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**How to talk to
someone you love**

**The four faces
of Jesus**

**Faith and science:
Can they coexist?**

**How to choose
what we watch**

The hidden Bible

Volume 14
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3

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At peace: *lacta alea est*

It was the year 49 B.C. Julius Caesar's troops were marching toward Rome, defying his powerful rival Pompey and the corrupt Senate. However, there was a law that prohibited a general to advance with his army beyond the northern border of the republic.

After considerable discussion and against the advice of some of his strategists, Caesar ordered his troops to cross the Rubicon stream and march south. At that moment, according to the historian Suetonius, he uttered the words that echo down through history as an adage of irrevocable decision: *lacta alea est*.

"The die is cast." "I can't go back." "What I've done is done." Centuries later, in 1521, Martin Luther concluded the courageous defense of his biblical convictions before the emperor with similar words: "Here I stand. I can do no other." We Christians have cast our lot irreversibly. Our Lord and wonderful Master is Christ. We have decided that nothing and no one will move us from whom we have believed.

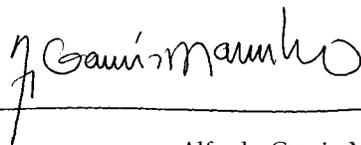
As a result of this decision, we have a certainty firmly anchored in Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. We enjoy a peace that transcends time and space. For this reason, we daily receive an abundant supply of peace that manifests itself in our relation to the world, to ourselves, and to God.

The peace mentioned is very real. It is transcendent. It covers every aspect of our existence. Here are some of the "symptoms" of the inward peace that we receive from Jesus:

- A perpetual endowment of the ability to enjoy every moment we live.
- A tendency to think and act spontaneously, without reference to past negative experiences.
- A loss of interest in interpreting critically the actions of others.
- A gradual loss of interest in creating conflicts.
- A growing inability to worry.
- Frequent and overwhelming urges to express sincere appreciation for others' contributions.
- Feeling of harmony with other humans and the rest of God's creation.
- Frequent attacks of joyful emotion and a smiling face.
- A growing susceptibility to accepting love from others, and the urgent desire to share that love.
- An endemic tendency to prayer-itis.

I trust that, as you savor each part of this issue of *Dialogue*, you will find new affirmation of this wholesome peace offered by the Prince of Peace.

At peace: *lacta alea est*.



Alfredo Garcia-Marenko
Associate Director for Senior Youth,
General Conference Youth Department

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Letters

An attractive perspective

As a student attending a large government university, I am grateful that a magazine like *Dialogue* exists. Its content not only interests and encourages the members of our local Adventist student association, but also allows us to share an attractive perspective of the Christian faith with our colleagues who espouse other beliefs.

David C. Ahamba
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Help in my discouragement

I am serving as a volunteer English teacher and Bible instructor in Sanyang-ri, South Korea. Since I am from the Philippines and don't speak Korean, I often feel quite lonely. One Sabbath morning, I didn't go to church for worship because I can't understand the language and was discouraged at my mission assignment. In fact, I began packing my few belongings, planning to go back home. While doing it, I found a copy of *Dialogue* that I had brought from my homeland. As I opened it I found the article, "Jack, an incredible story," by Jolena Taylor King (*Dialogue* 11:2). Reading about the marvelous providence of God in the life of this young man brought healing to my broken spirit. I sensed that God was still my trusted companion. My courage has been renewed to face the difficulties that I may still encounter in my isolated mission post. Thank you!

Sarah S. Delgado
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Human freedom and God's power

I read and enjoyed Dwight Nelson's article, "Through grief and beyond" (*Dialogue* 14:1). There is no question that, in order to survive in these stormy times, the safest sanctuary is Jesus. How-

ever, the article does not address a (seemingly) historical paradox: God allows tragedy at certain times and prevents it at other times, still remaining a merciful, just, and loving God, who does not deny the totality of finite choice. This apparent dichotomy does not help the adjustment to or the acceptance of the continuum of grief which strikes humans day after day,

Two questions can, then, be asked: Has God intervened since creation to alter events, thereby tying the hands of human free choice? Or, did God, at creation, include all possible interventions that are selected out over time through the dynamic interplay of variables, including the most important variable—prayer? I prefer the latter, for it gives me assurance that God is absolutely fair in allowing all possible degrees of finite freedom, embedded in the infinite boundaries of grace.

David Hutchins
Little Rock, Arkansas
U.S.A.

The author responds:

Is God capricious in His providence? How can we explain the loss of the four aircraft on September 11, and the subsequent saving of the "shoe bomber's" aircraft in December? The "historical paradox" the reader notes is addressed in the biblical story of Job, where human pain and suffering are the vortex of a raging cosmic struggle. The otherwise arbitrary loss of life in Job's opening chapter would remain inexplicable were the veil not drawn aside and the reader introduced to the cosmic battle for human loyalty and trust, played out in the "great controversy" between God and his arch-nemesis Satan. How many times over has the same spiritual war been the "unhidden" agenda behind the litany of human suffering and woe! Such knowledge doesn't lessen the pain of suffering, nor does it explain suffering's apparent randomness. But it does elevate the sufferer into a circle of notables like Job and Jesus, who as the best suffered the worst. And to every sufferer God makes two promises: first,

if you trust me, your very suffering becomes strategic in advancing my kingdom of love even in this life (i.e., you win); and secondly, I will have the last word and will restore to you in eternity what the enemy has robbed you of in this life (i.e., you win). In the stories of Job and Jesus human suffering and divine mercy both triumph.

Dwight K. Nelson
Berrien Springs, Michigan
U.S.A.

An expanding global circle

There is no other journal that is more attractive to Adventist university students and teachers than *Dialogue*, at least in Africa. The few copies of the French edition that reach us irregularly find broad circulation in the various campuses of our university. The journal keeps us in touch with the cultural, scientific, and spiritual issues that are of interest to our colleagues in other parts of the world. The fact that it is published in four parallel language editions makes our Adventist global circle even wider. Congratulations!

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Write to us!

We welcome your comments, reactions and questions, but limit your letters to 200 words. Write to *Dialogue Letters*: 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904; U.S.A. You can also use fax: (301) 622-9627, or e-mail: 102555.2215@compuserve.com Letters selected for publication may be edited for clarity or space.

How to talk to someone you love

by Roger and Peggy Dudley

Ten guidelines to develop a more mature and meaningful relationship.

H*e:* Where is my blue shirt?
She: I didn't have time to iron it. It's been a hectic day.

He: What do you mean you didn't have time? You've been home all day!

She: Look, Buster, I've been busy. I've had plenty to keep me occupied.

He: Doing what? I'm out working hard all day to put bread on the table while you just lie around here and watch soap operas.

She: You're crazy! You haven't got a clue of what it means to run a home: cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing, taking care of the kids!

He: That's a bunch of bunk! You have the easiest life of anybody I know. You need to know what real work is like.

She: Oh, and you do, I suppose. You sit in your fine office all day except to take your clients out to lunches and play golf with the boss. Then you come home at night, demand to be fed, and watch TV while I clean up. You are impossible!

One of the main problems in a relationship is the failure to communicate. Communication means to express your thoughts and feelings so the recipient understands what you mean. Well, by that standard the above couple are certainly communicating, but not in a way that will improve their relationship. How can we communicate in a way that will enhance significant relationships? How do we talk to someone we love?

As we search for answers, many of our illustrations will be taken from marriage—perhaps the most crucial area of

relationships. However, the guidelines we will discuss are good for any relationship in which two people care about each other. We can apply these to parents and children, courting couples, roommates, work associates, fellow church members, and close friends. Everyone has someone that he or she cares about. So everyone needs to know how to talk in a way that enhances the relationship. Here are 10 guidelines for talking to someone you love.¹

1. Listen carefully for both thoughts and feelings.

"You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger" (James 1:19, NRSV). If we are to build loving relationships, we must become good listeners before we can even think of how to talk. Loving communication involves an understanding between two minds and two hearts. We absolutely have to know what the other person is thinking and feeling in order to respond in a relationship-enhancing manner.

Listening is an art that does not come naturally but has to be learned. First, don't interrupt until the other person has finished talking. When we are listening, the temptation is to think of responses and rebuttals. So we may break in to get our point of view across. This sends the message: "I care more about what I am thinking than what you are saying."

Second, give your full, undivided attention to what your loved one is saying. This is more difficult than it sounds, for it is so easy to become dis-

tracted and let your mind wander on to other things. Ruth Graham, the wife of the famous evangelist, illustrates this point: "My husband is frequently preoccupied. Understandably. He has a lot to be preoccupied about. We were expecting company for dinner, and I asked him what he would like to have on the menu.

"Uh-huh,' he grunted. I knew he was with me in body only and decided to have some fun.

"I thought we'd start off with tadpole soup,' I began.

"Un-huh.'

"And there is some lovely poison ivy growing in the next cove which would make a delightful salad.'

"Un-huh.'

"For the main dish, I could try roasting some of those wharf rats we've been seeing around the smokehouse lately and serve them with boiled crabgrass and baked birdseed.'

"Un-huh.'

"And for dessert we could have a mud souffle and...' My voice trailed off as his eyes began to focus.

"What was that you said about wharf rats?" he asked."²

Focused listening is very wearing, but set aside some time to concentrate on the messages from your loved one.

Third, accept the thoughts and feelings of your loved one as genuine, and do not try to deny him or her or talk the person out of them. Statements like, "You shouldn't feel that way," or "Don't ever say that," or "That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard" fracture the conversation and the relationship. For example, at supper Bobby takes a spoonful of soup and complains: "This tastes terrible!" Mother will be tempted to say: "No it doesn't; it's delicious!" But tastes are personal. If he doesn't like it, no objective evidence will be convincing. Bobby hears: "I am not interested in your opinion."

Of course, that doesn't mean that we agree with every statement we hear. We

have our own tastes. But we can accept the judgments and feelings of others as representing their thoughts and feelings. Mother would be wiser to reply: "I'm sorry that you don't enjoy the soup. I personally enjoy it, but you can probably find some other things to eat that you will like better."

Fourth, check out the meaning of the message you are receiving. Since words mean different things to different people, it is easy for meanings to get garbled in passing from one person to another. We can check out our understanding by paraphrasing. "You are frustrated and angry because the boss unfairly blamed you for the mistake." "You're afraid it may threaten our relationship if I appear to be too friendly with Sue." The sender then has opportunity to confirm that the receiver has gotten the intended message or to correct any misapprehension.

2. Be slow to speak.

Think through things carefully. Speak in a way that the other person can accept what you say.

Listening carefully will help us formulate the best response. It will help prevent the tendency to say what pops into our minds without thinking through.

One sure way to gain the support of the listener is to take responsibility for feelings expressed. This can be achieved through the use of "I" messages by: (1) giving a non-blameful description of what is being said or done that is causing the problem, (2) sharing the feelings you are experiencing now, and (3) explaining why this behavior causes you a problem.

For instance, if I am feeling frustrated because someone is late in meeting an appointment, I could respond in two different ways: I could say: "You make me so angry by being late again. Why aren't you more considerate?" Or I could say: "I am frustrated because it really bothers me to be late to an ap-

pointment because I feel that I have inconvenienced the person we were to see. Can you help me make an adjustment?"

Actually, no one can make us experience anger or any other emotion. We are responsible for whatever emotions we have.

3. Don't turn minor points into major ones.

Nobody is perfect. Your loved one will probably have habits that you find disagreeable. Some people tend to expand these to characterize the whole relationship by free use of the words *always* and *never*. "You are always late." "You never treat me with respect." These are pretty extreme terms that are probably not true.

Edith Shaeffer once said: "If you demand perfection or nothing, you will get nothing." Important relationships need to be based on honest communication. So we must not exaggerate the other's faults but speak only the truth. But note: Truth must always be spoken in love. "Love.... does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do it wrong" (1 Corinthians 13:5, TLB). To be totally honest and yet to be totally kind is the genius of true communication.

4. Don't frustrate your loved one with the silent treatment.

A person might choose to remain silent for a number of reasons. One may want to punish the other person, hope the problem will disappear if ignored, feel that silence is golden in that it gives the problem time to resolve itself, or feel that nothing said will make any difference. None of the above reasons work—they just build walls and bar communication.

It is important to explain why you are hesitant to talk at this time and use the three suggestions for how to use "I" messages under guideline 2. This can result in improved understanding and

working through issues so they don't crop up again.

5. Learn to disagree without quarreling.

"Stop being mean, bad-tempered and angry. Quarreling, harsh words, and dislike of others should have no place in your lives" (Ephesians 4:31, TLB). Two people will not always agree on everything. But when you do disagree even with someone you love, it is possible to do this in calm, caring manner—concentrating on the problem and not attacking the person.

Love is not a warm, fuzzy feeling although such feelings, may result from love. Love is a decision to care about another and to promote his or her welfare. Nearly a hundred years ago, the noted psychiatrist, Harry Stack Sullivan, defined love as follows: "When the satisfaction or the security of another person becomes as significant to one as is one's own satisfaction or security, then the state of love exists." We will not always feel loving, but we can make a determination to act in a loving manner.

In *No Longer Strangers*, Bruce Larson relates a conversation he had with a friend: "That particular morning when I asked my friend how he was doing, he said, 'Terrible. I had a fight with my wife last night and we went to bed not speaking to each other, sleeping back to back. But this morning she gave me a kiss and said, 'Honey, I love you.''"

"What did you say?" I asked eagerly.

"I said, 'Well I don't love you and I don't love myself and I don't love God. I can't think of anybody that I do love. But I'll tell you this: I'm going to pray this morning and I believe that sometime in the near future God will straighten me out because He loves me. He will make me able to love again. And when He does, I promise to put you first on the list!'"³

Note that in spite of the negative words, this man really did love his wife.

In fact, he was telling her that he cared for her even though he didn't feel loving. Sometimes we won't feel loving. Sometimes our relationship will seem flat. Sometimes we will be angry with each other. That's when real love rises above the emotional level and signals to the other that we care.

6. Do not respond in anger.

"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1, NIV). "In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are angry" (Ephesians 4:26, NIV).

Edgar N. Jackson in *The Many Faces of Grief* offers these four A's to manage anger. We have adapted them to fit this model.

1. *Admit it* (this is often difficult to do). We need to take responsibility for our emotions.

2. *Analyze it* objectively. Ask yourself, Why am I so upset? Why this burst of emotion? Does it make sense?

3. *Act it out* in a wise and healthful manner so the adrenalin level can be reduced to normal by walking, chopping wood, playing golf, cleaning the closet, or journaling out your feelings.

4. *Abandon it* after realizing that your anger is not worth what it costs in stress and damaged relationships. We can't change what has already happened, but we can choose our response to it.

7. Confess and ask for forgiveness.

When two people are in a close relationship, inevitably, they will hurt each other at times. When you know you are in the wrong, admit it and ask for forgiveness. Even if you think you are not the offender, express sorrow that your relationship is damaged and offer to do whatever you can to mend the damage. "Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed" (James 5:16, NRSV). This is what people who really care about each other must do to keep the relationship

strong and loving.

And when someone you love confesses to you and asks for forgiveness, offer it freely. Don't wait until you feel like it. Once you forgive someone, forget about it and don't bring it up again. Re-visiting past hurts prevents a relationship from growing.

8. Avoid nagging.

"It's better to live in the corner of a flat roof than to share a large house with a nagging wife" (Proverbs 25:24, *The Clear Word*). If you have ever tried nagging, you have probably discovered that people only become defensive. People don't change because someone else wants them to change. People change when it becomes an inner motivation. Cecil Osborne suggests that "we cannot change another person, either by direct, overt action, or through manipulation."⁴ "In the marriage relationship, instead of waiting for our needs to be met, we must seek to meet the needs of the other."⁵

If there is a need for change, one option is to sit down with the person involved and in a loving way (using the three steps from guideline 2 about how to use "I" messages) ask for help and suggestions about how to accomplish the task or the change. If it is a family situation, family council time is the ideal setting for this type of discussion.

9. Look for the positive.

Perhaps certain behaviors or traits in the one you love rub you wrong. The natural human tendency is to criticize the person. It is easy to blame the other for unsatisfactory situations. But it simply doesn't work. We tend to think that if we point out the faults in another, he or she will be grateful for the help and will reform. In fact, the person will almost always raise a defense and retreat into the problem. It never helps a relationship to blame the other partner.

Rather, people grow when they are affirmed for what they are doing right.

Locate the strongest character points in the one you love and affirm that point. Relationships grow when we tell spouses, children, or whomever why we love them and how valuable they are. When people realize that they are valuable, they behave in valuable ways.

Ellen White comments on how Jesus looked for the positive in others. "In every human being He [Jesus] discerned infinite possibilities. He saw men as they might be, transfigured by His grace.... Looking upon them with hope, He inspired hope. Meeting them with confidence, He inspired trust.... In His presence souls despised and fallen realized that they still were men, and they longed to prove themselves worthy of His regard. In many a heart that seemed dead to all things holy, were awakened new impulses. To many a despairing one there opened the possibility of a new life."⁶

Employment and Volunteer Opportunities

If you are a Seventh-day Adventist with professional skills, you may submit your personal information or check for employment and volunteer opportunities in the following web sites:

- Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA): www.adra.org
- Adventist Volunteer Center: <http://volunteers.gc.adventist.org>
- General Conference Secretariat: <http://www.adventist.org/gc/secretariat/employment.htm>

10. Recognize that the one you love has a right to be different from you.

God values diversity. We see it in all of creation. No two persons or snowflakes are alike. Everybody doesn't have to be like us. Though we are one (as husband and wife or as family), yet we are each unique and separate. If we value these differences, we can broaden our experience and learn to grow. Where diversity is respected and uniqueness affirmed, love will flourish.

Review these 10 guidelines and mark one or more where you would like to make improvement. With God's help, make a concerted effort to develop new and improved ways to communicate with those who are important to you. Psychologists say it takes 30 days to create a new habit. Just think—in only one month, new habits can become established, and the old ones will die from disuse.

Roger L. Dudley (Ed.D., Andrews University), professor of church ministry, emeritus, at the Andrews University Theological Seminary, and Margaret [Peggy] Dudley (Ph.D.), a licensed professional counselor, have been married to each other for 50 years. Their second book on marriage, *Intimate Glimpses: 29 Couples Share the Secrets of a Happy Marriage*, is scheduled for publication by the *Review and Herald* in 2003.

Notes and references:

1. The 10 guidelines given here are adapted from H. Norman Wright, *Communication: The Key to Your Marriage* (Glendale, Calif.: Regal, 1974), pp. 188, 189, but the material is largely our own.
2. Ruth Graham, *It's My Turn* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1982), p. 67.
3. Bruce Larson, *No Longer Strangers* (Dallas: Word Books, 1971), p. 67.
4. Cecil Osborne, *Understanding Your Mate* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1970), p. 109.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
6. Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1903), p. 80.

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The four faces of Jesus

by Robert K. McIver

Each of the four Gospel writers has a unique witness to Jesus and His message.

Why are there four Gospels in the New Testament? Surely one would have been enough. Such, at least, was the opinion of the second-century church father Tatian, who produced the *Diatessaron*, a translation of the Gospels into Syriac. Rather than translate all four Gospels, he produced a “harmony”—taking one of the versions of each of the important stories, and linking them together into a harmony of the Gospels. John Calvin wrote a commentary on each of the Bible books except the Gospels, for which he worked out a harmony and then wrote a commentary on it.

Yet, Tatian and Calvin are exceptions. Four Gospels have been in the New Testament from the very first time anybody thought to ask which writings should be included in it. The reasons why the earliest Christians choose to keep all four Gospels in the New Testament are not known. But because they did so, we now have four slightly different witnesses to Jesus. Just as several witnesses called in a court case give their individual perspectives so that truth might emerge with greater clarity, so too, the four evangelists provide four different perspectives of Jesus. Between them, we see Jesus in four dimensions, as it were. In fact, at one stage I had called my book on the four Gospels, “Jesus in Four Dimensions.” The editors decided that *The Four Faces of Jesus* would be a better title, and indeed, this title expresses the same idea—that each of the Gospel writers has a unique witness to Jesus and His message. What do they all think is important?

While most of this article will be devoted to looking at each of the four Gospels separately to discover what is distinctive about it, it must not be forgotten that there is a basic harmony between the Gospel accounts of Jesus. For example, they agree on many of the details of His ministry. Matthew and Luke record that He was born in Bethlehem, and all four agree that He grew up in Nazareth, and that His ministry was located in the small towns and villages around the northern end of the sea of Galilee. Most significantly, all four Gospels share in the conviction that the most important thing to know about Jesus is the events surrounding His crucifixion, death, and resurrection. They all agree that the significance of the cross lay in who Jesus is, and that what happened there was the result of God’s will and not blind fate. All the Gospels note the link between the cross and the Passover, and that Jesus was crucified as king of the Jews, which is rather ironic, because the cross did in fact inaugurate the kingdom of God. Further, they all stress that Jesus was raised with a real body, and that the death and resurrection of Jesus provide the impetus for the missionary activity of the earliest (and latest) Christians. These concepts, and more, are shared by all four Gospels. Yet each has a distinctive view of Jesus.

The Gospel of Matthew

John 21:25 expresses a frustration that must have been true of all four evangelists: “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the

whole world would not have room for the books that would be written" (NIV). All of the evangelists knew a lot more about Jesus than they were able to include in their Gospels. So they needed to be selective in their material. Consequently, it is interesting to look at what each Gospel writer includes that is not in the other Gospels. In Matthew and Luke in particular, this methodology gives a good insight into their special interests and emphases. For example, Matthew's interest in the community of believers is revealed by the fact that several sayings of Jesus that are unique to Matthew deal with the community of believers. In Matthew 18:15-18, which is unique to Matthew, Jesus outlines what should be done if there is a dispute between two members of the community. The need for forgiveness is stressed by the parable of the unforgiving servant (18:21-35) that immediately follows the statement about community discipline. This parable is found only in Matthew. Furthermore, Matthew 23: 1-3, 5, 8-10, 15, 16-21, 27, 28, 32, and 33, which are all unique to Matthew, highlight how the Christian community should conduct itself differently than the community of Pharisees.

Matthew also has a great interest in matters that relate to the relationship between Jews and Gentiles, presumably because this was an issue that was of concern to his community at the time he was composing the Gospel. It is Matthew that traces Jesus' genealogy back to Abraham (Matthew 1:1; see Luke 3:23-38, which traces Jesus' genealogy to Adam. It is Matthew that gathers the teachings of Jesus about the law into what we know as the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:17-48). Likewise it is Matthew that shows that the mission of Jesus was first directed only to the Jews (Matthew 10:5, 6), although it is made clear in chapter 28:19, 20 that the mission of the disciples was to go into all the world and tell all the nations about the good news of salvation.

Matthew is also very interested about how Christians should react to the fact that Jesus would return soon. In Matthew 24 and 25 he attaches to Jesus' sayings about the signs of the end of the age (which are also found in Mark 13 and Luke 21) four parables that deal with how Christians should behave between now and the Second Coming: the parable of the faithful and unfaithful servant (24:45-51), the parable of the 10 maidens (25:1-13), the parable of the talents (25:14-30), and the parable of the judgment of the nations (25:31-46). Three of these parables are unique to Matthew.

Matthew also emphasizes that Christians should act righteously. They will even keep the law better than the Pharisees (5:20). Matthew illustrates how this is so. Jesus says that as well as not committing murder, His disciples will not get angry (5:21-26); as well as not committing adultery, they will not even lust (5:27-30). Indeed, they will love their enemies and be perfect just as God is perfect (5:43-48). Along with this strong emphasis on the need for Christians to live righteous lives, the truth that we are saved by faith apart from what we do is found in several places in the material unique to Matthew. It is perhaps clearest in the parable of the workers in the vineyard (20:1-16). In the kingdom of God, as in the parable, the reward given at the end of the day is not related to the amount of work performed, but to the graciousness of the Lord.

The Gospel of Mark

Only 30 of the 609 verses in the Gospel of Mark are unique to that Gospel. So, in contrast to Matthew, Luke, and John, the character of Mark is not revealed by the material that is unique to it, but rather by a comparison that is more subjective. Mark, the shortest of the Gospels, records fewer events than the other Gospels, and less of the teachings of Jesus. Yet those events that are recorded are usually done so more vivid-

ly than in the other Gospels, using more words to include details lacking elsewhere. There is also more action happening in Mark, which is why it is often suggested as the best Gospel of the four to recommend to anyone who is planning to read one of the Gospels from beginning to end for the first time. Among other things, Mark emphasizes the really human Jesus together with the fact that He was the unique Son of God. He portrays Jesus as teacher. Above all, Mark stresses that Jesus cannot be understood apart from His suffering, death, and resurrection, and the fact that He will return soon. Each reader of his Gospel experiences what the first disciples experienced—a call to ministry.

The Gospel of Luke

The stories at the beginning of Luke reveal many of the differences between this Gospel and that of Matthew. When Matthew deals with the infancy of Jesus, he recounts that kings and wise men from the East were involved. The characters that we meet in Luke, on the other hand, are the poor and outcasts of society—a poor country priest and his wife, shepherds, an elderly prophet in the temple, and, of course, women. The status of women in any first-century society, including that of Judaism, would not be envied by most modern women. Yet, unlike just about all other ancient literature, Luke not only records the sayings and deeds of women (Luke 1:39-56 are devoted to the deeds and words of Mary and Elizabeth), but throughout the Gospel, he recounts several places where Jesus has special dealings with women (e.g., Luke 7:36-50; 10:38-42; 13:10-19).

Luke also has an eye for some of the best parables. Without Luke we would not have the parables of the Good Samaritan (10:25-37) and the prodigal son (15:11-32). He also includes three parables that deal with prayer that are not found in the other Gospels (11:5-13;

18:1-8; 18:9-14). Luke is also unique in that he lets the reader know what happened after the Resurrection. The Book of Acts is the companion volume to the Gospel. Without Luke we would not have known about the way the message of Christianity moved outside the boundaries of Judaism. We also have to thank Luke for letting us know of the conversion of Paul, and the details of his missionary activities. Without Luke we would know very little indeed about the earliest days of the Christian Church.

The Gospel of John

When we move to the Gospel of John, we move into a conceptual world that is quite different from that of the other three Gospels. While John is like the other Gospels in the emphasis he gives to the events surrounding the betrayal, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the rest of his Gospel is almost entirely made up of material that is only found in John. After introducing in his first chapter many of the key themes that will reoccur later in the Gospel, the evangelist structures chapters 2 through 12 around several of the important miracles of Jesus (which he calls signs), and discourses between Jesus and different listeners. His disciples, Nicodemus, the woman at the well, and the crowds are all partners in these dialogues. There are many recurring themes in these discourses, and it is as the reader moves through each of them that a fuller understanding of Jesus emerges.

John is able to show some of the depths of the teachings of Jesus, yet he uses very simple language and imagery. One of the simple, still profound, images is that of "above versus below." Several clusters of ideas are associated with these spatial orientations. Jesus is associated with the realm of heaven and God the Father. He has come down from heaven (above), the place of life, light, truth, and spirit, into the Earth (below) which is characterized by death, dark-

ness, lying, and the flesh. This is the key reason that those bound to the Earth cannot understand Jesus: They are thinking only in terms of the flesh (e.g., John 3:11, 12; 6:50-52). Many of the discourses of Jesus in John 2-12 are tied up with these concepts of above/below. Simple concepts, but used in a very profound way.

Another concept found throughout these discourses is the tendency for the future to have come into the present. The last judgment and eternal life are things that properly belong in the future. But the judgment has already come in Jesus. Our attitude toward Jesus is our judgment. If we believe in Jesus, we have passed through the judgment into life; if we do not believe, we are condemned already (3:16-18). Indeed, if we believe in Jesus we have eternal life already.

Several themes emerge from John 13-17, the next major section in this Gospel. In contrast to the style of leadership adopted by the gentiles, the Christian leader is a servant leader. If you would be leader, then you will be the one who serves most. Several sayings of Jesus in this section stress that Jesus is the only way to the Father. This section records the giving of the promise of the Spirit, and shows Jesus preparing His disciples for His and their coming suffering. Love will be the hallmark of Jesus' disciples.

John's portrayal of the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus has several unique aspects. In particular, in John, the cross is the time of Jesus' glorification. It is the moment when the Son of Man is lifted up. It is Jesus' enthronement as king.

Summing up

The four Gospels preserve four different perspectives of Jesus. They bring us face-to-face with a Jesus who does not comfortably fit in the textbooks of Christian theologians or in the sermons preached each week. This is a Jesus who assumed full humanity, but who was

fully divine. A Jesus, who by His life, death, and resurrection changed humanity, and made salvation open to all who believe in Him. A Jesus who is soon to return to destroy evil, and restore the world to God. A Jesus who comes to us, often at an inconvenient time, and says, "Come, follow me." A Jesus who calls us to a life of discipleship and service. In short, a Jesus who challenges us with the deepest and most important question we will have to answer on this earth: "What about you... who do you say I am?" (Mark 8:29).

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Faith and science: Can they coexist?

by Leonard Brand

The approach of faith and science involves different worldviews, but scholarship and integrity can help one understand the other.

Can faith and science coexist? Many would say scientists must leave all religious influences out of their scholarly pursuits, because to do otherwise would compromise the search for truth. However, I believe the God of the Bible understands the highest levels of scholarship, not just comforting inspirational themes. Even in what may seem like the most unlikely disciplines—paleontology and geology—we can benefit through insights from the Creator of the universe, insights that others ignore.¹

Challenges to be overcome

Any attempt to integrate faith and scholarship immediately introduces a tension. Can religion bring bias into our scholarly search for truth? Yes, it can. For example, some conservative Christians believe, on the basis of what they consider is biblical teaching, that dinosaurs never existed. But numerous dinosaur skeletons have been found. One suggested solution is to leave the Bible out of our scholarly pursuits, so religious biases will not trouble us, and we can be more objective.

But such a solution is shallow, as an episode in the history of geology illustrates. For more than a hundred years, the pioneering geologist Lyell's work was considered authoritative in the field of geology.² Lyell rejected all the catastrophist geology interpretations common in his day, and replaced them with the theory that all geological processes occurred very slowly and gradually over eons of time (gradualism). Historical analysts of Lyell's work, however, have concluded that the catastrophists were

the more unbiased scientists, and Lyell imposed a culturally derived theory upon the data.³ Gould and others do not agree with the biblical views of some of the early geologists; but they have concluded that Lyell's colleagues were more careful observers than Lyell, and their catastrophist views were realistic *interpretations* of the data. Lyell's strictly gradualistic theory was bad for geology because it closed geologists' minds to any interpretations that suggested rapid, catastrophic geologic processes.⁴ So said Gould and Valentine. These authors still prefer to explain geology in a scenario of millions of years, but they recognize the evidence that many sedimentary deposits were catastrophic in nature. Now that Lyell's serious bias has been recognized and at least partially abandoned, the minds of geologists have been opened to recognize evidence for catastrophic processes. That evidence was there in the rocks before, but was not recognized because of Lyell's bias.

This episode reveals that bias is not limited to religion. It's a problem that we all have to contend with, no matter what worldview we adopt. The idea that religion introduces biases, but scholarship that leaves religion aside is objective, is naive. We do read our pet ideas into the Bible, between the lines, and misunderstand how to relate Scripture to nature. But those who do not take Scripture seriously have their own problems with other biases, and these are as significant as the biases that can result from religion.

The study of geology and paleontology is usually dependent on the assumption that life has evolved over millions

of years, and did not involve any divine intervention. This naturalistic worldview can introduce extremely pervasive biases into scientific inquiry. Nevertheless, the nervousness of many Christian thought leaders about seeking an integration between science and religion cannot be lightly brushed aside. But there are answers to their concerns,⁵ and this article will focus on part of the answer.

Approaches to the relationship between faith and science

One common approach is to keep science and faith separate.⁶ This method works fine in many disciplines that deal with issues on which Scripture may not say anything. However, in the study of Earth history, the Bible and conventional science say different things, and we need a method that can deal with this conflict. My solution is to know God as a personal friend, learn to trust His Word, and use it to assist us in our scholarly thinking. Meanwhile, our interaction with other scholars with varied views can help us avoid simplistic attempts to relate Scripture to the natural world. There are many creationists who write books or pamphlets on evolution or geology that are clearly an embarrassment even to conservative Christians informed on these subjects. Perhaps the problem isn't their use of biblical concepts, but a lack of scientific knowledge combined with a lack of peer review of their ideas.

This leads us to an approach that has been tried and proven, using the following steps:

- Actively search for and utilize insights from Scripture pertinent to your discipline.
- Be aware of the work and thinking of those who have a different worldview.
- Whenever feasible, submit your work for publication and peer review.
- Be friendly with those who hold a

different worldview, and perhaps even do collaborative work with them. This requires the confidence and independence of thought to not accept whatever one's collaborators think, while maintaining a constructive dialogue that can reduce the likelihood of superficial thinking.

Examples of published research based on the above approach

1. **Grand Canyon geology.** Geologists have interpreted the Cambrian Tapeats Sandstone, near the bottom of the Grand Canyon, as an accumulation of sand in shallow water along an ancient ocean shore, with the water level and sand deposit gradually rising along an existing cliff face over eons of time. Dr. Arthur Chadwick, Dr. Elaine Kennedy, and their collaborators found a geological deposit that clearly challenges that interpretation of the Tapeats Sandstone.⁷ Their evidence indicates accumulation of the sand in deep water by processes very different from those that would occur in shallow water (these deep water processes possibly were also much more rapid, but that is another issue). They presented their data and conclusions at a professional meeting of geologists, including some who had done much of the previous research on that formation, who concluded that Chadwick's and Kennedy's conclusions were correct. One geologist asked Dr. Chadwick afterwards what led him to see these things that other geologists had missed? The answer was that their worldview prompted them to ask questions that others were not asking, to question conclusions that others take for granted, and it opened their eyes to see things likely to be overlooked by a geologist working within a conventional naturalistic scientific theory. The questions a scholar asks have a strong controlling influence on what features of rocks or fossils will catch their attention, and what data they will collect.

A careful scientist who allows Bible history to inform his or her science will not use a different scientific method from the method used by other scientists. When scientists are at a rock outcrop, they all use the same scientific method. The types of data potentially available to them are the same, and they use the same scientific instruments and logical processes to analyze data. The differences are in (1) the questions that Christians tend to ask, (2) the range of hypotheses we are willing to consider, and (3) which of the potential types of data are likely to catch our attention.

Just because we start from what we believe to be a more correct beginning point (like Scriptural insight), that does not guarantee that the hypotheses we develop will be correct (Scripture doesn't give that much detail). It just initiates a search in a more productive direction, and if we have reason to trust divine insights, it will help us to improve our progress in some areas of science by opening our eyes to things we would otherwise be less likely to see.

2. **Fossil whales of the Miocene/Pliocene Pisco Formation of Peru.** The Pisco Formation in Peru contains numerous fossil whales in a diatomite deposit. Microscopic diatoms are organisms that float near the surface of lakes and oceans. Upon death, their silica skeletons sink, and in modern oceans they form accumulations of diatomite a few centimeters thick in a thousand years. Most scientists assume that ancient (fossil) diatomite deposits formed at the same slow rate, a few centimeters per thousand years.

Geologists and paleontologists who had published on the geology and the fossils of the Pisco Formation apparently did not ask how it can be that sediment accumulating at the slow rate of a few centimeters per thousand years can contain complete, well-preserved whales, which would seem to require rapid burial for their preservation. This was another case in which our Christian worldview

opened our eyes to see things that others have not noticed—the incongruity of the well-preserved whales as opposed to the presumed slow rate of diatom accumulation.

Our research there during the last three summers, with my graduate student Raul Esperante and other Earth scientists, has accumulated evidence pointing to rapid burial of the whale carcasses, probably within a few weeks or months (a few years at an extreme maximum) for any given whale, and suggests how ancient diatomites may have formed much more rapidly.

Our research results and conclusions were presented at annual meetings of the Geological Society of America,⁸ and in an initial published paper.⁹ More papers will be submitted. The best scientists in the field have opportunity to evaluate our work, and will be eager to point out our mistakes. That is a powerful incentive to keep us from being careless.

In this research (and other paleontological research not described here,¹⁰ I have spent time in the field with geologists or paleontologists who are not Christians and who have a worldview completely different from mine. I have found that there is value in working with someone from a different point of view. I have discovered things that they would probably never even consider, and they notice things that I would likely overlook. This helps us to avoid simplistic answers as we seek to understand geological history.

Integrating faith and science

Scientists get their ideas in many different ways¹¹ and no matter where their ideas come from (even from the Bible), those ideas and hypotheses are valid science if they can be tested against data. Science, of course, has nothing to contribute to evaluating much of the content of Scripture. Whether Jesus actually changed water to wine, or bodily raised Lazarus from the dead is beyond scientific scrutiny. What experiment would

you do to test those biblical miracles? On the other hand, when a biblical worldview can suggest testable hypotheses, these are valid contributions to science.

Actively attempting to integrate faith and science can help us find a balance between opposing concerns. For example, our biblical insights helped us to ask the right questions, and find that at least some geological deposits were formed quite rapidly. At the same time our scientific research seems to indicate that the common non-biblical assumption of no geological activity on Earth between Creation week and the Flood does not seem to be correct. The geological column may not have formed entirely in the Genesis flood, but may have accumulated over a period of time before, during, and after the Flood.

Religion can introduce biases into our science, but so can any other approach. If we make a conscious effort to integrate faith and science, or faith and our other disciplines, the effort can open our minds to new insights. The reverse of this is also true: if we *do not* seek to integrate science and faith, it is unlikely that we will adequately understand the areas where science and religion seem to be in conflict. If we do not put forth serious effort to challenge conventional thinking and develop a positive synthesis of science and faith, we are likely to accept conventional thinking without knowing whether or not it is based on a solid foundation.

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How to choose what we watch

by Daniel Reynaud

The subtle and the not so subtle values promoted in television and movies present the Christian with a challenge as to what and how to watch. Some guidelines.

With multiple channels accessible at the press of a button and with videos and movies available throughout day or night, the visual media poses a dilemma for Seventh-day Adventists.* Much of it appears fundamentally at odds with our faith. Violence, sex, destructive lifestyle, and rampant materialism characterize most of what passes for entertainment. Some Adventists respond to the problem by simply eliminating the visual media from their lives: no television, no videos, and no movies. These are avoided as a major source of corruption.

Yet it seems unrealistic to cut ourselves off entirely from the media and its potential value. Without proper understanding and use of mass media, our message may become isolationist and irrelevant. We also run the risk of becoming disconnected from the very society with which we must engage. Of course, an unrestrained and uncritical acceptance of the diet that television, videos, and movies offer is clearly not in the best interest of the Christian. On what basis, then, can we choose what to see and what to avoid?

Media and values

To begin with, we need to understand how the visual media works. Too often, we judge this media according to popular myths that circulate about it, without really examining how true such myths really are. Ironically, many of these myths about the media are in fact promoted by the media, as they serve the media's self-interest.

The media's primary concern is not aesthetics or morality. Some media pro-

ducers of television programs and films have a social or moral agenda that they push—for example, advocacy of tolerance toward homosexuality and a more accepting attitude to those with AIDS. But by and large, the visual media does not consciously set out to present a particular point of view. The fact that the media often has a fairly uniform social and moral stance owes more to the commercial pressures under which it operates, rather than any conspiracy of evil producers.

Sometimes we as audiences feel as if we are at the mercy of these producers, and that their opinions are foisted on us. However, when you talk to the producers, you discover that quite often they feel they are at the mercy of fickle audiences, whose tastes and desires they are constantly searching to understand and fulfil. Media history is full of examples of films, television programs, and music albums that should have sold well but failed. They had popular talent and high-quality technical production, but for some mysterious reason, they failed to ignite audiences. As programs are usually quite expensive to make, producers are constantly searching for the magic formula that will guarantee them a good return on their expensive investment. Thus the tendency for hit movies to be followed by sequels and look-alikes. However, producers still have not isolated what it is that makes one movie a hit and another a flop.

Having established that the media is not primarily concerned with passing on specific values, we need to establish what it is about. Movies, videos, and television programs are a business be-

fore they are anything else. As a business, the primary goal of the media is to make money. Since movies make a profit mostly through the box office, their aim is to please the broadest possible spectrum of the public. For television, the main source of income is advertising. While ratings are important to television producers, the opinions of advertisers are even more significant. One can point to many cases of popular programs being taken off the air, simply because advertisers did not feel that they were a suitable medium for their products. Television's main function for audiences is usually to entertain, but for producers, it is a means to sell an audience's attention to the advertisers.

What advertisers want from television programs is a suitable setting to show off their products. Typically, this revolves around portraying upper-middle class white people with lifestyles of conspicuous consumption. Having popular characters whose manner of living is somewhat more expensive than ours encourages consumerism, and hence is what the advertisers like best. Television's rampant materialism, and to some extent its racism (it is overwhelmingly white) and sexism (men appear three times more often than women on television, and usually hold the positions of power) are to a large degree an outcome of the need to create programming that supports advertising.

Movies are a little different, as they do not depend on advertising revenue. Hence their value system can vary. However, two factors tend to hold the cinema in line with accepted social values: the need to appeal to large sections of the audience, and product placement. The latter is a disguised form of advertising, whereby a company pays a fee in exchange for having meaningful and positive coverage of its product. If any brand name is visible in a movie, someone probably paid to have it there. This is particularly true of products such as airlines, cigarettes, and alcohol. In ef-

fect, the movies tend to reinforce selfish consumerism, and support racist and sexist attitudes.

What Christians notice most often, and object frequently about television and movies, are things such as sex and violence. But we often fail to notice the crass materialism so inbred in these entertainment avenues. The reason that materialism as such fails to offend us is that we share the same values! And the media is at its most influential when it coincides with our values, for then it tends to reinforce what we already believe without us noticing. When the media portrays something to which we object, then we usually consciously reject the ideas, minimizing its impact.

What we watch

Having established the process by which the media generates values, and to some extent the way it slips them past our notice, we can now turn our attention to our choice of viewing. Two issues arise immediately: What shall we watch? How shall we watch? Our selection of viewing must be complemented by a particular viewing attitude and process if we wish to sustain a sound Christian approach to the media. I believe the "how" opens up a range of media to positive Christian interaction, and without it, there is little media to be recommended to the Christian.

The "what" is both simple and impossible to answer. Often people want a list of acceptable films. Such a process is too much like an inverse "Index"—the list of banned books maintained by the Catholic Church during and after the Reformation. However, appropriate films to watch can be defined qualitatively, not quantitatively; in other words, what may be acceptable for one person in one context may be inappropriate in different circumstances. Clearly, different personalities will respond in different ways to particular films and television programs, as is the case with any aesthetic creation such as music or

painting. Differences in taste must be acknowledged as part of the human diversity created by God. So, how to choose a film or program?

I would ask, "Does it reflect the world or a part of it? Does it make us more sensitive to suffering and joy, pain, and wonder? Does it put me in touch with the emotions of someone else? Is there aesthetic merit in its formation, a delight in the creative processes, such as the use of language or the juxtaposition of images?" Each of these characteristics opens up a film or program to a positive Christian response.

The first question (Does it reflect the world?) asks us to consider in what ways the media allows us insight into the human condition. I would emphasize at this point that the human condition portrayed need not be positive, all sweetness and light. All too often, Christians assume that portrayals of evil are inappropriate for them. There has been a tendency to adopt a Disney view of the world, both literally and metaphorically. I believe this to be fundamentally flawed. There is no false romanticism about God's picture of the world. The Bible is full of very graphic and indeed disturbing images of evil—and that is the point. When the Bible portrays evil, it shows it in its full context, sometimes as having short-term gain, but always as having long-term pain. Christians should reject media products that ignore the reality of evil and its consequences. A number of programs are excessively sweet; many more suffer the opposite problem of glamorizing or romanticizing evil, by showing the behavior as having no negative consequences. Typically, heroes use violence to achieve their ends or have multiple sexual relations without any of the emotional baggage that goes with such behavior.

A program that reflects the world, or at least part of it, should put us in touch with the experiences of real people. An understanding of the true nature of evil

as well as good is valuable to the Christian. It makes us more sensitive to people's needs and to the nature of the spiritual conflict on this planet. A film need not be realistic to achieve this. A parallel case is that some of the parables in the Bible are not literal, yet they still teach real truth.

The last question, about aesthetics, is too often ignored by Christians. We have a responsibility to develop aesthetic appreciation, for it is a gift of God and a reflection of His own sense of beauty. It is appropriate for us to watch and admire a film or program that is aesthetically well made.

How to watch

Moving to the important question of how to watch television and movies, let me suggest a few things. Remember that the media is built around commercial values. To be aware of this makes us more sensitive to its influence, and acts as a barrier to its full effect. Indeed, we should always reflect on the underlying value system that a film portrays. Often, a film will have surface values and underlying values, which may in fact work in opposite directions. For example, the recent popular film *Bridget Jones' Diary* has surface values that appear to support loose sexual attitudes, yet its underlying values are about human integrity and identity. Viewed with the right attitude, the film can sensitize us to the situations facing secular people today. Viewed superficially, it can simply be seen as entertainment or even as a negative experience.

An awareness of the values in a media product can help us respond in an appropriate way to it. It is also helpful to know something of the processes by which a program or movie is produced. For example, a knowledge of basic film technique can be a powerful way of understanding how the media seeks to persuade us. Camera angles, lighting, editing, sound track—all these factors help shape our response to the characters

portrayed. The more we know about the processes, the greater our power in determining our response to the media.

I have lectured on mass media at university level for 10 years now, and the most common response I have from students is that their knowledge of film technique gives them a healthy contempt for the rubbish they used to watch. They are much more discriminating, both in their choice of viewing and in the way they respond to their viewing. In other words, film knowledge shifts the power balance away from the film to the viewer.

There are other ways to educate the viewer. For example, most films and television programs are reviewed in the press. Naturally, these are not necessarily done from a Christian perspective. Nor are the reviewers always fair. Often they have an elitist attitude toward popular cinema. All the same, the reviews offer perspectives on current media offerings, and are a source of knowledge to empower the viewer. Another valuable way of watching films from a positive Christian perspective is to discuss them with others after the viewing, particularly analyzing their value system. Practice at this helps build up the skills of understanding a film, and getting other people's perspectives can broaden one's own view, sensitizing us to aspects we may have missed.

Conclusion

Let me conclude by commenting briefly about two relatively recent popular films: *Shrek* and *Pearl Harbor*. You may disagree with my responses, but at least we will have considered the values of the films.

My response to *Pearl Harbor* was quite negative. It was expertly directed and had technical excellence, and clearly showed the horrors of war, but I felt these virtues were undone by serious flaws. The script was poorly written, and the story was overloaded with clichés, the treatment of the characters was su-

perficial, and the themes were light, mainly driven by the need to resolve the love triangle. In many respects it reminded me of *Titanic*, another film whose technical dazzle concealed identical faults. What made both of them worse was the illusion they created of actually showing us something historical and real. Technically, both had many aspects of reality—for example, the ships and aircraft were authentic-looking. However, both used this to sell a value system that was sentimental and superficial.

On the other hand, *Shrek* is a classic example of an unrealistic film that deals with real issues. Its images are computer-generated, and the whole story is a play on every fairy tale we have ever heard. Yet it deals with human relationships in a way that reflects the complexities we face in real life. The characters have competing values that demand priority, and they must choose. In the end, the main characters opt for relationships based on trust and forgiveness rather than ones based on personal gain and superficial appearance. The punch line of the film, when the princess turns into a plump and somewhat ugly creature, similar to Shrek, emphasizes that true human value cannot be based on mere outward appearance. Despite occasional coarse language, the film is open to a positive response from a Christian perspective.

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*I am aware that etymologically *media* is the plural of *medium*, and that it should require verbs in plural. However, its common use is leaning toward singular, which is what I have used in this article.



James Graves

Dialogue with a Supreme Court judge in Mississippi

The National Bar Association awarded him its first Distinguished Jurist Award in 1996. The National Conference of Black Lawyers named him Judge of the Year in 1992. The Millsaps College Black Students Association named him Alumnus of the Year in 1993. Gov. Ronnie Musgrove appointed him to the Mississippi Supreme Court on October 29, 2001. But he's most proud of being named Parent of the Year for the 2000-2001 school year by the Jackson Public School District.

Justice James E. Graves Jr., 47, is a Seventh-day Adventist and is active in his church in Jackson as religious liberty secretary. Born to a Baptist minister, Justice Graves is married to Dr. Betty Graves. They have three sons, ages 27, 20, and 18.

In recognition of his untiring efforts to save and help children, Graves was named Champion Adopter for his mentoring in Lake Elementary Schools' "Boys for a Brighter Tomorrow" program. He led the high school Mock Trial Team to its state championship in 2001. He is intensely devoted to children everywhere, loves their direct honesty, and is committed to being a positive influence in their lives.

Graves was born in Hinds County, Mississippi, and graduated from Sumner Hill High School in Clinton, where he was valedictorian of his class. He completed a B.A. degree in sociology from Millsaps College, where he met and studied the Bible with Betty, a Seventh-day Adventist, whom he married after graduation and baptism. He earned his law degree from the Syracuse University College of Law and a Master of Public Administration degree from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York. He was admitted to the Mississippi Bar in 1980 and has served the state of Mississippi in a number of roles. His service includes director of the Division of Child Support Enforcement of the Department of Human Services, circuit court judge of Hinds and Yazoo counties, and private law practice.

Graves has taught trial advocacy at Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and has served as adjunct professor at Jackson State University, where he taught both media law and civil rights law.

Yet, it is Psalm 75:6 and 7 that keep Justice Graves grounded: "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another (KJV)."

■ Justice Graves, what led you to pursue law?

I wanted to be in a profession that would allow me to effect the most change in society and to help people.

■ Help us to understand what it means to grow up in Mississippi during an era when the legal system opposed civil rights for people of color and now to sit as a supreme court justice of that very same state.

It is awesome and very humbling. It motivates me to work very hard, because for so many people in Mississippi, it means a lot that someone like me sits on the Mississippi Supreme Court—someone who grew up in a small town here and went to college here. It just behooves me to do the best that I can in this job.

■ Do you ever feel as if you're being placed in a precarious position?

I don't know if I'd call it precarious. I think it's one where, obviously, there's an awful lot of scrutiny for two reasons: (1) because it's the highest court in this state and then (2) I'm the only African-American who sits on the court. But I don't know that I feel it's any more precarious to me than it would be for anyone else. It's one where you have a lot of power and a lot of responsibility, and so you just ought to be careful and deliberate in making decisions on this court.

■ What case or cases have had the most impact on you?

Criminal cases. Sentencing decisions were the most difficult decisions that I had to make as a trial judge. When you can give someone anywhere from zero

to 30 years for the sale of cocaine, for example, you literally hold that person's liberty in your hands. That's major decision-making power, and it's one that I never took lightly.

■ *How do you balance your religious beliefs with your responsibilities as a Supreme Court justice?*

I don't see the two as being in conflict, and I don't see the two as a situation where I have to participate in one to the exclusion of the other. I can't imagine doing one without the other. The religion is always there: you want to be fair, you want to do the right thing, and you want to look at what is just and morally correct. That's the prayer I pray every day—to make the right ruling for the right reason. I don't separate the two.

■ *Do you find opportunities for witnessing about Jesus?*

All the time. It's not so much through the profession; it's the ancillary opportunities that are presented because I do what I do. There are tons of opportunities to do witnessing and to talk about my religious beliefs and my belief in Christ and how that influences what I do. I let people know that the 10 years I was a trial judge, I never walked into that courtroom without getting on my knees and praying first.

■ *Is it important that Adventists and the church be vocal on such controversial issues as cloning, the death penalty, and now security?*

I don't know that it's as important to be vocal as it is to be aware of those issues. I think, historically, Adventists thought it was not important to participate in the political process. That's just not true. As more Adventists become involved in politics, it's important that other Adventists are involved also. I never knew an Adventist to have any reluctance to call me (when I practiced law) when one of their kids was arrest-

ed, when somebody went to jail, when they needed to get somebody out, or when they had a question about a domestic problem. And when somebody died and they had a question about an estate or will or property, they called.

But when you're involved in politics, they're not aware of it, they didn't know you were running, they didn't know they needed to help, they didn't know they needed to vote. It's important that they be aware, that they participate, and that they're active. I don't know that they need to make public proclamations or public statements. But they need to be aware of issues, and they need to participate in the political process, because cloning is in part going to be a political issue. And Congress is going to consider laws and pass laws, and all of that is politics. So yes, yes, yes, it's important.

■ *Will your position now create a new view for Adventists and force them to look at some of these social or religious issues with a different attitude, and even cause certain issues to be pushed to the forefront?*

I hope that it will. If just the position and what is attendant to it provokes thought and dialogue, that's good.

■ *What do you say to Christians who believe that their disputes should not be decided in a court of law?*

Hooray! Frankly, I wish fewer people would come to the court to resolve their disputes. I've seen cases where family members were trying to resolve issues in court that, in my opinion, should have been resolved over dinner. Obviously, I don't subscribe to the point of view that disputes should never be decided in court "because I'm a Christian, and I don't believe in that." There are some disputes that are appropriately resolved in the courts; those are what the courts are for, and that's where those disputes ought to be resolved.

■ *You received the Innovation Award in 2000 for your pioneering efforts in bringing*

in the first state-of-the-art high-tech courtroom in Mississippi State Courts, in establishing the first court website for a Mississippi State Trial Court, and in implementing electronic filing of court documents. What have been the advantages of such changes?

The trials go faster. They're more interesting. The lawyers aren't hauling in TV sets and VCRs and having to do blowups. You can take an 8" x 10" photo and put it under that machine and it's blown up on a 15-foot parabolic screen. It's a more efficient and cost-effective way of presenting evidence to a jury. The court website allows people to log on and pull up information that they otherwise would have to call the court for. With the website, you log on and the information is there, anytime, day or night. And there's an obvious advantage to the electronic filing of documents that allows you to store on one CD what would otherwise fill a box. Courthouses all over the country have been running out of storage space for documents.

■ *In the post-September 11 atmosphere, could decisions be made that will curtail public movement, including limiting church attendance?*

I think you are going to see, on the part of some, a willingness to infringe on certain civil and religious liberties in the name of security and antiterrorism. And there will be those willing to give up certain freedoms in the name of security. I certainly think that such decisions are on the horizon.

■ *How difficult do you think your position might be in making some of those decisions from a legal versus a religious standpoint?*

I'm going to do what I think is right under the law and under the circumstances. If there's some constitutional prohibition, then I've got to vote to uphold the Constitution, which I think is broad enough to encompass a sufficient

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Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse

*Dialogue with a musician
with an up-tempo vision for Adventist education*

Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse has indelibly stamped Adventist culture with her vision of musical activism. Music has been her work of a lifetime, and yet her vitality today is scarcely less than when she first started the New England Youth Ensemble in 1970. With that ensemble she has traveled to more than 40 countries.

When she was 3, Canadian-born Virginia-Gene left with her parents for South Africa, where her father would serve as president of Helderberg College. Until she was 19, Virginia-Gene pursued her budding musical career there. Back in North America, she earned Master's and doctoral degrees in music—the latter from the prestigious Peabody Conservatory in New York.

She became a well-known concert pianist and violinist, married Dr. Harvey Rittenhouse, and spent time in medical and music ministry in Jamaica before joining the faculty of Atlantic Union College in 1972. (Interestingly, her father had been dean there in the 1940s.) And, in some ways, that was the beginning of the story as Adventism has come to know this remarkable woman. The story of the New England Youth Ensemble is her story. And that continues in a new way with the transfer, seven years ago, of the Ensemble to Columbia Union College, in Takoma Park, Maryland.

■ *What gave you the idea for the Youth Ensemble? What did you have in mind?*

I was teaching at Atlantic Union College, and I had very young pupils, violinists. Just as an off-hand thought, I wondered if I had them play together, maybe they would get a bit more inspired to practice. So in my living room I gathered five of them—11 to 13 year olds—including my niece and nephew, and I said, "Let's play together." Well, they started playing together, and in no time at all we put them in little outfits and they started playing concerts. I found that people were just charmed and that it was a real mission. Our first concert was at a luncheon for the Kiwanis Club at Christmas time. Well, afterward a businessman came to me, all choked up. "We have never been so moved," he said. "These young kids played Bach and Handel. It restores our

faith in American youth!" Then others came, one after another, saying how much they appreciated the concert. Suddenly, I realized that there was real power in children and youth playing great music. That was the spark of my inspiration. Then we started playing in the churches everywhere. We played at the General Conference session in Atlantic City, New Jersey. We went to the World Youth Congress in Edinburgh in 1973; that was our first overseas tour. The young people were just a sensation wherever we went. We played at many famous music centers, including ones in Poland and Russia.

■ *So you have been constantly on the go ever since?*

Yes, ever since 1973 without a break! Every year, twice a year. We have a winter tour, usually in California or the U.S. Northwest. Then it is on to the overseas tour, practically without a break.

■ *How large is the group?*

About 45, at any one time.

■ *Do you have any idea how many young people in total have been part of the group?*

Oh, hundreds. They put on a big alumni reunion last March and former ensemble "kids" came from all over the United States and everywhere. It was absolutely wonderful!

■ *I need to get to the reason why Dialogue wanted this interview. It seems that you have used the ensemble to project the value of Adventist education.*

Absolutely! My father was in Christian education all his life; president of

Helderberg College, dean of Atlantic Union College, and so on. So I have been brought up on campuses since I was born—in fact, I was born on a college campus. I am absolutely committed to Christian education. And today, when so many of our young people are going to public universities for a variety of reasons, I still hold most strongly to the unique value of Adventist education.

I recruit ensemble members from all over the country. I think of a brilliant young violinist who is coming to join us at Columbia Union College. He is choosing us above Julliard, the prestigious School of Music. He has had an awful time making his decision, and I said to him, “Preston, let me tell you something, I know we are not Julliard. We are trying to raise money for a new music building. I want you to understand that it is inadequate, but it is not a building that you are coming to.”

I told Preston that we are small, and we don't have the facilities, and so on. “But, Preston, I can promise you that no place else can offer you what we can. We offer a Christian atmosphere.” I talk to the players in New York, and I know what they think. The spiritual dimension is not there. Many of them would love to join our group. They beg to go on the tours. If I opened up the program, I would have all non-Adventists on the tours. They love the idea of the mission and the tour and all. So I said to Preston, “You'll have the tours. We go throughout the world. You'll play in Carnegie Hall and you'll have—the most important of all—a Christian atmosphere.” Well, I have convinced him.

■ *From your long experience, can you recall an incident or anecdote that stands out in your mind?*

I think it would have to be the moment in St. Petersburg, Russia, about four years ago when we played at a large stadium. There were 15,000 people there that night. I had no idea what we

were getting into; to see hundreds of people surging up to us afterwards, all trying to talk to us in Russian, and flowers lining the stage. I think that was one of the most unforgettable moments. And as an outcome of that evangelistic crusade, thousands were baptized and we were at that baptism. It was wonderful!

■ *And it is all happy memories of the past! Where to now?*

The Ensemble is performing 15 concerts this season at Carnegie Hall. We have performed more at Carnegie Hall than any other orchestra in the country, I guess. Each season we tour all over the United States and other countries. We were in Australia last year and Scandinavia and Russia the year before. We tour every summer and we will soon be headed for England, Zimbabwe, and then to South Africa for the fifth time. Our guest conductor will be John Rutter, from England, the most famous composer and conductor of sacred music today. At his request, we are going with him throughout South Africa.

Our particular mission at this moment is the establishment of an orphanage for AIDS orphans in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Interview by Lincoln Steed.

Lincoln Steed is the editor of Liberty magazine and associate director of public affairs and religious liberty for the North American Division. E-mail: steeli@nad.adventist.org

You can contact Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse by e-mailing her assistant at RochelleDavis@CUC.edu.

Graves

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amount of religious liberty and freedom.

■ *It's said that you are most proud of being named Parent of the Year by the Jackson Public School District for the 2000-2001 school year. What makes you an outstanding parent?*

Being a good father has always been of paramount importance to me. Since my son's senior year in high school was his last year at home, it was important to me to have dinner ready for him when he'd come home from band practice and other activities.

■ *That's a nice dad.*

My father was always such a good father, and he still is. If I could just be half as good a father to my children as my father has been to me, then I'll be a good father. The most important thing I want said about me when I'm dead is that I was a good father to my sons.

Interview by Audrey Stovall and Roy Brown.

Audrey Stovall is an editor for a university in Alabama. Her e-mail: stovallay@hotmail.com

Roy Brown is host of PBS-WGCU-TV's "In Focus" and news producer for NPR in Ft. Myers, Florida. His e-mail: RBrown@fgcu.edu

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Where is God when life hurts?

by Steve Grimsley

The answer to suffering is not an abstract idea, because this isn't an abstract issue; it's a personal issue. It requires a personal response.

It was a rainy evening, rush hour traffic. When the light turned green, I accelerated to 35 miles per hour. As I gained speed, suddenly, the driver in front of me swerved violently to the right. My reaction was one of perplexity more than alarm. I lifted my foot off the gas pedal, but it was too late. Before me were two vehicles stopped behind a stalled car. I swerved and braked. But not in time to avoid clipping the right rear of the car before me. I then nudged my crippled car to a halt in the emergency lane.

I agonized over my crinkled Mazda 626, but was thankful I had no personal injury. I looked back into the halted traffic. A 30-something woman stood beside her car, arms raised, head back, tears flowing, screaming, "Thank you, Jesus! Thank you, Jesus!" I walked up to her, assuming she was a victim of my recklessness. Quickly, she reentered her vehicle and mumbled something about being late for an appointment and sped off. I stood there somewhat confused, and it was only then that I realized she was untouched.

But, what about the young couple whose Chevy Malibu I clipped? What about me? Well, we had to deal with law enforcement, insurance adjusters, rental car agencies, and body shops. Why didn't Jesus save us from all this?

Suffering: Is it fair?

My suffering, though minor, brought to mind a more profound question—one that has haunted the Christian faith

for generations. How can a loving God allow pain and suffering to exist in this world? The distribution and degree of suffering appear to be completely random and unfair. Wasn't I just as worthy of escape as the woman who drove away unscathed?

But my little mishap was trivial. What our times have witnessed benumb the mind. Millions perished in death camps, gulags, and killing fields. Ethnic cleansing, tribal genocide, and the horrors of September 11 lead one to wonder, Why didn't God stop all this? Television images of earthquakes burying thousands causes one to cry out, Why doesn't God care?

In the midst of human tragedy and suffering, how is it possible for a rational person to believe that we serve a God who loves?

At the risk of seeming unsympathetic, let me raise another question: "Is it possible that God may tolerate certain short-range evils to allow for long-range good, and that I as a finite being cannot understand this?"

Suffering: Long-range good?

Peter Kreeft, Boston College philosophy professor, provides an analogy of short-range pain resulting in long-range good:

"Imagine a bear in a trap and a hunter who, out of sympathy, wants to liberate him. He tries to win the bear's confidence but he can't do it, so he has to shoot the bear full of drugs. The bear, however, thinks this is an attack and

that the hunter is trying to kill him. He doesn't realize that this is being done out of compassion.

"Then, in order to get the bear out of the trap, the hunter has to push him further into the trap to release the tension on the spring. If the bear were semiconscious at that point, he would be even more convinced that the hunter was his enemy who was out to cause him suffering and pain. But the bear would be wrong. He reaches this incorrect conclusion because he's not a human being."¹

Can this be an analogy between God and us?

But, the question remains, "How can an all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving God tolerate such pervasive, persistent, unfathomable evil?" Consider Kreeft's point that good can come from evil. God has specifically shown us how this works. He has demonstrated how the very worst thing that ever happened in earth's history resulted in the very best thing that ever happened in history—Christ's death on the cross. At the time, nobody thought that any possible good could ever come from this tragedy. And yet God knew the glorious outcome that no human had the foresight to see. If it happened there, why couldn't it happen in our individual lives?

Paul Kreeft further illustrates this concept.

"Suppose you're the devil. You're the enemy of God and you want to kill him, but you can't. However, he has this ridiculous weakness of creating and lov-

ing human beings, whom you can get at. Aha! Now, you've got hostages! So you simply come down into the world, corrupt humankind, and drag some of them to hell. When God sends prophets to enlighten them, you kill the prophets.

"Then, God does the most foolish thing of all—he sends his own Son and he plays by the rules of the world. You say to yourself, 'I can't believe he's that stupid! Love has addled his brain! All I have to do is inspire some of my agents—Herod, Pilate, Caiaphas, the Roman soldiers—and get him crucified.' And that's what you do.

"So, there he hangs on the cross—forsaken by man and seemingly by God, bleeding to death and crying, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' What do you feel now as the devil? You feel triumph and vindication! But, of course, you couldn't be more wrong. This is his supreme triumph and your supreme defeat. He struck his heel into your mouth and you bit it and that blood destroyed you."²

Now, if this occurrence is not unique, perhaps it points out that when we suffer and bleed, it is God's way of defeating Satan all over again. Most of the well-known Christians in history seem to say they've grown closest to God when they've suffered the most. The Apostle Paul stated, "For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake.... So then, death is at work in us; but life is at work in you" (2 Corinthians 4: 11, 12, NIV).

Suffering: Forsaking God?

But, isn't it possible to come away forsaking God because of His seeming ambivalence to our suffering? Elie Wiesel describes how he lost his faith when he, imprisoned at the Buna Camp at the age of 15, witnessed the hanging death of a Dutch boy who refused to reveal information about an arms cache found in his master's home. The light weight of the boy prolonged his agonizing death for over a half hour as he hung by

his neck suspended on a twisting rope. Wiesel, along with thousands of other prisoners, was forced to march in front of the boy and observe as he struggled between life and death.³

Wiesel lost his faith, but his story contains the answer to the question we've been asking throughout this article. God was there at Buna with the little Dutch boy, just as He was at Calvary with Jesus, His Son, as He too hovered between life and death on the cross. So, is there an answer to the question, "Where is God?" There is no answer. But there is an Answerer.

No answer, but an Answerer

Peter Kreeft sums it up: "It's Jesus himself. It's not a bunch of words. It's *the* Word. It's not a tightly woven philosophical argument; it's a person. *The* person. The answer to suffering is not an abstract idea, because this isn't an abstract issue; it's a personal issue. It requires a personal response. The answer must be someone, not just something, because the issue involved someone—God, where are you?

"Jesus is there, sitting beside us in the lowest places of our lives. Are we broken? He was broken, like bread, for us. Are we despised? He was despised and rejected of men. Do we cry out that we can't take it any more? He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Do people betray us? He was sold out himself. Are our tenderest relationships broken? He too loved and was rejected. Do people turn from us? They hid their faces from him as from a leper.

"Does he descend into all our hells? Yes, he does.... He not only rose from the dead, he changed the meaning of death and therefore of all the little deaths.... Every tear we shed becomes his tear. He may not wipe them away yet, but he will."⁴

Suffering: God is there

Is my God aloof? Does He stand over me, as a towering despot demanding my

surrender to His will? Does He cloister Himself in enclaves of serenity rarely looking down upon my anguish? If this were the case, I could not believe in Him. But for the cross, my belief would flounder on myths and agnosticism. There on Calvary, my Savior, lonely, forsaken, twisted, bleeding, broken, thirsty, cried out in agony for my forgiveness. That's the God for me!

So, when the question of how a loving God can allow pain and suffering in this world hangs accusingly in the air, I pull a rainbow from the sky, construct a symbol with two rough hewn blocks of wood, and plant the cross of Christ at its highest point.

Steve Grimsley is the director of health plans, Adventist Risk Management, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. E-mail: sgrimsley@adventistrisk.org

Notes and references

1. In Lee Strobel, *The Case for Faith* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), p. 32.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 39, 40.
3. Elie Wiesel, *Night* (New York: Avon Books, 1969), pp. 75, 76.
4. Strobel, 51, 52.

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Light on the first day of Creation

As I read the account of creation in Genesis, I find that on the first day of Creation God said, "Let there be light," and there was light" (1:3, NIV). A few verses later, however, I read that on the fourth day of Creation week God ordered into existence "lights in the expanse of the sky... to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness" (1:14-18). As a Bible-believing Christian, I wonder what was the source of the light that illumined our planet before the fourth day, if it did not come from the Sun.

Havannah Beetson,
Boroko, Papua New Guinea

Several explanations have been given. One possibility is that God's presence was the source of light on the first day of Creation. Psalm 104 is a stylized account of the creation story, and it mentions God covering Himself with "light as with a garment" in the section paralleling the first day of Creation (v. 2). During the first three days God could have separated the light from darkness (as He later separated light from darkness at the Red Sea, Exodus 14:19, 20). By God Himself being the light source for the first part of the week, He would be emphasizing the theocentric (God-centered), not the heliocentric (sun-centered) nature of Creation. This would forestall any temptation to worship the sun that might have been encouraged if the sun were the first object created.

A second option suggests that the sun was created before the fourth day, but became visible on that day as the cloud cover was removed. This would explain the evening/morning cycle before day 4. The Hebrew syntax of Gene-

sis 1:14 is different than the pattern of the other days of Creation. Verse 14 literally reads, "Let lights in the firmament of the heavens divide the day from the night" (not "Let there be lights...to divide..." as in most translations), perhaps implying that the lights were already in existence before the fourth day. The "greater" and "lesser" lights as well as the stars could have been created "in the beginning" (before Creation week, v. 1; cf. John 1:1-3) and not on the fourth day. On the fourth day they were given a purpose, "to separate the day from the night" and "to mark seasons and days and years." A variant of this view is that the sun and moon were created before Creation week, but in their *tohu-bohu* ("unformed-unfilled") state like the earth (see v. 2), and on the fourth day were further formed into their fully-functional state (v. 16).

A third suggestion is that God created the physical properties of visible light and the rest of the electromagnetic spectrum on the first day. This idea, however, is not satisfactory if the universe and light from other galaxies are older than life on earth. Several passages of Scripture suggest that celestial bodies and intelligent beings were created before life was brought into existence on this planet (Job 38:7; Eze. 28:15). In addition, the Hebrew syntax of Genesis 1:16 doesn't require the creation of the stars on day 4, and in fact suggests that they were already in existence.

A fourth suggestion is that the literary structure of Genesis 1 dictated the order of the days of Creation: the sun on the fourth day to provide the light on the first; birds and fish on the fifth to

inhabit the air dividing the water on the second; animals on the sixth to live on the dry land and eat of the vegetation of the third. However, the symmetry seems reverse on the first and fourth days, since the light appears before its physical source.

A fifth answer suggests that the Genesis 1 creation story is intended to undergird the monotheistic religion of Israel, in contrast to the polytheism of the surrounding nations. The story deliberately altered the relationship of the sun, light, and daily cycle to convey the power of the Creator God. For example, the term translated "greater light" was used rather than the Hebrew word for sun, to avoid any confusion with the pagan sun-god. However, both this and the previous answer rely on a figurative rather than on a literal understanding of the Creation narrative.

Of the above options, the first two seem to be most in harmony with the biblical data. Perhaps a combination of these two views is possible: the sun and the moon may have been created (at least in their "unformed-unfilled" state) before creation week, but God Himself was the light source until day four. Genesis 1 is clearly intended by the author to be a literal account of Creation. (Note that the heading "these are the generations/accounts/history" is used in Genesis 2:4, as well as with the nine other sections of Genesis, indicating that the author intended the Creation to be taken just as literally as the rest of Genesis.) Part of suggestion four may also be true in that God seems to have artistically

Continued on page 33.

Water is good for your heart!

by Dustin Jones

Drinking five or more 8-ounce glasses of water can significantly reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, according to a research conducted by Loma Linda University, in Loma Linda, California, and published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* (May 2002). The research is part of the on going Adventist Health Study project that began in 1976.

The study, "Water, Other Fluids, and Fatal Coronary Heart Disease," showed that drinking five or more glasses of plain water a day is as important as exercise, diet, or not smoking in preventing coronary heart disease. "Basically, not drinking enough water can be as harmful to your heart as smoking," warns Jac-

queline Chan, Dr.P.H., principal investigator and lead author of the article. Dr. Chan and Synnove Knutsen, M.D., Ph.D., second author, found that California Seventh-day Adventists who drank five or more glasses of plain water a day had a much lower risk of fatal coronary heart disease compared to those who drank less than two glasses per day.

The study is the first of its kind to compare high water intake to a reduction in coronary heart disease, according to Dr. Chan. The study showed that whole-blood viscosity, plasma viscosity, hematocrit, and fibrinogen—which are considered independent risk factors for coronary heart disease—can be elevated by dehydration. Neither total fluid intake nor intake of other fluids combined showed this reduced risk. Instead, for women, high intake (five or more glasses a day) of other fluids actually showed a greatly increased risk for coronary heart disease. Other fluids such as coffee, milk, and caffeinated sodas did not show any statistically significant heart benefits. The initial effect of these types of fluids is actually to draw water from the blood because they cannot be digested until their concentration is reduced to be similar to that of the blood. This causes at least a temporary increase in blood viscosity, thus increasing the risk of blood clots.

Water, however, is absorbed immediately, hydrating the blood system. Drinking high amounts of water thins the blood, reducing the risk for blood clots, which could lead to heart attacks. "People need to be made aware that there is a difference, at least for heart health, whether they get their fluids

from plain water or from sodas," says Dr. Chan. Though more research is needed to confirm the findings, Dr. Chan and Dr. Knutsen have already adjusted the figures to account for other potential factors in heart disease fatalities such as age, smoking, calorie intake, exercise, blood pressure, and socio-economic status.

Continued on page 27.

Water consumption tips

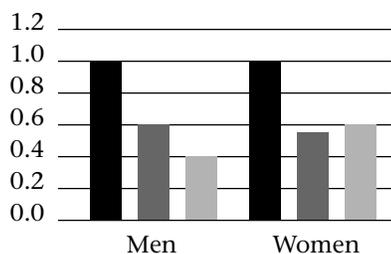
Knowing when to drink water during the day is almost as important as actually drinking water. The most crucial time to drink water is when you wake up in the morning, a time when our bodies are most dehydrated.

Many people drink coffee and orange juice first thing in the morning. However, both beverages are known to cause at least a temporary increase in blood viscosity at a time when the blood is at its most viscous. The result is an increase in heart attacks in the morning. An easy way to combat this is to begin each day with a glass or two of water.

You should drink water throughout the day, but pay special attention to keeping your body hydrated before you exercise. Hydration is also important during the workout. After exercising is the most important time to replenish the water your body has used.

It is recommended that men drink six to 12 eight-ounce glasses of water each day. For women, four-and-a-half to nine eight-ounce glasses of water are recommended.

Less than 2 glasses per day
3 to 4 glasses per day
5 or more glasses per day



The graph above represents relative risk of fatal coronary heart disease in men and women without a history of heart disease, stroke, or diabetes, according to water intake. Data has been adjusted for age, smoking, hypertension, body mass index, socio-economic status, and estrogen-replacement therapy in women.

Responsible Proselytism: An Inter-religious Statement

With increasing globalization and growing inter-religious and ideological strife, a constructive relationship among religions has become imperative. To deal with these issues, the International Religious Liberty Association convened meetings and conferences of experts in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Spain in 1999 and early 2000. The conference included representatives from Christianity (Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant), Islam, and Judaism, and it adopted the following statement on specific points of agreement.

Preamble

Freedom of religion or belief is a basic human right. Despite the strong support given to this universal right during the past fifty years by the various international instruments, beginning with the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of 1948, and including the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* of 1966, the *Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief* of 1981, and the *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities* of 1992, widespread violations of this right continue to occur and are to be deplored.

Freedom of religion or belief includes the right to manifest and communicate one's faith or belief to others. Religions have differing beliefs about how they should disseminate their convictions. The question of "proselytizing" or making converts inevitably affects inter-religious relations. The term "proselytism" has various meanings

and connotations. To avoid ambiguity, hereafter this document does not use it.

Accepting the increasing reality of religious pluralism and with the aim of strengthening religious liberty, tolerance, dialogue, and respect for equal rights for all, the Conference of Experts suggests the following guiding principles regarding the responsible dissemination of religion or belief. These principles have primarily an ethical character and provide criteria to guide individuals and communities in their relations with each other. They also have relevance for relations between religious communities and states. These principles are based on the dignity of the human person and the person's freedom to follow the voice of conscience.

The conference participants are convinced that the observance of the following guiding principles is invaluable in enhancing a culture of peace, social cohesion, personal and collective responsibility, and the upholding of equal rights for all.

The conference participants hope that all individuals and religious communities will look at these principles in the light of their own beliefs and practices, and make them their own, thus being fully committed to the divine mandate or high ideals in which they believe.

Principles

1. To teach, manifest, and disseminate one's religion or belief is an established human right. Everyone has the right to attempt to convince others of the truth of

one's belief. Everyone has the right to adopt or change religion or belief without coercion and according to the dictates of conscience.

2. Aware of their common responsibilities, religious communities should build relationships through contacts and conversations, manifesting convictions with humility, respect, and honesty. Dialogue should replace confrontation. In witnessing to others or in planning missionary activity, the inviolable dignity of the addressed persons requires consideration of their history, convictions, way of life, and cultural expressions.
3. Religion, faith, or belief is best disseminated when the witness of a person's life is coherent with the message announced, and leads to free acceptance by those to whom it is addressed.
4. In disseminating faith or beliefs, one should be truthful and fair towards other religions and beliefs. This requires comparing the ideals of one's own community with the ideals of other communities, and not with the alleged failures of others.
5. In the dissemination of religion or beliefs, both the rights of majority and minority should be protected in accordance with international human rights instruments which condemn all forms of discrimination and intolerance.
6. In referring to other religious and belief communities, respectful and non-offensive terminology should

be used.

7. Social and humanitarian activities should not be linked to the dissemination of faith or beliefs in a way that exploits the poor and vulnerable members of society by offering financial or other material incentives with the intent to induce people to keep or change their religion or belief.
8. While the right to hold and manifest religious beliefs and convictions is recognized, inter-religious strife, hatred, and antagonistic religious competition are to be avoided and replaced by dialogue in truth and mutual respect.
9. No one should knowingly make false statements regarding any aspect of other religions, nor denigrate or ridicule their beliefs, practices, or origins. Objective information about these religions is always to be desired in order to avoid the spreading of ill-founded judgments and sweeping prejudices.
10. Dissemination of religious faith or belief should respect the addressed person's freedom to choose or reject a religion or belief without physical or psychological coercion, and should not force that person to break the natural ties with family, which is the foundational component of society.
11. Using political or economic power or facilitating its spread under the guise of disseminating religious faith or belief is improper and should be rejected.
12. Responsible dissemination of religious faith or belief should accept that it may invigorate the faith of the persons or groups addressed, or lead to a free and unfettered choice to change one's religious affiliation.
13. Bearing in mind their responsibilities for the common good of soci-

ety, religious communities should, where feasible and in harmony with their convictions, join in efforts aimed at improving justice and welfare, and peace among peoples and nations.

14. Where conflicts arise with respect to dissemination of religion or belief, the relevant communities should consider entering into a process of conciliation.

—International Religious
Liberty Association
Conference of Experts
Adopted by consensus.
January 29, 2000

Las Navas del Marqués, Spain

Water...

Continued from page 25.

"This study needs to be replicated, and if similar results are found, then this would be the cheapest and simplest method of preventing coronary heart disease," adds Gary E. Fraser, M.D., Ph.D., cardiologist at the Loma Linda University Heart Institute, and principal investigator for the new Adventist Health Study. The water study was supported by a grant from the National Institutes of Health.

For more information on this story, go to <http://www.llu.edu/news/today/may0902/>.

Dustin Jones is special projects editor, Office of University Relations, Loma Linda University, California. His e-mail address: djones@univ.llu.edu

Attention!

The 2nd European Congress for Adventist University Students will take place in Germany November 1-3, 2002 under the theme, "Celebrating A Heritage and Facing a Mission: Can Adventist Students Walk in the Shoes of the Reformers Today?"

Topics: "Luther and the Adventist Message," "Can Adventist Theology Be 'Modern'?" "Keepers of the Flame or Preservers of the Ashes?" "Katherina de Bora, the Wife of Luther," "How to Love God With All Our Mind." Reports on Adventist university students activities, and more.

Location: Feriendorf Eisenberg, DE 36275 Kircheim, Germany (25 km south-east of Stuttgart, on Highway A7, between Fulda and Kassel).

Lodging: Small group dormitories in several buildings.

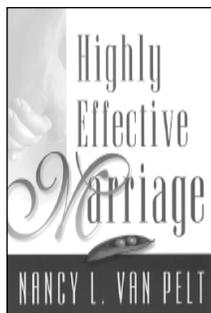
Cost: Room and board available for 50 Euros per person (includes meals from Friday evening to Sunday noon).

Languages: Simultaneous translation provided in various languages via head phones.

Registration: Space is limited. Contact Therese Sanchez before September 10, 2002 via e-mail: therese.sanchez@euroafrica.org

Come and enjoy the international fellowship! See you at the congress!

Books



Highly Effective Marriage,

by Nancy L. Van Pelt (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 2000; 222 pp.; paperback).

Reviewed by Lucio Altin.

This book is a result of a lifetime of family ministry. Nancy Van Pelt is a Certified Family and Consumer Service Professional. She has conducted more than 1,000 seminars on family relationships in some 25 years of service. She is also the author of some 22 books, translated into more than 20 languages. Her dynamic style of communication, both oral and written, conveys an incredible vitality that soon becomes contagious. The book reflects the author's dynamism, vitality, directness of approach, and above all practicality.

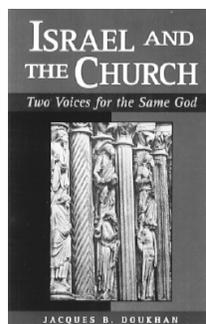
The author begins with a familiar picture of our time: rising marriage failures, and even more rising remarriage failures. From that not-so-pleasant start, she focuses more on what works rather than on what causes failures. Sterile diagnosis is not her cup of tea. She is interested in solutions, including practical suggestions and divine guidance. What else would she have in mind when she states, "A marriage may be made in heaven, but the maintenance must be done on earth" (p. 13).

The book is divided in seven parts, with three or four chapters in each. These major parts are devoted to affirming what can be done to make marriages happy. Van Pelt begins by saying that the needs of a couple can help to decode the mystery of marriage. Then she introduces the concept of an emotional bank account. One cannot take out what one does not put in, and so it takes two to handle differences. That gives a good starting point to consider how to live with an imperfect mate, and introduces the concept of an emotional bank account. Part 3 deals with the art of communication in marriage—listening to a partner without judging. Next, like Professor Higgins in *My Fair Lady*, the author asks, "Why can't a woman be more like a man?" But unlike the professor, Van Pelt gives an answer by drawing a verbal map of sexual differences in the way of processing and interpreting communication that exist between the male and the female. The book also skillfully handles the issue of control and power, as management—of money, children, or shopping—is a major issue in a marital relationship. Van Pelt presents the view that in marriage relationships responsibilities are complementary and not competitive. From a biblical perspective, it is not a question of who's in charge, but what can I do? Part 6 deals with sexual

intimacy, which Van Pelt approaches in a sensitive, non-apologetic, and direct manner. Finally, the book presents practical suggestions as to how to prevent a marriage burn-out. The secret is: You cannot begin soon enough. Romance, play, and fun all have a part, but the most vital element in an effective marriage is the love and care the couple have for each other, always following the biblical principle of "preferring the other" over one's self.

Readers interested in research and clinical details will find the bibliography incomplete and the writing style too chatty. But perhaps it is that style that lends readability to the book. It surely does not detract from its positive contribution to the understanding of Christian family relationships.

Lucio Altin, an ordained minister and a trained marriage and family therapist, is the president of the Italian Union of Seventh-day Adventists.



Israel and the Church: Two Voices for the Same God,

by Jacques Doukhan (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publ., 2002; 108 pp.; paperback).

Reviewed by Clifford Goldstein.

The rejection of Jesus as the Messiah by the Jews led to God's rejection of them as the chosen people. In their place, God has put the New Testament Church. That is a common Christian theological paradigm.

Dr. Jacques Doukhan, a professor at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, works hard in his book to debunk that paradigm. He seeks the theological equivalent of what Thomas Kuhn, in the realm of science, called a "paradigm shift."

Concerned about the horrible consequences of "replacement theology" (i.e. everything from the marginalization of Jews in Christian society to the outrageous extremes of the Holocaust), Doukhan calls upon Christians to take another look at their assumptions regarding this delicate, misunderstood, and often painful topic.

For starters, and in what is perhaps the best chapter in the book, Doukhan argues against the notion that the Jews, en masse, rejected Jesus. That some did, of course, is well-known, but he shows, with compelling New Testament evidence, that many Jews did, in fact, accept Christ, and have continued to do so through the ages.

The schism came, he argues in the next chapter, not be-

cause the Jews had rejected Christ, but because the church had rejected the law, particularly the Sabbath, thus creating a wall that all but guaranteed the Jews couldn't become part of this community. To do so would have been to deny the law, something that any decent Jew couldn't do. As long as Christianity remained rooted in its Jewish past, the Jews were much more open to accept Jesus. However, once the church rejected its Jewish origins, the Jews were, by default, excluded. Thus, far from the Jews rejecting Jesus, the church by changing the Sabbath to Sunday rejected not just its Jewish roots, but the Jews as well. We have all lived with the sad results since then.

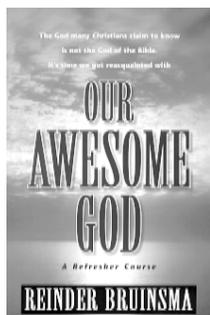
Doukhan further argues that both the Jews and the Christians need the witness of each other: the Jews need the church to come to a better understanding of the role and the mission of the Messiah; the church needs the Jews to help it re-establish the relevance of the law.

"Both witnesses, Israel and the church, are needed," he writes, "not only because they confirm each other's truth, but because each one brings a truth, a dimension, that is ignored or simply rejected by the other."

Of course, Doukhan's position will raise some hackles from both Jews and Christians, understandably so since his book brings up some questions that shift their basic paradigms.

But that, I think, was his point.

Clifford Goldstein is a prolific author and the editor of the Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide, published quarterly by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.



**Our Awesome God:
A Refresher Course,**

*by Reinder Bruinsma (Nampa, Idaho:
Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 2000; 159 pp.;
paperback).*

Reviewed by Enrique Espinosa.

Reinder Bruinsma is a long-time pastor, theologian, and church administrator. Originally from the Netherlands, he earned a Ph.D. in church history from the University of London. At the moment of writing this book he served as secretary of the Trans-European Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Our Awesome God begins with an important assertion and a timely question: "The most important question of the Christian religion [and of Adventism] is: How can we be sure that God exists? And if He exists, how can we really know Him?" (p. 17).

Incredible as it may sound, many Christians' allegiance to the church is built primarily on social grounds rather than on a strong belief in God. The author's concern is explicit in the first few pages of the book. We may know everything about the millennium, the Sabbath, and the state of the dead, and explain accurately other matters related to doctrine and religious norms, but some of us have the strangest non-biblical views about God. Bruinsma notes that our evangelistic outreach takes for granted that people who hear about doctrines and the soon return of Christ already believe in the God of the Bible. "We just build our special doctrines on the foundation we assume is already there." "Could it be," Bruinsma asks, "that we are assuming too much? Could it be that this foundation, if it exists at all, often may not be very strong and that as a result, we win people who become Adventists without ever becoming solid Christians?" (p. 15) "Often their religion is an allegiance to a system of doctrine rather than a relationship with a personal, almighty, loving God" (p. 16).

Even though he does not identify systematically those strange ideas that some Adventists may have about God, the author tackles the basic issues that would be studied in a class called the Doctrine of God. In simple language, the book deals with great theological concepts and correctly analyzes them in such a way that even those without theological training can follow the argument. Even as he does this, Bruinsma recognizes difficulties in the doctrine of God, such as the existence of evil and suffering and God's possibility to change, and deals with them appropriately.

One of the central ideas of the author is that God is so transcendent that He cannot be reduced to simple axioms of logic (pp. 79, 81, 96). All attempts to apprehend God by a rational approach will get us nowhere, and will fall in the face of paradoxes—assertions that are apparently self-contradictory but each equally true and correct.

With this basic idea of God in mind, the author explores in a balanced manner such subjects as faith in God, His unity and the Trinity, the "rational proofs" of God's existence, the idols and the secular gods, the Creator's amazing power, God's name and His attributes, the belief in God of people like Jimmy Carter, Alvin Plantinga, Susan Howatch, and many others.

Our Awesome God is a well documented, brief and thought-provoking book. Reading it is a real pleasure. It gives what its subtitle offers: "A refresher course" to get reacquainted with the God of the Bible.

Enrique Espinosa (Ph.D., Andrews University) is the dean of the School of Theology at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

Faith on trial

A story of courage from Brazil on how Adventist youth faced Sabbath examinations.

by Michelson Borges

Faith was on trial for 28 Adventist students in Brazil last year. The trial pushed the name of Seventh-day Adventists to the forefront, and promises to be a story that ends well in the long struggle for religious freedom.

The students had prepared long and well to write their entrance examinations to the Universidade Federal de Uberlândia (UFU). But when the examination schedule was published, the Adventist students found out to their dismay that they were to take the test on Sabbath afternoon. The students requested the Permanent Committee of the Entrance Examination the right to remain incommunicado from 2:00 p.m. to sunset, after which they could write the exams. The committee refused. The students appealed to a federal court, and obtained a preliminary sentence

granting their request. The Committee appealed the court's decision and obtained an annulment from the federal regional court. Result? The students did not write the examinations.

Marlon Gouveia Faria, an 18-year old student and member of the Central Adventist church in Uberlândia, says that even though he could not get into the university, he is happy to belong to a group who gave a powerful witness to their faith. "Many people who have never heard of our church now know what we believe. A school principal even gave us support in a television program. A teacher wrote a letter that was published in the city paper [see box, p. 31]; and many of my classmates showed their support and admiration. It was very pleasing to be able to explain to people that I gave up the vestibular examination, because I love my God above all things."

Naor dos Reis Lima, 24, states that the experience was "humiliating." "We were treated as mischief makers. Even a police van was kept in anticipation of trouble. For me, to be at peace with my conscience is more important than passing an examination."

"There was among us a young man from Campinas, who was not willing to miss the exams," says Lilian Dangelo da Silva, 21. "Afterwards he said that our attitude of faithfulness toward God led him to rethink carefully and to decide not to participate in the vestibular examinations. Perhaps, this may have been the reason why God allowed us to go through this experience, to help strengthen the faith of someone. This

will always be kept in my memory."

Priscila Merisa Franco, 20, said she was upset that her dreams had collapsed for now. "But, because of this experience, it is difficult to find somebody in town who doesn't know Adventists, and this makes me happy." Lidia Fernandes Felix, 19, says: "When I chose to be an Adventist Christian, I chose to keep God's commandments, even though knowing that I might suffer loss."

Yes, 28 Adventist students could not write the examinations. But their stand for their faith and conscience made a difference in the country. Public and media took notice. And good news is in the horizon.

Law and citizenship

Last March, Representative Silas Brasileiro introduced legislation that would ensure religious freedom. The draft bill, which combines six other projects formerly proposed, was unanimously approved by the Committee of Constitution and Justice of the House of Representatives (CCJ). According to Mr. Brasileiro, "The intention is to guarantee respect for religious belief, and to avoid any hurt to Sabbath observers."

The draft now goes to final editing, and then to the Federal Senate. "The last step to this victory for religious freedom will be the approval by the full Federal Senate," promises Representative Geraldo Magela, the reporter of the CCJ. After senate approval, the bill goes to the president for signing into law.

Already several states and counties

What do the laws say?

Article 5, paragraph VIII, of the Federal Constitution of Brazil, states that "nobody shall be deprived of his rights on the ground of religious belief or of philosophical or political conviction." Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that: "All are entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion," assuring also "the freedom to manifest his religion or belief, by teaching, by practice, by worship and by the observance, alone or in group, publicly or in private."

have provisions respecting worship days. In Brasilia, for example, in 1998, the then-governor sanctioned a law establishing that examinations for civil service and university entrances should be conducted only from Sunday to 6:00 p.m. Friday.

The defense of conscience and religious freedom has been a major theme promoted by Seventh-day Adventists who enlist in politics. The university professor and former representative Marcos Vinicius de Campos is one of them. Vinicius, the keeper of the website www.liberdadereligiosa.org.br, states that Christians have a great responsibility in exerting an influence on society with their values. "This influence may take many forms: from simple lifestyle issues to public proclamation of our viewpoints in regard to themes of interest to society. To share one's faith means not only to speak about it, but also to show real interest in making the world a better place to live in. We cannot turn our back to the world in which we live, notwithstanding our desire and hope for the return of Jesus. We are to be salt and light."

"To demand our rights is also an exercise of citizenship," believes Vinicius. "We must know our rights and assert them with courage and conviction that we are not demanding any favor, but only enlarging the concept of citizenship."

Michelson Borges is associate editor of Sinais, a bimonthly evangelistic publication of the Adventist Church in Brazil. Address: Caixa Postal 34; 18270-970 Tatui, SP; Brazil. E-mail: michelson@cpb.com.br



Adventist students of Uberlandia—a powerful witness to their convictions.

Support for the students

The students who refused to write their entrance exams received several expressions of support. Two of these left a deep impression on the students. The first was a letter from the professor of Portuguese language and linguistics, Sandra Diniz Costa, published in the newspaper *Correio de Uberlandia*. She wrote that she had been always proud to belong to the faculty of the university, and that she always fought for the institution with nails and teeth, but stated that, for the first time, she felt ashamed to be a teacher at the university, "to witness such an attitude of arrogance and religious intolerance on the part of the University."

And she explains: "I am not an Adventist. On the contrary, I am a convinced spiritualist. Nor do I have children taking University entrance examinations. I am not fighting on behalf of myself." For her, the position of the young people reminded her of the Christians who became martyrs in the first centuries of Christianity. "Naturally

the lions of today are uglier and more cruel, because they are ideologic."

Sandra finished her letter saying that "many in history have died for what they believed. You have not died, but you taught this world of unbelievers that there are yet people who do not yield their ideals."

Another touching witness was given by the lawyers Renata S. Alves and Lilia M. F. Manfrin, who had been sought by the students. The two, who barely knew the Adventist Church, stated that they felt great pride in listening to people who are not vanquished in the face of an arbitrary act. "Imagine the Brazilian people with such great conviction, with such a faith! We would be a different nation, without down-trodden rights, with respect to racial and religious differences; we would be a country at peace. Many thanks for your faith; grateful for teaching us to be more persistent and to hold more faithfully our ideals."

The hidden Bible

The story of how God's Word

became a source of comfort and strength in a prison.

by Robert Wong

“Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits” (Psalm 103:1,2, KJV).

How could a young man with lung problems endure a total of 15 years of confinement inside a jail and a hard labor camp in China because of his religious convictions and finally come out safe and sound? How could his life have been spared at least six times from the near-death accidents inside that hard labor camp? How could this same person, once shut up in a 6 foot by 9 foot cell for years, be privi-

leged to travel to dozens of countries to witness to true liberty in Christ? How could he be suspended as a student for 25 years from normal study and yet unexpectedly be given the opportunity to go back to schools thrice and eventually receive a doctoral degree in his mid-fifties? How could this shy boy turn out to be a public broadcaster and gospel communicator? I am that young man, that student, that prisoner.

From among the many blessings and providential care from the Lord, I would like to share just one particular testimony on how wonderful our loving God is! I spent the first four years of imprisonment in a custody house, and there I was placed under maximum security because of my religious beliefs. That meant I could not write to or receive letters from my family members. All I received was a sentencing paper on a hot summer afternoon. I was later transferred to a regular prison in Shanghai for another four years to complete my 8-year term. The living conditions there were almost as bad as those of the custody house—no bed, no chair, no desk, no book to read except the red bible, *Mao's Quotations*. The food was anything but desirable.

Only one thing was redeeming—that was to come later: permission to communicate with my family by letters as well as through limited visitations by them. I was told, however, that my letter must be limited to 100 Chinese characters (less than a third of a page). After the first visitation by my immediate family members, a new hope arose in my heart. More important than desiring to get some supplemental food (in fact,

it was not allowed at that time), I had the hunger in my heart for a Bible, since my pocket Bible had been confiscated on arrival at the police detention house. Realizing that I would be in confinement for a long time, before my extended incarceration I committed to memory Bible verses as I could. I started with the Book of Daniel, verse by verse, then on with the Book of Revelation, then the Psalms, and then other familiar texts in the Old and New Testaments. By God's grace, once I even conducted a Bible study with two cellmates without a Bible on hand. Using a topical approach to the systematic study of Christian doctrines, I gave them 10 or more verses the first day. The following day, we reviewed the doctrines and Bible verses. On the third day, we tried to repeat them from memory. Later we even put some of these verses in song.

But all the while I was still yearning for a copy of Bible. From a human point of view, during this period of the so-called Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) in China, when everything was going berserk, and with the social fabric all but broken down, getting a Bible, which was declared as a forbidden book, was just pure fantasy. Any attempt to smuggle one to me would endanger me as well as my family. But our God is a wonder-working, miracle-performing God.

One day as I was writing to my family I was wondering how I could give them a clue that I desperately needed a Bible. Right at that moment I heard a loud voice—one of the forced laborers of the prison calling out someone's ID number 115, 115! The Holy Spirit enlightened my mind to recall that in our

Attention, Adventist Professionals

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

<http://apn.adventist.org>

Encourage other Adventist professionals to register!

old Chinese songbook the title for hymn 115 was "Give Me the Bible!" A sudden flash of God's illumination! Amazing! Though I could not write out plainly in my censored letter, "Please send me a Bible." So I wrote, "Send me a 115 page-notebook" and underlined the number. I handed the letter to the prison guard with a silent prayer. When he checked it and said okay, he really did not understand the spiritual secret.

The same Holy Spirit who enlightened me also opened the eyes of my family members to give them insight to my secret message. At the assigned visitation time, our hearts were pounding. Eight minutes passed and just before my family members left, they told me: "When you use the soap, cut it in pieces." I nodded with an understanding smile. After we bade farewell, the police handed me the essential items, including a large bar of laundry soap.

Nothing was easy to do in a small cell room. I thought for a while how to take out what I suspected was inside the bar of laundry soap without being seen by the guard and others. It was near sunset. With my back to my cellmates and with the guard looking the other way, I put my dirty laundry in a basin. I used a thread to divide the soap into two halves. A lovely mini-pocket English New Testament wrapped in a piece of plastic came out. That was very exciting! I quickly put the Bible in my underwear pocket. I thanked God and prayed: "Oh Lord. You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound. I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety" (Psalm 4:7, 8, NIV).

The next morning, I saw several prisoners in line being paraded in the lobby. They had to confess that they were anti-reformists. They had been caught with prohibited articles, which now were being hung around their necks. One had candy, another cookies, still another lard inside a toothpaste tube that family

members had inserted. All these were detected, and the recipients of these smuggled items were punished. I learned later that someone had put a needle inside a bar of soap and it too was discovered and confiscated. It seemed the police had strained at a gnat but swallowed a camel! The police detected a small needle in a bar of soap but overlooked a New Testament. How amazed and grateful I was for God's power and love.

"So do not worry...your heavenly Father knows that you need [all these things]... But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:31-33, NIV).

But how could I read my Bible under the constant watch by the guard? That is another story. I will never forget what God has wrought for me—one who was hungry and thirsty for His truth and righteousness. The Bible has truly become a light in my path and a never-failing guide amidst darkness. Moreover, the safest place and efficient way is to have God's Word in our heart, in our soul, and in our life.

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Faith...

Continued from page 14.

- Northern Arizona: Evidence for Underwater Origin," *Geology* 19 (1991): 1201-1204. Commentaries on this paper were published in: *Science News* 141 (1992) 4:5; *Geology Today* 8 (1992) 3:78, 79; and *Nature* 355 (January 9, 1992): 110.
11. See A. Cromer, *Uncommon Sense: The Heretical Nature of Science* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 148; K. R. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (New York: Harper and Row, 1999) pp. 31, 32.

Light...

Continued from page 24.

created in such a way that the first three days formed the *tohu* ("unformed") mentioned in verse 2, and the last three days filled the *bohu* ("unfilled") of verse 2. Part of suggestion five is also true in that God created in such a way (and had Moses accurately report the creation account in appropriate terms) to serve as a polemic against the polytheism of the surrounding nations.

Regardless of the answer(s) preferred, the Genesis story refutes the worship of nature, including the popular sun-god. Light and the daily cycle were created by God and are dependent on Him. Later in the Creation week, God gave these responsibilities in the heavens to the sun and the moon, just as He passed on to human beings the responsibility for stewardship of the earth, its natural cover, and its creatures. Ultimately, the heavens, the natural world, and any human ability to control or thoroughly understand them are still totally dependent on God who alone deserves our worship.

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Action Report

Nigerian students hold largest convention

More than 1,500 delegates attended the 15th National Convention of the Nigeria Association of Adventist Students (NAAS), March 28-April 1, 2002—probably the largest gathering of its kind in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nigeria. Hosted by the West Nigeria Conference chapter of NAAS, the meeting was held for the first time on the beautiful campus of Babcock University, a chartered Adventist institution of higher learning located in Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State, not far from Lagos.

Approximately 3,000 Adventist students attend public universities in Nigeria. They are organized in local fellowships in most of the 100 public university campuses. Once in two years students hold regional conventions and on alternate years they schedule a national meeting. The theme of this year's convention was "Not Far From Home." During the months leading to the event,

many students prepared themselves for this important meeting with fasting and prayer.

The convention program included a balanced mix of spiritual, cultural, social, and scientific presentations followed by questions and discussion. The students presented reports of their activities, addressed issues of campus life, and praised God with vocal music of high quality. The various facets of the program were coordinated by specially-designated student groups, with counsel from the national association president, Mr. Toyin Titus Oyedele (a medical student at the University of Ibadan) and Pastor Evans N. Nwaomah, director of Youth and Chaplaincy Ministries for the Nigerian Union.

Pastor Onaolapo Ajibade, president of the West Nigeria Conference, led in the devotionals, encouraging students to commit themselves to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and to live lives that

would honor Him. Among special guests were Pastors Japheth L. Agboka, Chaplaincy Ministries director, and Emmanuel Nlo Nlo, Communication director for the Africa-Indian Ocean Division. The three administrators of the Nigerian Union were also in attendance during the weekend, thus showing their strong support for this important ministry.

For the first time in the history of NAAS, three representatives of General Conference entities participated in the convention. Dr. Humberto M. Rasi (Education Department director) lectured on how to integrate faith and reason in the Christian life and how Adventists can relate constructively to contemporary culture. Elder Alfredo Garcia-Marenko (associate director of the Youth Department) addressed sexual ethics from a biblical perspective and presented a film on AIDS that made a powerful impression on the audience. Dr. L. James Gibson (director of the Geoscience Research Institute) gave scientific lectures on creation versus evolution issues and answered questions on these subjects. Prof. Enoch Dare moderated a panel on courtship and marriage, with presentations by various specialists, including Dr. Grace O. Adeoye, director of Women's Ministries for the Nigerian Union.



Some of the convention participants on the campus of Babcock University.



Convention sponsors and speakers included (from the left): Dr. Japheth L. Agboka, Pastor Evans N. Nwaomah, Dr. Grace O. Adeoye, Dr. Humberto Rasi, Dr. A. Garcia-Marenko, and Dr. L. James Gibson.

The climax of the convention occurred on Sabbath. Additional tents were erected to provide protection from the tropical sun to an audience of more than 2,500 students, teachers, and professionals. After the sermon presented by Dr. Rasi, eight students were baptized, a result of witnessing by their fellow Adventist students. In addition, national and regional leaders of the student association were recognized with pins of honor.

The three officers of the Nigeria Association of Adventist Students were selected for the next term: Onwudebe Azu-Asonye will serve as president, Francis Ejim as secretary, and Chinonso Ogbonna as treasurer. Plans are already being drawn to hold the 2004 national convention in the Eastern part of Nigeria. In the meantime, several hundred copies of *Dialogue* donated by the General Conference AMiCUS Committee will be distributed among the students in the regional chapters.

This convention offered NAAS members an opportunity to spend time at the only Adventist university in the country and to enjoy its facilities. Several of them manifested interest in transferring to our own Babcock University and expressed the hope that some day they may become part of its faculty or staff. All voiced their appreciation for the gracious hospitality of the university family.

Many of the participants stated that this was the best national convention in the twenty-year history of the association. As they traveled back to their homes and campuses, the delegates wondered, "When will be able to meet again as students and fellow-believers?" The answer is, "In 2004, in Eastern Nigeria, if the Lord tarries!"

—Pastor Evans N. Nwaomah,
Youth/Chaplaincy Ministries director,
Nigerian Union Mission.

Adventist students hold first meeting in Bulgaria

Seventy Adventist university students and young professionals from various parts of Bulgaria met for the first time as a group in April 2002 at the Adventist church in the picturesque town of Velingrad. The convention theme, "If Not You, Who? If Not Now, When?" focused anew the challenge of Adventist witness in secular campuses.

The week-end program included devotionals, worship, discussions, social activities, and presentations by Elder Corrado Cozzi (Youth Department director of the Euro-Africa Division) and Dr. Humberto M. Rasi (Education Department director of the General Conference),

Participants enthusiastically endorsed the concept of establishing a formal organization of university students in the country and selected nine regional representatives to cooperate with the youth department of the Bulgarian Union in drafting a constitution and proposing a structure for the associa-

tion. Elder Nikola Levterov, the union president, attended the meeting and expressed on the part of church leaders their support of this initiative, designed to provide mutual encouragement and promote outreach on the university campus and beyond.

Readers interested in networking with this new student organization may contact us through our e-mail address: ventzi@sz.inetg.bg

—Ventsislav Panayotov,
Youth Department director



Top: Some of the regional representatives to the convention.

Bottom: Delegates and speakers pose in front of the Adventist church in Velingrad.

Expand Your Friendship Network

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

Valeria Acosta: 24; female; single; completed a degree in secretarial administration at Universidad Adventista del Plata; interests: playing the cello and the clarinet, travel, and cooking; correspondence in Spanish or English. Address: Avda. Sabbattini 1662; 5014 Córdoba; ARGENTINA. E-mail: valdewi@hotmail.com

Bismark Osei Adomako: 24; male; single; completing basic teaching education at Adventist Training College; interests: learning about other cultures, exchanging souvenirs, and sharing my faith; correspondence in English or Twi. Address: 5th Garrison S.D.A. Church; P.O. Box BC 62; Burma Camp, Accra; GHANA.

Joshua Jake Agbo: 24; male; single; pursuing a degree in business administration; hobbies: cycling, watching movies, and playing basketball; correspondence in English. Address: Valley View University; Box KA 9358; Airport, Accra; GHANA.

Joselyn Morales del Agua: 21; female; single; pursuing a degree in elementary education; hobbies: writing poems, listening to good music, and exchanging ideas; correspondence in English or Tagalog. Address: Liceo de San Jacinto College; San Jacinto; 5417 Masbate; PHILIPPINES.

David Ahamba: 23; male; single; studying medicine; interests: religious music, hiking, and sharing my faith; correspondence in English. Address: College of Medicine and Surgery; Abia State University; P.M.B. 2000; Uturu, Abia State; NIGERIA. E-mail: davvy2u@yahoo.com

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ing, swimming, and gardening; correspondence in English. Address: The University of Zambia; P.O. Box 32379; PR 2-16; Lusaka; ZAMBIA.

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Invitation

If you are an Adventist college/university student or professional and wish to be listed in Interchange, send us the following information: (1) Your full name, with your family name in capital letters; (2) your age; (3) your sex; (4) your marital status; (5) your current field of studies or degree obtained and specialty; (6) the college or university you are attending or from which you graduated; (7) your top three hobbies or interests; (8) language(s) in which you would like to correspond; (9) the name of the local Adventist congregation of which you are a member; (10) your mailing address; (11) if available, your e-mail address. Please write clearly. Mail this information to *Dialogue Interchange*; 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904- 6600; U.S.A. You can also use e-mail: ssicalo@yahoo.com We will list here only those who provide all the 10 items of information requested above. *Dialogue* cannot assume responsibility for the accuracy of the information submitted or for the content of the correspondence that may ensue.