

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY
DIALOGUE

English • French • Portuguese • Spanish



**Before you plan
your wedding**

**How reliable is
Bible prophecy?**

**Twenty years after
*The Blind Watchmaker***

**Christians and the
environment**

I believe in a Creator God



Volume 19

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

EAST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION

P.O. Box 14756, 00800-Westlands, Nairobi,
KENYA
Hudson E. Kibuuka kibuukah@ecd.adventist.org
Mulumba Tschimanga bresilien54@yahoo.com

EURO-AFRICA DIVISION

Schoshaldenstrasse 17, 3006 Bern,
SWITZERLAND
Roberto Badenas
roberto.badenas@euroafrica.org
Corrado Cozzi corrado.cozzi@euroafrica.org

EURO-ASIA DIVISION

Krasnoyarskaya Street 3, 107589 Moscow,
RUSSIAN FEDERATION
Guillermo Biaggi gebiaggi@esd-sda.ru
Peter Sirotkin psirotkin@ead-sad.ru

INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION

P.O. Box 830518, Miami, FL 33283-0518, U.S.A.
Moisés Velázquez
Velazquezmo@interamerica.org
Bernardo Rodríguez
bernardo@interamerica.org

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD
20904-6600, U.S.A.
Gerald Kovalski
Gerald.Kovalski@nad.adventist.org
James Black james.black@nad.adventist.org
Martin Feldbush
martin.feldbush@nad.adventist.org

NORTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION

P.O. Box 43, Koyang Ilsan 411-600, KOREA
Chek Yat Phoon cyphoon@nsdadventist.org
Joshua Shin joshuashin@nsdadventist.org

SOUTH AMERICAN DIVISION

Caixa Postal 02600, Brasilia, 70279-970 DF,
BRAZIL
Carlos Mesa carlos.mesa@dsa.org.br
Otimar Gonçalves otimargoncalves@dsa.org.br

SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION

Locked Bag 2014, Wahroonga, N.S.W. 2076,
AUSTRALIA
Barry Hill bhill@adventist.org.au
Gilbert Cangy grcangy@adventist.org.au

SOUTHERN AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION

P.O. Box H.G., 100 Highlands, Harare,
ZIMBABWE
Ellah Kamwendo kamwendoe@sid.adventist.org
Eugene Fransch fransche@sid.adventist.org

SOUTHERN ASIA DIVISION

P.O. Box 2, HCF Hosur, 635 110 Tamil Nadu,
INDIA
Nageshwara Rao
nageshwarrao@sud-adventist.org
Lionel Lyngdoh lyngdoh@sud-adventist.org

SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION

P.O. Box 040, 4118 Silang, Cavite, PHILIPPINES
Stephen Guptill sguptill@ssd.org
Jobbie Yabut jyabut@ssd.org

TRANS-EUROPEAN DIVISION

119 St. Peter's St., St. Albans, Herts, AL1 3EY,
ENGLAND
Daniel Duda dduda@ted-adventist.org
Paul Tompkins ptompkins@ted-adventist.org

WESTERN AFRICA DIVISION

22 Boîte Postale 1764, Abidjan 22, COTE
D'IVOIRE
Chiemela Ikonne
110525.1700@compuserve.com
Emmanuel Nlo Nlo
104474.235@compuserve.com

CONTENTS

ESSAYS

5 Before you plan your wedding

Seek and use all the resources available to prepare adequately for a successful and lasting marriage. Otherwise the risks are too high.
by Willie and Anita Oliver

8 How reliable is Bible prophecy? The case of Daniel

A brief review of Daniel shows that biblical prophecy is historically reliable and theologically meaningful.
by William H. Shea

11 Twenty years after *The Blind Watchmaker*

Beyond Dawkins' questionable arguments, evidence continues to increase in support of the idea that all living organisms require an intelligent cause.
by Timothy G. Standish

14 The environment: Should Christians care?

The biblical concept of creation and restoration requires that Christians adopt a responsible attitude toward our earthly home and its care.
by Henry Zuill

DEPARTMENTS

EDITORIAL

3 Priorities for the new year
by Hiskia Missah

4 LETTERS

PROFILES

16 Dulce Neto
by Miguel Nunes

18 Benjamin Gunawan Yonas
by Jonathan Kuntaraf

LOGOS

20 The ultimate homecoming
by Greg A. King

VIEWPOINT

22 I believe in a Creator God
by Danilo Boskovic

ACTION REPORT

26 General Youth Conference
motivates young people to
spread the Gospel
by Joelle Damsteegt

27 Adventist students active in
Burkina Faso
by Magloire Yé

FIRST PERSON

28 From Hollywood to heaven
by Steve Wohlberg

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

30 Adventist statements on homo-
sexuality and same-sex unions

BOOKS

32 *Understanding Scripture:
An Adventist Approach*
(George W. Reid)
by Atilio René Dupertuis

32 *The Big Argument: Does God
Exist?* (John Ashton and Michael
Westacott)
Reviewed by John T. Baldwin

OPEN FORUM

34 Getting married or living
together?
by Julian and Annette Melgosa

ET CETERA

God always answers prayer

INSERT

Interchange

EDITORIAL

Priorities for the new year

The beginning of a new year is an ideal time for looking back to the past and, more importantly, looking forward to the future. When the singing, fireworks, and eating delicious foods are over, most of us become more serious because it is the time to evaluate our lives and reflect on the changes we want to make—a time to make personal resolutions.

As Christian young people who have high goals and ambitions in life, have you made your new-year resolutions? If you haven't, you still have time to do it today. Visualize what you wish to become by the end of 2007. This will help you grow toward a more balanced and successful person.

Every resolution you make implies that you are in control of yourself and you are not a victim of your circumstances. You are an individual who can make choices to change your life for the better. And God will be at your side, strengthening and encouraging you. Ellen White wrote in *Christ's Object Lessons*: "True, we cannot change ourselves; but the power of choice is ours, and it rests with us to determine what we will become" (p. 56).

Making thoughtful resolutions will also help you to establish priorities for action in your spiritual life, in your studies, in your healthful living, and in your relationships. Avoid by all means the easy thought, "If there is time": If there is time, I will read my Bible; if there is time, I will pray; if there is time, I will share my faith. Instead, promise to yourself, "No matter what!": No matter what, I will grow in my friendship with Jesus. No matter what, I will be faithful in my choices. No matter what, I will be an ambassador of God wherever I go.

I quote for your reflection the "Best Gifts to Give on New Year," by an unknown writer:

- To your friend—loyalty
- To your enemy—forgiveness
- To your employer—service
- To your child—a good example
- To your parents—gratitude and devotion
- To your mate—love and faithfulness
- To everybody—kindness and care
- To God—your life, your all!

The best resolution you can make is similar to the one Joshua made when he promised, "as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15, NIV).

Every day, fill your glass of life to the brim with positive resolutions and drink deep to your life as God works in you and through you to bless others.

To each one of you, happy new year and happy life!



Hiskia Missah
Associate Director, General Conference Youth Ministries

This 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.

Volume 19, Number 1

Copyright © 2007 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.

Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief Humberto M. Rasi
 Editor John M. Fowler
 Associate Editor Martin Feldbush
 Managing Editor Susana Schulz
 Copy Editor Beverly Rumble
 International Editions Susana Schulz
 International Copy Editors
 Corinne Egasse (French)
 Cesar Luis Pagani (Portuguese)
 Susana Schulz (Spanish)

Editorial Correspondence

Dialogue
 12501 Old Columbia Pike
 Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.
 Telephone 301 680 5073
 Fax 301 622 9627
 Email schulzs@gc.adventist.org

AMiCUS Committee

Chairman Ella S. Simmons
 Vice Chairmen C. Garland Dulan, Martin W. Feldbush, Baraka G. Muganda
 Secretary Humberto M. Rasi
 Members Lyndelle Chiomenti, Rex Edwards, John M. Fowler, Jonathan Gallagher, Clifford Goldstein, Linda Koh, Bettina Krause, Kathleen Kuntaraf, Kermit Netteburg, Dionne Parker, Vernon B. Parmenter, Gerhard Pfandl, Roy Ryan, Gary B. Swanson

Circulation Inquires should be addressed to the Regional Representative located in the area where the reader resides. See names and addresses on page 2.

Subscriptions US \$13 per year (three issues, airmail). See coupon on page 6 for details.

Website <http://dialogue.adventist.org>

DIALOGUE has received correspondence from readers in 118 countries around the world.

LETTERS

More articles on faith and science

I am pursuing a degree in nursing at Adventist University of the Philippines and I wish to encourage you to continue publishing articles on faith and science as well as on bioethics. Since there are very few journals that approach these issues from a biblical perspective, those found in *Dialogue* have given me good ideas for my class assignments.

Danna Joy Asuncion
PHILIPPINES
djea2pt@yahoo.com

Appreciation for the editorial

A classmate gave me a copy of *Dialogue* and I read it from cover to cover. Thank you for publishing a journal that strengthens the faith of students and motivates us to live as true Christians. I especially appreciated the editorial by Baraka Muganda, "Where is your passion?" (*Dialogue* 18:1). It hit me like a thunderbolt and led me to reflect on my priorities. Jesus Christ is now at the top of my list!

Peter Lawal
Dygbé, Ibadan, Oyo State
NIGERIA

Write to us!

We welcome your comments, reactions and questions, but limit your letters to 200 words, please. Write to

DIALOGUE Letters
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904
U.S.A.

FAX 301 622 9627
EMAIL schulzs@gc.adventist.org
Letters selected for publication may be edited for clarity and/or space.



JORDAN MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS Jerusalem

To: Jesus, Son of Joseph
Woodcrafters Carpenter Shop
Nazareth

From: Assessment Division

Dear Sir,

Thank you for submitting the résumés for the 12 men you have picked for leadership positions in your new organization. All of them have now taken our battery of tests, and we have not only run the tests through our computer, but also arranged personal interviews for each of them with our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultants. The profiles of all tests are included, and you'll want to study each of them carefully.

It is the staff's professional opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background, education, and vocational aptitudes for the type of global enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the team concept. We would recommend that you continue your search for persons of experience in leadership and proven capabilities.

Specifically:

- Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper.
- Andrew has absolutely not managerial abilities.
- The two brothers—James and John, sons of Zebedee—place personal interests above company loyalty.
- Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine group morale.
- Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau.
- James and Thaddaeus have definite radical leanings, and both registered a high score on the manic-depressive scale.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He's a man of initiative and resourcefulness, meets people well, possesses a keen business mind, and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated and ambitious. We recommend Judas Iscariot as your comptroller and right-hand man.

All the other profiles are self-explanatory.

**God does not always call the qualified,
but is faithful to qualify the called.**

Before you plan your wedding

by Willie and Anita Oliver

Seek and use all the resources available to prepare adequately for a successful and lasting marriage. Otherwise the risks are too high.

A few years ago, millions of Americans tuned in the prime-time TV show, “Who Wants to Marry a Millionaire?” The reactions of most people to the program ranged from amusement to shock, disbelief, and indignation. The television show allowed a mystery millionaire to pick a bride—with the help of friends and family—from 50 women. Before the groom could choose, each semi-finalist was interviewed. Physical attributes were also displayed as each woman modeled beach wear for the bachelor and viewing audience. The soon-to-be-husband selected his bride and the couple wed a few moments later, without having met before and, obviously, without any type of premarital education. This couple tied the knot before learning the ropes and after a few days, had their marriage annulled.

One quickly recognizes that this high-viewer-rated show closely reflects the prevailing view of marriage in many modern societies today. The parallel is almost too close for comfort—have beautiful wedding pageantry and then dissolve the relationship due to irreconcilable differences.

Beyond the obvious glamour of marrying a wealthy groom, the show’s success was due to its appeal to wish fulfillment—most people wish for a satisfying relationship. Isn’t it interesting that no matter how much our world tries to deny God, we always have to go back to the Creator? God created us to be in relationship—first with Him and then with one another. And the need to belong and be a part of some-

one else’s life is still one of our primary basic needs.

Furthermore, most people want a satisfying marriage relationship that lasts a lifetime. The fact that a high number of first-time marriages end in divorce in several countries has not deterred many from matrimony. Recent survey results tell us that teenagers still put having a happy marriage and family as their number one goal. Sadly, far too many couples enter marriage with as little preparation as did the two people who became husband and wife on the television show. Most couples spend an enormous amount of time, energy, and resources preparing for a wedding day that lasts a few hours. Not as much time is spent getting the necessary relationship skills needed to build a marriage for a lifetime.

To be sure, it’s far simpler to prepare for a one-day wedding event than it is to prepare for a marriage that lasts a lifetime. Nevertheless, the most romantic and elegant wedding in the world doesn’t prepare a couple for having a satisfying and happy marriage. After the beautiful wedding and exotic honeymoon, couples are faced with the mundane matters of life. Such issues as remembering to balance the checkbook, or what brand of toothpaste to use and how to squeeze the tube are but a few. Then there are more serious issues like which spouse’s family to spend holidays with, how to balance work and marriage, and handling previous friendships. Many couples panic at the first signs of conflict or disagreement, thinking perhaps they weren’t meant for each other. They aren’t prepared to handle the serious realities of everyday life.

Dr. John Gottman, a professor of psychology at the University of Washington in Seattle, says that it’s the ordinary events of everyday life that build love in marriage.¹ When couples can resolve conflict in a constructive and positive way, the marriage is strengthened and intimacy is

deepened. However, if these seemingly insignificant issues go unresolved or are resolved in a destructive manner, they cause marital distress, which leads to divorce or remaining in an unhappy marriage.

Premarital education as prevention

Current research suggests the possibility of preventing marital distress through teaching couples skill-building in areas of communication and conflict management prior to problems developing.² For those who want a lasting and happy marriage, premarital education is an absolute must.

Premarital education isn’t just to help a couple know where to stand and when to say “I do” on the wedding day. An effective premarital education program teaches couples specific skills, techniques, and ideas for maintaining and building a strong Christian marriage. It’s an attempt to help a couple prepare for a satisfying lifetime marriage and, hopefully, prevent future distress and divorce. Couples who have had a positive premarital education experience are also more willing to participate in future marriage enrichment opportunities or counseling if necessary.

If done effectively, premarital education prepares couples for inevitable disappointments and conflict in marriage. It teaches the skills needed to manage conflict and miscommunication and to prevent distress before it starts. Having a good relationship is a skill, and at the heart of this skill is speaking and listening to one another in ways that will build up rather than tear down. For those of us who are Christians, none of this is news, as we have been told, “My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry” (James 1:19, NIV).

Of course, teaching anything to a couple who is deeply in love is very hard. However, this is when most couples usually ask for premarital guid-

ance, after they are well into the wedding and honeymoon plans. Usually the pastor is consulted more as a courtesy, and pastors traditionally have just given a few courtesy premarital sessions and a blessing on the wedding day.

Ideally, a couple should seek the guidance of the pastor or Christian counselor while deciding about marriage and before setting the wedding date. Many couples are so determined to be together that they are afraid to get counseling for fear they will be told that they aren't meant to be together. It's true that a couple may dissolve a relationship because of issues that surfaced during premarital guidance, but such an experience is much less traumatic than going through a divorce.

Consider Joe, 30, and Susan, 29, who have been dating for more than a year. This couple had already set their date and paid a deposit to reserve the reception hall. After taking a premarital preparation program at their church, they discovered that they

had many issues that they needed to resolve prior to marriage. They decided to postpone their wedding for six months. At first Susan was unhappy about postponing the wedding, but she knew that it was the right thing to do.

The most effective premarital programs focus on teaching couples how to make the transition from single to married life. These programs make couples aware of the risk factors that will either lead to divorce or marital distress. Communication, conflict resolution, and consensus building are the factors that are most predictive of future distress. What divorcing couples call "irreconcilable differences" often occur in areas in which a couple can make changes and be taught skills for handling their differences.

Marital researchers estimate that only 40 percent of the time do couples in the United States divorce because they are having frequent devastating fights. More often than not, husbands and wives distance themselves to

avoid hostile fighting, until there is no closeness, friendship, or sense of connection, thus ending their marriages under the guise of "we just grew apart."

Couples must also discuss and assess other factors that are less amenable to change or not changeable at all, but may have potential influence on the success of the relationship. These factors include each partner's individual traits and behaviors, such as emotional health, self-esteem, neurotic behaviors, and dysfunctional attitudes. Other areas for assessment are similarity of race, religion, values, age, and gender role expectations. Couples will also want to assess how background factors, including family origin, socioeconomic status, and previous divorce history might impact their relationship. If couples are aware of these factors prior to marriage and preferably before engagement, then they can make more informed choices, anticipate future problems, and sometimes, for their benefit, decide to dissolve a relationship.

SUBSCRIBE TO DIALOGUE

So you want to be a thinker, not merely a reflector of other people's thought? *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, air mail): US \$13.00 **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

Email torskel@gc.adventist.org

Helping young couples to prepare

Historically, the church has been the primary provider of premarital education. To be sure, religious organizations still have the most access to engaged couples, since most first-time marriages still take place in a church, synagogue, or temple. Consequently, even the secular marital researchers are looking to religious institutions to deliver effective premarital programs in the hopes of preserving and protecting marriages. The church can naturally play a pivotal role in the work of preparing couples for successful marriages and preventing divorce.

Given this information, the church can no longer afford to function primarily as a blessing machine when it comes to marriage.³ Despite the energy that most churches put into premarital training, the divorce rate for Christians, including Seventh-day

Adventists, is approaching divorce and separation rates among the rest of society. It may be safe to assume that much of this energy hasn't always been spent in the most effective manner.

Adventist church leaders must be more intentional about preparing persons for marriage. First, we have to begin looking at premarital education as prevention, thus taking a long term approach to the process. Each local church must be prepared to establish specific guidelines for engaged couples. In the past the pastor has been solely responsible for premarital preparation of couples. Perhaps the time has come for us to take a community-oriented approach to the premarital effort. The church family must be willing to make a bigger investment of time, energy, thought, and prayer in preparing a premarital education program that supports and prepares couples and individuals in the church for marriage.

The family ministries committee of

the local church can serve as a wonderful resource. Churches can use the many tested instruments based on solid research, which help to assess the strengths and weaknesses of couples. There are also many intervention programs which are ideal for use with premarital couples.⁴

The pastor can then meet with couples privately to discuss deeper issues, and, when ready, make plans for the wedding. Christian counselors, therapists, and certified family life educators may also serve as an excellent resource in providing premarital education for couples. Some churches use trained mentor couples. These are couples who are committed to their own relationship and are interested in helping new couples have Christ-centered marriages.

Take the initiative

The best premarital education available will be of no value unless couples who have a steady relationship take advantage of this valuable resource. If you are already beginning to think of marriage, take time to seek counsel from mature Christians who know you. Better yet, make an appointment with an Adventist minister or professional who has training and experience in premarital counseling. This may require that you travel to a nearby city. In preparation for such meeting, purchase one of the many books written by Christian specialists for couples considering marriage.

There is no question that couples who participate in effective premarital preparation programs are reducing their risks of future marital distress and divorce, and enhancing their capacity for a healthy, satisfying, and Christ-centered marriage.

While we believe that premarital education is an opportunity for prevention, we must also say that its effects won't last for a lifetime. Couples will need ongoing support to maintain the preventive effectiveness. Couples must take advantage of enrichment

seminars and retreats as often as possible, and churches must provide these opportunities for couples. Marriage isn't an individual sport. It truly is a team effort.

Ellen White says it well: "One well-ordered, well-disciplined family tells more in behalf of Christianity than all the sermons that can be preached."⁵

While Adventist church leaders must assume greater responsibility in this important area, Adventist young adults should also use all the resources available to them to prepare adequately for a successful and lasting marriage. Unless they take the initiative, the risks they will run are too high.

Willie Oliver is the director of Family Ministries for the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Elaine Oliver is a marriage and family consultant. Pastor Oliver has edited a book, *Family Ministries: Curriculum for the Local Church*, which is available in English and Spanish and can be purchased through Advent Source (<http://www.adventsource.org>). The Olivers' mailing address: 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, Maryland 20904; U.S.A.

Dialogue for you, free!

If you are a Seventh-day Adventist student attending a non-Adventist college or university, the Church has a plan that will allow you to receive *Dialogue* free while you remain a student. (Those who are no longer students can subscribe to *Dialogue*, using the coupon on page 6.) 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. If these communications fail to produce results, contact us via email: schulzs@gc.adventist.org.

REFERENCES

1. John M. Gottman and N. Silver, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1999).
2. Scott Stanley, D. Trathen, S. McCain, and M. Bryan, *A Lasting Promise* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998).
3. Michael J. McManus, *Marriage Savers: Helping Your Friends and Family Avoid Divorce* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishers, 1995).
4. For additional information on premarital resources, check the North American Division Family Ministries website: www.adventistfamilyministries.com.
5. Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publ. Assn., 1952), p. 32.

How reliable is Bible prophecy?

The case of Daniel

by William H. Shea

A brief review of Daniel shows that biblical prophecy is historically reliable and theologically meaningful.

Prophecy is critical to Adventist faith and belief. It is on the basis of biblical prophecy that the Adventist movement was founded, with the conviction that history will come to its climax in the second coming of Christ. Leading to that glorious culmination is the march of history which itself will wind up as God destroys sin and Satan forever and opens up the doors of eternity for the redeemed of all ages. Adventist interpretation of last-day events is largely based on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, in addition to other prophetic declarations in the Bible. However, non-Christians and many Christians have questioned the authenticity of biblical prophecy and tend to reject the Adventist interpretation as so much speculation.

Such a charge cannot be allowed to stand without a serious theological and historical look at biblical prophecy. Either biblical prophecy is reliable or it is not. A brief look at Daniel shows that its content as divine prophecy is historically reliable and theologically meaningful. This article will show how.

The Book of Daniel neatly divides in half. The first half treats some portions of Neo-Babylonian history, especially as they involve Daniel and his three friends (chaps. 1-6). The second half of the book presents some intensely symbolic and long-range prophecies that are called apocalyptic (chaps. 7-12). The first half of the book also has prophecies but, aside from Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2,

they involve mostly local persons, places, and events. The prophecies relating to Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 4 and to Belshazzar in chapter 5 are more like "classical" prophecy that is found, for example, in Isaiah and Jeremiah.

This chronological range of prophecy in the book we are considering provides an opportunity to relate these predictions to historical fulfillment on the scale from a near point in Daniel's own time to an intermediate period after his lifetime to a long-range prophecy centuries after his time.

Prophecy in the near view: The fall of Belshazzar

Chapter 5 of Daniel narrates what happened in the palace of Babylon on the night the city fell to the Medes and Persians. The king, who is identified as Belshazzar, summoned his nobles and officials to a great banquet. He undoubtedly felt that the Persians besieging Babylon from the outside had no chance of conquering the city in view of its extraordinarily strong fortifications.

In the course of the feast, some writing supernaturally appeared on the wall of the palace chamber where the banquet was held. The four words written there were sufficiently mysterious that none of the wise men of Babylon could interpret them. Daniel, who was remembered from a previous episode of interpretation, was summoned. He was able to read the writing and tell the king that it meant that he had been weighed in the balances of divine judgment and had been found wanting. His kingdom was to be taken from him and given to the Medes and Persians.

This prophecy was fulfilled when invading forces entered the city that very night by the strategy of diverting the Euphrates River. Babylon was conquered without a battle. Belshazzar was slain, and his kingdom passed into the hands of the Medes and Persians.

At first, one might think that there is no way, through historical sources, to check on the fulfillment of this prophecy. While it is true that it would be very difficult to demonstrate it was given the very night it was fulfilled, there are indirect methods through which we can value the setting.

At one time, the existence of Belshazzar was unknown. His father Nabonidus was listed as the last king of the Neo-Babylonian period. Beginning in 1861, the name of Belshazzar as crown prince began to appear in cuneiform tablets that were then being translated. These references continued to accumulate until a tablet known as "The Verse Account of Nabonidus" was published in 1929. This important tablet indicated that Nabonidus "entrusted the kingship" to Belshazzar when he went off to Tema in Arabia for a prolonged period. So, evidence for Belshazzar as a kind of co-king, known as a co-regent, became available.

The episode described in Daniel 5 is specific. It indicates that when Daniel came into the throne room to read the writing on the wall, the king who was there was Belshazzar, not Nabonidus. It would have been more likely for Nabonidus to have been conducting this banquet, but he is not even mentioned in the narrative. The direct implication is that Nabonidus was not in the palace that night. If he was not in the palace, where was he?

A Babylonian text known as "The Nabonidus Chronicle" tells us that Babylon was taken without a battle on 16 Tishri of Nabonidus' 17th and last year of reign. This can be equated to October 12, 539 B.C. At this time, the text says, Nabonidus was out in the field with a division of the Babylonian army, fighting Cyrus and the Persians at the site of a city named Opis on the Tigris River. Thus, there was no possible way he could have been in Babylon the night it fell.

This would have been an easy place to catch the writer of Daniel in a mistake, if he had put Nabonidus in the banquet hall on that night, but the writer knew which king was there—Belshazzar, the junior co-regent—and he knew which king was not—Nabonidus, the senior co-regent, who was out in the field with the Babylonian army.

How could the writer of this chapter have had such accurate knowledge about who was in the city and who was not on that very night? The answer is, Because he was an eyewitness in the palace that night. If his knowledge about this central fact was so accurate, then I believe we can trust his record as to the prophecy of what was to happen on that very night.

An intermediate length prophecy: The rise of Alexander

The prophecy in Daniel chapter 8 begins with a depiction of what the Medo-Persian kingdom would accomplish, using the symbol of a rampaging ram. This ram is identified as Medo-Persia (Daniel 8:20). It is followed symbolically by a goat, representing Greece (Daniel 8:2-8, 21). This goat starts out with one prominent horn, like a unicorn. That great horn represents its first king as it started out on its war with the Persian ram.

Historically, we know this “horn” to be Alexander the Great, who mustered his army and invaded the Near East, defeating the Persians and conquering all the territory in a lightning-like campaign that lasted only three years.

Critics of the book have argued that this was not prophecy, but history later written as if it were prophecy. However, there is an interesting story in the writings of Josephus that indicates this prophecy was already known by the fourth century B.C.—well before the time when critics claim it was written (second century B.C.).

The story is about Alexander as he campaigned down the coast of Syria and Palestine. On his way to Egypt,

he decided to turn off the main road south and go up to Jerusalem. When he came to the city, one of the priests took the scroll of Daniel to him and showed him where he was located in this prophecy, as the Greek who would overthrow the empire of the Persians. Impressed by this prophetic reference to himself, Alexander asked the Jewish leaders what he could do for them. They asked him for relief from taxes during their sabbatical years when they let their fields lie fallow and did not harvest their crops. Alexander is said to have granted their request. The passage in Josephus runs as follows:

“And when the book of Daniel was showed him, wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended; and as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present, but the next day he called them to him, and bade them ask what favors they pleased of him: whereupon the high priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year. He granted all they desired: and when they entreated him that he would permit the Jews in Babylon and Media to enjoy their own laws also, he willingly promised to do hereafter what they desired.”¹

If this story in Josephus is accurate, then the prophecy of Daniel 8, including the element of the great horn of Greece which was Alexander, was already in existence by the fourth century B.C. Not only does this give evidence of the early date for the composition of Daniel, but it also shows how one element of this prophecy met its fulfillment and was recognized at the time when it did so.

Needless to say, once again critics of the predictive nature of Daniel dismiss this story as unhistorical. There is some evidence in the story itself, however, that testifies to the historical nature of the meeting of Alexander and the priests at Jerusalem. That evi-

dence comes from the reference to a sabbatical year in this context.

About a dozen references to sabbatical years have been found in extra-biblical sources. These texts and inscriptions give the equivalents to those sabbatical years in terms of other calendars. Thus, a table of sabbatical years can be filled out. The year in which this interview with Alexander occurred was 331 B.C. According to the table of sabbatical years, 331 was indeed a sabbatical year. Now that Judea had been taken over by the Macedonian king, the Jewish leaders could see the problem that would confront them when they had to pay taxes to him. They would have no harvest with which to pay the tax. Thus, the urgency of their request.

This minor feature, the request based on the sabbatical year, gives evidence that the episode really did happen, and that the historical transition that then took place actually was prophesied by Daniel before it happened.²

A long-range prophecy: The rise and fate of Rome

Daniel chapters 2 and 7 provide parallel prophecies about four Mediterranean and Near Eastern empires. Daniel 2 gives the account of events that occurred around a dream given to King Nebuchadnezzar that the wise men of Babylon could not describe or interpret. However, Daniel was able to successfully describe the dream and interpret it. Using the symbols of four metals that constituted the impressive statue of Daniel 2, Daniel described the succession of these four great empires: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

There are those who do not like this much direct evidence for divine foreknowledge in prophecy, and they have argued against this view. They say that the author of Daniel did not live in the sixth century B.C. when this prophecy was given. In their view, he lived in the second century B.C. and

used the pen name of Daniel to write about events that had already taken place. Thus, these critics claim, Daniel is actually history written as if it were prophecy.

The argument can be evaluated, however, to see how well it fits the data. If the author of Daniel was writing in the second century B.C. and he was only a historian, not a true prophet, what kinds of predictions might he have made? There are two main possibilities. First, he could have said that the fourth kingdom, Rome, which was stronger than all the previous kingdoms, would stand forever. That was probably the most common view of the future in the second century B.C., by which time Rome had come to pre-eminence. (It actually was the view of Flavius Josephus, the first-century Jewish historian, when he treated this portion of the Book of Daniel. He did not mention the divisions or the stone kingdom to follow.) Alternatively, the writer could have reasoned that if there had been four great world kingdoms, there should be a fifth, a sixth, a seventh, and so on. In other words, the sequence should just keep going. After Rome, another great world power should come, and then another, and another.

These then would have been the two main alternatives for a historian

Let's Talk!

Do you want to send a comment or a question to Pastor Jan Paulsen, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church? You can do it through a website:

<http://www.letstalk.adventist.org>

The website's goal is to foster communication between young Adventists around the world and the office of the General Conference President. You'll also find useful links and a searchable database of questions and answers on many topics at the same site. Check it out!

writing in the second century B.C. without information from divine foreknowledge: either that Rome would stand forever or that other great world powers would follow it.

The writer of Daniel did not embrace either of these two logical possibilities. Rejecting the idea that there would be further world powers, he said the fourth power would be broken into pieces and those pieces would continue and contend with one another until God set up His kingdom. He also rejected the idea that Rome would stand forever—this fourth kingdom would be broken up. Indeed, that is just what happened with the barbarian invasions of Rome in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D.

How was it that the author of Daniel knew several centuries in advance that Rome would break up into pieces, that it would not stand forever or be replaced by another great world kingdom? How was it that he chose the least likely possibility for the future from the standpoint of ordinary human logic? The point is that he did not rely on ordinary human logic; he relied on the foreknowledge that God gave to him.

Summary

There are many prophecies in the Bible that its writers say were fulfilled, but the records of these fulfillments are found only in the Bible. In these instances, there is no external evidence confirming the fulfillment. However, for many biblical prophecies, external evidence indicates they were fulfilled. The cases just reviewed demonstrate that point.

Biblical prophecies operate on various levels. Some were addressed to individuals, others to towns or cities, and some to kingdoms or nations. The same is true in terms of time range. Some prophecies concerned immediate circumstances, others dealt with events in the relatively near future, while still others can be classified as long-range predictions that extend over centuries.

The cases described in this article cover this range of possibilities.

The one common factor in all these cases is that there is external evidence to demonstrate the accuracy of the predictions. This provides evidence that the prophecies were written on the basis of more than just educated human guesses. They testify to the God who gave inside information to His servants, the prophets. This is one more good reason to believe that the biblical God exists.³

William H. Shea (M.D., Loma Linda University; Ph.D., University of Michigan) served as medical missionary, seminary professor, and associate director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. This essay is based on a longer study published in *The Big Argument: Does God Exist?* edited by John Ashton and Michael Westacott (Master Books, 2005). His email address: Shea56080@aol.com.

REFERENCES

1. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, book 11, chapter 8, paragraphs 337, 338.
2. Tables for the sabbatical years of the Jews can be found in B. Z. Wacholder, "The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles During the Second Temple and the Early Rabbinic Period," *Hebrew Union College Annual* (1973), pp. 153-196.
3. For further reading refer to the following:
For the texts relating to Belshazzar and a synthesis of them, see R. P. Dougherty, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1929).
For a very useful collection of cuneiform texts in translation, especially Babylon sources related to topics in the article, see J. B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1955).
For a useful review of Babylonian history, see H. W. F. Saggs, *The Greatness That Was Babylon* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1962).
For the history of the interpretation of the four world kingdoms in the prophecies of Daniel through the ages and the presence of Alexander the Great in Daniel 8, see L. E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vols. I-IV (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1950-1954).

Twenty years after *The Blind*

by Timothy G. Standish

Beyond Dawkins' questionable arguments, evidence continues to increase in support of the idea that all living organisms require an

Twenty years ago, *The Blind Watchmaker* burst on the scene and readers were assured that faith in a Creator God had been dealt a death-blow. Richard Dawkins, the author, set out "to persuade the reader, not just that the Darwinian world-view happens to be true, but that it is the only known theory that could, in principle, solve the mystery of our existence."¹ The rise of the Intelligent Design movement over the past 20 years may be seen as a measure of Dawkins' success.

Dawkins' losing strategy

The book's title is a reference to a design argument made in the early 19th century by William Paley, an English clergyman, who noted that the evident purpose in a watch's construction logically means "the watch must have had a maker."² Paley then argued that similar purpose is evident in organisms; thus it is logical to infer a Maker of living things. In countering Paley's reasonable observation, Dawkins adopted a losing strategy from the start. Instead of laying out logically coherent arguments for Darwinism, he instead chose "to become an advocate and use the tricks of the advocate's trade."³ By *advocate* Dawkins is presumably using the term in the English sense, meaning a defense lawyer. His admirable honesty in admitting this in the preface to the book makes it easy to understand why his arguments appear designed more to confuse the reader than actually make a case for Darwinism. In short, Dawkins does write like an advocate,

but one defending a clearly guilty client.

Dawkins' amateur foray into the advocate's art has been fully dispatched with by real lawyers, particularly Phillip Johnson of the University of California, Berkeley. Johnson's *Darwin on Trial*,⁴ published a few years after *The Blind Watchmaker*, shows what a qualified lawyer can do with logically incoherent arguments. But that should not be taken to mean that Dawkins is not a brilliant man or that reading *The Blind Watchmaker* is a dull and droning penance. Quite the opposite is true. Dawkins' prose is stimulating, and his wonder at marvelous natural systems like the sonar used by bats is contagious, even if his mantra that they do not require a designer sounds as if he were trying to convince himself in the face of overwhelming contrary evidence. Dawkins provides a perfect example of why breathing life into an argument that is already a corpse takes true brilliance.

Misrepresenting Darwinism to save it

In his enthusiasm to convince the reader, Dawkins commits any number of sins. Probably the most serious and ironic of these is the violence he does to Darwinism itself. While acting as its self-anointed high priest, he uses example after example that is not Darwinian at all. From replicating clay crystals to multiple computer simulations, core Darwinian doctrines are slapped, spanked, and ejected from the ring. My original copy of *The Blind Watchmaker*—the paperback edition published in 1988—came with a floppy disk containing a program designed to convince the reader by simulating evolution. This Apple Macintosh program—imaginatively titled *Blind Watchmaker* like the book—allowed a person to stand in the place of Mother Nature herself, selecting various "mutated" "biomorphs" until a desired outcome was achieved.

The mental image of Darwin roll-

ing in his grave at such an embarrassingly inaccurate representation of his theory is difficult to erase. Natural selection is supposed to lack a goal, a teleology; that is why Dawkins called it the *Blind Watchmaker*. But the process of evolution carried out in the *Blind Watchmaker* program occurs in response to the intelligent guidance of a person with a specific goal in mind. Yes, evolution occurs, but it is hardly Darwinian evolution. In any case, even a simple program like this requires all the work and intelligence that goes into creating an Apple Macintosh computer and writing programs, not to mention a human being to run it. Dawkins is explicit that nature starts with simple things that act according to the laws of physics, not with complex creations like computers, software, and humans.⁵

Possibly Dawkins' most famous illustration of the Darwinian mechanism involves a phrase from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Speculating on the shape of a cloud, Hamlet states: "Methinks it is like a weasel."⁶ Here Dawkins uses yet another computer simulation to show it is possible to evolve the phrase in a relative few generations if correct letters are fixed while incorrect letters continue to change randomly until they, by chance, hit on the correct letter. For example, if the second letter, which should be "e," was actually "p" in a random starting string of letters, it could "mutate" to another letter of the alphabet, but once it became "e" by chance, selection would prevent further change. The sin in this example is twofold. First, it misrepresents Darwinism because it requires a goal, the phrase "Methinks it is like a weasel." Darwinism specifically forbids this kind of teleology because it claims living things resulted from "natural" causes, not from the intelligent plan of a designer who had a goal in mind.

Misrepresenting nature to support Darwinism

The second sin in this example is

a misrepresentation of nature itself. Protein machines, which may be fairly represented as a string of letters like “Methinks it is like a weasel,” operate within tolerances like any other machine or machine part. A random string of amino acids does not have a little bit of this, that or the other function, just as a chunk of metal lacks a little bit of the function of an engine piston or cam shaft. If the parts are not constructed within certain specifications, they do not work at all. While tolerances may vary from one protein to another, they still have limits to how much they can vary; otherwise, every protein would do everything. Proteins must have some minimal function before they can be selected, just as a string of letters must have some minimal order to them before any meaning can be discerned. Dawkins cheats by not requiring that his starting string become in some minimal way like “Methinks it is like a weasel” before he begins selecting for it.

As Dawkins points out, “If evolutionary progress had had to rely on single-step selection, it would never have got [sic] anywhere.”⁷ And yet this is precisely what Darwinian evolution must rely on to get some minimally functional protein before cumulative selection can kick in. In Dawkins’ defense, he realizes the problems with his illustration and honestly, if briefly, points out that while his “model is useful for explaining the distinction between single-step selection and cumulative selection, it is misleading in important ways.” This pattern of spending pages exciting the reader with some “misleading” argument followed by a brief admission immunizes Dawkins from accusations of either ignorance or duplicity, but leaves readers wondering exactly when a real argument is going to be offered in support of Darwinism.

Occasionally Dawkins actually seems to attempt this. For example, he takes on eye evolution, perhaps not so much as evidence of evolution, but as a way

of showing how Darwinism can deal with an organ that has been put forward as evidence of design in nature.⁸ But here again his argument is more of a gloss than logically coherent. His interesting thought experiments seem to hinge on the assumption that “5 percent vision is better than no vision at all.”⁹ But 5 percent vision requires close to 100 percent of the machinery necessary for sight in the first place. There must be some kind of retina, a mechanism for forming an image, or at least allowing light to hit the retina, a way of conducting the signal to the brain, part of the brain capable of recognizing the signal, and so on.

Some members of my family suffer from *retinitis pigmentosa*, a hereditary disease that involves retina degeneration, reducing vision significantly. Even this impaired vision requires 100 percent of an eye, optic nerve, and the part of the brain that deals with sight. Dawkins struggles to explain the gradual evolution of sight while seeming to ignore the biological reality of how sight works. Ultimately his argument telescopes back to something like Darwin’s use of examples of different kinds of eyes, some of which are morphologically simpler than the camera-type eyes of mammals, while ignoring the remarkable biochemical and physiological systems necessary for eyes of any kind to work.¹⁰

Triumphal claims of victory

Ironically, in the same chapter, Dawkins fails to show how eyes could actually evolve via Darwin’s “successive slight modifications.” He then boldly claims: “One hundred and twenty five years on, we know a lot more about animals and plants than Darwin did, and still not a single case is known to me of a complex organ that could not have formed by numerous successive slight modifications.”¹¹ In one sense, this is a claim with which anyone could concur. I don’t know of a single aircraft that could not, in principle, form by numerous successive slight

modifications, but I don’t know of any that could do this via the Darwinian mechanism while maintaining the ability to fly, let alone making it a better flyer at each step. It is not that one can’t make up imaginary scenarios for the gradual creation of anything, but the task becomes much more challenging when every modification must be both small and cause the organism to produce more offspring.

After *The Blind Watchmaker*

Since the mid 1980s when *The Blind Watchmaker* was first published, much has changed in our understanding of where the true complexity is in living things. In his book *Darwin’s Black Box*,¹² biochemist Michael Behe specifically takes on Darwin’s challenge providing multiple examples of molecular machines that appear to violate Darwinism’s requirement of numerous slight modifications while subject to natural selection.

My own experience upon first reading *The Blind Watchmaker* for a graduate evolutionary biology course was immediate surprise at the weak arguments.¹³ It had the unintended effect of creating doubt about Darwinism and building my interest in design in nature. I have met numerous others who had similar experiences. Reading *The Blind Watchmaker* would probably be a good exercise for anyone with the logical skills and necessary knowledge to see through its vacuous Darwinian apologetic.

Even some of the “facts” Dawkins appealed to have changed over the past 20 years. For example, Dawkins’ trumpeting of “junk” DNA as leftover evolutionary baggage has fallen flat with the discovery of functions for many classes of non-coding DNA, and promise of further discoveries.¹⁴ In addition, it seems that every newly discovered molecular machine makes living things look that much more designed.

Ultimately, Dawkins fails to deliver on his extravagant promise in the first

chapter to show that while “biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose,”¹⁵ “natural selection, the blind, unconscious, automatic process which Darwin discovered, and which we now know is the explanation for the existence and apparently purposeful form of all life, has no purpose in mind.”¹⁶ In the end, he resorts to attacking other people’s ideas, from the punctuated equilibrium of Stephen J. Gould and Niles Eldridge to the theology of believers—anyone who questions Dawkins’ view of Darwinism gets the Dawkins treatment.

Even in doing this, Dawkins provides nothing that has not been dealt with previously, particularly arguments from imperfection as when he states in reference to the location of eyes on flatfish, “No sensible designer would have conceived such a monstrosity if given a clean hand to create a flatfish on a clean drawing board.” This argument may work against a specific theological view of God, but not against design. In essence it is a straw-man argument, as bad design is hardly evidence of no design; and Dawkins’ view of what constitutes bad design may or may not actually be bad design. In essence, just because a person doesn’t think God would do something a certain way is not an argument that He didn’t or couldn’t.

Recycling old arguments

Another mantra against design that is repeated in *The Blind Watchmaker* is the infinite regress or, the “Who designed the designer?” argument.¹⁷ “If we want to postulate a deity capable of engineering all the organized complexity in the world, either instantaneously or by guiding evolution, that deity must already have been vastly complex in the first place.” This off-the-shelf atheist argument has been around for a very long time. The internal incoherence of such an argument is remarkable; if the assumption is true that

greater complexity is necessary to create lesser complexity—and it probably is—why is it logical to claim that simple laws like random mutations and natural selection must have created complexity? Darwinism claims this is the case and denies that complexity must arise from some greater complexity, so this argument is not based on assumptions assumed to be universally true by Darwinists, but is an attempt to use a design assumption against design.

Logically, it should be possible to detect design even if one has no answer for who designed it.¹⁸ For example, when the Nazca lines in Peru were first discovered by Westerners, they were immediately recognized as designed, even though the designers were a mystery. In the case of design in living things, the need for an ultimate uncaused cause, Aristotle’s unmoved mover, is well recognized in Christian theology. This is why the Christian view of God, consistent with Scripture, is that God is eternal. As the Apostle Paul put it: “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen” (1 Timothy 1:17, NIV). Ultimately, belief in an uncaused designer is at minimum as logical as Darwinists’ belief in an uncaused universe.

From scientist to devil’s chaplain

Since *The Blind Watchmaker* was published, Dawkins’ contributions as an actual scientific researcher publishing in the peer-reviewed literature have been thin at best.¹⁹ Instead he has declared himself “A Devil’s Chaplain”²⁰ and from his position as Charles Simonyi Professor of the Public Understanding of Science, University of Oxford, and Professorial Fellow of New College, he seems to concentrate his talents on destroying religious faith rather than genuinely helping the public to understand science. In his latest book, *The God Delusion*,²¹ Dawkins continues his attack on religion at the expense of doing any real science.

His efforts may be cheered on by an enthusiastic choir, but more thoughtful readers continue to wonder when he will make an actual logical argument based in empirical data for the truth of Darwinism. In the meantime, evidence accrues on a daily basis supporting the inference from living things to an intelligent cause and the Intelligent Design movement continues to gain momentum.

Timothy G. Standish (Ph.D., George Mason University) is a scientist at the Geoscience Research Institute. His mailing address: 11060 Campus Street; Loma Linda, California 92350; U.S.A.

REFERENCES

1. Page x, emphasis in original. Note that there is an almost identical statement in the second paragraph (p. 287) of the final chapter, Chapter 11, “Doomed Rivals.”
2. W. Paley, *Natural Theology: or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity*, 12th Edition (London: J. Faulder, 1802), p. 3. Published electronically by University of Michigan Humanities Text Initiative, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
3. Page x.
4. P. E. Johnson, *Darwin on Trial* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1991).
5. See Chapter 1, “Explaining the Very Improbable.”
6. This is discussed in Chapter 3 “Accumulating Small Change.” Dawkins is quoting Shakespeare, *Hamlet* Act III, Scene II.
7. Page 49.
8. See Chapter 4, “Making Tracks Through Animal Space.”
9. Page 84.
10. For a brief discussion of the problems involved, see: http://www.arn.org/docs/behe/mb_mm92496.htm.
11. Page 91.
12. M. J. Behe, *Darwin’s Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (New York: Free Press, 1998).
13. T. G. Standish, *In Six Days: Why 50 Scientists Choose to Believe in Creation*. John F. Ashton, editor (Sydney: New Holland Publishers, 1999).
14. T. G. Standish, “Rushing to Judgment: Functionality in Non-Coding or Junk DNA,” *Origins* 53 (2002), pp. 7-30.
15. Page 1.
16. Page 5.
17. See Chapter 11, “Doomed Rivals.”

Continued on page 27

The environment: Should Christians care?

by Henry Zuill

The biblical concept of creation and restoration requires that Christians adopt a responsible attitude toward our earthly home and its care.

When Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring* in 1962, she could not have known she was unleashing a force that has endured to our day. The environmental movement has evoked enthusiasm as well as calumny, and generated much controversy. Human greed opposes environmentalism and many conservative Christians remain indifferent.

Fortunately, a positive Christian response to environmental needs is slowly emerging,¹ but it still appears to be a minority position. How did it happen that the church withdrew from so seemingly positive an endeavor? Do Christians have a legitimate interest in environmentalism, or might it be a distraction from the real work of the gospel?

A brief history

Before *Silent Spring*, Christian writers had relatively little to say about our responsibility toward nature. Immediately after *Silent Spring*, there was a slight bump, but output still remained low. Then, in 1967, science historian Lynn White published a paper that largely blamed the West's Judeo-Christian roots for the ecological crisis.² He saw as the root cause of the problem the doctrines of the creation of humankind in God's image and His granting to them dominion over nature. White's article caught the attention of Christian writers in a big way.³ Responses varied, with some writers being incensed, while others were contrite. But White's allegations seemed to bypass a bloc of believ-

ers who continued to affirm what he accused them of saying that creation was "explicitly for man's benefit and rule... [and] that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends."⁴

At about the same time, atmospheric scientist James Lovelock, while studying Mars' atmosphere, concluded that it could not support life. But he also noted Earth's life-supporting atmosphere and deduced that it was maintained by the very life it supports. The concept of a global feedback system eventually led some to propose the controversial "Gaia Hypothesis," which was embraced by followers of the neo-pagan New Age movement. They, in turn, embraced environmentalism to protect "Mother Earth." In response, conservative Christians in particular turned away from creation care, fearing it would constitute Earth-worship. This is where we are today.

This history and several theological interpretations (misinterpretations?) underlie numerous impediments to Christian creation care. We will examine and briefly analyze them.

Impediments to creation-care

1. Subduing and having dominion along with tending and keeping creation. Many Christian believers insist that God mandated environmental exploitation. An example of this came to my attention several years ago when I received an account of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). The article contrasted ANWR lands with adjacent oil fields. After I shared the account, a Christian pastor surprised me. Skipping over the drama of ANWR, he insisted that oil companies would never despoil land. Moreover, unconsciously echoing White's critique, he dismissively declared: "Didn't God give us dominion over creatures?"

I believe this pastor and others like him misunderstand and misapply the biblical concept of "dominion." Thus, it may be helpful to examine this issue more closely. What we think of God

and creation greatly influences how we live. Consider Genesis 1:27, 28 and 2:15 together: "So God created man in His own image... Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth'.... Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend it and keep it" (NKJV).

How should we understand "subdue" and "have dominion" in context with "tend and keep"? Some commentators suggest that "subdue" and "have dominion" could have referred to the future, after the disobedience of Adam and Eve. In fact, some speak of the "dominion mandate." But since God called creation good, celebrated creation, instructed humans to tend and keep creation, and repeatedly defines Himself as the one and only Creator, reckless exploitation appears out of character, unsatisfactory, and out of context.

As presented, "subdue" and "have dominion" appear to qualify the "image of God." Moreover, filling the Earth qualifies "subdue." Genesis 2 suggests that the Earth was not full when God created Eden. Eden in the east implies an exact location. And after sinning, Eve and Adam were ousted from Eden, additionally suggesting a real but restricted place.

What was outside? We know little, but evidently the Earth was unfilled. This makes me wonder if Eden had not only been created as home for our first parents, but also as a model and resource for expansion to other parts of the planet. In order to enlarge Eden, humans were given authority (dominion).

In *My Life Today* Ellen White described renewed earth, "that garden of delight [Eden]... untouched by the curse of sin—a sample of what *the whole earth would have become* had man but fulfilled the Creator's glorious plan."⁵ She also wrote elsewhere: "The home

of our first parents was to be a pattern for other homes as their children should go forth to occupy the earth.”⁶

What was the dominion relationship? Isaiah describes human association with animals in the future restored earth: “The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11:6, RSV). If the future reflects the past, then dominion appears to have been more a willing rather than a coerced response to human interaction.

We conclude, then, that “subdue” and “have dominion” are not the same as “tend and keep;” but neither are they in opposition. They are in harmony when correctly understood and followed. Dominion is not a license to destroy.

2. *New Age and neo-pagan environmentalism.* Novelist William Golding suggested that James Lovelock name his global feedback hypothesis for maintaining Earth’s atmosphere, “Gaia” after the Greek earth goddess. When the Gaia hypothesis caught the attention of New Agers, they adopted Gaia wholeheartedly. Thus, the New Age movement became associated with environmentalism. Christians, seemingly unable to distinguish between the two, rejected both.

The church was alerted to “New Age environmentalism” in 1983⁷ through the writings of Cumbeys⁸ and Hunt, which opened a wide gap between conservative Christianity and environmentalism. While the background to the New Age movement is doubtless satanic, condemning Christian environmentalists as heretics is quite another thing. Sheldon wrote: “The New Age movement is a real threat to the church ... But Cumbeys is incorrect to suggest that the Lord is not interested in His Creation and has not placed us in a position of authority for its care.”⁹

3. *Misunderstanding the nature*

of life, death, and future existence.

In his critique, Lynn White suggested that the environmental crisis was largely a religious problem, so it would take religion to solve it. Francis Schaeffer added that for Christianity to do the job, it would have to be the right kind. He cautioned: “Any Christianity that rests upon a dichotomy—some sort of platonic concept—simply does not have an answer.”

To understand how the platonic concept affected Christian environmental perspective, we need to go back to the early church. As the church developed after the second century, opposing Greek philosophies influenced Christian doctrine and beliefs. Christian theology, for example, assimilated Greek dualism along with Gnostic ideas. Gnostics believed a lesser God created Earth, which, in turn, was correspondingly devalued. Nevertheless, a divine spirit that could be reintegrated with divinity endowed the human.

Greek philosophies permeated popular Christianity, demeaning both the process and the product of creation, and even the Creator Himself. This led to theological aberrations, such as the concept of an immortal soul, the ascent of a conscious spirit at death, an eternally burning hell, the inherent evil nature of human flesh, a reduced value placed on celebrating Creator and creation through Sabbath-keeping, and now, anti-environmentalism. Christians have lost much.

Even though corrupted by sin, our world is still God’s gift that must be cherished. Earth will be restored as our eternal home (Revelation 20, 21), not a lesser place to leave behind. It will be a real world with real people and real animals and plants. Moreover, what we do with Earth now says much about our understanding of God, the creation, and our future life. Clearly, God expects us to care for His creation.

4. *Suspicion of science.* Many conservative Christians distrust science. Victoria Schlesinger wrote: “Science

remains the principal foe of the belief that God created the world.... Consequently, many conservative evangelicals dismiss science as part of the liberal agenda.”¹⁰

Just as conservative Christians may have difficulty distinguishing between environmentalism and New Age pantheism, so they may find science and atheism indistinguishable. When scientific evidence seemingly disagrees with biblical teachings, science may be too easily rejected. Instead, we need to make sure that both Scripture and science are correctly understood.

Adventists, like other conservative Christians, are concerned about issues relating to creation and evolution. Adventist enthusiasm for health sciences also promotes strong basic science education programs, in the understanding that “true science and Inspiration are in perfect harmony.”¹¹ The expression “true science,” suggests the alternative, “false science.” Thus, Paul’s advice about sifting truth from error is appropriate, whether referring to science or Scripture: “Test all things; hold fast what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21, NKJV). Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we must evaluate and intelligently decide. Environmentalism cannot be so simply dismissed because some scientific theories are distrusted.

5. *Environmentalism and eschatology.* However much we may wish to justify creation-care, Peter notes: “the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10, NKJV). Where does this leave us?

Some conservative Christians, anticipating Jesus’ return, ignore creation-care, and excuse exploiting resources without regard for the future. Greed may even taint their eschatology, as long-range global warming threats go unheeded, forests are thoughtlessly

Continued on page 24

PROFILES



Dulce Neto was born in 1964 in Angola. As the civil war raged in the country, she moved with her family to Namibia, and two years later to Portugal. When she was 10, she became a Seventh-day Adventist.

At 19, with very high grades in secondary school, Dulce started her law studies at the University of Coimbra, the country's oldest institution of higher learning. While studying there, she began writing for journals. After graduation, she commenced her internship in law, but journalism attracted her interests. In 1989, Dulce started working for the respected newspaper *Público*.

Being an editor in a national newspaper and also the single mother of two girls poses its problems. However, Dulce has always been involved in church activities, as youth director, co-founder of AMiCUS in Portugal, and moderator in church panels on sensitive topics such as abortion and homosexuality. She is currently an elder and women's ministry director in her church and is frequently invited to preach.

■ *Please tell us how you entered journal-*

Dulce Neto

Dialogue with an Adventist journalist in Portugal

ism.

As I was completing my secondary studies, I felt attracted to history. However, after seeking the counsel of several pastors, I was convinced that the church needed more experts in law. In my third year at the university, I had an opportunity to work for the university radio. In that same year I began writing for a new newspaper in Coimbra. I was also part of a group that debated human rights. We were the first in Portugal to denounce child labor and we spoke about terrorism, prisoners' rights, etc. This group was very important for my motivation in journalism.

■ *And then?*

After my internship, I enrolled in a postgraduate program in communication law. Once this was completed, I began a Master's program in criminal law. But because I missed many lectures on Sabbath, I could not write my thesis and complete that degree. I then took a Master's degree with emphasis on European organizations and institutions.

In the national newspaper *Público* I was given the responsibility of editor for the education section. At 34, I was the first woman named to the newspaper editorial board and as one of the executive editors. After a while, however, I requested a change in responsibilities because I was expecting my second child. So I started working as a reporter for *Pública*, the weekly magazine of *Público*, and two years later I became its editor. After a reorganization of the magazine, I am now responsible for one of its most important departments and have Saturdays free. Thus far,

everyone accepts this arrangement.

■ *Who were the people that exerted the strongest influence in your formation?*

First, my parents. Mother is an avid reader, and she taught me to enjoy reading at an early age. On the other hand, my father pushed me to learn and to aim high in life. By the time we were four years old, my brother and I had learned to read and do advanced calculus.

Next to my parents, pastor João Esteves exerted a powerful influence in my Christian development. He taught us the beauty of the gospel and the reliability of the Bible as a guide for our life. In high school, I had a very demanding but fantastic teacher. Once he told me, "You're in charge of the next five class lectures!" And I took the challenge. His attitude motivated me and gave me self-confidence.

I have always treasured a statement that Ellen G. White wrote in *Messages to Young People*: "You should be content with no mean attainments. Aim high, and spare no pains to reach the standard.... There are responsibilities for every one to bear; and we can fulfill life's grand mission only when these responsibilities are fully accepted, and faithfully and conscientiously discharged" (pp. 36, 37).

■ *How did you start working for Público?*

Those supporting the project announced that it was going to be the best newspaper in Portugal. Many applications were received, and 600 journalists were pre-selected. The first screening test fell on Saturday. It was hard for me to not being able to par-

ticipate, as I knew that many of my friends were going to take it. When I phoned asking for an exception, the organizers laughed at me. I tried to console myself, remembering that “God opens a window when there is a closed door.”

When the results were made known, only 20 from the 600 journalists were hired, and other 20 were selected as contributors. This meant I was completely excluded. Unexpectedly, however, I received a phone call from the recruiters asking if I'd be willing to be a contributor to the newspaper. They said that my application had been one of the best, and that they knew about my work at the radio and at other newspapers. That was amazing!

■ *What attracted you to journalism?*

A good journalist has the power to change things and make a difference for good. For instance, if we make a report about a poor neighborhood, the local authorities take action to remedy the situation. Or when you write about an important educational issue that must be addressed, the government actually does something in the direction you pointed in the newspaper. Of course, you must know the facts and present good arguments.

Once the Portuguese minister of education, Marçal Grilo, invited me to accompany him as a journalist while visiting government schools and meeting with educators. Twice he asked me to cover school visits on Saturdays, but I told him that I could not do it due to my religious convictions. So he learned that I was a Seventh-day Adventist and what it meant. He respected my decision. Two years later, he asked me to write a book about him and his ideas. He trusted me so much that he even gave me access to his diary.

■ *How do you manage not to work on the Sabbath?*

When I started working for *Público*, I could not be a member of the edi-

torial board because I would not be in the office on Saturdays. In 1991, the editor in chief, who appreciated my work, asked me half in jest, “If a plane crashes on the towers of the University of Coimbra on Saturday, would you cover the story?” I said, “No, but we can make a deal. I will join the editorial board, and on the day the plane crashes on the towers and I don't report the story, you can fire me.” Until today there has been no plane crash! (*laughing*) When I was appointed executive editor, I was responsible every day for the first page of the newspaper. That created a problem for Friday evenings and Saturdays. So I asked the director about it, and he just said there was no problem. That was a fantastic answer from God. He does answer our prayers when we are faithful.

■ *Tell us about your involvement with AMiCUS Portugal.*

This is an important initiative. I was part of the committee that in 1997 drafted the first statutes for the association. I was also among the Portuguese delegation that attended the Euro-Africa Division AMiCUS Congress in Italy in 2005. The number of Adventists studying in institutions of higher learning in our country continues to grow. Our church should make this ministry one of high priority.

■ *You also fought for the rights of the Adventist students...*

There was a law protecting the rights of high school students to observe the Sabbath. But the law did not apply to students in higher education. So when I was attending the university, I persistently argued that the law should apply also to us. Once I had to miss an exam that fell on Saturday. Two of my colleagues wrote a 15-page document arguing that my conscience should be protected by Portuguese law, which I have used to help other Adventists facing a similar challenge. Meanwhile, the government moved, and now there is a

law that protects the religious convictions of students in higher education.

■ *What advice would you give to an Adventist who is thinking of a career in journalism?*

Journalism is not incompatible with your Christian faith convictions. It offers many opportunities to serve and influence public opinion. But you should be the best! Problems may arise in your relation with the employing organization, which can happen in any profession. Because of its characteristics, the biggest challenge Adventists face in journalism is Sabbath-keeping. But if you are a good professional and if you work for a good organization, the problems can be solved, and you can enjoy your work. You must be honest, impartial, and independent in your thinking.

■ *Would you like to share another thought with Dialogue readers?*

You should make excellence grow in you. Be demanding on yourself, both in your intellectual and in your spiritual life. If you know Jesus, you will be at peace in your profession. The choices you make today will determine your eternal destiny. So cultivate your friendship with Him every day.

Interview by Miguel Nunes

Miguel Nunes is studying aerospace engineering at Instituto Superior Técnico, an engineering university in Portugal. He is an AMiCUS member and enjoys playing the violin. His email address: miguel_nunes@yahoo.com.

Dulce Neto may be contacted through dneto@publico.pt. The link to the journal for which she works is <http://www.publico.clix.pt>.

PROFILES



Benjamin Gunawan Yonas, also known as Yo Bu Gwan, is an engineer and building contractor. He was born in Bandung, Indonesia, and graduated from the largest Catholic university in Indonesia with a degree in civil engineering.

Benjamin is actively involved in his local congregation and supports the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Indonesia. He has served as Adventist youth leader, Sabbath school superintendent, and church elder. He has also served in various capacities such as conference executive committee member and academy board member. Currently he is on the Bandung Adventist Hospital board.

■ *Benjamin, tell us about your background and how you joined the Adventist Church.*

I grew up in a non-religious family. My father is a free thinker, and my mother is a follower of Confucius. Of the six children in the family, only I was sent to an Adventist high school, for two and one half years. There I began to learn about the Bible and the doctrines of the Adventist Church. I felt spiritually moved during a week of prayer. Though I was convinced of

Benjamin Gunawan Yonas

Dialogue with an Adventist engineer in Indonesia

the truth, I was not ready to become an Adventist. I left the school, without being baptized. But when I was experiencing a painful personal problem, a former Adventist classmate comforted me and invited me to visit the Adventist Chinese Church. The pastor prayed for me, and I began to attend church regularly. In 1982, the pastor who conducted the week of prayer was holding a series of evangelistic meetings. I went regularly to the meetings, and at the end I was baptized—you may not remember now—by you. Not long after that, I married a lovely Adventist lady, Juniar Jacob, and the Lord has blessed us with two children. We are enjoying God's blessings every moment of every day.

■ *You are a graduate of a well-known Catholic university. Did you have any problem with Sabbath observance while studying there?*

Yes, many lectures were scheduled on Saturday, and so were the examinations. Those were difficult times for me. Parahiang University has 7,000 students, of whom about 2,000 are freshmen, so the institution has a very strict, inflexible schedule. I needed to be wise in choosing subjects so that there would be no Sabbath problem; so much so that I had to take a first-semester course during my ninth semester of stay. Once I asked an Adventist pastor for a special letter so that I could get a special permission for Sabbath observance, but the letter created more problems. The dean of the School of Engineering rejected in writing the request and sent a copy of his letter to all professors. As a result, a few of them refused to give any special

examination to me.

■ *What made you to stand firm in your convictions despite the challenges you faced with Sabbath observance?*

Perhaps three factors: my Christian friends who faced the same situation, my commitment to be faithful to God, and the fellowship and support I received from the members of Bandung Adventist Students Association (IMAB). As a new Adventist, the writings of Ellen G. White also encouraged me much to be faithful. God gave me the power to do His will. With His blessings, the program of 10 semesters could be completed in 12 semesters. This was faster than I expected, considering the many Sabbath problems I experienced.

■ *Can you share a little of the history of IMAB and the benefits of Adventist university student associations?*

IMAB was established in 1979, and it was my privilege to serve as president of the student association for two years. Its main purpose was to foster fellowship among Adventist students, to intervene with Sabbath problems, and to make a positive contribution to the church and community.

IMAB also helped us through many other activities. We learned to encourage and serve one another. Our group Bible study helped our spiritual development and prepared us to witness for our faith. We learned to work together and develop leadership skills. On behalf of the church we got involved in several community projects such as digging wells, building toilets, and establishing business cooperatives to provide financial assistance. We also

placed Ellen White books in several college and university libraries so that others could learn more about our faith. These initiatives helped us grow socially, spiritually, and intellectually, and we were able to create a positive image for Christians in general and Adventists in particular.

■ *As the only Adventist in your family, how do you relate to other members?*

I want to help my family members to know the truth of the gospel, to believe what I believe, and to join the Adventist Church. They respect me and seek my counsel about the problems they face. I am happy because my parents, brothers, and sisters have visited our church, but more follow-up is needed. With God's guidance, my grandmother is now baptized.

■ *What kind of business are you involved in?*

The Lord has blessed us with several business initiatives. We have construction and building consultant businesses, and own a printing press and three music schools. We also have a company to manage apartments in two high-rise buildings in Bandung.

■ *What is the main challenge you face in your work? Do you have any opportunities to witness at work?*

I always face Sabbath problems. It is a real challenge to meet building schedules without working on Saturdays. We have to convince customers that we can meet the target date without working on Sabbath. So often people ask me why I don't like to do business on Saturday. This gives me an opportunity to share what I believe.

■ *Can you use your talents in support of the progress of our church in Indonesia?*

The Lord has allowed us to help with various construction projects at Bandung Adventist Hospital. I have also designed and constructed several Adventist school buildings, a conference office building, the girls' dormi-

tory of an Adventist university, the Manado Adventist Hospital building, and other projects. It was my privilege to design many Adventist churches and help with the calculations to make them more economical.

■ *You seem to have a busy life. How do you maintain a balance between your profession, family, and church?*

It is hard to budget time, but I thank God for the Sabbath. I have also learned to delegate some business tasks to others. I take time for regular exercise. We also make time for family vacations during the holiday season.

■ *Have you heard about Dialogue in which this interview will be published?*

Oh, yes. I learned about *Dialogue* when I was a university student and found it very interesting, full of inspiration, and meeting the needs of Adventist students. We hope its distribution will continue and expand.

■ *What counsel would you give to Adventist students attending non-Adventist colleges and universities?*

Join the local Adventist university student association. If there isn't one, start one. It will help you to remain faithful, grow spiritually, and serve others. As a member of IMAB, we helped to start several students associations in other cities and organized a meeting of Adventist university students for the whole island of Java.

■ *Any advice to Adventist church leaders?*

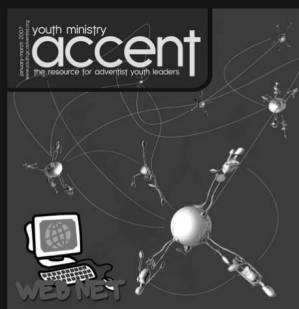
Our church will be much stronger if we would provide more support to the thousands of Adventist studying in public universities. Frequently, they have to move away from their congregation to study and, as a result, become almost invisible in the new location. Make an effort to locate them and to listen to the challenges they face. Appoint a chaplain for them. If we give attention to those students, they will be faithful, and they will

become witnesses for the church on the secular campuses. Later, they will be the strong leaders that our church and the community need.

Interview by Jonathan Kuntaraf

Jonathan Kuntaraf (D.Min., Andrews University) is Director of the Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland. His email address: kuntaraf@gc.adventist.org

Mr. Benjamin Gunawan Yonas' email address: bg_yonas@telkom.net. He has two websites: www.bandungvaluestay.com and www.allegria-music.com.



Youth Ministry Help — All Online!

Website: youth.gc.adventist.org
Email: dunchiem@gc.adventist.org
Phone: 301-680-6170 • Fax: 301-680-6155
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring • Maryland • 20904 • USA

accent

The ultimate homecoming

by Greg A. King

There's nothing quite like a homecoming!

There is the homecoming at the airport of a father coming back from a lengthy work assignment in another country. Picture the scene. After getting off the plane, the returning dad enters the terminal. His wife and two children are waiting expectantly for him, and their excitement knows no bounds. The two children break free from their mother's grip and launch themselves into their daddy's arms. Finally, it is her turn, and she embraces him as if she will never let go again.

There is the homecoming of a son or daughter returning from the university to enjoy some vacation days at home. Mom prepares a favorite recipe, and Father gets off work early. Everyone, including the family pet, is excited about welcoming the returning family member. Yes, there's nothing quite like a homecoming!

One reason we like homecomings so much is because of how they foreshadow another homecoming, the heavenly one, an event which might be called the Ultimate Homecoming. Actually, these earthly homecomings whet our taste and give us a greater longing for the ultimate homecoming, because, unlike it, they are not permanent. The joy that we take in them all too quickly comes to an end. The father must leave his family behind and return to another work assignment overseas, and the student's vacation time races by rapidly, and he or she must return to school.

Jesus speaks of this ultimate homecoming in John 14:1-3, a passage that

is one of the crown jewels of all of Scripture. Several phrases in this passage deserve reflection.

To prepare a place

One phrase is Jesus' declaration at the end of John 14:2: "I am going there [to heaven] to prepare a place for you."¹ This announcement that our Lord and Savior has personally gone to get our very own place ready contains obvious significance, because it underscores His future plan for each of us. However, it makes it even more special when we remember what was Jesus' earthly occupation prior to His ministry. He was a carpenter, a builder. So the text tells us that the Carpenter of Nazareth is using His skills again, building a place for each of His children. He is personally invested in preparing for you and me, and this personal involvement bespeaks His love for and His interest in His children.

I will always remember how my wife set to work after learning that she was pregnant with our first child. Now for me as a man, the positive pregnancy test was a signal that we had about seven months before we needed to start getting ready for the arrival of our child, but for my wife, it was another story. Preparation needed to begin right away! A nursery had to be readied. A crib obtained and assembled. We needed a stroller, a car seat, etc., etc. All of this preparation reflected her excitement in bringing this child into our home and her great love for him. Forever after, we can always look at our son and say, "Before you entered the world, you were loved and cared

for. Your mother—with a little help from your dad—prepared a place for you."

Many rooms

Another phrase in the great homecoming passage of John 14:1-3 to consider is Jesus' assertion at the start of verse 2, "In my Father's house are many rooms." What I want to focus on is the adjective "*many*." It emphasizes that at the time of the ultimate homecoming, God's country will have unlimited capacity. There will never be a "No Vacancy" sign!

During my teenage years, my father and mother decided to take our family on a trip to Montreal, Canada. The ostensible reason was for my accountant father to attend a professional convention, but the real purpose was to give our family the opportunity to visit our northern neighbor and see a different part of the world. After a drive of many hours from our home in Atlanta, Georgia, we finally arrived in Montreal. We were excited to be in a new country, but our excitement evaporated when we arrived at the headquarters hotel for the convention, the elegant Hotel Bonaventure, and they had no record of the reservation form my father had sent in. Furthermore, the hotel was filled to capacity. There was no room for us! We finally found lodging at a shabby little hotel on the outskirts of town, but the lack of accommodations at the Bonaventure cast a shadow over our whole trip.

How glad I am that in God's kingdom we will not see any "No Vacancy" signs! In fact, God is persistently inviting each of us to permanently dwell in our own place in His better land. "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life" (Revelation 22:17).

I will come again

Yet another phrase in this treasured

passage to reflect on is Jesus' simple promise in John 14:3, "I will come back." These four simple words have nourished and sustained believers down through the ages. As Stephen, James, Peter, and the other early Christian leaders gave their lives for the Lord they loved, these four words, "I will come back," gave them courage. As Hus, Jerome, Ridley, Cranmer, Latimer, and others were burned at the stake, these same four words fostered hope. When Joseph Bates, James and Ellen White, and other Adventist pioneers were mocked and scorned for their faith in a soon-coming Savior, these four words kept a spring in their step. And these same four words, "I will come back," are the last, best hope for the world today.

However, nearly 2,000 years have passed since Jesus first spoke these words. That's a long time! Someone might ask, How can we be sure He is still coming? You might think, My grandparents thought He was coming when they were young. They even debated whether to have children or not. My parents expected Him to return long before now. How can we still have faith He is going to come back?

The answer to this question is simple and straightforward: Because Jesus, the Son of God, said so. Because He promised He would. When my brother and I were boys, occasionally someone would give my father a couple of tickets to an Atlanta Falcons football game. My unselfish father, because he had two sons and only two tickets, would drive us to the stadium, let us out under the big Coca-Cola sign, and promise to return and meet us in the same spot once the game was over. Someone might wonder, Weren't you and your brother worried about your dad not returning and leaving you stranded in the big city? No, there was nothing to worry about. My father had promised he would come back for us, and he came. Even so, Christ has pledged He will return for His chil-

dren, and He will come.

Togetherness at last

There is one last phrase in this ultimate homecoming passage that demands our attention. After promising to return, Jesus continues in John 14:3, I will "take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." In this phrase, we see the purpose of it all. We see Jesus' ultimate goal: Reunion. Togetherness. The focus in this text is not on the cosmic signs that precede it. Rather, the emphasis is on the Lord's intense desire for personal fellowship. Jesus has been separated from His children for too long, and He yearns to be with them again.

In Ty Gibson's marvelous book *An Endless Falling in Love*, he titles his chapter on the second coming, "Love Counts the Days." The idea is this: When you are separated from someone you love, you eagerly await the time till you are together again. You count the days.

In 1993, I went with a *Voice of Prophecy* team from the United States to Brazil to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of *A Voz da Profecia*. During my nearly four-week trip, I had a marvelous time, sensed the Lord's blessing in my speaking appointments, and saw some wonderful scenery. However, if there was a downside to this trip, it was being away from my family for 25 days. This was a significant chunk of time to be gone, especially from my youngest son, Joshua, who was only about one year old at the time.

I will always remember what happened when I took him in my arms upon returning home. He looked to his mother to rescue him from this "stranger," and the puzzled expression on his face inquired, "Who is this strange man holding me?" One thing was abundantly clear. I'd been away from this child whom I loved for too long! It was time for a reunion.

That is the way the Lord feels. He has been gone for too long. He yearns

for the separation to end. He longs for a reunion. He has promised to return, to take His children to the ultimate homecoming, and as 1 Thessalonians 4:17 states, "So we will be with the Lord forever." May our prayer be that of John the Revelator, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).

*All Bible verses in this article are quoted from the New International Version unless otherwise indicated.

Greg A. King (Ph.D., Union Theological Seminary) is dean of the School of Religion at Southern Adventist University, in Collegedale, Tennessee, U.S.A. His email address: gking@southern.edu.



July 20 - 28, 2007

**During the
Pan American Games
in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

• 4,000 Adventist college and university students from all over South America.

• Seminars, community projects and evangelism.

**For more information:
WWW.IMPACTORIO.COM**

VIEWPOINT

I believe in a Creator God

by Danilo Boskovic

Our concepts about reality determine not only how we approach the question of origins but also how we are capable

I was standing outside the principal's office. My mother, a faithful Seventh-day Adventist, was inside, pleading my case for Sabbath exemption with the principal, the school inspector, and senior teachers. As a fifth grader, I was anxiously waiting for the verdict. The issue was important to me. I wanted to be faithful to God and His truth. God was the most significant person in my life. Would my faithfulness to Him get in the way of my studies?

I had waited almost an hour when the door abruptly opened, and the principal came out. A big man, he stared at me, and fired a series of questions that left me speechless. "What is this thing about believing in God? Where is He anyway? Don't you know that Yuri Gagarin, the Russian astronaut, went up in space and announced that he did not find God? There is no God! And you want to believe such fairy tales? Cut that out; we are not going back to the dark ages again!"

I didn't really know how to respond to the principal. I thought to myself how easy it would be if God just wrote a startling message across the skies that all the world could see and believe, and so that all the skeptics could be silenced.

Since that experience in Yugoslavia, I have been keenly interested in issues arising from the controversy between the creationist and the evolutionary

models of origins. In recent years, numerous articles have been published, often in scientific literature, with a good deal of vitriol toward those considering creation as a legitimate model for the origin of life. Creation continues to be deemed by many as not only unscientific but also as a direct threat to science. Even *Time* magazine recently published a debate between Dawkins and Collins pitting God against science.¹

How did science get to such a state that it feels threatened even by the very idea of God? To be sure, a number of creationist promoters have employed similar tactics of vitriol and ridicule directed against evolutionists. In the heat of the battle, it seems that both camps have forgotten something very basic. Reality can not be altered by our opinions about it! We must approach truth with humility, seeking to discover it and appreciate it.

It is not entirely clear just why and how neo-Darwinists arrived at the utter unacceptability of God. It has, however, effectively become a dogma that cannot even be questioned. Any attempt at rational discourse on the subject is immediately dismissed as not only unscientific but also anti-scientific. The rationale seems to be that if God were to exist, then we could not be sure that He is not interfering with our actions, experiments, or even thoughts. This theophobia implies a view of God as a petty, capricious manipulator. The orthodox Darwinists carry this view even further, seeing the concept of God as a threat to sanity itself, rendering all rational thought unlikely. This view is perhaps best demonstrated by the title of Dawkins' recent book *The God Delusion*.²

If both camps remain locked in this power struggle, then the most likely outcome will be sharper polarization, and both science and religion will ultimately suffer losses. For all the finger-pointing at the past excesses of religion, there is no shortage of relatively recent examples of crimes against humanity perpetrated by atheistic ideologies, striving toward the inexorable upward evolutionary thrust proposed by Darwinism. Unfortunately, religion has also amply demonstrated its capability to persecute anyone it chooses to disagree with, sometimes even legitimate scientists. Retrogressing to such approaches does not vindicate either God or creation. It only demonstrates that religion has become malignant, yet again.

Survival of the fittest?

Regardless of the initial ideological or conceptual framework, when we seek to control the views of other people, we tend to slide toward the same willingness to alienate, ridicule, marginalize, or persecute them. Our collective human addiction to power and control tends to subvert every ideology and conceptual framework that we can conceivably devise. Sometimes, the more extreme our plight, the more desperately we seek to gain power and regain control. It is a seductive falsehood, a philosophical trap whose comfort we eagerly seek, that with sufficient power any and all problems can be easily overcome. If the final outcome follows essentially the same destructive script, does it really matter that we started with the concept of "survival of the fittest" rather than "God is on our side"? Are we doomed to a continuing rehearsal of the same ugly show regardless of the mantra being chanted?

Superficially, the concept of "survival of the fittest" seems obvious, almost beyond question. The strong and healthy thrive, while the weak and sick die. Natural selection at work! By all appearances it seems self-evident. As

one of the two pillars of the evolutionary doctrine, alongside chance, natural selection is rarely questioned. How has this postulate been tested, however? Anyone who is bold enough to wonder about this is regarded as lacking wisdom, frequently even by the devoutly religious. From the point of view of individual organisms it seems difficult to even imagine alternatives. Implicitly, this concept represents an ongoing unremitting struggle by all living organisms for resources such as space, food, or mates.

If, however, we begin to consider networks of individual organisms, then new issues arise. For example, let us entertain a relatively simple thought experiment incorporating a struggle over a single issue. Consider a building in which every brick, stone, or beam was in a constant struggle to be on top. How stable could such a structure possibly be? How long would it stand? Who in his or her right mind would ever wish to enter it? Similarly, if our bodies were composed of cells that were in a constant struggle against one another, rather than networking with one another, our existence would not be possible. Have we as a human race bought into the “survival of the fittest” concept, explicitly or implicitly, even though it is fundamentally flawed? If so, can any social structure we develop with such flawed principles reliably stand? If not, what alternatives are there?

What kind of God?

Perhaps such questions can not be satisfactorily dealt with until we begin to consider not merely the idea of God, but also the kind of God that might be possible. My desperate hoping and grasping for more clout in dealing with the confrontational school principal was not rewarded as I wished. At the time, it seemed to me that God was neglecting a splendid opportunity to settle all questions once and for all. Why didn't He? He could have written across the sky in plain

Yugoslavian so that anyone could read it: “Sabbath is the day of rest, and you, yes you, the school principal bothering Danilo, are wrong!” The thought made me feel so vindicated, justified, empowered, and ... yes, oh yes, on top!

As I rehearsed fantasies like these, the words of Jesus, admonishing those who wish to be first seemed strangely discordant. (See Mark 10:43, 44.) In fact, it seemed to me that He, like a good parent, was merely telling us to “play nice”—an admonition particularly perplexing since the other people were clearly not “playing nice.” Is it possible that He was trying to point to issues more profound, via a different paradigm of success than we commonly envisage? If there are competing paradigms, how do we determine which is better?

Power and control

It seems that our attraction for “survival of the fittest” devolves upon our attachment to ideologies of power and control. What if our view of reality is distorted by such perceived or even unconscious desires? What if we all actually serve the concepts we hold dear—complete with their strengths and weaknesses, merits and fallacies? How would we distinguish between concepts that liberate or elevate and concepts that burden or trap? If we consider a variety of number systems, for example, it quickly becomes clear that they are not all equally easy to work with. Under the Roman numeral system, dependent largely on definition, and without an adequate place-value principle, it was a major undertaking to conduct even some of the basic arithmetic operations. Competitions were held for the purpose of finding talented individuals capable of multiplying or dividing two numbers quickly and correctly. Now, our children learn these operations in the early grades of elementary school. What made the difference? A number system with a complete set of place-

value rules. Similarly, would laboring under a poorly chosen paradigm not be burdensome? Perhaps in this context Christ's words—“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28, NKJV)—gain a whole new level of significance. Could our preoccupation with power and control be leading us into difficulties, not to mention temptations?

My late father had a watch that he passed on to me. Unfortunately, it stopped running several years ago. I now have several options. I could attempt to resolve the problem through application of some power in the form of a nice little hammer, judiciously tapping in all the likely places. After some time, I might conclude that more power is called for in the form of a bigger hammer. Since I have a very superficial understanding of the structure and functioning of watches and no skill whatsoever with regard to watch repairs, chances are that my ever-increasing dependence on power will only further complicate the problem rather than solve it.

Clearly, the reliance on mere power to solve complex problems can be very destructive. The reason is obvious: the more complicated the problem, the more essential are understanding and skill to resolve it. This explains why God in Christ came to restore what was broken rather than seek to impose His authority, His will, or His rights. “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45, NKJV). Consistent with His life, so also in His sacrifice, His focus was on what was needed as expressed by the words, “not as I will, but as You will” (Matthew 26:39, NKJV). Service for the benefit of others is the only approach that works! We do not become heroes or even saints by recognizing this profound truth; we merely gain a chance for sanity.

Power vs. service

Recognizing that the universe was created with the implicit incorporation of the principle of service rather than the principle of “survival of the fittest” also presents us with an entirely different view of God. If the alternatives to service simply cannot work, then God cannot be a capricious, manipulative dictator. In fact, the best evidence against such characterizations is that the accusations are even possible. If God was in fact vengeful, unforgiving, exacting, and severe then how could such accusations ever have been made? Anyone likely to raise them would have been at the very least pre-empted in some way. After all, a dictator relaxes his grip at his own peril.

Instead, far from being concerned about His own good, God in Christ came to serve humanity. Seeing God in this light stimulates all thought and every desire to understand. And, in the final analysis, isn't this basic desire to understand, this joy of learning, coupled with freedom of inquiry, at the foundation of all genuine science?

Attention, Adventist Professionals

If you hold a degree in any field and have an email address, we encourage you to join the Adventist Professionals' Network (APN). Sponsored by the Adventist Church, this global electronic registry assists participant institutions and agencies in locating consultants with expertise, volunteers for mission assignments, and candidates for positions in teaching, administration, or research. Enter your professional information directly in the APN website:

<http://apn.adventist.org>

Encourage other Adventist professionals to register!

The concepts about reality that we have embraced and hold dear determine not only how we see the question of origins but also how we are capable of perceiving God. The concepts we treasure will in large measure determine the paradigms we employ to rationalize the universe we live in. Clearly, all paradigms do not work equally well. Some burden while others liberate. We can choose a paradigm underwritten by power ideology or one based upon the principles of service motivated by love. In one case, we may ultimately wonder why nature should even be understandable. In the other, we will delight in every new day with its revelations of deeper insights inspired from the source of light and love. What an awesome choice!

Danilo Boskovic (Ph.D., Queen's University) teaches biochemistry at the School of Medicine, Loma Linda University. His mailing address: Mortensen Hall 207, Loma Linda, California 92350, U.S.A. Email: dboskovic@llu.edu

REFERENCES

1. “God vs. Science,” *Time*, November 13, 2006.
2. Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2006).

The environment...

Continued from page 15

exploited and poorly managed, and resources generally wasted. Contrary to greedy exploitation, however, Isaiah anticipates the great oppressor's death when even forest trees and Lebanon's cedars figuratively rejoice: “No one will come now to cut us down now!” (Isaiah 14:8, NLT).

Ever since Jesus ascended, many have hoped and thought the Advent

near. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: “Don't be so easily shaken or alarmed by those who say the day of the Lord has already begun” (2 Thessalonians 2:2, NLT). We believe the Advent near for increasingly valid reasons, but in the parable of the talents, the master instructed his servants to continue in business until he returned (Luke 19:13). What does this say about tending and keeping now?

We conclude that both the renewed Earth and its people will be real, physical, and tangible. This concept is important for servicing a doomed and devastated creation. Linking the Advent with environmental needs, we may choose to focus hopelessly on doomsday or alternatively look eagerly ahead to Earth's restoration. Attitudes toward creation now will color attitudes we take toward the new creation. If we treat creation recklessly now, could we be expected to treat the renewed Earth differently? No wonder, Revelation 11:18 says those who destroy Earth will themselves be destroyed.

Why then should we look after a doomed creation? We do it because it's God's and He told us to keep it. Moreover, living now as we will live in the renewed Earth makes additional and ultimate sense. Environmental abuse offers no hope; the Advent promises a bright future as we practice creation-care now.

6. Christian leaders' pressure against positive environmental action. Many conservative believers fail to participate in creation care because of these understandings. Christian environmentalism alarms old guard leaders who often resist creation-care¹² as they themselves, with these opposing attitudes, constitute yet another impediment. Mainline churches are more receptive to environmentalism, but recently the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) almost backed pro-environment action. A few, especially younger believers educated in and more com-

fortable with science, don't see science as the threat others fear. These promoted Christian environmentalism to the NAE, but unfortunately, church leaders blocked the effort, unreasonably fearing environmentalism in the church as tantamount to "earth worship." Later reports indicate that under this pressure, the NAE backed down. Still, a group of 86 Christian leaders is commendably pressing on.¹³

Practicing Christian environmentalism

At the beginning of this essay, we asked if environmentalism might constitute a distraction from the real work of the church, or might it be part of what we're actually about. We have examined several apparent impediments to positive environmental action by Christians, analyzed them, and I hope, put them to rest. I interpret biblical teachings, together with science, to say that when Christian environmentalism is correctly understood, these impediments should not stand in our way; environmentalism is not only something we may, but actually must, be part of. In the beginning we were indeed given a mandate—not a mandate to exploit, but a mandate to be responsible and caring.

We often think of environmentalism in negative terms, like pollution, global warming, ozone depletion, mass species extinction, erosion, with resulting economic loss, and so on. But there is a positive side as well. Howard Frumkin, makes this point:¹⁴ "Contact with the natural world may be directly beneficial to health." Thus, caring for creation benefits us now.¹⁵ Richard Louv also shows how nature positively impacts children in the book, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*.¹⁶

A healthy environment enables the gospel. Ellen White observed that "medical missionary work...is the gospel in practice."¹⁷ She referred to the "Gospel of health"¹⁸ and indicated

that a healthy environment is health inducing. "Nature is God's physician," White wrote, referring to pure air, sunshine, beautiful flowers and trees.¹⁹ "The things of nature are God's blessings, provided to give health to body, mind, and soul."²⁰

In an essay, Larry Boughman²¹ refers to Mavis Batey, who wrote about the gardens of Oxford and Cambridge. She thought those gardens embodied the philosophy of simplicity and excellence so necessary for both students and professors to flourish in their intellectual endeavors. Natural environments promote and enhance spirituality, health, and learning.

Two roads branch before us, one popular and easy, but leading to devastation, while the other more challenging, leading to life. We have seen that the church, when considering environmental action, has experienced difficulty deciding which road and what role to take. Proclaiming the Gospel of salvation is the first work of the church. Caring for creation is the second. Romans 8:21 tells us, moreover, that nature will also be liberated when Jesus returns. The good news is also for creation. And in the end, as we tend and keep creation now, so we will continue to care for Eden restored.

Consequently, how should we live? Caring for creation, with seriousness and simplicity, should be a way of life. The cost of environmental neglect and abuse is high; the payoff for caring is indeed generous—and eternally ongoing.

Henry Zuill (Ph.D., Loma Linda University) has taught biology and conducted research in ecology for many years. Now actively retired, he resides in Norman, Arkansas, U.S.A. His email address: hzuill@hotmail.com. This essay is based on a paper he presented at the Third Symposium on the Bible and Adventist Scholarship in March 2006, sponsored by The Foundation

for Adventist Education. The full text is accessible at <http://fae.adventist.org>.

REFERENCES

1. Articles positive to Christian environmentalism may be found in *Christianity Today*.
2. Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis," *Science* 155 (March 10, 1967), pp.1203–1207.
3. See Joseph K. Sheldon, "Twenty-One Years After 'The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis': How Has The Church Responded?" *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 41 (September 1989), pp.152–58.
4. White, p. 1205.
5. Ellen G. White, *My Life Today* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1952), p. 340. Italics supplied.
6. Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1890), p. 49.
7. See Sheldon, *op. cit.*
8. Described as raised Adventist but converted to the Baptist faith in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constance_E._Cumbey.
9. Sheldon, *op. cit.*
10. See <http://www.vschlesinger.com/StewardshipWars.html>.
11. Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1930), p. 190.
12. See Alan Coopman, *Washington Post* (February 2, 2006), p. A8.
13. See Frank James, *The Olympian*, February 11, 2006, Olympia, Washington. Front page.
14. Howard Frumkin, "Beyond Toxicity: Human Health and the Natural Environment," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 20:3 (2001), pp. 234-240.
15. For other examples of the environment enhancing life see Jane Essman, *Conservationist*, 47 (February 1993) 4:47; "Fighting Crime With Leaves," *Christian Science Monitor* (August 28, 1997); "Petunias in the Playground," *Economist* 320 (1991)17, p. 56.
16. Published by Algonquin Books (April 15, 2005) ISBN:1565123913.
17. Ellen G. White. *Counsels on Health* (Mountain View, Calif: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1957), p. 532.
18. _____, *Medical Ministry* (Mountain View, Calif: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1963), p. 259.
19. _____, *My Life Today*, p. 135.
20. _____, *Counsels on Health*, p. 169.
21. Larry W. Boughman, "Campus Beautification: A Factor in Integration of Faith and Learning," *Christ in the Classroom: Adventist Approaches to the Integration of Faith and Learning*, vol. 14, (1994).

ACTION REPORT

General Youth Conference motivates young people to spread the Gospel

Nearly 4,000 Adventist young adults, some of whom are studying in public university campuses, converged in Baltimore, December 27-31, 2006, to celebrate and to affirm their faith. Meeting as a General Youth Conference, the participants focused on the theme “By Every Word” (Matthew 4:4) and were challenged spiritually to live out their faith and to witness for what they believe.

The idea of the General Youth Conference was born in 1999, when several groups of Adventist college and university students decided to start an experiment, taking the claims of biblical Adventism seriously. They studied the Bible in depth, prayed intensely,

and aimed for uncompromising lifestyles. One of their dreams was to have a yearly meeting where young people from similar backgrounds could come to network, learn more about the Bible and witnessing to those around them, and be challenged to a higher standard of spirituality.

The result? The yearly meeting called General Youth Conference (GYC) had its first convention in 2002. Each December, GYC meets for five days of serious Bible study in the form of workshops, seminars, plenary sessions, and networking sessions. It attracts young professionals, students from public and Adventist university campuses, youth leaders, chaplains, high school students, and others from all over the United States and several other countries. From 500 attendees at the first conference, it has grown to 4,000 in 2006.

Preeky Zaw, junior operations major at the University of Maryland who attended the 2006 conference, says, “GYC is needed in our church at this time because it brings so many youth together to share experiences, spiritually grow together, and learn from each other.”

The Baltimore convention featured several plenary sessions and seminars around the theme. Speakers included Ted Wilson, vice president of the General Conference; David Asscherick, director of ARISE; Samuel Koranteng-Pipim, director of public campus ministry for the Michigan Conference; and C. D. Brooks, speaker emeritus of the *Breath of Life* television program.

At each conference, GYC attendees are encouraged to work hand-in-hand with the Adventist Church in taking the three angels’ messages to the world in this generation. Christina Lee, a freshman from New York University, says, “I liked the seminar on the three angels’ messages. I think that at times we forget that witnessing is a matter of life and death. We have the responsibility to share the truth. GYC is needed to give that sense of urgency and reassurance that we have the facts to witness for what we believe.”

Caleb Kelly, a nutrition major at Tufts University, has attended four GYC conventions. What draws him back every time? “It’s the messages and the people who come,” Caleb says. “It’s just so nice to congregate with people who have a similar vision and similar goals in life.” He especially likes the practical applications he has gleaned from meetings and seminars. “I’m going to relate differently to my classmates and look for opportunities to show them the gospel in how I live. I am in a non-Adventist environment, and it’s a challenge, but I can be a positive influence.”

If you would like to be challenged spiritually and learn how to reach out to your classmates, plan ahead to join other like-minded college and university students during the next GYC convention. Mark your calendars right now. See you at Minneapolis, Minnesota, December 19-23, 2007.

Joelle S. Damsteegt is vice president for communication of the General Youth Conference (GYC). Her email: joelled@gmail.com. To learn more and listen to past GYC messages, log on to <http://www.generalyouthconference.org>.



Adventist students active in Burkina Faso

The Association of Adventist Students in Burkina Faso consists of a small but active group of members committed to grow spiritually and academically. Burkina Faso, located in Western Africa, is a French-speaking country with a population of 14 million. Fifty percent of the population is Muslim, 40 percent adhere to indigenous beliefs, and a 10 percent minority includes Christians, mostly Roman Catholics. The Adventist membership in the Burkina Faso Mission is approaching 3,000.

Most of the members of our association study at the University of Ouagadougou, in the capital.

During the 2005-2006 academic year we carried out the following initiatives:

- Special days of fasting and prayer, asking God to give us courage and grace in order to be His faithful ambassadors on campus and in all our relationships.
- We dedicated three hours on Thursday mornings to distribute Adventist publications among our fel-

low students, which were well received and in some cases lead to Bible studies.

- At the beginning of the school year our musical group presented a choral concert at the university amphitheater that attracted hundreds of students.

- We conducted a short evangelistic campaign under the theme "Certainty in an Uncertain World" which was supported by the Adventist youth of a local church.

- In April, a group that included the president and the chaplain of the Sahel Union as well as the chaplain of the Burkina Faso Mission and leaders of our student association had an audience with the university authorities to speak about religious freedom issues relating to Adventist students.

- In May, the director of the university library agreed to make copies of *Dialogue*, which we will supply, accessible to students.

- On Wednesday evenings we held a prayer meeting to which we invited our fellow students, seeking spiritual strength and divine guidance.

Encouraged by the results achieved by these initiatives and focusing on the university campus as our mission field, our student association has drawn plans for the future, which include three emphases:

1. Spiritual growth and evangelistic outreach through doctrinal instruction, reading and meditation, identification of spiritual gifts, and evangelism.
2. Strengthening the image of the student association through activities such as community service, cooperation with other Christian student associations, and participation in radio and television programs.
3. Consolidating the financial base of the association through regular member contributions, financial appeals, and lucrative projects.

We believe that God has placed us at the university as witnesses to the transforming power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Please pray that God will allow us not only to succeed in our studies, but especially lead us to live lives that will honor Christ and bring others to know and love Him.

Magloire Yé is president of the Association of Adventist Students in Burkina Faso. His email address: aeeabf_president@yahoo.fr.



The executive staff of the Association of Adventist Students in Burkina Faso. From left: Magloire Ye, president; Norbert Kambire, general secretary; Aristide Poda, responsible for spiritual activities; and Marie Sama, treasurer.)

Send us your group's report

Leaders of Adventist university student associations are invited to send a brief report of their group's activities and one or two digital photos for publication in *Dialogue*. Include all relevant information about the student group, describe its main activities, challenges, and plans, and list the name, position, and email address of the report's author. Send them to Humberto M. Rasi (h.rasi@adelphia.net) and to Susana Schulz (schulzs@gc.adventist.org). Thank you!

Twenty years...

Continued from page 13

18. Much has been written about this. Here is a good starting essay: http://www.idthefuture.com/2005/06/who_designed_the_designer_a_lengthier_re.html; also see: <http://www.ideacenter.org/contentmgr/showdetails.php/id/1147>.
19. Dawkins' résumé can be viewed at: <http://www.simonyi.ox.ac.uk/dawkins/CV.pdf>.
20. R. Dawkins, *A Devil's Chaplain* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2003).
21. Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006).

FIRST PERSON

From Hollywood to heaven

by Steve Wohlberg

September 1979. I had just enrolled at California State University, Northridge, about 45 minutes from the Hollywood hills where I grew up. Although I was a Jew, I knew nothing about faith. My lifestyle could be summed up in one phrase: reckless and immoral. I had one Seventh-day Adventist friend, Richard, whom I met in a health-food store in Northridge and who offered to take me to his church on a Saturday.

Two weeks later, Richard took me to the Canoga Park Seventh-day Adventist Church and introduced me to his minister, Pastor J. B. Church, who gave me a copy of the book, *The Desire of Ages* by Ellen G. White. Who was this lady? I had no clue. I knew about Mick Jagger, The Rolling Stones, John Travolta, and discos, but nothing about religion. For the past six years, starting at age 14, I had been a pot smoking, cocaine snorting, disco dancing teen. It's a miracle I survived.

With classes about to begin, I sat inside my dorm room and surveyed with disinterest my stack of first-semester textbooks, especially Statistics and Economics. *Yuck! What have I gotten myself into?* I chose Marketing as my major, not from careful thought or deep interest, but because my dad was a businessman. During the previous summer, I had worked in and around Hollywood as an extra in the movies, but I realized that my chances of achieving wealthy stardom were pie-in-the-sky. So I chose a business career.

My dorm room was small, like most dorm rooms: four walls, two beds, two desks, and one door into a shared bathroom. Theoretically, dormitory

rooms are supposed to be places where thoughtful students energetically study textbooks, gain useful knowledge, and take practical steps toward accomplishing something in life. Realistically, they're often party holes where guys and girls mess around. Such was my life. The sights, sounds, and smells of wild living surrounded me, seeping under my door, onto my bed, into my head. I felt lonely, directionless, and confused.

Hooked by a book

There it sat: *The Desire of Ages*. Textbooks demanded my attention, but this volume beckoned voicelessly: *Read me*. For the past three months, God had been speaking to me in various ways, and His voice was getting louder. It all started with a fishing trip in the mountains when I glanced up onto a hillside and noticed the words, "Repent or Perish," sprayed on a large rock. That got my attention. *What does that mean?* I wondered. Then there was that *It Is Written* TV program I "just happened" to come across one Sunday morning while channel surfing at my dad's condo in Studio City. A man named George Vandeman was talking about the Sabbath. Indeed, for the past three months something unusual had been happening in my life. Various circumstances had awakened my slumbering conscience, and I had begun thinking about God for the first time in my life.

I don't remember what day it was—Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday—but at some point, a wild 20-year-old Jewish college student newly enrolled in a secular university picked up *The*

Desire of Ages and began reading the story of a Man named Jesus Christ. Ancient Jewish prophecies, Bethlehem, a holy baby, Nazareth, John the Baptist, a descending dove, parables, miracles, healing the sick, even raising people from the dead! As this incredible drama unfolded before my astonished eyes, I was hooked; hooked by a book. I had never heard any of this before.

In a short time, I had plowed through 73 beefy chapters in *The Desire of Ages*, which was quite amazing, for I wasn't much of a reader. Then I reached the chapter which, unknown to me, was destined to change my life. *Aghh! This is serious!* my guardian demon must have thought. Heavenly angels drew near. The title of Chapter 74 contained one mysterious word: "Gethsemane." Ten minutes later, I was gripped by the mysterious account of a 33-year-old Man sweating blood among olive trees. With His face touching the dirt, Jesus prayed, "Oh My Father! If it is possible, take this cup from Me! Nevertheless, not my will, but Yours will be done."

What's happening? I remember asking myself. Why the sorrow and anguish? Line by line, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, the pieces came together, and this is where a real miracle occurred. In spite of my drug use, addictions, selfishness, and overall spiritual deadness, *I started understanding God's Word*. Rays of divine light penetrated my darkened mind. An unseen Power stood by my side, right there, inside my dorm room. I lost track of time, of everything. All I saw was the Gethsemane Man. Alone in a garden, suffering for me.

Meeting the Gethsemane Man

Six paragraphs near the end of Chapter 74 brought me over the line. Because of space limitations, I won't quote them all, but here are two of them.

“Turning away [from His sleeping disciples], Jesus sought again His retreat, and fell prostrate, overcome by the horror of a great darkness. The humanity of the Son of God trembled in that trying hour. He prayed not now for His disciples that their faith might not fail, but for His own tempted, agonized soul. The awful moment had come—that moment which was to decide the destiny of the world. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. Christ might even now refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty man. It was not yet too late. He might wipe the bloody sweat from His brow, and leave man to perish in his iniquity. He might say, Let the transgressor receive the penalty of his sin, and I will go back to My Father. Will the Son of God drink the bitter cup of humiliation and agony? Will the innocent suffer the consequences of the curse of sin, to save the guilty? The words fall tremblingly from the pale lips of Jesus, ‘O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.’”

“Three times has He uttered that prayer. Three times has humanity shrunk from the last, crowning sacrifice. But now the history of the human race comes up before the world’s Redeemer. He sees that the transgressors of the law, if left to themselves, must perish. He sees the helplessness of man. He sees the power of sin. The woes and lamentations of a doomed world rise before Him. He beholds its impending fate, and His decision is made. He will save man at any cost to Himself. He accepts His baptism of blood, that through Him perishing millions may gain everlasting life. He has left the courts of heaven, where all is purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that has fallen by transgression. And He will not turn from His mission. He will become the propitiation of a race that has willed to sin. His prayer now breathes only submission: ‘If this cup may not pass away from Me, except I

drink it, Thy will be done.’”

As I read this scene, it dawned on me that just as Jesus Christ made that key decision in Gethsemane to surrender Himself entirely to the will of His Father, even so must I make a choice whether or not to surrender my life to Him. Drugs, parties, rock music, and girls—these beckoned on one side. On the other side was my Savior, the love of God, and eternal life. What should I do? I must choose. Now. As I beheld Jesus willingly becoming separated from His Father, I made my choice, dropped to my knees for the first time in my life, said a short prayer, and asked Jesus to become my Savior.

A soothing sense of peace

I don’t remember everything I said in that little prayer, but there is one thing I remember as if it was yesterday. It was the soothing sense of peace that instantly flowed into my soul. I had never felt anything quite like this before. *This is better than drugs!* I thought. A heavy weight was lifted. My slavery to drugs, alcohol, and nasty habits ended as a supernatural Presence entered me. I was free! Psychologists may not comprehend it, skeptics may deny it, doubters deride it, and demons despise it. I don’t care. *It happened to me*, and no human or devil can take it from me. Hollywood faded, and Heaven moved in. I became a Jewish believer in Jesus Christ. *This is the truth.*

Within two weeks I found myself—through the advice of Pastor Church—at La Sierra College in Riverside, California, choosing religion as a major and enrolling myself in the ministry. One of my first classes was called, “Life and Teachings of Jesus.” Guess what my required textbook was? *The Desire of Ages!*

That was 27 years ago. The journey continues. My larger book, *From Hollywood to Heaven*, reveals many more details that I don’t have time to explain here. But in a nutshell: I am now the speaker/director for White

Horse Media within the Central California Conference, have written many books, pastored many churches, preached for *Amazing Facts*, witnessed hundreds of baptisms, produce radio and TV programs for 3ABN, Hope Channel, and other networks, am happily married to a lovely Adventist woman named Kristin Renee, and we have a beautiful two-year-old boy named Seth. “Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now I’m found, was blind, but now I see!” I owe it all to God’s mercy.

A love that won’t let go

When I was five years old, my brother Mike and I went fishing with our dad on the California coast. Unexpectedly, my appendix ruptured which, back in those days, was life-threatening. My dad drove me to a local hospital, and I was rushed into a waiting chamber near an operating room. To this day, I still remember what happened next. My dad held me as I writhed in pain in his arms. A stranger wearing a mask walked over and started yanking me away from my father. “No! No! I don’t want to go!” I screamed in terror, as my little hands clung desperately to my dad’s neck.

But go I must. With terrible difficulty—difficulty only a father can fully understand—my dad slowly peeled each of my tiny fingers off his neck so that the strange man could take me away. Why was I ripped out of my father’s arms? So the doctor could operate, remove my appendix, and save my life. On an infinitely greater scale, that’s exactly what happened to Jesus Christ in Gethsemane, and shortly thereafter as He hung on the cross. *He was separated from His Father.* He did it to save our souls.

I don’t know what’s happening with you right now. Maybe alcohol, drugs, rock music, and the flesh are pulling you down. Now you know that I’ve

Continued on page 33

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Adventist statements on homosexuality and same-sex unions

From time to time, Seventh-day Adventists in many countries are asked questions about their position regarding homosexuality and same-sex unions. As Bible-believing Christians, we have studied and reflected on these sensitive and important issues on the basis of God's revelation in Scripture. On two occasions, Adventist leaders representing millions of believers around the world adopted statements relevant to these questions. They are provided here for the benefit of our readers and other interested individuals.

Announcing...

European Field Conference on Faith and Science July 1-12, 2007

Co-sponsored by the Euro-Africa Division and the Geoscience Research Institute, the conference is open to Adventist educators interested in issues of origins, evolution, creation, geology, and paleontology.

For information on registration, fees, and transportation, contact Dr. Roberto Badenas at Roberto.badenas@euroafrica.org.

Dr. Raúl Esperante will provide information on the program, itinerary, lectures, and field work: resperante@llu.edu.

Seventh-day Adventist Statement on Homosexuality

The Seventh-day Adventist Church recognizes that every human being is valuable in the sight of God, and we seek to minister to all men and women in the spirit of Jesus. We also believe that by God's grace and through the encouragement of the community of faith, an individual may live in harmony with the principles of God's Word.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that sexual intimacy belongs only within the marital relationship of a man and a woman. This was the design established by God at creation. The Scriptures declare: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24, NIV). Throughout Scripture this heterosexual pattern is affirmed. The Bible makes no accommodation for homosexual activity or relationships. Sexual acts outside the circle of a heterosexual marriage are forbidden (Leviticus 20:7-21; Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Jesus Christ reaffirmed the divine creation intent: "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator "made them male and female," and said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?" So they are no longer two, but one" (Matthew 19:4-6, NIV). For these reasons Adventists are opposed to homosexual practices and relationships.

Seventh-day Adventists endeavor to follow the instruction and example of

Jesus. He affirmed the dignity of all human beings and reached out compassionately to persons and families suffering the consequences of sin. He offered caring ministry and words of solace to struggling people, while differentiating His love for sinners from His clear teaching about sinful practices.

This statement was voted during the Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee on October 3, 1999 in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.

Seventh-day Adventist Response to Same-Sex Unions: A Reaffirmation of Christian Marriage

Over the past several decades the Seventh-day Adventist Church has felt it necessary to clearly state in various ways its position in regards to marriage, the family, and human sexuality. These subjects are at the heart of many pressing issues facing society. That which for centuries has been considered to be basic Christian morality in the marriage setting is now increasingly called into question, not only in secular society but within Christian churches themselves.

The institutions of family and marriage are under attack and facing growing centrifugal forces that are tearing them apart. An increasing number of nations are now debating the topic of "same-sex unions," thus making it a world issue. The public discussion has engendered strong emotions. In light of these developments, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is clearly restating its position.

We reaffirm, without hesitation, our long-standing position. As expressed in the Church's Fundamental Beliefs, "marriage was divinely established in

Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship.”¹ Though “sin has perverted God’s ideals for marriage and family,” “the family tie is the closest, the most tender and sacred of any human relationship,” and thus “families need to experience renewal and reformation in their relationships” (*An Affirmation of Family*, 1990).² God instituted “marriage, a covenant-based union of two genders physically, emotionally, and spiritually, spoken of in Scripture as ‘one flesh.’” “The monogamous union in marriage of a man and a woman is . . . the only morally appropriate locus of genital or related intimate sexual expression.” “Any lowering of this high view is to that extent a lowering of the heavenly ideal” (*An Affirmation of Marriage*, 1996).³

Homosexuality is a manifestation of the disorder and brokenness in human

inclinations and relations caused by sin coming into the world. While everyone is subject to fallen human nature, “we also believe that by God’s grace and through the encouragement of the community of faith, an individual may live in harmony with the principles of God’s Word” (*Seventh-day Adventist Position Statement on Homosexuality*, 1999).⁴

We hold that all people, no matter what their sexual orientation, are children of God. We do not condone singling out any group for scorn and derision, let alone abuse. However, it is very clear that God’s Word does not countenance a homosexual lifestyle; neither has the Christian Church throughout her 2000 year history. Seventh-day Adventists believe that the biblical teaching is still valid today, because it is anchored in the very nature of humanity and God’s plan at creation for marriage.

This document was voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Administrative Committee on March 9, 2004.

Other official statements on contemporary topics by Adventists can be found at the Church’s website, <http://www.adventist.org>, under “Adventist Beliefs,” then click on “Official Statements.”

REFERENCES

1. *Seventh-day Adventists Believe: A Biblical Exposition of 28 Fundamental Doctrines*, Doctrine 23 on “Marriage and the Family.”
2. Public Statement, “An Affirmation of Family,” released July 5, 1990, at the General Conference Session, Indianapolis, Indiana, U.S.A.
3. Statement voted by the General Conference Administrative Committee on April 23, 1996.
4. Statement voted by the Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee, October 3, 1999.



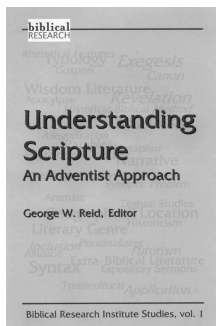
Loma Linda University Geology, Environmental and Earth System Science Bachelor of Science Programs

Geology, with emphasis in sedimentology and paleontology, prepares the student for further education at the graduate or professional level, for secondary science teaching, or work in industrial geology. Go to the website <http://www.llu.edu/llu/grad/natsci/ugrad-geo.html> for further information, or contact Dr. Leonard Brand at lbrand@llu.edu.

Environmental and Earth System Science, the integrated study of the earth’s biogeophysical systems and how human activities impact earth system sustainability, prepares students to contribute to efforts that promote better “global to local” stewardship of Planet Earth resources. The program prepares students for entry level employment or for advanced study in a variety of fields, including biology, several fields in the geosciences, environmental science, natural resource management, biotechnology, diverse health sciences as well as public policy, law or planning careers. The website <http://resweb.llu.edu/rford/EESS/> will provide more information, or contact Dr. Robert Ford at rford@llu.edu.

In these two Bachelor of Science programs, students take the first two years at any college or university and the last two years at Loma Linda University. Each program offers solid academic preparation in accord with Loma Linda University’s 100 year record of strong academic quality.

BOOKS



**Understanding Scripture:
An Adventist Approach**
edited by George W. Reid (Silver Spring,
Maryland: Biblical Research Institute,
2006; 363 pp.; paperback).

Reviewed by Atilio René Dupertuis

Published in honor of Dr. Raoul Dederen, a distinguished Adventist theologian, the book is a symposium in which 17 Adventist scholars participated. The book's purpose is to provide guidance in the study of Scriptures. The last words in the introductory chapter set the tone for the rest of the volume: "Adventists are convinced God raised the Seventh-day Adventist Church, within the challenges of the 'last days' (2 Tim. 3:1), to restore and uplift the authority of His Word and to promote a system of biblical interpretation derived from the Scripture itself" (p. 12).

The book covers areas such as the nature of revelation and inspiration, and the authority of the Bible. It introduces the reader to a series of principles of biblical interpretation that are compatible with a high view of the Bible. It concludes with two valuable appendices: "Methods of Bible Study" and "The Use of a Modified Version of the Historical-Critical Approach by Adventist Scholars." It also includes three indices: Scripture Index, Author Index, and Subject Index, which facilitate its study.

While complete uniformity in style and approach cannot be expected among all the authors, since they come from several national and cultural backgrounds, one thing is constant: the unwavering confidence in the Bible as the inspired and authoritative Word of God. The presentations are not very technical in nature and aim to reach a broad readership. However, some familiarity with serious study of the Bible would be necessary to profit fully from its excellent content.

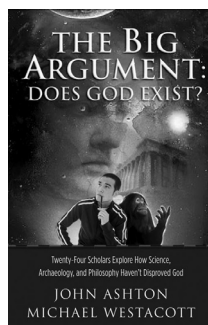
The book is offered as "an Adventist approach" to the understanding of Scripture, but it deserves broad circulation beyond the confines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Other Christians also have a high view of the Bible and could greatly benefit from it.

A few chapters in the book lean a bit too heavily on the writings of Ellen G. White to explain the nature of biblical revelation and inspiration. A stronger case in defense of the inspiration and authority of the Bible could have been made in those chapters had the Bible been allowed to stand on its own, thus being in harmony with the announced methodology of the volume: "to promote a system of bibli-

cal interpretation derived from Scripture itself" (p. 12). In any case, the position of the Adventist Church in relation to Ellen G. White's writings is clearly presented in the excellent chapter devoted in its entirety to "Ellen G. White and Hermeneutics."

Understanding Scripture is a welcome and valuable addition to the bibliography on the subject. Broad in its scope and clear in its focus, this book is essential reading for pastors, church leaders, educated laymen, and especially college and university students whose faith is often challenged by philosophical assumptions that in practice negate the divine origin and authority of Scriptures.

Atilio René Dupertuis (Th.D., Andrews University) is professor of theology, emeritus, at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, U.S.A., where he has taught for the past 20 years. His e-mail address: atiliodupertuis@yahoo.com.



**The Big Argument:
Does God Exist?**
edited by John Ashton and Michael
Westacott (Green Forest, Arkansas:
Master Books, 2005; 403 pp.;
paperback).

Reviewed by John T. Baldwin

Reading through this book was a faith-building experience. John Ashton and Michael Westacott asked 24 scientists holding Ph.D. degrees and believing strongly in a personal creator God, to share the strongest evidence at the work-bench level for their personal belief. The result is *The Big Argument: Does God Exist?*

This intellectually stimulating book is important because it represents a significant new trend. In his chapter, "Has Science Disproved God?" Barry Whitney points out that we are witnessing today a renewed interest in the rational defense of beliefs. The book is a leading work in this new movement and contains an arsenal of geological, paleontological, archeological, biblical, and philosophical evidence substantiating the Bible message. The contributors deal convincingly with questions such as: Has science disproved God? What evidence is there for Creation as opposed to evolution? Why is evil permitted? Does geological evidence exist that clearly suggests the truth of a global Flood? What about the scientific reliability of the Bible? What is the evidence that the resurrection of Jesus did occur?

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 addresses “God, Science, and Philosophy,” while Part 2 focuses on “God, History, and the Bible.” A case from each part follows, illustrating the richness of the book.

In Part 1, the chapter “The Geological Evidence for Creation,” by Andrew Snelling (Ph.D. in geology, University of Sydney), offers much compelling paleontological and geological evidence in support of what is perhaps the most strategically important creationist belief and also the most ridiculed creationist claim by evolutionary science today—namely, that a global Flood occurred in actual Earth history. Denial of this claim is theologically devastating to a belief in the merciful character of God, the truth of the atonement, and to the life hereafter, to mention only a few of the consequences of rejecting the reality of a global Flood. These considerations render Snelling’s chapter significant.

Paleontologically, many water-deposited “fossil graveyards” are found throughout the geological column. The Soon Shale in the Cedarberg Mountains of South Africa, for instance, contains thousands of nautiloids, brachiopods, conodonts (minute eel-like fossils), and other organisms at several locations hundreds of miles apart. The complete feeding apparatuses of the conodonts are exceptionally preserved. Snelling concludes: “With so much evidence for the catastrophic burial of organisms in water-deposited sediments on such a vast scale throughout the geological record, it is totally reasonable to view this devastation as due to a catastrophic global flood” (p. 136).

Geologically, the Hawkesbury Sandstone in the Sydney Basin is a flat-lying sandstone layer covering an area of about 7,722 square miles. Frequent cross-bedding up to 26 feet high, sometimes overturned, show that many underwater sand dunes 33-55 feet high were moved along by water currents traveling about 5 feet per second by water waves more than 65 feet high and up to 155 miles wide, which carried the billions of tons of sand required to deposit this sandstone over this vast area (p. 137). Snelling concludes that the extent, rate, and scale at which such rock layers were deposited “is impressive evidence for a catastrophic global flood” (p. 138).

In Part 2, Timothy Standish outlines biological evidence establishing that the central, contemporary evolutionary assertion that life first arose from non-living matter (abiogenesis) is analogous to believing the scientifically discredited teaching of Aristotle that lagoon oysters generate spontaneously from slimy mud (*History of Animals*, Book V, Chapter 15 [547b 13-20]). How can we with consistency reject the later and accept the former? We cannot. In a separate chapter, George Javor, in concert with Standish, concludes: “*life, as we know it, cannot evolve spontaneously under any condition*” (p. 111), thereby falsifying abiogenesis, and showing the need to accept the truth of Creation.

The Big Argument: Does God Exist? should be of interest to college and graduate students as well as to professors. I recommend it highly with the only regret being that its chapters were not longer.

John T. Baldwin (Ph.D., University of Chicago) is professor of theology at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, in Berrien Springs, Michigan, U.S.A. His email address: baldwin@andrews.edu.

From Hollywood

Continued from page 29

“been there and done that.” Whatever’s going on, there is only one permanent solution to your difficulties; only one answer to your deepest needs. It’s the Gethsemane Man. Read *The Desire of Ages*. Read your Bible. Read the truth.

Jesus loves you more than words can express. Why not invite Him into your heart as I did?

Steve Wohlberg is the Speaker/Director of White Horse Media. To learn more about his ministry, visit www.whitehorsemedia.com. He can also be reached at steve@whitehorsemedia.com. Mailing address: White Horse Media; 1968 N. Gateway, Suite 103; Fresno, California 93727; U.S.A. His book *From Hollywood to Heaven* (Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 2006) may be purchased in book form or as an audio CD through www.adventistbookcenter.com.

Quotable

God has given the power of choice to each person, and it is theirs to use. We cannot change our hearts. We cannot by ourselves give our love to God, but we can choose to serve Him. We can give Him the powers of our minds. He will help us choose the right way. Then our whole being will be guided by the Spirit of Christ. We will love God, and our thoughts will be like His.

— Ellen G. White

OPEN FORUM

Getting married or living together?

My girlfriend and I have a steady relationship. Since we plan to get married in a little more than a year, when we finish our university studies, we are considering the advantages of living together in one apartment before our wedding. This will help us save money, get to know each other better, and allow us to strengthen our mutual commitment. Some of our friends tell us this isn't a wise move. What do you think?

Living together without having formalized a marriage contract may seem practical, especially when there is a mutual commitment to get married at a later time.

However, there are a number of drawbacks that you need to consider. Obviously, you need to ask your girlfriend what she really feels about the idea. The majority of women look at cohabitation with some apprehension. Once they are in this kind of relationship, they see it as transitory, unstable, and insecure. With good reason, they much prefer the security of marriage from day one. Comparisons show that women living together with their boyfriends suffer more from dissatisfaction and depression than married women.

Several studies show a greater incidence of domestic violence toward women and children when there is no legal marriage involved. Furthermore,

if and when marriage is entered into, couples that have cohabited in their courting stage experience lower levels of satisfaction during the first years of marriage than those who married without living together first. This was first found in a pioneering study conducted in Canada by Robert Watson in the 1980s, and consistent results have been found in similarly-designed studies elsewhere. Perhaps the most active researcher in this area is David Olsen from the University of Minnesota who has ongoing studies with more than 20,000 engaged and married couples. These studies consistently show that couples who live separately before marriage have the highest level of satisfaction after marriage. Meanwhile, studies also show that couples living in cohabitation before marriage have the lowest level of satisfaction.

A committed, legal marriage, as opposed to living together, has several advantages. Here are a few:

1. A married relationship creates public and private commitment as well as high expectations in the couple. This, in turn, leads to a more stable relationship.

2. When crises arise, married partners display a particularly high level of energy and willingness to resolve conflict. This is because marriage is seen as a stable state of commitment.

3. Abandoning a married relationship is usually considered only as a last resort, whereas breaking a cohabitation arrangement is much easier (about one-half of couples living together out of marriage separate). This is especially meaningful to Christian couples who see marriage as a commitment for life.

4. Marriage is universally respected, while cohabitation often carries a social stigma. The majority of families

and societies expect that a committed couple will marry, not simply live together. The latter is likely to bring about alienation from the family and much pain to loved ones such as parents, siblings, and other relatives.

5. When a marriage breaks up, the law makes provision for the children and the spouse. For couples living together, previous verbal promises or agreements are usually of no consequence.

If you and your girlfriend are Bible-believing Christians, you should take into account the high view that God has had on the marriage union from the very beginning. Jesus Himself performed His first miracle to celebrate and give His stamp of approval to a wedding in Cana. In spite of the apparent short-term convenience of cohabitation, it is in reality a poor substitute for a marriage between a man and a woman who truly love each other and who remain chaste until they take their vows before God and in the presence of family and friends. You will never regret it.

Julian and Annette Melgosa are authors of the book *To Couples* (Madrid: Safeliz, 2004). Julian is dean of the School of Education and Psychology at Walla Walla College (WWC) and Annette is a librarian at the college library, College Place, Washington, U.S.A. His email address: melgju@wwc.edu. Her email: melgan@wwc.edu.

Dialogue on-line

Now you can read online some of the best articles and interviews that you may have missed in earlier issues of *Dialogue*.

Check our new, user-friendly website:

<http://dialogue.adventist.org>

GOD ALWAYS ANSWERS PRAYER



When your request is not right, God says, "No."

No, when the request is not the best He has in mind for you.

No, when the idea is absolutely wrong.

No, when though it may help you, it could create problems for someone else.



When the time is not right, God says, "Slow."

What a catastrophe it would be if God answered every prayer at the snap of your fingers. Do you know what would happen? God would become your servant, not your Lord. God would be complying with your wishes instead of you serving Him.

When you are not right, God says, "Grow."

Remember: God's delays are not God's denials. His timing is perfect. Patience and perseverance is what we need in prayer.

The selfish person has to grow into unselfishness.

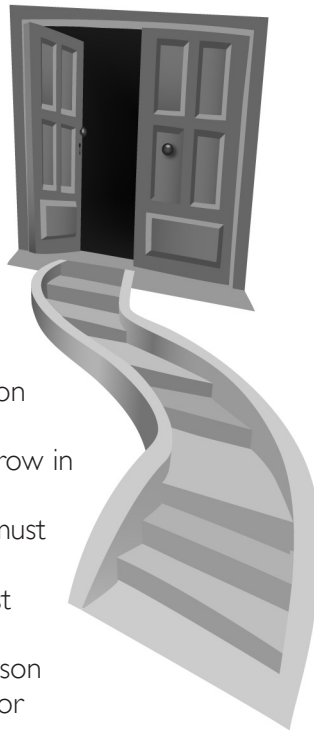
The overly cautious person must grow courage.

The timid person must grow in confidence.

The dominating person must grow in tolerance.

The negative person must grow in positive attitudes.

The pleasure-seeking person must grow in compassion for suffering people.



When everything is all right, God says, "Go."

Then miracles happen:

The helpless alcoholic is set free.

The covetous becomes generous.

The drug addict finds release.

The angry-prone person becomes forgiving and patient.

The doubter becomes as a child in trust.

Diseased tissue responds to treatment and healing begins.

The door to your dream suddenly swings open and there stands God saying, "Go!"



If the Lord has you on hold, hold on!
If the Lord has said "No" to you, thank Him!
If the Lord is molding your heart and mind, go with His change!
If the Lord opens doors that you have been asking Him to open, praise Him!
Be trustful and grateful wherever you are in your life today.
God, who knows what is best for you, has His hands on the situation.



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY

Excellence...in the health sciences

ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Clinical laboratory sciences (BS)
Coding specialist (CERTIFICATE)
Cytotechnology (BS, CERTIFICATE)
Diagnostic medical sonography (CERTIFICATE)
Dietetic technology (AS, CERTIFICATE)
Emergency medical care (BS)
Health information administration
(BS, CERTIFICATE)
Health information technology
(BS; *on-campus or online*)
Medical radiography (AS)
Nutrition (MS)
Nutrition care management (MS)
Nutrition and dietetics
(BS, PROGRESSION BS, CERTIFICATE)
Nuclear medicine technology (CERTIFICATE)
Occupational therapy (MOT, PPMOT, OTD)
Occupational therapy assistant (AA)
Phlebotomy (CERTIFICATE)
Physical therapy (PMPT, PPMPT, DPT, DSc)
Physical therapy assistant (AS)
Physician assistant (MPA)
Radiation sciences (BS)
Radiation therapy technology (CERTIFICATE)
Rehabilitation sciences (PHD)
Respiratory care (BS, PPBS)
Special imaging technology—CT/MRI; CVI
(CERTIFICATE)
Speech-language pathology (MS, CERTIFICATE)
Speech-language pathology & audiology (BS)
Speech-language pathology assistant (AS)

DENTISTRY

Dental hygiene (BS)
Dentistry (DDS)
Dentistry/basic medical sciences (DDS/MS,
DDS/PHD)
Dental anesthesiology (CERTIFICATE)
Endodontics (MS, CERTIFICATE)
Implant dentistry (MS, CERTIFICATE)
Oral/maxillofacial surgery (MS, CERTIFICATE)
Orthodontics & dentofacial orthopaedics (MS,
CERTIFICATE)
Pediatric dentistry (MS, CERTIFICATE)
Periodontics (MS, CERTIFICATE)
Prosthodontics (MS, CERTIFICATE)

FACULTY OF RELIGION

Biomedical and clinical ethics
(MA, CERTIFICATE)
Clinical ministry (MA, CERTIFICATE)
Religion and the sciences (MA)

MEDICINE

Anatomy (MS, PHD)
Biochemistry (MS, PHD)
Biomedical sciences (CERTIFICATE)
Medicine (MD)
Medical scientist program (MD/MS, MD/PHD)
Microbiology/molecular medicine (MS, PHD)
Pharmacology (MS, PHD)
Physiology (MS, PHD)

NURSING

Baccalaureate program in nursing (BS, BA/BS
OPTION, RNBS OPTION, RNMS OPTION)
Master of science in nursing (MS)
Adult nurse practitioner (ANP)
(POST-MASTER'S CERTIFICATE)
Clinical nurse specialist:
Adult & aging family (CNS)
(POST-MASTER'S CERTIFICATE)
Growing family (CNS)
(POST-MASTER'S CERTIFICATE)
Nursing/clinical ethics (MS/MA)
Family nurse practitioner (FNP)
(POST-MASTER'S CERTIFICATE)
Neonatal nurse practitioner (NNP)
(POST-MASTER'S CERTIFICATE)
Pediatric nurse practitioner (PNP)
(POST-MASTER'S CERTIFICATE)
Nursing administration
Nursing educator
Doctor of philosophy in nursing (PHD)

PHARMACY

Doctor of pharmacy (PHARM.D)

For more information, please contact:
Loma Linda University
Office of Enrollment Management
11139 Anderson Street
Loma Linda, California 92350
(800) 422-4558 • www.llu.edu

PUBLIC HEALTH

Basic & advanced biostatistics (CERTIFICATE)
Basic & advanced epidemiology (CERTIFICATE)
Biostatistics (MPH, MSPH)
Emergency preparedness and response
(CERTIFICATE)
Environmental & occupational health (MPH)
Epidemiology (MPH, DRPH)
Epidemiologic research methods (CERTIFICATE)
Global health (MPH*)
Health administration (MPH*; MBA; BSPH)
Health education (MPH*; DRPH)
Health geographics & biomedical data
management (BSPH)
Health geoinformatics (CERTIFICATE)
Lifestyle intervention (CERTIFICATE)
Maternal and child health (MPH)
Nutrition (MS, MPH, DRPH)
Preventive care (DRPH)
Public health practice (MPH*)
Reproductive health (CERTIFICATE)
Tobacco-control methods (CERTIFICATE*)

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Biology (MS, PHD)
Case management (CERTIFICATE)
Child life specialist (MS, CERTIFICATE)
Clinical mediation (CERTIFICATE)
Counseling (MS)
Criminal justice (MS)
Drug & alcohol counseling (CERTIFICATE)
Earth science (PHD)
Environmental & earth system science
(MS, CERTIFICATE)
Family counseling (CERTIFICATE)
Family life education (CERTIFICATE)
Family studies (MA, PHD)
Geology (BS, MS)
Gerontology (MS)
Group counseling (CERTIFICATE)
Health professions education
(MS, CERTIFICATE)
Marital & family therapy (MS, DMFT, PHD)
Natural sciences (MS)
Psychology (MA, PSYD)
Clinical (PHD)
Experimental (PHD)
Public administration (DPA)
School counseling (CERTIFICATE)
Social policy & social research (PHD)
Social work (MSW, PHD)
Spanish studies for health care professionals
(CERTIFICATE)

*Available in non-traditional formats

INTERCHANGE

Expand your friendship network

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

Caleb Babatope Adaramola: 21; male; single; studying sociology and anthropology at Obafemi Awolowo University; interests: table tennis, basketball, and soccer; correspondence in English. NIGERIA. Email: justonetop@yahoo.com.

Olanrewaju Oluseun Adegbite: 19; male; single; studying civil engineering at Polytechnic Ibadan; interests: reading the Bible, making new friends, and singing; correspondence in English. NIGERIA. Email: seventhdayblack@yahoo.com.

Kenneth Onyango Ageng'o: 34; male; married; studying geography and economics at University of Nairobi; interests: basketball, biblical literature, and aiding in environmental research around Lake Victoria; correspondence in English. KENYA. Email: agengo2003@yahoo.com.

Honorat Akonde: 24; male; single; studying economics at Université de Parakou; interests: outreach activities, talking about my faith, and scientific research; correspondence in French or Goun. BENIN. Email: akhonort2@yahoo.fr.

Glaydson Demetrio Almeida: 27; male; single; studying nursing at Universidad de Montemorelos; interests: music, travel, sports, and collecting postcards; correspondence in Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, or Italian. MEXICO. Email: demetrio2x@hotmail.com.

Asande Denis Anari: 25; male; single; completing a degree in physics at JKUAT; interests: adventures, reading, and sharing my faith; correspondence in English, Swahili, or Kissi. KENYA. Email: asande06@yahoo.co.uk.

Tiago Silva Curria de Andrade: 19; male; single; studying Portuguese and Spanish at Instituto Alvorada

Plus; interests: reading, helping at the Pathfinders club, and making new friends; correspondence in Portuguese or Spanish. BRAZIL. Email: tcurria@hotmail.com.

Chris Annan: 22; male; single; holds a diploma in shipping management and insurance; interests: hiking, reading, and internet surfing; correspondence in English or French. GHANA. Email: chris9ce@yahoo.com or adedieba@hotmail.com.

Samuel Kofi Arhin: 25; male; single; pursuing a degree in dental technology; interests: travel, reading, and making new friends; correspondence in English. GHANA. Email: samkoarhin@yahoo.co.uk.

Pamela Mora Armenta: 23; female; single; holds a degree in English; interests: travel and making new friends; correspondence in English or Spanish. U.S.A. Email: pammela@hotmail.com.

Roselou Bantaculo: 24; female; single; working as a missionary; interests: singing, playing musical instruments, and hiking; correspondence in English. KOREA. Email: aeonflux_6x7@yahoo.com.

Christian Adrián Bentancor: 22; male; single; studying theology at Universidad Adventista del Plata; interests: collecting key rings, sports, and discussing contemporary issues; correspondence in Spanish. ARGENTINA. Email: chabew@hotmail.com.

Elianny Altargracia Berrido G.: 21; female; single; studying medicine; interests: camping, making new friends, and spending time talking with them; correspondence in Spanish, English, Portuguese, or German. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. Email: la_gordita_26@hotmail.com or Ellie-Garcia@lycos.es.

Midiã Andrade Brito: 21; female;

single; pursuing studies in accounting at Fundação Visconde de Cairu; interests: music, reading, and making new friends; correspondence in Portuguese. BRAZIL. Email: midia_andrade@yahoo.com.br.

Carmen Rosa Cáceres D.: 24; female; single; holds a degree in business administration; interests: travel, learning about other cultures, and making new friends; correspondence in Spanish. BOLIVIA. Email: asor50@hotmail.com.

Tânia Márcia de Domênicis Casseano: 46; female; married; holds a degree in literature and working as a teacher; interest: gardening; correspondence in Portuguese or English. BRAZIL. Email: juninho_cris@hotmail.com.

Luiz Roberto Casseano Jr.: 23; male; single; holds a degree in physical therapy; interests: sports and camping; correspondence in Portuguese or English. BRAZIL. Email: luizrobertocasseano@bol.com.br.

Amaku Lawrence Chukwudi: 24; male; single; pursuing a degree in electrical and electronics engineering at Federal Polytechnic Oko; interests: music, reading, and soccer; correspondence in English. NIGERIA. Email: chidoo4all2000@yahoo.com.

Sergio Mauricio Conde S.: 21; male; single; pursuing a degree in education; interest: making new friends; correspondence in Spanish or English. BOLIVIA. Email: mauricio70743440@hotmail.com or 59170743440@viva-gsm.com.

Milton Chicalé Correia: 56; male; married; holds a master degree in education; interests: reading about education subjects, travel, movies, and soccer; correspondence in Portuguese, Spanish, English, or French. BRAZIL. Email: m.chicale.correia@bol.com.br.

Damaris Cruz M.: 26; female; single; holds a degree in law; interests: making new friends, learning about other cultures, and listening to religious music; correspondence in Spanish or English. MEXICO. Email: damarisonzon@yahoo.com.mx.

Lovelee Melodee Daniel: 18; female; single; pursuing a degree in science and letters at French Harbour Adventist College; interests: listening to gospel music, writing songs

and poems, and making new friends; correspondence in English, Spanish or French. HONDURAS. Email: roatandarkangel@yahoo.com or love2kool4u@hotmail.com.

Patrice Djiro: 28; male; single; pursuing a degree in computer science; interests: music, travel, and making new friends; correspondence in French or English. CHAD. Email: djipat_ ng2000@yahoo.fr.

Jean-Pierre Elisee: 50; male; divorced; completing a master degree in English and translation at University of the Antilles and French Guyana; interests: music, singing in a choir, and travel; correspondence in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese; MARTINIQUE (French Overseas Department) Email: jeanpierrelisee@hotmail.com.

Stephani Espinal: 17; female; single; ready to start university studies; interests: health and medicine, and developing a good relationship with God, family and friends; correspondence in Spanish. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. Email: stephani_ m89@yahoo.com.

Nancy González: 47; female; married; interests: sharing my faith, reading, and writing letters; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: P.O. Box 192902, San Juan, 00919-2902 PUERTO RICO.

Tanja Halbknapp: 19; female; single; pursuing a degree in tourism and economics; interests: studying the Bible, nature, and playing the guitar; correspondence in German, English, or Spanish. AUSTRIA. Email: silberfisc@yahoo.de.

Juliana Ihechi S.: 24; female; single; pursuing a degree in chemical engineering at Institute of Management and Technology; interests: singing, cooking, and reading; correspondence in English. NIGERIA. Email: julian_4chi@yahoo.com or ihechiks2000@yahoo.com.

Gélison Rony França de Jesus: 21; male; single; pursuing a degree in education at Faculdade Adventista da Bahia; interests: internet surfing, reading, and sharing time with friends; correspondence in Portuguese. BRAZIL. Email: gelisonronyfranca@yahoo.com.br.

Loriza Kettle: 34; female; single;

holds a degree in journalism; interests: reading, music, and speaking with friends; correspondence in Portuguese or English. BRAZIL. Email: loriza@gmail.com.

Ian Larry: 21; male; single; pursuing a degree in education at Pacific Adventist University; interests: music, sports, and singing; correspondence in English. PAPUA NEW GUINEA. Email: ilarry@pau.ac.pg.

Elizabeth T. Laviña: 45; female; separated; working as an elementary teacher in a church school; interests: strumming the guitar, biking, and internet exchanges; correspondence in English. PHILIPPINES. Email: thebz_44@yahoo.com.

Thembo Eriab Lawson: 27; male; single; holds a degree in education with emphasis in English and history; interests: reading classical and biblical literature, Christian music, and making new friends; correspondence in English. UGANDA. Email: thembolawson@yahoo.com.

Charity A. de Leon: 28; female; single; holds a degree in physical therapy; interests: music, nature, and reading about other cultures; correspondence in English. PHILIPPINES. Email: oceandee11478@yahoo.com.

Mufungulwa Likando: 28; female; married; pursuing a degree in English and literature at Zambia Adventist University; interests: sharing Christian experiences, singing gospel music, and playing scrabble; correspondence in English. Address: P.O. Box 940200; Kaoma; ZAMBIA.

Ella Liza Villaver Llanto: 25; female; single; studying civil engineering at the University of Mindanao; interests: camping, travel, and learning other languages; correspondence in English or Filipino. PHILIPPINES. Email: alleazil818@yahoo.com.

Andre Toutou Kabeya Luendu: 26; male; single; pursuing a degree in technology for rural development at Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural at Tshibashi; interests: listening to religious music, soccer, and making new friends; correspondence in French, Lingala, or Tshiluba. D. R. OF CONGO. Email: toutoukabeya@yahoo.fr.

Angélica del Pilar Joo Luna: 20; female; single; studying English at

Centro Universitario del Idioma; interests: volleyball, singing, outdoor walking, and cooking; correspondence in Spanish or English. ARGENTINA. Email: rizlittle@yahoo.es or rizlittle@hotmail.com.

Jane Ranises Magtrayo: 24; female; single; studying nursing at Mountain View College; interests: reading, knowing God intimately, and music; correspondence in English or Tagalog. PHILIPPINES. Email: jen_mag2104@yahoo.com or sweet-jane_22@hotmail.com.

Yacqueline Martínez B.: 21; female; single; studying art; interests: reading, making new friends, and nature; correspondence in Spanish. EL SALVADOR. Email: jobel@myway.com.

Elizabeth C. Martínez P.: 24; female; married; studying nursing at Universidad de Puerto Rico at Humacao; interests: listening to Christian music, making new friends, and sharing personal experiences; correspondence in Spanish. PUERTO RICO. Email: palmar26@hotmail.com or palmar26@yahoo.com.

Iverson dos Passos Martins: 34; male; single; studying theology at IAENE; interests: learning languages, reading, and collecting postcards; correspondence in Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, French or English. Address: Rua Francisco Gueiros 581, Heliopolis, Garanhuns, PE 55290-000, BRAZIL.

Emmanuel Tunzo Mngumi: 24; male; single; pursuing a degree in education at Morogoro Teachers College; interests: listening to Christian music, computers, and making new friends; correspondence in English or Swahili. TANZANIA. Email: franleys@yahoo.com.

James Mubonderi: 21; male; single; studying at the University of Fort Hare; interests: reading, travel, and making new friends; correspondence in English. ZIMBABWE. Email: kulejam@yahoo.com.

Yves Muhire: 23; male; single; studying law at National University of Rwanda; interests: Christian music, reading, and sports; correspondence in French. RWANDA. Email: muhireyves@yahoo.fr.

Kevin Mwanmbi M.: 23; male; single; pursuing a degree in animal production at Egerton University; interests: reading Ellen G. White books, walking outdoors, and learning other languages; correspondence in English or Swahili. KENYA. Email: mwakevi83@yahoo.com.

Imelda L. Nayre: 38; female; a widow; holds a degree in midwifery; interests: reading, singing, and cooking; correspondence in English. PHILIPPINES. Email: inayre@yahoo.com.

Okoro Daisy Nneoma: 21; female; single; studying foreign language and translation studies at Abia State University; interests: travel, music, and making new friends; correspondence in French or English. NIGERIA. Email: determineddaisy@myway.com.

Silvia Verónica Noriega: 26; female; single; pursuing a degree in architectural design at UCLA ; interests: singing, learning languages, and sharing my faith; correspondence in Spanish or English. VENEZUELA. Email: silviav8378@hotmail.com or veronica.noriega@gmail.com.

John Peter Nsengimana: 29; male; single; studying mathematics and physics education at Kigali Institute of Education; interests: reading, travel, and making new friends; correspondence in English, French, or Kinyarwanda. RWANDA. Email: jpnseng@yahoo.fr.

Francisco Javier Núñez P.: 23; male; single; studying film and media production at Universidad del Mar; interests: music, movies, and learning more about God; correspondence in Spanish or English. CHILE. Email: elnupar@gmail.com.

Ugochukwu Daniel Nwaogwugwu: 27; male; single; pursuing a degree in mathematics and computer science at Federal University of Technology; interests: singing, swimming, and travel; correspondence in English, Igbo, or Yoruba; NIGERIA. Email: ugosluf@yahoo.com.

Benjamin Mutuku Nzioka: 23; male; single; pursuing a degree in education at the University of Nairobi; interests: reading, singing, and playing the piano; correspondence in English. KENYA. Email: benzimut@yahoo.com.

Paul Allen Oche: 24; single; male; studying electronic engineering at University of Nigeria at Nsukka; interests: poetry, reading, listening to classical music, and research; correspondence in English. NIGERIA. Email: ochpaul@yahoo.com.

Nicky Okeyo Odhiambo: 28; male; single; studying applied statistics at Maseno University; interests: making new friends, listening to Christian music, and helping people in need; correspondence in English, Swahili, or Luo. KENYA. Email: nickokeyo2000@yahoo.com.

Calvince Odhiambo Ogola: 21; male; single; holds a degree in computer management; interests: Bible study, travel, and making new friends; correspondence in English, Swahili or French. KENYA. Email: olive03sep@yahoo.com.

Nsabimana Philemon Olivier: 23; male; single; pursuing a degree in pharmacy at the National University of Rwanda; interests: singing gospel music, nature, and reading; correspondence in French, English, or Kinyarwanda. RWANDA. Email: olinsabi003@yahoo.fr.

Samson Moracha Omgongi: 28; male; single; pursuing a doctoral degree at Guru Manak University; interests: making new friends, travel, and listening to religious songs; correspondence in English. INDIA. Email: sam_moracha@yahoo.com.

Luke Mogusu Ongigo: 28; male; single; studying commercial management and accounting at Rani Durgawati University; interests: making new friends, reading spiritual books, and travel; correspondence in English. INDIA. Email: mogusu_luke@yahoo.com.

Sally A. Ooko: 23; female; single; pursuing a degree in mathematics and economics at Egerton University; interests: nature, gospel music, and making new friends; correspondence in English. KENYA. Email: sallyooko05@yahoo.co.uk.

Alex Osei-Kojo: 20; male; single; pursuing a degree in political science at the University of Ghana; interests: watching soccer, singing, and listening to gospel music; correspondence in English. GHANA. Email: oseikojoalex@yahoo.co.uk.

Austin O. Osuagwu: 25; male; single; studying at IMO State University; interests: reading, writing, drawing, and singing; correspondence in English. NIGERIA. Email: austinomy@yahoo.com.

Covenant Oyetade: 32; male; single; pursuing a degree in elementary education and Christian religious studies at Tai Solarin University; interests: reading Christian novels, movies, drawing, and painting; correspondence in English. NIGERIA. Email: wow2005@fastermail.com.

Kenneth Otieno Owuor: 22; male; single; studying electrical engineering at Western University; interests: studying the Bible and Ellen G. White books, youth activities, working with Adventurers and Pathfinders, and listening to Christian music; correspondence in English or Swahili. KENYA. Email: kennoowuor@yahoo.com.

Alpha Amor Parado: 23; female; single; pursuing a degree in education at Adventist University of the Philippines; interests: singing, scrabble, and making new friends; correspondence in English or Filipino; PHILIPPINES. Email: jayal_15@yahoo.com.

José Luis Pérez V.: 25; male; single; teaching English and arts at the secondary level; interests: painting, reading, and listening to music; correspondence in Spanish or English. MEXICO. Email: Gracias_a_Dios_@hotmail.com.

Martin Pete'e: 19; male; single; pursuing a degree in accounting and computer management; interests: singing, listening to powerful preachers, and swimming; correspondence in English. PAPUA NEW GUINEA. Email: mpete'e@pau.ac.pg.

Pearly Mae Platil: 24; female; single; studying administration at Cagayan de Oro College; interests: making new friends and nature; correspondence in English. PHILIPPINES. Email: preaxy143@yahoo.com.

Rigoberto Onas Quiñones: 30; male; single; holds a degree in informatics; interests: sports, making new friends, Christian music, and reading the Bible; correspondence in Spanish. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. Email: jonas9056@hotmail.com.

Hery Zo Razakandraibe: 21; male;

single; studying theology at Université Adventiste Zurcher; interests: reading, playing the guitar, and youth activities; correspondence in Malgasy, French, or English. MADAGASCAR. Email: heryzobe@yahoo.fr.

Yosairys C. Richiez: 17; female; single; studying accounting; interests: making new friends and sharing my faith; correspondence in Spanish. PUERTO RICO. Email: mariposa_yosi@hotmail.com.

Roberto Riveros Ch.: 51; male; married; a mining engineer; interests: hiking and supporting ADRA emergency projects; correspondence in Spanish or English. CHILE. Email: harshalomltd@gmail.com.

Sandor Rodríguez D.: 29; male; single; holds a degree in food management; interests: sharing my faith, playing the guitar, and travel; correspondence in Spanish. Address: Calle 26 # 3332 entre 33 y final; Madruga, La Habana; CUBA.

Josías Emmanuel Scholles: 22; male; single; studying graphic design at Universidad Nacional de Misiones; interest: making new friends, especially those in the graphic field; correspondence in Spanish. ARGENTINA. Email: josiasboca2003@hotmail.com.

Rubia Gomes da Silva: 19; female; single; studying journalism at UNASP; interests: reading, poetry, making new friends, and cooking; correspondence in Portuguese, Spanish, or English. BRAZIL. Email: sourubinha@yahoo.com.br.

Marlene Grace L. Son: 52; female; separated; holds a diploma in secretarial administration; interests: public speaking, writing, and research; correspondence in English or Filipino. PHILIPPINES. Email: marlene_son@yahoo.com.

Gilbert Sosi: 22; male; single; studying geospatial engineering at the University of Nairobi; interests: listening to gospel music, camping, and reading inspirational materials; correspondence in English. KENYA. Email: gilbertsosi@yahoo.com.

David Teodoro Sotomayor: 21; male; single; an electrical technician; interests: sharing my faith, church activities, singing, and travel; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: Calle Revolución # 503,

entre Independencia y Juan B. Zayas, Cruces, Cienfuegos, 57500 CUBA.

Ismael Martins de Souza: 38; male; single; teaching physical education; interests: singing with the church choir, camping, and travel; correspondence in Portuguese. BRAZIL. Email: ismaeladventista@yahoo.com.br.

Adeyemo Temilade: 24; female; single; studying law at the University of Lagos; interests: singing, reading novels, and sightseeing; correspondence in English. NIGERIA. Email: timmyd4real@yahoo.com.

Pau Kap Thang: 30; male; single; completed college studies; interests: reading, travel, and listening to music; correspondence in Burmese or English. MYANMAR. Email: thangpi7@gmail.com

Thang Sian Tuang ThawmTe: 23; male; single; studying industrial arts at Spicer Memorial College; interests: playing the guitar, making new friends, and soccer; correspondence in English or Chinese. INDIA. Email: siantuang@rediffmail.com.

Tony Theomae: 22; male; single; pursuing a degree in chemistry and mathematics at Pacific Adventist University; interests: playing soccer, reading, and visiting other countries; correspondence in English. PAPUA NEW GUINEA. Email: ttheomae@pau.ac.pg.

Leandro Corporan Tiburcio: 27; male; single; studying electronics and computer sciences at Universidad Adventista Dominicana; interests: music, sports, and reading; correspondence in Spanish or English. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. Email: leandroct09@yahoo.com.

Mang Sian Tuang: 26; male; single; holds a degree in religious studies; interests: preaching, reading, listening to sacred music, and making new friends; correspondence in English. MYANMAR. Email: mstuang@yahoo.com.

Thang Sawm Tung: 21; male; single; studying religion at Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary; interests: carpentry, reading religious subjects, and exchanging ideas with friends; correspondence in English or Burmese. MYANMAR. Email: muas@myanmar.com.mm.

Alwyn Evan Upolu: 23; male;

single; studying theology at Pacific Adventist University; interests: playing soccer, reading history books, and listening to gospel music; correspondence in English. PAPUA NEW GUINEA. Email: aupolu@pau.ac.pg or st_th_alwynu@pau.ac.pg.

Milagros E. Waminal: 27; female; single; completing a degree in computer engineering at Cagayan de Oro College; interests: drawing, gardening, and outdoor activities; correspondence in English or Spanish. PHILIPPINES. Email: wamsmide_garfield@yahoo.com.

Nomar E. Waminal: 23; male; single; studying biology at Mountain View College; interests: sports, music, outdoor activities, and photography; correspondence in English, Filipino, or Cebuano. PHILIPPINES. Email: planetypus@yahoo.com.

Dorcas Yankey: 25; female; single; working as a teacher; interests: cooking, making new friends, and travel; correspondence in English. Address: S.D.A. Church; P.O. Box 42; Aiyinase-Mzema East; GHANA.

Invitation

If you are an Adventist college/university student or professional and wish to be listed in Interchange, send us the following information: (1) Your full name, with your family name in capital letters; (2) your age; (3) your sex; (4) your marital status; (5) your current field of studies or degree obtained and specialty; (6) the college or university you are attending or from which you graduated; (7) your top three hobbies or interests; (8) language(s) in which you would like to correspond; (9) the name of the local Adventist congregation of which you are a member; (10) your mailing address; (11) if available, your email address. Please write clearly. Mail this information to *Dialogue* Interchange; 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; U.S.A. You can also use email: shulzs@gc.adventist.org. We will list here only those who provide all the 10 items of information requested above.

Dialogue cannot assume responsibility for the accuracy of the information submitted or for the content of the correspondence that may ensue.