

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

DIALOGUE

Published in

►English

French

Portuguese

Spanish



**The moral
implications
of Darwinism**

**The Adventist
advantage**

**The year 2000:
Will it usher
in the millennium?**

**Dating: Preparing
for a successful
marriage**

Volume 11
Number

2

Contents

Editorial

- 3 Needed: Leaders of courage
— Alfredo García-Marenko

3 Letters

Profiles

- 16 Kim Gangte
— Dorothy Watts and Dittu Abraham
- 18 Heber Pintos
— Humberto M. Rasi

Campus Life

- 24 God, me, and the marketplace of ideas
— Will Sutton

Logos

- 26 Shattered dreams and bright hope
— Donna J. Evans

Open Forum

- 28 Should we ever judge others?
— John M. Fowler

Action Report

- 29 Seminar for university students in Maranhao, Brazil
— Otimar Gonçalves
- 29 Romance across the Caribbean
— Carlos Guzmán García

Books

- 30 *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture* (Roth)
— David Ekkens
- 30 *True Believer* (Bolotnikov & Wahlen)
— Eugene V. Zaitsev
- 31 *Jack: An Incredible Life* (King)
— Mary Wong

32 Interchange

First Person

- 34 Jack, an incredible life
— Jolena Taylor King

Regional Representatives

Africa-Indian Ocean Division: Japheth L. Agboka. Address: 22 Boite Postale 1764, Abidjan 22, Cote d'Ivoire.

Eastern Africa Division: Hudson E. Kibuuka. Address: H.G. 100, Highlands, Harare, Zimbabwe.

E-mail: 100076.3560@compuserve.com

Euro-Africa Division: Roberto Badenas. Address: P.O. Box 219, 3000 Bern 32, Switzerland.

E-mail: 74617.1776@compuserve.com

Euro-Asia Division: Harry Mayden. Address: Krasnoyarskaya Street, Golanovo, 107589 Moscow, Russian Federation.

E-mail: esdedu@glasnet.ru

Inter-American Division: Carlos Archbold and Eliezer Melendez. Address: P.O. Box 140760, Miami,

FL 33114-0760, U.S.A. E-mail: 74617.3457@compuserve.com & jovenes@interamerica.org

North American Division: Richard Osborn, José Rojas, and Richard Stenbakken. Address: 12501 Old Columbia Pike,

Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, U.S.A. E-mail: 74617.545@compuserve.com & 74617.760@compuserve.com &

74532.1614@compuserve.com

Northern Asia-Pacific Division: David S. F. Wong. Address: Koyang IIsan, P.O. Box 43, 783 Janghang-Dong, IIsan-Gu,

Koyang City, Kyonggi-do 411-600, Republic of Korea. E-mail: dsfwong@ppp.kornet21.net

South American Division: Roberto de Azevedo and José M. B. Silva. Address: Caixa Postal 02-2600, 70279-970 Brasilia,

DF, Brazil. E-mail: educa@dsa.org.br

South Pacific Division: Lester Devine and Gilbert Cangy. Address: Locked Bag 2014, Wahroonga, N.S.W. 2076,

Australia. E-mail: ldevine@adventist.org.au Gilbert_Cangy@SDASPD.adventist.org.au

Southern Africa Union: Jonathan Julies. Address: P.O. Box 468, Bloemfontein 9300, Free State, South Africa.

Southern Asia Division: Edwin Charles. Address: P.O. Box 2, HCF Hosur, Tamil Nadu 635110, India.

Southern Asia-Pacific Division: Oliver Koh. Address: P.O. Box 040, Silang, Cavite, 4118 Philippines. E-mail:

okoh@ssd.org

Trans-European Division: Ole Kendel and Orville Woolford. Address: 119 St. Peter's Street, St. Albans, Herts., AL1 3EY

England. E-mail: 74617.1257@compuserve.com & 71307.1432@compuserve.com

Essays

5 The moral implications of Darwinism

We cannot be Darwinists and at the same time hold the biblical-Christian view that human life is sacred.

— Earl Aagaard

8 The Adventist advantage

Research findings suggest that the Adventist lifestyle contributes to better and longer life.

— Larry Beeson

12 The year 2000: Will it usher in the millennium?

A review of human speculations and the biblical teaching.

— George W. Reid

20 Dating: Preparing for a successful marriage

A professional family counselor outlines seven stages in the dating process.

— Nancy L. Van Pelt

College and University

Dialogue™, an international journal of faith, thought, and action, is published three times a year in four parallel editions (English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish) by the Committee on Adventist Ministry to College and University Students (AMiCUS) of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; U.S.A.

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 2.

Copyright © 1999 by the AMiCUS Committee. All rights reserved.

DIALOGUE affirms the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and supports its mission. The views published in this journal, however, are the independent thoughts of the authors.

CIRCULATION INQUIRES should be addressed to the Regional Representative located in the area where the reader resides. See names and addresses below.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: U.S. \$12 per year (three issues). See coupon on page 15 for details.

AMiCUS Committee

Chairman: Matthew Bediako
Vice Chairmen: Baraka G. Muganda, Humberto M. Rasi, Richard Stenbakken

Secretary: Julieta Rasi

Members: John M. Fowler, Alfredo García-Marenko, John Graz, Allan R. Handsides, Jonathan Kuntaraf, George Reid, Virginia L. Smith, Mario Veloso

Editorial Board

Editor-in-chief: Humberto M. Rasi

Editor: John M. Fowler

Associate Editors: Alfredo García-Marenko, Richard Stenbakken

Managing Editor: Julieta Rasi

Senior Consultants: James Cress,

George Reid

Copy Editor: Beverly Rumble

Editorial Secretary: Silvia Sicalo

International Editions: Julieta Rasi

International Copy Editors:

Muriel Menanteau (French)

Eunice Scheffel do Prado

(Portuguese)

Julieta Rasi (Spanish)

Editorial Correspondence:

12501 Old Columbia Pike;

Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600;

U.S.A.

Telephone: (301) 680-5060

Fax: (301) 622-9627

E-mail: 74617.464@

compuserve.com or

104472.1154@compuserve.com

Dialogue has received correspondence from readers in 104 countries around the world.

Needed: Leaders of courage

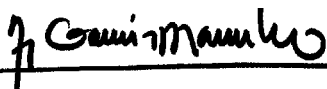
Significant events are occurring rapidly around the world. The good news about Jesus Christ and His soon return is entering new frontiers, closed until recently. God's family is growing in many countries, as men and women surrender their lives to the transforming influence of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, there is widespread apprehension as we approach the new millennium. False messiahs and nihilistic philosophies spread their clever deceit and attract many.

Today, as never before, the world and the church need leaders with commitment, integrity, and wisdom. Leaders who, instead of using power for their own benefit, will be ready to help and serve. Men and women with courage to remain firm in defense of truth and justice. Young people who will dare to defy the ease of the permissive society while standing loyally for the principles of God's kingdom and manifesting those principles in their lifestyle.

This is time for courage: "To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason" (Ellen G. White, *Testimony Treasures*, 2:31).

This year marks 120 years of the existence of Adventist youth societies, which for generations have served to develop the talents of young men and women and inspired them to serve others. Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the Pathfinder Clubs, which have channeled the energies and strengthened the spiritual development of thousands of teenagers and pre-teens. We have marked too many anniversaries. Now, as we approach the new millennium, we must not forget that we have very little time to fulfill our mission. This mission cannot be completed without more and more youth and young adults getting involved in Pathfinder Clubs, Advent Youth Societies, university fellowships, service-oriented programs, evangelistic teams, and new congregations.

Are you ready to do your part?



Alfredo García-Marenko



Alfredo García-Marenko, associate director in the General Conference Youth Ministries Department, is the new associate editor of *Dialogue*.

Connecting through electronic mail

Thank you for the instructive article "The World Wide Web" (*Dialogue* 8.3). As a doctoral student in mathematics at the University of Nairobi, I am beginning to appreciate the power and use of computers and the convenience of electronic mail. For readers who wish to connect with me through e-mail, here is my address: tachia@uon.ac.ke

Thomas Achia
Nairobi, KENYA

For lovers of poetry

Dialogue readers may be interested to know that I have just published through Seaview Press of Australia a volume of lyric poems titled *Odes to Edibles*. Written in Singapore English, the poems included in the book focus on Adventist and Jewish foods of the world. Those who wish more information about this singular poetry collection may contact me through e-mail: gychyan@yahoo.com

Gan Yung Chyan
SINGAPORE

Relevance and quality

I wish to congratulate the editors of *Dialogue* for the relevance and quality of the material published in each issue. The feature articles expand our knowledge and help us relate as Christians to the challenges of contemporary culture. I have already started corresponding with readers in other countries, listed in "Interchange," sharing my faith with them and learning about their customs. Thank you!

Josafa M. dos Santos
Salvador, BRAZIL

Pleased but puzzled

I want to congratulate you for the subjects you address in *Dialogue* and to express appreciation for your efforts on behalf of university students and other thoughtful young adults. But I'm puzzled by the statement found on page 2 of every issue, indicating that the jour-

Letters

nal “affirms the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and supports its mission. The views published in this journal, however, are the independent thoughts of the authors.” Do you screen the content of the articles you publish to ensure that they support the fundamental beliefs of our Church?

Alejandro Horacio Fracasso
Neuquen, ARGENTINA

The editors respond:

We edit carefully the content of each issue of *Dialogue* for accuracy, style, and coherence with Bible teachings. But many of the articles we publish explore fields not clearly addressed by the Scriptures or specifically mentioned in the doctrines of the Adventist Church. Faithful Christians may disagree in their approaches to subjects such as artificial intelligence, bioethics, experiments on humans, gene therapy, inter-racial marriage, literary fiction, music choices, or postmodern thought—topics we have covered in recent issues. By addressing them, we foster an intelligent faith among our readers and seek to fulfill the goal implied in the name our journal—*Dialogue*.

A happy surprise

What a happy surprise to discover *Dialogue*! I'm 22 and a recent graduate from Karaganda State University. Last year I began teaching English and German, my specialties, at a private institute that trains secretaries and interpreters. Four years ago I became a Seventh-day Adventist and am now an active member of one of the two small Adventist congregations in the capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in central Asia. I would like to correspond in English with other young adults to improve my use of the language and to share my

Christian experience. My address: Gapeewa 9, Apartment 526; 470078 Karaganda; Kazakhstan.

Constantine Kalmykow
Lingua Institute
Karaganda, KAZAKHSTAN

Thanks for the connections

For many years we were isolated from fellow Adventist students in other parts of the world. Now, thanks to *Dialogue*, we have been able to connect with many of them. Although copies of the journal reach us late, we still enjoy them as we rotate them among ourselves. We are a group of 32 Adventist students pursuing various professional careers. I am studying medicine and serving as chairman of THISDASAO, our Adventist student association. We invite members of other Adventist student fellowships to contact us at P.O. Box 476; Mwanza; Tanzania.

S. K. Lawrence
Bugando Medical
Training Centre
Mwanza, TANZANIA

Still interested

I recently graduated from the University of Illinois in Champaign. Since I am no longer entitled to receiving *Dialogue* free, I am enclosing a check to cover the cost of a two-year subscription and to obtain, as a bonus, the book *Christianity and Science*. As an Adventist young adult, I truly enjoy reading each issue. I appreciate the insights and perspectives of my fellow brothers and sisters around the globe. Indeed, it is refreshing to look at current issues from a biblical perspective. By the way, does *Dialogue* ever publish a cumulative index? My e-mail address: nkma@juno.com

Nickie Ma
Northbrook, Illinois, U.S.A.

The editors respond:

Thank you, Nickie, for your encouraging letter. *Dialogue* publishes a cumulative in-

dex of its content every five years. You will find these indexes in issues 5:3 (1993) and 10:3 (1998), which we are enclosing to help you in locating articles of lasting interest. We are willing to supply copies of these indexes to readers who request them.

Getting better and better

I don't know how you do it, but each issue of *Dialogue* seems better than the previous one, full of thought-provoking articles, fascinating interviews, and moving personal stories. Congratulations! Enclosed you will find our yearly contribution to expand the circle of readers of this great journal.

Louis A. Ramirez
Grand Terrace,
California, U.S.A.

Looking for correspondents

Although I am not an Adventist, I am a Christian. I first saw a copy of *Dialogue* while visiting the Adventist church in Mosul, Iraq. In fact, I meet with that small congregation every Saturday and we study Bible lessons together. The journal allowed me to understand better some important subjects and I especially liked the “Interchange” section. I am interested in corresponding with *Dialogue* readers in English. My address: P.O. Box 10072; Bilal al-Shahada A.D.; Mosul, Iraq.

Bashar Shamoun
Mosul, IRAQ

Write to us!

We welcome your comments, reactions and questions, but limit your letters to 200 words. Write to *Dialogue Letters*: 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904; U.S.A. You can also use fax: (301) 622-9627, or E-mail: 74617.464@compuserve.com Letters selected for publication may be edited for clarity or space.

The moral implications of Darwinism

by Earl Aagaard

We cannot be Darwinists and at the same time hold the biblical-Christian view that human life is sacred.

Human life seems to have lost its dignity and value. Ask a Muslim in Serbia, a Ba'hai in Iran, or a Christian in the Sudan. Observe Jack Kevorkian assisting suicide and then being embraced as a serious and even valuable contributor to our moral conversation. The question looms: What is important about being human?

Time was when we could blame barbarity on the pagan, the uncivilized, or the fanatics. Names spring to mind: Hitler, Ghengis Khan, or Pol Pot. But now we're not talking about the past. We are at the edge of the 21st century. Knowledge has been increased: astronauts crisscross space; satellites circle the globe bringing information from everywhere to everywhere in a few moments; galaxies beyond our own have become objects of study; and genes within our bodies are searched and researched for a clue to the mysteries of human life. And yet there remains the question—simple, yet most profound: What is so special about being human?

For many philosophers, including some who call themselves Christians, the answer is increasingly, nothing much. With all of today's scientific knowledge and technical achievements, and with the historical record in full view, human beings are still tempted to violate basic human rights.

After World War II, the Nuremberg Trials bared the evil that lurks in the human heart, and showed how even the most cultured and civilized society can crawl into the moral sewers, virtually erasing the spiritual meaning of "humanity." The lessons of that war drove the United Nations to pass, in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

This document affirmed the dignity and equality of every human being, requiring civilized societies to protect the weak from the strong. The declaration still stands. Why, then, are we still talking about human rights and dignity?

The myth of origins

The answer may be found in what is embraced as the scientific explanation of the origin of life and its diversity, a story that leaves out the biblical God. This perspective is clearly expounded in James Rachels' 1990 book, *Created from Animals: The Moral Implications of Darwinism* (New York: Oxford University Press). The author reasons from a foundation of naturalistic evolution. His conclusion, robustly supported, is that Darwinism completely undermines the doctrine of human dignity. Human beings occupy no special place in the moral order; we are simply another form of animal.

This view and concern about it are not new. In 1859, Bishop Samuel Wilberforce warned that Darwinism was "absolutely incompatible" with Christianity's "whole representation of the moral and spiritual condition of man." The Southern Baptist Convention of the United States echoed Wilberforce in 1987. But there is no unanimity among Christians. A century ago Henry Ward Beecher, the renowned preacher, suggested that the evolutionary perspective *added* to the glory of God's creation. Pope John Paul II is willing to accept the evolutionary process as God's means of creating the human body (although not the "spirit," which he insists is God's immediate creation).

Even scientists are divided on this issue. Some (such as Steven Jay Gould)

say that Darwinism and religion are not incompatible, that one can be both a theist and a Darwinist; while others (William Provine) assert that Darwinism makes all supernatural religion not just superfluous, but untenable.

Rachels argues ("Must a Darwinian Be Skeptical?") that teleology (direction and purpose) in nature is irrevocably destroyed by Darwinism. Without teleology, religion must "retreat to something like deism,...no longer...support[ing] the doctrine of human dignity" (pp. 127, 128). This argument is a powerful one, and must be refuted if a religious Darwinist is to salvage the biblical teaching that humans are created in God's image and have a special place in the divine order. As Rachels reminds us, "The 'image of God' thesis does not go along with just any theistic view. It requires a theism that sees God as actively designing man and the world as a home for man."

In "How Different Are Humans From Animals?" Rachels concludes that Darwinism destroys any foundation for a morally significant difference between humans and animals. If humans descended from primitive ape-like creatures by natural selection, they may be physically different from non-human animals, but cannot be essentially so. Certainly not different in any way that gives *every* human more rights than *any* animal. In Rachels' words, "one cannot reasonably make distinctions in morals where none exist in fact." He calls his doctrine "moral individualism," and it rejects "the traditional doctrine of human dignity" along with the idea that human life has any inherent worth that non-human life lacks.

Moral individualism

In "Morality Without Humans Being Special," Rachels deals first with human equality, and then rejects it! Humans are entitled "to be treated as equals" only if there are no "relevant differences" between them. Rachels, lacking belief in sin and its power (and ignoring history), expects that "rele-

vant differences" will be used in distinguishing individuals *only*, and not genders, races, religions, etc. Accepting Darwinian concepts extends the analysis to non-human animals as well, yielding no automatic superiority of human claims over those of rabbits, pigs, or whales. Under "moral individualism," when faced with using a human or a chimpanzee for a lethal medical experiment, we can no longer decide the question by noting that the chimp is not human. "We would have to ask what justifies using this particular chimp, and not that particular human, and the answer would have to be in terms of their individual characteristics, not simply their group memberships" (p. 174).

Given the crucial role of "relevant differences" in this ethic, one looks for some formal definition of the term. Rachels provides none. Instead we get "something of how the concept works" in an example about testing cosmetics on the eyes of rabbits, and in a vague hypothetical: "If it is thought permissible to treat A, but not B, in a certain way, we first ask why B may not be treated in that way....If A and B differ only in ways that do not figure in the explanation of why it is wrong to treat B in the specified manner, then the differences are irrelevant" (p. 181). This is no bulwark against the selfishness and evil we see in ourselves and in our fellow human beings.

Experience demonstrates that any soft, relativistic ethical standard will be twisted into whatever shape is needed to allow us to do whatever we want to our fellow human beings. Examples abound: chattel slavery; racial and religious persecution; one million annual U.S. abortions; the epidemic of abandoned, abused, and murdered babies; laws permitting assisted suicide and euthanasia; ethnic cleansing; etc. We must have a "bright line" standard of our obligations to every member of the human family. This is the difference between morality and amorality. There is no middle ground.

Darwinism and amorality

The connection between Darwinism and amorality is now explicit. In the *New York Times Magazine* of November 3, 1997, Stephen Pinker wrote about "evolutionary psychology." He tells us that "moral philosophers have concluded that...our immature neonates don't possess [the right to life] any more than mice do," and alleges that "neonaticide may be a product of maternal wiring" since it has "been practiced and accepted in most cultures throughout history." He thus ties infanticide directly to our evolutionary ancestry and the Darwinian struggle for survival, which sometimes demands that mothers kill their young in order to further their own reproductive future. In articles such as this, the formerly unthinkable is being presented as reasonable and acceptable. We are being "softened up" for a change in community morality—one holding that some humans deserve respect and protection, but that others do not, and can be killed with impunity. You can see this process at work today: in academic discourse, and increasingly in the popular media.

Just 50 years ago, every nation voting at the United Nations flatly rejected this kind of reasoning. The emerging ethic in the West is a direct repudiation of the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In its preamble, the U.N. General Assembly unanimously (with eight abstentions) declared that "the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world" is "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family." In the Articles themselves, we find that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" (Article 1); "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind" (Article 2); "Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person" (Article 3); "Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a per-

son before the law" (Article 6); and "All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law" (Article 7). This is not equivocal language; there can be no confusion about what was meant. Accepting what Rachels and Pinker are offering means turning our back on the settled wisdom of the past.

Maturity (and our safety) demands honest reflection. A system of ethics based on moral relativism will always end up with the strong in charge and the weak beneath their heel. The Darwinist worldview, followed to its logical conclusion, leads us nowhere else, and this should be sufficient for us to reject it. Perhaps we should not be surprised to find the secular and wholly naturalistic Darwinists espousing such a cold-blooded and utilitarian philosophy, but what is truly astounding is the number of ethicists, philosophers, and others who identify themselves as Christians and yet urge us to adopt an ethic that leads us down the Darwinist path.

The argument for moral relativism is subtle and appealing on the surface. Often it begins by reaffirming the biological (and biblical) truth that we are human from the moment of conception. But, then we are told that there is a difference between a "human" and a "person," and that "personhood" is the category a human must attain in order to have a right to life. The qualifications for "personhood" vary—but generally they include the possession of self-consciousness as a necessary condition to be a "person" with full moral status (for instance, to have a right not to be killed). Of course, no human being is born with self-consciousness, and many of us may lose our self-consciousness, temporarily or permanently, due to injury, illness or age. Here, then, is the convergence of Darwin's philosophy and that of some of today's Christian thinkers, "moral individualism" meeting "proximate personhood."

Moral individualism (or the "person-

hood" ethic) and the U.N. Charter's Universal Declaration of Human Rights are colliding moral galaxies; they are totally incompatible. The galaxy represented by the U.N. Declaration is founded on the Judeo-Christian moral tradition—a tradition going back for millennia. The galaxy of "moral individualism" purports to be founded on human reason, and is expressed in statements that begin with, "I argue..." "I see..." or "I contend..." "Moral individualism" and its clones propose that both humans and non-human animals are to be judged by the same relativistic criteria. In this moral universe, human beings have lost their inalienable right to life, something that Christians have always granted because "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27, NIV).

Pushed off the pedestal

Pushing humans off the pedestal of dignity on which the Bible has placed them has implications for everyone, not just for the comatose patients, the handicapped newborns, the old and feeble, and others not like "us." Under the ethic of "moral individualism," there is no principle preventing one race from classifying other races as less than fully human and enslaving or killing them. There is no principle calling to account those who seek to demote others to the status of "non-persons." There is no principle condemning parents who use pre-natal testing to determine the sex of the unborn and then abort the female. There is no principle to stop a society from deciding that full human status isn't reached until age 3 or 4, and establishing centers for the elimination of any unwanted "non-persons." There is no principle to prevent the cloning of a (very rich) individual, or the use of the human being that results as a stock of spare parts. We may recoil at these suggestions, but the hard truth is that when we abandon the biblical imperative that

innocent human life is sacred and must not be touched, we are all at risk, because when the strong take over, "might makes right."

When Christian ethicists reach the same conclusions as Darwinists about our obligations to our fellow humans, it's time to do some careful thinking. God created us, and He knows the evil of which we are capable. For this reason, He instructed us to treat all humans as worthy of equal dignity and respect. Neither "moral individualism" nor the ethic of "personhood" is compatible with the traditional interpretation of Scripture, and this should be reason enough for people of faith to reject them outright. But, in addition, for those whose faith is weak, history offers many demonstrations that before every slaughter there has been a division of the human population into "our group" (protected) and "those other guys" (not protected) that makes it permissible to do the killing. Most of the current relativistic ethicists have no such thing in mind. They are simply trying to create a non-dogmatic, rationalistic base for behavior they deem proper. This effort has been tried before, invariably with tragic consequences.

I believe that James Rachels succeeds in his argument: One cannot be a Darwinist and logically hold the traditional view that human life is sacred. The more immediate question for the "people of the Book" seems even more relevant: Can one hold that human life is *not* sacred and still be a Christian?

Earl Aagaard (Ph.D., Colorado State University) is professor of biology at Pacific Union College. His mailing address: 3 College Ave.; Angwin, California 94508. E-mail: eaagaard@puc.edu

For earlier essays on this topic in our journal, see David Ekkens, "Humans and animals: Are they equal?" Dialogue 6:3 (1994), pp. 5-8, and James Walters, "Is Koko a person?" Dialogue 9:2 (1997), pp. 15-17, 34.

The Adventist advantage

by Larry Beeson

Research findings suggest that the Adventist lifestyle contributes to better and longer life.

Be it a simple radio or a complex big screen stereo TV, a food mixer or the latest car—everything you purchase comes with an owner's manual. The manufacturer expects you to read the manual before you begin using your new acquisition. You refer to the manual as frequently as necessary in order to understand both the mechanism and the working of the product and to ensure that it serves better and lasts longer.

If that is so with a mundane mixer or a car, how much more care should we give to our body, perhaps the most complex system ever known to us?

The Bible informs us that “the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7).^{*} The Creator has also given us His manual for the proper care and treatment of our bodies. This manual is the Bible and all of us are encouraged to read it to best understand the stewardship of the body. Paul says, “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. . .? Therefore honor God with your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). In addition to other meanings this verse may carry, one relevant to our discussion is what we eat and drink.

The epidemiology of Seventh-day Adventists

During the last several decades, health-related organizations within the United States and elsewhere (for example, the National Institutes of Health, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the World Health Organization, etc.)

have provided epidemiologic evidence from around the world as to which lifestyle characteristics promote health and deter the disease process. Part of that evidence comes from health research on Seventh-day Adventists. Health research has focused on Adventists for two reasons. First, they tend to be more homogeneous in many lifestyle choices, such as avoidance of alcohol and tobacco. Second, they are more heterogeneous in nutritional habits: they range from vegans (no animal products in diet) to lacto-ovo-vegetarians (whose diet includes dairy and egg products, but no meat) to omnivores (meat eaters). More than 250 scientific articles have been published worldwide on the health advantage of Adventists. Most of what is described below refers to research conducted by Loma Linda University scientists on Adventists in California. But similar findings have been reported for Adventists in Norway, Holland, Poland, Denmark, Japan, Australia, and other countries.

The Adventist Mortality Study (AMS)

The first major epidemiologic study of Adventists began in 1958. It is known as the Adventist Mortality Study (AMS), involving 22,940 non-Hispanic white Adventists residing in California.¹ The findings of this study on Adventists were compared with a similar study of non-Adventists conducted by the American Cancer Society during the same time period. Both studies enrolled volunteer subjects in California who were relatively well-educated compared to the average Californian. Both studies obtained copies of death certificates of participants in the study who had died

during the subsequent follow-up years. The similarities between the groups were important because it has been found that individuals who volunteer for such studies tend to be healthier than the general population, and those in the upper-economic classes tend to have lower rates of disease overall. Thus, the Adventist Mortality Study and the American Cancer Society Study provided a reasonably fair comparison between Adventists and non-Adventists.

The comparison revealed the following: If the cancer mortality in the American Cancer Society Study was 100, the mortality for Adventists was 60 for men and 76 for women. This means that after adjusting for differences in age distributions in the two studies, Adventist men had a significantly lower death rate from cancer for a given age group compared to what might be expected for a comparable group. This means Adventist men still died of cancer but at a much older age than the non-Adventist men. The same can be said for Adventist women. Since there is no *a priori* reason to believe that California Adventists are genetically different than non-Adventists, the hypothesis is that one or more lifestyle characteristics or environmental influences may be responsible for the delay in cancer death.

Since smoking has been shown to be a major factor in causing cancer, researchers from the Adventist Mortality Study compared the mortality rates of nonsmokers from both populations. As would be expected, the mortality rates for these non-Adventists were closer to those of the Adventists. However, an advantage for the Adventists generally persisted which could now not be accounted for by differences in past tobacco use. Thus, other characteristics of Adventists, apart from their nonsmoking status, such as diet and perhaps social support, are also clearly important in reducing the risk of disease.

Adventists also appeared to have a delay in cardiovascular deaths. If the

death rate from coronary heart disease in the American Cancer Society study is taken as 100 percent, then Adventist men had only 66 percent of what was expected. Adventist women showed only a small reduction, with 98 percent. Adventist men also died of stroke, but their death rate was only 72 percent compared to their non-Adventist counterparts. For Adventist women, their death from stroke was 82 percent of that for the non-Adventists.

Thus, according to these studies, it is quite evident that the Adventist lifestyle does provide some protection from cancer and other fatal diseases. But differences in mortality rates between Adventists and others may be due to at least two scenarios: (1) Adventists may acquire a particular disease at the same rate as others, but survive longer with the disease because of better access to medical care or an improved immune system or better lifestyle; and/or (2) Adventists actually get the disease at a lower incidence rate than non-Adventists. It may be that both these possibilities contribute to the lower mortality rates observed among Adventists. But mortality studies like the AMS could not resolve this issue. The Adventist Mortality Study raised a number of interesting questions. What was it about their lifestyle that enabled Adventists to live longer? Would Adventist lifestyle differences in themselves produce different risks for contracting specific diseases—both fatal and nonfatal?

The Adventist Health Study (AHS)

The Adventist Health Study (AHS) is a second major study of California Adventists. Funded by the National Cancer Institute and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, the study began in 1974 and was conducted by Loma Linda University researchers. The study incorporated the *incidence* (that is, new cases) of cancer and heart disease in the ever-expanding research on the characteristics of the Adventist lifestyle that en-

abled Adventists to have a “health advantage.” Similar to the AMS study, death certificates were obtained to document the underlying cause of death for members who died during the study. Hospital records were used for all nonfatal cases. The response rate from white non-Hispanic subjects to the mailed lifestyle questionnaire was the highest of any ethnic group and numbered 34,198. This group became the “incidence study” portion of the AHS² in that new cases (incidence) of fatal or nonfatal cancer and myocardial infarction diagnosed after completion of the baseline lifestyle questionnaire were ascertained.

AHS and AMS had some basic differences. For one, AHS was designed to find out which components of the Adventist lifestyle give protection against disease. It has not been a major aim of AHS to compare the incidence rates of disease or mortality between Adventists and non-Adventists. The AHS was primarily designed to look at variations in lifestyle among Adventists themselves and how these variations translated into changes in disease risk.

The AHS also added a more detailed investigation of diet compared to the 1960 American Cancer Society questionnaire used by the AMS. Further, the AHS questionnaire included questions on previous medical history, drug therapy, physical activity, and a variety of psycho-social questions. When the gathering of follow-up data was concluded, 32,000 hospitalizations (for any reason) were self-reported representing more than 18,000 different participants. Of the hospitals involved, 698 were in California, and 960 were out-of-state. All these hospitals were contacted in a six-year follow-up of all those who completed the baseline lifestyle questionnaire.

A basic profile of the AHS population showed an average age of 51 years for men and 53 for women. The proportion of subjects who had been diagnosed by a physician as hypertensive was close to

that expected for an adult population. Although a modest number of subjects admitted to past cigarette smoking—usually before joining the Adventist Church—there were virtually no current smokers in the population. A relatively large proportion claimed to exercise with at least moderate frequency. The study population, made up of about 60 percent women, tended to be well-educated. A little more than half of the AHS participants said they ate meat less than once a week. Most were lacto-ovo-vegetarians.

Lifestyle influence

What did these studies reveal on the influence of lifestyle on reduction of disease incidences and mortality?

Lung cancer. By far the strongest risk factor for lung cancer is chronic exposure to tobacco smoke, from both active smoking as well as from passive smoking (“secondhand smoking”). Working or living with a smoker has been shown to increase one’s chances of developing cancer of the respiratory tract. The AHS demonstrated³ that individuals could further reduce their chance of developing lung cancer by not only minimizing exposure to tobacco smoke, but also by incorporating in their diet a variety of fruits, many of which contain components (for example, antioxidant vitamins) thought to enable the body to fight off cancer. Adventists who consumed fruit two or more times a day had only 25 percent chance of developing lung cancer compared to those individuals who consumed fruit less than three times a week. This health advantage of fruit consumption was observed in Adventists who had previously quit smoking as well as Adventists who had never smoked.

Prostate cancer. According to one estimate,⁴ 29 percent of all newly diagnosed cancers among U.S. males in 1998 had to do with the prostate gland, and incidence of this disease has been rising during the last several decades. Strong protective relationships were observed⁵ in Adventist men who consumed mod-

erate amounts of legumes (such as beans, lentils, peas), fresh citrus fruit, dried fruit (for example, raisins and dates), and tomatoes.

Breast cancer. In the mid-1980s, lung cancer surpassed breast cancer as the most commonly diagnosed cancer in U.S. females.⁶ However, in nonsmoking populations, such as the Seventh-day Adventists, breast cancer is still the leading newly diagnosed cancer. The known risk factors for breast cancer include: increased exposure to estrogen and/or progesterone hormones, early menarche, late menopause, and obesity in post-menopausal women. Factors that may be protective of the development of breast cancer include: decreased exposure to estrogen and/or progesterone hormones, early first-term pregnancy, lactation, and physical activity. In the AHS, women who exercised vigorously had a 21 percent decrease in lifetime risk of breast cancer and an average delay of 6.6 years in the age at which this cancer is diagnosed compared to women who infrequently exercised.⁷ Physical inactivity had its most important effect on age at diagnosis rather than lifetime risk. The protective effect of physical activity on risk of breast cancer may be particularly pronounced at younger ages as the benefits of exercise was not clearly seen in post-menopausal women.

Bladder cancer. Cigarette smoking is a strong risk factor for bladder cancer. Adventists who had smoked cigarettes prior to joining the church had more than two-fold increased risk of bladder cancer, compared to those who had never smoked. Previous investigators have noted increased bladder cancer risk in persons with high consumption of animal foods. Approximately 50 percent of the participants in the AHS were lacto-ovo vegetarians. Adventists who avoided meat, poultry, and fish had less than half the risk of bladder cancer, compared to those who ate these foods three or more times per week.⁸

Pancreas cancer. AHS observed that increasing consumption of legumes, dried fruit, and vegetarian protein products (such as soy, gluten, and nut-based) were associated with highly significant protective relationships to pancreas cancer risk.⁹

Other cancers. The AHS has investigated other cancers (colon cancer,¹⁰ tumors of the brain and cranial meninges,¹¹ and leukemia and myeloma¹²) and has observed that those individuals who follow the “Adventist lifestyle” most closely are those who also enjoy a reduced chance of acquiring any of the chronic diseases investigated.

Heart disease. The AHS not only investigated the relationship between a variety of lifestyle practices and incident and fatal cancers, but also looked at factors that relate to heart disease. A fascinating AHS finding that has been replicated by researchers in other populations was that frequent consumption of nuts five or more times per week (about a handful each time) was associated with substantially fewer definite fatal coronary heart disease events and definite nonfatal myocardial infarctions (heart attacks) compared with those who consumed nuts less than once per week.¹³ But since nuts are generally very high in fat, consuming large amounts may not be as beneficial.

Adventists who ate mainly whole-wheat bread experienced a 40 percent reduction in risk of heart attack, compared to those who ate mostly white bread. Also, there was more than a doubling of risk of heart attack among men who consumed beef at least three times per week, compared to vegetarians. Adventists who exercised regularly 15 minutes or more at least three times per week experienced a significant reduction in risk of dying of heart attack.

Vegetarian food guide pyramid

Based on the international epidemiologic evidence over the last several decades, which includes results from studies on Adventists, health re-

enth-day Adventist Church, made the following observation: "Health is a treasure. Of all temporal possessions it is the most precious. Wealth, learning, and honor are dearly purchased at the loss of the vigor of health. None of these can secure happiness, if health is lacking."¹⁴ Disease prevention makes much more sense than its treatment. Don't let your Bible gather dust. Read your "owner's manual"

lated-organizations around the world have advocated a dietary lifestyle aimed at reducing the risk of cancer, heart disease, and other chronic diseases. The food guide pyramid (see figure) illustrates the relative contribution of these different food items. At the foundation of the pyramid are the whole-grain breads and cereals. Next are the fruits and vegetables. Many people do not eat enough of these foods that have many protective elements such as vitamins. The next level of the pyramid gives the foods that provide protein and minerals. We need fewer servings of these. Finally, at the tip of the pyramid are the sweets, fats, and oils, of which we need very little.

If these recommendations are in fact helpful in reducing chronic disease, then it seems logical that we should observe a reduction of these diseases in a population that has been following these principles for over 100 years. And that is exactly what we find in studies of Seventh-day Adventists.

It's your move

More than 100 years ago Ellen G. White, one of the founders of the Sev-

and discover what the Master Designer has intended for you.

Larry Beeson (Dr. P. H. candidate, Loma Linda University) teaches epidemiology and biostatistics at the School of Public Health and the School of Medicine of Loma Linda University. He has been part of the Adventist Health Study research team since its inception. Postal address: School of Public Health; Loma Linda University; Loma Linda, California 93350; U.S.A. E-mail address: lbeeson@sph.llu.edu.

Notes and references

- * All Bible passages are from the New International Version.
1. F. R. Lemon and R. T. Walden, "Death From Respiratory System Disease Among Seventh-day Adventist Men," *Journal of American Medical Association* 198 (1966) 2: 117-126; F. R. Lemon and J. W. Kuzma, "A Biologic Cost of Smoking: Decrease Life Expectancy," *Archives of Environmental Health* 18 (1969):950-955; R. L. Phillips, F. R. Lemon, W. L. Beeson, and J. W. Kuzma, "Coronary Heart Disease Mortality Among Seventh-day Adventists With Differing Dietary Habits: A Preliminary Report," *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 31 (1978 Supplement):191-198; R. L. Phillips, L. Garfinkel, J. W. Kuzma, W. L. Beeson,
 2. T. Lotz, and B. Brin, "Mortality Among California Seventh-day Adventists for Selected Cancer Sites," *Journal of National Cancer Society* 65 (1980):1097-1107; R. L. Phillips, J. W. Kuzma, W. L. Beeson, and T. Lotz, "Influence of Selection Versus Lifestyle on Risk of Fatal Cancer and Cardiovascular Disease Seventh-day Adventists," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 112 (1980)2:296-314.
 3. W. L. Beeson, P. K. Mills, R. L. Phillips, M. Andress, and G. E. Fraser, "Chronic Disease Among Seventh-day Adventists: A Low-risk Group," *Cancer* 64 (1989):57-81.
 4. G. E. Fraser, W. L. Beeson, and R. L. Phillips, "Diet and Lung Cancer in California Seventh-day Adventists," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 133 (1991):683-93.
 5. S. H. Landis, T. Murray, S. Bolden, and P. A. Wingo, "Cancer Statistics, 1998," *Ca-A Cancer Journal for Clinicians* 48 (1998)1:6-29.
 6. P. K. Mills, W. L. Beeson, R. L. Phillips, and G. E. Fraser, "Cohort Study of Diet, Lifestyle, and Prostate Cancer in Adventist Men," *Cancer* 64 (1989)3:598-604.
 7. See 4 above.
 8. G. E. Fraser, D. Shavlik, "Risk Factors, Lifetime Risk, and Age at Onset of Breast Cancer," *Annals of Epidemiology* 7 (1997):375-382.
 9. P. K. Mills, W. L. Beeson, R. L. Phillips, and G. E. Fraser, "Bladder Cancer in a Low Risk Population: Results from the Adventist Health Study," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 133 (1991)3:230-239.
 10. P. K. Mills, W. L. Beeson, D. E. Abbey, G. E. Fraser, and R. L. Phillips, "Dietary Habits and Past Medical History as Related to Fatal Pancreas Cancer Risk Among Adventists," *Cancer* 61 (1988) 12:2578-2585.
 11. P. N. Singh and G. E. Fraser, "Dietary Risk Factors for Colon Cancer in a Low-Risk Population," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 148 (1998) 8: 761-774.
 12. P. K. Mills, S. Preston-Martin, J. F. Annegers, W. L. Beeson, R. L. Phillips, G. E. Fraser, "Risk Factors for Tumors of the Brain and Cranial Meninges in Seventh-day Adventists," *Neuroepidemiology* 8 (1989):266-275.
 13. P. K. Mills, G. R. Newell, W. L. Beeson, G. E. Fraser, and R. L. Phillips, "History of Cigarette Smoking and Risk of Leukemia and Myeloma: Results from the Adventist Health Study," *Journal of National Cancer Institute*, 82 (1990):1832-1836.
 14. G. E. Fraser, J. Sabaté, W. L. Beeson, T. M. Strahan, "A Possible Protective Effect of Nut Consumption on Risk of Coronary Heart Disease," *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 152 (1992):1416-1424.
 15. Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1938), p. 20.

The year 2000: Will it usher in the millennium?

by George W. Reid

*A review of human speculations
and the biblical teaching.*

Hollywood splashes it across the screen. From serious journals to frivolous tabloids, it receives treatment that is both scary and garish. The world of computers is working feverishly to prevent a crash or a meltdown of their programs. Theologians from the left to the right talk and write about it as though it does not matter or as though it is the only thing that does matter.

Millennium! That's the magic word. As the year 2000 draws near, will the century lead history toward a new opportunity or chaos? Will humanity race toward a communication crisis that will affect all electronic information vital to life, such as bank accounts, legal records, chemical formulas, stocks and bonds, taxes, and academic records? Will it critically disrupt airline transportation and unleash an atomic holocaust?

Religious leaders are seizing the opportunity to launch a new age of faith. A few foresee the end of all things, but those less inclined to speculative excitement see the year 2000 as a benchmark from which to proclaim the beginning of a new age for religion, generally one readjusted to the expectation of a transformed world. One element is the papal call for an assembly of religious leaders of all world faiths in Jerusalem in the year 2000.

The past two centuries have brought about a sweeping transformation of religious self-understanding, especially among Christians. From the beginning of time, religion has dealt with the active interface between nature and the supernatural. Medieval Christianity's curatorship of this boundary was shown to

have flaws so serious that the Enlightenment of the late 1700s succeeded in discrediting virtually every claim to belief in the supernatural, leaving the desiccated shell of a Christianity reduced largely to a social service organization, with claims to the supernatural tenuous at best, deceptive at worst.

The end product: a mainstream Christianity focused on ideas, but no longer certain about God. Within this vacuum, alternate explanations developed to provide meaning and a worldview, for example through Darwin's evolutionary theory, supported by fossil sequences, melded into an amalgam that displaced the supernatural Bible version. As biblical ideas fell away as myth, religious enterprise turned to human concerns. Biblical texts were dissected, evaluated by human logic, and the Christian intellectual community embarked on the search for a historical Jesus. Science became the guide to the future and biblical prophecy was reduced to after-the-event writings, with eschatology a wistful hope of uncertain events.

But the barrenness of such religion, robbed of its purpose of connecting humanity with God, drives people elsewhere. Today a new generation is in full swing, people in search of satisfying answers to penetrating questions. Supernaturalism, long dismissed as defunct, has emerged at the cutting edge of religious interest. Again miracles are in vogue. Angels are everywhere, in the literary world, the entertainment industry, even among theologians long dubious of their existence. New Age mysticism permeates contemporary music, literature, philosophy, education, and even

health-care theory. Evangelical Christians, now numbering some 400 million believers, no longer can be ignored. Restorationist fundamentalism now exerts a profound force in non-Christian religions.

Toward a millennial utopia

From this resurgent platform, today's religious leaders hope to launch a mighty revival that will involve all religions and bring about the utopian world of peace, prosperity, progress, and unity—long a part of another brand of the millennial dream.

How can an assembly of diverse, disjunctive, competitive, and often contradictory religious traditions be combined to usher in the utopian ideal? The proposed formula is found in a relatively simple block of elements:

1. *Non-judgmentalism.* One faith can no longer be treated as superior to another.
2. *Merit.* Each tradition carries validity in its own sphere, so merits respect by all.
3. *Acceptance.* As each religious tradition is valid, its place must be assured within a pluralistic whole.
4. *Diversity.* Within such plenary acceptance, every person must be allowed to practice his or her own way, free of any whiff of proselytism.
5. *Commonality.* The focus must center about one common element—humanitarian service.
6. *Subjectivity.* Everyone can transcend partisan beliefs and practices to share the inner experience that all religions hold in common. After all, it is a relationship with the divine as one conceives it that actually counts.

Despite such a formula of utopian millennialism, the Bible in fact points to a millennium totally different in fact, purpose, and meaning.

The biblical millennium

When we turn to the Scriptures, surprisingly only a few passages make direct reference to the millennium, although it is embodied in the fuller biblical teaching. By far the most explicit passage is Revelation chapter 20. The gospels say nothing of the millennium, and Paul does so only tangentially. Related themes such as judgment and final consummation appear throughout the Scriptures, but in the direct search for a tie to the specific 1000 years, we come to limits.

To encompass the full biblical teaching we note several passages theologically related to one another. Paul tells the Corinthians of the coming resurrection at the last trumpet (1 Corinthians 15:51-55). Although he makes no direct reference here to Christ's return, for he is focusing on Christ's triumph over death, quite clearly he assumes that the church at Corinth had knowledge of what at that very time he was teaching the believers in Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-12). Christ's coming is the core event around which both the end of the world and resurrection cluster. Paul was founder and first teacher of the Corinthian church, spending possibly two years with that congregation (Acts 18:11, 18). It seems unthinkable that his basic teaching of Jesus' return does not stand behind what he says in 1 Corinthians 15. Despite this, nowhere in Paul's writings does he directly link the events of the second advent with a specific time period.

The Apostle Peter makes two references to 1,000 years in the same verse: "But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8 RSV). However, the intent is clearly rhetorical rather than prophetic. Peter is not giving a specific prophetic time period or interpretive method, but simply underscoring the truth that God stands above time, con-

trary to human experience.

John uses the expression "thousand years" six times in Revelation 20. In summary form, he foresees the grand climax of history. Satan, the archenemy, is seized and confined for a thousand years (vs. 1-3). The righteous rise in the first resurrection and reign with Christ in heaven a thousand years (vs. 4-6). At the conclusion of the 1,000 years, Satan is released to lead his now-resurrected followers in an assault on the saints and the holy city (vs. 5, 7-10), whereupon fire from heaven destroys all the evil ones.

Peter's brief statement in 2 Peter 3:8, where he quotes from Psalm 90:4, has given birth to an amazing variety of proposals, based on the contention that here he is offering a formula for interpreting the many biblical references to days, generally outside any prophetic setting. Based on the assumption that the seven days of Creation are parallel to seven 1,000-year epochs of earth history, some add an additional premise that the sixth thousand-year period ends with A.D. 1999. Proponents of this theory advance the idea that with the year 2000 we will enter a fulfillment that parallels the seventh literal day of Creation—a millennium of peace and prosperity. This argument first appeared in Jewish speculations prior to the time of Jesus and has resurfaced on occasion in later Christian writers, but it has no true scriptural basis.

Another question may be asked: Where will the people of God spend the thousand years? The answer is found in other New Testament passages. The first resurrection is that of God's people, to occur at Christ's second advent (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17) when the resurrected are "caught up together with them [the living saints] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" (vs. 17, RSV). Jesus Himself promised to return to take the believers to His Father's house (John 14:3). The redeemed will spend the thousand years in heaven, where they are given a

part in the judgment (Revelation 20:4), following which they return with New Jerusalem to witness the end of sin (Revelation 21:2-8). Efforts to portray the millennium as a magnificent era with Christ presiding over an earthly kingdom do not fit at all with the biblical teaching on last-day events.

Even though most Christian interpreters of the millennium argue for dispensational theories that posit a soon-to-appear messianic kingdom in which Christ reigns over the earth, Adventists part company with them as we follow Peter and Paul to teach a total devastation of the earth at Christ's coming. That event renders the earth uninhabitable to humans, hence a place appropri-

ate for Satan's confinement. Based on the Book of Revelation, we foresee at the close of the thousand years the eradication of evil and restoration of all to pristine purity, a world "wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Millennial theories

Today the word *millennium* has given birth to a new meaning. Beyond simple reference to the biblical thousand-year period, it is becoming an organizing schematic for tracing coming events to the end. At its more superstitious levels it absorbs elements plainly suspect, such as numerological speculations and quite specific predictions built upon strings of logic strung between paltry data.

This kind of speculation has a long history. Beginning between the time of the Old and New Testaments, Jewish teachers discussed a coming Messianic kingdom. In Jesus' time some of this undoubtedly clouded the popular concepts He confronted in trying to explain the nature of His kingdom.

Fourth Ezra, an apocryphal book, presents a good example. According to it, the Messiah would be revealed, set up an earthly kingdom where all would prosper and rejoice for 400 years, following which the Messiah and all humans would die, returning the earth to primeval silence. Then a general resurrection would occur, followed by an earthly paradise with a restored Jerusalem.

From the Talmud we learn that, depending on one's choice of speculations, the days of the Messiah would last 40 years, or 70 years, or three generations. Some rabbis opted for 400 years, 365 years, 7,000 years, or 2,000 years (Sanhedrin 916). Often the golden age, whatever its length, is presented in terms of lavish prosperity, houses and lands, abundant crops and offspring, tables groaning with loads of delicacies, satisfaction of every sensual drive, and triumph over every enemy. Such ideas, now labeled chiliastic, soon made their

way into the Christian vision of a coming millennium.

When would all this begin? Would it follow 85 jubilees, as some argued? Or after 7,000 years, 6,000 years, 5,000 years, 2,000 years, 600, or just when? Rabbi Akiba argued for only 40 years. A half-dozen schematic systems pepper the pseudographic writings, and some of them came to be adopted by influential Christians such as Irenaeus (c. 170), Justin Martyr (c.150), Eusebius (c. 325), and others. Jerome (c. 380) argued for a world history of 6,000 years, followed by a millennial Sabbath. Even some non-Christians like Persian Zoroastrians and the early Etruscans in Italy taught that the human race would last 6,000 years. Due to the gross materialism incorporated into developing Christian ideas of the millennium, other church fathers rejected the very idea of a millennium, even to denying canonicity to the Apocalypse.

But it was Augustine (d. 430) who captured medieval Christendom with his novel view that the millennium is not a span of time but an experience, beginning with conversion and climaxing in an inner spiritual exhilaration comparable to the second coming of Christ (*City of God*, 20:6,7).

These ideas underlay public excitement over the approach of the year 1000. Based on Augustine's thinking, Christians began to look for solemn events in that year. As the year approached, even as the notably corrupt Sylvester II sat on the papal throne, tensions rose, but nothing remarkable happened. Although considerable speculation circulated in monasteries, the Vatican played down fears of the end of the world. In 998 the Council of Rome imposed on Robert, King of France, seven full years of penance for a grievous violation of canon law, and the German emperor, Otto III, continued to devise his plan to conquer and restore the ancient Roman Empire.

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 15.) 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: 74617.464@compuserve.com or 104472.1154@compuserve.com If these contacts fail to produce results, write to us at our editorial address.

Adventists today and millennial speculation

Being deeply interested in prophecy, Seventh-day Adventists are particularly vulnerable to unsound speculations. Throughout Adventist history we have faced time-setting speculators, active despite biblical warnings and Ellen White's discrediting all efforts to predict coming time events.

Today we need to address the 6,000-year agitation in Adventist circles. Generally those who advance specific calculations build arguments on Ellen White's affirmation of a short earth chronology of about 6,000 years. By coupling this idea with a futurist day-for-a-day reapplication of historic time prophecies, such advocates argue we can gain new light for our time, beyond standard readings of prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. Some interpretations rest on the ancient 6,000-year theory. In fact, however, biblical chronology is complex and includes several uncertainties that render exact calculations chronologically uncertain. These do not affect the message of the Scriptures, but they keep us from dating biblical events with precision earlier than the time of the Hebrew kings.

Ellen White made no effort to create a chronology. Over her 70 years of writing, she made 43 references to 6,000 years and 42 to the mathematically related 4,000 years. Generally she simply cited Ussher's chronology printed at the head of columns in her Bible. The pattern is one of approximation, not rigid dating. In 1913 she wrote that the earth is "nearly 6,000 years old." At times she used other modifying words, such as "nearly 6,000" (nine times), "about 6,000" (three times), "more than 6,000" (twice), "almost 6,000" (once), and "over 6,000" (once). On the whole, careful students of the Bible and Ellen White's writings will avoid building exact chronologies on this type of evidence.

Principles to protect us

Thus the question arises: Are there sound principles that can help us deal with millenarian speculations and protect us from being misled? The following would help:

1. Millenarian speculations have a long (and uniformly mistaken) history.
2. Craving for superficial prophetic novelty must yield to careful Bible study.
3. Time-setting for the end is itself a faulty enterprise unsupported in the Scriptures.
4. Ellen White firmly endorses the historicist approach to prophetic interpretation, never proposing

futuristic recycling of apocalyptic time prophecies.

5. Sound study of Bible prophecy remains a valid and essential component of the Adventist message, but it must not lead to any form of exact time setting for the return of Jesus or other events prophesied to occur in connection with His return.

George W. Reid (Th.D., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary) is director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and a senior consultant for Dialogue. His address: 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, Maryland 20904; U.S.A.

Subscriptions

So...you want to be a thinker, not merely a reflector of other people's thoughts? *Dialogue* will continue to challenge you to think critically, as a Christian. Stay in touch with the best of Adventist thought and action around the world. Get into *Dialogue*!

One year subscription (3 issues): US\$12.00; Back issues: US\$4.00 each.

I'd like to subscribe to *Dialogue* in: English French Portuguese Spanish

Issues: Begin my subscription with the next issue.

I'd like to receive these back issues: Vol. __, No. __

Payment: I'm enclosing an international check or money order.

My MASTERCARD or VISA # is _____
Expiration Date _____

Please Print

Name: _____

Address: _____

Mail it to: *Dialogue* Subscriptions, Linda Torske; 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; U.S.A. Fax: 301-622-9627



Kim Gangte

*Dialogue with an Adventist
member of parliament in India*

Tears ran down the cheeks of women that day in Imphal, Manipur, a state in Northeastern India. Kim Gangte, the candidate who had fought for their rights, was victorious. The crowds were ecstatic as she took the microphone to speak after her victory.

“You have witnessed a miracle today,” she told them. “Insurgents captured polling booths. Many of you were beaten and threatened. I was kidnapped to prevent my visiting the polling stations. Yet I was victorious. How did it happen? This is not because Kim Gangte is good. It is because God is great! He has heard our prayers. God is alive. He still reigns.”

That day Kim Gangte became the first Adventist to enter the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament. Even though Kim won with a narrow margin, she is using her position in New Delhi, the Indian capital, to continue working for the rights of the underprivileged, especially those of women and children.

Kim comes from a family of farmers of the Kuki tribe from the Churachandpur district of southern Manipur. At the age of seven her parents sent her 700 kilometers away to the Adventist Training School at Jowai, Meghalaya. She received a B.Sc. from Guwahati University, Assam, and an M.A. in English from Pune University, Maharashtra. She taught at Spicer Memorial College and at the Adventist Training School before accepting a position with the University of Manipur in Imphal. It was while at Imphal that she began extensive social work among the women of Manipur who had lost husbands because of communal clashes.

■ *How did you become involved in working for human rights?*

I saw women and children die. I saw villages burned. I met women whose husbands had been killed in the fighting. I saw so many human-rights violations, especially involving women and children. Thousands were homeless and without food. I had to do something.

I visited remote areas, sometimes going through the mountains on foot, to reach the women. I organized them and began to educate them about their rights. I held workshops. Most of my salary went into my social work.

I also became an announcer for All India Radio and a free-lance magazine correspondent. I wrote about human

rights, women’s empowerment, and children’s rights.

■ *Why did you leave teaching to enter politics?*

I wanted to change the conditions I saw. Sometimes I wept. Sometimes I shouted. Sometimes I got angry. But weeping, shouting, and fighting did not bring any change. So I went to my bedroom, fell to my knees, and prayed, “God, please send someone to help my people as you sent Moses to lead your people to the Promised Land.”

I realized we needed someone in the policy-making group. I looked around to find someone I could support, someone who would mobilize women and children and youth. I tried to find such a person for three years, but was disappointed when those I thought would use their power for good, used it instead for themselves and their family.

I wondered if I should run for office myself. I would have to leave my position as lecturer in the college in order to run in the elections. This was a struggle for me. If I gave up my salary from the college, how would my parents eat? How could I continue my social work?

But the thought persisted. Again I went to my room, locked the door, and prayed: “God, if it is not your will that I should become a candidate in the elections, then please erase the idea from my mind.” I fasted and prayed for several days. The idea became stronger. Two months before the elections I resigned my teaching position, and many people told me how foolish I was to give up my good job. But I knew God wanted me to contest and that He would take care of me.

■ *What obstacles did you face in the election?*

On the day before elections, an edict was issued by the underground that no one should vote for Kim Gangte. I took the pamphlet to the electoral observers, but they did nothing. I went to the polling station the next day, but armed insurgents were there to prevent anyone from voting. Government security forces were not there. People were weeping. We all felt so powerless.

At the next polling station and the next, it was the same. No one was allowed to vote. I was not allowed to speak. Suddenly armed men kidnapped me to prevent me from visiting the polling sites.

I was so angry. I said to them, "You must honor human rights. This is the greatest violation of human rights. You must let people vote. The women are weeping because they want to vote. Tell them to vote against me, but you must let them vote!"

After three hours they let me go. However, still the insurgents were at the polling sites threatening people. I felt it was no use to visit anymore. I went back to Imphal and when my supporters saw me they wept. "Don't worry," I told them. "There is God!" Women's groups fasted and prayed all night. I too prayed.

■ *What did you pray for?*

I never prayed that I should be elected. I said, "Lord if it is your will and you want me to do justice for your people, I will do it." I read the Psalms and prayed. "Lord, you know my opponents are mighty, but you are there. You are the God who caused Jericho to fall. You are the God of David who triumphed in you. You are a God who can work in the ballot boxes so that everyone will know that you still reign."

The next morning my opponent was 22,000 votes ahead. By evening he was 6,000 ahead. The following morning the lead came down to 4,000. By after-

noon, to 3,000. By evening I was ahead by 364 votes. When the last 40 polling booths had reported, I was 2,500 ahead. God had done this miracle for us.

■ *What message do you have for Christians who would like to get involved in politics?*

It is good for Christians to get involved in the public life of their country. I count Moses as one of the greatest politicians because he loved people and he sacrificed the throne for the sake of his people. Many people say politics is a dirty game, and politicians are looked upon in a negative light. Certainly, there are risks. But religious people should come into politics so that politics is kept clean. If the politicians are clean, then politics will be clean and people will benefit.

My definition of politics is very simple. Politics is loving people, counting human values, honoring human rights, and serving people. My target is helping people. Maybe this does not involve preaching from the Bible, but it means putting the teachings of Scripture into practice in giving practical help to those who need it.

■ *There have been accusations made in the newspapers against missionaries, that they are bringing money into India to aid the insurgents. Have you been able to do anything to counteract these statements with government officials?*

I met Mr. L. K. Advani, the Union Home Minister, with some of our church leaders. I said to him, "You know me for a number of years and how I have been fighting for the poor and downtrodden people. If you have confidence in me, then you must have faith in my church. This is the church that brought me up and taught me the values I uphold. I was educated in Seventh-day Adventist schools. I know my church leaders. These stories about them are false. I know they are only trying to help the poor and needy of this country."

■ *Do you see any role for the Adventist Church in the cause of human rights in India?*

Yes, the Seventh-day Adventist Church can play an important role. I would like to see Adventists visiting jails and prisons and supplying books for the inmates to read. I would like to see them involved in literacy programs. One of the main reasons we have so many insurgents in the Northeast is because of unemployment. I think the church could play a bigger role in introducing vocational training for young people. We need to teach people skills to support themselves. The government will appreciate our church getting involved in such non-political activities.

■ *How do you feel about your being the first Adventist in the Indian Parliament?*

God has answered my prayers. He has given me this opportunity to serve people and to show that He is a great God, and He still lives and works today.

Interview by Dorothy Watts and Dittu Abraham.

Dorothy Eaton Watts is Associate Secretary of the Southern Asia Division of Seventh-day Adventists. Dittu Abraham is Director of the Communication Department of the Southern Asia Division.

Kim Gangte's address in New Delhi is: Kim Gangte, M.P.; Manipur Bhavan, Sardar Patel Marg; New Delhi, 110 001; India. Her home address is: Kim Gangte, M.P.; G-69, Type-III, Langol Housing Complex; Lamphel, Imphal 795 004, Manipur; India.



Heber Pintos

Dialogue with an Adventist illustrator from Uruguay

Born in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1942, Heber Pintos has spent most of his life drawing, painting, and illustrating. He attended the School of Fine Arts in his hometown and studied theology at River Plate Adventist University in Argentina and at Brazil Adventist College. In 1969 he began his professional career as a free-lance artist, working on multiple projects for commercial and Christian publishers. During 1978-1979 Pintos taught at the Pan-American School of Art in Sao Paulo and in 1980-1981 at Instituto Adventista del Uruguay, where he himself had been a student.

One of the major contributions of Pintos to Christian art is his illustration of 179 episodes of the gospel story in *The Life of Jesus*, a three-volume work published in English and Spanish by the Pacific Press in 1983-1984. Since 1986 he has served as associate director of art at the Adventist Brazil Publishing House in Tatui, Sao Paulo. He has received several professional distinctions.

Heber and his wife Ingrid have two grown children: Fabio, a computer engineer for Microsoft, and Patricia, a mathematics student at the University of Sao Paulo-Campinas.

■ *When did you first feel an inclination toward drawing?*

Since childhood, growing up in Montevideo. I remember tearing blank pages from my sister's school notebook and using them to sketch anything that came to mind. Then, in primary school, I began drawing caricatures of teachers and friends. Most of the time, although not always, they found them humorous!

■ *Who encouraged you during your formative years?*

One of the elementary school teachers told my mother that I had a very keen ability to draw with perspective, which she considered unusual for a six- or seven-year-old boy. In those years I was fascinated with the cartoon strips that appeared in newspapers and magazines and were collected in booklets. My mother did not let me spend money on cartoon stories. So I borrowed them from my friends and began imitating the different styles. Alex Raymond was

my favorite cartoon artist. In secondary school I learned and received support from Omar Seco, an outstanding Adventist art teacher.

When I was 17, a decisive event occurred. The Sabbath school superintendent of my church in Uruguay asked me to draw, for public display, the portraits of 13 Bible women who were the subject of the lessons for that quarter. The project involved me in deep study and taught me to fulfill commitments on time.

■ *Are you still attracted to cartoon-style drawing?*

Although I studied drawing formally in art school and have branched into other types of illustration, I still like cartoon style. With photography and realistic illustrations, one can communicate a limited range of emotions. But cartoons and caricatures, which involve a certain degree of exaggeration in design, allow me to convey strong emotions—

happiness, surprise, anger—and they can make a powerful impact on the reader-viewer.

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

My mother was a strict Catholic and quite active in parish life. One of our neighbors, a kind Adventist lady, shared the Bible truths with our family for 17 years. On Friday evenings she came to our home and told Bible stories to me and many of my friends in the neighborhood. At times she brought color slides to illustrate those stories and I helped her by operating the projector. When it came time for me to go to primary school, this lady insisted that I should attend an Adventist school and even gave my mother money to help pay my tuition.

■ *What factors led you to become an Adventist?*

Adventist teachers opened for me and our family a new way of looking at life and the world. In November 1955, during my first year at the Adventist boarding secondary school in Uruguay, I was baptized. The following year, my mother was baptized. As a 13-year-old adolescent, I did not know much about Adventist teachings, but I admired the way my teachers and other Adventists lived.

■ *Did you grow beyond that initial understanding?*

During my youth my main interest was having a good time, but as I studied Bible and theology in college I matured. I met Jesus as a unique Person. The thought that God had chosen to become like one of us and was willing to suffer and die for me was overwhelming.

■ *What effect did this maturation have in your art?*

I began doing more illustrations on biblical themes and Christian subjects. The art of Adventist illustrator Harry Anderson made a deep impression on me. His style, which avoids photographic hyper-realism but conveys powerful emotions in a free-flowing manner, was very attractive to me. I imitated his approach, combining it with a dynamic sense of movement and action.

■ *How do you go about preparing to illustrate a particular topic or theme?*

If my assignment is to introduce or complement an article or a book, I read the text carefully in order to understand the intention of the author. Frequently I do research on the cultural and historical context of a specific character or event. Then I start doodling with the pencil and slowly a design emerges. At times I spend hours sketching but without achieving what I have in mind. The only evidence of having worked is a wastebasket full of discarded, crunched paper! Then, after a short break, I come back to the table and in a few minutes the idea becomes a drawing.

■ *Do you approach differently religious and secular topics?*

In commercial assignments, one seeks to please the customer, keeping the honorarium as a goal. In doing religious illustrations, I always try to convey a spiritual message that, hopefully, will have an effect on the reader's relationship with God and His truth. My formal studies in biblical theology were very useful in that respect. They helped me to abandon the popular caricature of a cruel God, ready to punish us for the smallest fault, and to experience the reality of an immensely powerful but loving God.

■ *In The Life of Jesus, your most important project, you portray the Son of God in a rather unconventional manner. Why?*

I don't feel attracted by the languid

and saccharine depictions of Jesus that have become popular in some Christian circles. Jesus was for many years a carpenter, a strong young man with powerful hands and a muscular body. The gospels present Him as a divine-human Person with a forceful personality, capable of courageously confronting evil and yet magnetically attractive to children and those rejected by society.

There are some who consider this realistic portrayal of biblical characters a vulgarization of the divine message of the Bible. But I disagree. Jesus Himself was accused of not respecting the religious traditions and of associating with the common people. He used illustrations of daily life to convey deep spiritual messages. He portrayed God as a loving Dad, always ready to forgive, welcome, and embrace the wayward sons and daughters who decide to come back home.

■ *Do you have a preferred readership for your illustrated stories?*

All through my career I have felt an affinity with readers in their childhood, adolescence, or youth. I enjoy their spontaneity, humor, and imagination. With two children of my own and having worked for years as a Pathfinder instructor and youth Sabbath school teacher, I can relate to their questions and emotional swings.

■ *How would you define your style as an illustrator?*

That's a difficult question! An art teacher once told me, "Don't worry about style. Draw as you imagine and feel." A review of the illustrations I have done through the years shows considerable diversity of styles—from classic to cartoonish. The fact is that as I draw, I feel free to adjust to both the intended readers and the intention of the text I'm illustrating.

■ *How have you adjusted to technical innovations in the field of illustration?*

Computer programs have brought

dramatic changes in recent years. They are a fabulous professional tool. However, knowing how to draw by hand is always an advantage. It helps to keep illustrations fresh and realistic.

■ *What gives you satisfaction as an artist? What frustrates you in your work?*

I enjoy completing a project. After struggling for days or weeks with the concept and its realization, it feels so good to deliver the illustration or the painting to the customer! Then I can turn my attention to the next task. My main frustration is to recognize that I am not a perfect illustrator. When I see one of my works printed, many times I wish I could have worked on it for a while longer.

■ *What advice would you give to a young reader who feels artistically inclined and would like to become an illustrator?*

The ability to draw and illustrate well is an uncommon gift. It is not simply a matter of studying art for a certain number of years and then suddenly becoming an artist. In addition to the talent, one must be willing to draw and draw and draw until achieving a certain level of skill. I would also suggest to imitate good models, try different techniques, and listen to the counsel of experienced artists.

■ *How do you nurture your spiritual life?*

I like to read widely. But I always come back to the Bible, which is a constant source of inspiration both for my work as an artist and for my growth as a Christian.

Humberto M. Rasi (Ph.D., Stanford University) is director of education for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and editor-in-chief of Dialogue.

Heber Pintos mailing address: Casa Publicadora Brasileira; Caixa Postal 34; 18270-000 Tatui, SP; Brazil. E-mail address: heber@bitweb.com.br.

Dating: Preparing for a successful marriage

By Nancy L. Van Pelt

A professional family counselor outlines seven stages in the dating process.

Bill and Nina met at church. Afterwards they went out for something to eat. "We talked for hours," Nina says. "I've never met anyone that I could share with quite so fast. That first night I knew him better than all the other guys I've dated put together. I told him things about myself I'd never shared with anyone. We dated every night for a week and then Bill proposed. I knew it was right, and accepted."

Bill also remembers that first week, "Nina was the most intelligent and beautiful girl I'd ever met. I could hardly take my eyes off her. I wanted to touch her and hold her. She had real sex appeal. We saw each other every day. I was hooked. I never loved anyone the way I loved her. I knew this was it. We had to get married."

Bill and Nina got married—one month after they met. Four months later they separated and filed for divorce.

What went wrong? Two good people, honest in their feelings for each other, get married and then find their marriage shattered, their hopes collapsed. They just did not know each other long enough. They were victims of a dating tragedy.

Look before you leap

The biggest dating tragedy is to marry before riding out the wave of red-hot feelings and later finding oneself married to a totally unsuitable person. Society labels this another "marriage failure" when in reality it is a "dating failure."

More than a million divorces occur annually in the United States alone. Most couples marry within seven

months of meeting. The average duration of these marriages is seven years, with about half disintegrating within three years. Each of these couples stood at the altar, eyes bright with joy, promising love and faithfulness forever, never anticipating they were making the greatest mistake of their lives. What happened to their starry-eyed talks, the tender promises, lingering looks, close embraces, passionate kisses, and whispers of love?

Pulsating emotions overrule good sense and people rush into commitments that may be regretted in years to come. There is no such thing as instant love. Strong, lasting relationships must be paced over a long period of time when "getting to know you" is the major theme. This is why I stress slowing down, and looking carefully before you leap.

Stages of dating

Dating proceeds through seven stages. Each stage has a function and purpose in establishing a basis for the relationship. If any stage is rushed or skipped, there is a gap in the development of the relationship, and problems result.

Stage 1: Friendship. During friendship, you get to know each other while participating in non-romantic social, recreational, spiritual, and intellectual activities. Most of these activities are group-oriented, as opposed to couple-oriented. This stage is more casual and less emotional than the later dating stages, since no romantic or sexual overtones exist.

Friendships are less stressful than dating relationships, because friendship is not dating, and there is no need to play games. Often friends are more honest

with each other than are lovers, and it is possible for friends to become more emotionally intimate than lovers.

Becoming friends before becoming romantically involved makes a lot of sense. If you fall in love too fast and it doesn't work out, you will rarely become friends again. If you take your time getting to know someone at the friendship level first and let love grow slowly and gradually, you are more likely to have a friend for life, whether you marry this person or not. Furthermore, love affairs that flare up instantly usually burn out just as fast. And it's more likely that you will be judged on superficial qualities like your appearance or body build than your character.

It is harder to remain friends than lovers. The easy thing to do when you find someone you are attracted to, is to shift into high gear, give it all you've got, and gun it. It is infinitely more difficult to take your foot off the gas pedal and move slowly when there are no curves, detours, or roadblocks in sight. But choosing the fast, easy route rarely builds a relationship that lasts because when conflicts arise, the tendency is to choose the easy way—walking out.

Stage 2: Casual dating. Two friends now move away from the group to enjoy activities they have already learned they enjoy together. Since the degree of emotional involvement between them is low, both are free to date others. They do not consider themselves to be in love. Pleasant times are shared along with a friendship that may hold promise for the future.

A couple should remain at the friendship and casual dating stage for six to 12 months. This is the time to get to know each other's likes, dislikes, backgrounds, habits, and behaviors. If what they learn at this unhurried pace checks out with what they're looking for, they can slowly move into stage three. It is possible to remain friends for months and even years without becoming romantically involved.

Stage 3: Special dating. Special dating is an in-between stage. There is a growing emotional attachment between the couple, but they have not yet reached the commitment required in a steady relationship. They are spending more time together but are not yet dating steadily.

Stage 4: Steady dating. In this stage, there is an understanding between the two that they will not date others. They see each other more often than in casual dating. For the first time, words like *commitment* and *exclusive* come into play. Steady dating provides an opportunity to look each other over carefully with no commitment to marriage. The stage also tests the relationship quite thoroughly. It reveals if the two people involved are able to remain committed to one relationship—a vital fact to know before marriage is considered.

In this stage a couple may think they are in love, but still may not be certain. But there is the opportunity for them to develop confidence and trust in a person of the opposite sex over an extended period of time. Many personality traits can be observed during this stage—sense of humor, listening ability, manners, thoughtfulness, dependability, spirituality and maturity, handling differences of opinions, and communication skills.

Steady dating provides a serious trial period during which a couple can make intelligent decisions regarding their compatibility. It also means escalating a feeling of love as the couple spends more time alone. Sexual urges may be exploding and throbbing at an all-time high. Sex now will confuse the emotions and complicate the process of separating infatuation from real love. Steady dating calls for self-denial, patience, and discipline—traits that go a long way in building a relationship that lasts. It forms a natural bridge to pre-engagement and formal engagement.

Stage 5: Pre-engagement. Pre-engagement is the stage when a couple begins

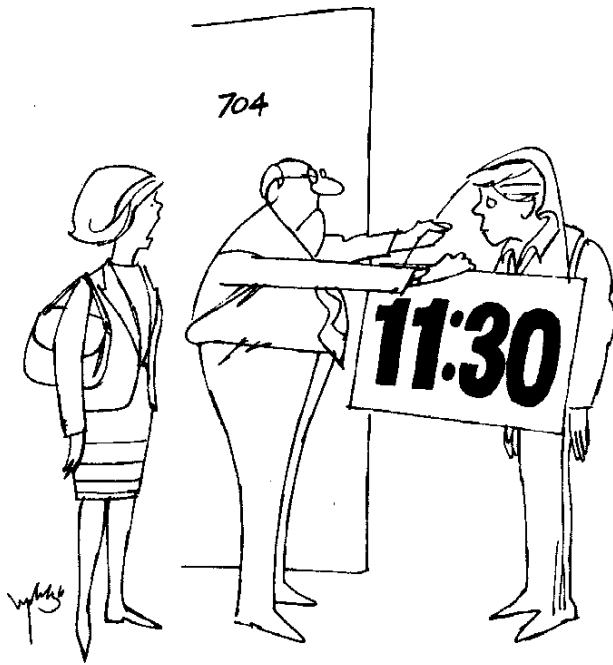
discussing the possibility of marriage. The couple talks about marriage—"someday." Someday when we finish college, get a promotion, can afford it, or when circumstances become favorable. All talk and plans are tentative, but the couple is more sure they are made for each other. Their understanding is private and personal rather than final or binding.

During this stage, a couple can take an in-depth look at whether their lifestyles and personalities are compatible enough for marriage. Much of what used to be discussed only during the formal engagement period is opened here for scrutiny. This approach should make the engagement more meaningful as well as reduce the number of broken engagements.

Since effective communication is the single most important contributor to a stable and satisfying marriage, the most important goal of any stage 5 couple is to evaluate and improve their communication skills. This is the last chance to bail out of a relationship without making it uncomfortable for everyone involved.

Stage 6: Formal engagement. The formal engagement follows the "someday" talk of stage 5. It brings a deep sense of commitment and belonging that doesn't come with going steady or pre-engagement. There are several things that separate the formal engagement from the pre-engagement stage. A formal engagement announcement serves as public notice to friends and family that a couple intends to marry. It provides an opportunity for others to adjust to the fact that a new family unit will soon form, and a new member will join the extended family. The public announcement also strengthens the commitment. The more people who know about the engagement, the more likely the couple is to follow through and marry. Thus a secret engagement is really no engagement at all.

Secondly, the prospective groom pre-



Dad likes me in on time.

© David Harbaugh in *The Lighter Side of Campus Life*

sents a gift to the prospective bride to solemnize the engagement. This gift is a symbol of their commitment to each other and further strengthens the couple's commitment.

Thirdly, a wedding date is set and wedding plans begin. Engagement is not an end in itself. It's a commitment to marry. Therefore, plans for a wedding need to proceed. An engagement with no wedding date in sight destroys the value of engagement.

During engagement, expressions of affection will become more intense because they are in transition from courtship to marriage. Because of this urgency to fulfill the natural desire for unrestricted intimacy, short engagements of six to nine months are ideal. If a couple have spent two years getting to know each other before the engagement, the short engagement period is sufficient.

This is the last opportunity to check out the future partner before being locked in for life. This is the time to bring out any unresolved differences or

accomplished during engagement is not the planning of a wedding, but premarital counseling with a qualified pastor or professional counselor. Every couple should have a minimum of six counseling sessions before marriage.

Stage 7: Marriage. Marriage is different than the previous six stages in that it is final and binding with legal procedures and courts necessary to dissolve the relationship through divorce. It should be a continuation of the romantic phase of courtship, characterized by affection, respect, courtesy and fun together.

Getting the cart before the horse

Unfortunately, couples often go through these stages out of sequence. So eager are they to find love, that they skip the preliminaries and jump into romance. But all the romantic stuff does not necessarily produce lasting love if an enduring friendship has not first been established.

Most couples tend to act in haste and marry too quickly. Every couple need to

reveal any hidden secrets, checking and rechecking their evaluations.

An engagement is not a sealed contract that forever links a couple's destiny. It is possible that an engaged couple may decide not to marry. This is hardly an unheard of phenomenon. As many as 40 to 50 percent of all engagements are broken. As difficult as it may be, a broken engagement is better than a broken marriage.

The most important task to be

date for two years prior to engagement. Ideally, a total of one year should be spent at stages 1, 2 and 3, slowly and carefully nurturing a friendship first.

To win the love and respect of their partner, most people show only their better sides and attempt to hide their faults and shortcomings. They believe that if the other person knew about their faults or idiosyncrasies they would not be good enough or lovable enough. So they act a part, act as if these faults are not a part of themselves—for a time—allowing their loved one to see them only at their best. Such a behavior is nothing but *masking*.

Many people can successfully mask negative tendencies for a year. Only rarely can such game-playing go beyond that. Therefore, when a couple rushes into marriage too quickly, they have not allowed sufficient time for the masks to slip. They are marrying a virtual stranger, someone who will likely turn out to be stranger than they ever wanted to know. Rapid acceleration of relationships is so exciting that romantic feelings stay alive when they should begin fading. As the euphoria intensifies, the thrill of being a twosome and doing enjoyable things together blinds the couple to reality. Marrying in haste, without taking sufficient time to check a person out, is jumping into a relationship based on assumptions. Assumptions make appalling marriage partners.

Researchers at Kansas State University found "a strong correlation...between length of time spent dating their current spouses and current marital satisfaction." The researchers noted that "couples who had dated for more than two years scored consistently high on marital satisfaction, while couples who had dated for shorter periods scored in a wide range from very high to very low."

Bill and Nina could have perhaps saved their marriage if their dating included this two-year frame. Nothing gets my attention faster than hearing a couple talk about marriage who have

not dated long enough. They are about to pledge "till death do us part" and have seriously underestimated the need for a strong relationship and the communication skills necessary to weather financial crises, bouts of sickness, and misunderstandings.

The two-year rule is applicable to the previously married also. Some of the biggest fiascos involve previously married individuals who think because they are "experienced," they can skip all the "kid stuff." "After all," they declare, "we're not teenagers."

Every couple, regardless of their age, circumstances, or experience, should take two full years to evaluate their readiness for marriage. When they do, they will have a significantly higher likelihood of making a good choice. The most important advice I give to couples can be summed up in three words: *Take your time!*

Pacing relationships

Progressing too rapidly in a relationship causes two problems. First, there is a strong possibility that the couple will not slow the pace sufficiently to develop the skills necessary to maintain a long-term relationship. Relational skills, such as communication, settling conflicts, or negotiating power struggles, will likely be untested. Immature couples tend to resolve their conflicts in bed, especially if this pattern was learned in the past. Their relationship lacks depth, and the first hint of difficulty signals a serious threat.

Second, developing a relationship with a person of the opposite sex is so electrifying that it is necessary to spread intimacy-building over a time period for real depth to develop. A compelling desire to spend as much time together as possible immediately propels the couple toward physical intimacy and commitment.

When a couple experiences a strong sexual attraction, they assume that they are in love and marry on the basis of sexual excitement alone. They ignore facts, thus indicating their values, goals,

and belief systems are at odds. After they marry they discover they have few common interests and incompatible personalities. They differ on many aspects of life, from what to do on a day off to how to spend money. In the midst of such chaos, they find their sexual interest also declining. When they wake up to what everyone else could see all along, they divorce. They weren't in love, they were "*in lust*."

Developing physical intimacy is more exciting and less work than developing intimacy at the emotional, spiritual, and friendship levels. This makes physical intimacy more difficult to control. But it can be controlled if you choose your dating activities carefully. Some activities build relationships slowly but surely at the friendship level; others rapidly hurl couples toward physical intimacy. An afternoon spent exploring a historic town is more constructive than a day spent cuddling on a blanket at the beach.

Cathy Guise from the Cathy comic strip says, "I'm beautiful, bright, charming, talented, and ready to share my life with someone, Charlene! I want to dream with someone...plan with someone...I want to be there for someone, and I want someone to be there for me!"

Charlene responds, "My husband has a really cute friend who..."

"Aack!!" Cathy screams, "A fix-up?? No fix-ups!! I'm ready to be married. I'm not ready to date."

Many people are like Cathy. Marriage is their goal, but they don't want to have to go through the process of preparing successfully to achieve their goal. They want the prize but aren't willing to pay the price.

Be smarter than such people. Rather than becoming sexually involved and later attempting to build a friendship, go forward through a relationship, not backward. And take your time!

Nancy L. Van Pelt is a family life professional who has authored 22 books. This arti-

cle is adapted from her book *Smart Love* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Fleming H. Revell, 1997). This book was reviewed in *Dialogue* 11:1 (1999), p. 32. Mrs. Van Pelt's address: 493 Timmy Avenue; Clovis, California 93612-0740; U.S.A. E-mail: vanpelt5@juno.com Her web site: heartnhome.com

Note

- * Quoted in Neil Clark Warren, *Finding the Love of Your Life* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Focus on the Family, 1992), p. 9.

Jack...

Continued from page 35.

but his mother obviously had shown no interest.

Terribly disappointed, Jack tossed the letter in the trash. *No one knows Mother like I do*, he reasoned. *I'll handle it when I get home*. On second thought, he retrieved the envelope just in case he might need the return address, later discovering that God's hand was over even that act!

For the rest of the story, read Jack, An Incredible Life (Review and Herald, 1998), the exciting story of God's workings in this man's adventure through life. The book is available at your local Adventist Book Center. Dr. Jack Blanco is currently Dean of the School of Religion at Southern Adventist University.

Jolena Taylor King works in the Human Resource Department of McKee Foods Corporation in Collegedale, Tennessee. She and her husband Roger, a retired dentist, live on a beautiful mountaintop where they enjoy playing with the grandchildren, hiking, gardening, reading, entertaining, and many other hobbies. Her address: P.O. Box 3302; Collegedale, Tennessee 37315; U.S.A.

God, me, and the marketplace of ideas

by Will Sutton

With my graduate seminar over, I continued the discussion with my professor. As we traversed the main university plaza, there was “Preacher Joe.” “Repent! Repent!” he shouted. “Jesus can save you from your sins!” Just then my professor, obviously irritated, stopped his train of thought and said to me, “That guy is an idiot.” Without skipping a beat, he continued his previous thought.

After that I didn’t follow anything my professor said. Inside me a war had erupted. I wanted to jump in and redirect our conversation back to Preacher Joe, repentance, and salvation, but embarrassment, shame, and pride held me hostage. I never brought up Jesus in our conversation that day, even though I had the perfect opportunity.

What is our response and responsibility as Christians vis-à-vis the marketplace of ideas—be it the university or the workplace?

Paul—ready anywhere, anytime

The Apostle Paul had no problems in witnessing to the gospel in the marketplace of Athens. The apostle “reasoned and argued in the synagogue with the Jews and those who worshipped there, and in the marketplace (where assemblies are held) with any who chanced to be there” (Acts 17:17, Amplified Bible).

Athens was an intellectual center. It was there that Socrates had carried on his famous debates and Plato and Aristotle opened schools of rhetoric and philosophy and science.

Athens was the birthplace of the idea of democracy. For the *Hellenes* (later called the “Greeks” by their Roman conquerors), the *polis* or “city-state” was the

very condition of human existence. Aristotle wrote, “to exist outside of a *polis* is to be either greater or less than human.”

The *agorá* or marketplace was the nexus of all economic and social activity in the *polis*. In the marketplace, *polites*—citizens who were adult males born in the *polis*—daily engaged in often intense public debates on pressing political issues brewing in the *polis*, or conducted sophisticated public trials.

Religious festivals, which not only paid homage to the pantheon of Greek deities but also questioned the very nature of the *polis*, were also celebrated with pomp and ritual in the marketplace. From the late sixth and early fifth centuries B.C., Athens became the hub of the Hellenistic world, and its marketplace the forum of the world’s ideas.

Paul was whisked away to Athens after yet another riot had broken out as a result of his preaching in the marketplace. He had been severely beaten and jailed for preaching in Philippi (Acts 16:12). The Thessalonians also persecuted him and incited a riot in the city (Acts 17:1-9).

Paul was not deterred. While waiting for Silas and Timothy, Paul began “reasoning” with the Athenians in their marketplace. Some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers wandered into the marketplace and wanted to know about what this “babbler” was jabbering. Some persons told them that Paul was speaking about some foreign religion, about Jesus and His resurrection. The philosophers grabbed Paul and dragged him before the religious tribunal at the Areopagus (Acts 17:18, 19).

Athens was no ordinary city. Large in population, it practiced a radical de-

mocracy. The city had 10 socio-political districts drawn up to establish and balance local power that affected all aspects of its culture. In the fifth century B.C. Athenians had established their assembly and supreme court, both of which met in the marketplace as the main legislative and decision-making bodies of the city. They transferred from the Areopagus, where the aristocracy had once ruled often tyrannically, all but the religious matters of Athens. Now, a tribunal met to choose who, for example, would be the Athenian patron for the annual festival of Dionysia—a five-day event of drama, sacrifice, and feasting—or to try an accused for desecration of an altar or a sacred statue. Paul stood in the center of the Areopagus. There, before a tribunal of the wealthy land-owning elite, around A.D. 51, the apostle boldly spoke of the gospel.

Paul’s address at Athens

“Men of Athens,” Paul began, “I perceive in every way... that you are most religious....For as I passed along and carefully observed your objects of worship, I came also upon an altar with this inscription, ‘To the unknown god.’ Now what you are already worshipping as unknown, this I set forth to you” (Acts 17:22,23, Amplified Bible).

Reasoning with the tribunal, Paul revealed God’s love and justice. “[In the past ages of ignorance], God, it is true, ignored and allowed [idolatry] to pass unnoticed; but now He charges all people everywhere to repent... Because He has fixed a day when He will judge the world righteously (justly) by a Man Whom He has destined and appointed for that task, and He has made this cred-

ible and given conviction and assurance and evidence to everyone by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30, 31, Amplified Bible).

What did Paul possess that we do not?

Paul's response to Athens is instructive and compelling. The apostle was a student of people and human activity. He was a cosmopolitan. His travels around the Mediterranean and the Aegean afforded him a great education. He met people where they were: Jews in the synagogue and Greeks in the marketplace. Paul moved about under the guidance of the Holy Spirit with boldness and without personal regard, and focused on his commission.

Having studied under the prominent Jewish law professor, Gamaliel, Paul was a well-read, adroit orator and rhetorician. Paul used his lawyering skills to assess his audience's mind-set as well as its cultural and social background. Taking that which was familiar to his audience, he pointed it towards the God of the universe, and propounded the gospel in the marketplace of ideas. Why are we so afraid to proclaim Jesus to our friends and colleagues in the marketplace?

Marketplace at Cal

Let me share my experience at the University of California, Berkeley (also known as "Cal"). My fear has been threefold. First, I have a *type of agoraphobia*—fear of the marketplace. Cal is one of the top research universities in the world. Its current faculty include six Nobel laureates and more fellows of the National Academies of Science, Arts and Humanities than any other university in the United States. The strength of its academic departments and curricula can be seen in examples from its faculty and students discovering several chemical elements on the periodic table to the creation and design of the UNIX computer networking system and the mo-

dem. Many people from around the world converge and mingle at Cal and barter in a humanistic environment.

Secondly, I fear relating to people with whom I am not acquainted, that is, I fear people. Cal's students, among the brightest and most gifted and talented in the world, are creative and love to explore new ideas and situations. They are not only passionate about what they believe, but they also act. It is not uncommon to see or hear non-traditional dress, music, or political speeches on the fringes of Cal.

Not a few Americans, based on hearsay, propaganda, and myth, label Cal students and faculty as "radical," "weird," "hedonistic," "heathen." Unfortunately, I too exhibit that same scorn by not mixing and exchanging with the shoppers and purveyors at Cal.

Lastly and most importantly, I, like so many Christians, am a non-believer. I say "non-believer" because I have not yet taken God at His word to completely rely upon Him. One of the many consequences of my unbelief is that I am afraid to proclaim the abounding love and imminent return of Jesus Christ in the marketplace of ideas.

Paul exclaimed, "but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day" (2 Timothy 1:12, NASB).

Here I am profoundly saddened. Far too many of us are either ashamed of our knowledge of the gospel, ashamed to be known as followers of Jesus by our classmates and colleagues, or we are ashamed to share the great news with those who desperately need to hear it—the thinkers in the marketplace.

Many of us do the fashionable, "politically correct" thing and not approach our peers with the gospel. We take a "they-will-come-to-us-if-they-want-to-know" posture, as if our lives are as Christ-like as they ought to be, as if scores and scores of seekers of truth will

suddenly mob us.

Many of us are too comfortable in our cloistered sanctum sanctorum or our philosophical think-tanks. We would rather sit in Jerusalem and wait and maybe pray for the people in Athens, instead of taking the gospel to them.

The truth is, we *are* afraid. We are afraid of the marketplace of ideas and the people who buy and sell there. We are afraid that we will be rejected or that our reputations will be marred. We are afraid for our well-being. Not one of our fears, whatever it might be, has anything to do with the intellectual currency of the gospel in the marketplace.

No need to fear

Paul assures us: "If God is for us, who can be against us?... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:31, 35, 37-39, NKJV).

What prompted Paul to hazard his life for the gospel?

Paul was once afraid of non-Jews of the world's marketplace. He was on his way to Damascus to kill Christians when he met Jesus. Paul took his commission from Jesus as his life. He used his education and skills to reach people—people who might not have been otherwise reached with the gospel. He allowed himself to be filled and led by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, who emboldened the Apostle Paul, will also speak through us today in the marketplace of ideas if

Continued on page 27.

by Donna J. Evans

Shattered dreams and bright hope

Dan Miller grew up in Pateros, a small town on the banks of the great Columbia River, at the foot of the North Cascades mountains, in the state of Washington. As he viewed the grandeur of the mountains and the beauty of the river and as he played with his friends, he was obsessed with a dream: to become a professional basketball player. As a boy, he spent countless hours on the basketball courts, dribbling a ball almost as big as himself, shooting up at a basket far above his head. As he grew, so did his skills. He played basketball with his friends, classmates, and teachers, and when no one was available to play with, he played by himself. He made the junior high varsity team easily. He made the high school varsity when he was only 15 and a freshman. He was good. He was on his way up. He was going to be a pro.

Then one day tragedy struck, catching him totally unprepared. Dan woke up one morning with a strange sensation in one arm. Before sundown, he was prone in bed, stricken with polio. For awhile he fought for his life. And then, when he finally knew he would survive, he almost wished he hadn't. He had lost the use of one arm. One leg dragged and could serve only to balance himself with. The other arm retained 20 percent of its function. Once the perfect candidate for supreme athlete, now... His dream was dead. He would never become a professional basketball player.

As he contemplated his future, he must have felt utter despair. He had lived for basketball. What would he live for now? He could think of nothing else he wanted to do. He stood on the court. He bent to the ball, and found he could

not even lift it. He dragged around a bit, and then asked his parents to buy him a little ball, and tried to fling it with his partially functioning arm. After long hours of trying, he could get it in the basket. He smiled, and moved back a little, and began the process over. Eventually, he could get that little ball into the basket from the free-throw line with the same deadly accuracy he had once shown with the basketball.

He went back to his parents and asked for a slightly bigger ball, got it, and started the whole long process all over again. He could not be a pro basketball player ever. He knew that. But he was playing his game, the game that he loved. He worked out as he had always worked out, blocking out his black despair by playing on the court he had inhabited for most of his life, and he kept working his way through high school. Dan never recovered the use of his arms or his leg, but he got to where he could pick up a basketball again and throw it from the free throw line into the basket. In fact, his percentage became and has remained 96 out of 100 attempts—an average even some of the members of the national teams can't achieve.

A change in dreams

Dan knew he could not play professional basketball, but he did not want to let go of his dream. If he himself could not play, maybe he could train players, so he marched off to college determined to become a basketball coach. He registered as a physical education major. The teachers looked at him, read the doctor's physical examination exempting Dan from PE, and tried to talk him into another profession. But Dan knew what he

wanted to do and he persisted, so they gave in. He took every class that other PE majors took, and though he could not perform what they could perform, he could understand what was required. Four years later he graduated with the coveted physical education degree. He was hired in the Seattle area as a coach. He would train young people to become the basketball players that he once had dreamed of being.

It's a marvelous story. It says something very important to me. All of us are like Dan Miller, crippled in ways that sabotage our dreams, whether we know it or not. For many years in my youth, I was required by my Pathfinder leaders to read the Bible Year, and I plodded through Leviticus and Numbers with great boredom, then launched into Joshua and Judges in horrified fascination. There were so many stories in there that Uncle Arthur had never mentioned, and I couldn't help but wonder why they were in the Bible.

As I have grown older and read the same stories from the perspective of an adult, I have been struck by the fact that God is willing to be identified as the God of imperfect people. He is the God of Abraham, not only when he went out in faith from Ur of the Chaldees to a place he knew not of, but also when the frightened liar stood before Pharaoh in shame. He is the God of Isaac, not only when he willingly lay down on the altar to be a sacrifice, but also when he was an indulgent parent playing favorites with his children. He is the God of Jacob the deceiver, God of Rahab the prostitute, God of David the adulterer, God of Peter the disloyal.

In spite of our imperfections, God cares

Too often we are tempted to think that if we do not reach the ideal, we will be second-rate citizens in the eyes of God, as so often we are in the eyes of each other. We assume that because things are not as we wish they were,

God cannot perfectly love us. But the whole Bible stands as a record to tell us otherwise. Even when Abraham, in his lack of courage and faith, lied to Pharaoh about his wife, God spoke to Pharaoh in a dream saying, "This is my Abraham, my person, don't hurt him or his wife."

We are not perfect, as individuals, as institutions, or as a church. We must recognize in all humility that we are warped and damaged. We have defects of character that even we are blind to. We have broken or strained relationships that we cannot seem to fix. We have physical imperfections. We are mentally limited. We are spiritually dwarfed. But God is still our God. We are still the apple of His eye, His beloved sons and daughters, and He works with us and through us and lives our lives with us.

His words addressed to Joshua at a critical moment are also meant for us: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9, NIV) Our greatest need is to recognize our imperfections and still feel His great love and power, to see through all the un-ideal circumstances of our lives, the richness He can give us, and the meaning our lives can have to those we share them with.

Dan Miller has no trophies lining the walls of his home. But he has trophies, oh, yes. His trophies are young people who thank him for the way he has changed their lives, has given meaning to their dreams. Even though he will never have that perfect athletic body

that was the focus of his life, he is richly fulfilled without it. And whatever our imperfections are, whatever shattered dreams our lives hold, we can still live and love, be accepted and richly fulfilled.

Donna J. Evans (Ph.D., Claremont University) is an educator who has taught at all academic levels. Her address: P.O. Box 181; Brewster, WA 98812; U.S.A. E-mail: djevans@nwi.com

God, me,...

Continued from page 25.

we would only surrender our lives and talents to Him.

Multitudes of people are out there—our classmates and teachers, who, like Paul, "want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection" (Philippians 3:10, NRSV). Our joy is to share with them our knowledge of and experience with Jesus. Let's spend quiet time with Jesus studying His Word, praying to our Heavenly Father, and listening to His voice. Only then will our lives have purpose and our witness be effective. Whenever we have the opportunity—from casual conversations to writing articles, op-ed pieces, or books about our lives with Jesus—we must share.

Will Sutton is the coordinator of the Berkeley Seventh-day Adventist Student Association. His mailing address: 75 Evergreen Lane; Berkeley, California 94705-1438; U.S.A. E-mail: will@serendipite.com.

Visit our web pages

AMiCUS: <http://www.adventist.org/education/amicus/home.htm>

Dialogue: <http://www.adventist.org/education/dialogue/home.htm>

Should we ever judge others?

Jesus said, “Do not judge, or you too will be judged” (Matthew 7:1, NIV). Does this mean we cannot pass judgment against sin or discipline a person who has done wrong?

The passage is one of the great sayings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. Obviously Jesus did not mean that we cannot make choices or relationships between good and bad, between good and evil. Nor did He mean that we should condone evil or overlook moral lapses. For in verse 6 of the same chapter, He says, “Do not give to the dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs.” This saying implies that one must make judgments about the definition of a dog or a pig. That is to say, the Bible nowhere prohibits a person or a body of persons from distinguishing between that which is wrong and right; nor does it prohibit disciplinary measure against what is considered wrong, sinful, or unacceptable conduct.

Hence, Paul in 1 Corinthians 5 admonishes the church to deal firmly “in the name of our Lord Jesus” with a certain individual who has been living in open sin and urged the church to “expel the wicked man from among you” (vs. 1-13).

So the saying of Jesus must not be understood to mean that we as individuals or as a body of believers have no business condemning sin or disciplining wrongdoers—be it in the church, in school, or in families. Nor should the saying of Jesus be taken to mean that

humans have no business judging. If no one could judge others, there would be no court system, no trials for breaking a law, no justice, and no punishment. A society without the ability to judge its members for violation of its law would descend into chaos and eventually self-destruct. Even within the limitations of human knowledge and understanding, there is need for judgment.

What the text prohibits, therefore, is not judgment but judgmentalism—that attitude of arrogance by which one assumes an air of superiority over others by constantly indulging in criticism, faultfinding and an unforgiving spirit toward others while ignoring the same faults in oneself, that hypocrisy that sees a splinter in a brother’s eye while ignoring a beam in one’s own (vs. 3). Ellen White calls this spirit of judgmentalism Pharisaical, and counsels: “Do not set yourself up as a standard. Do not make your opinions, your views of duty, your interpretations of Scripture, a criterion for others and in your heart condemn them if they do not come up to your ideal. Do not criticize others, conjecturing as to their motives and passing judgment upon them” (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 124).

While we must guard against judgmentalism, we must not fail to protect the moral and spiritual health of the body of Christ, which includes us as well. That’s why Jesus warned in Matthew 7: “Watch out for false prophets.... By their fruit you will recognize them” (vs. 15-20). Safeguarding against false

prophets and examining the nature of “fruits” people produce involve a spiritual discernment that is different from being judgmental and censorious. A clear line must be drawn between ethical assessment and motivated criticism, between censure unto condemnation and discipline unto redemption.

Jesus further warns us against being zealous judges over others. The Bible often uses the words *judge* or *judgment* in terms of the final salvation of a human being. This arena is off limits to us. “Do not judge” certainly prohibits us from passing judgment as to the final salvation of an individual, however sinful that person might be. The fitness of a person for eternal life is something that will be decided by God alone.

John M. Fowler (Ed.D., Andrews University) is the associate director of education for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and editor of Dialogue.

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.

Action Report

Seminar for university students in Maranhao, Brazil



Participants in the seminar.

The first Seminar for Adventist University Students in the State of Maranhao, Brazil, was held in Sao Luis, October 23-24, 1998 under the motto, "Growing in Quality With Christ Today." The meeting was attended by many students and teachers connected with the regional and federal universities in the State of Maranhao.

Several lectures were presented, such as "How to Make Friends for God," "A Grain of Sand in the Universe," and "Truth Is a Person." On Sabbath afternoon, all students attending received a copy of *Dialogue* and then participated in a round-table discussion on why some Adventist students abandon their faith while attending the university. A summary of their responses yielded the following points: (1) Lack of foundation in Bible doctrines; (2) inability to filter and counteract ideas that are contrary to their faith; (3) campus friendships that lead them away from Christian principles and lifestyle; (4) academic pressures that weaken and then strangle their devotional life; (5) superficial acquaintance with the writings of Ellen G. White; (6) insufficient support from mature church leaders (both pastors and laypersons).

At the close of the seminar it was agreed to establish the Association of Adventist University Students in Maranhao (AUAMA in Portuguese) and to hold the second seminar June 3-6, 1999 in the city of Imperatriz.

We welcome contacts with other Adventist student associations in Brazil and in other countries. Our address: Av. Daniel de La Touche, 53; Maranhao Novoy Sao Luis, MA; 65061-050 Brazil. Fax: 55-98-246-1102.

E-mail: comunicacao@mma.unb.org.br

—Otimar Gonçalves
Youth Ministries Director

Romance across the Caribbean

God still works mysteriously His wonders to perform. In December 1995 I attended a meeting of the Cuban Association of Adventist University Students and Professionals (ACUPA in Spanish). I was not yet a Seventh-day Adventist (my baptism took place in September 1996). I enjoyed the meeting and was given a copy of *Dialogue*. I was attracted to the section "Interchange." I sent my name, address, and other particulars, which were published in issue 8:3 (1996) of the journal. The listing indicated that I was an elementary school teacher.

One year later, in December 1996, Magdalena Adame Torres, secretary to the treasurer of the South Pacific Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Puebla, Mexico, attended a congress of Adventist university students and professionals in that city. During the meet-



ing, she received a copy of *Dialogue* and also was attracted to "Interchange." Magdalena wrote to four of the persons listed in that section. I was one of them.

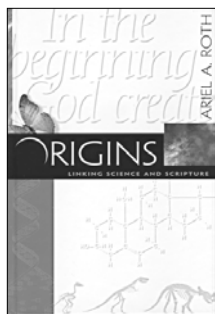
For several months we exchanged letters and then began communicating by telephone. I invited her to visit our beautiful island. Later in 1997 Magdalena and her father traveled to Cuba. It was my pleasure to accompany them on their tour. Our friendship turned into mutual attraction and then to love, which we nurtured through many letters and frequent telephone calls.

In July 1998 Magdalena returned to Cuba and we were married in a civil ceremony. As soon as Magdalena went back home, she submitted to the Mexican government the documents that would allow me to join her. The process usually takes more than six months, but in just 13 days I received the necessary visa to migrate to Mexico. Our church wedding took place October 25, 1998 in the Adventist church at Cuernavaca, Morelos. What a joyful day that was for both of us!

God has blessed our marriage with mutual understanding and deep love. Magdalena continues to work as a secretary at the conference headquarters and I teach in one of the Adventist schools in the area. We have committed our lives to God and are ready to follow His guidance wherever He leads us. (Our mailing address: Apartado 1160; 72000 Puebla, Pue.; Mexico.)

— Carlos Guzmán García

Books



Origins: Linking Science and Scripture,

by Ariel A. Roth (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1998; 384 pp.; hardbound).

Reviewed by David Ekkens.

The origin of matter and life is not an easy subject to approach. Philosophers have struggled with it over the centuries. Evolutionary scientists have battled over it not just with creationists, but among themselves. Into this battle-scarred area enters Ariel Roth, for many years director of Geoscience Research Institute of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Roth has spent his entire career living the life of a believer and the profession of a scientist, without any sense of contradiction or need for apology. In spite of difficulties in the realm of faith and science, and while not claiming to have answers to all the questions, Roth always speaks and writes with a deep sense of conviction. For this reason I was looking forward to the publication of this book—a result of many years of study and work in creation research. I was not disappointed.

As the title of the book implies, Dr. Roth wrote *Origins* in an attempt to show a reasonable link between science and Scripture. In the preface, he reveals his point of departure: “As a practicing scientist, I take science extremely seriously. And as one who values meaning and religion, I also take the Bible just as seriously.” Thus Roth takes off to deal with one of the greatest intellectual battles of history—the conflict between science and Christianity, which has raged for centuries.

The book is divided into six major sections. The first section establishes the fact of the conflict between science and religion. Then the author deals with living organisms, covering the major problems concerning evolution of life forms, starting with the origin of life itself and going on up through humans.

The third section deals with “The Fossils” and problems associated with the fossilized record of life, including how creationists deal with the geologic column. Next comes a discussion of the rocks—how geology answers some major questions and provides evidence for a universal Flood. He also discusses time and age dating and problems associated with different dating techniques.

The fifth section of the book points out some major achievements of science and some of the problems associated with them. He also presents major strengths and weaknesses of the biblical arguments on origins.

In the last section, “Some Conclusions,” Roth discusses his overall conclusions—that science made its “greatest error

when it rejected God” (p. 334) and that “among all the models considered, the creation described in Scripture makes the most sense” (p. 362).

All in all, Roth presents several good arguments. However, it seems unlikely that many atheistic scientists will be convinced. Still, there is a growing number of scientists who are willing to consider the existence of a transcendent, intelligent power. They may be willing to give Roth’s arguments a fair hearing. Certainly, to those who accept the Bible as God’s Word, *Origins* affirms the Creation belief.

The book is well referenced and has a helpful glossary. Those interested in the creation/evolution debate will enjoy and benefit from this well-written book.

David Ekkens (Ph.D., Loma Linda University) teaches biology at Southern Adventist University. His address: P.O. Box 370; Collegedale, TN 37315; U.S.A.



True Believer,

by Alexander Bolotnikov as told to Gina Wahlen (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1997; 176 pp.; paperback).

Reviewed by Eugene V. Zaitsev.

Sasha (Alexander) grew up in the Soviet Union with absolute faith that Marxism-Leninism would usher in the perfect society in which honesty, fairness, national unity and equality would reign. That’s what he learned throughout his school years, and he had no reason to believe otherwise. But Sasha got his first “stinging bite of hypocrisy” in the very sacred Lenin’s Room where he had pledged “to love the motherland deeply, to live, study, and struggle according to the great Lenin’s behests and the Communist Party’s teaching” (p. 34). His final disillusion in Communist ideas came after he was refused admission in the Moscow Institute of Physical Engineering, not because he fell short of requirements, but because of his Jewish parentage.

Behind that incident, Sasha saw not simply hatred, but a challenge to his identity. Who was he, anyway? Why did he see so many doors closing on his face? The identity crisis turned Alexander on a spiritual journey. He did not know where he was going, but through solid questions and unsatisfactory answers, through the impact of events and personalities, Alexander moved from Marxism to Judaism. His roots gave him meaning and a sense of belonging to a community that awaited the Messiah. But he was not quite satisfied.

True Believer traces the long and torturous route of Alexander from absolute faith in Marxism to disillusionment to search and finally to fulfillment in Jesus.

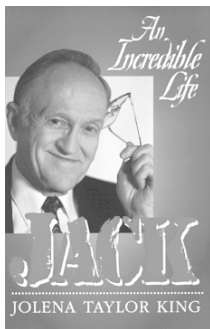
While studying at Kiev State University, Sasha met some Christian friends. They were different. They seemed to have found real meaning in life. They had something solid to hope for. And they were willing to accept Sasha for what he was, and to share with him what they knew. Soon Bible studies began. Isaiah 53 and Daniel 9 gave Sasha a new understanding of the Messiah—that He is a Person who has already come and who has opened the doors to eternal life.

Even as Sasha was struggling within his soul, his country was undergoing the most dramatic change after nearly 70 years of Communist experimentation. The *perestroika* and the breeze of fresh ideas blowing across the Soviet landscape gave Sasha the opportunity to press forward in his spiritual journey and the study of the Bible.

The author, Gina Wahlen, a professional journalist and English teacher, charts out Sasha's journey—step by gripping step—and keeps the reader's interest with her passionate narrative that does not fail to capture how the Holy Spirit touches the heart and guides the soul of a seeker after truth. The final pictures of the book are thrilling—the soul struggles of Sasha, his painful heart attack and recovery, and finally the daring step to accept Jesus as his personal Saviour. The author's artistic gifts—lucidity, stylistic ease, the novelist's touch—make the reading of *True Believer* not only pleasurable but compelling.

Sasha is now an Adventist with a mission—to translate the Bible in simple Russian so that millions will know of the Lord of the Word.

Eugene V. Zaitsev (Ph.D., Andrews University) is a vice-president for academic affairs of Zaoksky Theological Seminary, Russia.



Jack: An Incredible Life,
by Jolena Taylor King (Hagerstown,
Maryland: Review and Herald Publ. Assn.,
1998; 208 pp.; paperback).

Reviewed by Mary Wong.

We have known Jack Blanco for many things: an exemplary Adventist, an outstanding theologian, a caring pastor, an affirming writer, the translator of the *Clear Word Bible*. However, there is one side of Jack—an incredible side—that has been known only to a few of his family and friends. Jole-

na King has corrected that deficiency and has gifted to the world of Adventism this remarkable book on the making of a great man.

Jack is a survivor. He survived the stigma attached to a child born out of wedlock and the resultant rejection from those around him. He survived early childhood poverty. When at age 10 he went to Germany to live with his maternal grandparents, he thought he had found a country and an identity—only to land in a Nazi labor camp. He survived that. He survived teenage traumas, religious skepticism, and lifestyle risks.

Perhaps *survival* is not the right word. As Blanco, the Christian, would testify, he was rescued by God's amazing grace for a specific purpose.

The deprivation, the torture, the rebellion, life's strange twists, and the divine rescue runs through this remarkable book. The narrative has an appeal to all—especially young people who go through the struggles of identity crisis, values clarification, career choice, and religious faith. However, what distinguishes Jack's experiences from those of a normal teenager is that his were not only the struggles peculiar to a teenager but also the dilemma of a German American teenager trapped in the country of his roots during World War II. This dilemma is intensified by the fact that the country of his birth and the country of his roots were opposite forces in the war.

Woven into the story is the theme of God's providential leadings. From his unfortunate beginnings in the slums of Chicago to his baptism into the Seventh-day Adventist Church, from his choice of a life partner to his choice to be a minister for God, from his work in the mission fields and educational institutions to the culmination of his achievement in the writing of the *Clear Word Bible*, we see evidences of a heavenly Father looking out for a child abandoned by his natural father.

The book has all the elements of a captivating story—conflict, suspense, and pathos. However, some readers may have a problem with the development of the plot in the story. Having weathered the "storms" of Blanco's early life with him in the opening chapters, they may feel themselves "becalmed" in a sea of less-exciting details describing his school days, his family, and work in the final chapters. Nonetheless, if the readers were to keep in mind the intent of the story, they may be able to sustain sufficient interest to read through to the conclusion and share with Blanco his joy, made possible through a God who loves and cares.

Jack is another incredible story of God's amazing grace. Read it. Experience it.

Mary Wong (Ph.D., Michigan State University) is the director of the children's ministries, family ministries, and women's ministries for the Northern Asia-Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists, Seoul, Korea.

An excerpt of this book is published in this issue, "First Person."

Expand Your Friendship Network

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

Yonie P. Aganan: 22; female; single; studying toward a degree in pharmacy; interests: listening to music, evangelism, travel, and camping; correspondence in English. Address: 1296 Cruzan; Bulacao, Talisay, Cebu; 5045 PHILIPPINES.

Bernie Lyn Arrogante: 29; female; single; an office worker; hobbies: cooking, camping, travel, and church activities; correspondence in English. Address: 101-1 N. Balcalso Ave.; Cebu City; 6000 PHILIPPINES.

Beverly S. Baruis: 22; female; single; completed a degree in accountancy at Mountain View College; interests: reading, gardening, and mountain climbing; correspondence in English or Filipino. Address: Ever Sun Development Ltd.; Sarmiento, Parang, Maguindanao; 9604 PHILIPPINES.

Lisiane Batista: 21; female; single; studying business management and working as an announcer in an Adventist radio; interests: reading, music, camping, and nature; correspondence in Portuguese or Spanish. Address: Ernesto Valt, 134; Curitiba, PR; 81200-140 BRAZIL. E-mail: ufprlisi@hotmail.com

Marcia Bailey: 25; female; single; studying nursing; hobbies: camping, singing, sewing, and going to the beach; correspondence in English. Address: Salt Spring Dist.; Salt Spring P.O.; Montego Bay, St. James; JAMAICA.

Stephen Y. Busi: 27; male; single; a lay evangelist; interests: Bible studies, Christian music, and travel; correspondence in English. Address: Seventh-day Adventist Church; P.O. Box 22; Kintampo, Brong, Ahafo Region; GHANA.

Francisco Cruz Rosell: 28; male; married; a physician; interests: Christian music, Bible prophecy, literature on surgery, and travel; correspondence in Spanish. Address: Calle 8, #157 entre D y E; Reparto Guernica, Camaguey; 74510 CUBA.

Maggie Cuezzo: 20; female; single; studying English; interests: ecology, animals, playing the guitar and piano; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: Alvarez Condarco 330; San Miguel de Tucuman, Tucuman; 4000 ARGENTINA.

Dealnie Viana de Oliveira: 26; female; single; pursuing a masters in physiology at Universidade Federal de Pernambuco; interests: religious music, evangelism, study nature, and travel; correspondence in Portuguese, English, or Spanish. Address: Rua Cabo Epitacio Lucena, 57; Casa Amarela, Recife, PE; 52210-010 BRAZIL.

Cleide da Silva Deodato: 24; female; single; a teacher studying pedagogy at Universidade Federal do Parana; interests: reading, camping, travel, and Christian music; correspondence in Portuguese, English or Spanish. Address: Rua Pedro Airton Zimmermann No. 564; Bairro Novo A, Curitiba, Parana; 81910-350 BRAZIL.

Talia Dueñas Pena: 24; female; single; completing a degree in pharmacy and biochemistry at Universidad Nacional Mayor San Marcos; interests: travel, painting, good music, and exchanging souvenirs; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: Urb. Res. Surco, Calle 3, Mza. D, Lte. 4; Santiago de Surco, Lima 33; PERU.

Luz B. Dug-oy: 30; female; single; completed a degree in elementary education at Mountain View College; interests: singing, cooking, and gardening; correspondence in English. Address: Malangas S.D.A. Elementary School; Malangas, Zamboanga del Sur; 7038 PHILIPPINES.

Joy Eballar: 21; female; single; studying computer science; interests: collecting stuffed toys, listening to music, and playing the organ; correspondence in English, Filipino or Cebuano. Address: South Philippine Adventist College; Digos, Davao del Sur; 8002 PHILIPPINES.

Analyn H. Enero: 22; female; single; studying toward a degree in elementary education; interests: reading, travel, photography, and outdoor activities; correspondence in English or Filipino. Address: Adventist University of the Philippines; P.O. Box 1834; Manila; 1099 PHILIPPINES.

Angel Figueroa: 26; male; single; a government employee; interests: music, travel, learn about other cultures, exchange stamps, postcards, and key rings; correspondence in Spanish. Address: 1505 Loiza St., Box 5-A; San Juan, Puerto Rico 00911; U.S.A.

Julia M. Gutiérrez V.: 25; female; single; holds degree in sociology and health education; will pursue a masters in speech communication at University of Texas Pan Ameri-

can; interests: travel, outdoor activities, going to the beach, and reading the Psalms; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: 303 S. Casa Rd.; Pharr, Texas 78577; U.S.A. E-mail: juliamgv@hotmail.com

Dina Hernández B.: female; single; holds a degree in elementary education; interests: collecting phone cards and bird feathers; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: Colegio del Pacífico; Ado. 134; Navojoa, Sonora; MEXICO.

Edson Ryoki Okamoto Iwaki: 26; male; single; completing a masters in mathematics at the University of Sao Paulo; hobbies: travel, camping, and learning about other cultures; correspondence in Portuguese or English. Address: Rua Manoel Alves dos Santos, 350; Sao Paulo; 05862-230 BRAZIL. E-mail: iwaki@ime.usp.br

Leilani Jereos: 20; female; single; studying toward a degree in accountancy; interests: singing, playing the guitar and piano, church activities, and nature; correspondence in English. Address: Central Philippine Adventist College; P.O. Box 420; Bacolod City; 6100 PHILIPPINES.

Thomas Joseph: 30; male; single; a lawyer; hobbies: sharing my Christian faith, nature, travel, and music; correspondence in English. Address: P.O. Box 28076; Nairobi; KENYA.

Mercy Kimani: 25; female; single; originally from Kenya, pursuing a degree in computer science; hobbies: travel, listening to music, and hiking; correspondence in English. Address: 1212 University City Boulevard, Apt. I-99; Blacksburg, Virginia; U.S.A. E-mail: rkimani@vt.edu

L. Koberson: 25; male; single; studying theology; interests: singing, nature, sports, and evangelism; correspondence in English. Address: Spicer Memorial College; P.O. Ganeshkhind, Aundh Road; Pune 411007, Maharashtra; INDIA.

Simone A. Le Fleur: 23; female; single; studying toward a degree in education while working as part-time secretary; interests: mission projects, walking, liturgical dancing, and Formula 1 car racing; correspondence in English or Afrikaans. Address: 43 Herring Circle; Newlands East, Durban; 4038 SOUTH AFRICA.

Eltozen Gay Llegado: 23; female; single; a registered midwife completing a degree in nursing; interests: travel, music, hiking, and nature; correspondence in English or Tagalog. Address: 1984 Pag-Asa Daraga; Albay; 4501 PHILIPPINES.

Evans O. Machera: male; single; studying law; hobbies: photography, travel, camping, and music; correspondence in English. Ad-

dress: 426 Nehru Chowk; Cantt. 2 - Aurangabad, 431002 Maharashtra; INDIA.

A. Urika T. Mailau: 37; male; married, three children; studying toward a diploma in commerce; interests: music, fishing, and photography; correspondence in English. Address: Kapai S.D.A. Church; P.O. Baimuru, Gulf Province; PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

Ellen Mang: 21; female; single; a college student; hobbies: playing games and sports; correspondence in English. Address: Myanmar Union Adventist College; Mosokwin Rd.; Myaungmya; MYANMAR.

Rachel Mantoka: 21; female; single; studying toward a degree in education; hobbies: reading, singing, listening to music, and making new friends; correspondence in English. Address: c/o Students' Services; University of Goroka; P.O. Box 1078; Goroka, E. H. P.; PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

Jubilee G. Maquinto: 26; female; single; completing a degree in accountancy; interests: reading and travel; correspondence in English. Address: Central Philippine Adventist College; P.O. Box 420 Bacolod City; 6100 PHILIPPINES.

Byron W. Minick: 22; male; single; studying speech pathology at Paradise Valley Community College; hobbies: weight lifting, cycling, foreign languages, and computers; correspondence in English. Address: 15810 N. 38th Place; Phoenix, Arizona 85032-4066; U.S.A. E-mail: minick.byron@juno.com

Pumulani Mpofu: 22; male; single; pursuing a degree in applied chemistry at National University of Science and Technology; interests: Bible study, sports, chess, nature, and travel; correspondence in English. Address: 4933 Magwegwe West; P.O. Bagwegwe; Bulawayo; ZIMBABWE.

Tee D. Munyaradzi: 29; male; single; a teacher at an Adventist primary school; hobbies: travel, sports, photography, and exchanging postcards; correspondence in English. Address: Box 5; Renco Mine; ZIMBABWE.

Murniati: 29; female; single; studying English; hobbies: reading, listening to music, and making new friends; correspondence in English. Address: Jl. Scimbawa No. 20A; Bandung; 40113 INDONESIA.

Julius Nyakundi Nyagwoka: 24; male; single; studying toward a diploma in agricultural engineering at Jomo Kenyatta University; interests: sharing my faith, listening and singing gospel music, and basketball; correspondence in English or Kiswahili. Address: P.O. Box 502; Nyamira; KENYA.

Rachel Pamben: 21; female; single; studying toward a teaching degree in English; hobbies: reading, sports, good music, and travel; correspondence in English. Ad-

dress: University of Goroka; P.O. Box 1078; Goroka, E.H.P.; PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

Janitha Kalum Perera: 23; male; single; studying photography; hobbies: hiking, playing cricket, bird watching, and collecting stamps; correspondence in English. Address: 815, Batagama North; Ja-ela; SRI LANKA.

Ivailo Petrov: 25; male; single; studying social activities at V. Tirnovo University; hobbies: poetry, religious music, photography, and theology; correspondence in Bulgarian or English. Address: j.k. "Ug," Bl. 1, Vh. D, Ap. 4; 5400 Sevlievo; BULGARIA.

Jean Pinheiro: 20; male; single; working as a nurse; interests: reading and collecting postcards; correspondence in Portuguese, Spanish or English. Address: Rua Coxipoacu, 84; Pq. Maria Helena, Sao Paulo; 05855-220 BRAZIL.

Cecilia Pizarro: 20; female; single; studying agro-industrial engineering; interests: collecting stamps and postcards, travel, and bicycling; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: Universidad Adventista de Chile; Casilla 7-D; Chillán; CHILE.

Mary Rose Porle: 28; female; single; holds a degree in secretarial administration; interests: singing, listening to music, and sports; correspondence in English or Tagalog. Address: #107 Slaughter Compound; Bagoio City; 2600 PHILIPPINES.

Nilsia Sánchez Pardo: 23; female; single; studying toward a degree in English; interests: reading, walks in nature, caring for animals, and music; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: La Chorrera, Panamá; PANAMA.

Jannette Sánchez Ruiz: female; single; studying toward a degree in computer engineering; interests: collecting postcards and camping; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: Colegio del Pacífico; Ado. 134; Navojoa, Sonora; MEXICO.

Yeimy Sandoval P.: 20; female; single; studying psychology at Universidad Adventista de Santo Domingo; interests: music, acting, excursions, and sharing Christ with others; correspondence in Spanish. Address: C. Prolongación Juan Tomás Díaz #81; San Cristóbal; DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.

Margarida Serafim da Silva: 30; female; single; studying business management; interests: youth activities, reading, and collecting postcards; correspondence in Portuguese. Address: Av. Prof. Flavio P. Camargo, 1160; Caetetuba, Atibaia, SP; 12940 BRAZIL.

Roger Antonio Sosa: 23; male; single; studying biology; interests: camping, music, nature, and learning about other cultures; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: Col. Kennedy, Zona 2, SMZ 6; Bloque

22; Pasaje 5, Casa 4510; Tegucigalpa, M.D.C.; HONDURAS.

Elena Stepanova: 20; female; single; studying toward a degree in social psychology at Yaroslavl State University; interests: art, travel, reading, and learning about other countries and peoples; correspondence in Russian or English. Address: Bolshye Polyanky Street, 17-92; Yaroslavl; RUSSIA.

Carolina Urquizo: 21; female; single; studying agronomy; interests: collecting postcards, listening to Christian music, and sports; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: Universidad Adventista de Chile; Casilla 7-D; Chillán; CHILE.

Florene Wellington: 36; female; completed a baccalaureate degree in communications at University of West Indies, Jamaica; hobbies: singing and reading; correspondence in English. Address: P.O. Box 3095; Zanzibar; TANZANIA.

Ruwan Wijetunge: 25; male; single; studying toward a degree in microbiology; hobbies: gospel music, playing the guitar, and camping; correspondence in English. Address: No. 7, Alfred House Gardens; Colombo 3; SRI LANKA.

Ayuca Yoseph: 31; female; single; a private teacher; hobbies: reading, listening to music, and making new friends; correspondence in English. Address: Jl. Jaji Saodah No. 181, RT6/RW7 Jatihandap; Cicaheum, Bandung; INDONESIA.

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. (We will also list your e-mail address if you provide it.) Address your letter to *Dialogue Interchange*: 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, U.S.A. Please type or print clearly. You can also use e-mail: 104472.1154@compuserve.com We will list only those who provide all the information requested above. The journal cannot assume responsibility for the accuracy of the information submitted or for the content of the correspondence that may ensue.

Jack, an incredible life

by Jolena Taylor King

And what will you name the little bastard?" the stern-faced midwife asked rudely as she turned to pick up her bag. Expecting no answer from the stoic young German immigrant, she departed with a grunt, leaving her comment to bounce around the room.

Katie clutched her tiny infant close, burying her face in his blanket. "How can I protect you from such hurt?" she murmured. These would not be the only tears to flow as she attempted to raise Jack alone in the ghettos of Chicago during the Great Depression.

By the time her son reached school age, so many miracles had occurred in Jack's life that Katie wondered if God didn't have some special plan for her fatherless son. Sisters at the Catholic school he attended showered him with love, and Jack thrived on their attentions.

Then one day when he was almost 10, Mother came flying through the door of the Chicago apartment they shared with kind relatives. "We're going to Germany!" she shouted. "Isn't it grand!"

The transition from Chicago's slums to the idyllic German countryside was dramatic, and Jack immediately loved the farm, his grandparents, his uncles and aunt, the animals. So much so that the family decided Germany would be the perfect place for Jack to spend the next year. Until they took Katie to the train station for her lonely return to America.

"Please don't leave me here!" Jack shrieked, clinging to his precious mother. His panic-stricken face revealed wild terror as he fully realized that she was

leaving Germany without him. For a year! Had the family known how long it would actually be, perhaps everyone would have wept. As it was, his beloved uncles pulled him, kicking and screaming, off Katie as she quickly boarded the train, broken-hearted and tearful at her son's strange demonstration. One last train whistle, and Mother was gone. Gone to America. Gone. Gone.

For many days Jack could do nothing but weep and mourn, despite Grandmother's tempting food and loving kindness. But gradually he eased back into the harsh German farm life that was now his. Grandfather helped make him feel important, however, especially after Uncle Fritz was drafted into the army. Jack helped milk twice every day, and did other farm work from before the sun rose until long after it had set, six days a week. Soon he was speaking German as fluently as his classmates at the village school. By the time summer came around again, Jack was counting the days until he would leave for the United States, home and Mother. Her letters too were filled with anticipation.

Then, in early September, just days before Jack's scheduled departure, Hitler invaded Poland, and World War II began. Jack would not be leaving Germany.

"But maybe the war won't last long." The youngster optimistically threw himself even more vigorously into helping Grandfather, mainly because Uncle Joseph, the youngest son, was also gone away to war. That left Grandfather, Connie, and Jack to harrow, sow, plow, hay, pull weeds, fell trees, harvest, winnow, and mow, using only

the oxen and the ancient farm equipment. Grandmother anxiously fingered her rosary and murmured her sons' names as she worked. Laughter all but disappeared from the home; grim survival was the name of the game.

Deprivation became a way of life, month after endless month. After three desperately hard years with no communication from Mother, Jack graduated from the eighth grade, harboring an idea. Did he want to continue the harsh farm life or prepare to enter the university? Perhaps with his love of engineering, he could become a pilot! Now *that* would be thrilling!

"I'll not hold you back from your dream," Grandfather said wearily. "School might keep you off the front lines until you graduate."

Trapped in a labor camp

"How do I get to Koenigswusterhausen to the engineering school?" an eager Jack asked the station master. The food basket Grandmother had packed held no interest as the train pulled out, Jack was so excited. *I wonder if someone will meet me at the station?*

Sure enough, a tall young soldier greeted him as he descended the train steps. "Your name?" "Good." "Follow me." The stern-faced Nazi strode slightly ahead for about a half-mile before Jack saw the barbed wire.

He gasped. *This is not a school! This is a Nazi labor camp! And this is a Nazi guard leading me into a labor camp!*

It was true. But there was no time for sympathy—for himself or his pitiful captive companions. While used to the 4:00 a.m. rising time, Jack was not accustomed to working all day on a near-

ly-empty stomach. The bread and water diet contained very little bread. His thin straw sleeping tick was infested with cockroaches, lice, fleas, and other vermin. Even in bitter sub-zero temperatures, inmates had only a lightweight blanket, so they learned to sleep fully clothed, including coat and shoes, just to survive. The acrid odor of unwashed bodies filled the barracks. With the intense cold, brutally hard physical work, and near starvation diet, Jack's once strong body wasted away.

One incredible miracle after another preserved his life over the next two difficult years, which included a couple of escape attempts. But eventually the war ended, and Jack returned to Grandfather's farm. Fritz and Joseph had both been killed in the war, so 16-year-old Jack threw himself vigorously into helping his grandparents all he could. The entire country was in shambles. Even mail could not get through, but Jack began thinking more and more of Mother, Chicago, and home.

Reunion with mother

Amazing events reunited Jack with his mother, her husband Lee, and their four-year-old daughter—Jack's new sister—Marie. Back in Chicago, his stepfather soon recognized that all Jack's new freedom was a bit too heady for him. Lee owned a short-order restaurant, and before long, young Jack worked his way from dishwasher to night cook in the café.

"Son, you really ought to finish high school," his mother chided after Jack began to associate with some questionable friends in a neighborhood gang.

"Yeah, sure," he responded sarcastically, "and still work 10 hours a day?" Actually, his language had become so coarse that Mother cringed when he spoke.

Then Lee heard of a night school at the University of Chicago and Jack enrolled. Eagerly his active mind absorbed the education he had missed for several

years. School also took him away from his rough associates. The foul language, however, clung. Finally, a kind teacher explained why there were so many red marks on his papers. "This is not fit language for polite society," she said, and Jack began a real effort to change.

A tumultuous period in his life erupted, and Jack separated himself from the church of his childhood, sorely grieving his mother. At a drinking party, a very drunk Jack made a veritable fool of himself in front of many people. Soon thereafter, being forced to register for the military draft, Jack dropped out of college and joined the U.S. Air Force, hoping to leave the restaurant business forever.

Finding the true model

The recruiting ads depicted stalwart young heroes, manly and strong, steadfast and true, jaws set, eyes purposeful, manners impeccable. Jack wanted a hero to copy, a model life to emulate. Reality was severely different. He found no heroes. Everyone seemed to cave in at a price. Keenly disappointed, Jack struggled with the realization that he had only ever heard of one person worthy of full respect: Jesus Christ. He made a remarkable determination: *Christ will be my example.*

The Holy Spirit had begun a miraculous work. Bad habits which Jack recognized as wrong or hurtful began to disappear. Smoking, drinking, and profane language vanished almost immediately. Amusements, reading materials, and diet shifted slowly but dramatically. A book at the base library which Jack thought was a Bible became his source of information and inspiration.

One day another young airman said to him, "I understand you're interested in religious things." Carl loaned Jack a book: *The Desire of Ages*. Carl also mentioned some Bible correspondence lessons he was enjoying. One stirring providence led to another until Jack and Carl were baptized together in a

beautiful blue lagoon off the island of Guam.

Thinking his mother would be pleased with the about-face his life had now taken, Jack wrote her a hasty note just prior to his baptism, explaining his awakened love for Christ and his desire to follow wherever Jesus led. A few days later, he excitedly tore open what he sensed was her written response. Stunned, he read, "*If you go through with this wild notion (of being baptized into a Protestant church),...you will not be welcome in our home and should never expect to eat at our table....I am embarrassed.... You are turning against the whole family and against God....*"

The letter was short, abrupt. Its stinging rebuke left Jack hurt and confused. But after much thought and prayer, he determined that God's love would triumph. He decided to write his mother daily, expressing love and gratitude for her.

There was no answer. Days passed. Weeks. Months. Jack continued writing every day. He also became involved at the Seventh-day Adventist island mission, reading avidly from their library and absorbing the Adventist lifestyle. He discovered that life in the military became much more challenging once he determined to keep the Sabbath.

Finally, his mother began to answer his letters, and eventually, it appeared she'd had a slight change of heart and was looking forward to his coming home. Jack thought, *I'll find the address of a Chicago church and ask the pastor to visit her. Maybe then she'll be ready for baptism by the time I get home.* It turned out, in answer to his request, that a Bible instructor did go to visit his mother, but Jack received a disappointing letter from her.

"I'm sorry I was unable to begin giving your mother Bible studies...Perhaps the Holy Spirit has a different timetable." The letter was kind and gracious,

Continued on page 23.

