The Speed of the Spirit

Papua New Guinea has the fastest-growing concentration of Adventists in the South Pacific Division.
Religion in China

Chinese history being a serious hobby of mine, and having recently lived in China, Rex D. Edwards’ “The Soul of a Giant” (A u g. 13 W orld Edition) fascinated me. I believe that historically Christianity has had trouble rooting itself in China because of two major events.

While the concessions awarded to Western powers during the Opium Wars (from the 1840s through the 1860s) allowed Western missionaries previously denied access to China, the humiliation suffered by the Chinese did not make Western ideas endearing.

The Taiping Rebellion was most likely the bloodiest civil war in history. In the 1850s a young man named Hong Xiuquan started an enormous peasant revolt in southern China and eventually set up what he called the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace in the ancient capital of Nanjing. Hong led a cult based on Christian teachings and believed himself to be Jesus’ younger brother. When the rebellion was finally crushed in 1864, an estimated 20 million people had died, and Christianity suffered a serious blow to its image.

Although Christianity in China enjoys new freedom, it still faces major challenges. With the recent advent of the Socialist free market economy, China has witnessed the rise of a wealthy and nonpolitical class. This class wants nothing to do with religion or anything else that might hinder them from getting ahead. The church also suffers from a pronounced lack of youth. I think that the church’s biggest struggle is to make itself relevant to the people of this giant nation.

—Nathan McNeill
PASCO, WASHINGTON

Suppose that some of our pioneers had contacted Hong Xiuquan early in his career and introduced him to a fuller gospel, as Aquila and Priscilla did with Apollos? Could it be that the Taiping movement might have reached much or all of Asia with Christianity?

—Val Periman
Siloam Springs, Arkansas

O Jerusalem

Thanks for William Johnsson’s “O Jerusalem” and Jonathan Gallagher’s “Church Scholars Examine Biblical Essentials in Jerusalem” (both A u g. 13) on the Jerusalem Bible Conference. Being there was a high point of my life. The fellowship with Spirit-filled, Bible-believing teachers from around the world was a foretaste of heaven. Thank you to the General Conference, the Biblical Research Institute, and the Adventist Theological Society for sponsoring and organizing this wonderful experience.

—Ed Christian
Kutztown, Pennsylvania

They Still Go

Roy Adams’ excellent editorial “They Still Go” (A u g. 13) greatly appeals to this 71-year-old heart, as I believe it will to many younger Adventists walking the road less traveled.

And how appropriate that a photograph of the landing place at Pitcairn Island was used. That tiny dot of land will always be remembered as the pioneer missionary base for gospel giving by Adventists in the vast Pacific Ocean. Having just returned from a research trip through Fiji, where I spoke to more than 30 Pitcairners who have immigrated to that country from the island, I can report that the love of God’s truth still burns in Pitcairner hearts.

Internet users wishing to know more about Pitcairn and its future may go to www.puc.edu/Library/Pitcairn

—Herbert Ford, Director
Pitcairn Islands Study Center

The Gift of Salvation

I am so overjoyed with the message of George W. Reid’s “Wow! What a Gift!” (A u g. 13). My church has a Bible study group studying salvation and grace. The Holy Spirit has impressed us with this same great truth. The understanding of this work of sanctification has produced dramatic conversions and renewed joy.

As a young adult, I am excited to be living in a time of new (or rediscovered) light. The Holy Spirit is ready to pour out His blessing and fire as we embrace Christ’s grace.

—Jennifer R. Loveridge
Jacksonville, Florida
Money Matters
It was with some apprehension that I read “Money Matters” (Faith Alive! Aug. 13). I was delighted that Calvin Rock mentioned that “church treasurer responsibilities do not include divulging information regarding individual performance.” However, I was appalled that a respected church leader would encourage pastors to inspect church treasury records to find out who is giving tithe faithfully.

I had hoped “tithe policing” was a relic of the past. Our church cannot afford this practice for at least three reasons. First, since our church depends on the free will gifts of members to sustain it financially, institutional policy must respect the anonymity of charitable contributions. Second, our churches need to foster an open, trusting, mature atmosphere that is destroyed by a “Big Brother’s watching you” approach. Third, and most important, how we give to Him is a matter of conscience and confidence, to be shared only by Him and us.

More generally, while there is clear biblical support for admonition of struggling believers, there is no role for “sin policing.” If we search the giving records to find out who is not giving enough tithe, what will be next? Sneaking into church members’ backyards to look through the window and see who’s doing what? Frankly, in this end-time we have much more important things to do in preparation for His return.

—Mark Reeves
New York, New York

Gun Control Position?
As a newly baptized member, I’m wondering about the Adventist Church’s position on gun control.

—Leonard Urrea, Sr.
Santa Barbara County, California

The church has taken no official position on gun control.—Editors.

What Have We Missed?
Regarding Roy Adams’ “A Deeper Courage” (July 23 AnchorPoints Edition). So many of us in the bloom of youth bought the myth that we must do and have in order to be. Without realizing the potential consequences, we committed our futures to busyness and the accumulation of things. By midlife we are so weighted by stuff and activity that we can scarcely stir the water. Forget making waves or even tentatively rocking the boat; we have become poor followers of the Galilean Prophet who didn’t have a hole or a nest to call His own, but who flattened waves and walked on the water.

We wanted security. We wanted adventure. We wanted money.

Strange reasoning. We wanted security and money so we could experience great adventures for God, but money and security became our gods. We should have allowed God to do great things in us, for us, and through us, and thus experience real adventure. What have we missed?

God must look down on us and shake His head as we struggle through these midlife years dealing with the results of decisions and attitudes we made or acquired in the almost-forgotten past. But God does have a deal for us: take Him at face value and see what He will still do in us, for us, and through us. For this we don’t have to wait until retirement. And for those of you just starting out: consider the lilies.

—Merlin Nichols
Chetwynd, British Columbia, Canada

On the Cover: In Papua New Guinea a pastor baptizes another convert in the waters of the Kia River.
Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ through stories of His matchless love, news of His present workings, help for knowing Him better, and hope in His soon return.

The Adventist Review (ISSN 0161-1119), published since 1849, is the general paper of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is published by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and is printed 40 times a year each Thursday except the first Thursday of each month by the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Periodicals postage paid at Hagerstown, MD 21740. Copyright © 1998, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Preparing this issue, the Adventist Review editor, William G. Johnson, was assisted by: Roy Adams and Bill Knott were associate editors; Myrna Tetz was managing editor; Carlos Medley was news editor; Stephen Chavez, Andy Nash, and Ella Rydzewski were assistant editors; Beverly Koester and Jean Sequeira were editorial secretaries; Bill Kirstein was art director; Bill Tymeson was designer; Stephanie Kaping was production assistant; Melynie Tooley was ad sales; Steve Hanson was subscriber services; Ray Tetz was marketing coordinator; Robert S. Folkenberg, chair; Phil Follett, vice-chair; Lowell Cooper; William G. Johnson; A. C. McClure; Dorothy Watts; Ted N. C. Wilson; Martin Ytreberg; Robert Nixon; legal advisor

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To Writers: We welcome unsolicited manuscripts. (Please query before submitting long articles.) Include address, telephone number, and Social Security number, where available. Address all editorial correspondence to 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600.

E-mail: Internet: reviewmag@adventist.org
ComputServe network: 74657.13
Subscription Desk: Box 1119, Hagerstown, MD 21741.
Single copy, US$2.50. Rights subject to change without notice.
Subscription queries and changes of address: Call 1-800-456-3991, 301-791-7000, ext. 2439, or e-mail shanson@rhpa.org.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Adventist Review, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740.


Printed in the U.S.A.
Vol. 175, No. 41
Several years ago the makers of Chevrolet trucks set out to project an image of toughness and reliability, and "Like a rock" became the slogan of workers and advertisers alike. Would that these words characterized every Adventist!

In these strange and bewildering times, moral values and Christian ideals are crumbling and collapsing before our eyes. The philosophy of the age teaches that everything is relative, that truth is in the mind of the beholder. With the media pandering ever more to the baser instincts of human nature, society has become inured to acts of brutality, lust, greed, and perversion.

As I write, the president of the United States has just addressed the nation in an extraordinary "first." He has confessed to an intimate relationship with White House intern Monica Lewinsky and to having misled Americans for more than seven months as to what happened. It is a sad and sorry spectacle; with millions of others I feel for the first lady, daughter Chelsea, and aides of the president who spent months publicly defending him.

The president has shrunk; so has the presidency. This image—the grim-faced Clinton confessing to the cameras—seems to capture our times. No heroes anymore. Celebrities, yes; heroes, no.

Is there anyone who stands like a rock today? Anyone of whom it could be said: "A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. 32:2)?

Like a rock—surely this is God's call to every Christian today. Like a rock—surely this is His challenge to every Adventist as we expect Jesus' soon return. Like a rock—surely this is the ideal to hold out to our young people. Not trying to ape the world, or fun, or fantasy, but like a rock.

The ideal is impossible in our own strength. But we know One who is strong, One who invites us to hide in Him. Jesus is the solid Rock, the Rock of Ages (1 Cor. 10:4), and He is our safety and our strength. "The Lord lives! Praise be to my Rock! Exalted be God my Savior!" (Ps. 18:46, NIV).

When temptation batters us—like a rock. When doubts gnaw at our vitals—like a rock. When friends fail and the spirit grows faint—like a rock. When the church stinks and leaders slip—like a rock.

That's how I try to live. I have given up trying to solve every problem and answer every question, given up trying to make everyone happy. I don't have all the answers, but I have enough answers. I know the church is far from God's ideal, but I also know that it is the apple of God's eye.

I go back to the rock. Back to the rock of Scripture. Back to the rock of prayer. Back to the solid Rock.

I claim the promise: "Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the merits of the Saviour" (The Ministry of Healing, p. 182).

And that is my ideal and prayer for the Adventist Review. One paper for this amazing, wonderful, weird, frustrating, marvelous world movement? Who do we think we're kidding?

But God loves that word "impossible." I cling to the Rock. Plenty of people tell us how we should go about our mission. Some want us to report on every scandal or rumor that blows by. "Why didn't we read about this in the Review?" they charge.

Well, the Review isn't into scandal. If something bad happens that impacts the church nationally or internationally (example: Waco), you'll hear from us. We'll share the facts and try to give a balanced picture.

Nor do we major in issues. We take up issues from time to time, but we let others make them their focus.

Not even news and information. We carry these, but they aren't our forte. Besides, in today's computer age, more and more people want—and get—their news way faster than we can deliver.

Our focus is the Rock.

We believe that time is short; Jesus is coming soon. The twin errors of Sunday sacredness and soul immortality are becoming critical issues in front of our eyes, just as our spiritual forebears predicted.

We want to be like a rock. We want to be like the Rock.
Knowledge Is Not Enough

It's a sign of the times. A fulfillment of prophecy. Daniel predicts, "M any shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (Dan. 12:4). Seventh-day Adventists have long understood this as a prediction that in the last days "knowledge concerning the truths contained in these prophecies will be increased" and also "as pointing to the stupendous advances of science and general knowledge." 1

Take for example the increase in knowledge about methods of warfare and their implementation. The Washington Post reported that the United States government has "explored ways of planting computer viruses or 'logic bombs' in foreign networks to sow confusion and disruption. It has considered manipulating cyberspace to disable an enemy air defense network without firing a shot, shut off power and phone service in major cities, feed false information about troop locations into an adversary's computers and morph video images onto foreign television stations." 2

One can hardly read about the increase of knowledge just in the area of warfare and not remember that at the end of World War II many people declared the atom bomb so deadly everyone would live in peace and safety forever because nothing worse could be envisioned, much less manufactured.

There's no drought of knowledge for Seventh-day Adventists, either. Even though the fulfillment of the specific time prophecies ending in 1798 and 1844 has passed and we are now in a waiting period, Seventh-day Adventists have not lost their zest for identifying additional prophetic interpretations.

We nodded our heads in an "I told you so" mode as, in the early nineties, Pope John Paul and former U.S. president Ronald Reagan agreed to fight the common enemy identified as Communism in what Time magazine called "The Holy Alliance." 3

Recently the pope issued an encyclical with a call to "rediscover Sunday" with "a meaning and importance which go beyond the distinctly Christian point of view." 4 The Adventist response is a thumbs-up emphatic yes. We knew this would happen.

In the August 20 edition of the Adventist Review Gary Hopkins and Bailey Gillespie suggest that if information was all we needed to curb the abuse of drugs and alcohol in the United States, the problem would be solved. Which made me think. If information is all we need to convince us of the soon coming of Jesus (and to change us), we have it. We’ve charted the course of prophecy for years; and, if placed end to end, those charts might reach from New York to Hong Kong.

And, corporately, we’ve done well. Our use of knowledge to broadcast Pentecost ’98 in Africa NET ’98 worldwide is truly amazing. Technical acumen to produce Pentecost ’98 in Africa with more than 16,000 baptisms testifies to a good use of knowledge.

So if knowledge is all we need, we have it. We must ask, "Is there something more?"

There's a heavenly Merchantman laden with riches who wishes to sell eyesalve because "the churches need to have their eyes anointed . . . that they may see the many opportunities all about them to minister." 5 He has gold for sale, too, because "the only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love" (Gal. 5:6, NIV). Then we notice white clothes on the rack and, if worn, we would carry "the sweet fragrance of Christ's righteousness." 6

We consider the merchandise and decide we'd like the eyesalve and the gold, and ask the Merchantman the cost.

"The eyesalve is free," He says, "and I paid the price for the gold when I died for you." We lay the white garments on the counter and ask the price. He wraps the white clothes around us, draws us close to Him, and says, "My beloved child, I lived a sinless life so that your sinfulness will not count against you. There is no cost to you."

So there is something more. And by the way, according to the charts the shop may be closing soon.

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1 The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 4, p. 879.
5 Ellen G. White, in Review and Herald, July 23, 1889.
6 Ibid., vol. 10, p. 195.
ADVENTIST LIFE

My husband and I had recently returned from Quebec, Canada, where we had been studying French. We were staying at my mom's house while fund-raising for a missionary term in Benin. One day as we were getting ready to go out shopping for the afternoon, I asked my mom, in French, if she was ready. “Prêt [pronounced preh]?” I said.

Without hesitation my mom quickly bowed her head and folded her hands, ready to have a word of prayer!

— Michelle St. Claire, Benin, West Africa

Many traveling Adventists can relate to language-learning misunderstandings. If you have a humorous mission experience to share, please send it to Misunderstandings at the Give & Take address below.

GOOD VERSUS EVIL

Hey, kids! Herald's trumpet is once again hidden somewhere in this magazine.

In our last contest (Sept. NAD Edition) our three winners were: Kevin Plebanek, from Godfrey, Illinois; Miljoy Gallego, from Arcadia, California; and Dorita Snyder, from M anchester, Kentucky. Kevin, Miljoy, and Dorita received Lisa and the Drainpipe Prayer, by M ary Louise D eMott.

Where was the trumpet? In the photo on page 26.

If you can find the trumpet this time, send a postcard telling us where you found it to: Herald's Trumpet at the Give & Take address on this page. The prize is Bible Word Search & Sort, by A nita M arshall. Have fun!

THE CHURCH UNDER FIRE? This still frame, taken from the German TV film Copkiller (RTL Television C), shows a NET '96 poster as it appeared onscreen. Praise God for providing us with more powerful weapons (Eph. 6:11-18). Submitted by Christian B. Schaffler, Communication Department, German-Swiss Conference.

READERS’ EXCHANGE

In this feature Adventists request correspondence on a specific topic.

YOUTH TALK: I am a theology student at Romanian Adventist College, and I like to work with youth (15-25 years old). I want to specialize in this domain. I want to correspond with persons from the U.S.A. or Canada who are currently working in youth ministry. Thank you very much!

— Gorgescu Tiberius, com. C acorasti M isiile, sat Goruna, cod 2179, jud. Prahova, Romania

CHURCH PLANTING: We are a family in the central part of southern New Zealand planting a church in a town of 5,000 that has minimal church presence. We are looking to correspond via e-mail with other laypersons involved in small-town church planting.

— Kim, Jenny, Jessica, and Jayden H eck; e-mail: kjjheck@xtra.co.nz.

CHINESE ADOPTEES: We would like to correspond with other Adventist families who have adopted children from China.

— Ralph, Francie, and T hacia S tirling, 414 SW Seventh Street, College Place, WA 99324; e-mail: stirra2@wrc.edu.

WE NEED YOU

Send Give & Take submissions to . . . Give & Take, A dventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; Fax: 301-680-6638; E-mail: 74532.2564@CompuServe.com. Please include phone number. Submissions will not be returned.
PAPUA NEW GUINEA, ONE OF THE world's most undeveloped tropical islands, has inspired awe for centuries. From its exotic birds, fish, and vegetation to its volcanic islands, snow-covered mountains, and larger-than-life mosquitoes, Papua New Guinea can scarcely be rivaled for fascinating features. Slightly larger than California and nestled in the South Pacific just north of Australia, Papua New Guinea is home to more than 4.3 million inhabitants who speak at least 836 different languages and dialects. With so much variety, we must first understand Papua New Guinea's culture before examining any religious movement in this nation.
Independent and Unique

The independent state of Papua New Guinea covers the eastern half of the island of New Guinea, while the western half, Irian Jaya, belongs to Indonesia. Discovered around 1512 and declared fully independent in 1975, Papua New Guinea now exists as a self-governing member of the British Commonwealth, with the British monarch as its head of state. Papua New Guinea contains more than 700 unique people groups. Approximately 42 percent of its 4 million inhabitants are under the age of 15, presenting a mixed challenge and opportunity for developers and missionaries. Although its official language is English, tok pisin (Melanesian Pidgin) is often spoken as well. However, among the approximately 86 percent of the population that lives in rural areas, regional dialects are more frequently employed.

Religious growth in Papua New Guinea is booming. According to 1993 research, about three fifths of the country's citizens are Protestant, with the majority of these Lutheran. Approximately one third of the population is Roman Catholic; other major religions include the Baha’i, Anglican, and animist. While spirit worship still persists in many areas, the work of God presses forward.

TRUTH MARCHING ON: Many women participated in camp meeting through women's ministries marching groups. Like most groups, these women sported matching uniforms.

DYNAMIC DUO: General Conference president Robert Folkenberg and Papua New Guinea’s governor-general Sir Silas Atopare present a message to a Sabbath morning audience of more than 50,000 people.

CIRCLE OF BELIEVERS: Baptismal candidates line up in columns that form the edge of a large semicircle. Each column proceeds forward toward a baptizing pastor.
A Tradition of Growth

Seventh-day Adventist pastors and laypersons are joyfully reaping the results of years of cultivation among the Papua New Guinea nationals. The Adventist Church entered Papua New Guinea in 1908 with the arrival of S. W. Carr and his wife, and Peni (Beni) Tavodi, a Fijian teacher. According to the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, the government had divided the entire Papuan territory between the Methodists, the Anglicans, and the London Missionary Society, leaving no room for new denominations. Carr eventually succeeded in leasing 130 acres of land for his ministry near Port Moresby. The work continued with the establishment of other schools and institutions.

Today, with more than 250,000 Sabbath school members (approximately 170,000 official church members) and more than 712 recognized churches, Papua New Guinea is one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing regions of the church in the South Pacific Division. This figure is further enhanced by another factor. “Hand churches,” a phenomenon unique to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, bring attendance even higher. Hand churches are simply branch Sabbath schools that have grown and multiplied without being assimilated into the church-district organizational structure.

Seven Unforgettable Days
July 4-11, 1998. To most people these dates are nothing more than long-forgotten squares on a rumpled wall calendar. To the believers in Papua New Guinea, however, this week marked a spiritual high that may continue for months or even years.

This year’s Eastern Highlands Simbu Mission Keiya camp meeting, the first unionwide camp meeting since 1989, presented a prime example of gospel growth in Papua New Guinea. Approximately 50,000 attendees gathered just beyond the Kia River, near the city of Goroka, for the meetings.

People arrived from all corners of the island and in all fashions of transportation. Many arrived days or even weeks beforehand to attend several premeeting presentations and secure camping locations. Some traveled on foot for two or three days to reach the site, while others paid to ride in public motor vehicles for many miles. Still others spent as much as one fourth of their year’s earnings to hire airplanes for passage across difficult territory. Hundreds camped by rural airstrips for weeks, waiting for a missionary pilot to give them a ride. Attendance also grew with the arrival of thousands of Goroka Adventist Church members as well as curious visitors from other tribes or denominations. Total camp meeting attendance rivaled and probably exceeded that of a full General Conference session Sabbath service.

A Leader Foretold

Governor-general Sir Silas Atopare has not always been famous. Born into a non-Adventist family in 1950, Atopare first came into contact with Christianity through his father, who sold supplies to missionaries of all denominations. As a boy Atopare longed to attend the local Adventist mission school, but was enrolled at first in a Catholic school. However, after Atopare miraculously survived a near-death experience while swimming in a local river, his parents let him attend the Adventist school.

In adulthood Atopare gained a seat in Parliament in 1977 and lost it in 1982. Troubled, with no plain career path and running out of money, Atopare met with an Adventist minister. Pastor Kala began to pray for Atopare, then stopped in the middle of his prayer and finished with no explanation. Afterward Pastor Kala said, “God just told me that you’re going to be the seventh governor-general of Papua New Guinea. You will be elected in 1997.”

Eight years later, after several prestigious jobs, Atopare did not belong to a particular political party, nor was he a member of Parliament. On election day, November 15, 1997, he wasn’t even on the ballot. By noon, however, Atopare’s name had appeared on the list. And at 3:00 that afternoon Parliament officials called to tell him he’d been elected the seventh governor-general of Papua New Guinea—just as the pastor had prophesied.

Pastor Kala, then in his early nineties, was flown in and prayed for Atopare at his swearing-in ceremony soon afterward.

In this picture Atopare shares his incredible story with Elder Folkenberg.

WATERS OF BAPTISM: Another individual, one of 1,700 that day, takes his stand for Christ.
Beyond the sheer numerical power of the gathering, this year’s camp meeting was also a wonder to behold in person. The central meeting place, located in a natural grassy bowl surrounded by smaller hills, provided a hub for all activities. Mary Lane Anderson describes her first sight of a meeting in an e-mail newsletter:

“Suddenly spread out before us was a mass of colored umbrellas like a sea in the bright sunshine, all across the bowl, up all the sides of the hills in front of the stage, and then another huge gathering on the downside of the road, where all the children were gathered...no rows, no benches, no roof, just people crowded together, sitting on the ground in the dark shade of their umbrellas.”

She notes that despite the size of the gathering, the huge audience listened quietly to each speaker.

The general smoothness with which meetings progressed flowed through camp life as well. Since pastors are a rare commodity in Papua New Guinea (one for every 3,000 members), laypersons coordinated nearly every facet of the event. These volunteers installed temporary facilities, including water taps for drinking, makeshift outhouses, garbage pits, electricity for light and amplification, and several thatched huts for visitors and security.

A side from these conveniences, camp meeting guests were responsible for their own shelter and food. A menagerie of tents, tarp homes, clotheslines, grass huts, cooking fires, and open-air campsites blanketed the surrounding area. A string of 20 or 30 camping-supply stores and food shops sprouted along the road to camp meeting. Those who wished to bathe found their way to the Kia River for a quick dip in its shallow waters.

The meetings featured a broad variety of speakers and music. Multiple choirs, dressed in matching uniforms, graced the banana-tree-decorated stage. Women's ministries marching troupes, drum-and-bagpipe marching bands, and Pathfinder Clubs held exhibitions as well. Song services filled the air with music. Local and division leaders, including Ray Coombe, communication secretary of the South Pacific Division, ministered to the people.

Camp meeting was truly a feast for the senses as well as the soul.

To conclude the week’s events and as part of a weeklong Papua New Guinea tour, General Conference president Robert Folkenberg preached on Sabbath morning. A finewire, in a thrilling finale, 1,700 new converts were baptized in the Kia River. Elder Folkenberg watched the baptism from a rope bridge near the river's shore and reported, “The candidates spread out over such a large area that there was no single place from which I could see all the baptism.” What a glorious sight! Hundreds of white-clad baptismal candidates walked by columns into the center of the river and awaited their turn for baptism. Nearly every available pastor helped with the effort. This monumental event provided an unforgettable close to a powerful week and a fitting representation of church growth in Papua New Guinea.

A approximately one third of Papua New Guinea’s parliament is Seventh-day Adventist, including the speaker of the house.

Pieces of the Whole

From camp meeting bustle to everyday life, Christ’s work is evident across Papua New Guinea. Elder Folkenberg’s weeklong trip (July 6-13) to Papua New Guinea led him to discover and document the amazing progress the gospel has made in this country.

Papua New Guinea’s government provides overwhelming approval for Adventist activities. The two highest-ranking officials in the country, governor-general Sir Silas A topare and prime minister Bill Skate, are both members of the Adventist Church. On July 9 Elder and Mrs. Folkenberg met with Sir Silas and Lady A topare in their official residence. In a statement to the news media, Mr. A topare said, “Adventists play a major role in the development of Papua New Guinea. Wherever Adventists prosper, health and happiness become part of the community lifestyle.” “I commend all churches to bring the message of Jesus Christ to Papua New Guinea.” Mr. A topare later presented his testimony of faith during the final church service at camp meeting, stating, “I am a Seventh-day Adventist and will always be a Seventh-day Adventist until Jesus comes.”

A approximately one third of Papua New Guinea’s parliament is Seventh-day Adventist, including the speaker of the house, John Pandari. Elder Folkenberg attended a special meeting with these individuals and other officials. Several other prominent figures also embrace the church. In fact, in the city of Goroka so many residents are Adventists that most businesspeople close their shops on Saturdays.

Elder Folkenberg also visited Waitope, a Global Mission site in the interior of Papua New Guinea. Six months ago Pastor Samson A se arrived in Waitope determined to plant a new congregation. Now there are at least 31 people attending Sabbath services, three of whom were recently baptized. The Waitope congregation is in the process of constructing a new house of worship—their first real building since...
The church began meeting. As with many churches in Papua New Guinea, progress has halted temporarily because of a lack of funds for completion.

The staff and students of Omoura, a pastoral training facility, welcomed the Folkenbergs with open arms. Omoura provides a practical program for pastors who will work in the remotest areas of Papua New Guinea. Elder and Mrs. David Bryce lead this institution.

According to their curriculum, students (1) spend one year at Omoura, (2) work in the field for one or two years, (3) return for another year of education at Omoura, (4) go back to the field for another year, and (5) conclude their training with a third year of education at Omoura. During the three years they attend classes at the Omoura campus, each student also pastors a church within four hours’ walking distance from the campus.

The Folkenbergs then traveled to Kora, a remote mountaintop Global Mission target village. A fly-in medical program currently serves Kora’s needs. Adventist Aviation transports physicians and nurses to this location and leaves them there for one to two weeks. Immediate goals include providing a potable water supply, vaccinating the children in the area, and overall health care. Just before leaving Papua New Guinea, the Folkenbergs paid a quick visit to Pacific Adventist University and were once again impressed with the hospitality and generosity of the believers in Papua New Guinea.


What a paradox Papua New Guinea has become! Christian truth now takes a place of honor in this formerly entirely animistic culture. Although Adventists rejoice in the knowledge that some populations (Eastern Highlands) are at least 98 percent Christian, attention must still be focused on the unreached masses. Tens of thousands still search for freedom from demons and fear. These must not be forgotten even while the church enjoys the joy of the journey.

In the words of another victor: “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion” (Phil. 1:6, NIV). This journey will be over sooner than we imagine. God’s Spirit has entered Papua New Guinea in a mighty way.

Sarah Coleman is a junior at Walla Walla College. She wrote this article during her summer internship with the Adventist Review.

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Tidal Wave Update

On July 17, 1998, a series of three massive tidal waves rocked the northern coast of Papua New Guinea, near the village of Aitaope, killing approximately 1,600 people. Among the victims were 27 Adventists from two local churches.

Relief organizations such as Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) have been working steadily to provide aid for destitute survivors. ADRA’s largest concentration has been on providing medical support and fresh drinking water to the disaster’s victims, including the approximately 8,000 now-homeless individuals along the coast. This is “the worst single disaster to hit Papua New Guinea,” says Warren Scale, ADRA manager for disaster response and overseas development in Australia. “The situation is far worse than anything that has been reported.”

Providentially, ADRA volunteers had just finished a drought-relief project elsewhere in Papua New Guinea when the disaster happened. They have since been moved to the tidal wave site to provide added support for survivors.

“My heart goes out to them at this sad time,” says Robert Folkenberg, General Conference president. Let us continue in prayer and support of the Papua New Guinea tidal wave victims.

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Sarah Coleman is a junior at Walla Walla College. She wrote this article during her summer internship with the Adventist Review.
Eviliticus 16:22 says that the goat for A zazel “shall bear all their iniquities upon him” (RSV); and Isaiah 53:12 describes the promised Saviour with the words “He bore the sin of many.” Does that not make the goat for Azazel a symbol of Christ?

It’s sometimes useful to examine the historical origin of theological ideas. This is one of those cases.

An ancient Christian tradition interprets the goat for A zazel as representing Christ or an aspect of His work. For instance, Justin Martyr (c. 100-165) interpreted it as a symbol of the second coming of Christ; Tertullian (c. 160-220) saw in it a reference to the human nature of Christ and His humiliation; and for Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444) the scapegoat was Christ ascending to heaven, loaded with our sins. Interestingly, Origen (c. 185-254) equated the scapegoat with A zazel, whom he took to be a fallen angel. Obviously, there was no harmony in the early Christian interpretation of the scapegoat, and views presented were mostly of a speculative nature, lacking exegetical analysis.

During the Reformation the ritual of the scapegoat was used in the formulation of the doctrine of the atonement, and that continues to be the case among some Protestants. However, today scholars tend to believe that A zazel was a demonic figure in the Old Testament, making it more difficult to interpret the ritual under discussion as a type of Christ’s atoning work.

The application of the symbol of the scapegoat to Christ is commonly based on two arguments. The first is the use of the phrase “to bear sin,” which also applied to Jesus. The second is taken from Hebrews 13:12, where it is indicated that Jesus “suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood” (RSV). It is then pointed out that the scapegoat was taken outside the Israelite camp. This last argument is not persuasive in that there is no symbolic correspondence between Christ offering His blood outside the city as a sacrifice and the scapegoat that was sent alive to the wilderness. Besides, contextually Hebrews is dealing with the regular sin offering and not with the goat for A zazel.

In the study of the Scriptures we should not only take into consideration the use of specific words but also the combination of a few words to communicate an idea that one of those words by itself could not express. The phrase “to bear sin/iniquity” appears to be a legal expression used to indicate that the person bearing sin is legally guilty, responsible for the sin committed, and liable to punishment (see Ex. 28:43; Lev. 19:8; 20:17). Sometimes God is the subject of the phrase (God bears the sin of His people), meaning that He assumes responsibility for it and forgives the repentant sinner (Num. 14:18; Ps. 25:18).

In the context of the sanctuary, sinners are described as bearing sin (Lev. 5:1, 2, 5, 6), and it was in that state that they brought their sacrifices to the Lord. They were responsible for their own sins and liable to divine punishment. They could be delivered from that condition through a sacrifice. The priest used the sacrifice to make atonement, and the individual was forgiven (verses 6, 10). Sin was transferred to the sacrificial victim, and it died in his or her place. This is exactly what Christ did for us (Isa. 53:4, 12).

There is a peculiarity of this phrase that we must notice. It is practically never used to express the idea of carrying sin from one place to another. “To bear sin” means to be or become responsible for sin and liable to punishment. This is what we call the absolute use of the phrase. The only exception to this usage is found in Leviticus 16:22, where it is followed by a clause of destination. In that case it means “to carry sin,” not “to bear sin” (NIV: “The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a solitary place”). The goat is not bearing the sin of the people vicariously, but simply carrying it to the wilderness, returning it to A zazel, the originator of sin and uncleanness. This use of the phrase is not the same as we found in the daily services of the sanctuary, and it does not point to Christ as the one who bore our sin as our substitute.

Angel Manuel Rodríguez is an associate director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference.
HAT DOES IT!” I STORMED. “I'M NOT going to take this any longer!” Once again a church member’s words had wounded my heart. Initially I had hoped she meant no harm, but now I felt sure that she hated me.

How could a sister in Christ choose to dislike me? I wondered to myself. We’re both a part of God’s family! I couldn’t see merit in anything she said. I knew my attitude was wrong, but my emotions swirled around me, and I felt powerless to change my negative perspective.

Imagination Is Fertile Ground

Despite all the “evidence” we collect against him or her, it’s all too easy to misjudge another person’s intent. Why are we so often wrong? On its own, our imagination is fertile ground. When Satan adds his subtle allusions, we automatically see the worst in others. By our very nature our imaginations are finely tuned to Satan’s insinuations. We can resist him only so long before we weigh the evidence and believe that our “attacker” is found wanting.

Retaining a positive attitude is a tough battle to fight, but we’re not left without a Helper. When we are born into a new life through Christ, He gives us a new mind as well. Paul describes this new mind in 1 Corinthians 13:

“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails” (verses 4-8).

A mentality rooted in love! Scripture sets the standard by which we must measure all the thoughts that enter our minds. Paul calls us to meditate on “whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report” (Phil. 4:8). This kind of mind-set keeps us standing in the middle of the fiercest battle zone we have ever faced: the inner battle between Christ and Satan.

But our Saviour promises our success with heartwarming facts. “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). “Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin” (Rom. 6:6).

With such strong promises to bolster us, why do negative thoughts concerning other people still flood our minds? We must recognize two things that hinder our fight:

1. The “old man” is dead by faith, not by feelings. Although emotions may run high, we can walk by faith and not by sight, believing that Christ will give us victory.

2. Satan still exists. He does not die at conversion; he merely seeks to harass us all the more with insinuation and lies.

Although these struggles continue to plague us, we still have the opportunity to choose Christ. When a negative thought enters our minds concerning another person, we can either consent to it or recognize its source—the evil one—and throw it from our minds. Too often we consent to...
his schemes, causing the prevalent discord and lack of forgiveness we see today. We cherish the ill will of the “old man” instead of exchanging it for the love that “is not provoked,” that “thinks no evil,” that keeps no accounting of past wrongs.

The Source of Our Thought Life

The ability to recognize the source of our thoughts may be one of the most precious gifts of the Holy Spirit. Many conflicts would fail to germinate if we recognized the source of our thought life and made the decision to harbor only Spirit-generated thoughts. Our heavenly Father desires that we walk in the Spirit and deny the flesh, stopping Satan’s power to destroy the church of Christ.

“Spirit-generated thoughts” sound wonderful, however, until we are faced with a true antagonist. The person in question is obviously a wolf in a sheep’s costume. We are justified in our anger... or are we?

At this point crucifixion “with Christ” comes in to clearer focus. We may have a perfect right to be angry, but did Christ show His anger at Calvary? If He had the right to be angry with His tormentors, why didn’t He demonstrate it? Christ’s total selflessness took no offense at their cruelty. Instead He looked down the corridor of time, felt the agony of His enemies as they experienced the second death, and prayed that they would turn from their misguided course. He longed that the death He already tasted for them could be applied to them.

All Resentment Must Be Buried

After the closing scenes of Calvary are pondered, it becomes obvious that all resentment toward others must be buried not in our mind, but in the cleansing flow of Calvary. Obtaining Christ’s selflessness becomes the yearning of our soul. Longing to reflect His love floods over us. Can we do it? “I can do all things through Christ” (Phil. 4:13). Through embracing Calvary, Christ turns our weakness into His strength.

“I can’t believe she said that!” Once again I find myself in conflict. What my friend said was truly malicious. She meant to damage my reputation. But I still have the same choice: walk in the Spirit or walk in the “old man.” I am a new creation in Christ. Will I yield my injured feelings to the cross or selfishly hold on to them? Will I claim my right to liberty from all the chains of self or retain my right to resentment for the wrong done to me? Will I walk in my new life in Christ or in the old life of sin?

What will I do? What will you do?

* All Bible references in this article are from the New King James Version.

Denise Rutledge was living in Dominica, in the British West Indies, when she wrote this article.
ROY TERRETTA WAS NEITHER TRAINED nor experienced as an evangelist. He had come to Russia in 1991 to oversee the establishment of a new publishing house adjacent to the Seventh-day Adventist seminary at Zaoksky.

With the passage of time we are prone to forget how startling was the opportunity to establish either a seminary or a publishing house in a setting where for more than 70 years religion was officially either banned or burdened with heavy restrictions. To possess even a typewriter was to risk being considered a subversive, an act sometimes viewed by Russian authorities as treasonous. A seminary and printing press? Unimaginable!

"Those early days of setting up the press," Roy remembers, "were so involved and busy that there was no time even to think of doing evangelistic preaching." Roy's ministry was in literature evangelism, and the challenges of setting up a printing press in a land where the technology was barely available—and only newly legal—was all the challenge he could manage.

Family Ties

So why would a biology major with a master's degree from William and Mary College in Virginia and an M.B.A. in international marketing from Duke University be preaching at an evangelistic meeting in the closed city of Bolshoi Kamen, near Vladivostok, at the southeastern tip of Russia?

Coming to the end of his term of mission service in 1996, Roy began to entertain the notion that prior to a permanent return to North America, perhaps he could go preach in the village where his grandfather, Silvester Evdokimovich Terretta, had lived at the turn of the century. Bolshoi Kamen—where Roy found himself in May of 1997—did not even exist when Silvester left his home village in 1913. It is not only a new city but a closed city as well, having been established as a base for building Soviet nuclear submarines. Nonetheless, it is the area where the Terretta family had relatives, and Roy was determined to preach there.

Terretta's ancestors had emigrated from Russia to the United States many years earlier. And now, as the Zaoksky press began to operate more and more adequately with the skill of the local workers he had trained, Roy began to feel the pull of family ties more than 80 years old to travel to the other end of the country—some seven time zones and thousands of kilometers away—and preach the gospel.

Divine Intervention

A woman named Alexandra also had lived near the same village at the turn of the century (although she never met Silvester Terretta as far as we know). A devout young woman, she attended meetings conducted by some charismatic Christians who urged her to pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Earnestly she prayed for God's guidance in her spiritual quest,
and one day, to her amazement, she saw the room filled with bright light as she prayed. A hand appeared and wrote on the wall in blazing letters of fire. But the words faded, and she was unable to read them or remember what had been written.

Eagerly Alexandra continued in prayer until sometime about a week later when the room again filled with light and a heavenly messenger appeared to her. “What is the meaning of the words of fire?” she asked.

“If you love Me,” came the words of the Messenger, “keep My commandments.”

Obtaining a Bible from a friend, Alexandra began a search that led her to the Ten Commandments. And to her surprise, she discovered the fourth commandment enjoining the keeping of the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week.

As she began her search to find a church that kept the Sabbath of Scripture, Alexandra relayed to her family and friends the vision she had experienced and inquired where she might find people who kept the seventh day as the Sabbath. To her dismay, no one knew of such a church, and the ongoing quest became a legend in her family and village.

A Bridge to the Present

Nearly a century later Alexandra’s granddaughter stood face-to-face with Silvester’s grandson at the close of his first lecture and told him the oft-repeated story of her grandmother’s vision. (Who could have dreamed that God’s providence would bring them to this moment?) And following the recitation of the legend, Alexandra’s granddaughter asked, “Do you know of a people that keep the commandments of God and worship on the seventh day?”

Resisting the urge to provide more information than she and her friends in attendance could comprehend in one moment, Roy wisely responded, “Just keep coming to all the meetings. You’ll find the church you’re looking for.”

To make a long story short—and after all, we are talking about a story that stretches nearly 100 years—at the end of that series of meetings Alexandra’s granddaughter and her husband, along with 145 of their friends and family, were baptized and joined the Seventh-day Adventist church in Bolshoi Kamen.

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?” (Rom. 11:33, 34).

We sometimes assume that unless Seventh-day Adventists are present—unless we have missionaries or churches or institutions or programs going—that God is not active in a particular location. But for 100 years the vision lived. And now the grandchildren of Alexandra and Silvester—who probably never even met—share a common faith.

Epilogue: Roy Terretta and his wife returned to the United States to be close to his aging mother-in-law. Because of Roy’s national heritage and his Russian experiences, the Lord has given Roy a burden for the estimated 500,000 to 750,000 immigrants from the former Soviet bloc who live in North America following the collapse of Communism.

Roy believes that a combination of literature and public evangelism (in Russian) will make a deep impact on the Russian-speaking people who have settled in some of North America’s large cities: New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

Gary Patterson is a general field secretary for the Office of Mission Awareness at the General Conference.
Mao Seventh-day Adventist Church had been in a stupor for more than two decades. Political turmoil on this small island off the eastern China coast resulted in the 1967 closing of the Adventist Church’s only educational institution on the island—Macao Sam Yuk School.

The school had been an effective witness in a strategic territory, and its closing was a major setback to the church’s work. Macao, the “Monte Carlo of the Orient” and a stepping-stone to mainland China, has always been an important city. More than 400 years of Portuguese rule over this enclave, which has a population of about 500,000 (95 percent of whom are Chinese), has left a unique blend of Western and Eastern cultures stamped on the land and life of its people.

Macao was the first European colony of the Western nations in the Asia-Pacific region, and it will be the last to be returned to the People’s Republic of China. This will happen at the end of 1999, just two years after the handover of Hong Kong by the British government on July 1, 1997.

But witnessing the miracles that the Lord has performed and is still performing for His church in Macao, we can be certain that He is building a lighthouse of truth here.

After almost 60 years of strenuous efforts by our pioneers, Macao has yielded only about 100 souls from among the local population. These were mainly students of the Macao Adventist School, locally called the Sam Yuk School (Sam Yuk, in Chinese, translates into the three principles of Adventist education: mind, body, and spirit). When the school closed during the political turmoil in 1967, the church membership started to dwindle, and our church in Macao barely survived into the early 1990s.

It was then that our leaders in the Hong Kong-Macao Conference decided to build up the church again by resurrecting the defunct school. Handel Luke, a veteran missionary and educator who spent more than 45 years of active service in various positions, including president of Hong Kong Adventist College, courageously accepted the challenging appointment as principal of the new Macao Sam Yuk School.

God performed one miracle after another to open the way for the building of a new school in this city of gamblers. The first miracle came in the form of a piece of land measuring 180,000 square feet, granted by the Macao government to the church to build the new school campus. There are 47 denominations in Macao, but only the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Catholic Church have been granted a piece of land by the government.

The second miracle was the waiving of land reclamation costs, which amounted to about US$800,000. The next miracle was the waiving of the requirement to build an asphalt road from the main road to the front of the school, plus a parking lot to accommodate 40 cars. These were all completed at government expense.

The Chan Shun Foundation and numerous church members from...
Gospel Outreach Continues in Indonesia Despite Riots

Ongoing civil unrest and rioting in Indonesia have not prevented successful gospel outreach programs, according to church workers.

"Riots erupted in Medan three months ago," said Jonathan Kuntaraf, an associate director for the General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department. "Many churches have been burned across the country, and we were advised that our safety could not be assured." However, Kuntaraf, together with his wife, Kathleen, an associate director for the GC Health and Temperance Department, and Ben Sanidad, an Adventist doctor from Cleveland, Ohio, traveled to Indonesia and held a number of health and gospel outreach programs July 30-August 15.

The civil unrest did not prevent a high attendance at the meetings, with more than 1,300 present each evening. At the conclusion of the program, 258 chose to be baptized and join the Adventist Church.

"This is the highest baptism in the history of Medan," reported Sabar Pinem, president of the Adventist Church in north Sumatra.

"We were pleased to be able to work in Medan," says Kuntaraf. "Many discouraged us before we went, saying it wasn’t safe. But we encountered no problems and enjoyed the experience very much. Right now we still have the freedom to preach in the country, so now is the time to take advantage of the opportunity."—Adventist News Network.

Texas, North Carolina Receive ACS Relief Assistance

Aventist Community Services (ACS) mobilized emergency teams in response to flash floods in Del Rio, Texas, and to the daylong destruction caused by Hurricane Bonnie on the East Coast.

On Sunday, August 23, a flash flood in Del Rio, Texas, caused by Tropical Storm Charley, killed 16 persons, and as many as 20 are still reported missing as of press time.

On Tuesday, August 25, Joe Watts, ACS director for Texas, took needed supplies to Del Rio for distribution to those affected. Through mobile units, ACS volunteers distributed blankets, grocery items, water, cleaning supplies, clothing, and other needed items. Volunteers from the two Aventist congregations in Del Rio assisted victims along with ACS leaders from several parts of Texas.

More than two thirds of the town was under water during the worst part of the flooding, causing severe damage to the town’s water distribution system and leav-
The Pain of Prosperity

BY ROGER HUNTER, TEACHER, STANBOROUGH SCHOOL, WATFORD, ENGLAND

Do not,” says the Lord in Matthew 6:19, “store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy” (NIV). Considering the state of Western capitalism, the advice has never been so timely.

We are all aware of the meltdown in the markets of the East and of the spectacular and dangerous implosion of the Russian economy. Even the relatively healthy businesses of Western Europe and the United States are fearing for their futures.

However, it was a fascinating article by Dr. Anthony Daniels in the September 13 Sunday Telegraph that particularly caught my attention. Daniels, a medical practitioner, pointed out that in Britain more and more people are taking antidepressants, obviously implying that the nation is feeling more unhappy. In fact, one in 30 men and one in 12 women are now prescribed these drugs annually. This is surely a paradox when, as Daniels puts it, “[we have] better bathrooms, more mobile telephones, and rising share ownership.”

Daniels’ comments carry important lessons for all of us. First, he points out that we never compare ourselves with those worse off than ourselves, but with those much wealthier—thus inducing envy, anxiety, and in some cases, depression. Second, says Daniels, “our greater wealth gives us more to lose.”

“Prosperity,” he says, “is temporary.”

This, of course, was pointed out years ago by God Himself. And as more and more worldly people “discover” the emptiness of material things, we might ask ourselves: Are we a church proclaiming this message clearly and loudly to people trapped in unhappiness and materialistic frustration?

Or are we once again allowing secular commentators to preach our message?

Zambian Church Leader Killed in Accident

Webby Mukoma, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zambia, died September 1 in a car accident. Mukoma was traveling from home to work when his car was involved in a head-on collision. He died some two hours later from internal injuries.

Born in 1953, Mukoma became an Adventist pastor in 1977 and worked as a literature evangelist, publishing director, school chaplain, Bible teacher, district pastor, conference president, and union secretary before becoming president of the Zambia Union Mission, reports George Mwansa, communication director for the Eastern Africa Division.

“Webby Mukoma was executive secretary when I was president of the Adventist Church in Zambia,” says Pardon Mwansa, associate director of the General Conference Stewardship Department. “I knew him very well, and his death is a real shock. He was a very devout church leader, a happy, smiling man who was totally committed to the faith. A brilliant student, he had the courage to face very difficult situations. The church in Zambia has lost a wonderful and valued leader.”

Mukoma is survived by his wife, Ellen, and seven children.—Adventist News Network.

Northern Europe Pathfinders Hold Camporee

Some 1,750 Pathfinders from 20 nations in northern Europe, Egypt, Albania, Lithuania, Hungary, and Iceland gathered for a camporee in Oslo, Norway, July 27 to August 5.

The theme of the camporee was “Log on Jesus.” In addition to recreational activities, the Pathfinders raised money to help refugees in Sudan. In all, USS17,000 was raised, reports Ole Kendel, Trans-European Division youth director.
Test Your Global Mission IQ

1. Butembo is in an African nation that changed its name after independence and changed it back again. Global Mission evangelism resulted in the baptism of 400 persons. A group of Adventist women there had built a church costing US$13,000. Crusades by laypeople and ministers led to these new converts. Butembo is west of the chain of deep lakes that trace the western branch of the Great Rift Valley, near the equator. In which African country did this fruitful evangelism occur?
   A. Kenya  C. Burundi
   B. Uganda  D. Congo

2. Upper Volta is the former name of Burkina Faso, a landlocked country tucked among Mali, Benin, and other West African nations. In the past months Global Mission evangelists have worked in nine of its provincial capitals. Two of them are predominantly Catholic and Assemblies of God populations. The other seven have predominantly what religious affiliation?
   A. Buddhism  C. Animism
   B. Islam  D. Presbyterianism

3. An employer’s concern for an absent employee led to a new congregation in Garakurthi, in southeastern India. Noticing that Mallesham had been away from the carpenter shop for several days, Nagaraju went to his village. Finding his employee dejected because of personal difficulties, Nagaraju talked to him about Jesus and His promises. Bible studies followed, with the whole village invited. Sixty-two were baptized. This village and eight others where work was begun in 1998 are located in the Indian state of which Hyderabad is the capital. What state is it?
   A. Uttar Pradesh  C. Andhra Pradesh
   B. Madhya Pradesh  D. Tamil Nadu

Answers:
1. D. Congo, until recently Zaire.
2. B. Islam. Throughout North Africa and the sub-Saharan most of the population are Muslims.
3. C. Andhra Pradesh (population 76 million). Its ratio of Adventists to population is 1:889. Other regions of India have ratios of 1:14,000—a Global Mission challenge.
   — Compiled by Don Yost of the General Conference Global Mission Office.

Islamic Relations Seminar Meets This Month

Adventists with Muslim friends, family, or business associates will receive special training and inspiration at the Islamic Relations Seminar commencing October 12-17 at the George King Institute in Hagerstown, Maryland. Conducted by the North American Division, the workshop will help participants to better understand, worship with, and lead a small group of “true believers.”

Cost of the six days is $200, including food, lodging, and materials. For more information, call (301) 680-6416.

News Notes

✔ CompuServe Users. You can access the Adventist Review online each week within 48 hours of presstime and several days before the magazine reaches your home. The Review is available free of charge in the Adventist Online Forum on CompuServe (GO SDA).

If you have e-mail, you can also contact the Review staff online. Send letters, prayer requests, and subscription requests to reviewmag@adventist.org.

✔ F. Martin Ytreberg. General Conference under-treasurer, was recently appointed vice president for finance of Adventist Risk Management, Inc., effective November 1. Ytreberg, who has served at the General Conference since 1990, replaces Laurence Downing, who resigned in July.

✔ Rhonda Karr, Iowa-Missouri Conference assistant treasurer, was recently elected conference treasurer. Karr is the first female treasurer for the conference and one of only two female local conference treasurers in North America.

She replaces Neil Brady, who became treasurer for the Georgia-Cumberland Academy in Calhoun, Georgia.

✔ Correction. The North American Division registration limit for the Discover the Power Pathfinder camporee is 15,000, not the number indicated in the September 10 Newsbreak.

What’s Upcoming

Oct. 4-10  Health Emphasis Week
Oct. 10  Sabbath School Guest Day
Oct. 10  Community Relations Day
Oct. 17  Spirit of Prophecy Day
Fourscore  
... by Reason of Strength

BY ROBERT G. WEARNER

“The righteous flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God. In old age they still produce fruit; they are always green and full of sap, showing that the Lord is upright” (Ps. 92:12-14, NRSV).

The ageless God who inhabits eternity seems to have a special fondness for His eldest servants. In His Word and through His gifting, He assures them that their aging process has not changed His estimate of them. Through His grace, at whatever age, they may still produce fruit.

God’s Word reminds us that “by their fruits ye shall know them.” The consistent, unswerving examples of mature believers through the centuries of faith provide us with inspiring models of how we may also grow old with grace and usefulness.

It is not often remembered that many of the great personalities of Scripture accomplished great things for God when past the age of 80. Abraham and Sarah left their city and culture, traveled hundreds of miles, conceived a child, and settled a new land at an age when most peers were settling down for extended peace and quiet. Moses, Aaron, and Miriam were called to leadership when all were more than 80. Joshua and Caleb fought and subdued the enemies of God’s people until late in life. Simeon and Anna gave reverent witness to the infant Messiah after a lifetime of waiting for Him is appearance.

It should be no surprise, then, to discover that in God’s last-day church, senior citizens have also been faithful servants, serving as long as God gave them health and strength. These are some of their stories.

Robert Leo Odom
Pastor-evangelist, overseas missionary, editor, and author, Robert Leo Odom didn’t stop working for the Master even after he reached his eightieth birthday. During the later years of his career he dedicated his time and energies to evangelization of the Jews, including 21 years as editor of Israelite magazine, a journal now published under the title of Shabbat Shalom.

Odom had to lay down his editorial role at 82 because of increasing blindness, but failing eyesight didn’t stop him from working. His wife, Martha, herself an accomplished author, assisted him as secretary, doing research for him and taking dictation. Three of Odom’s later books dealt with the experience of the people he so loved: Israel’s Prophetic Puzzle, Israel’s Angel Extraordinary, and Israel’s Preexistent Messiah.
In his eighty-ninth year a final volume came off the press, titled Is Your Soul Immortal? This useful small book dealt with the many theories about what happens to human beings at death and emphasized the biblical doctrine of the resurrection of the righteous.

Harry Willis Miller

The man known as the “China doctor” to thousands of Seventh-day Adventists around the world wore many hats during almost 80 years of serving his church, including thyroid surgeon, soybean product pioneer, and church and hospital administrator.

When Harry Miller celebrated his eightieth birthday in 1959, he accepted a call from the Far Eastern Division to go to Hong Kong to establish medical work.

Accompanied by Ezra L. Longway (see next column) and Robert M. Milne, themselves veteran China missionaries, he laid plans for hospital construction. Together they raised more than $15 million through public solicitation. All three men lived to see two modern hospitals constructed in the region: the 118-bed Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital in the New Territories, and the 150-bed Hongkong Adventist Hospital on the island. Even with his strenuous schedule of fund-raising, Dr. Miller continued seeing patients at both facilities.

Well past his eightieth birthday, the doctor continued his research on soybeans, his lifelong special project. His pioneering work led to the development of a now-booming meat analogue business, including such products as soy cheese, vegeburgers, and vegetarian hot dogs. Miller’s soy milk research literally saved the lives of thousands of babies in China and many other lands.

A t age 90 Miller became a consultant to the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and was internationally esteemed for his continuing service to children and the poor all around the globe.

Ezra Leon Longway

Few names in the history of Adventist missions in Asia are as well known as that of Ezra Longway. After decades of dedicated service in China and other Asian posts as a pastor-evangelist, departmental director, and church administrator, he returned to Hong Kong at age 80 along with his wife, Florence. For another 12 years Longway made two great contributions to Adventist work in the region: translating Spirit of Prophecy books into Chinese, and raising funds for hospital construction.

Longway’s expertise in the Chinese language enabled him to translate more than 25 Spirit of Prophecy volumes from English to Mandarin. Several of these were completed after Longway turned 80, including such devotional books as Maranatha, The Upward Look, and Reflecting Christ.

Along with R. M. Milne and Dr. H. W. Miller, Ezra Longway is remembered for his solicitation of funds for hospital construction. Hongkong Adventist Hospital, an eight-story 150-bed facility, had recently been opened when the Longways arrived in 1974. He raised funds for the construction of the 12-story La Rue Villa behind the hospital that served as space for mission offices and apartments.

Longway also raised funds for expansion efforts at Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital in the New Territories. Money he solicited helped build an additional 10-story complex that provided a nurses’ residence and administrative offices for a school of nursing. Classrooms and a chapel were also added through his efforts.

On return trips to the United States he and Florence crisscrossed the country, gathering funds to upgrade East Asia hospitals. Their efforts have blessed uncounted thousands who first became aware of Seventh-day Adventism through the “entering wedge” of health evangelism.

Josephine Cunnington Edwards

When she turned 80 in August 1984, Josephine Cunnington Edwards gave no sign that she was looking for an easy chair. According to her son, Bob, longtime member of the Voice of Prophecy’s King’s Heralds Quartet, she continued to write, visit camp meetings, hold Weeks of Prayer in schools, and fill many appointments in North America and overseas.

Nicknamed “Whirlwind” by her
friends, Mrs. Edwards loved the junior-age boys and girls, whom she held spellbound while recounting thrilling tales of her mission service in Africa. Thousands more relished her stories in the more than 30 books she authored.

In her eightieth year she moved to Milton-Freewater, Oregon, and signed up to teach a class in creative writing at a local community college. In 1989, when she was 85 years of age, the Review and Herald Publishing Association reprinted a number of her books, delighting a whole new generation of readers with the Christ-centered stories of this dynamic woman.

True to form, Mrs. Edwards continued taking camp meeting appointments until a few weeks before her death in 1993, just 10 days short of her eighty-ninth birthday.

Hulda Hoehn Crooks

Health educator and mountain climber, Hulda Crooks came to international prominence after she turned 80. At an age when many consider less-challenging pursuits, she became famous for climbing Mount Whitney, a 14,495-foot peak in southern California. She first scaled this highest mountain in the continental United States in 1962, when she was 66 years old. When the intrepid climber turned 80 in 1976, she stood at the summit for the fourteenth time.

At age 90 she challenged U.S. congressman Jerry Lewis to accompany her to the top. He accepted the challenge, and they walked up together on her twenty-second ascent, with full media coverage. At age 91 she joined a hiking group and in 10 years climbed an incredible 90 peaks. At 91 she climbed Mount Fuji, Japan’s highest peak.

But Crooks did not limit herself to Mount Whitney. At 81 she joined a hiking group and in 10 years climbed an incredible 90 peaks. At 91 she climbed Mount Fuji, Japan’s highest peak.

At every opportunity she preached the gospel of health in what she called “high-altitude evangelism.” She credited her long life to her Adventist faith, as well as to exercise, a vegetarian diet, and a spirit of gratitude to God.

Bernice Starr Larrabee

Nurse, educator, missionary, and church planter, Bernice Larrabee breezed by her eightieth birthday in 1981 with barely a pause. From her home in Milton-Freewater, Oregon, she led out in a ministry to one of the most neglected groups in the region.

A lifetime of ministry among Hispanic people gave her a special focus in what some call the “retirement years.” A young adult she and her husband, Harry, had served as missionaries in Central America, where she mastered the Spanish language and developed a passion for working with the poor. When her companion was killed in a plane crash, she came back to the States to rear her three children. In midlife she returned to the mission field to serve in Peru, Nicaragua, and Puerto Rico.

With this rich background in working with Hispanics, Bernice Larrabee set about to teach migrant laborers and their families how to can food, make quilts, and study the Bible. She translated for them and assisted them in filling out their applications for United States residency.

She is also credited by many as the driving force in the establishment of the Milton Spanish church, now a flourishing congregation of 200 people.

The stories of active, contributing Adventist octogenarians continue to unfold. That yet unbuilt hall of fame for those who served past age 80 includes such illustrious names as evangelists H.M.S. Richards, Sr., and John L. Shuler, longtime Bible instructor Mary Walsh, musician Henry de Fluiter, and entrepreneur and philanthropist O.D. M. McKee.

Often we read or hear of persons whose friends announce that they have gone “over the hill” at their fortieth or fiftieth birthday celebration. Even allowing for the teasing, this still seems to imply that their best years have passed and that they have begun a slow decline. But both Scripture and church history show us that even the years after 80 may be abundantly fruitful. Even past fourscore we may still be green and full of sap.

A son who has also now turned 80, I gather great inspiration from these worthy champions of truth, most of whom I knew personally, who now rest from their labors, when I gave myself to Jesus as a child and when I was ordained to the gospel ministry in my youth, I vowed to serve the Master full-time all the days of my life. That pledge is still good and will be as long as God gives me strength.

Robert Wearner is a pastor and author living in Ooltewah, Tennessee.
Experiencing God

BY BARBARA FOLKENBERG

The following is the condensation of a message presented at the Annual Council of the General Conference in San José, Costa Rica, in October 1996.

STANDING AT THE ticket counter at an airport a few summers ago, I heard the horrible words addressed to me: “Your passport has expired.”

Turned away. Rejected. I could see the valid one in my top drawer at home, but home was more than one hour away.

I find my deepest joy just sitting in God’s presence with His Word. And there I find strength for every emergency.
A phone call to my neighbor, a long wait, and I was able to board the plane at the last minute. However, I had discovered the importance of a passport the hard way. It verifies one’s citizenship.

And I got to thinking about my heavenly citizenship. What are the credentials that would prove I have it? Ellen G. White lists them as love, peace, and joy (see My Life Today, p. 14). So I ask myself: Is my heavenly passport current?

Joy—In the Word

It’s hard for me to imagine how Christ on His way to Gethsemane could have talked with His disciples (and to us) of His joy! But listen to Him: “These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (John 15:11). David, a fugitive for 20 years, testified that “in [God’s] presence is fulness of joy” (Ps. 16:11).

This suggests that the closer my walk with God, the greater my joy. “To comprehend and enjoy God is the highest exercise of the powers of man,” says Ellen White (Our High Calling and Teachers, p. 456).

Years ago I read that the time and place of prayer are sacred because God is there. But how do we find time? We’ve said it so many times: “I would really like to, but I have no time.” That thought often came to me as a mother of three children, the wife of a pastor-evangelist, and a church school teacher.

Jesus, however, can empathize with our press of duties. From dawn to dusk crowds thronged Him and spies trailed Him. But morning by morning His Father wakened His ear to hear (Isa. 50:4) so He could be strengthened for the duties of each new day. I am sure He longs to give us His strength, His courage, and His joy before our own frenzied day begins.

My dedicated spot is my desk, surrounded by my books. I love every minute there in His presence. I often experience what Ellen White describes when she says: “If you will prayerfully study the Word of God, light will flash into your mind. God works with every diligent student” (Counsels to Parents and Teachers, p. 456).

I believe God waits eagerly for me to accept His loving invitation on every page. I read that “He would have us understand how earnestly and tenderly His heart yearns over us” (Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 84).

I Interact With the Word

Not only do I pray for guidance as I begin to read the Word, but I choose to respond as soon as the Holy Spirit impresses me with a message I need. In the wide margin beside the verse I write my commitment, praise, or intercession. For me, study, prayer, and praise are intermingled. What a precious joyful sense of closeness and communion with my best Friend!

Here are a few examples:

Jeremiah 15:16 says: “Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts” (NKJV). I wrote in the margin, “Lord, Your words give me joy. I thank and praise You. May they ring in my ears all day.”

Lamentations 3:57 says: “You drew near on the day I called on You, and said, ‘Do not fear!’” (NKJV). So I wrote in my Bible margin: “O Lord, You have pleaded the case of my soul. My fear is for my friend Mary; I plead for her. Lord, I love her so much. Oh, draw her to You.”

Ezekiel 6:9 says: “I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me” (NKJV). My notation reads, “O Lord, may I never break Your dear heart!”

And near Philippians 1:6 (“Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” [NKJV]) I wrote, “Lord, I praise You for what You have begun in me. Complete it, Lord, I pray. Protect me from myself.”

Most Bibles do not have wide margins. So you could just write the date in the margin and your response in a notebook with date and reference.

My Prayer Book’s Bulging

So often when people ask me to pray for them or for a family member, I would lose the note I made of the request or just simply forget about it in spite of my good intentions. But while driving alone last October I...
The doctor reported, however, that miraculously every bone was in perfect alignment. Several weeks prior to the wedding both Dan and his fiancée were baptized, and on the day of the wedding he was able to walk down the aisle to meet his bride. I have no doubt it was an answer to united prayer, and I was glad to have had a part in it.

Here’s a sample of the kind of struggles—and victories—I’ve had the privilege of sharing:

1. Dan was to be married. Then in his work for a tree company he fell 60 feet and was taken unconscious to the hospital with a broken back and many other broken bones. The doctor reported, however, that miraculously every bone was in perfect alignment. Several weeks prior to the wedding both Dan and his fiancée were baptized, and on the day of the wedding he was able to walk down the aisle to meet his bride. I have no doubt it was an answer to united prayer, and I was glad to have had a part in it.

2. A friend of mine, John McGovern, was driving to work at an Adventist Book Center when he passed a parked car in which he noticed two women visiting in the front seat. A quarter mile down the road he was strongly impressed to turn around and go back. By that time, however, one woman had left. At first introducing himself to the lone still in the vehicle, he discovered she was interested in religious things. A gain he received a strong impression; this time to ask if she would like to study the Bible with a friend of his—me.

She agreed. Edie and I became friends, and she was later baptized. Because of serious family problems, she was not safe at home. So for a while she and her two daughters stayed in our home. Many years later we still keep in touch. We are so thankful John followed the impressions God gave him.

3. Nellie, a pastor’s wife in New York and a friend of mine, knew her husband would be late getting home from a church board meeting, so she and the children went to bed. Suddenly she awoke out of sound sleep with the strong repeated impression: Pray for your husband—now! Falling on her knees by the bed, she prayed that God would protect him, though she had no idea of any special problem or crisis. A little later she heard the door open and his footsteps approaching.

He had been driving on a highway with a wide landscaped median when the car began to vibrate so severely that he could scarcely keep it on the road. He pulled off the road, but had no idea what to do next.

Because of the rolling hills, approaching headlights could not be seen, but he heard a car approaching very fast. He saw lights for a moment. Then just as suddenly they disappeared, traveling in the wrong direction. Had he not been off the road, a head-on collision would have been virtually inevitable. He had no more problems with the car.

On their knees they praised God for His providence.

There’s Work in the Valley

I want to walk with God, as Enoch did. Not reluctantly, but keeping pace with His opening providences.

Sometimes His providences lead me in sunny paths; Other times, through shadows. Sometimes it’s easy to recognize them as all wise and wonderful; Other times, they seem dark and mysterious.

But regardless, I can still be joyful in His presence!

We walk together, my Lord and I, and talk.

Shadows of night overtake the dusk. Four weary men trudge silently up the rugged mountain path. Their leader turns aside and pours out His love for strength for Himself and for His disciples; for a manifestation of His divinity so His disciples may be comforted at Calvary.

Suddenly the three gaze at Him, enshrouded with heavenly light. His face shines like the sun. They see Moses and Elijah comforting their Master. They hear a voice, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

And when they lift their eyes, they see “no man, save Jesus only.” Jesus, their companion and friend; Jesus, their pattern and guide.

The three men on the mountain with Jesus rejoiced, eager to tarry on the heights, forgetting the needs of the valley below.

Down in the valley, struggling with failure, unable to fill the needs of a father and his demon-possessed son, nine men were discouraged at their defeat, jealous of the three colleagues on the mountain.

Jesus leaves the glory of the mountain and responds to the call of the valley, to the misery and degradation below, to the needs of your children and mine.

My Saviour still longs to commune with us on our mountaintop. But He also wants to minister through us to those in the valley. I believe that as we commune with Him and rejoice in Him, as we talk of Him and live for Him, unconsciously we will become more and more like Him, emanating His love, His peace, and His joy.

Barbara Folkenberg is a retired teacher, missionary, and pastor’s wife. She lives in Silver Spring, Maryland.

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Symbols of Freedom

ROSY TETZ

Have you ever been to New York City? There is lots to see and do. One place that most visitors want to see is the Statue of Liberty. It is a very famous tourist attraction.

Even if you haven’t actually visited the Statue of Liberty yet, I’m sure you’ve seen pictures of it—a tall green lady holding up a torch. She’s green because she’s made out of copper, and copper turns green when it is out in the weather for a while.

The Statue of Liberty has been standing in New York Harbor for more than 100 years. It was a gift to the United States from the people of France. It honors the friendship that grew between the two countries during the war for independence.

The Statue of Liberty is more than just a statue—it’s a symbol. It is a symbol of friendship between countries. And its name tells you that it is a symbol of liberty or freedom. For many people who came to the United States in a boat, the Statue of Liberty was the first thing they saw of their new country. It promised them that this was a place they would have freedom.

Symbols can be as complicated as you want them to be. You can see the Statue of Liberty and think, That’s a symbol of the United States. Or you can think about the Revolutionary War and independence, freedom and friendship, liberty and justice for all. And so on and so on.

God often uses symbols to teach us. In the Old Testament, sacrifices were a symbol. When the people offered a lamb as a sacrifice to God, it was supposed to help them learn. It was a horrible thing to have to kill a lamb. It made them stop and think how horrible sin was.

But the sacrifice was also a symbol of hope. The lamb was a symbol of the Redeemer. The people could look forward to the day when God would send His Son to take the punishment for sin. Jesus was the Lamb of God.

We don’t need to offer sacrifices anymore. Jesus has already died for our sins. But we still have symbols. The cross is a symbol of freedom. Whenever we see a cross, we remember that Jesus has saved us. “We have freedom now because Christ made us free” (Galatians 5:1, ICB).
BABSH AW, Juanita Marie—b. A ug. 25, 1941, Stoneham, Mass; d. Feb. 20, 1998, Melbourne, Fla. She served 34 years in elementary education in California, Arizona, South Dakota, and Florida. She is survived by her husband, Jack George Babshaw; two sons, Jack George, Jr., and John Roy; two daughters, Janene Laree and Julie Marie; and parents, Ernest and Mary Cecelia Roy.

BENTZINGER, Oliver H.—b. Jan. 15, 1913, St. Louis, Mo.; d. May 2, 1998, A popka, Fla. He served as a pastor and evangelist for 36 years in Oklahoma, Missouri, Colorado, Texas, and Florida. He is survived by his wife, Myrtle; three sons, Herbert, Ron, and Danny; two daughters, Betty Vilemain and Judy Robb; 13 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

FRANCISCO, Sylvester O.—b. N ov. 3, 1920, Burton, Kansas; d. July 6, 1998, Riverside, Calif. He served as a pastor, chaplain, and Bible teacher in the Southeastern California Conference for 22 years; he also served as a chaplain in Europe for six years and in Idaho for seven years. As a U.S. marine in World War II, he and a Catholic marine donated four months' salary to begin the Seventh-day Adventist mission on American Samoa. He is survived by his wife, Margaret; one son, Bo; three daughters, Peggy West, Phyllis Schafer, and Pearline Sickle; one brother, Jack; and one sister, Pauline Wilson.

KAMBLE, Daniel A.—b. Mar. 23, 1943; d. Apr. 16, 1998, India. He served as a press manager and later as a teacher in Laasalgaon, India. In 1986 he accepted a pastoral call to Miraj, where he was ordained. From 1992 to 1995 he served as church ministries director of the Maharashtra section, Bombay. In 1995 he went to pastor the M arathi church at A undh, where he served until his death. Through all of his work he was also an active evangelist. He is survived by his wife, Grace; one son, Vivek; one daughter, Vinitha; and two grandchildren.

LEE, Willie S., Jr.—b. May 29, 1915, Dothan, Ala.; d. July 9, 1998, G lendale, Calif. He served as a pastor and evangelist in Oklahoma, Florida, Louisiana, and New York. He was an administrator in the Pacific and Central union conferences, and president of Central States Conference from 1966 to 1971. Lee was active in the work of integration in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America, particularly in the Pacific Union. He is survived by his wife, Hilda; one son, Willis S. Lee, Jr.; two daughters, A thea Kennedy and Brenda A. Alexander; and seven grandchildren.

MILLS, Eirita—b. Oct. 27, 1919, W ilson, N.C.; d. May 11, 1998, Chattanooga, Tenn. For 40 years she served with her husband, R. C. Mills, in treasury and administrative work in the United States and five countries overseas. She also worked as a secretary in a conference and a division and as a purchasing agent for a college. She is survived by her husband; three sons, Sid, Bob, and Charles; and one daughter, Susan VanCleve.

MULL, Zella Orders—age 85; d. Feb. 22, 1998, Candler, N.C. She served with her husband, Stearl R. Mull, who was assistant publishing secretary for 18 years in the Carolina, Georgia-Cumberland, and Ohio conferences. She is survived by two daughters, Elviga M. Sykes and Iris M. Westcott; four grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

PEEK, William Earl—b. A pr. 1, 1923, Mobile, Ala.; d. June 7, 1998, Seymour, Tenn. He served as a pastor in the Virginia, A labama-M ississippi, and Florida conferences. He also served as Sabbath school and personal ministries director in the A labama-M ississippi and Kentucky-Tennessee conferences and the A tantic and M id-America union conferences before retiring in 1985. He is survived by his wife, Ina; two sons, John William and Robert Earl; and six grandchildren.

PRATT, R. W.—b. A ug. 5, 1998, Centerville, Ohio. He served as a pastor and evangelist and then taught at Union Springs Academy and A delphian A cademy, where he was also the principal many years. He was later dean of students at Kettering College of Medical Arts. He is survived by his wife, Lois; two daughters, Karen Grimes and Darlene A lvaredo; and two grandchildren.

PUPO, Emmanuel A.—b. 89, Cuba; d. Feb. 18, 1998, Orlando, Fla. As a pastor, he helped establish more than 15 churches during his ministry in Cuba, and was instrumental in starting three new churches in the United States. He is survived by his wife, Gloria; two sons, Victor and A.fredo; one daughter, Gloria M. Becker; 10 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

RISTAU, Eric—b. Dec. 22, 1914, Denver, Colo.; d. July 1, 1998. He served as a literature evangelist in Colorado before becoming publishing director of the Colorado Conference and later the Potomac Conference. He served in the Philippines, at the Review and Herald Publishing Association, and then as publishing director of the Southern Union until he retired in 1980. He is survived by his wife, Pat; one daughter, A. lene; three grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

TURNER, Jack—b. May 17, 1913, Chicago, Ill.; d. Nov. 13, 1997, Camarillo, Calif. He served in the denomination for 37 years as a teacher and administrator in the printing field. He worked in California, New York, Trinidad, and Africa. He was also a World War II veteran. He is survived by his wife, Naomi.

VAQUER, Isacio Matthew—b. Sept. 21, 1902, Cuba; d. A ug. 8, 1998, Loma Linda, Calif. He served in Chile, Argentina, Peru, and Ecuador in the South American Division. For seven years he was the manager of the East Coast transportation office of the General Conference, and before retiring in 1970 he was the West Coast transportation agent. He is survived by his wife, M aria; two daughters, Gwendolyn Prietera and Sylvia; two grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

VASKO, John G.—b. 86, b. Dupont, Pa.; d. June 2, 1998, Lynchburg, Va. He served as a literature evangelist for 32 years in the Potomac Conference. He is survived by his wife, Pauline; one son; and one grandson.


WILLET, Fern L.—b. Apr. 1, 1909; d. June 28, 1998, Kettering, Ohio. She served for more than 40 years with her husband, E. F. Williett, who held treasury and auditing positions in the Potomac, Ohio, Michigan, and Columbia Union conferences. She was a nurse at Washington Sanitarium and Hospital for many years. She is survived by two sons, Edward and Robert; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.
A colleague of mine, who for many years suffered severe depression, recently committed suicide. Her funeral was held in the church where she had been a devoted member. The pastor spoke as if we can hope to meet her again in heaven. How can we hope to be reunited with someone who has committed suicide?

One of the most helpful insights into the nature and causes of suicide was provided by the French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858-1917). He ascribed to suicide three basic characteristics: altruistic suicide (taking one’s life for the sake of the group or according to group norms of like conduct); egoistic suicide (taking one’s life because of the absence of emotional attachments or friendship basis at a point of severe personal crisis); and anomie suicide (taking one’s life because of a lack of controlling standards of behavior).

Since human life is God’s sovereign gift, suicide, by this and every other label, is always tragic. No matter how unfortunate its circumstances, life is the extension of a divine principle and therefore sacred.

It may be argued that some acts of altruistic suicide (i.e., taking a death blow intended for another or killing one’s self for the cause, as did Sampson) are justifiable. However, Christian faith and doctrine clearly condemn all other altruistic suicides and, I believe, any others “voluntarily done.”

The words “voluntarily done” are critical. Suicide is not always a failure of courage. Suicide sometimes results when one’s reason has been so impaired by disease, medication, or injury to the mechanisms of the brain that the individual is no longer rational. The act is “involuntary” or done when one is rationally disabled. Does God hold individuals responsible for acts committed under such circumstances? I think not.

God judges all acts by the motive that prompted them; and since rational motivation cannot be ascribed to acts committed under the circumstances mentioned above (especially those not of one’s own making), there are some suicide victims for whom we may indeed hold the hope of eternal life.

Most people who join the church are individuals of strong belief.

A another is the widely differing educational and social backgrounds of members. The level of education is particularly significant in that it pervasively influences the way one interprets and reacts to both God’s commands and the church’s guidelines.

Of course, the position that is always harmful is the assumption that one’s opinion is the only possible right one and not subject to modification. This posture, usually accompanied by the disposition to condemn and even persecute those whose views are different, is particularly detrimental.

Other primary reasons are the tendency of some to find and maintain extremes of issues and ideas; the disposition of some to apply counsel of Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy without regard to time and place; and the habit of others to caricature the church and its leadership in the categories of a single typology (i.e., Rev. 3:14-19) without regard to other significant models (i.e., Isa. 58:12-14).

Since our lengthening stay in time guarantees increasing disparities of age, culture, and education, differences of opinion are inevitable.

Our need is for the strength to uphold faithfully all recognized tests of fellowship, for the magnanimity to accept graciously differences in those teachings that are not—and the spiritual insight to know the difference.

C alvin B. Rock is a general vice president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He holds doctoral degrees in ministry and Christian ethics.
Life Applications at Dunns River Falls

This past summer I was one of the chaperons for the eighth-grade students from Dupont Park Seventh-day Adventist School in Washington, D.C., on their class trip to Jamaica.

During our stay we traveled to many beautiful places, but one in particular I will never forget. We approached the 600-foot Dunns River Falls, admired its beauty, and then wondered how we would climb the slippery, craggy, moss-covered rocks. Our guide instructed us regarding the special footwear that was necessary in order to make the steep climb. He assured us that if we followed his instructions, we would make it safely to the top. By holding hands, our group was to form a human chain that would give each of us assistance as we climbed to this waterfall.

Early on I could see the necessity of following the guide's instructions. I had to grab hold of the person in front of me, who helped me over rough and sometimes very slippery rocks. At times the rocks gave way to the cavernous depths. The person in front alerted me, and I, in turn, alerted the person following. Sometimes the water was so strong that it would gush into my face, temporarily obstructing my view. As the trail grew higher and higher, I was tempted to look back.

After climbing for a while, we reached what some thought was the top. Oh, that was easy; no challenge, I thought. However, the guide informed us we were only one fourth of the way. As I trudged on, I was not feeling as exuberant as before, because I did not know how much farther it was to the top. I kept telling myself, “Do not give up; you must make it; keep your eyes on the guide and help those around you.”

We reached a plateau and were greatly relieved. As we looked up, however, we discovered that the next climb was the most challenging of the entire trek. My heart sank, and I became fearful.

“No need to stop now,” I told myself. “You must keep going.” My right foot searched to find a groove in the rock above, but they were all too slippery. Feeling that I would surely slip and fall backward, I had to make a decision. Should I concentrate on how much farther to the top, or look down over the rough areas I had already climbed?

My legs began to tremble. My focus became distorted. I wondered how I could possibly complete the climb. The people following me were waiting for me to reach the next level. I was ready to give up, and then I heard the voice of the guide. He was standing above me and directing me to place my foot to the right of the rock. With a new desire to keep going, I placed my foot on the rock the guide had indicated. It was abrasive enough that I could ascend and not slip. I encouraged the others following me to keep to the right. It was important to concentrate not on where I had come from, but on where I was going. The guide was there to assist me, and if I obeyed his instructions, I would, in turn, be able to help others.

So it is in life. We must follow our Guide, the Lord Jesus Christ. We must not let the rocks of life eclipse our view of the heavenly Father. They will be slippery; they may reach to scary depths. Sometimes we will not want to go on, but we must focus on the Guide and continue the climb of life. He knows the best route to take. We can hear His voice as we read Scripture and commune with Him in prayer. We must listen and obey. He has been over the same slippery rocks too. We can trust Him with the direction. Praise God for our Guide.

Marialyce F. Gibson is an administrative office secretary in the Office of Human Relations at the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland.