mystery as seen in the 1648 painting, *Supper at Emmaus*. Rembrandt's increasing interest in religious themes may have been in part the result of his affinity for the Mennonites. Even though there is little evidence to support that he actually became a Mennonite, he shared their beliefs in the sole authority of the Bible and the power of silent prayer.

Rembrandt's genius was in art, but not in management. Through mismanagement and his insatiable interest in art (he owned works of Michelangelo, Raphael, and Dürer) and Eastern rarities purchased at auction, he was forced into bankruptcy in 1656. By 1660, he had to sell off his home and his prized collection of art, costumes, and assorted items that had often served as props in his art. For the next 10 years of his life, Rembrandt saw himself as an outcast of Amsterdam and witnessed the tragedy of the death of his second wife Hendrickje Stoffels and his son Titus by the first marriage. In 1669, at the age of 63, the great artist died alone of an undertermined illness.

Rembrandt's legacy

What survived Rembrandt? On a personal level, one daughter by his second wife, with one child having died earlier. In art, an outstanding legacy of more than 600 paintings, 1,400 drawings, and at least 30 etching plates. But it is perhaps in the philosophy behind his art that Rembrandt left a most profound bequest: He showed that life may have its depths of despair and heights of hope and contentment, and yet as an artist he could provide the archetype of deep spiritual courage. Rather than becoming bitter over numerous incredibly sad circumstances, he became a man of resolute faith, strength, and tenderness. His works of art, particularly the later ones, reflected a



Christ Healing the Sick (1642).

basic spiritual philosophy that may be defined in six major thrusts:

1. A reverence for life. Arising out of a core belief that all things descend from God and are not to be scorned, he had a reverence for life in its totality. All humans were worthy of his esteem, even beggars and outcasts. Unlike the detached observer, Rembrandt identified with the dispossessed and demonstrated a sincere sympathy for the afflicted.

This basic tenet of Rembrandt's belief system is seen in his *Christ Healing the Sick* (1642), sometimes known as the *Hundred Guilder Print*. According to a poem of his contemporary Hendrick Waterloos, on the back of an impression, the etching (a print made from a copper plate) illustrates the nineteenth chapter of Matthew in its entirety. In the foreground and the right are the great multitudes following Jesus, wanting to be healed. To the left are the Pharisees set to provoke Him. Between them and Jesus' rebuking disciples are the little children seeking His embrace and blessings. Close scrutiny reveals a camel entering an archway as a counterpoint to the rich young ruler who negates his yearning for Christ with a desire to maintain his earthly wealth. As the focal point to the composition, Jesus literally radiates acceptance and compassion as He invites the little children to come to Him while healing those so desperately believing in His transforming

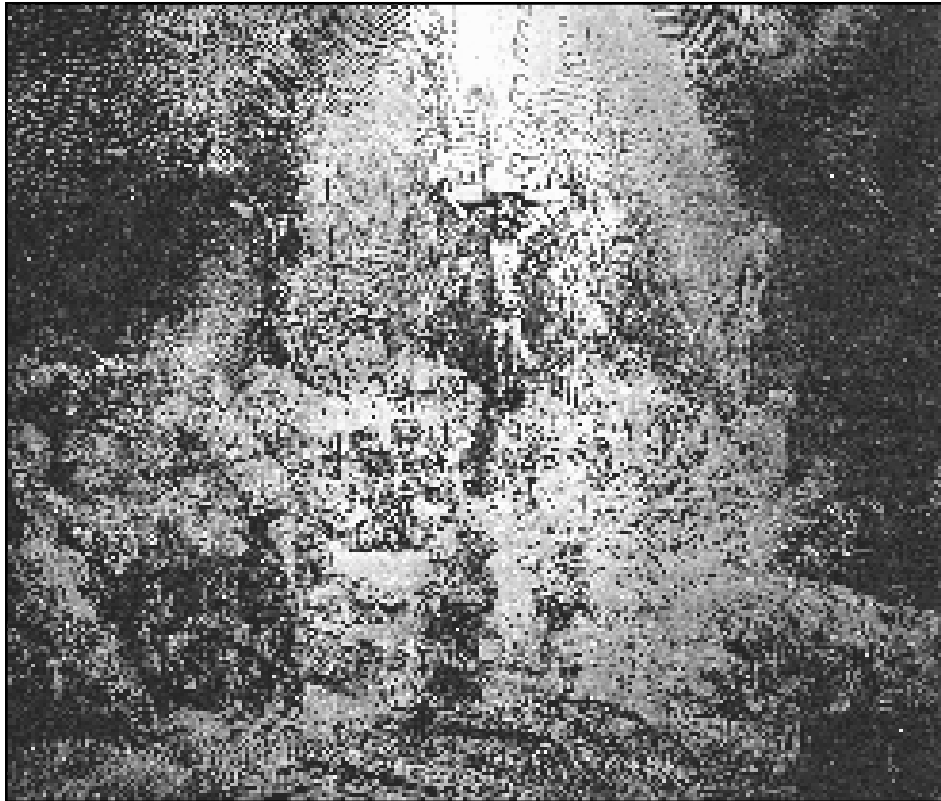
touch. Here was the quintessential 17th century expression of Christ as the Son of Man.

2. A loving and compassionate God. In so personifying Jesus, Rembrandt went beyond his Calvinist upbringing; he refused to present a stern and overpowering God. Instead, his was the loving and forgiving Jesus. Similar to the Mennonites, who made no class distinctions between members, he depicted Christ as one who blessed the "poor in spirit" and as the serene teacher and healer rather than as the implacable God of Calvin.

Rembrandt's portrayal of Christ differed also with those typically seen in the Roman Catholic artistic tradition. Unlike many Catholic renditions, which coupled Christ's divinity with the notion of the Church Triumphant by portraying Him as distant and fearsome, Rembrandt revealed the humble Nazarene—not aloof, not at all intimidating. For him, Christ was love incarnate, ministering to all classes and empathizing deeply with their infirmities, Himself having known suffering and pain.

3. Humanization of biblical themes. The artist's humanization of the scene also demonstrated itself in his choice of models, unconventional for the time in which he worked. For Rembrandt, it was inconceivable to depict biblical characters in a Greco-

Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Gift of Mrs. Horatio Greenough Curtis in memory of Horatio Greenough Curtis.



The Three Crosses (1653).

Roman or Nordic mold. His models came from the Jewish community of Amsterdam, many of whom were refugees from Portugal and Spain. Thus, his apostles and saints were ordinary people, worn and impoverished, whose distinction was not of the physical but of the spiritual.

4. The focus of the cross. Central to Rembrandt's Christianity was his belief that the entire Bible is meant to lead us to the cross. He was convinced, however, that this essential message must be interpreted in human terms. For him, "the Scripture was the beginning chapter of a narrative of man's situation, a dramatic and continuing narrative in which Rembrandt saw himself and his contemporaries as vital participants."¹

A consummate expression of all he sensed about God and humanity—suffering, forbearance, love, and acceptance—is *The Three Crosses*, a drypoint (an etching done with a heavy needle) dated 1653. Christ is pictured on the cross flanked by the two thieves. Between the crosses are grouped Jesus' friends and family, with the customary representation of a grieving Mary. To the left, at the foot of the impenitent thief, are mounted Roman soldiers and the kneeling centu-

rior who acknowledges Christ as God's Son. At the far left are onlookers, some sorrowful, others in vigorous discussion. Except for the stark illumination of Jesus as the center of the composition, the rest of the scene is so dark as to be overwhelming. The incredible range of physical, emotional, and social forces in this print seems to say that all humanity, including the artist himself, share in the guilt of Christ's agony and death.

The depth of Rembrandt's emotive crucifixion is all the more remarkable when one considers the religious and artistic milieu in which he lived—a Dutch culture steeped in Calvinism and therefore eschewing art that in any way denoted the iconic.

5. Religion of everyday life.

Rembrandt's acute spiritual vision was not exclusive to biblical subjects. Like many Protestants, he brought religion out of the confines of church ceremony and dogma into the realm of daily life. Distinctions between past and present, sacred and secular, became less and less distinct for him and others in Calvinist Holland. With Rembrandt, the human presence went beyond mere externals to embody a deeper, more contemplative facet. What

he sought through subtle modulations of light and shadow to portray in his oils of family and friends so often lost in their own thoughts was "simply the quality—secret, otherworldly, spiritual, meditative... which Christ tried to touch in the hearts of men."²

6. Divine strength for the human journey. This capturing of the intangible *essence* of the human applied especially to the artist's numerous self-portraits. Continuing a Northern European tradition of artists documenting their changing appearances, Rembrandt provided an even greater visual autobiography chronicling virtually every year of his career. The profusion of self-portraits (more than 90) would seem to suggest that Rembrandt was egocentric and obsessed with his own visage. Not at all: These works were seldom if ever images of narcissism. Rather, they penetrated the artist's changing emotional states and his repeated self-assessment relative to his Creator. *Self-Portrait* (1669) culminated the life of a man who had passed from a face once youthful and filled with buoyant optimism to a visage of weariness and quiet dignity. Like all humankind, he too was ultimately weak and vulnerable; yet there remained something inherently noble in this final self-characterization. Though ravaged by care and anxiety, he demonstrated an indomitable spirit as a greater revelation of the human capacity to survive the cruelties of life when strengthened by God's infinite love and power.

While Rembrandt's works have typically given us an intimate glimpse into one's relationship to God and one's fellow human beings in a specific time and place, they have also managed to touch something in virtually all of us. His art, at once personal and yet paradoxically timeless, describes "not only his pilgrimage but also that of all humanity toward a final peace with this world and with God."³ 🙏

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Notes and References

1. Robert Wallace, *The World of Rembrandt: 1606-1669* (New York: Time-Life Books, 1968), p. 168.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Campus ministry in Tanzania

by
Elifas
Bisanda

Adventist students pray, hope, and dream for greater accomplishments in Tanzania.

In 1975, five years after Tanzania's University of Dar-es-Salaam was established, a few Adventist students on the main campus at Mlimani organized themselves into a branch Sabbath school. Today there is a Seventh-day Adventist church on the campus with 250 members, with a third of them being university students.

What made this possible? The commitment of Adventist students in the university to be true to their faith and mission. One year after the university branch was founded, students in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda formed the Association of University SDA students of East Africa (AUSDAEA) with one singular purpose: to meet the spiritual and social needs of Adventist students on secular campuses and to witness to those around them of their faith. Tanzania too formed its own Adventist student organization. Together, these Adventist groups took on the challenge of holding Bible studies, presenting prophecy seminars, and organizing spiritual fellowships on various colleges, university campuses, and nearby villages.

The students are active in outreach programs both on and off campus. On campus, nurturing of Adventist students and reaching out to non-Adventist students and teachers are emphasized. Sam Maghimbi, an associate professor of sociology, became an Adventist after reading *The Great Controversy*. Off campus, students conducted evangelistic crusades in the neighboring villages of Changanyikeni and Makongo between 1986 and 1991. Nearly 200 villagers accepted the gospel, and today they are part of the university church.

The church has an active Dorcas program, which cares for various community needs. Three years ago, Professor Maghimbi started a prison ministry at Ukonga, 15 miles from the

university. More than 30 prisoners, some of them sentenced to death, have made a complete break with their past and have been baptized.

The most ambitious evangelistic program undertaken thus far by the student group was in the Kagera region, about 900 miles northwest of Dar-es-Salaam. The area is one of the worst AIDS-affected regions in Africa, with almost every home having lost a loved one to the terrible disease. The evangelistic team decided to take the church's health and spiritual message to the region. Students in teams of two visited each home, expressed their concern for the residents' health, prayed with them, and invited them for the special meetings held in the area. Despite opposition and disruption by other religious groups, 60 people attended the meetings during the day, and some 200 came for the night sessions. At the end of the meetings, 13 were baptized, and more than 50 requested further studies.

The outreach of the university student association has been successful, but the group has been having difficulty on the campus itself. Every now and then

students are threatened with dismissal because of Sabbath observance, but so far the Lord has watched over His faithful ones. A more recent challenge has been to find a place to meet for Sabbath services. Until recently, Adventists were allowed to use the university chapel, jointly owned by two other religious groups. However, the rapid growth of the Adventist congregation has not made others happy. The university has offered land where we could construct our own facility. But how can the student group and the poor villagers who make up the Adventist congregation raise the US\$150,000 needed for the construction work? We are hoping and praying. We are dreaming of a strong and permanent Adventist presence on our university campus. 📖

Elifas Bisanda (Ph.D., University of Bath) is a senior lecturer and associate dean in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Dar-es-Salaam. He is also the campus sponsor of the Adventist Student Association. His address: P. O. Box 35131; Dar-es-Salaam; Tanzania. E-mail: bisanda@unidar.gn.apc.org.

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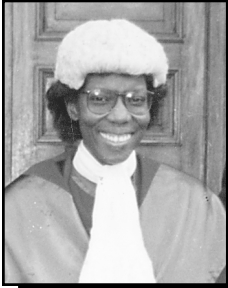
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Mary Atieno Ang'awa

Dialogue with an Adventist judge in Kenya's High Court



Like many Adventist girls, Mary Atieno Ang'awa really wanted to be a teacher. She loved art and music, and she wanted to share this love in a school environment. She also loved children. However, one day while in her A level, a guest lecturer spoke to her class about law and about how much a lawyer can do for the service of the community and the nation. The guest, a state attorney, spoke also about the challenge faced by women trying to get into law in Kenya. At the end of the lecture, students were encouraged to fill in admission forms to the law school. Mary applied, and she was the only one to be accepted.

That was the turning point. Within a few years she graduated from law school at the University of Nairobi. And then, in June 1993, she had her highest opportunity of service when the chief justice of Kenya's High Court escorted her to the State House, where she was sworn in by the

President of Kenya as a judge of the apex court. Justice Ang'awa was the fourth woman to be so honored in the country.

Prior to this important appointment, she served in many capacities: advocate, magistrate, and member of two government commissions.

■ *Justice Ang'awa, please tell us about your background.*

I was born in an Adventist family in Mombasa, the port city of Kenya. My early education took place at Maxwell Adventist Preparatory School in Nairobi, and later I transferred to public schools for secondary and college education.

■ *As a woman judge in a part of the world where male dominance is prevalent, how do you feel?*

That's no problem at all. I am speaking specifically for the bench. Here I am a professional, and the judiciary accepts me as a fellow jurist.

■ *What are your specific responsibilities?*

I serve as a Puisne Judge, which is the same as an Appellate Court judge.

All the cases from the subordinate courts come to me on appeal. I also sit as an Original Court. In cases like murder that carry a death sentence or in cases of civil matters where they are under limited jurisdiction, I am able to hear any matter on any subject within Kenya.

■ *You are known as a no-nonsense judge. Being a judge and a Seventh-day Adventist at the same time, do you face any special challenges?*

To have an Adventist standing before me in court because of some dispute he or she might have had with someone is perhaps one such challenge. I believe as Christians we ought to be the first to be reconciled before matters reach the court. Is that not the counsel of the Bible and the church? I feel such reconciliation should be sought even when matters involve a Seventh-day Adventist and a non-Seventh-day Adventist. However, when I do find that

one of the parties in dispute is my fellow church member, I usually try to refer the case to another court.

■ *Does an Adventist have right to come to the court to seek constitutional remedy in matters such as Sabbath observance?*

Of course, because this is a fundamental right. Unfortunately, our members in Kenya have never really used the court very much in defense of their religious liberty. They would rather be fired than work on the Sabbath. Yet the courts are there for the people. In 1993, for example, a group of Adventist girl students were expelled from their school because they refused to attend classes on Sabbath. The Adventist Advocate Association got involved, and one of their advocates took the matter to court. Eventually the girls were reinstated.

■ *As a judge, how do you find job satisfaction?*

My job satisfaction comes when I see two people who come squabbling before me go home both satisfied. One, of course, loses, for we are in an adver-

sary system in which one person has to lose. But to have them go satisfied, saying, "At least we got a fair trial," is a great satisfaction for me.

■ *How important is the church in your life?*

Perhaps your question should be, "How important is God to you?" God is first in my life. Although I attended Maxwell Adventist School in Nairobi, I did not give my life to Christ until later. My father died when I was a teenager. This experience was one of disappointment for me, and my first response was to reject Christ. I later discovered that there was nowhere to turn but to Jesus; thus, before I went to the university, I accepted Jesus and was baptized. The university experience was a good one because it taught me to enjoy freedom and yet be accountable. The Adventist campus ministry provided spiritual nourishment and strength. Living on a secular campus makes one appreciate even more the joys of Friday vespers and Sabbath services.

■ *How vivid is your experience with God?*

Throughout my life, I've experienced God's marvelous guidance. I know He has been looking after me. While at the law school, I have seen how God allowed me to pass examinations despite my not attending classes on Sabbath. Since that time I have made a commitment to the Lord that I will trust Him in all my endeavors. I have also experienced His leading in my professional life. He has given me opportunities for growth and service time after time.

■ *Now, can you tell us about your role in the church?*

In the past I have been very involved in church activities such as Sabbath school, youth, Pathfinders, and church building projects. Recently, I helped start the Association of Adventist Lawyers in Kenya. We are currently trying to coordinate the Trust Service Program for the East African Union. I still teach a Sabbath school class in my local church.

Involvement in church work is very important to me. I compare it to wood burning in a fireplace. Take a piece of wood that has been burning, and put it aside. What happens? It dies, even though the flame in the fireplace keeps

burning. Likewise, to keep us spiritually alive and aflame, we need to be involved in the local church.

I am a private person. I am single. Moreover, I am forced not to mix with litigants, so I find my church life even more important.

■ *Do you have time for other activities?*

I belong to several professional organizations and am currently involved in forming the Adventist Laymen Association under the umbrella of the church, to coordinate lay members in participating fully in church activities. I am also the founder-director of SANAGA, a non-governmental organization helping the poor, particularly women and children.

■ *Earlier in our conversation, you mentioned the support that you received from Adventist campus ministries while you were a student. What is the status of this program in Kenya?*

When I attended the university back in the 1970s, the campus ministries program was small. We had one university in Kenya, the University of Nairobi, with only a few Adventist students. Today, it is estimated that there are between 2,500 to 3,000 Adventists studying at the five public universities and their 15 respective campuses. About 1,500 of these are involved in activities sponsored by our campus ministries program, which is directed by two full-time chaplains. Since our church does not operate enough secondary schools for our youth, there is also an Adventist campus program aimed at students attending public secondary schools and similar institutions, with eight chaplains. The church must continue to seriously address the needs of our students attending public institutions. It must provide adequate budgets for strengthening this important ministry.

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

For the last two years I have been most fortunate to be residing in Nyori, a rural town at the foothills of Mt. Kenya. There are many small churches in this area. Oh, how the people are on fire for Christ! To cite an example, quite a number of our young people have given up career jobs to become literature evangelists. Apart from selling religious

and medical books, these young literature evangelists have formed evangelistic teams and are preaching Christ to the people of this area. New churches are being established in unentered areas. Many of our church members give of their time and meager means to ensure that the gospel is proclaimed. While the sacrificial spirit of our people is commendable, there are times when the work is hampered because of lack of funds.

Although the present church membership in Kenya has exceeded 400,000, making the East African Union one of the largest in the world, there are still many sincere women and men who must be reached for the Lord. This will be achieved, under God's blessing, as church workers and lay members unite and move forward together. 🙏

Interview by **W. Ray Ricketts**

W. Ray Ricketts is campus ministries director for the East African Union. He serves Adventist students attending public universities in Kenya.

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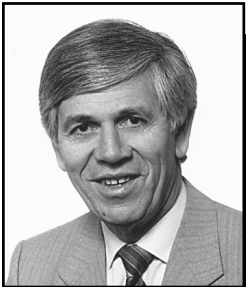
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Mario Veloso

Dialogue with an Adventist poet from Chile



Mario Veloso is an Adventist Christian by commitment, a church administrator by vocation, and a poet by that indescribable beat within his heart. A Chilean by birth, he received his first education in his homeland and later studied in Argentina and the United States. He holds master's degrees in history and in divinity from Andrews University, and a doctorate in theology from Universidad del Salvador in Buenos Aires.

When he was 14, Mario left home to begin his secondary education in a public school in southern Chile, where his father had already preregistered him. But he was in for a disappointment: a bureaucratic error had left out his name among the registered students. He had no alternative except to go back to Pitrufquen, his home town, and register at the local Adventist school.

A disaster? No, says Veloso. It was a miracle that set him out on the journey to Adventism and the discovery of his life's vision and mission. As a Seventh-day Adventist worker he has served the church at all levels, including youth director and secretary of the South American Division. He also founded the Latin American Adventist Theological Seminary. Currently, Veloso serves as an associate secretary of the General Conference. As such he is involved in the placing of missionaries in various parts of the world, in working with administrative and theological committees, and in crafting policy for the world church.

Veloso is a writer and an accomplished poet. In addition to many articles, he has published several books including *El compromiso cristiano* (The Christian Commitment, 1974), *Comentario do Evangelho de João* (Commentary on the Gospel of John, 1982), *Livre para amar* (Free to Love, 1984), and *Cristianismo y revolución* (Christianity and Revolution, 1987). The University Press of Chile has published four books of his poetry: *Regreso* (Return, 1987), *Ciudades del hombre* (Cities of Men, 1988), *Una palabra* (One Word, 1992), and *Al sur de la distancia* (South From a Distance, 1995). A fifth one is under preparation. Mario and his wife, Lucy, have a daughter and a son, both of whom are physicians.

■ *Your journey to Adventism began by accident?*

No, I'd say providential guidance. While attending that Adventist day school, I learned of an Adventist boarding academy and college. Since my first experience was positive, the following year I moved to the boarding school. There a group of close friends helped me understand and appreciate Adventism. Two factors impressed me. First, the consistency of my friends—they lived what they professed to believe. Second, the Adventist beliefs, particularly the understanding of Bible prophecy. I found both very attractive. So during that first year at Chile Adventist Academy, at 15, I was baptized.

■ *When did you begin writing?*

As I was completing my elementary school, I began to read literature, write a few poems, and dream of becoming a writer. I didn't tell anyone about it; it seemed too presumptuous. My first serious effort at writing was a novel about a person who moves from the city to a farm and goes through a series of shocking experiences as he tries to adjust to a very different environment. I was reflecting my own situation, since we too lived in a city and regularly visited a farm my father owned. I completed that writing experiment when I was 14.

■ *Did you receive any encouragement?*

Not really, but I did have a model. One of my teachers, Altener Guerrero, was a poet, and I admired him very much.

Although I never told him about my dreams and my first attempts at writing poetry, I looked up to him as an ideal person.

■ *Why do you write poetry?*

For two reasons. First, because it allows me to express myself freely. Poetry does not require you to address specific subjects, nor does it restrict you with constraining rules. Any experience or impression, fleeting or insignificant as it may be, can lead to a poem. Second, poetry lets me experiment with language. As you seek to communicate, poetry forces you to explore the whole range of expression, trying to find the most concise and effective way of conveying a feeling or an experience.

■ *In your formative years as a poet, who influenced you the most?*

For a boy growing up in Chile during those years, the influence of Gabriela Mistral was unavoidable. Born in North-Central Chile, she was writing and publishing widely. Mistral received the Nobel Prize in literature in 1945, the first awarded to a Latin American writer. Later I became acquainted with the work of another Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, who received the Nobel Prize in 1971. While Mistral's strength was in her content, Neruda taught me that expression is equally important in poetry. Vicente García Huidobro, a Chilean poet residing in France, also showed me the possibilities of using language with total freedom.

■ *Did you also read poets from other cultures?*

I was already in college when I discovered Walt Whitman. He impressed me tremendously with his ability to express himself as a person. His *Song of Myself*, even in translation, allows the reader to get in touch with his soul and to experience nature with him. I was also impressed by *Letters to a Young Poet*, by the German writer Reiner Maria Rilke, which led me to look for his poetry. I learned much from him, and even now I go back to his poetry with pleasure. Ezra Pound also fascinated me strongly. I realize Pound was emotionally unbalanced, but his use of the language in its fullest range is admirable. Whenever I can, I try to read poetry in the original language. I'm now reading a Russian poet in a bilingual edition, using my limited understanding of the Russian language and comparing it with the translation. It is fascinating to see how the thoughts and feelings of the poet are conveyed into another language, and how the music of poetry comes across in the translation.

■ *What leads you to compose a poem?*

The impulse springs from a life experience. A specific incident can impress us in various ways and can also be expressed in different modes. I can narrate it, analyze it, or convey it poetically. Frequently this poetic experience resonates with my own religious understanding. That is why I consider David the ideal poet, the one I most admire. Like no other writer, David was able to put together life, poetry, and his experience of God in a single piece in the Psalms.

■ *Under what circumstances do you generally write your poems?*

Usually when I'm traveling—either

waiting, or flying, or working in a city away from home. The experience of seeing other people, sensing a new environment, and making contact with a different culture makes a strong impression on me, and a poem begins to be born. [See samples of Mario Veloso's poetry on page 24.]

■ *How has your poetry been received in literary circles in Chile?*

To my happy surprise, rather well. In addition to positive reviews, I have received favorable letters from readers. The Chilean Writers' Society has invited me to become a member. Whenever I visit Chile, the society organizes a meeting in which I read some of my poems and talk about the literary scene in the countries I have visited. Currently, the editors of Chile University Press are evaluating what could be my fifth book of poetry published by them.

■ *Are they aware of your religious convictions?*

Yes, and they respect them. A few months ago I talked to the literary critic who teaches literature at the University of Chile and who wrote the introduction to my book *Una palabra* (One Word, 1992). She told me that after reading my poems, she sensed that it is impossible to separate my religion from my poetry.

■ *Please tell us about the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Chile.*

We have about 80,000 members in a population of 12 million. Although our church is numerically small in comparison with the Roman Catholic Church and the Pentecostal Church—the two largest in Chile—we are well known and quite influential. Our educational work is respected. We are the only Protestant church that operates a government-recognized university: Chile Adventist University, which offers several programs, including a master's in public health. The work of ADRA is well appreciated, particularly its relief ministry during our frequent earthquakes.

■ *Are there any significant developments in our relations with other religious bodies in Chile?*

The most notable is the growing number of Pentecostal leaders and members joining our church. Having discovered that our doctrines are thoroughly grounded in the Scriptures, Pentecostal bishops and pastors are asking

us to offer them special seminars. Many of them have been baptized, and we have encouraged them to continue pastoring their congregations. If current trends continue, Adventist membership could double in the near future.

■ *Our world church membership is now nearing nine million. You have travelled widely, and you are a shrewd observer of church trends. Where do you see the Seventh-day Adventist Church going as we approach the 21st century?*

The dramatic growth of our membership is a miracle. Along with growth, there are problems. One such problem is a growing tension between two contrasting visions for the Adventist Church: between the one that is politically motivated, seeking power and an accommodation with the rest of society, and the one that is motivated by the mission of the church and is radically committed to its fulfillment. This tension between compromise and mission is likely to increase in the future, but as we approach the end of time, God's promises will not fail.

■ *How would you characterize the attitude of Adventist young people toward the church?*

There are countries in which Adventist youth and young adults have a strong identification with their church. They are deeply involved in its internal activities and in its outreach, frequently occupying leadership positions. At the other extreme, there are also places in which one can see a distance between the youth and the church leaders. And there are in-between positions. Young people are always driven by something that is authentic. Our challenge is how to respond properly to the needs and expectations of Adventist youth. I am hopeful, because I know that under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the idealism and commitment of our youth will continue to grow as a very positive force for the church in accomplishing its mission. 🙏

Interview by Humberto M. Rasi

Humberto M. Rasi is director of the Education Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and editor-in-chief of Dialogue. Interested readers can write to Dr. Mario Veloso at the editorial address of this journal, listed on page 2.

Poetry by Mario Veloso

I Am

.....
I was just a boy—silent, sad,
and lonely.
I took long walks in the wheatfields.
My blood absorbed
their rays of light,
shimmering across the countryside.
I heard the music of the river
and felt the calling of the roads.
In the summer evenings,
walking alone,
I ate the simple pilgrim's bread.

Left behind was the sleeping stubble
of the field I never inherited.
Wheat, light, and country roads—
all are memories.
But another Wheat and another Summer
filled with light are mine now.
I'm a pilgrim in this world.
The roads keep calling me,
for I am a messenger of the Cross.

Your Hand

Your hand has lighted a candle
that no wind can put out.
My poor house, I know,
has broken windows,
and the old roof
has let the rain come in.
Hurricanes have left my body
naked in the field,
and cruel hands
have torn my flesh and bones.
The nights were dark and icy.
The claws, sharp and vicious.
But your hand, oh Jesus,
has lighted a candle
that no wind can extinguish.
I was sad, but I trusted you.
I know your hand cradles the dawn.
Your pierced hand has opened a window
that lets me see a New World,
the glorious New Kingdom
that you are preparing
and soon will appear.

Five Loaves of Bread

.....
Our pain never ends; it expands.
It tears our body with nails of steel,
confusing our mind and making it spin.
Fear strangles us.
There is no inner peace, no trust,
no intimate friends.
Our own selfishness rules.
For how long will this hellish power
continue to rule the earth?
For how long will the agony
of eating other's bread
feed our bitter envy?
How long, o Lord, how long!

I have five loaves of bread.
Here they are, Master.
Will you transform them
into bread that satisfies all?

Mortal

I am not eternal:
just a flower of time
and water
from which life
is slowly dribbling.

Soft plume
of a vaporous cloud;
for a brief second
it balances itself
and then descends as rain.

Each day my rose
drops its petals
one by one.
When the last one falls
on the friendly soil,
I will fall sleep.

Darkest night,
lifeless stump,
dry fountain.
Nothing.

No more dreams or songs,
no more joy or tears,
no more wishes, time,
or memories. Silence.

But when Dawn comes
I will live again,
full of light and vigor—
forever.

Letters...

Continued from page 4

What about cosmetics?

I'm responding to your invitation to write. As an Adventist interested in applied theology, I need guidance in the area of cosmetics and personal adornment. Many of us, young adults, are confronted daily with worldly practices and do not always know how to decide on the basis of biblical principles. May God guide you as you approach controversial subjects.

SONIA ROJAS E.
Callao, PERU

The editors respond:

The use of cosmetics and adornment by Christians is, indeed, a controversial topic, given the cultural diversity that exists among Seventh-day Adventists around the world. We recommend you read "What Shall I Wear?" by Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi in Dialogue 7:2. The article discusses seven biblical principles on dress and adornment. You may also check "Shall We Dance? A Basis for Our Lifestyle Standards," by Steve Chase (6:2) and "Christians Versus Culture: Should We Love or Hate the World?" (7:2). Articles such as these can serve as starting points for a fruitful series of studies in your Adventist youth meeting or in your Adventist student fellowship. It would be advantageous to invite an experienced minister, counselor, or Bible teacher as moderator in the discussions.

Continue publishing it!

I recently discovered *Dialogue* and found it to be a very interesting magazine. It covers important issues that help Adventist young people like me in our Christian life. It also allows us to get in touch with other Adventist young adults from different parts of the world. I just want to encourage you all to continue publishing it!

EMMA TRUJILLO
Paraiso Village, BELIZE

The gospel teaches us two things: the enormity of sin and the abundance of God's forgiveness.

The letter carried a visceral punch. It was a demand from an attorney that I pay up a certain debt within two weeks. My television license fee, the letter said, was in arrears for two months. If I didn't settle it in two weeks, my credit rating and credit cards would be in jeopardy. This, to me, was tantamount to a national disaster. Furthermore, there was a fine of 10 percent for each month I was in arrears. Worse still, I could be taken to court. I was in trouble!

I checked my files. What a relief it was to find that I had paid the dues on time. My fear turned to anger. I called the attorney's office four times before I could get through. I informed the lady on the other end that I owed nothing. She was apologetic. It seemed that the television corporation had lost its records and had sent letters of demand to everyone. Bureaucracy has its ways, and in due course, they sent me a letter of apology.

However, for the first time, I learned what it means to be in debt and to be called to account. Jesus once told a story about being in debt (Matthew 18:21-35). A king summoned one of his servants to pay his debt, a debt so enormous he could not possibly pay it. It was 10,000 talents, more than 10 times the annual tax income of the government of all four provinces in Palestine at that time. What a terrible situation to be in! The man fell on his knees and begged for mercy and more time. The king took pity on his servant and canceled the entire debt.

Ironically, the servant did not quite understand the enormity of the debt forgiven. He thought time was all he would need to repay the debt, but he could not have cleared it in a hundred years. In reality, he did not understand the meaning of forgiveness.

This same servant had a debtor who owed him a small sum, just a fraction of what he had owed the king. Coming from the king's court with his debts canceled, he demanded from his debtor immediate repayment. In fact, he grabbed his fellow servant and began choking him. When payment was not

forthcoming, the king's servant had the unfortunate debtor thrown into jail.

Forgiveness has its dynamics: an element of gratitude and transference. What Jesus was trying to teach in this story is that it is not enough to receive forgiveness—it is essential to offer forgiveness. The unmerciful servant failed to experience this dynamic, and hence he could not experience the joy of forgiveness.

The gospel shows us two things: the enormity of our debt and the magnitude of God's grace and mercy in setting us free. All of us are sinners under the sentence of death (Romans 6:23). There is nothing we can do to help ourselves. But then there stands the cross. Jesus' sacrifice is a perpetual reminder of the lengths to which God was prepared to go to forgive our sin and cancel our enormous debt. In His infinite mercy and love, God remits in full and gives us hope.

If I recognize how much God has forgiven me, I will not keep a count of the number of times I need to forgive my brother (Matthew 18:22). Peter thought that forgiving a person seven times was generous enough. After all, the Pharisees had taught the principle of "thrice to forgive, fourth to punish." The gospel of Jesus is abounding grace. In it forgiveness has no numerical limit.

Often we are like that evil servant. We have no concept of the enormity of the debt canceled or the generosity of the One who had to bear the cross. Therefore we find it difficult to forgive our fellow humans their small debts. How frequently we collect all the hurts of the past and the present, and withhold forgiveness, not realizing what we have been forgiven!

Only a vision of Jesus on the cross and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit can help us understand what God has done for us. Only then will we gladly and freely forgive others. 🙏

David Birkenstock (Ed.D., Andrews University) served until recently as rector of Helderberg College, South Africa. He is now dean of the School of Graduate Studies at Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, in the Philippines. His address: AIIAS; P.O. Box 7682; Domestic Airport Post Office; 1300 Pasay City, Metro Manila; Philippines.

What debt?

by
David
Birkenstock

Adventist college/university students and professionals interested in exchanging correspondence with colleagues in other parts of the world:

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If you are an Adventist college/university student or professional and wish to be listed here, send us your name and postal address, indicating your age, sex, marital status, current field of studies or degree obtained, college/university you are attending or from which you graduated, hobbies or interests, and language(s) in which you would like to correspond. Address your letter to **Dialogue Interchange:** 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; U.S.A. Please type or print clearly. We will list only those who provide all the information requested above. The journal cannot assume responsibility for the accuracy of the information submitted nor for the content of the correspondence that may ensue.

I knew I could do it. The job was simple, according to the job description. I knew I had no experience as a teacher, but I also knew that there was something I could share with my would-be students: English. After a short period of training, I was going to teach English in a city on the eastern frontier of Russia—on Sakhalin Island, north of Japan.

For a student from Pacific Union College, in California, Moscow is far enough, but the International Teacher Service of the General Conference sent me to teach in a town 10 time zones east

God's power at Russia's frontier

by
Gina
McHenry



Joy and commitment: A baptism off Sakhalin Island.

of Moscow, far away from home, friends, and loved ones. However, I was soon to learn that love knows no distance, and friendship knows no frontier.

However, a surprise awaited me. I was going to be not just a language teacher but also the pastor of their newly established church. I am no preacher. I had no sermon notes. I had no training, not even a book on preaching. Could I do it? Should I even attempt it?

I went to Russia more for taking a break from my hectic routine as a bioengineering student rather than for making any great contribution in a faraway land. Sure, I felt a tug at my heart string—something mysterious, something real, a feeling that God wanted me to go to Russia, to be of some use to His people there.

Teaching English was one thing, but preaching? I began to have misgivings. Did God really want me here? Was He leading me in my decision to come? Why would He want me to preach when

He knew very well that I have no particular talent in that area? I felt totally helpless—and nervous.

God empowers

But it is precisely at the moment of one's helplessness, help comes from above. When I recognized I had no power of my own, God showed me how great His power is. When I was at the end of my knowledge, my resources, and my wit, God stepped in. His command became His enabling. I felt God's power.

The first Sabbath I stood shaking before the church, but God's Word speaks its message to its people through any person who is willing. Week after week, God was using me, and the attendance grew from 15 the first week to 50 in 4 month's time.

Soon I discovered why God wanted me to be a pastor and a teacher in this distant land. One of my English students approached me with a surprising request. She wanted baptism. She was 17, shy, and when I first met her had no knowledge of God or the Bible. However, she regularly attended not only the English class, but also the Bible lessons I taught each day. She seldom spoke in the class. She never said a word about what we discussed, about Jesus, sin, salvation, or the Sabbath.

After the second week, she asked to borrow a Bible. She wanted to read it on her own. She must have read quite fast, for thereafter, whenever I related a Bible story, her eyes would pop up with enthusiasm. "I've read that," she would say and join in the discussion. Eventually she decided to become a Christian. I asked her why. "I always wanted to be one," she said, "but no one had shown me how. Your Bible classes taught me the way."

When she was baptized, she said, "This is the happiest day in my life." In mine too. I knew now why God had brought me so far, thus far.

The Spirit works

I struggled to understand how the faith of Russian youth could have survived under the circumstances in which I found them. They knew so little about basic Christianity. Their families were often against their attending church. In fact, a few months after I arrived on Sakhalin, the Orthodox Church leader for Eastern Russia, in a



Growth: Recent members of the Sakhalin English Language Church.



Farewell: Students and friends bid good-bye to Gina (back, center).

television broadcast, warned people to stay away from the Adventist Church because it was an evil cult. Consequently, parents of some of our younger church members forbade them to come to church, and for several weeks I agonized in prayer for those new, young Christians. However, they kept coming and bringing their friends.

I could clearly see the Holy Spirit working on the most unexpected people. One boy in particular stands out in my mind. He was 15 and started attending my English classes with a large group of his friends. They would walk me home after class every night, smoking their cigarettes and boasting about how much vodka they could drink before they passed out. It surprised me that Ilya never smoked like his friends. When I asked him about it, his simple answer was that he didn't like it.

The next week we had a week of prayer at our language school. This was a special time when we invited all our students to attend the meetings right before or after their classes, so that more of them would have the opportunity to discover what we did in Bible classes. At the end of the week, I made an appeal and handed out decision cards. The cards listed several choices: "I'd like to study more about Jesus;" "I'd like to study for baptism;" or "I accept Jesus as my personal Savior." While many students marked at least one choice, Ilya didn't mark any. As the weeks went by, I wondered why he kept attending the

daily Bible classes. He did this for 10 weeks, seven days a week. He would carefully turn his Bible to every text I referred to, often searching for several minutes. One day I asked him if he wanted to be baptized. Without hesitation he joined the small baptismal class. He was baptized shortly thereafter.

The witness spreads

The Spirit was indeed at work. I saw this in the case of Sveta also. Sveta taught English and Japanese in a village elementary school. One day, while waiting for a bus, she met a Filipino student missionary who invited her to attend his Adventist English Church. She agreed, if only to hear good English and pick up a skill or two in spoken English.

At church I met Sveta. I visited her home, shared my faith, and listened to her concerns. Soon she was bringing her family and friends to our church on Sabbath. When school started, she brought her English students to church. Even the two-hour bus ride did not keep her from attending. I had the privilege of seeing her baptized before I left.

I learned some lessons

My Russian experience taught me three important lessons. First, God doesn't call us to do the impossible. When He calls us, He also enables us. Second, He wants us to trust in Him. The weaker we feel, the more He is glorified in us. Too often we see God in our perspective and limit Him; instead, we

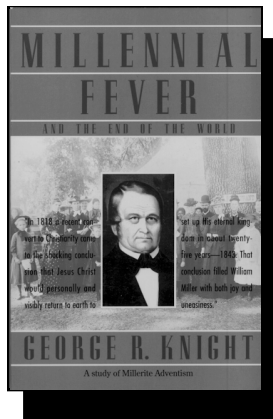
need to see us in His perspective and let Him use us as He wills. Third, let God control our lives. Life under our own control may be successful; but life under God's control opens up great horizons, and we become instruments of His accomplishment. When I left Sakhalin, 60 people were attending the church, and I left with the satisfaction that God had used me for His purposes.

I am back to bioengineering, but I shall always remain an instrument of God's service wherever He wants me. 🙏

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Who Is My Neighbor?

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) has produced a 125-page illustrated book that takes an in-depth look at the agency's world-wide development work from a theological, social, economic, and human perspectives. If you are interested in ADRA's philosophy and its mission around the world, you may request a free copy of *Who Is My Neighbor? The Human Response to Human Tragedy*, by writing to ADRA Communications; 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904; U.S.A.



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1844 and the Rise of Sabbatarian Adventism, compiled and edited by George R. Knight (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1994).

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William Miller: Herald of the Blessed Hope, by Ellen G. White (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1994).

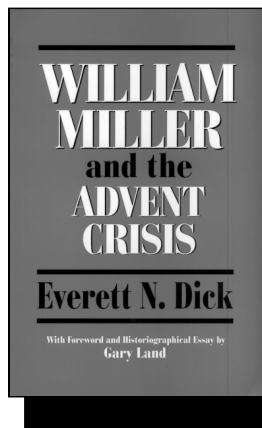
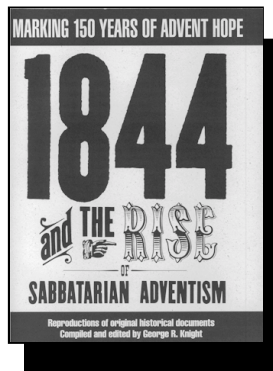
Till Morning Breaks, by Elaine Egbert (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1993).

REVIEWED BY DOUGLAS MORGAN.

The year 1994 marked the 150th anniversary of the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844. The event generated a literary output that provides us with richer and fuller understanding of the awakening of interest in the Second Coming lead by William Miller. The individual most directly responsible for this new wealth of understanding is George Knight, professor of church history in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. Knight's *Millennial Fever* is comprehensive, scholarly, and accessible to the non-specialist. It is now surely the best single-volume history of Millerism available.

The entire book is strong, but Knight may be at his best in guiding the reader through the bewildering welter of groups that went diverse ways after the Great Disappointment splintered the Millerite movement. He may surprise—even shock—Seventh-day Adventists by showing that the faction of post-Millerite Adventism out of which the denomination emerged was “up to its armpits in fanaticism” (p. 295). It is fascinating to see both Seventh-day Adventism’s origins in that radical wing and the process by which the denomination’s pioneers forged out of this superheated chaos a new identity and belief system based on their ongoing study of Scripture.

Knight has also compiled and edited *1844 and the Rise of Sabbatarian Adventism*, a collection of original historical

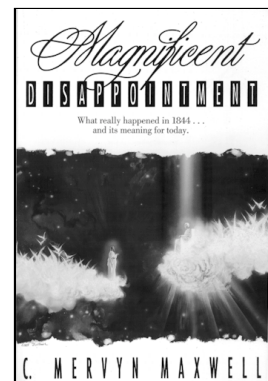


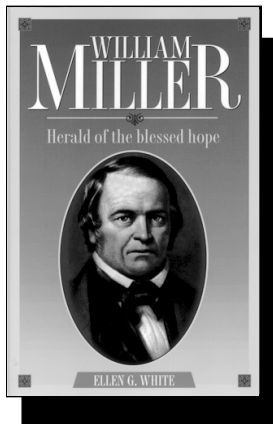
documents that directly connects readers with those who experienced the Millerite movement and the time of confusion, experimentation, and deepened understanding that followed 1844. Documents include excerpts from Miller’s own writings, selections from Millerite papers, such as Charles Fitch’s stirring sermon “Come Out of Her, My People,” correspondence of Millerite and Sabbatarian Adventist leaders, Hiram Edson’s poignant reminiscence on the Great Disappointment, and Ellen White’s original, unedited report of her first vision.

In making these contributions, Knight builds on the pioneering work of others. Prominent among these scholars is the late Everett Dick, who served for decades on the faculty of Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska. Dick achieved wide recognition as a historian of the trans-Mississippi American frontier, but until now, his groundbreaking study of the Millerite movement has been unavailable, even though it was completed in 1930—nearly halfway between 1844 and now! In his doctoral dissertation at the University of Wisconsin, Dick charted a new path in Millerite studies. He sought neither to deride the Millerite movement as a delusion nor to defend it as being of divine origin, but to understand it through the means of scholarly historical analysis. His efforts to find an Adventist publisher were rebuffed by church leaders who felt that only an apologetic work would do.

Now, more than 60 years later, Dick has finally and posthumously found an Adventist publisher—Andrews University Press. *William Miller and the Advent Crisis* includes a foreword and historiographical essay by Gary Land which, respectively, narrate the fate of Dick’s manuscript and provide a superb analysis of virtually everything significant written about the Millerite movement from the 19th century to the present. Though in some ways now superseded by Knight and others, Dick’s relatively brief but thoroughly researched history contains numerous rewards difficult to find elsewhere.

He documents that Advent believers reported numerous signs in the heavens portending Christ’s return—far more than simply the meteor shower of 1833. In February of 1843, for example, many citizens of Fort Leavenworth saw a blood-red moon with a black cross of equal proportions over the face and a small rainbow on each side, and individuals throughout North





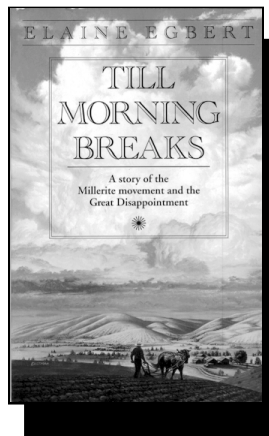
America reported even more bizarre sightings. Another particularly fascinating section describes preparations for October 22, 1844. We learn of storekeepers who gave away their merchandise, a New York woman who confessed to a murder years before in England and asked to be sent back for trial, and a modest boost the U. S. Treasury received when a Millerite sent in \$5 he confessed he owed.

In *Magnificent Disappointment*, C. Mervyn Maxwell offers a theological defense of Miller and the Seventh-day Adventist reinterpretation of the significance of 1844. The disappointment was “magnificent” because it was the essential prelude to the emergence of Seventh-day Adventism and its distinctive theological insights. Written with the verve characteristic of his many previous works of church history, theology, and biblical studies, *Magnificent Disappointment* drives home a traditional interpretation of 1844 in a clear and forceful manner.

Maxwell connects 1844 with Adventist doctrine, identity, and mission in a wide variety of ways. His interpretation of the sanctuary and investigative judgment doctrines particularly stresses the development of a “final generation” of believers in whom Christ’s character will be perfectly reproduced before He returns. While Maxwell has effectively set forth one major way Seventh-day Adventists have understood 1844, it is by no means the only way. Readers searching for a broader perspective might be well served, for starters, by Roy Adams’ *The Sanctuary Doctrine: Three Approaches in the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1981).

William Miller: Herald of the Blessed Hope is a brief (94-page) volume compiled by the White Estate, mainly from *Early Writings*, *Life Sketches*, and from two versions of the final work in the “Conflict of the Ages” series—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, Volume 4 and *The Great Controversy*. Ellen G. White’s treatment focuses on the importance of Miller and 1844 in the Seventh-day Adventist theology of history. As an American reformer (see chapter 18, *The Great Controversy*), Miller carried on the Protestant Reformation in America by calling Christians out of their traditional understandings to a new grasp of biblical truth. Building on Miller’s message, Seventh-day Adventists offered a further unfolding of truth that called people to break free from their creeds and take a bold stand on the Bible alone.

Readers who have wondered what 1844 was like for everyday people in the Adventist movement may enjoy Elaine Egbert’s novel *Till Morning Breaks*. What was it like when belief in the “Advent near” divided churches, families, and



finances? How did it feel to live through the emotional roller coaster of conviction, expectation, ecstasy, devastation, ridicule, and new hope? Egbert helps us feel what it must have been like by drawing us into the experience of her characters in a way that is imaginative yet faithful to the historical context.

These books not only give us many insights into 1844; they also say something by implication about the Seventh-day Adventist Church today. They show us a church mature enough for honest, critical historical reflection on some of the strengths and weaknesses in its founding. They show us a church willing to display a degree of diversity in its perspectives on and interpretation of those events.

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Book publishers: Andrews University Press; Berrien Springs, MI 49104, U.S.A.; Pacific Press Publishing Association, P.O. Box 7000, Boise, ID 83707-1000, U.S.A.; Review and Herald Publishing Association, 55 W. Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740, U.S.A.

Dialogue for you, free!

If you are a Seventh-day Adventist student attending a non-Adventist college or university, the Church has a plan that will allow you to receive *Dialogue* free while you remain a student. (Those who are no longer students can subscribe to *Dialogue*, using the coupon on page 19.) Contact the director of the Education Department or the Youth Department in your Union and request that you be placed in their distribution network for the journal. Include your full name, address, college or university you are attending, the degree you are pursuing, and the name of the local church of which you are a member. You may also write to our regional representatives at the address provided on page 2, with a copy of your letter sent to the Union directors listed above. In North America, you can phone us toll free at 1-800-226-5478, fax us at (301) 622-9627, or send an E-mail message via CompuServe: 74617,1231. If these contacts fail to produce results, write to us at our editorial address.

Adventist World Leaders Adopt Campus Ministries Guidelines

World delegates attending the Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee, in October 1995, voted the following guidelines for Adventist Ministry to College and University Students (AMiCUS). The guidelines provide new impetus for this ministry and define responsibilities at various levels of church administration.

Objectives

Adventist Ministry to College and University Students (AMiCUS) seeks to meet the spiritual, intellectual, and social needs of Seventh-day Adventist students on secular campuses worldwide. In cooperation with leaders at various church levels, it aims to achieve these goals by strengthening the faith commitment of these students to Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and values, providing opportunities for Christian fellowship, preparing students to deal with the intellectual challenges that arise in a secular environment, developing their leadership abilities, and training them for outreach and witnessing on the campus, in the community, and in the world at large.

Guidelines and Responsibilities

General Conference:

1. The Committee on Adventist Ministry to College and University Students (AMiCUS) will continue to provide leadership in this ministry, in coordination with the Interdepartmental Strategic Planning and Networking Committee (ISPAN) Task Force on Education and Youth, and through their counterparts in the world divisions.
2. AMiCUS will carry out its main assignments, in consultation with leaders in the world divisions, as follows:
 - a. Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries will take the initiative in providing training for campus chaplains and pastors in university centers, and in developing materials to support their ministry. Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries will also maintain an international list of Seventh-day Adventist campus chaplains.
 - b. The Department of Education will be responsible for developing *Dialogue* as a network journal published in interdivision languages (English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish), and for printing and distributing *Dialogue* on the basis of orders received through the world divisions (each division will be billed for the printing and mailing costs). The Department of Education will also promote the values of Seventh-day Adventist education, mission, and service, encouraging these students to continue their studies at a

Seventh-day Adventist college or university where possible.

- c. The Youth Department will lead out in fostering the organization of student associations in university centers, training students for outreach, holding student retreats, and developing necessary materials. The Youth Department will also maintain an international list of student associations.
3. AMiCUS will submit to the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee, through the General Conference Administrative Committee, an annual budget to carry out these assignments.
4. In response to requests received from the divisions, AMiCUS will seek the involvement of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department to obtain, at the local or national level, Sabbath exemptions for class assignments and examinations for Seventh-day Adventist students.
5. Where linguistically appropriate, AMiCUS will cooperate with the Sabbath School Department in promoting the use of *Collegiate Quarterly* in English or Spanish among Adventist students in colleges/universities.
6. AMiCUS will work with the various services to encourage and facilitate the involvement of Adventist students as student missionaries, volunteers, or interns.
7. AMiCUS will provide guidance and coordination to the ministry of their counterparts in the world divisions in this area, as well as periodic assessment.

World Divisions:

1. Assign to one or two qualified departmental directors the responsibility for leading out in Adventist ministry on secular campuses, in consultation with the General Conference AMiCUS Committee and with support from other division departmental leaders and administrators.
2. Conduct, in coordination with their counterparts at the union level, periodic surveys of Adventist students on non-Adventist college/university campuses to determine their needs and to develop materials and a plan with adequate funding to meet those needs.
3. In consultation with the unions, promote the organization of student associations, where possible, and maintain a master list of these associations and campus chaplains in the division territory.
4. Implement a financial plan that will involve the division, the union, and the conferences/missions in the free distribution of *Dialogue* to each Adventist college/university student. Forward the printing order to the General Conference AMiCUS Committee and supervise the distribution of the journal within the territory of the division. Finances will also be assigned for co-sponsoring inter-union training workshops for campus chaplains and pastors, and inter-union student retreats.
5. Where linguistically appropriate, work with the Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department in promoting the use of *Collegiate Quarterly*, in English or Spanish, among Adventist students in colleges/universities.

6. Assist union leaders in providing training for student outreach on their campuses and in their communities.
7. Promote the involvement of Adventist students as student missionaries, volunteers, or interns, making them aware of service opportunities and processing their applications.
8. Connect these students with Adventist colleges and universities as potential transfer students, where possible, and as eventual faculty members.
9. Assist union leaders in establishing and maintaining good relations with administrators of non-Adventist colleges and universities in which Adventists are students.
10. Upon request from union leaders, seek the involvement of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department in preventing or solving Sabbath observance issues related to Adventist students on non-Adventist campuses.
11. Provide guidance and coordination to the ministry of their counterparts in the unions in this area, as well as periodic assessment.

Unions:

1. Assign to a qualified departmental director the main responsibility for leading out in this ministry, in consultation with his counterpart(s) in the division and with support from other union departmental leaders and administrators.
2. Conduct, in coordination with their counterparts at the conference/mission level, periodic surveys of Adventist students on non-Adventist college/university campuses to determine their needs and to develop materials and a financial plan to meet those needs.
3. With support from the administration, implement a financial plan to foster activities and the development of materials needed for campus ministry in the union territory.
4. In consultation with conferences/missions, promote the organization of Adventist student associations, where possible, and maintain a master list of these associations and their members, as well as campus chaplains in the union territory.
5. Forward orders for *Dialogue* to the division and supervise its free distribution, along with other relevant materials, within the union territory.
6. Organize unionwide retreats for Adventist students on secular campuses, with carefully selected subjects and speakers.
7. In coordination with division leaders, sponsor unionwide training workshops for campus chaplains and pastors in university centers.
8. Upon request from conference and mission leaders, organize seminars that will equip students to become involved in outreach and witnessing activities on the campus and in the community.
9. Assist conference and mission leaders in establishing and maintaining good relations with administrators of non-Adventist colleges and universities in which Adventists are students.
10. Upon request from conferences and missions, seek the involvement of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty

Department in solving Sabbath observance issues related to Adventist students on non-Adventist campuses.

11. If linguistically appropriate, promote the use of *Collegiate Quarterly* in English or Spanish among Adventist students in colleges/universities.
12. In coordination with conference/mission leaders, select major university centers on which to establish facilities for Adventist Campus Ministries for the purpose of fostering nurture and outreach. Where appropriate, appoint campus chaplains to carry out that ministry.
13. Promote the involvement of Adventist students as student missionaries, volunteers or interns, making them aware of service opportunities and processing their applications.
14. Connect these students with Adventist colleges and universities as potential transfer students, where possible, and as eventual faculty members.
15. Provide guidance and coordination to the ministry of their counterparts in the conferences and missions in this area, as well as periodic assessment.

Conferences and Missions:

1. Assign to a qualified departmental director or administrator the responsibility for leading out in this ministry, in consultation with his union counterpart(s) and with support from other conference/mission departmental leaders and administrators.
2. Conduct periodic surveys of Adventist students on non-Adventist college/university campuses to determine their needs and develop a plan to meet those needs.
3. With support from the administration, implement a financial plan to support activities and the development of materials needed for this ministry in the conference/mission territory.
4. Promote the organization of Adventist student associations, where possible, and maintain a master list of these associations and their members, as well as campus chaplains in their territory.
5. Forward orders for *Dialogue* to the union, and supervise its free distribution, along with other relevant materials within the conference/mission territory.
6. In coordination with the union, organize student retreats and training workshops for campus chaplains and ministers in university centers.
7. Work with church ministers and campus chaplains in providing seminars that will equip students to become involved in outreach and witnessing activities on the campus and in the community.
8. If linguistically appropriate, promote the use of *Collegiate Quarterly*, in English or Spanish, among Adventist students in colleges/universities.
9. Wherever possible, appoint campus chaplains or qualified pastors to carry out this ministry at the local or regional level.
10. Assist church leaders and chaplains in establishing and maintaining good relations with administrators of non-Adventist colleges and universities in which Adventists are students.
11. In consultation with union leaders, provide Adventist student

centers and/or residences as close to the campuses as possible to strengthen nurture and outreach.

- Promote the involvement of Adventist students as student missionaries, volunteers, or interns, making them aware of service opportunities and processing their applications.
- Connect these students with Adventist colleges and universities as potential transfer students, where possible, and as eventual faculty members.
- Provide guidance and coordination to the work of the local and district pastors in this ministry.

Churches and Districts:

- On university centers, and in consultation with the conference/mission, assign to a local pastor or qualified elder the responsibility for leading out in this ministry, with support from the church board. If necessary, request training for this ministry from the conference/mission or union.
- Locate and develop a list of Adventist students and teachers in non-Adventist campuses in the local church or within the district.
- In consultation with conference/mission leaders, organize a church-based ministry to meet the spiritual, intellectual, and social needs of these students, providing the necessary funds through the church budget.

- Order through the conference/mission leaders sufficient copies of *Dialogue* for free distribution to each Adventist student.
- Involve college/university students in the life and outreach of the church, assigning leadership responsibilities (Sabbath school, youth activities, music, evangelism, deacon, etc.) and providing appropriate mentoring.
- Explore the possibility that a qualified pastor or church leader may obtain recognition as a campus chaplain at a nearby college or university.
- Promote the involvement of Adventist students as student missionaries, volunteers, or interns, making them aware of service opportunities and assisting them in processing their applications.
- Help these students to connect with Adventist colleges and universities as potential transfer students, where possible, and as eventual faculty members.
- With assistance from the church clerk, keep track of students from the local congregation who move to a distant college/university campus to pursue their studies, and maintain contact with them through regular letters and bulletins, ensuring that they receive Adventist publications such as *Dialogue*, *Collegiate Quarterly*, *Adventist Review*, and other local or regional church papers. 📖

Ancestors...

Continued from page 15

were, it is obvious that there are problems with almost any interpretation of these fossils. Given the current database, caution is warranted. Indeed, it would be premature to draw any definitive conclusions with regard to the origins of these organisms and their relationship to the Genesis record. ²⁰ 📖

Elaine Kennedy (Ph.D., University of Southern California) is a geologist at the Geoscience Research Institute. She is the author of several articles, including "The Intriguing Dinosaur," (*Dialogue* 5:2). Her address: Geoscience Research Institute; Loma Linda University; Loma Linda, CA 92350, U. S. A.

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- I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Lee Spencer and to the Geoscience Research Institute staff for their advice during the final stages of this essay.

Dialogue answers your questions

Death penalty

For some time, there has been a debate about the death penalty in my country. As a Christian, I'm trying to develop my own views on this issue, but as I study the Bible there seems to be contradictions. Please summarize for me the biblical teaching on the death penalty. Has our church taken a stance on this issue?

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has not taken a position on the death penalty, although considerable thought has been given to it insofar as it connects with our advocacy of non-combatancy in military service. Some make an argument that since we oppose use of arms in military settings, consistency requires our opposition to the death penalty. However, the connection is not that obvious.

According to the Scriptures, a person is not at liberty to deprive another person of his or her life. Personal conflicts, however serious, are not to be settled in this way. This concept is inherent in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere. Less clear is the question of self-defense in situations of violence. The literal Hebrew reading of the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder" implies an act driven by malice.

But the death penalty is contingent on a legal process that has examined the evidence and determined that there is a guilty party. It is the effort of society, not an individual, to deal with violation of other person or persons. In democratic cultures, death is reserved for only the most offensive of acts, typically murder or murder compounded by other offenses. The death penalty rises above simple revenge to the goal of protecting society from someone who is extremely dangerous and has demonstrated his or her character in violence. Biblically, there is no place for vigilantism.

Romans 13:1-7 affirms the legiti-

macy of the community to organize and appoint specified persons to act on its behalf for the security of the group. This passage affirms the legitimacy of government, warning that to threaten the safety of the group carries grave consequences. Many understand Paul's statement in verse 4 to justify even execution of defiant people. It reads, "But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer" (RSV). The word translated *servant* here is applied elsewhere to Christian ministers. Most serious students of the Bible include capital punishment within this passage. Beyond this point lies the question of participation in killing as an authorized agent in military action. But this is beyond the immediate question we are addressing.

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Bible versions

In the past few years new Bible versions have been published in my language. Is this good or bad? Some Adventists prefer the old, classical version of the Bible and others like the new ones. At times there are even arguments about this in our church. How should I relate to the new versions, some of which are easier for me to understand? How can I choose the best?

New Bible versions are generally good. While all the versions do not target the whole of the Bible-reading public, most versions target a specific audience, and since it makes it more understandable for them, this can be helpful. The only time a Bible version would be bad is when it inserts into the Bible interpretations reflecting the translator's own biases, that are not derivable from the

original.

In the English-speaking world, some well-meaning but misinformed people have deliberately set aside clear historical facts, claiming that only the King James Version can be used as a Bible. Something similar could happen in other language areas if an older version has held sway for many years. The problem with the older versions is twofold. First, when they were translated, the oldest Greek manuscripts were not used or available, so the translation does not reflect the more accurate text of the Bible. Second, an older version will not be as clearly understood by younger readers, since the language is at least somewhat out-of-date. One should choose a Bible that is sponsored by all or most of the Christian churches in the country (at any rate a version translated by a group of churches and individuals rather than only one), a modern translation that relies on the most ancient manuscripts, and a translation that is contemporary, accurate, clear, and beautifully translated. God gave us the Bible so that we could understand His will, so it is important to have a Bible that is clear and understandable. 📖

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Open Forum

Is there a question you'd like to have answered by an Adventist specialist? Phrase it clearly in less than 75 words. Include your name and postal address, indicating your hobbies or interests. Mail your question to *Dialogue - Open Forum*; 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904; U.S.A. If your question is selected for publication, along with an answer, you will receive a complimentary book with our thanks.