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**Science and design:
A physicist's perspective**

**When science
rejected God**

**Ellen G. White
and mental health**

God's timing, God's way

**An offering
"without blemish"**

3

Volume 20

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CONTENTS

ESSAYS

5 Science and design: A physicist's perspective

"The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever; that we may do all the words of this law" Deuteronomy 29:29, (ESV)*

by *Gary Burdick*

8 When science rejected God

As presently practiced, science is the odd combination of the study of nature and a secular philosophy that excludes God! This is not an open search for truth.

by *Ariel A. Roth*

11 Ellen G. White and mental health

In a postmodern world that questions the relevancy of truth, how does a Christian affirm that truth indeed is?

by *Merlin D. Burt*

DEPARTMENTS

EDITORIAL

- 3 Be a Daniel or Daniella!
by *Lisa M. Beardsley*

PROFILE

- 15 Fiaia Matainaho
and Teatulohi Matainaho
by *Lisa Beardsley*

- 18 Silvia and Arturo Finis
by *Lorena Mayer*

BOOKS

- 20 *E. J. Waggoner: From the
Physician of Good News to the
Agent of Division*
by Woodrow Whidden
Reviewed by *Aecio E. Cairus*

- 21 *Science Discovers God:
Seven Convincing Lines of
Evidence for His Existence*
by Ariel A. Roth
Reviewed by *David Cowles*

- 22 *20 Questions God Wants to Ask
You: Life-Changing Encounters
With the Divine*
By Troy Fitzgerald
Reviewed by *Younis S. Masih*

FIRST PERSON

- 23 God's timing, God's way
by *Patricia Jones*

LOGOS

- 25 An offering "without blemish"
by *Gerry D. Karst*

ACTION REPORT

- 27 In Britain: A conference for schol-
ars seeking faith
by *Karen K. Abrahamson*

- 28 Romanian College hosts EUD's
Fourth International AMiCUS
congress
by *Cristina Neagu*

32 INDEX

Volumes 16-20

EDITORIAL

Be a Daniel or Daniella!

In his book *70 Years of Miracles*, Richard H. Harvey writes about a chemistry professor. Professor Lee was a deist who for many years attacked prayer. After lecturing about the power of the laws of nature and what he perceived as lack of evidence for believing that God intervenes in human affairs, Dr. Lee would proceed to tell the students that he was going to drop a test tube to the floor. He challenged any student to pray that the glass tube would not break. One day a student stood up and offered to pray; the professor was caught off guard. No one had ever dared him before!

Our young people in secular schools and universities are daily exposed to situations similar to Harvey's story. Ridicule, unbelief, and open challenge to one's faith often constitute the scene believing students face in secular campuses.

But that is not unusual. We can go back to the time of Daniel. He and his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were taken captive to Babylon. The first challenge they had to face concerned their faith and lifestyle (Daniel 1:3-21). Their names were changed. They were to fall in line with Babylonian customs, eat the food of the king, and partake of the king's lifestyle. But they chose not to. They were given the best education Babylon could offer. They learned in that atmosphere, but when the best of Babylon was in conflict with their beliefs, they refused it. They defied the empire, and they prevailed.

Today we have many Daniels studying in secular institutions, and they face a hostile world. My son chose to study law, and thousands of others seek a profession of their choice and find those professions unavailable in Adventist institutions. They find themselves in public universities and often confront a challenge to their faith. Such challenges, instead of weakening their faith, can lead them to stand up like Daniel and his friends and share their faith with their teachers and fellow students.

In this issue, you will read of courage and conviction, faith and mission that ought to characterize Adventist students in secular campuses. Read Ariel Roth's analysis on science's claim that religion is not to be trusted, and find out how you can meet its attempt to "demonstrate its superiority over religious beliefs." Take a look at the fresh perspective physicist Gary Burdick provides about a believer standing tall in a world of science. Don't fail to read the heart-warming testimony of Pat Jones that however rough and uncertain the road may be, one is not alone when one walks with God.



The world has always been there – from Babylon

Continued on page 4

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.

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LETTERS

Shalom, dear brothers of the editorial team!

I am very happy to have discovered *Dialogue*. I have almost finished my studies and have just finished reading a copy given to me by a friend. Congratulations to the editorial team for their articles and in-depth studies on progress, health, prayer, spiritual development, and so much more....

They are an inexhaustible supply of ideas that I use for my presentations on drug addiction, sexuality, wholesome nutrition, and other current topics. I'm really enthusiastic about sharing what I learn from reading *Dialogue* and passing on my experiences to everyone I meet.

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Thank you

I would like to thank you for the care that you are showing. I get really happy every time I receive an issue because it has been helping in my spiritual journey. May God keep blessing each one of you at *Dialogue!*

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"There is much for all to learn, and there cannot be invented a better use for brain, bone, and muscle than to accept the wisdom of God in doing good... Youth may be useful to others, making their labors lighter, soothing the sorrowing, lifting up the discouraged, speaking words of comfort to the hopeless, turning the minds from fun and frolic which often carries them beyond dignity of manhood and womanhood to shame and disgrace. The Lord would have the mind elevated, seeking higher, nobler channels of usefulness."

— Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Vol. 2, page 323, 324

(*Review & Herald Publ. Assn.*, 1958)

Editorial

Continued from page 3

to Rome to today's temples of secular learning. In that real world, modern Daniels and Daniellas are called to live, work, worship, and witness. Wherever you are, grab every challenge and turn it into an opportunity to affirm and enrich your faith. The church, too, must not lag behind in engaging our scholars and professionals and providing them a safe place for meaningful dialogue and growth.

As the radio commentator Paul Harvey used to say, "And now the rest of the story," here's rest of the story Richard Harvey tells in his book. Startled, Lee dropped the test tube onto his foot. It rolled off the tip of his shoe and then on to the floor, but it did not break. The class applauded the boldness of the student, and from that moment on, Dr. Lee stopped lecturing against prayer. Call it what you want: an answer to prayer? a pure coincidence?

I choose to believe in a God who still stands with Daniels today.



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Science and design: A physicist's perspective

by Gary Burdick

“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.” Deuteronomy 29:29 (ESV)*

Science does an excellent job of describing and explaining natural phenomena in the world around us. Scientists, however, are not content with merely describing phenomena. They strive to understand the underlying structure, the fundamental laws of nature that determine these phenomena. It is at this deeper level of explanation that conflict may arise between science and theology because science, as generally practiced, attempts to use exclusively naturalistic language in its explanations.

As science develops more complete naturalistic explanations to describe the universe, it may appear that there is less room for God in the picture. And if science ever discovers a “complete” theory, it could be presumed that it would describe a universe without God. I am confident, however, that this conclusion is neither necessary nor valid. Drawing upon examples from physics, my purpose is to show that in developing a more complete picture of the universe, scientists are led to greater evidences for God and His design.

Increasingly over the past few decades, tremendous effort and resources have been expended to find an ultimate theory of physics. These attempts have names such as the “Grand Unified Theory,” or the “Theory of Everything,” and include

such proposals as Quantum Loop Gravity, String Theory, and M-Theory. This quest is sufficiently profound that many of its practitioners cannot help but use theological language in its description. Some have called it the quest for the Holy Grail of science. Stephen Hawking talks about this as a search to know “the mind of God.”¹ Although the “God” Hawking refers to is merely one small facet of the God we know from the Bible, this does acknowledge that a complete theory would not preclude theistic belief.

Extensive summaries of the current state of the quest for a complete theory have been written.² Rather than attempt another summary, I will examine just one piece of the puzzle and consider its theological implications.

Elemental abundances

Physicists have long wondered why Earth has just the right proportions of carbon, oxygen, and other elements necessary for life. Sixty years ago, they understood how the sun and other stars fuse hydrogen into helium, but there seemed to be no mechanism for making heavier elements. When two helium atoms collide, they form an extremely unstable form of beryllium, which immediately³ separates back into two helium atoms. Three helium atoms need to bond to create carbon, but the chance of a third helium atom colliding with the beryllium before it separates was shown to be far too small to allow formation of the carbon we observe.

At that time, this was seen by some as convincing evidence for “scientific creation.” Science could not explain the carbon and oxygen on Earth. Thus it was argued that these elements could only be here in the correct proportions because that was the way God created them. However, the story doesn’t stop here.

In 1953, the astronomer Fred Hoyle

hypothesized that carbon must have an excited state at a resonant energy related to the sum of energies of the unstable beryllium and helium. This resonance would enhance the creation of carbon in stars. Physicists were skeptical of Hoyle’s idea, since he was not a nuclear physicist. Nonetheless, they looked for, and discovered, the excited state at exactly the energy Hoyle predicted. This discovery of the “carbon resonance” provided an explanation for how carbon is formed.

Shortly thereafter, an “oxygen resonance” was discovered. Without this resonance, no oxygen could form. But if the resonance was too close, collisions of helium with carbon would quickly transform virtually all of the carbon into oxygen, leaving no carbon. Thus, not only must there be an “oxygen resonance,” but it must also be detuned by the correct amount to provide the appropriate ratio of carbon to oxygen.

By 1960, the mechanistic details of stellar nucleosynthesis had been clearly demonstrated. Nuclear physics could now account for the existence and abundances of the elements, including the carbon and oxygen essential for life. Since physics had filled this gap, it would seem that any argument for “design” in the elemental composi-

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tion of the universe had been refuted. However, Hoyle, who had considered himself an atheist, reacted otherwise: "From 1953 onward, Willy Fowler and I have always been intrigued by the remarkable relation of the 7.65 Mev energy level in the nucleus of ^{12}C to the 7.12 Mev level in ^{16}O . If you wanted to produce carbon and oxygen in roughly equal quantities by stellar nucleosynthesis, these are the two levels you would have to fix, and your fixing would have to be just where these levels are actually found to be. Another put-up job? Following the above argument, I am inclined to think so. A common-sense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology, and that there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature."⁴

Clearly, Hoyle was not looking at the mechanistic details when he called the universe a "put-up job." Rather, he was looking at the fundamental laws of physics that had to be fine-tuned to

create the resonances necessary for the mechanism to work.

We now know that if the Strong Nuclear Force was 0.5 per cent stronger than its actual value, there would be virtually no carbon in the universe. And if the Strong Nuclear Force was 0.5 per cent weaker, there would be virtually no oxygen.⁵ The necessity of the carbon and oxygen resonances similarly constrains the strength of the Electro-Magnetic force, the Strong Nuclear Force interaction distance, the masses of the protons and neutrons, and the Planck constant.⁶ As Hoyle discovered, the question of why the fundamental constants and laws are tuned exactly right is much more difficult to answer without recourse to a Designer than was the original question of why the universe has exactly the right abundances of the elements necessary for life.

Many in the Intelligent Design movement look for things that science cannot explain. That is, they examine places where the scientific explanation

breaks down. If those anomalies are not readily explainable by the scientific theories, then this may provide evidence that there was a designer at work. These design arguments were developed by William Paley in the 19th century. In his watch analogy, Paley imagined crossing a heath, finding a watch laying on the ground, and inquiring how it got to be there: "The inference [is] that the watch must have had a maker; that there must have existed, at some time and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer; who comprehended its construction, and designed its use."⁷ Paley saw the structure of the universe as being far more complex than a watch, concluding that the universe must have been designed.

Arguments from design may provide strong support for the existence of a Creator-Designer. However, as science advances and more previously unexplained phenomena are explained by science, gaps are closed, and God seemingly has fewer places to act in the world. This leads to a perception that God is invoked merely as a "stop-gap" measure to explain what science has not as yet explained. This is the argument given by Richard Dawkins in his book *The Blind Watchmaker*.⁸ But the fallacy of this argument can be seen in the carbon resonance problem. The answer that closed the "gap" needs itself to be explained. Basically, Dawkins tells Paley to just continue walking, and he will come to an entire automated watch-making factory blindly producing watches. This, according to Dawkins, fully explains how the watch came to be there. What Dawkins fails to realize is that the existence of an automated watch-making factory is far more difficult to explain without recourse to a Designer than was the watch in the first place.⁹

There are many more recent examples that could be given. Physicists commonly find that when they discover a mechanism to explain a previ-

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ously-unexplained phenomenon, they do so by invoking laws or principles of physics that are more fundamental, that are themselves in need of further explanation. As physicist Stephen Barr states: "In every case where science explains order, it does so, in the final analysis, by appealing to a greater, more impressive, and more comprehensive underlying orderliness. And that is why, ultimately, scientific explanations do not allow us to escape from the Design Argument: for when the scientist has done his job there is not less order to explain but more. The universe looks far more orderly to us now than it did to the ancients who appealed to that order as proof of God's existence."¹⁰

Thus, the closer we get to discovering a complete theory of physics, the more clearly we can see the underlying design of the universe. Astrophysicist Paul Davies came to a similar conclusion: "The temptation to believe that the Universe is the product of some sort of design, a manifestation of subtle aesthetic and mathematical judgment, is overwhelming. The belief that there is 'something behind it all' is one that I personally share with, I suspect, a majority of physicists."¹¹

Physics has had tremendous success in understanding the mechanistic details of how all the elements are formed. But when it comes to the question of understanding why the laws of physics are set just right to allow these mechanisms to work, many physicists acknowledge that there is an appearance of overt design in the universe.

Conclusion

Frank Hasel makes the point that "in science as well as in theology, humility is one of the rarest, yet most important, characteristics and presuppositions of those engaged in the study of both."¹² Physics provides powerful tools to understand the intricate details of God's creation. However, as physicists push the edges of their dis-

cipline to search for a more complete picture of the universe, they realize their limitations, recognizing that even their explanations reveal an underlying order that is still inexplicable. Thus, the physicist is constrained by his discipline to be humble.

Theologians are similarly constrained by their discipline to be humble. The Bible provides a reliable and trustworthy account of how God has interacted with humankind throughout history and provides all that is needful for salvation. But that does not mean all questions regarding the nature of God are answered. There is always something more for the theologian to learn about God. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'" (Isaiah 55:8, 9, ESV).

The theologian's striving for a complete picture of the unapproachable and transcendent God also requires humility. Thus, both physicist and theologian "see through a glass, darkly." We both see enough to have certain knowledge regarding what God has revealed about Himself and His creation. However, the picture is still but a shadow of the reality. We look forward to the time when we will clearly see a more complete picture and join our disciplinary perspectives, for to learn about God's creation is also to learn about God. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Corinthians 13:12, KJV).

Gary W. Burdick, Ph.D. (The University of Texas at Austin) is professor of physics and assistant dean for graduate programs, College of Arts and Sciences, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

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English Standard Version

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When science rejected God

by Ariel A. Roth

As presently practiced, science is the odd combination of the study of nature and a secular philosophy that excludes God! This is not an open search for truth.

When Christopher Columbus set out sailing west in 1492, he hoped to eventually reach the shores of India in the East. His plan was based on his conviction that the earth was a sphere, and so a ship sailing west should surely eventually find itself on the eastern side of the globe. At a meeting in Salamanca, Spain, the church leaders argued against his ideas, warning that the earth was flat and if he set out west, he would not reach the west but rather fall off the edge of a flat earth. Columbus sailed off west anyway, but instead of landing in India, he landed on the eastern shores of the Americas – a serendipitous discovery that opened doors to the New World.

Parts of this story are fabricated. It is true that Columbus believed that the earth was a sphere and that if one sails west from Europe on open seas, a spherical earth should eventually take one to the eastern part of the globe. However, the great fallacy of the legend lies in the often-repeated story that the church leaders of that time asserted that the earth was flat and that they tried to prevent Columbus from undertaking a voyage that was headed to a disastrous plunge at the ultimate edge of the earth.

The belief that during the Middle Ages, church leaders advocated a flat earth theory is a myth.¹ Several writers were culprits in crafting the fallacy and attributing it to the church. In the early nineteenth century, the popular American writer Washington Irving freely combined history with fiction.

He described how the church fathers assailed Columbus at the famed meeting at Salamanca. Irving argued that church leaders provided Columbus with a long list of authorities who validated the flatness of the earth. However, this account should not be taken seriously; it has been evaluated as fictitious. History notes that at the Salamanca meeting, concerns were expressed about Columbus having to travel too far, but nothing was said about the flatness of the earth.

The person most responsible for the spread of the flat-earth fallacy is likely John Draper, a research scientist and physician who became president of the medical school at the University of the City of New York. His father was a Methodist minister, but he himself was strongly antireligious. When his sister's son died at the age of eight, and she placed his prayer book on Draper's breakfast plate, Draper was so upset that he ordered her out of the house. She remained alienated from her family, joining the Catholic Church that her brother despised.² In 1873, Draper published an enormously successful book titled *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*.³ In the United States alone it had 50 printings in 50 years and was translated worldwide. At that time, the controversy between science and the Bible was fulminating. Darwin had recently published *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, which strongly endorsed evolution. Against this background, Draper's book used the flat-earth fallacy to advocate the superiority of science over religion. While Draper recognized that some scholars in the Middle Ages believed the earth was spherical, he falsely depicted church theologians as attacking Columbus at Salamanca for his belief in a spherical earth.

Subsequently, Andrew Dickson White, president of Cornell University, published *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*. In this work, White referred to the

flat-earth theory as a "terror among sailors [and] was one of the main obstacles in the great voyage of Columbus."⁴ In referring to this, the historian Jeffrey Burton Russell points out: "The curious result is that White and his colleagues ended by doing what they accused the [church] fathers of, namely, creating a body of false knowledge by consulting one another instead of the evidence."⁵

Many other authors have also contributed to the spread of the false notion that Christianity introduced the flat-earth concept during and prior to the Middle Ages. Such false assumptions spread widely to textbooks and encyclopedias. Fortunately, there are indications of rectification as knowledge of the flat-earth fallacy became better known. The cliché "flat earth" still prevails and has become synonymous with ignorance, a deprecate past, and erroneous religion. The legend serves to assure skeptics that they are right and that religion is not to be trusted. Such false accusations against the church also became a convenient and powerful weapon to adulate science, demonstrating its superiority over religious beliefs. While the church has made many errors, the flat-earth concept was not one of them. This fallacy was generated at the time science was liberating itself from religious authority.

Religion and the pioneers of modern science

Almost all leading founders of modern science (Kepler, Galileo, Boyle, Newton, Pascal, and Linnaeus, to name a few) fervently believed in God and the Bible. In their scientific publications, they often spoke about God and His activity in nature. They saw no conflict between God and their study of nature because they believed that God had created the laws of nature that made science possible.

Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), one of the greatest scientists of all time, did more than any other to emanci-

pate science from speculation and the low standard of authentication that prevailed before his time. His seminal treatise *Principia* was lauded by the French scholar Laplace as being superior to all other productions of the human intellect. There Newton comments: "This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being."⁶ Newton was also deeply committed to the study of the Bible, writing extensively about the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. Newton's life clearly illustrates how well science and a strong belief in God can work together.

Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), who worked in Prague, developed three principles known as Kepler's laws that have survived almost intact to this day. Like the famous Italian astronomer Galileo (1564-1642), he saw a rigorous relationship between God and the mathematics of nature, and like Newton he also wrote about the life of Christ. His reverence for God can be seen as he writes in a prayerful context: "If I have been allured into brashness by the wonderful beauty of thy works, or if I have loved my own glory among men, while advancing in work destined for thy glory, gently and mercifully pardon me: and finally, deign graciously to cause that these demonstrations may lead to thy glory and to the salvation of souls, and nowhere be an obstacle to that. Amen."⁷

Science's rejection of God

In contrast to Kepler and Newton, science today finds itself in a very different intellectual matrix when it comes to God. The new ethos is strongly materialistic (also called naturalistic or mechanistic) and has no room for God in its explanatory menu. To include Him is considered to be unscientific. Plainly stated: science has redefined itself and expelled God. Famed Harvard University biologist Richard Lewontin candidly

comments: "It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary that we are forced by our *a priori* adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counterintuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door."⁸ For God, science has now posted a "Do Not Enter" sign. Kansas State University biologist Scott Todd comments in the prestigious journal *Nature*: "Even if all data point to an intelligent designer, such an hypothesis is excluded from science because it is not naturalistic."⁹ At present, there is an almost absolute exclusion of God from scientific textbooks and journals. Unfortunately, such a closed attitude prevents science from following the data of nature wherever it may lead. Science cannot evaluate evidence for God as long as He is excluded from consideration.

When did science reject God?

The change was gradual. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as modern science developed in the Western world, firm belief in God and the Bible was very dominant among scientists. This belief began to wane as materialism and the mistrust of religion grew. Philosophers and skeptics such as Hume, Voltaire and Kant profoundly influenced humanity's outlook during the so-called "Enlightenment" period. Subsequently, when the nineteenth century came along, a few scientists started making suggestions about evolution and long geologic ages, and these were in stark opposition to the Genesis account of a recent creation and the Flood, as well as the Ten Commandments, where God directly states that He completed creation in six days. Darwin's *Origin of Species* added to the prevailing unrest

by providing a suggestive mechanism for evolution where God was not involved. The book was at first viewed with considerable skepticism, but it was not long before both theologians and scientists endorsed it.

During the last half of the nineteenth century, scientists continued to eliminate God from scientific interpretations. The general mood was away from spirituality, and stories like the flat-earth fallacy contributed to the deprecation of religion. Science became more powerful and prestigious as all kinds of marvelous discoveries were reported, and it was not long before scientists started viewing their discipline as superior to anything else. Materialist explanations were provided for nearly everything, and there was no longer any need for God. In fact, the church had been so wrong in the past that its influence and its God should be avoided. This view strongly prevails to the present. Even the suggestion that there might be some kind of intelligent designer for the extreme complexities of nature that science is discovering, as advocated by the prevalent Intelligent Design movement, is vigorously rejected by the leaders of the scientific community. Science has trapped itself into a secular prison that restricts its ability to find all truth – an erroneous position to take in case God exists!

Rejecting God: Problems for science

If science had come up with some plausible explanations for the deep questions about origins that we have, one might more seriously consider its rejection of God. However, when we look at nature, major features seem to require a very perceptive Designer. Examples include:¹⁰ (1) How did matter ever get organized into extremely complicated and versatile atoms all by itself? These atoms can form all kinds of things from our brains to galaxies, and they can make light so we can see. (2) How did the four forces of

physics happen to have the extreme values, precision, and specific realm of action exactly necessary in order for the universe to exist? (3) How did even the simplest form of independent life, that is extremely complex, ever get organized all by itself on a barren earth? (4) How did features with interdependent parts, such as the intricate auto-focus and auto-exposure systems of the eye, ever get organized by random mutations? Mutations are almost always detrimental or insignificant and cannot plan ahead so as to design complex organs. (5) The billions of years postulated for the slow evolution of life forms on earth are way too short for the improbabilities involved when evaluated both at the molecular level and with the slow rates of reproduction of advanced organisms. (6) The fossil record reveals the sudden appearance of major groups and not a long, gradual evolutionary process. A few evolutionary intermediates that are similar to other organisms are sometimes suggested, but the problem is with the origin of the major groups. (7) Science has not found plausible explanations in matter for the phenomena of the mind such as our consciousness, understanding, morality, appreciation of beauty, and the meaning of our existence.

Unfortunately for science's secular stance, it turns out that the complexities and precision of a host of scientific discoveries have made the godless mechanistic explanations much less tenable now than when science eliminated God over a century ago. The rejection of God by the scientific community is probably its greatest philosophical error.

Why?

The extreme complexity of the psychology and sociology of the scientific community precludes definitive answers; however, there are pertinent suggestions as to why science now rejects God. One can logically argue that the scientist's specialty is the

study of nature; there the scientist feels more comfortable than in studying a less scrutable God. However, that argument loses its validity when one considers how freely the scientific community indulges in really wild speculations, such as all kinds of universes beyond the one we can observe, or organisms postulated to have lived many hundreds of millions of years before scientists can find any of their fossils in the geologic layers. The fact that science is so willing to speculate about all kinds of imaginary things, but will not allow the suggestion of God in scientific interpretations, implies a strong bias against God.

One likely reason why science rejects God is the personal or communal pride of the scientist in a successful and autonomous scientific enterprise. Another reason may be the personal freedom that a meaningless universe provides, where one is not responsible to God. In addition, there are sociological reasons. At present scientists are under tremendous pressure to exclude God from science, especially because of the anti-God attitude of the leaders of the scientific community. Current practice indicates that if scientists include any suggestion of God in their interpretations, the scientific and academic community is likely to reject them. Many scientists believe in God¹¹ but do not dare to publish about Him.

One must keep in perspective that the scientific enterprise has done much good, and that most scientists are honest persons providing us with fascinating new information and very useful innovations. At the same time, we should not forget that there is good science and there is bad science, and we should seriously seek to distinguish between the two.

There is a strong secular bias in science. However, the Bible believer must ever keep in mind that we all make mistakes and that a lot of mischief has been promoted under the banner of Christianity and God. In the great struggle between science and God, the

Christian must always strive, as God would, toward a forgiving and redemptive perspective.

The verdict

Science has redefined itself. As presently practiced, science is the odd combination of the study of nature and a secular philosophy that excludes God! This is not an open search for truth, following the data of nature wherever it may lead. Academic freedom is compromised. Excluding God has led to pervasive errors such as the general theory of evolution. Hopefully, science will pay more credence to the recently discovered extreme complexity and precision of nature that indicates a necessity for God. Science should return to the openness it had when the pioneers of modern science allowed God into scientific interpretations.

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Continued on page 26

Ellen G. White and mental health

by Merlin D. Burt

Ellen G. White was one of the three principal founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She held a unique leadership role in the emerging church: she had the gift of prophecy. In her public ministry of more than 70 years, she received hundreds of visions and dreams with messages ranging from personal counsel to issues pressing upon the newly-founded church – in such areas as faith and doctrine, organization and mission, health and education, etc. Although she wrote prolifically and with authority, she never understood her writings to be additional scripture. Throughout her life and ministry, she pointed to the Bible as the Christian's rule of faith and practice. One of her major roles was to help individuals and the church organization to understand and follow God's will. Though she had no formal mental-health training, she often served as a spiritual counselor for people who had various emotional and psychological needs. She touched the lives of thousands of people and gave them new hope with a healthy spiritual, mental, and emotional focus. Her extensive writings demonstrate sympathy for mental health issues. Among other material, she wrote an important chapter titled "Mind Cure" in her book *The Ministry of Healing*. In 1977, the Ellen G. White Estate published a two-volume compilation titled *Mind, Character, and Personality: Guidelines for Mental and Spiritual Health*.

This article will present briefly Ellen White's understanding of mental health, her personal and family experiences, and her role as a counselor on issues affecting mental health.

How White understood mental health

When Ellen White used the term "mental health," she associated it with "mental clearness, calm nerves,

a quiet, peaceful spirit like Jesus."¹ In order to understand her observations on mental-health issues, it is necessary to understand her use of 19th-century language. For example, she used the words "diseased imagination" to refer to delusional thinking or emotional imbalance and "despondency, which increases to despair" when speaking of depression.² She also used the term "mind cure" to describe mental health issues.

Ellen White's understanding of human nature was based on the biblical view that human nature is inherently sinful and needs external help from God. To her, Jesus was the great healer of the sin-damaged human mind. "It is impossible for us, of ourselves," she wrote, "to escape from the pit in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we can not change them." She then quoted Job 14:4 and Romans 8:7 to support this view. She continued: "Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here

they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before [men and women] can be changed from sin to holiness."³

For Ellen White, there was a convergence of psychology and theology. The two must interplay and, when correctly integrated, provide the most help for the human mind and emotions. For her the true source of mental and emotional health was God the loving Father, Jesus the "Great Physician," and the Holy Spirit the "Counselor."

Ellen White strongly advocated a proper connection between the physical, mental, and spiritual in the human experience. "The spiritual life is built up from the food given to the mind; and if we eat the food provided in the Word of God, spiritual and mental health will be the result."⁴ True mental health was dependent

This article is based on a presentation made at the **Symposium on Christian Worldview and Mental Health: Seventh-day Adventist Perspectives**, held in Rancho Palos Verdes, California, August 28-September 2, 2008.

The symposium brought leading Adventist scholars and mental health professionals to explore mental-health issues from a Christian worldview, as informed by the Seventh-day Adventist biblical perspective. Participants represented a wide range of disciplines: history, sociology, theology, philosophy, and mental-health practice, including psychotherapy, counseling, spirituality, and Christian ministry. Presentations and the ensuing discussions focused on the nature of mental health, psychopathology, mental-health interventions, and models of education and clinical training derived from a biblical worldview. The conference also undertook the revision of "Adventist Concepts of Psychology," a statement voted by the church in 1977. The proceedings of the symposium are expected to be published shortly.

– Lisa Beardsley

upon establishing a proper balance between the body and the mind. "We cannot afford to dwarf or cripple a single function of the mind or body, by overwork or abuse of any part of the living machinery."⁵ She used the phrase "physical and mental health" to show the link between the two: the physical and mental dimensions are closely connected and require proper balance and care. She believed that a right environment, right actions, and a proper diet facilitated mental health. She was also a strong advocate of the healing benefits of nature, a right attitude, and acts of service for others.⁶

Personal experience

Ellen White's philosophy on mental health, while informed by her study of the Bible and her visions, was connected to her own experience. Through her long life, she was no stranger to emotional pain and psychological challenges. As a child she was introverted, shy, and emotionally sensitive. To this was added the complication of a physical disability. During her younger years, she experienced fearfulness and hopelessness that brought about protracted periods of depression. In addition to her personal struggles, her immediate family was touched with mental disability issues.

Ellen White's fundamental touchstone for mental and emotional health was an understanding of the loving character of God. As a child she viewed God as a "stern tyrant compelling men to a blind obedience."⁷ When preachers would describe the fires of an eternally burning hell, she personalized the horror of that experience. She wrote: "While listening to these terrible descriptions, my imagination would be so wrought upon that the perspiration would start, and it was difficult to suppress a cry of anguish, for I seemed already to feel the pains of perdition."⁸ This led her to doubt her acceptance by God and caused periods of depression. She recalled one occasion: "Despair

overwhelmed me, and . . . no ray of light pierced the gloom that encompassed me."⁹ Her "feelings were very sensitive" and at one point she feared she would "lose" her "reason." Ellen White recollected that "sometimes for a whole night" she would not dare to close her eyes but "kneel upon the floor, praying silently with a dumb agony that cannot be described."¹⁰

Her pre-teen and early-teen years were burdened by physical disability. She was severely injured through an accident at about age 9. A broken nose with other complicating damage caused equilibrium problems and prevented her from continuing her education. She also developed a chronic pulmonary disorder that was diagnosed at the time as "dropsical consumption," or in modern terms, "tuberculosis with complicating congestive heart failure." Her fears were exacerbated by the thought that she could bleed out at any time from an arterial rupture in her lungs.¹¹ Her physical and emotional trauma combined with her introverted personality prevented her from seeking help.

Finally, at about age 15, she talked with someone who helped her to better understand the loving character of God. She pointed to her interview with Levi Stockman, a Millerite Methodist minister, as providing her with the most help. Stockman was sympathetic to Ellen's emotional pain and even shared her tears. She wrote that she "obtained" from Stockman "more knowledge on the subject of God's love and pitying tenderness, than from all the sermons and exhortations to which I had ever listened."¹² She specifically identified what helped her most: "My views of the Father were changed. I now looked upon Him as a kind and tender parent. . . . My heart went out toward Him in a deep and fervent love."¹³ The love of God became Ellen White's favorite theme throughout her life. She also believed that "Christ's favorite theme was the paternal tenderness and abun-

dant grace of God."¹⁴ Her five-volume masterpiece series on the cosmic conflict between Christ and Satan begins and ends with this theme.¹⁵ Her most popular book, published in scores of languages with millions of copies, has as its first chapter "God's Love for Man."¹⁶

Ellen White's own visions and dreams confirmed her conviction of a loving God and compassionate Savior. An early personal dream that occurred before her first prophetic vision brought her into the presence of Jesus, where she realized He knew all her "inner thoughts and feelings." Yet, even with this knowledge He "drew near with a smile," laid His hand on her head, and said, "Fear not."¹⁷ In an interview in the last year of her life, Ellen White said, "I find tears running down my cheeks when I think of what the Lord is to His children, and when I contemplate His goodness, His mercy, [and] His tender compassion."¹⁸

Mental health challenges in White's family

Besides her own emotional struggles during childhood and at times during adulthood, Ellen White faced mental-health challenges within her family. Her second son, James Edson, evidenced some of the characteristics of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Her niece, Louisa Walling, became so mentally unstable that she was admitted to a mental facility. Out of concern for Louisa's two children, James and Ellen White brought them into their home. Ellen White ended up raising the girls, and they called her mother.¹⁹ Even James White suffered from a series of strokes during the 1860s and 1870s that altered his mental state and brought marital conflict. In 1879 Ellen White realized her husband did not "have sufficient physical and mental health" to give counsel and advice.²⁰ At one point she wondered if he was a "sane man."²¹

Ellen White's personal experience,

combined with her visionary guidance, helped her to provide a unique ministry to individuals who also suffered with mental and emotional brokenness. Her writings reveal a consistent compassion for people who sometimes had serious life dysfunction. She engaged to a remarkable degree in close personal work with many such people.

Ellen White as a counselor

Throughout her life, Ellen White addressed mental health and social dysfunction issues. Her scope of interaction with people was varied and diverse. Below are four examples that show how she addressed serious mental health issues, such as obsessive behavior, emotional abuse, alcohol addiction, and sexual dysfunction.

Obsessive behavior. Ellen White's letter to "Brother Morrell" shows her perception of his mental condition. She described this man as having "large conscientiousness" and "small self-esteem." It seems that Morrell was obsessive and pathologically perfectionist about his conduct. He felt guilty for the smallest perceived mistake, to the point of mental instability. White wrote of this man's condition thus: "Brother Morrell's nervous system is greatly affected and he ponders over these things [his perceived sins and failings], dwelling upon them. His imagination is diseased.... The mind has suffered beyond expression. Sleep was driven from him." She wrote directly: "I saw, Brother Morrell, you must cast away your fears. Leave consequences with the Lord and let go. You try too hard to save yourself, to do some great thing yourself which will commend you to God.... Jesus loves you, and if you will consecrate yourself and all you have to Him, He will accept you and will be your Burden-bearer, your never-failing Friend.... Believe Jesus loves you and in your efforts to obey the truth, if you err, don't feel that you must worry and worry, give up

your confidence in God and think that God is your enemy. We are erring mortals." As a complement to her spiritual and emotional related counsel, she urged this man to adopt health reform and avoid stimulants. "Then," she wrote, "can the brain think more calmly, sleep will not be so uncertain."²²

Emotional abuse. Ellen White wrote several letters of counsel to women who were either emotionally or physically controlled by their husbands. In December 1867, she visited the Washington, New Hampshire, Seventh-day Adventist Church with her husband and J. N. Andrews. She first gave oral counsel and followed up with a written "testimony" based on a vision she had received. She provided pointed counsel to Harriet Stowell. After the death of her first husband, Harriet married Freeman S. Stowell, who was 12 years younger and was not practicing his faith.²³ Ellen White's words are clear and explain the situation: "She [Harriet] is beloved of God, but held in servile bondage, fearing, trembling, desponding, doubting, very nervous. Now this sister should not feel that she must yield her will to a godless youth who has less years upon his head than herself. She should remember that her marriage does not destroy her individuality. God has claims upon her higher than any earthly claim. Christ has bought her with His own blood, she is not her own. She fails to put her entire trust in God, and submits to yield her convictions, her conscience to an overbearing, tyrannical man, fired up by Satan when his Satanic majesty can make effectual to intimidate the trembling, shrinking soul who has so many times been thrown into agitation that her nervous system is torn to pieces and she [is] nearly a wreck."²⁴

Ellen White supported individuality in marriage and rejected the idea that a spouse must give up his or her personality and self-identity. This

testimony was a help to this woman who was driven almost to emotional collapse.

Alcohol addiction. In a letter to a troubled young man in England, Ellen White recognized the effect of alcohol addiction. Henri Frey worked as a translator for the European mission in Basel, Switzerland. He had a drinking problem. Because of his actions, he was removed from his position as translator. He then wrote Ellen White that he was being persecuted. She supported the decision of the mission but personally appealed to Frey. "I feel the tenderest feeling of pity, and of love for your soul; but false words of sympathy... shall never be traced by my pen." She cogently described his condition: "You find your emotional nature untrue to your best resolutions, untrue to your solemn pledges. Nothing seems real. Your own inefficiencies lead you to doubt the sincerity of those who would do you good. The more you struggle in doubt, the more unreal

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everything looks to you, until it seems that there is no solid ground for you anywhere. Your promises are nothing, they are like ropes of sand, and you regard the words and works of those whom you should trust in the same unreal light.”²⁵

She continued by emphasizing the power of the will in meeting emotional dysfunction. “You may believe and promise all things, but I would not give a straw for your promises or your faith until you put your will over on the believing and doing side.” Her letter of counsel was interwoven with appeals for this young man to see the help Jesus can give. “I tell you that you need not despair. You must choose to believe, although nothing seems true and real to you.” She concluded with words of hope. “A life of usefulness is before you, if your will becomes God’s will.... Will you try Henri, will you now change square about? You are the object of Christ’s love and intercession.”²⁶

Sexual dysfunction. Ellen White often dealt with sensitive issues. In 1896, she wrote to a leading minister in South Africa. He was guilty of sexually abusing young girls and perhaps boys. This man had written to Ellen White of his struggles but believed he was not guilty of adultery. She began her letter with a prayer: “May the Lord help me to write you the very words that will be for your restoration and not for your destruction.” She then wrote most directly to him: “I feel sorry, very sorry for you. Sin, my brother, *is sin*; it is the transgression of the *Law*, and should I try to lessen the sin before you, I would not be doing you any good.... Your mind and heart are polluted else all such actions would be loathsome.” She described for this man the long-term effect of sexual abuse on children, including generational effect. She cited several cases and described how psychological damage was often lifelong. “How can I present it in such a manner that you will no longer look

upon it, as you have done, as no great wrong?” After a lengthy direct and sometimes painfully graphic description of his conduct, she appealed to him: “You are a free moral agent. If you will repent of your sins, and be converted, the Lord will blot out your transgressions and impute unto you His righteousness.... He will undertake your case, and angels will guard you. But you must resist the devil. You must educate yourself to a different train of thought. Put no confidence in yourself. Never seek the companionship of women or girls. Keep away from them. Your moral taste is so perverted, that you will ruin yourself and ruin many souls if you do not turn square about.... Everlasting life is worth a life-long, persevering, untiring effort.”

Finally she urged him to make himself accountable to “brethren who know this terrible chapter in your experience.”²⁷

These four examples illustrate the level of involvement Ellen White had in the lives of many people who had emotional and mental-health difficulties. One of the remarkable characteristics of her work is her consistent optimism that people can recover, no matter how broken they may be. Ellen White always pointed them to God as the great healer of mind and soul.

Ellen White was wholistic in her approach to healing. She realized that the mind was linked to the body and that God intended humans to have restored social relationships. For her, the most important connection was with a loving and holy heavenly Father.

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PROFILE

Fifaia Matainaho and Teatulohi Matainaho

Dialogue with twin brothers – Adventist professional leaders in Papua New Guinea

Interview by Lisa Beardsley

Fifaia and Lohi are twins. Born in the Mortlock Islands of Papua New Guinea, they grew up in the midst of beauty – the swaying palms, the never-ceasing waves of the sea beating the silvery sands of the beaches, the thrill of wading into low-tide waves to catch fish, and all other fun that goes with simple and undisturbed seaside village life. Their family, like the rest of the village, with a total population of 450, were ancestor worshipers, and knew little or nothing about Christianity. Their formal education began with a primary school in their lagooned village. After completing high school in Bougainville, the twins went to the mainland – overnight journey by boat – where they enrolled in university education: Fifaia enrolled in Papua New Guinea (PNG) University of Technology, while Lohi joined the medical school at the University of Papua New Guinea. Today, both brothers have doctoral degrees and are deeply immersed in the educational and developmental work of the island nation.

Dr. Fifaia T. Matainaho currently serves as the director of development at Pacific Adventist University and as an environmental and chemical engineering consultant to many government and professional organizations. Dr. Lohi T. Matainaho is the head of the pharmacology department at the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Papua New Guinea. Presently he is the only



Fifaia Matainaho

Adventist with a professorial appointment in a government (public) university in PNG. He focuses on researching new medicines from marine and forest resources.

■ *Fifaia, your love of reading led you to the Adventist faith. How did that happen?*

Fifaia: Once I happened to visit a fellow university student who spoke my language. In his room I saw a book with an interesting title, *Steps to Christ*. My passion for reading drove me to borrow this book. That night I sat up and read the book right through. I was amazed at the style of writing and the content of the book. It took me over



Teatulohi Matainaho

completely. About a week later, I visited the student again, and this time I borrowed *The Great Controversy*. I was impressed with its flowing narrative of history and the detail portrayal of the origin of sin and its climactic end. Soon I found out that both the books were written by the same person, a woman with great insights. I was greatly touched by what I had read.

My interest in Ellen White's books began to grow. My friend put me in touch with the Adventist Church, from where I could get more of her books. Although some classmates told me that this author was weird and Adventists held strange beliefs, I wanted to personally know more about this

author. I used all my allowance to buy books, such as *Education* and *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*. Her way of writing caught my attention.

While reading *The Great Controversy*, two subjects interested me deeply: the sanctuary and the Sabbath. I dug into those two topics and bought more books. I read George Vandeman and Morris Venden and came to understand righteousness by faith. I arranged to get *Signs, The Record*, and the *Review and Herald*. Before long, I was keeping the Sabbath.

■ *None of your relatives belonged to any formal religion. How did they feel about your newfound faith?*

Fifaia: When I went to visit my home during Christmas of 1976, I met up with my twin, Lohi, and a cousin who were also going home for the holidays. While waiting in Bougainville for the boat, I explained to the two that I was going to church on Saturday, and encouraged them to come along. Like me before, they knew only of ancestral worship, but they agreed to accompany me to church.

Arriving in our village, I told my family and others about Jesus and the Sabbath. Those on the island had no religion with which to compare, and they simply accepted the Adventist faith. The three of us weren't even Adventists yet, but we got everyone together under the coconut trees to worship and sing the gospel songs that I had learned at the Adventist Church. They continued to worship that way under the coconut trees for many years. About eight years ago, an Adventist church was finally built on my island.

■ *How did you come to the decision to join the Adventist Church?*

Fifaia: After reading Ellen White's books, I sought out and worshiped in an Adventist church. The local pastor visited me in my room. He was impressed with my book collection,

including the Adventist books. When he asked me if I wanted to be baptized, all I could say was, "If that's the way you people do things, that's OK by me." That was it. I just walked into the church.

■ *You faced challenges because you would not participate in the required field work that was part of your engineering course.*

Fifaia: We were required to do field work in engineering (geology, hydrology, etc.) on Sabbath on a number of occasions, but I did not go. As a result, I lost marks and had to rely on doing well in the exams. But in one class, the field work was a major component. The entire class was to go together with the professor to determine the velocity of a stream by means of stream gauging. I didn't go because it was on Sabbath. The professor said: "I'm sorry, I can't help you. You'll have to figure out how to do it yourself." I had to study all the technical manuals and figure out how to operate the instruments by myself. But stream-gauging cannot be done alone. One of the department technical staff saw my predicament. He had at one time gone to an Adventist church, so he offered to drive me with the equipment to a stream on a Friday afternoon so I could collect the data. An Adventist student at the university came and helped me handle the equipment and assist with data recording. I received a passing grade for that course. God cares for His people when they are faithful to him.

■ *Has Sabbath observance negatively impacted your professional career?*

Fifaia: Whenever I started a new job, the first thing I did was to notify my supervisor that I am an Adventist and therefore will not work on Sabbath. If efforts were made to force me to work on Sabbath, I was determined to find another job. I have always been forthright at the outset. My pay was lower, but that didn't bother me.

When I attend professional conferences, I tell my colleagues right at the start that I will not attend the meetings on Sabbath. My colleagues understand my position, and often they will speak with the organizers for a schedule change so that meetings don't fall on Saturday.

■ *What advice would you give Adventist students if they feel their faith is becoming weak or challenged in the course of their studies?*

Fifaia: Be involved! I was heavily involved in church meetings and outreach activities. I attended Bible studies with fellow Adventist students and was active with the Adventist student association at the PNG University of Technology. I found joy – real joy – in those activities.

Sometimes I would miss out on my own academic work in order to participate in special church outreach or Bible study programs because I felt I should take advantage of the special opportunity. I have been involved in teaching Bible studies in church or at home, and have helped lead others to make a decision. But academic studies are also important and should not be neglected.

Make it a regular habit to read the Bible. Turn to its pages when you have any problems. When I was preparing to defend my doctoral dissertation at Vanderbilt University in the United States, I spent a lot of time reading the Bible and received great comfort, strength, and inner peace. I felt confident that even if something different happened than what I had wanted, God is in control.

■ *What about finding a life partner? What was your experience and what advice do you have in that area?*

Fifaia: Be cautious about rushing into relationships. Be open-minded rather than overly serious. I was visiting the University of PNG Port Moresby when I met a non-Adventist who was active with the United

Methodist Church and the Tertiary Christian Fellowship. We became friends and wrote letters to each other. I shared my faith with her through our correspondence, without pushing her. In the beginning I wrote about the fundamental, basic Christian beliefs rather than about the specifics of what Adventists believe. That came later. Then when we met face to face some time later, I was frank with her and told her that I was an Adventist and I was concerned whether we should become more serious. I did not want to get into something deeper without consulting with her. She said that because of what I had been communicating about my faith in letters, she felt she could become an Adventist. It turned out that her father's sisters were Adventists, so she was open and willing to learn more about Adventists. It led to Bible study, which I love doing very much. We studied the Bible together and then I went and told the pastor, "I think she's ready for baptism." Eventually we got married.

My advice to young people is: be open with others. If you want to become more serious, look for the window of opportunity to share your belief. It will open. Be steadfast in your beliefs and assert yourself with respect to faith.

■ *Last year you resigned from your position as the head of the Department of Civil Engineering at the PNG University of Technology. Why?*

Fifaia: In mid-2006 I told my wife, Karo, that I would like to work for the church. I started corresponding with the president of the South Pacific Division. In the meantime, the Vice-Chancellor of Pacific Adventist University (PAU) contacted my wife who has an MBA and was working as a manager for Price-Waterhouse Coopers. The university was interested in her to be the new bursar. We had already talked about being useful in the church, and PAU was ideal with my background in university admin-

istration and her experience in the financial field. My wife became the bursar and I took a one-year leave from PNG University of Technology and operated as a consultant. Later I resigned from PNG University of Technology to join PAU to assist with the strategic plan and to become their director of development.

■ *Why are you working in Papua New Guinea when you could earn far more in Australia, Europe, or North America?*

Fifaia: Tyco International, one of the largest engineering companies, made an offer for me to work anywhere in Canada or the U.S. But since I'm the only PNG national with a Ph.D. in environmental engineering, I felt obligated to work in PNG to help my people and my country. In addition to my current positions at the Adventist university, I also serve as a consultant in several PNG organizations, including the government. I chair several technical committees and am involved in environmental issues. These tasks give me a satisfaction and fulfillment. After all, life must not be defined in monetary terms alone.

■ *Thank you, Fifaia. Let me now ask your brother, Dr. Lohi Matainaho, a few questions. Tell us about your conversion, Lohi.*

Lohi: I was in the medical school at the University of PNG. During the Christmas break, as my brother has already mentioned, he not only told me about the Sabbath but also its relationship to the concept of creation. The concept of a Creator immediately made sense to me.

You see, our village elders told us about big people with big feet who came a long time ago and created the atoll where we lived. Then they went away and no one had seen them since. When Fifaia told me about the Sabbath, it all made sense. There was a Creator and the Sabbath was the culmination of creation. He was the one who created our islands. We were

so excited that we told all our relatives when we got home.

When I got back to the university after holidays, I got a Bible, opened it, and read the first thing I saw. It was Matthew 6:6. I couldn't believe it! I suddenly remembered I had read those very same words when I was 10 or 12 in a book in our house. I had never heard of a Bible and didn't know that's what the book was then. I opened the book and read: "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (KJV).

We didn't have a door or a closet in our palm-thatched dwelling, and I didn't know what it meant to pray, but I immediately sensed I should do something. I got up and closed the opening to our home and then sat inside waiting. I didn't know how to pray, but I felt I should wait inside. I sensed *something* then in my wait, but didn't know what or who it was. Until that day, I had not opened a Bible again. Now when I read the same text once more, I was convinced God was talking to me and had already done so back when I was a boy. It encouraged me to continue reading the Bible, and eventually make a decision for Him.

■ *Tell us about your work at the School of Medicine and Health Sciences. How do you find expression for your faith?*

Lohi: I teach in the basic medical sciences, but most of my time is in research, exploring new medicines from forest and marine resources, and translating the molecules from the forest-bed and seabed to medicines for the sickbed. We, for example, dive and gather marine sponges or collect other botanical specimens for development as therapeutic compounds for the treatment of HIV/ AIDS, TB, malaria, cancer, and diabetes. I also study the biochemical and pharmacological

Continued on page 30

PROFILE



Silvia and Arturo Finis

Dialogue with an Adventist couple committed to international development

Interview by Lorena Mayer

From the Ecuadorian Andes to the desert mountains of Tajikistan and several other places in between, Silvia and Arturo Finis have served one goal: to advance the cause of international development, with a singular motive of spreading God's care and love to those in need.

Arturo and Silvia have many stories to tell. Stories of the faraway lands with vibrant cultures and fascinating people. Stories of the joys and challenges of service to God helping communities meet their particular needs. Stories of how this service has impacted their life and family. Soon after they were married in 1998, they began an international adventure in humanitarian service that took them far from their native Argentina.

While studying theology at the River Plate University in Argentina, and later international development with Andrews University, U.S.A., Arturo felt he had been called to become involved in relief and developmental operations. He was part of various relief teams accredited to work in crisis situations such as the terrorist attacks in Buenos Aires in 1994, local emergencies in Argentina, and Hurricane Mitch in Honduras in 1999.

Silvia shared his passion and participated in local activities with young people that prepared her for the greater international adventure with Arturo. She also studied at River Plate University, where she obtained degrees in accounting and business administration. Later, she was part of the relief team that served the victims of Hurricane Mitch.

Together Silvia and Arturo have spent nine years working with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Ecuador, South America, and in the Central Asian countries of Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan. They have two sons: Pablo, 8, and Nicolas, 6.

■ *How does working on the international scene enrich your life as a couple and as a family?*

Arturo: Working away from one's home country has its challenges and opportunities. Cultural adaptation can be difficult. Working away from home and familiar surroundings is not easy. But there are blessings as well – the opportunity to spend more time with each other as a couple and as a family. As a family, we have enjoyed exploring many new things, new landscapes, new cultures, new people, new ways of doing things. A new environment is a great learning center.

■ *Your children spent the first years of their life in a multicultural context. Was it difficult for them to adapt?*

Silvia: For our children, the diversity became the routine; that was all they knew. What was difficult for them was leaving one place, where

their friends were, and moving to another one completely unknown. Such moves are emotionally tough on children. But once in the new place, it doesn't take long to make new friends or to communicate with them. Even acquiring a new language becomes easy. Kids are like sponges! They absorb new things – friends, customs, language – quickly.

■ *Silvia, your kids were very young when you were in Central Asia, and you stayed at home to look after them. What were your personal challenges during those times?*

The main challenge was communication. When we arrived in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, we didn't know any words in Russian, and I just couldn't figure out how to say the simplest of things. English helped a bit when we were in Kazakhstan and a lot in Azerbaijan, and that certainly changed things. After two years in Central Asia, we managed to use some Russian, enough for survival.

In spite of language difficulties, I was able to relate to people. In a way, you don't need language to recognize common affinity in another culture, particularly among women. I was attracted to their spirit of hospitality. In Dushanbe, when Arturo returned from his activities, we used to take our kids to a park near our home and while they played, a lady would come close to us and try to say something. Sure, we may have appeared as strange to them as they were to us, but they appeared to be so genuinely interested in us as a new family to the neighborhood. They kept us company, played

with the kids and would even walk with us to our home on the way back. And if by any chance we happened to run into them another day, they would greet us as if we were their best friends.

■ *Arturo, what were your main joys while working as ADRA director in Ecuador?*

Ecuador was my apprentice school. I had done my ADRA internship in Lima, Peru, and had gained a lot of experience, but in Ecuador, I was all by myself in terms of responsibility, and that was different. I was very young and had to gain the respect of the local authorities and other colleagues. Ecuadorian people were very supportive of our work. The leaders of the Andean communities of Guantubamba didn't spare any effort to pave the way for one of our projects there: a water distribution system that would bring water to all the homes around that area.

■ *What about your experience as ADRA director in Tajikistan?*

Our experience in Tajikistan is the kind I like the most in international development! For example, we had a building project that involved different people. The Japanese were the main donors. The local Tajik people were the builders. My responsibility was to coordinate and plan the entire project. The work involved the rebuilding of a school destroyed during the recent civil unrest in Tajikistan. The community was in dire straits for not having a place for their children to study. Our donors were very generous, and the Tajik people pooled all their human resources to get the building ready on time. With everyone working together as a team, we were able to complete the project on time and begin the school on time. At the opening ceremony, the Japanese ambassador and his colleagues were present. The local people were there. Above all, the children were back, ready to

begin their education. It was a joy to see the children begin their schooling. Our donors were so impressed by the quality and the timeliness with which the project was completed that they were moved to finance other ADRA projects in the region. The satisfaction was immense.

■ *As Seventh-day Adventist Christians, how does it feel to work in largely Muslim areas?*

People are people, and need is need. When love motivates our service and when we extend this service with that as our basis, we are well received anywhere. During all the years we spent among Muslim people in different countries, we never faced disrespect or felt ill at ease. Likewise, we respected their beliefs and traditions. When we were asked about our faith and belief, we would explain our stand in terms they would appreciate because they are also a people of faith. Our sole reason for being in those countries was to serve their specific development needs and put at their disposal all the resources we could gather to meet those needs. Of course, our motivation came from our strong desire to serve God wherever there was a need. And needs exist everywhere, regardless of culture or religion. Respect begets respect, and love brings out love. That's a good thing to keep in mind when we live and work among people whose faith, lifestyle, or culture may differ from ours. All are God's children.

■ *What role does your own faith play in the work you do, especially when you live far away from places and people familiar to you?*

It is our love for God, our faith commitment, and our love for people in need that drive us to be involved in relief and developmental work. Without that basic commitment that God has called to do us the work we are doing, we cannot even begin to understand a global ministry such as

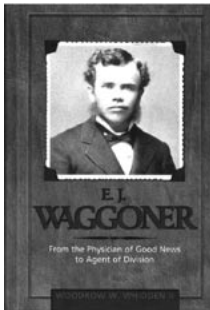
ADRA. When we begin with that trust in and commitment to God, whatever difficulties we face – electricity outages, water shortages, communication constraints, strange places to work – simply do not pose an insurmountable problem. When the tough times get tougher, the only thing to do is to believe and pray: “Lord, we need your help.” And the Lord does not forsake His own.

One personal example. Soon after we arrived in Dushanbe, our 2-year-old, Pablo, caught bronchitis and started coughing really badly. We didn't know any doctor in town, nor did we have any acquaintances who spoke English. Telephone lines were bad. The bronchitis was getting worse, especially at night. One night we took Pablo in our arms and asked God to be the doctor. The next morning the cough had gone and recovery started. Soon he was playing as usual.

On another occasion, in Kazakhstan this time, we were travelling back from a project site up north near the border with Russia and Mongolia. There you can drive hundreds and hundreds of miles and not find a person. We had all sorts of problems on the road, and we even had to sleep in the van beside the road because the brakes were not working and it wasn't possible to fix anything in the dark. When the morning came, the engine wouldn't start. Again, we prayed. We were right in the middle of the desert near a deserted road. Eventually, the van started, and we managed to get to the next town by noon. We stopped to eat something and when we were ready to drive again, the engine was dead. We had parked the van right next to a house that had a private parking place inside. When the man of the house saw our distress, he offered to keep our vehicle within his property and arrange for a taxi that would take us home. We arrived home just before sunset, Friday. That was

Continued on page 30

BOOKS



**E. J. Waggoner:
From the Physician of Good
News to the Agent of Division**
by Woodrow Whidden (*Hagerstown,
Maryland: Review and Herald Publ.
Assn., 2008*).

Reviewed by Aecio E. Cairus

Ellet J. Waggoner began his work as a medical missionary and in his final years associated himself with Dr. John Harvey Kellogg in his divisive enterprise against the Adventist Church. Woodrow Whidden reminds us that this is not the way in which we want to remember Waggoner.

With his current work, Woodrow Whidden, the chair of Theology-History Department at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, joins other authors in the continuation of a Review and Herald series on the shapers and movers of Adventist history. Previous works in the series include studies on James White, Joseph Bates, W. W. Prescott, and John H. Kellogg.

Waggoner's most important healing performance was theological. Adventism in the late 1800s was ailing with the malady of legalism. When Adventists tried to shake the Christian world free from the Sunday tradition, they took the side of the often-scorned Decalogue with such vigor that they sounded Pharisaical. In 1888, Waggoner, editor of *Signs of the Times*, together with Alonzo T. Jones, helped to bring the church back to the New Testament emphasis on righteousness by faith. Ellen White's support was a key factor in this restoration – and key again later in helping the church to get over Arianism that denied Christ's full divinity.

After 1888, Waggoner helped Ellen White and A. T. Jones on preaching tours that spread the message of righteousness by faith among the rank and file of the church, including its ministers, in spite of entrenched opposition from some church administrators. In 1892 Waggoner was sent to England as editor of the local church paper, and he became the first president of the South England Conference 10 years later. But then he requested a change of career and became a theology teacher.

At this point, standard biographical information on Waggoner becomes puzzling. Against the counsel of White, and in opposition to the church leadership, Waggoner took up a teaching position in 1904 in Kellogg's "Battle Creek College." At the end of the following year, Waggoner's wife divorced him for adultery and married another man. Dr.

Whidden illuminates these strange events with both an in-depth biography and a penetrating analysis of Waggoner's thought and tumultuous journey through truth and then theological deviations.

The section on Waggoner's early years covers Ellet's parents, his birth, infancy, youth, and education. The second part, on the 1888 General Conference session, describes the formation of the theological crisis of the church, the work of Waggoner at the session and its aftermath, and his theological thought at the time. The third part, the British years (1892-1903), describes the pernicious effects of Waggoner's new theological orientations. Finally, we have the account of "The Years of Decline" (1904-1916).

In spite of a lack of direct documents on the early years, Whidden by persistent investigation was able to correct biographical details such as the School of Medicine that graduated Ellet, which was not Bellevue but Long Island, New York. Even in such well-trodden terrain as 1888, the author's theological analysis shows that, in spite of superficial similarities, the early Waggoner cannot be cited as a precedent for the "universal legal justification" position. Whidden's analysis of the British years is particularly illuminating. While in 1888, Waggoner emphasized the objective action of salvation by God (what He did for us on Calvary), in the 1890s he started to move in the direction of a subjective salvation (what God is accomplishing in us through His Spirit). In this way, human accomplishments – the fibers of human devising that were brushed away from the robe of Christ's righteousness in 1888 – returned by the back door under the guise of sanctification and perfection. By the early 1900s, Waggoner was moving in the direction of a final perfect generation of Christians who would complete the work initiated by Christ at Calvary by showing the falsehood of the accusations of Satan.

Waggoner and Jones inaugurated in the early 1890s a new way to speak of the human nature of Christ. While J. N. Andrews had carefully distinguished between our sinful flesh and the mere *likeness* of a sinful flesh in Christ, specifically denying any sinful propensity in Christ, the new way made no distinction in the sinfulness of our flesh or Christ's flesh, for it held that He had our evil propensities. This position forced Waggoner to explain the actual sinlessness of Christ through the virtues of His "miraculous birth." Waggoner liked the sound of the phrase "Christ's sinful flesh" because he wanted to preach the same sinlessness in us, through the idea of a mystical reproduction of Christ's experience.

Ellen White, who taught that sanctification is the work of a lifetime, warned Waggoner against this "alpha of deception." She had seen among Millerites around 1844, and later in Indiana, the effects of this "holy flesh" idea: it made one blind to the very real evidence of continuing sinfulness in our flesh. No wonder Waggoner, in spite of White's

warnings, could not see the sinful side of the “spiritual affinity” he felt for a woman who was not his wife. He also fought for a concept of the church that had no place for structures such as a president, which nicely suited Kellogg’s struggle against the General Conference at that time.

The work of Whidden, carefully done through years of research, will no doubt stand as a standard for future studies on the life of Waggoner and other figures of the past, especially in its balance between theological analysis and careful biographical investigation. But more importantly, it may be expected to contribute to leading us away from theological theories with pernicious effects. The author is to be commended for this comprehensive approach to events in our history.

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Science Discovers God: Seven Convincing Lines of Evidence for His Existence
by Ariel A. Roth (Hagerstown, Maryland: Autumn House Publ., a division of Review & Herald Publ. Assn., 245 pages, 2008, hardcover).

Reviewed by David Cowles

Some sincere Christian scientists believe that our Christian faith should be kept strictly separate from our understanding of science and its implications for our world. I am not one of those. It is clear from reading Ariel Roth’s newest book, “Science Discovers God,” that he does not hold that philosophy either.

Dr. Roth begins the book with a brief survey of several past outstanding scientists, especially Isaac Newton, who combined excellent science with a profound devotion to God. He contrasts those views with the present confrontational approach in which any consideration of God is often excluded from scientific dialog by prior definition. He then proceeds to outline several major areas of modern scientific inquiry that, in the minds of many thoughtful people, have produced results which force reconsideration of the question of whether God may be ubiquitously involved in nature. Lines of physical evidence include the scientific conclusion that the universe had a beginning,

observation of the extremely fine-tuned nature of physical constants throughout the universe that make the earth not only hospitable for life but also an ideal platform to learn of our ideal situation. Biological lines of evidence include the extreme complexity of even the simplest living cells, the lack of any credible mechanistic pathway for cells to form from nonliving materials, and consciousness in the human mind. He gives good coverage to the recent controversy over irreducible complexity and notes the implications that many biological systems must have been specifically designed. He discusses the immense challenge of the vast eons of time that would be needed for the changes required to produce life’s array of living things, and contrasts that with the lack of evidence for long time periods such as the Cambrian Explosion and paraconformities in the geologic column.



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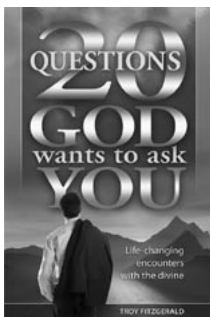
NEWBOLD
COLLEGE a mind-opening experience

He concludes with a discussion of the role of sociology and prevailing scientific paradigms for influencing the way scientists think and do their work, and how the question of God's existence is viewed by science today.

I enjoyed reading this book. Ariel Roth's thoughtful coverage of each topic begins with a basic introduction to help the non-expert understand the issues involved, then proceeds to a succinct description of the evidence. Occasionally I encountered minor proofreading errors, such as faulty conversion from Fahrenheit to Celsius (p. 52), or errors from oversimplification, such as completely omitting mRNA from the process of translation of DNA into proteins (p. 83) or conflating processes which occur at different steps of meiosis (p. 105). In general, however, this book reflects a thoughtful commentary from an experienced scientist on a topic of great importance to informed people interested in the relation between faith and science. References to the scientific literature are abundant and include many recent references. One issue I would caution about is the idea that complexity requires intelligent design. As he says in the book, being complicated and being complex are two different things. Irreducible complexity implies design, but one must be very careful about calling something irreducibly complex when it is really just complicated. Otherwise the excellent argument of irreducible complexity is diluted by spurious examples, which seems to be happening in the literature.

In summary, this book is an excellent summary of current scientific data implying God's existence. It belongs in your library.

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20 Questions God Wants to Ask You: Life-Changing Encounters With the Divine

by Troy Fitzgerald (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 2008; 191 pp.; paperback).

Reviewed by Younis S. Masih

We often tend to put questions to God – about life, death, love, suffering, marriage, etc. – and this is a legitimate part of Christian living. But have we ever paused to consider that “more important than our questions for God

might be His questions for us”? It is that pause, a deep and profound pause, that has led Troy Fitzgerald to reflect upon some great questions God wants to ask us. The result is a beautiful, easy-to-read work challenging us to take seriously God's longing for conversation with us. After reading through the book, the reader is bound to agree with the author: “Maybe the secret to a deeper walk with God lies in our response to the questions God asks” (p. 11).

Fitzgerald is a careful writer. With training in theology, education, and leadership, he knows the needs of ordinary Christians and confronts them with a God who is deeply interested in human life, conduct, and destiny. His chosen methodology in the book is experientially challenging and academically thought-provoking. He takes 20 questions from both Old and New Testaments and lets the Word of God confront ordinary Christians with the demand and the grace of biblical living. The questions – such as, “Where were you when the heavens were made?” “What do you think I am?” “Where is your brother?” “What is in your hand?” “Do you love me?” – vary from the profound to the intimate.

Each question is discussed from a biblical and relational standpoint, followed by a section for personal reflection and analysis, making the book a useful tool for both personal study and group discussions. The author's careful use of Hebrew and Greek words enhances the biblical basis of the studies, and his liberal use of illustrations sustains readability and interest. Through it all, Fitzgerald does not fail to emphasize God's desire for an intimate relationship with us as individuals. God's compassion for sinners, His ultimate care for the depressed, and His willingness to do extraordinary acts of grace in the ordinary lives of people are clearly depicted. Each chapter challenges the readers to trust in God despite the short-sighted, hard-headed and slow-hearted moments of trials and difficulties. One positive idea permeates the entire book: wholeness with Christ can only be achieved by having the inexorable desire to be made whole.

The author concludes his discussion with a remarkable statement: “God asks good questions that paint a picture of Him and His plan for us. But questions do more than portray Him to us – they present us with a real opportunity to draw closer to Him as our Creator, Savior, and Friend” (p. 191).

The reader will not be disappointed in either knowing more about that opportunity or in sharing the blessings of that opportunity with fellow believers or with seekers after truth. A good resource for personal or group study.

Younis S. Masih (M.A., Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Philippines) is a lecturer in biblical studies at Fulton College, Fiji Islands. E-mail: ymasih@fulton.ac.fj.

FIRST PERSON

God's timing, God's way

by Patricia Jones

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.... He has made everything beautiful in its time” (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 11).

I was just 14. A high-school student, I lived a normal life, happy and content, with a family of eight siblings on the beautiful island of Newfoundland, off the northeastern coast of Canada. One day, abruptly and without warning, my life was shaken by the sudden death of my father. He was just 40. My eldest brother, age 17, became advisor to our widowed mother. The future looked bleak and barren.

My dream was to become a nurse. Not just a nurse, but a nurse in a mission field in a faraway country where I might start a school of nursing or perhaps an orphanage. Would my dream ever come true? How could I pay for my education? All I knew was to wait. Wait upon God for an answer.

The waiting led to a deeper commitment. Immediately after completing high school, I was baptized in the gentle waves of the ocean not far from home. A year later, I left the island to study nursing in an Adventist college on the mainland of Canada, and soon transferred to a college in the United States where I could earn a bachelor of science degree in nursing. The journey to the first degree was filled with financial and other challenges, but God had already prepared the way.

One step at a time, I experienced His leading, and before long I was

marching down the aisle to get my degree in nursing. No family member was present to witness the event. For five years I had not gone home, and home was 5,000 miles away. But soon I would to make my own home, when I married John, a ministerial graduate I had met in college. Soon after, my husband and I headed for the seminary – he to continue his theological education and I to work on a master's degree in education (there was no graduate program in nursing then).

Becoming a missionary

A few months after John began his ministerial internship, we accepted a call to serve as teachers in the Far Eastern Division of the world church. My dreams as a 14-year-old were now beginning to unfold, one at a time, all with God's guidance and blessing. Against all odds, I had become a nurse, an educator, the wife of a Seventh-day Adventist pastor, and now a missionary. Together, my husband and I began our first international assignment as teachers at Hong Kong Adventist College.

The college was charged with the responsibility of preparing workers for China. This mission was uppermost in everyone's mind, and we began our preparation by taking up language study – Mandarin, the language common in China, even though Cantonese was the predominant dialect in Hong Kong.

But China itself was going through tremendous political and social unrest as the Cultural Revolution swept over the country. The mid-1960s were uncertain times. The unrest and violence on the mainland spilled over into Hong Kong. Streets of commerce

and peaceful centers of shopping in the British colony suddenly turned into unruly sites of political protests and demonstrations. Violence was an inevitable part of such scenes.

That was also the time when our firstborn, a beautiful girl, was born at Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital. Late one evening, after visiting me and the baby, John was driving home to the college at Clear Water Bay, when he passed a truck parked on the side of the road. The truck driver yelled out into the darkness, “Puo-loh! Puo-loh!” As John processed the sounds that registered in his ears, he remembered that “puo-loh” is Cantonese for pineapple, slang for handmade bombs placed in different areas of the city to create violence and chaos. He slowed, stopped, and investigated the road just in front of the car. Indeed, a live bomb lay waiting for impact. As he watched the police detonate the bomb a couple of hours later, the evidence of God's intervention in saving his life was plain and powerful. Could there be any doubt that God was guiding our lives for His purposes?

John continued to study the Chinese language with increased interest and even taught New Testament Greek to his ministerial students using Mandarin. Meanwhile, a second hospital was under construction in Hong Kong, this time on Victoria Island. With two Adventist hospitals, there was clearly a need for a school of nursing. The mission and union leaders asked me to take up that responsibility. The task was not mine, but God's. Sure enough, an Adventist nursing training program took shape. By the time we left Hong Kong five years later, the second class of students had graduated from Hong Kong Adventist Hospital School of Nursing.

Graduate study

At the end of our first term as missionaries, as we were planning to return to the U.S., the Far Eastern Division placed a fresh challenge

before us: take further graduate study and return to start graduate programs for the church in Asia. We loved Asia and its people. Where there are bonds of love, every challenge becomes God's opportunity.

Graduate study was eventful, with both of us enrolled fulltime in doctoral programs. Changes in financial support and the birth of our second daughter added new and special challenges. The markers on the road to the future were not clear all at once, but I knew God would reveal them one at a time. Sufficient is His grace and strength for the challenge of the moment. We completed our studies, and New Year's Day 1979

Guidelines for contributors

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

The editors are interested in well-written articles, interviews, and reports consistent with *Dialogue's* objectives:

1. To nurture an intelligent, living faith.
2. To deepen commitment to Christ, the Bible, and Adventist global mission.
3. To articulate a biblical approach to contemporary issues.
4. To offer ideas and models of Christian service and outreach.

Dialogue usually assigns articles, interviews, and reports to specific authors for publication. Prospective authors are urged: (a) to examine previous issues of our journal, (b) to carefully consider these guidelines, and (c) to submit an abstract and personal background before developing a proposed article. Unsolicited submissions will not be returned.

Check our Web site:

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

found us in the Philippines, where we joined the growing community of the Far Eastern Division Theological Seminary and Graduate School located on the new campus of Philippine Union College in Silang, Cavite.

These programs attracted bright students from across the vast territories and rich cultures of that region and from even as far away as Africa. To serve and live there was like being in a little United Nations.

There, the next challenge presented itself to me: the need for a graduate program in nursing to prepare faculty and leaders for the many Adventist healthcare institutions and schools of nursing throughout the Far East. Students from Thailand, Indonesia, Korea, the Philippines enrolled in the new program. Teaching such a diverse group of highly-motivated students in such a rich cultural context was deeply meaningful and rewarding.

An expanding ministry

Ten years later we faced a different kind of challenge. Our two daughters were ready for significant educational transitions. The first one was ready for university, the second for secondary school. It was time for our children's needs to have priority and that meant returning to the United States. As we returned, there was great discussion about the possibility of a collaborative project in China jointly sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church and a generous Hong Kong businessman. Loma Linda University Medical Center would oversee the construction and operation of a new modern medical facility – Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital (SRRSH) – in China. The very possibility of such a project was exciting, even though we were now leaving Asia and I had no idea if or how I might be involved. Twenty years after the Cultural Revolution and our stay in Hong Kong, a door was opening for the presence of Christian workers in China in a way unimagined earlier!

We returned to the United States and joined the faculty of Loma Linda University. The SRRSH project moved steadily forward and soon there was a need for nurse leaders to go to China to work alongside Chinese nurses when the hospital opened. A graduate student in the school of nursing decided to go when she finished her program. She was the right person for the challenge, modeling not only professional nursing but also God's love. More than one of the nurses at SRRSH became interested in Christianity.

The global ministry of Loma Linda University was soon to take a new turn. For years the Loma Linda University School of Nursing (LLUSN) had received requests from around the world for scholarships to prepare faculty for sister institutions in other countries. LLUSN responded, offering one or two scholarships at a time. Sometimes the students struggled with English and took up to three years to complete a master's degree. Our global ministry was thus limited. But then God inspired another way. The global shortage of nurses and of nursing faculty demanded a different approach. If we could bring more and more students from around the world to Loma Linda, why not take LLUSN's graduate programs to the world? Thus was born a new challenge.

An off-campus graduate program was developed. Visionary donors provided financial support. The first experiment of an international off-campus master of science program in nursing was launched in 2005 with nearly 50 students from 24 countries. Most were from Adventist institutions, but some were admitted from countries where the church once had a presence but no longer does. Eight students came from China. Half of the total group attended classes in Thailand, the other half in Argentina

Continued on page 31

LOGOS

An offering “without blemish”

by Gerry D. Karst

“When I look at myself I don’t see how I can be saved. But when I look at Jesus I don’t see how I can be lost.”

That saying, attributed to Martin Luther, clearly summarizes the grandeur of the gospel.

Let’s begin with where we are. Paul tells us that “all have sinned and fall[en] short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).^{*} I am a sinner and am unable to please God. Apart from Him, I stand guilty. I am an example of total depravity. I am a fountain of corruption. On my own, I am a disaster – not one that’s waiting to happen – rather, one that has already happened. So how can I possibly make it to heaven to live in the presence of a holy God, when I am morally and spiritually bankrupt?

God’s ideal for His followers

The standard God has set for His people is high, clear, and specific: “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48). Does God really mean this? Paul, writing to the Ephesians, spoke of Christ’s desire for the church: “that he might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:27). No wrinkle or blemish of any kind. That is God’s wish.

Seem impossible? How in the world

can I ever meet these requirements to be saved and then remain saved? How can I or anyone else achieve such a standard? Humanly speaking, there is no way to meet these requirements. Yet we know that God is just and fair. He would not set up an impossible standard. The good news is that there is a way.

Revelation 7:9 offers us this wonderful encouragement: “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands.” This picture of the future is encouraging because a multitude of people that no one could number is there, clothed with pure white, without any blemish. They all found a way.

There is a way

Jesus said, “I am the way” (John 14:6). This is so simple, so profound, and so thrilling. Jesus is the way. The righteousness that comes from His free grace provides us the way. But this righteousness is far from our righteousness, from our good works. Our soy-milk-drinking, tofu-eating, TV-rejecting, church-office-holding, literature-distributing, Bible-studies-giving, abstinent righteousness will never make it with God, because the best righteousness we can produce on our own is only “filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6).

When we refer to God’s free grace, we are not speaking of cheap grace that demands no obedience on our

part. Actually, divine grace is the most expensive grace one can imagine, for it cost God the life of His Son. That’s what makes Jesus the Way – a truth everyone needs to understand. Religious people who have emphasized behavior, performance, obedience, law, standards, and rules need to know this truth. So-called Christians who don’t have any joy or assurance in their spiritual life need to know this truth. People trusting in their own level of achievement need to know this truth. Adventists who feel guilty, burdened, condemned, and worn out trying need to know this truth. And if you think you can never measure up, you need to know and understand the meaning of the words “I am the way!”

Because Jesus is the way, I can be accepted while He is making me acceptable. I can be perfect while He is perfecting me. I can be ready while He is making me ready. I can gladly join Martin Luther in affirming, “When I look at myself, I don’t see how I can be saved. But when I look at Jesus, I don’t see how I can be lost.”

On May 21, 1946, Louis Slotin and seven other men were carrying out a dangerous experiment in Los Alamos, New Mexico. They were working with pieces of plutonium, which produces deadly radioactivity when enough of it is brought together. During the experiment, the pieces were accidentally nudged a little too close together, and a great surge of radioactivity filled the room. Slotin moved immediately. With his bare hands, he pulled the radioactive pieces apart. But in so doing, he exposed himself to an overwhelming dosage of radiation. Several days later, he died. The other seven survived.

Jesus came down to this dangerous, deadly earth laboratory where we live. On the cross, He threw Himself on the explosive, destructive force of sin, covering it with His own body so that we would escape and live. His death saved our lives.

An offering without blemish

Go back to the Old Testament sanctuary services. One of God's people became convicted of a sin and came to the sanctuary with an offering to be made right with God. Did God instruct the individual to *be* the offering or to *bring* the offering? Did God require that the *offerer* or the *offering* be "without blemish"? Whose life was taken to pay the price of God's broken law, that of the sinner or the lamb? Was the sinner justified, cleansed, reconciled with God on the basis of *being* the right kind of offerer, or of *bringing* the right kind of offering?

Look back again to the sanctuary service. Do you see the priest examining the lamb to be sure it is an offering without blemish? Do you see the repentant sinner place his hands on the head of the offering and confess his sins, thus transferring them to the totally innocent, perfect lamb? Do you notice that it is the lamb's life that is taken, and the lamb's blood that is carried into the sanctuary to

make atonement and reconciliation for the sinner?

On the nature of the offering, recall Leviticus 22:19-21: "You shall offer of your own free will a male without blemish from the cattle, from the sheep, or from the goats. Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it shall not be acceptable on your behalf."

An offering without blemish. Against that benchmark, I look at myself. I am defective. No matter how hard I try to be "without blemish," I can never be good enough to be the offering. But I need to look elsewhere.

Christ: The one without blemish

We need to look at Christ. He is our example in how to live. But we need something more than an example when it comes to salvation. We need a sacrifice. And Christ – the one without blemish – is our sacrifice. By dying for our sins, He became our substitute, our Savior. Hence Luther could say with confidence, "When I look at Jesus I don't see how I can be lost."

Does this mean that my "works" don't count? Does it mean that my spiritual growth and sanctification mean nothing? Isn't my obedience worth anything? Doesn't my striving to work out my salvation make any difference to God?

Absolutely, it does. It does as the "fruit" of my salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, the offering of God's own providing. But it is not the "root." What I do in loving obedience to the one who provides the acceptable offering is the evidence or fruit of my salvation experience.

Conclusion

We are not the offering. We cannot be the offering. We bring an offering, and that offering is the spotless Lamb of God. The story is told of a sculpture of a lamb on the roof of a church in Germany. When the church

was being built, one of the workers fell from the roof to the ground. His friends climbed down as quickly as they could, expecting to find him dead. But he was virtually unhurt. A lamb had been grazing below, and he had landed on the lamb, absolutely crushing it. He was so thankful that he chose to carve a stone lamb as a memorial of the lamb's sacrifice that saved his life.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, died on the cross to save you and me. We can experience the joy and freedom of salvation if we come to God in the name of that offering – the "without blemish" offering – in the name of Jesus because of whom we are counted righteous through faith.

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*All Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version.

Author's note: In writing this article, I am indebted to Philip Dunham's recent work *Sure Salvation* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 2007). Used by permission.

Attention, Adventist Professionals

If you hold a degree in any field and have an e-mail 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 Web site:

<http://apn.adventist.org>

Encourage other Adventist professionals to register!

Science

Continued from page 10

7. Quoted in O. Gingerich, "Dare a Scientist Believe in Design?" *Bulletin of the Boston Theological Institute* 3 (2004)2:4-5.
8. R. Lewontin, "Billions and Billions of Demons," *New York Review of Books* 44 (1997)1:28-32. Italics supplied.
9. S. C. Todd, "A View from Kansas on that evolution debate." *Nature* 401 (1999):423.
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ACTION REPORT



Many scholars shared their experience of integrating faith and intellectual integrity with the conference attendees.

In Britain: A conference for scholars seeking faith

An international and interdisciplinary conference, “*Gloria Patri: ‘For in Him We Live, and Move, and Have Our Being,’*” was held near Cambridge University from June 26 to 29, 2008. Held in the beautiful setting of Wyboston Lakes Conference and Training Centre near St. Neots, Herefordshire, England, the event attracted 70 intellectuals, including 36 students from 11 countries. Most of the student attendees presented scholarly papers across the disciplines of science, theology, philosophy, psychology, law, and medicine. Coming largely from public universities, the student delegates expressed appreciation for the opportunity the conference provided for free discussion of views without compromising one’s faith or intellectual integrity.

The conference focused on the theme taken from Paul’s address to the Athenians (Acts 17:16-34): “For in him we live, and move, and have our being,” (KJV). The inaugural

address examined ways by which Christians may uplift the God of creation through various academic disciplines. Christians are called to uplift the Creator and to seek evidences of Him in His creation. Paul’s message of a God who not only creates and intervenes in human history, but also holds humanity responsible for its actions, was completely foreign to his audience. The Epicureans attacked the notion of divine intervention, while the Stoics believed in a nonpersonal higher power that was equated with Fate.

That attitude of indifference to or ignorance of the God of creation, so much a part of the Athenian life, is no different from the attitude of today’s so-called intellectuals. Hence the Cambridge conference focused on how Adventist scholars can remain committed to the God of the Bible while pursuing various intellectual careers. The purpose for the conference was threefold: to begin intellectual evan-

gelism among unchurched people of higher education; to provide support, mentorship, and spiritual guidance for Christian students, especially those who attend non-Christian universities; and to encourage Christian-based interdisciplinary scholarship and research of the highest standard.

Niels-Erik Andreasen, president of Andrews University and an Old Testament scholar, presented three factors that provide coherence to faith-reason interface: “(1) We are called to worship God with our minds: scholarship is a privilege and a duty. (2) What we share with one another should be faith-affirming, inspiring. (3) In today’s culture, our adversary is unbelief; Adventists need robust apologetics for basic Nicene Christian theism.” To Andreasen, the conference was “like a camp meeting for scholars. The content is mixed, so different sorts of people can find interest and blessing. It’s an Adventist mind-and-heart conference.”

The conference also stressed the need for the church to address the question of how to relate to our highly-educated members. Often such members walk out the door – not just the door of church membership, but out of Christianity itself. Victor Pilmoor, treasurer of the British Union Conference and a highly-trained scholar, summarized the situation when he described the relationship of a local Adventist church to a certain prominent university. He noted that there is a definite gap between the town and the academic gown. Uncomfortable with the prospect of answering difficult and unconventional questions, churches can often be less than welcoming to members and visitors who are highly educated. Feelings of intimidation and fear of interacting with those imagined to be superior in some way can stand in the way of embracing those associated with high academia.

What is needed to help correct this problem is not simply a large mon-

etary investment to reach people with glitzy programs, but rather allowing those people to invest themselves in the church. People want to contribute something of themselves to a cause, and they will go where they can do so. Will they shake things up a bit? Yes. Will they make mistakes along the way? Yes. Are they causing a stir because they are anti-establishment and are just waiting for the older generation to die? No. Every good scholar knows that we stand on the shoulders of giants, and it is only by standing on those shoulders that we are able to see our way more clearly to the future.

The next conference will be June 4-8, 2009, at Bobbio Pellice, Italy. A call for papers for “*Gloria Patri: The Responsibilities of Christian Scholarship*” is posted at <http://gloriapatia2009.blogspot.com>. The purpose of the upcoming conference is to examine the ways in which a Christian worldview may positively interact with and impact the disciplines. The conference will explore: (1) the historical interaction of Christianity with the sciences and humanities; (2) methods for building positive interaction and dialogue between Christianity and the disciplines; and (3) the ways in which a Christian-based interdisciplinary dialogue and research may practically impact the disciplines.

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Romanian College hosts EUD's Fourth International AMiCUS congress

Under the motto “Warming Up,” the Fourth International AMiCUS Congress for the Euro-Africa Division (EUD) convened September 25-28, 2008, on the beautiful campus of the Adventist Theological Institute, Cernica, near Bucharest. Adventist university students from all over Romania and other parts of the region assembled to experience three days of fellowship that included Bible studies, position papers on global warming, and probing challenges to their commitment to mission.

The official program began Thursday night with inspiring songs, a challenging report on global warming with well-selected video clips, and a presentation on “The Value of Nature for Christians” by Dr. Antonio Cremades, former director of the Latin chapter of the Geoscience Research Institute and present education director for the Spanish Union. The presentation set the tone for the

congress, as delegates concentrated on the issue of global warming. Nature, it was pointed out, has a very special part in God’s plan for our education and for helping us to maintain a good relationship with Him, which is why it is so important to respect and protect it.

If I had to choose a word to define Friday’s activities, “new” would be a good one. New lectures and workshops, new ideas, new friends, a new trip, and new sightseeing spots. The most singular activity of the day was the tour of Bucharest. One day is not enough to discover a city, and so the organizers of the congress chose just two of the most representative and well-known monuments of Bucharest, the Village Museum and the Palace of the Parliament – to stir up participants’ desire for the next visit.

But the congress was not all play. Serious discussions on the issue of global warming provided two



Above: Dr. Roberto Badenas, Education Department director of the Euro-African Division, addressing the delegates.

Left: Part of audience at the Europe AMiCUS congress, which met at the Adventist Theological Institute, Cernica, near Bucharest, Romania.

new perspectives on the subject. Dr. Jacques Sauvagnat, director of the European branch office of the Geoscience Research Institute, helped us to understand that hoping for a new Earth also includes caring for the present one; we are indeed stewards of God's creation here. The second perspective came from Dr. Samuel Soret, associate professor and chairman of the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at Loma Linda University. He challenged the audience with new ideas and practical advice as to how to put into practice ecological theories. How can we practice "green" evangelism? How about an eco-friendly church?

The Sabbath was a feast of songs, worship, fellowship, seminars, and workshops. Drs. Cindy Tutsch, associate director of the Ellen G. White Estate, and Hans Gerhardt, rector of Friedensau University, were the principal speakers of the day. What has Ellen White to say about ecology? What is the relation between what we eat and global warming? Is global warming a sign of the times?

A student congress is by definition

an occasion of interaction. This one was not an exception. Saturday night, after two and a half days of lectures, participants had the opportunity to ask questions, present their points of view, and share their vision about the issues. The discussion was interrupted by the surprising visit of the mayor of Bucharest, Dr. Sorin Oprescu, who expressed his delight about the campus and his appreciation for the subject of the meeting. This unexpected VIP visit marked the day even in the newspapers.

Sunday is usually a good day for shopping. So that was the best time for a lecture about...shopping. How to buy ethically or "Good bye, good...buy"? The guide for this session of shopping was Dr. Michael Pearson, professor of ethics and vice principal of Newbold College. His purpose was not to bankrupt all the shops, but to challenge students to think a little bit more before buying.

Before each meeting, students presented reports on how different AMiCUS chapters implemented their mission in public campuses, high schools, elementary schools, cities,

and villages. It was pure AMiCUS mission. Those reports were all about *warming up* (our souls) for Jesus. The theme of the congress even wound up in a song that won students' hearts and helped them express their commitment to mission. The song, written especially for the occasion, will be included in the new International Adventist Youth Ministry songbook.

Cristina Neagu is the author of this article. She can be contacted by e-mail at avalansuta@yahoo.fr.

Visit <http://amicus.euroafrica.org> to watch seminar videos and concluding statement or download the congress hymn and the student's report ideas. www.euroafrica.org/index.cgi.

Make plans to attend the fifth EUD AMiCUS congress in France in 2010.

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 e-mail address of the report's author. Send them to Susana Schulz at schulzs@gc.adventist.org. Thank you!

Finis

Continued from page 19

the most pleasant Sabbath we had, and only God can work that out.

■ *One life lesson you learned?*

Humility. There are so many different cultures in our world, and all of them have something special. My culture is not better because it's mine or because it has more money. My culture is just another culture. I learned we don't have to judge other cultures as good or bad, but we have to view them as different.

■ *You can serve God in your own place, with people of your own culture and values, having relatives and friends close. Weighing the pros and cons of your experience, is it worth the sacrifice of serving*

God in lands so far and so different from your own?

Sacrifice is only one side of the coin. The other side shows you all the blessings that you are constantly receiving. Respect, solidarity, love and friendship come in the same package. We would be very happy to return to live and work in the lands where we had the opportunity to serve God thus far.

Lorena Mayer, (M.A. in International Communication, University of Southern Queensland, Australia), writes from Geneva. She works in one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system. E-mail: lorenmayer@hotmail.com.

Matainaho Brothers

Continued from page 17

properties of snake venom to improve management of snake bite. I am also involved with policy development for traditional medicine.

The focus on biodiversity for health has added enormous interest to conservation of resources and highlighted the need to articulate clearly the global and community issues associated with the use and management of the environment, including the impact of climate change.

Some of our research is funded by the United States National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, and World Health Organization, and I am involved in multi-national pharmacology research projects. I am particularly concerned about understanding the environment and the benefits offered by biodiversity, without exploiting it in the process. I believe stewardship of the environment was entrusted to us by the Creator.

To support Adventist education, I serve on the University Council for



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Pacific Adventist University. I am also very active in my local church. Recently, I have been writing on the topic of creation, and how the principles of success are illustrated by the days of Creation. But I would like to find a way to be even more involved with Adventist education somehow.

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God's Timing

Continued from page 27

and South Africa. Instruction was the same as at Loma Linda University and provided by the same faculty. A rich cultural exchange among students and between students and faculty enhanced the educational experience for all – faculty as well as students. Through role modeling of Christian values and integration of faith and learning, students observed Christianity in action and described it as life-changing.

But soon we discovered that master's degrees were not enough. A growing number of Adventist universities around the world are adding graduate programs of their own to maintain a qualified faculty and help meet the needs in their own country. In institu-

tions offering a master's degree, it is necessary for faculty to be prepared at the doctoral level. Again, it is difficult in many countries for Adventist faculty to obtain access to and support for doctoral study. Loma Linda University School of Nursing offers a Ph.D. in nursing, but at present it requires students to come to the main campus for a four- to five-year period to complete the degree. To serve the world field effectively, we need a format in which students can come for shorter periods and continue in their faculty roles in their home country. In addition, scholarships are necessary to make this possible. This is the next missionary challenge to conquer – a challenge that God will solve in His own way, in His own time, one step at a time. All He needs is human instruments who seek to do His will and His way.

In that seeking, I have found my joy. From the teenage girl, shocked by her father's untimely death and troubled by a future that seemed dark and uncertain I have become a person who has seen life in all its tragedy and triumph, uncertainty and fullness of joy. The way was paved and readied by the One who said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." All I needed to do was place my dreams, my hopes, and my life in Him who never fails.

Patricia S. Jones (Ph.D., Vanderbilt University) is professor of nursing and director of the Office of International Nursing at Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California. She is also the associate director for health ministries at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A. E-mail: jonesp@llu.edu.

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INDEX

College and University Dialogue Vols. 16-20 (2004-2008)

19:3 was not published.

By Author

- Abrahamson, Karen K. "In Britain: A conference for scholars seeking faith," 20:3 (2008), p. 27.
- Adams, Roy. "The tenderness of His love," 20:2 (2008), p. 17.
- Adjapong, Erik. "Ghana Adventist students host Bible lecture series," 18:3 (2006), p. 29.
- Agyemang, Richard and Lydia Oppong. "Ghanian students try new ways fo campus ministry," 20:2 (2008), p. 31.
- Almocera, Reuel U. "Closed or open doors?," 16:2 (2004), p. 34.
- Alves, Charlise. "Students in Brazil meet to learn and share," 18:3 (2006), p. 28.
- Amaral, Fabiana, Irineo Koch, and Erton Köhler. "Brazil on the move," 16:3 (2004), p. 34.
- _____. "University students attend symposium in Brazil," 16:1 (2004), p. 21.
- Andersson, Audrey. "Eva-Charlotte Roslin," 17:3 (2005), p. 18.
- Andreasen, Niels-Erik. "I know in whom I believe," 16:2 (2004), p. 15.
- Aranda Fraga, Fernando. "Amores que matan (Núñez)," 16:1 (2004), p. 26.
- _____. "El proceso pedagógico: ¿Agonía o resurgimiento? (Smith)," 17:1 (2005), p. 29.
- Ashton, John F. "Alcohol's dark secrets," 17:2 (2005), p. 28.
- Bacchiocchi, Samuele. "Passionate about *The Passion*," 16:2 (2004), p. 22.
- Badenas, Roberto. "Cristología: Descubriendo al Maestro (Núñez)," 19:2 (2007), p. 23.
- _____. "Division-wide AMICUS Congress in Italy," 18:1 (2006), p. 26.
- _____. "Jordi Baget," 19:2 (2007), p. 18 and insert.
- _____. "Rafael Falcó Güell," 18:2 (2006), p. 18 and insert.
- _____. "The essential Jesus (Ball and Johnsson)," 16:2 (2004), p. 28.
- Baldwin, John T. "The big argument: Does God exist? (Ashton and Westacott)," 19:1 (2007), p. 32.
- Barbosa, Henrienne. "Eunice Michiles," 20:1 (2008), p. 20.
- Batten, Nicole. "Duane Maynard Cady," 18:1 (2006), p. 22.
- _____. "Jaime Jorge," 17:1 (2005), p. 20.
- Beardsley, Lisa M. "Better vision in the body of Christ," 19:2 (2007), p. 20.
- _____. "Cultural critics," 20:2 (2008), p. 3.
- _____. "Fiaia Matainaho and Teatulohi Matainaho," 20:3 (2008), p. 15.
- _____. "Rainbow over hell: The death-row deliverance of a World War II assassin (Mohri)," 20:1 (2008), p. 23.
- Becerra, Enrique. "El culto que agrada a Dios: criterios revelados acerca de la adoración (Plenc)," 20:2 (2008), p. 23.
- Belvedere, Daniel. "How to approach a Jehovah's Witness," 18:2 (2006), p. 31.
- Bingham, Maxine and Ron. "The Da Vinci Code: fact or fiction?," 18:2 (2006), p. 24.
- Blake, Chris. "Christians and homosexuality," 19:2 (2007), p. 24.
- Bocaneanu, Sara. "Steliana Sandu," 16:1 (2004), p. 14.
- Boskovic, Danilo. "I believe in a Creator God," 19:1 (2007), p. 22.
- Boyle, Patrick J. "Islam in the post 9/11 world (Schantz)," 16:3 (2004), p. 29.
- Brand, Leonard. "Ellen White and her critics," 17:2 (2005), p. 24.
- _____. and Ernest Schwab. "The rainbow is all in your head," 18:2 (2006), p. 11.
- Brito, Azenilto G. "Cristãos em busca do êxtase (Dorneles)," 17:1 (2005), p. 28.
- Burdick, Gary. "Science and Design: A physicist's perspective," 20:3 (2008), p. 5.
- Burt, Merlin D. "Ellen G. White and mental health," 20:3 (2008), p. 11.
- Cairus, Acio E. "Drink a little wine?," 19:2 (2007), p. 29.
- _____. "E. J. Waggoner: From the physician of good news to the agent of Division (Whidden)," 20:3 (2008), p. 30.
- _____. "The Trinity: Understanding God's love, His plan of salvation, and Christian relationships (Whidden, Moon, and Reeve)," 17:2 (2005), p. 30.
- Carballo, Benjamin and Arturo King. "Committed minds - Ready hearts," 17:3 (2005), p. 23.
- Carbonell, Nancy J. "El poder terapéutico del perdón (Pereyra)," 18:1 (2006), p. 30.
- _____. "Sea feliz: Cómo vencer la depresión y controlar la ansiedad (Pereyra and Mussi)," 19:2 (2007), p. 22.
- Castro, Ausberto. "In search of the true lighted path," 18:1 (2006), p. 33.
- Caviness, Linda. "The mind-body connection: Some recent findings," 16:2 (2004), p. 11.
- Ceballos, Mario. "Be a Daniel or Daniela!," 20:3 (2008), p. 3
- Chartier, Gary. "The Christian in business: Beyond honesty," 17:1 (2005), p. 5.
- Ching, Kathy. "Elaine Kennedy," 16:2 (2004), p. 20.
- Cooper, Lowell C. "The gospel, the power of God," 20:2 (2008), p. 25.
- Coralie, Alain Gerard. "Enriching praise and worship through ACTS," 20:2 (2008), p. 27.
- Cotro, Hugo A. "Christians and political election," 18:2 (2006), p. 17.
- Cowles, David. "Science discovers God: Seven convincing lines of evidence for His existence (Roth)," 20:3 (2008), p. 21.
- Damsteegt, Joelle. "General Youth Conference motivates young people to spread the Gospel," 19:1 (2007), p. 26.
- Davidson Schafer, Rahel. "Integrating faith and science," 16:1 (2004), p. 18.
- de Groot, Mart. "Genesis and the cosmos: A unified picture?," 17:1 (2005), p. 15.
- Denk, Daniel. "Paul speaks at the university," 18:3 (2006), p. 35.
- Donkor, Kwabena. "The battle for the Bible (Marshall)," 17:2 (2005), p. 31.
- Douglass, Herbert E. "Natural disasters: Acts of God or acts of Satan?," 18:1 (2006), p. 18.
- Doward, Jan S. "God's perfect timing," 16:1 (2004), p. 32.
- Dulan, C. Garland. "Followers first," 17:2 (2005), p. 3.
- du Preez, Ron. "1844: Coincidence or providence," 18:3 (2006), p. 13.
- _____. "Thinking straight in a crooked world," 17:3 (2005), p. 26.
- Duerksen, Dick. "Where hope happens," 19:2 (2007), p. 28.
- Dupertuis, Atilio René. "Understanding Scripture: An Adventist approach (Reid)," 19:1 (2007), p. 32.
- Esperante, Raúl. "A fistuf of dollars," 20:1 (2008), p. 27.
- _____. "Archaeopteryx: A flying reptile?," 17:1 (2005), p. 32.
- _____. "Evidence for Creation (Javor)," 18:2 (2006), p. 28.
- _____. "Knowing God in the real world (Paulien)," 16:3 (2004), p. 28.
- _____. "Time, faith, and fossil whales," 16:2 (2004), p. 5.
- Feldbush, Martin W. "Blessed are the peacemakers," 20:1 (2008), p. 3.
- _____. "Cheers and challenges," 16:3 (2004), p. 3
- Feliciano, Redentor A. "Adventist students active in the Philippines," 17:2 (2005), p. 21.
- Fortin, Denis. "Systematic theology: Prolegomena (Gulley)," 17:3 (2005), p. 29.
- Fowler, John M. "Who am I?," 17:1 (2005), p. 3
- Gallagher, Jonathan. "Evan Jeremy Paki," 16:3 (2004), p. 20.
- Gane, Barry. "Coming home from the distant land," 16:2 (2004), p. 30.
- García-Marenko, Alfredo. "The Elijah Project: You are invited!," 17:1 (2005), p. 25.
- General Conference. "A Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of music," 18:2 (2006), p. 27.
- _____. "Adventist statements on homosexuality and same-sex unions," 19:1 (2007), p. 30.
- _____. "Seventh-day Adventists and Scholarship," 16:3 (2004), p. 26.
- Gibson, L. James. "Exploring the relation between faith and science," 17:1 (2005), p. 23.
- _____. "The Geoscience Research Institute," 16:1 (2004), p. 30.
- _____. "What is the meaning of kinds in Genesis?," 18:1 (2006), p. 27.
- _____. "When faith and reason are in tension," 19:2 (2007), p. 5.

- Giem, Paul. "Religion always loses?," 16:3 (2004), p. 30.
- Goldstein, Clifford. "Can reality be understood without God?," 16:2 (2004), p. 8.
- _____. "Einstein's Brain," 20:1 (2008), p. 24.
- Graham-Kennedy, Elaine. "Dinosaurs: Questions Christians ask," 18:3 (2006), p. 9.
- Halowiak, Bert. "The Adventist Church today," 17:3 (2005), p. 12.
- Hammerly, Héctor. "Expect great things (O'Ffill)," 16:1 (2004), p. 27.
- Hansen, Kent. "Grace at 30,000 feet," 16:1 (2004) p. 22.
- Hasel, Michael. "Postmodern Bible critics and recent archaeology," 18:2 (2006), p. 14.
- Hee, Jae Im. "Dreaming of a world without war," 20:1 (2008), p. 29.
- Hodgkin, Georgia E. "Nutrition and academic achievement: Are they related?," 20:1 (2008), p. 16.
- Höschele, Stefan. "Living in a world of war and violence: What should a Christian do?," 20:1 (2008), p. 5.
- Hull, Lakisha. "Philadelphia Adventist Network," 17:2 (2005), p. 20.
- Jamison, Bradley A. "A strange place for grace: Discovering a loving God in the Old Testament (Dybdahl)," 20:2 (2008), p. 23.
- Javor, George. "Decision time," 17:3 (2005), p. 32.
- Jones, Dustin R. "Daisy de Leon," 17:1 (2005), p. 18.
- _____. "Richard Hart," 16:1 (2004), p. 16.
- Jones, Patricia. "God's timing, God's way," 20:3 (2008), p. 23.
- Jordache, Costin. "Transforming prayer," 16:3 (2004), p. 22.
- Jordache, Leah. "Are you a true disciple of Christ?," 18:3 (2006), p. 22.
- Karst, Gerry. "Always read the owner's manual," 16:1 (2004), p. 3.
- _____. "An offering 'without blemish,'" 20:3 (2008), p. 25.
- Katemba Tobing, Caroline V. "Miracles happen through prayer," 18:2 (2006), p. 34.
- Kellner, Mark A. "Sharing your faith with a Jewish friend," 19:2 (2007), p. 31.
- Kibuuka, Hudson E. "Emily Akuno," 18:3 (2006), p. 18.
- _____. "Ken D. Bilima," 17:3 (2005), p. 20.
- King, Arturo and Benjamin Carballo. "Committed minds – ready hearts," 17:3 (2005), p. 23.
- King, Greg A. "Telling the truth about Truth," 16:3 (2004), p. 5.
- _____. "The ultimate homecoming," 19:1 (2007), p. 20.
- Koch, Irineo, Fabiana Amaral, and Erton Köhler. "Brazil on the move," 16:3 (2004), p. 34.
- Köhler, Erton. "A choice without regret," 17:3 (2005), p. 3.
- Köhler, Erton, Fabiana Amaral, and Irineo Koch. "Brazil on the move," 16:3 (2004), p. 34.
- Köhler, Erton. "Students in Chile hold first national congress," 16:3 (2004), p. 35.
- _____. "University students meet in Ecuador," 17:2 (2005), p. 20.
- Kuntaraf, Jonathan. "Benjamin Gunawan Yonas," 19:1 (2007), p. 18.
- Landless, Peter N. "Should I drink wine for my health?," 16:2 (2004), p. 24.
- _____. "Uncorked! The hidden hazards of alcohol (Ashton and Laura)," 18:1 (2006), p. 31.
- Lichtenwalter, Larry. "He breathed into his nostrils: God's kiss of life," 17:2 (2005), p. 22.
- Ludwig, Jenny. "NASDAS: Adventist students in Northern Australia," 17:1 (2005), p. 26.
- Luste Maran, Kimberly. "Birgit Philipsen," 19:2 (2007), p. 16.
- Mahon, Penny. "With all your might," 17:1 (2005), p. 22.
- Marshall, Anita (as told Charles Ngandwe). "The voice He gave me," 17:2 (2005), p. 34.
- Marshall, David. "The canon of the Bible: A brief review," 17:1 (2005), p. 12.
- Masih, Younis S. "20 Questions God wants to ask you: Life-changing encounters with the Divine Fitzgerald," 20:3 (2008), p. 22.
- Maxwell, Stanley. "In a prison cell: A matter of conscience," 16:3 (2004), p. 24.
- Maya Montes, César. "Yolanda Morales Romero," 16:3 (2004), p. 18.
- Mayer, Lorena. "Silvia and Arturo Finis," 20:3 (2008), p. 18.
- McClarty, Wilma. "Teaching Literature: A Seventh-day Adventist Approach (Davis)," 16:3 (2004), p. 28.
- Melgosa, Julián. "Reconciliación: Cómo reparar los vínculos dañados (Pereyra)," 17:1 (2005), p. 28.
- _____. "Getting married or living together?," 19:1 (2007), p. 34.
- Missah, Hiskia. "Priorities for the new year," 19:1 (2007), p. 3.
- Morgan, Douglas. "Peacemaking: Exploring Adventism's roots and heritage," 20:1 (2008), p. 8.
- Muganda, Baraka. "Where is your passion?," 18:1 (2006), p. 3.
- Muller, Ekkehardt. "Where is hell?," 18:3 (2006), p. 34.
- Neagu, Cristina. "Romanian College hosts EUD's fourth International AMICUS congress," 20:3 (2008), p. 28.
- Ngandwe, Charles as told to Anita Marshall. "The voice He gave me," 17:2 (2005), p. 34.
- Nicoll, Regis. "Rumors of things unseen," 17:3 (2005), p. 24.
- Nunes, Miguel. "Creation field conference in Portugal," 18:3 (2006), p. 28.
- _____. "Dulce Neto," 19:1 (2007), p. 16.
- Núñez, Miguel Ángel. "Domestic abuse has no excuse," 18:1 (2006), p. 15.
- _____. "The attitude of Jesus toward women," 19:2 (2007), p. 14.
- Olaore, Israel Bamidele. "Faith step by step: Finding God and yourself (Bruinsma)," 20:1 (2008), p. 23.
- Oliver, Ansel. "Ganoune Diop," 20:2 (2008), p. 20.
- Oliver, Willie and Elaine. "Before you plan your wedding," 19:1 (2007), p. 5.
- Oppong, Lydia and Richard Agyemang. "Ghanian students try new ways of campus ministry," 20:2 (2008), p. 31.
- Ouédraogo, Ben Issouf. "New student association in Burkina Faso," 17:1 (2005), p. 27.
- Pereyra, Mario. "Depression: How to detect and defeat it," 18:3 (2006), p. 16.
- _____. "How do you react when offended?," 16:1 (2004), p. 5.
- Perrino-Walker, Celeste. "Joy: The secret of being content," 17:2 (2005) p. 13.
- Pfandl, Gerhard. "Revelation of Jesus Christ (Stefanovic)," 17:3 (2005), p. 31.
- _____. "The soul sleepers (Ball)," 20:2 (2008), p. 22.
- Pichot, Paul. "Searching for the God of grace (Tyner)," 20:2 (2008), p. 24.
- Pitman, Sean D. "Why I believe in Creation," 17:3 (2005), p. 9.
- Plenc, Daniel. "Worship as adoration: A perspective from Ellen G. White," 20:2 (2008), p. 15.
- Poni, Carlos and Esteban Poni. "Your health is in your hands," 18:1 (2006), p. 12.
- Poni, Esteban. "Taking charge of your health," 16:1 (2004), p. 8.
- _____. "Your health is in your hands," 18:1 (2006), p. 12.
- Popescu, Claudiu. "Adventists students evangelize in Romania," 16:1 (2004), p. 20.
- Ransom, Kevin. "AMICUS active in central Philippines," 16:3 (2004), p. 34.
- Rasi, Humberto M. "Dealing with Sabbath difficulties," 16:1 (2004), p. 24.
- _____. "Giving a reason for our hope," 20:1 (2008), p. 11.
- _____. "Knowing God's will for my life," 18:1 (2006), p. 5.
- _____. "Romualdo Costa," 16:2 (2004), p. 18 and insert.
- _____. "So you want a job?," 17:1 (2005), p. 34.
- _____. "Three certainties," 19:1 (2007), p. 3.
- _____. "You are poetry in motion!," 16:2 (2004), p. 3.
- Rasi Gregorutti, Sylvia. "Grace at 30,000 feet and other unexpected places (Hansen)," 16:2 (2004), p. 29.
- Rasi, Julieta. "A letter read by all," 18:2 (2006), p. 3.
- Reid, G. Edward. "Don't worry about money!," 16:3 (2004), p. 8.
- Reid, George W. "Burial or cremation?," 17:3 (2005), p. 29.
- Riveros, Mario. "Misión y contextualización: Llevar el mensaje bíblico a un mundo multicultural (Klingbeil)," 18:3 (2006), p. 30.
- Rizzo, Kay D. told by Sunshine. "God's sunshine on stage," 18:3 (2006), p. 32.
- Roberts, Randall L. "Good God, what have we done to you?," 19:2 (2007), p. 9.
- Rodríguez, Ángel M. "Should women remain silent in church?," 16:1 (2004) p. 29.
- _____. "Suicide and the Bible," 16:3 (2004), p. 17.
- Rolland, Jean-Luc. "A search for identity (Knight)," 16:2 (2004), p. 28.
- Roth, Ariel A. "Science finds God," 17:2 (2005) p. 5.
- _____. "When science rejected God," 20:3 (2008), p. 8.
- Sabes, Jane. "Is there a role for Adventists in politics?," 18:3 (2006), p. 5.
- _____. "Michelle Chin," 18:2 (2006), p. 20.
- Sanchez-Sabaté, Rubén. "Adventist students in Spain meet for their 23rd annual convention," 20:2 (2008), p. 30.
- Sanggalan-Doroy, Christy. "Keeping the faith," 20:2 (2008), p. 29.

- Santana, Heron. "A powerful influence for good," 17:3 (2005), p. 22.
- Santos, Rudislei. "Adventist youth at work at the Federal rural University of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil," 20:1 (2008), p. 31.
- Schaller de Ponce, María Emilia. "The amazing power of God's Word," 17:1 (2005), p. 30.
- Schwab, Ernest and Leonard Brand. "The rainbow is all in your head," 18:2 (2006), p. 11.
- Shantz, Borge. "How to witness to your Muslim friends," 16:2 (2004), p. 25.
- Shea, William H. "How reliable is Bible prophecy? The case of Daniel," 19:1 (2007), p. 8.
- _____. "Searching for the tombs of Noah's family," 17:3 (2005), p. 5.
- Shield, Bonita Joyner. "Jonathan Gallagher," 18:3 (2006), p. 20.
- Simmons, Ella. "The test," 18:3 (2006), p. 3.
- Smith, Dan. "A day of delight, a day to remember," 19:2 (2007), p. 12.
- _____. "Ten reasons why I choose to remain an Adventist," 18:3 (2006), p. 24.
- _____. "What is the purpose of prayer?," 17:2 (2005) p. 8.
- Soriano, Alberto. "God's wonderful providence," 19:2 (2007), p. 30.
- Standish, Timothy G. "*Beginnings: Are science and Scripture partners in the search for origins?* (Brand and Jarnes)," 18:3 (2007), p. 30.
- _____. "Design in nature: Millennia of arguments," 20:2 (2008), p. 7.
- _____. "Twenty years after *The blind watchmaker*," 19:1 (2006), p. 11.
- Steyn, Delyse. "Neville Clouten," 17:2 (2005), p. 18, insert.
- _____. "Screening the screen: media literacy and the Christian," 17:3 (2005), p. 15.
- Sunshine told to Kay D. Rizzo. "God's sunshine on stage," 18:3 (2006), p. 32.
- Tasker, Carol M. "Finding 'The One?'," 20:2 (2008), p. 4.
- Taylor V, John Wesley. "*In passion for the world* (Greenleaf)," 18:1 (2006), p. 30.
- _____. "The truth search: A Christian response," 20:2 (2008), p. 11.
- Thomsen, Calvin. "Six myths of marriage," 17:2 (2005) p. 10.
- Thomsen, Ervin K. "How to fear God and be unafraid," 18:2 (2006), p. 22.
- Treyer, Alberto R. "The same story told differently," 16:2 (2004), p. 22.
- Treyer, Humberto R. "*Daniel: A reader's guide* (Shea)," 18:2 (2006), p. 28.
- Unknown. "A welcoming church?," 16:1 (2004) p. 25.
- _____. "God always answers prayer," 19:1 (2007), p. 35.
- _____. "Overcoming the Internet temptations," 19:2 (2007), p. 34.
- _____. "The assignment" 17:1 (2005), p. 35.
- _____. "The birdcage," 16:1 (2004), p. 35.
- _____. "The portrait," 18:1 (2006), p. 35.
- _____. "The target," 17:3 (2005), p. 35.
- Vacca, Roberto. "Dora Bognandi," 17:2 (2005), p. 16.
- Valenzuela, Alfonso. "Married but happy," 16:3 (2004), p.14.
- Van Pelt, Nancy. "Love or infatuation? How to tell the difference," 18:2 (2006), p. 8.
- _____. "Marrying a non-Christian?," 17:2 (2005), p. 27.
- _____. "What's this thing called love?," 18:1 (2006), p. 9.
- Viera, Juan Carlos. "*Prophets are human* (Bradford)," 17:2 (2005), p. 30.
- Virtic, Zvonko. "Lidija Odorcic," 18:1 (2006), p. 20.
- Vyhmeister, Nancy. "*Historical Dictionary of the Seventh-day Adventists* (Land)," 19:2 (2007), p. 22.
- _____. "Jesus Christ: Myth or history?," 16:1 (2004), p. 11.
- _____. "*Lifestyles of the Remnant* (Hyden)," 16:1 (2004), p. 28.
- _____. "*Questions on doctrine* (Knight)," 17:3 (2005), p. 30.
- Walton, John C. "Intelligent design and its critics," 18:2 (2006), p. 5.
- Weismeyer, Richard. "Adventist lifestyle and longevity," 18:1 (2006), p. 28.
- Whidden, Woodrow W. "The Trinity: Why is it important?," 16:3 (2004), p.11.
- Wohlberg, Steve. "From Hollywood to heaven," 19:1 (2007), p. 28.
- _____. "Harry Potter: Innocent fun or destructive tool?," 17:1 (2005), p. 9.
- Wong, Mary H. T. "In God's good time," 18:1 (2006), p. 24.
- _____. "*When all alone I stand* (Doward)," 16:1 (2004), p. 26.
- Yé, Magloire. "Adventist students active in Burkina Faso," 19:1 (2007), p. 27.
- Zaitsev, Eugene. "Understanding the Eastern Orthodox Church," 20:2 (2008), p. 32.
- Zuill, Henry. "*Origin by design* (Coffin, Brown and Gibson)," 18:2 (2006), p. 29.
- _____. "The environment: Should Christians care?," 19:1 (2007), p. 14.

Action Report (by country)

- Australia. "NASDAS: Adventist students in Northern Australia," by Jenny Ludwig, 17:1 (2005), p. 26.
- Brazil. "A powerful influence for good," by Heron Santana, 17:3 (2005), p. 22.
- Brazil. "Adventist youth at work at the Federal rural University of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil," by Rudislei Santos, 20:1 (2008), p. 31.
- Brazil. "Brazil on the move," by Fabiana Amaral, Irineo Koch, and Erton Köhler, 16:3 (2004), p. 34.
- Brazil. "Students in Brazil meet to learn and share," by Charlise Alves, 18:3 (2006), p. 28.
- Brazil. "University students attend symposium in Brazil," by Fabiana Amaral, 16:1 (2004), p. 21.
- Burkina Faso. "Adventist students active in Burkina Faso," by Magloire Yé, 19:1 (2007), p. 27.
- Burkina Faso. "New student association in Burkina Faso," by Ben Issouf Ouédraogo, 17:1 (2005), p. 27.
- Chile. "Students in Chile hold first national congress," by Erton Köhler, 16:3 (2004), p. 35.
- Ecuador. "University students meet in Ecuador," by Erton Köhler 17:2 (2005), p. 20.
- Ghana. "Ghana Adventist students host Bible lecture series," by Erik Adjapong, 18:3 (2006), p. 29.
- Ghana. "Ghanian students try new ways of campus ministry," by Lydia Oppong, and Richard Agyemang, 20:2 (2008), p. 31.
- Italy. "Division-wide AMICUS Congress in Italy," by Roberto Badenas, 18:1 (2006), p. 26.
- Mexico. "Committed minds – ready hearts," by Arturo King, and Benjamin Carballo, 17:3 (2005), p. 23.
- Philippines. "Adventist students active in the Philippines," by Redentor A. Feliciano, 17:2 (2005), p. 21.

- Philippines. "AMICUS active in central Philippines," by Kevin Ransom, 16:3 (2004), p. 34.
- Portugal. "Creation field conference in Portugal," by Miguel Nunes, 18:3 (2006), p. 28.
- Romania. "Adventists students evangelize in Romania," by Claudiu Popescu, 16:1 (2004), p. 20.
- Romania. "Romanian college hosts EUD's fourth international AMICUS congress," by Cristina Neagu, 20:3 (2008), p. 28.
- Spain. "Adventist students in Spain meet for their 23rd annual convention," by Ruben Sanchez-Sabaté, 20:2 (2008), p. 30.
- United Kingdom. "In Britain: A conference for scholars seeking faith," by Karen K. Abrahamson, 20:3 (2008), p. 27.
- U.S.A. "General Youth Conference motivates young people to spread the Gospel," by Joelle Damsteegt, 19:1 (2007), p. 26.
- U.S.A. "Philadelphia Adventist Network," by Lakisha Hull, 17:2 (2005), p. 20.
- U.S.A. "Where hope happens," by Dick Duerksen, 19:2 (2007), p. 28.

Books (by title)

- "*A search for identity* (Knight)," by Jean-Luc Rolland, 16:2 (2004), p. 28.
- "*A strange place for grace: Discovering a loving God in the Old Testament* (Dybdahl)," by Bradley A. Jamison, 20:2 (2008), p. 23.
- "*Amores que matan* (Núñez)," by Fernando Aranda Fraga, 16:1 (2004), p. 26.
- "*Beginnings: Are science and Scripture partners in the search for origins?* (Brand and Jarnes)," by Timothy G. Standish, 18:3 (2007), p. 11.
- "*Cristãos em busca do êxtase* (Dorneles)," by Azenilto G. Brito, 17:1 (2005), p. 28.
- "*Cristología: Descubriendo al Maestro* (Núñez)," by Roberto Badenas, 19:2 (2007), p. 23.
- "*Daniel: A reader's guide* (Shea)," by Humberto R. Treyer, 18:2 (2006), p. 28.
- "*E. J. Waggoner: From the physician of good news to the agent of Division*," 20:3 (2008), p. 20.
- "*El culto que agrada a Dios: criterios revelados acerca de la adoración* (Plenc)," by Enrique Becerra, 20:2 (2008), p. 23.
- "*El poder terapéutico del perdón* (Pereyra), by Nancy J. Carbonell, 18:1 (2006), p. 30.
- "*El proceso pedagógico: Agonía o resurgimiento?* (Smith)," by Fernando Aranda Fraga, 17:1 (2005), p. 29.
- "*Evidence for creation* (Javor)," by Raúl Esperante, 18:2 (2006), p. 28.
- "*Expect great things* (O'Ffill)," by Héctor Hammerly, 16:1 (2004), p. 27.
- "*Faith step by step: Finding God and yourself* (Bruinsma)," by Israel Bamidele Olaore, 20:1 (2008), p. 23.
- "*Grace at 30,000 feet and other unexpected places* (Hansen)," by Sylvia Rasi Gregorutti, 16:2 (2004), p. 29.
- "*Historical Dictionary of the Seventh-day Adventists* (Land)," by Nancy Vyhmeister, 19:2 (2007), p. 22.
- "*In passion for the world* (Greenleaf)," by John Wesley Taylor V, 18:1 (2006), p. 30.
- "*Islam in the post 9/11 world* (Schantz)," by Patrick J. Boyle, 16:3 (2004), p. 29.
- "*Knowing God in the real world* (Paulien)," by Raúl Esperante, 16:3 (2004), p. 28.
- "*Lifestyles of the Remnant* (Hyden)," by Nancy Vyhmeister, 16:1 (2004), p. 28.
- "*Misión y contextualización: Llevar el mensaje bíblico a un mundo multicultural* (Klingbeil)," by Mario

Riveros, 18:3 (2006), p. 30.
 "Origin by design (Coffin, Brown and Gibson)," by Henry Zuill, 18:2 (2006), p. 29.
 "Prophets are human (Bradford)," by Juan Carlos Viera, 17:2 (2005), p. 30.
 "Questions on doctrine (Knight)," by Nancy Vyhmeister, 17:3 (2005), p. 30.
 "Rainbow over hell: The death-row deliverance of a World War II assassin (Mohri)," by Lisa M. Beardsley, 20:1 (2008), p. 23.
 "Reconciliación: Cómo reparar los vínculos dañados (Pereyra)," by Julián Melgosa, 17:1 (2005), p. 28.
 "Revelation of Jesus Christ (Stefanovic)," by Gerhard Pfandl, 17:3 (2005), p. 31.
 "Science discovers God: Seven convincing lines of evidence for His existence (Roth)," by David Cowles, 20:3 (2008), p. 21.
 "Sea feliz: Cómo vencer la depresión y controlar la ansiedad (Pereyra and Mussi)," by Nancy Carbonell, 19:2 (2007), p. 22.
 "Searching for the God of grace (Tyner)," by Paul Pichot, 20:2 (2008), p. 24.
 "Systematic theology: Prolegomena (Gulley)," by Denis Fortin, 17:3 (2005), p. 29.
 "Teaching Literature: A Seventh-day Adventist Approach (Davis)," by Wilma McClarty, 16:3 (2004), p. 28.
 "The battle for the Bible (Marshall)," by Kwabena Donkor, 17:2 (2005), p. 31.
 "The big argument: Does God exist? (Ashton and Westacott)," by John T. Baldwin, 19:1 (2007), p. 32.
 "The essential Jesus (Ball and Johnsson)," by Roberto Badenas, 16:2 (2004), p. 28.
 "The soul sleepers (Ball)," by Gerhard Pfandl, 20:2 (2008), p. 22.
 "The Trinity: Understanding God's love, His plan of salvation, and Christian relationships (Whidden, Moon, and Reeve)," by Aecio Cairus, 17:2 (2005), p. 30.
 "Uncorked! The hidden hazards of alcohol (Ashton and Laura)," by Peter N. Landless, 18:1 (2006), p. 31.
 "Understanding Scripture: An Adventist approach (Reid)," by Atilio René Dupertuis, 19:1 (2007), p. 32.
 "When all alone I stand (Doward)," by Mary H. T. Wong, 16:1 (2004), p. 26.

Books (by author)

Ashton, John and Westacott, Michael. *The big argument: Does God exist?*, 19:1 (2007), p. 32.
 Ashton, John and Laura, Ronald S. *Uncorked! The hidden hazards of alcohols*, 18:1 (2006), p. 31.
 Ball, Bryan W. and Johnsson, William G. *The essential Jesus*, 16:2 (2004), p. 28.
 Ball, Bryan W. *The soul sleepers*, 20:2 (2008), p. 22.
 Bradford, Graeme. *Prophets are human*, 17:2 (2005), p. 30.
 Brand, Leonard and Jarnes, David C. *Beginnings: Are science and Scripture partners in the search for origins?*, 18:3 (2007), p. 11.
 Brown, Robert H., Coffin, Harold G., and Gibson, R. James. *Origin by design*, 18:2 (2006), p. 29.
 Bruinsma, Reinder. *Faith step by step: Finding God and yourself*, 20:1 (2008), p. 23.
 Coffin, Harold G., Brown, Robert H., and Gibson, R. James. *Origin by design*, 18:2 (2006), p. 29.
 Davis, Delmer. *Teaching Literature: A Seventh-day Adventist Approach*, 16:3 (2004), p. 28.
 Dorneles, Vanderlei. *Cristãos em busca do êxtase*, 17:1 (2005), p. 28.

Doward, Jan S. *When all alone I stand*, 16:1 (2004), p. 26.
 Dybdahl, Jon L. *A strange place for grace: Discovering a loving God in the Old Testament*, 20:2 (2008), p. 23.
 Gibson, R. James, Coffin, Harold G., and Brown, Robert H. *Origin by design*, 18:2 (2006), p. 29.
 Greenleaf, Floyd. *In passion for the world*, 18:1 (2006), p. 30.
 Gulley, Norman R. *Systematic theology: Prolegomena*, 17:3 (2005), p. 29.
 Hansen, Kent. *Grace at 30,000 feet and other unexpected places*, 16:2 (2004), p. 29.
 Hyden, Keavin. *Lifestyles of the Remnant*, 16:1 (2004), p. 28.
 Jarnes, David C. and Brand, Leonard. *Beginnings: Are science and Scripture partners in the search for origins?*, 18:3 (2007), p. 11.
 Javor, George. *Evidence for creation*, 18:2 (2006), p. 28.
 Johnsson, William G. and Ball, Bryan W. *The essential Jesus*, 16:2 (2004), p. 28.
 Klingbeil, Gerald A. *Misión y contextualización: Llevar el mensaje bíblico a un mundo multicultural*, 18:3 (2006), p. 30.
 Knight, George R. *A search for identity*, 16:2 (2004), p. 28.
 Knight, George R. *Questions on doctrine*, 17:3 (2005), p. 30.
 Land, Gary. *Historical Dictionary of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 19:2 (2007), p. 22.
 Laura, Ronald S. and Ashton, John. *Uncorked! The hidden hazards of alcohols*, 18:1 (2006), p. 31.
 Marshall, David. *The battle for the Bible*, 17:2 (2005), p. 31.
 Mohri, Tsuneyuki. *Rainbow over hell: The death-row deliverance of a World War II assassin*, 20:1 (2008), p. 23.
 Moon, Jerry, Whidden, Woodrow, and Reeve, John W. *The Trinity: Understanding God's love, His plan of salvation, and Christian relationships*, 17:2 (2005), p. 30.
 Mussi, Carlos and Pereyra, Mario. *Sea feliz: Cómo vencer la depresión y controlar la ansiedad*, 19:2 (2007), p. 22.
 Núñez, Miguel Ángel. *Amores que matan*, 16:1 (2004), p. 26.
 Núñez, Miguel Ángel. *Cristología: Descubriendo al Maestro*, 19:2 (2007), p. 23.
 O'Fill, Richard W. *Expect great things*, 16:1 (2004), p. 27.
 Paulien, Jon. *Knowing God in the real world*, 16:3 (2004), p. 28.
 Pereyra, Mario and Mussi Carlos. *Sea feliz: Cómo vencer la depresión y controlar la ansiedad*, 19:2 (2007), p. 22.
 Pereyra, Mario. *El poder terapéutico del perdón*, 18:1 (2006), p. 30.
 Pereyra, Mario. *Reconciliación: Cómo reparar los vínculos dañados*, 17:1 (2005), p. 28.
 Plenc, Daniel O. *El culto que agrada a Dios: criterios revelados acerca de la adoración*, 20:2 (2008), p. 23.
 Reeve, John W., Whidden, Woodrow, and Moon, Jerry. *The Trinity: Understanding God's love, His plan of salvation, and Christian relationships*, 17:2 (2005), p. 30.
 Reid, George W. *Understanding Scripture: An Adventist approach*, 19:1 (2007), p. 32.
 Roth, Ariel A. *Science discovers God: Seven convincing lines of evidence for His existence*, 20:3 (2008), p. 21.
 Schantz, Borge. *Islam in the post 9/11 world*, 16:3 (2004), p. 29.

Shea, William H. *Daniel: A reader's guide*, 18:2 (2006), p. 28.
 Smith, René. *El proceso pedagógico: ¿Agonía o resurgimiento?*, 17:1 (2005), p. 29.
 Stefanovic, Ranko. *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 17:3 (2005), p. 31.
 Tyner, Stuart. *Searching for the God of grace*, 20:2 (2008), p. 24.
 Westacott, Michael and Ashton, John. *The big argument: Does God exist?*, 19:1 (2007), p. 32.
 Whidden, Woodrow. *E. J. Waggoner: From the physician of good news to the agent of Division*, 20:3 (2008), p. 20.
 —. Moon, Jerry, and Reeve, John W., *The Trinity: Understanding God's love, His plan of salvation, and Christian relationships*, 17:2 (2005), p. 30.

Profiles

"Akuno, Emily" by Kibuuka, Hudson E., 18:3 (2006), p. 18.
 "Baget, Jordi" by Badenas, Roberto, 19:2 (2007), p. 18 and insert.
 "Bilima, Ken E." by Kibuuka, Hudson E., 17:3 (2005), p. 20.
 "Bognandi, Dora" by Vacca, Roberto, 17:2 (2005), p. 16.
 "Cady, Duane Maynard" by Batten, Nicole, 18:1 (2006), p. 22.
 "Chin, Michelle" by Sabes, Jane, 18:2 (2006), p. 20.
 "Clouten, Neville" by Steyn, Delyse, 17:2 (2005), p. 18, insert.
 "Costa, Romualdo" by Rasi, Humberto M., 16:2 (2004), p.18 and insert.
 "de León, Daisy" by Jones, Dustin R., 17:1 (2005), p. 18.
 "Diop, Ganoune" by Oliver, Ansel, 20:2 (2008), p. 20.
 "Falcó Güell, Rafael" by Badenas, Roberto, 18:2 (2006), p. 18 and insert.
 "Finis, Silvia and Arturo" by Mayer, Lorena, 20:3 (2008), p. 18.
 "Gallagher, Jonathan" by Shield, Bonita Joyner, 18:3 (2006), p. 20.
 "Hart, Richard" by Jones, Dustin R., 16:1 (2004), p. 16.
 "Jorge, Jaime" by Batten, Nicole, 17:1 (2005), p. 20.
 "Kennedy, Elaine" by Ching, Kathy, 16:2 (2004), p. 20.
 "Matainaho, Fiaia and Teatulohi" by Beardsly, Lisa, 20:3 (2008), p. 15.
 "Michiles, Eunice" by Barbosa, Henriette, 20:1 (2008), p. 20.
 "Morales Romero, Yolanda" by Maya Montes, César, 16:3 (2004), p. 18.
 "Neto, Dulce" by Nunes, Miguel, 19:1 (2007), p. 16.
 "Odoric, Lidija" by Virtic, Zvonko, 18:1 (2006), p. 20.
 "Paki, Evan Jeremy" by Gallagher, Jonathan, 16:3 (2004), p. 20.
 "Philipsen, Birgit" by Luste Maran, Kimberly, 19:2 (2007), p. 16.
 "Roslin, Eva-Charlotte" by Andersson, Audrey, 17:3 (2005), p. 18.
 "Sandu, Steliana" by Bocaneanu, Sara, 16:1 (2004), p. 14.
 "Yonas, Benjamin Gunawan" by Kuntaraf, Jonathan, 19:1 (2007), p. 18.

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