

# Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/December 1983



*A Christmas Litany*

# Letters

## **Membership, but not fellowship**

In the August issue, "What the Church Needs Most," by David E. Thomas, and "Caring for the Newborn," by Mark Finley, should serve as guidelines for the church. We are very willing to accept people into church membership, but we generally neglect to receive them into our fellowship groups. We believe that the "truth" should somehow carry them along without too much personal care on our part. If we don't open our hearts to people in true caring and fellowship we aren't truly winning them to Christ. We are simply satisfied with helping them to accept a set of doctrines. Until this tendency is remedied the church will continue to stagnate.—Paul R. Boling, Montgomery, Alabama.

## **Nurturer in chief**

Miriam has done it again ("130 Years as a Nurturer" by Miriam Wood, August, 1983)! She has taken a definite position on an explosive topic, demonstrated balance and sensitivity, and moved past peripheral distractions to the core of the problem. I would like to add two points to her comments:

1. Why must the idealized role model for female career fulfillment be the A-type, ignore-your-family, work-like-a-dog, sell-your-soul-to-the-company, climb-the-corporate-ladder, and die-of-a-heart-attack-at-55 male professional? Who is to say that such a person is not the pity-deserving victim of a mutation that has slipped in somewhere between Eden and the twentieth century? Ironically, despite the hoopla about career fulfillment, an overwhelming majority of women candidly admit that they work, not for the intrinsic fulfillment derived, but for financial reasons.

2. Too often we fail to differentiate between financial *considerations* and financial *necessities*. With certain undeniable exceptions, we could live on one income as well or better than our parents did at our age simply by choosing carefully where and how we live. Our home might be humbler. Its location might not impress those who are status

conscious. Our vehicles might be fewer and of more mature vintage. Our children might have to shoulder more of the load; they might even have to work so much that it would take six years to go through college instead of four.

Rising costs, I believe, are not the real reason so many homes are left without a nurturer in chief. It is the increasing value that is placed on things that once either didn't exist or were not considered as important as other human beings.—James Coffin, Burtonsville, Maryland.

## **More pieces?**

"Picking Up the Pieces" (July, 1983) is a fine piece of helpful information, although quite short. Do you think our pastors and administrators will read it and quit breaking into more pieces those who are unfortunate enough to experience divorce? Emotional problems begin before the act of divorce when everyone starts criticizing the couple for their decision. I suppose pastors don't do so on purpose, but if they could only read this article and understand what divorced people go through, perhaps things would change.—Armando A. Cottim, Evora, Portugal.

## **More compassionate**

I read and digested Vincent Q. Tigno's article "A Man Sent From God" (September, 1983) with much interest. Thank God for those who are able to present Biblical facts as they are, for the benefit of both clergy and those of us lay persons who deal daily with individuals from all walks of life! May the article be the challenge we need to be more compassionate and less judgmental in our appraisal of others.—Ruth W. Watson, Reading, Pennsylvania.

## **The Sabbath and social justice**

Congratulations on the recent article by Sakae Kubo ("The Sabbath, Sign of a Relationship," June, 1983), which suggested depths to this doctrine not previously seen in this journal. This was the first time I can remember seeing printed the connection between the Sabbath and social justice. It is amazing that with

our strong emphasis on Sabbath worship, we have not had equal emphasis on the unity of all believers in this worship. Kubo calls us to reflect on this ("The Sabbath for a called church is important because it points to the brotherhood of all men, who have a common Father."—Page 6.)

I am quite sure that Dr. Kubo would agree that this aspect of equality needs to be extended, not only across "economic, social, national, religious, and racial" lines (p. 6), but also sexual lines. The exclusion of women from leadership in our worship services is becoming as blatant as our exclusion of ethnic "others" has been in the recent past. I would appreciate seeing this issue addressed in the near future.

Please continue the increasingly good work.—Bruce Campbell Moyer, Battle Ground, Washington.

## **Brochures work**

I read with interest "A Brochure Can Introduce Your Church to the Community" by Milton Perry (June, 1983). We produced such a brochure last year and have found it to be most useful. We recommend the idea.—John M. Denne, Papatoetoe, New Zealand.

## **Identifies with shepherdesses**

We have received your inspiring publication for several years. I especially read the Shepherdess section every time and laugh as I identify with the experiences of other ministers' wives. Keep MINISTRY coming. It's refreshing, colorful, strong, and beautiful. Truly, it's worth reading, as it makes me think.—Pastor's wife, New York.

## **Courteous spirit**

Thank you for sending MINISTRY to me gratis. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading it. Not only have the articles been informative but the style and accuracy of their composition have been superb. The courteous spirit the writers show toward those of other religious persuasions has been admirable. In a day of much intolerance, this ethic is notable.—Alabama.

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# Ministry

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COVER: PAINTING BY  
B. PLOCKHORST

**Within the Veil: Where Did Christ Go?/4.** Erwin R. Gane. A thought-provoking study involving Hebrews 6:19, 20 and Ellen G. White's presentation of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. Does the genre of her various writings have any bearing on interpreting them?

**Adventist Hospitals Can Be Different/8.** In this interview D. L. Dunfield, a hospital administrator, delineates his view of the unique role Adventist hospitals and physicians should play in the mission of our church.

**A Christmas Litany/11.** Roger W. Coon wanted congregational involvement in the worship service he led out in last Christmas. In this article he shares the litany he compiled and describes how he used it in the service.

**Apocalyptic Prophecy and the Church—2/14.** Building on the compositional characteristics of Daniel and Revelation he noted in the first article of this two-article series, Kenneth A. Strand now shows what these apocalyptic prophecies have to say about antichrist and the end-time judgment.

**Is Your Church Staffed to Grow?/19.** Don Jacobsen. After having experienced satisfying growth in his church (it went from eighty to two hundred members in his first three years there), the author found himself at a loss as to how to get the church off the plateau it had reached. His findings as to the problem and the solution call for consideration by all seriously interested in sustained church growth.

**Leadership in Crisis/20.** Gordon Bietz. How does a church handle change? How do we relate to others in the church in times of change?

**The Best Gift/23.** Carole Gift Page gives us a Christmas story complete with gifts, kids, in-laws, and a bit of a mystery. The solving of the mystery revitalized Christmas for the author.

**Sermons in Stones/26.** B. Russell Holt.

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# Within the veil: where did Christ go?

*Some have felt that Hebrews 6:19, 20 destroys the understanding Adventists have had regarding the ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary and His special work of judgment beginning in 1844. Where did Jesus go at His ascension and why? Is Ellen White at variance with Scripture on this point?*

□ by Erwin R. Gane



*Ellen White herself predicted that as the end drew near there would be a concerted attempt to discredit her writings as communications from God (see Selected Messages, book 1, p. 48). Part of the current effort to weaken and discredit her prophetic ministry is the criticism of her interpretations of Scripture. Some are arguing*

that she was an inspired pastoral counselor, but not a Bible expositor. Refusing to be limited by Ellen White's understandings of scriptural passages, some reserve the right to reject a Spirit of Prophecy interpretation that they feel is in conflict with Bible teaching. After all, they argue, the Spirit of God is quite capable of explaining Scripture to them personally as they bring to bear upon it the scholarly tools that they have assembled.

None of us would deny that the Holy Spirit guides "into all truth" (John 16:13). Nor would anyone wish to stifle the individual effort to grasp the meaning of Scripture. Yet if Ellen White was indeed inspired of God, it should be relatively obvious that the same Holy Spirit who revealed truth to her in visions and dreams is not at all likely to provide contradictory interpretations for the present-day student of Scripture. In

Erwin R. Gane, Ph.D., writes from Angwin, California.

the light of her claims it is just not possible to argue that she was both inspired and Scripturally unsound. What were her claims in this respect? "The testimonies God has given His people are in harmony with His word."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 402.

Ellen White does *not* claim that every time she quotes a Bible verse, or a part thereof, she intends to provide a strict contextual application of the passage. But she does claim that the teaching of her writings is thoroughly consistent with that of Scripture. What attitude do we adopt, then, if we discover that our interpretation of a Scripture passage contradicts Ellen White's?

One option is to realize that even though our interpretation of a passage may be correct, Ellen White's different interpretation may also be correct. Some passages of Scripture are subject to more than a single application. A classic example is Hebrews 6:19, 20: "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which

enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (N.A.S.B.).\*

The phrase "within the veil" is the key element. Does it refer to the veil that separated the court from the holy place, or the "second veil" (Heb. 9:3), which hung between the holy place and Most Holy Place of the sanctuary? The question, as usually asked, seeks to determine whether Christ began His holy place, or His Most Holy Place, ministry after His ascension in A.D. 31. Some have felt this passage destroys the understanding Seventh-day Adventists have had regarding the ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary and the concept of a special work of judgment beginning in 1844. Let's look first at the passage Biblically and then examine Ellen White's use of it.

The message of Hebrews, chapters 6-10, is that Christ's death and resurrection rendered the earthly sanctuary and ministry obsolete, replacing it by His

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high-priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary "which is set up not by man but by the Lord" (chap. 8:2, R.S.V.).† Christ's sacrifice replaced all earthly animal sacrifices (chap. 9:9-14), whether offered in the daily services (see Leviticus 4), or upon the Day of Atonement (see chapter 16). This one sacrifice of Christ made possible His being "seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven" (Heb. 8:1, R.S.V.). Such access to the presence of the Father, followed by the application of the benefits of Christ's sacrifice on our behalf, results in the "conscience" or "consciousness" of the repentant sinner being purified "from dead works to serve the living God" (chap. 9:14). The message of these chapters, then, is one of forgiveness for sin in view of Christ's death for us and His heavenly ministry on our behalf.

In the earthly sanctuary, both the daily service and the annual Day of Atonement ritual provided forgiveness or cleansing from sin for confessing sinners. Regarding the daily ministry, Leviticus 4:26 says, "So the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin, and he shall be forgiven" (R.S.V.). Thus the daily service rendered the sinner a forgiven individual through atonement, or cleansing from sin, of which confession, sacrifice, and sprinkling of blood were integral aspects. Compare the work of the Day of Atonement: "For on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins you shall be clean before the Lord" (Lev. 16:30, R.S.V.). This cleansing resulted from a work of atonement. "And he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly" (verse 33, R.S.V.).

Hence, when the book of Hebrews speaks of Christ ministering for us the merits of His sacrifice "within the veil," using as the major analogy the ministry of earthly priests, we are surely justified in assuming that the heavenly "atonement" or priestly ministry of Christ, includes both daily mediation and Day of Atonement cleansing. "Within the veil" may, therefore, have reference to

(1) the exclusively mediatorial holy place ministry of Christ between A.D. 31 and 1844, and (2) the Most Holy Place judgment ministry, including mediation, which began in 1844 (cf. Dan. 7:9-14; 8:14; Rev. 4; 5; 6:9-11; 19:7-8; et cetera).

A further indication of the dual application of this phrase "within the veil" is provided by the fact that the earthly sanctuary depicted Christ in two main ways: by the Shekinah glory above the ark, or throne, and by the priest whose ministry was a type of His intercession. It was Christ who accompanied Israel in the pillar of cloud and fire (cf. Ex. 13:21, 22; 1 Cor. 10:1-4). And it was Christ whose Shekinah glory was manifested in the Most Holy Place above the mercy seat (cf. Ex. 25:22; 1 Cor. 10:4). While the earthly priest, who represented Him, was ministering daily in the holy place, Christ Himself was dwelling in the Most Holy Place.

Now consider the heavenly priesthood of Christ. Hebrews 8:1, 2 says quite unequivocally that He is now "seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven" (R.S.V.; cf. chaps. 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2). The throne in the earthly sanctuary was *always* in the Most Holy Apartment. There is no passage of Scripture that locates a throne in the holy place. Therefore, Christ surely went into the Most Holy Apartment of the heavenly sanctuary at His ascension in A.D. 31 and was still occupying that position years later when the book of Hebrews was written.

Are we, then, to assume that Christ's antitypical Day of Atonement ministry began in A.D. 31? Not at all. Where was Christ, Himself, during the daily service of the earthly ministry? He was enthroned above the cherubim in the Most Holy Place (cf. Ex. 26:34; Num. 7:89; 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2; Ps. 80:1; 99:1; 1 Cor. 10:1-4). The priest who represented Him ministered in the court and in the holy place. Most certainly it is not necessary to have Christ depicted in two ways in the heavenly sanctuary. Christ, as intercessory priest, does not have to be sheltered by a veil from Christ

upon the heavenly throne.

What is the point? Simply that when Christ ascended from earth to heaven, He passed from the antitypical court (the earth), where the sacrifice was made, to the true heavenly sanctuary, where mediation immediately began. Metaphorically speaking, He passed through two veils: (1) the veil that represented the entrance to daily mediatorial ministry (cf. Num. 18:7) and (2) the veil that represented access to the very presence of the Father, enthroned in the Most Holy Place. "Within the veil," therefore, means within both first and second veils.

But the phrase does not have to mean that the Day of Atonement ministry has begun. Christ upon the heavenly throne in the Most Holy Place is the High Priest who conducts only holy place mediatorial ministry until the judgment begins in 1844 (cf. Dan. 7:9-14; 8:14). Just as the earthly high priest passed through the "second veil" on the Day of Atonement to conduct his ministry in the Most Holy Place, so Christ in 1844, passed "within the veil" in a symbolic, metaphoric sense to begin His investigative judgment work. "Within the veil" in Hebrews 6:19, 20 may refer to the commencement of Christ's mediatorial ministry in A.D. 31, or to the beginning of His day of atonement judgment ministry in 1844 (cf. Rev. 3:7, 8; 4:1).

By carefully examining the scriptural passages first, we have followed Ellen White's counsel. Now we turn to her writings to discover whether they agree with the conclusions of our Bible study.

Ellen White uses Hebrews 6:19, 20 to refer to Christ's passage through the first veil and the consequent commencement of His holy place ministry.

"The ministration of the priest throughout the year in the first apartment of the sanctuary, 'within the veil' which formed the door and separated the holy place from the outer court, represents the work of ministration upon which Christ entered at His ascension. It was the work of the priest in the daily ministration to present before God the blood of the sin offering, also the incense

# In the earthly sanctuary, both the daily service and the annual Day of Atonement ritual provided forgiveness or cleansing from sin for confessing sinners.

which ascended with the prayers of Israel. So did Christ plead His blood before the Father in behalf of sinners, and present before Him also, with the precious fragrance of His own righteousness, the prayers of penitent believers. Such was the work of ministration in the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven.

"Thither the faith of Christ's disciples followed Him as He ascended from their sight. Here their hopes centered, 'which hope we have,' said Paul, 'as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever.' 'Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.' Hebrews 6:19, 20; 9:12."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 420, 421; cf. p. 489.

Ellen White also uses the phrase "within the veil" as a reference to Christ's antitypical Day of Atonement ministry beginning in 1844 in the Most Holy Place.

"I saw the Father rise from the throne, and in a flaming chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down. Then Jesus rose up from the throne, and the most of those who were bowed down arose with Him. I did not see one ray of light pass from Jesus to the careless multitude after He arose, and they were left in perfect darkness. Those who arose when Jesus did, kept their eyes fixed on Him as He left the throne and led them out a little way. Then He raised His right arm, and we heard His lovely voice saying, 'Wait here; I am going to My Father to receive the kingdom; keep your garments spotless, and in a little while I will return from the wedding and receive you to Myself.' Then a cloudy chariot, with wheels like flaming fire, surrounded by angels, came to where Jesus was. He stepped into the chariot and was borne to the holiest, where the Father sat. There I beheld Jesus, a great High Priest, standing before the Father. On the hem of His garment was a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate. Those who rose

up with Jesus would send up their faith to Him in the holiest, and pray, 'My Father, give us Thy Spirit.' Then Jesus would breathe upon them the Holy Ghost. In that breath was light, power, and much love, joy, and peace."—*Early Writings*, p. 55; cf. p. 251; *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, pp. 158, 159.

Ellen White uses the phrase "within the veil" in a general sense, as well, to refer to the very presence of the Deity where Jesus our Advocate and Saviour now represents us. In fact, this contextually sound application is her most common use of the phrase.

"That which brings sickness of body and mind to nearly all is dissatisfied feelings and discontented repinings. They have not God, they have not the hope which reaches to that within the veil, which is as an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast. All who possess this hope will purify themselves even as He is pure."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 566; cf. *The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Heb. 6:19, p. 930; *Messages to Young People*, p. 89; *Early Writings*, p. 72; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 756, 757.

Is there any indication in Ellen White's writings that Christ entered the Most Holy Place in heaven in A.D. 31 at His ascension? Yes.

"Christ was nailed to the cross between the third and sixth hour, that is, between nine and twelve o'clock. In the afternoon He died. This was the hour of the evening sacrifice. Then the veil of the temple, that which hid God's glory from the view of the congregation of Israel, was rent in twain from top to bottom.

"Through Christ the hidden glory of the holy of holies was to stand revealed. He had suffered death for every man, and by this offering the sons of men were to become the sons of God. With open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, believers in Christ were to be changed into the same image, from glory to glory. The mercy seat, upon which the glory of God rested in the holiest of all, is opened to all who accept Christ as the propitiation for sin, and through its

medium, they are brought into fellowship with God. The veil is rent, the partition walls broken down, the handwriting of ordinances canceled. By virtue of His blood the enmity is abolished. Through faith in Christ Jew and Gentile may partake of the living bread."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Matt. 27:51, pp. 1108, 1109.

Ellen White even suggests that there is no veil between the two apartments in heaven.

"By the rending of the veil of the temple, God said, I can no longer reveal My presence in the most holy place. A new and living Way, before which there hangs no veil, is offered to all. No longer need sinful, sorrowing humanity await the coming of the high priest.

"Type had met antitype in the death of God's Son. The Lamb of God had been offered as a sacrifice. It was as if a voice had said to the worshipers, 'There is now an end to all sacrifices and offerings.'"—*Ibid.*, p. 1109.

Why, then, was Ellen White shown the two apartments of the heavenly sanctuary with a veil separating them, and a throne in the *holy place*? The reference here is to the two chapters of *Early Writings* in which Ellen White describes the events of 1844. Although some have faulted her descriptions as incompatible with Scripture, a careful reading of both chapters—"End of the 2300 Days" (pp. 54-56) and "The Sanctuary" (pp. 250-253)—will reveal their highly symbolic nature. Just as John was shown things in heaven which were, in fact, symbols of realities (i.e., Revelation 4 and 5), so Ellen White was given visions designed to dramatize the change of ministry in heaven in 1844.

"Before the throne I saw the Advent people—the church and the world. I saw two companies, one bowed down before the throne, deeply interested, while the other stood uninterested and careless. Those who were bowed before the throne would offer up their prayers and look to Jesus; then He would look to His Father, and appear to be pleading with Him. A light would come from the

**C**hrist surely went into the Most Holy Apartment of the heavenly sanctuary at His ascension in A.D. 31 and was still occupying that position years later when the book of Hebrews was written.

Father to the Son and from the Son to the praying company. Then I saw an exceeding bright light come from the Father to the Son, and from the Son it waved over the people before the throne. But few would receive this great light. Many came out from under it and immediately resisted it; others were careless and did not cherish the light, and it moved off from them. Some cherished it, and went and bowed down with the little praying company. This company all received the light and rejoiced in it, and their countenances shone with its glory."—*Early Writings*, pp. 54, 55.

The vision is clearly symbolic of the historical situation just prior to 1844. The "exceeding bright light" represents the truth presented to the world before the great Disappointment. The Advent people are represented to Ellen White as bowed before the throne. She explains, "Now this praying company was in this mortal state, on the earth, yet represented to me as bowed before the throne. I never had the idea that these individuals were actually in the New Jerusalem."—*Ibid.*, p. 92. Thus by her own testimony the vision was symbolic.

Similarly, what follows is a symbolic dramatization of the change of ministry in 1844. Both Father and Son were taken in flaming chariots from the holy to the Most Holy Place (*ibid.*, p. 55). Then note what follows:

"I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne; they did not know that Jesus had left it. Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God. I saw them look up to the throne, and pray, "Father, give us Thy Spirit." Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and much power, but no sweet love, joy, and peace. Satan's object was to keep them deceived and to draw back and deceive God's children."—*Ibid.*, p. 56.

Satan, of course, is not physically in heaven, even though in the vision he was depicted as being there, Ellen White later explained (*ibid.*, pp. 92, 93). In this same place Ellen White identifies the

kind of vision given her with the highly symbolic, apocalyptic visions given to John the revelator. Obviously, she did not intend us to conclude (1) that the Father and the Son occupied the holy place, but not the Most Holy Place, until 1844, (2) that there is a throne in the heavenly holy place, (3) that a veil separates the two heavenly apartments, (4) that Satan is in the heavenly holy place receiving the homage of his earthly subjects.

On the other hand, we are apparently to conclude (1) that before 1844 some people accepted and others rejected the truth that God sent them, and that after the change of ministry in 1844 those who had rejected the light were left in darkness; (2) that both Father and Son were involved in the change of heavenly ministry in 1844 (cf. Dan. 7:9-14); (3)

beautiful colors" (*ibid.*).

In her overall teaching Ellen White, like Scripture, depicts a literal heavenly sanctuary, but one in which no veil hangs between the two apartments. The throne in the Most Holy Place is occupied by both Father and Son, from Christ's ascension to the end of time. Yet, the ministry of Christ is exclusively holy place mediation until 1844, when it becomes Most Holy Place judgment ministry, incorporating, of course, a continuation of intercession or mediation.

When we interpret Ellen White's symbolic visions carefully and look at her overall message, it is possible to recognize a glorious harmony between her sanctuary teaching and that of the Scriptures. Confusion arises when people isolate one or two Spirit of Prophecy

**C**onfusion arises when people insist upon a literal interpretation of visions which, in terms of genre, are to be identified with Biblical apocalyptic prophecy.

that Christ is receiving His kingdom in the Most Holy Place ministry after 1844; (4) that believers who by faith appeal to Jesus in the Most Holy Place are given the Holy Spirit with much light, power, sweet love, joy, and peace; (5) that those who reject the truth of the change of ministry in 1844 and do not believe that Jesus is now ministering for them in the Most Holy Place are deceived by Satan.

The very close similarity of this vision with the one entitled "The Sanctuary" (*ibid.*, pp. 250-253) is apparent. Both were symbolic in nature. In the latter vision she saw "figures wrought of gold to represent angels" (*ibid.*, p. 252). She was shown "two lovely cherubs. . . representing all the angelic host looking with interest at the law of God" (*ibid.*). She describes Christ's intercession as "a cloud of fragrance" which "arose from the incense, looking like smoke of most

statements that seem to contradict Scripture, failing to take note of other evidence, and insisting upon a literal interpretation of visions which, in terms of genre, are to be identified with Biblical apocalyptic prophecy.

The one who respects Ellen White's interpretations finds his confidence in the Bible constantly increased. Acceptance of the lesser light results in a much deeper love for the greater light, and the message of Scripture becomes a blaze of glory "that shines brighter and brighter until the full day" (Prov. 4:18, N.A.S.B.).

\*Scripture quotations marked N.A.S.B. are from the *New American Standard Bible*, © The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, and are used by permission.

†Bible texts marked R.S.V. are from the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyrighted 1946, 1952 © 1971, 1973.

# Adventist hospitals can be different



Adventists come from a tradition in which the church has been closely linked to and even actively promoted various kinds of health work. Continual reevaluation of both purpose and performance are necessary if the church's health work is to be successful.

In the following interview *MINISTRY's* editor, J. R. Spangler, questions D. L. Dunfield, president of Adventist Health Services/Asia, on the role a hospital and its staff can and should play in supporting the church's mission. □ by J. R. Spangler and D. L. Dunfield

Dr. D. L. Dunfield, president of Adventist Health Services/Asia, recalls a time as a young man when "I would have never even considered hospital work." As an undergraduate student at Atlantic Union College, he was at first a business major, but became interested in the medical field by working part time at New England Memorial Hospital in Stoneham, Massachusetts, where his wife was also employed. Later he returned to do his residency at the same hospital. "Ray Pelton, who was administrator at NEM then, really encouraged me and gave me a love for this kind of work," says Dr. Dunfield. His experience in hospital administration spans thirteen years and includes institutions in Canada, Australia, and Hongkong Adventist Hospitals, where he served for four years before assuming his present position in July, 1983.

**Q.** *Adventists like to say that the medical work is the "right arm" of our message. Do you agree?*

**A.** No. I'm unaware of support for that

phrasing. I do agree that the right arm of the message is the medical missionary work. That's quite another thing. For too long we have assumed that we are doing the Lord's work if we are involved in some kind of medical or health work—physician in private practice, community hospital employee, Adventist hospital employee, whatever. Don't you believe it! The Lord's work is to save souls.

**Q.** *But doesn't the term "disinterested benevolence" have the connotation of helping people without thought of conversions or baptisms?*

**A.** The church was not instituted by God to tie up its finances and manpower in simply operating hospitals. It's true that a hospital serves humanity. It's true that we are commanded to heal the sick. But, as Elder F. D. Nichol used to say, "We are also commanded to clothe the naked and feed the hungry, yet no one thinks that we should therefore establish clothing factories or operate restaurants strictly as a means to alleviate these

problems." To put it another way, I don't believe the medical work is an end in itself. To interpret medical work as ministry to the physical being alone is not enough. To operate hospitals just to operate hospitals is to miss the whole point of what ministry really is.

**Q.** *So you believe that Adventist hospitals are to be different from other hospitals?*

**A.** Yes. I believe our hospitals are to offer something the community hospitals do not. We are to link the gospel ministry with the ministry of physical healing. We are to be skilled in ministering to souls as well as to the body. Our hospitals should introduce the basic principles of health. We are not only to cure disease; we are to teach people how to stay well. Since hospitals in general profit financially from sickness, Adventist hospitals *will* be practicing "disinterested benevolence" when they teach their patients to live in a way that will keep them out of the hospital! I believe this mission to be the uniqueness in our Adventist blueprint for medical mis-



**I**f the administration is operating the hospital with no greater goal than to be running a good hospital, with no definite plans for soul winning, we should question our reason for maintaining the hospital.

sionary work. It is not our mission to compete with the community hospital; it is our mission to offer a dimension of concern and healing and teaching that the community hospital does not offer. And, let me add, I believe our medical care should in no way be second to that which can be obtained elsewhere.

**Q.** But can a hospital survive while trying to put itself out of work through an emphasis on preventive medicine?

**A.** So long as there is a world out there to be reached with the gospel, there will be no lack of patients. When our hospital administrators, our physicians, and all our staff combine soul winning and healing and healthful living, then the work will go forward as never before. And I believe our hospitals will prosper as never before because they are different. Jesus went about healing, associating with the people, ministering to their needs; and then He asked them to follow Him. His principles will bring success when they are applied in our hospitals as well as in our individual lives.

**Q.** Do you believe the size of a hospital is related to the care it gives?

**A.** Yes. It must be large enough to offer truly professional medical care, with all that that means in sophisticated equipment and facilities. But it must also be small enough to maintain Adventist identity and principles. Availability of Adventist staff—administrators, doctors, nurses—and availability of dedicated non-Adventist staff both must be factors in the question of size.

**Q.** Is it possible for an Adventist hospital to maintain the uniqueness you insist on with a staff less than 50 percent Adventists?

**A.** Certainly it is possible—if not, in all cases, probable. It can be done. The key is the commitment and dedication of the SDA staff. They must understand clearly and practice the aims of the hospital. A consistent Christian life is itself an irresistible power. If each



D. L. Dunfield

J. R. Spangler

Adventist staff member reflects the image of Christ, the atmosphere of the entire hospital will be permeated with care and concern.

**Q.** Would you close or sell a hospital rather than operate under less than ideal conditions—say, with a largely non-Adventist staff?

**A.** I do believe we are spreading ourselves too thin in terms of dedicated staff. But to answer your question directly, if the hospital has a committed SDA staff, whatever its size, and if it maintains the goals for which the church has established hospitals, I would not suggest it be closed. If the administration is operating the hospital with no greater goal than to be running a good hospital, with no definite plans for soul winning, with little or no concept of what it means to be part of God's plan for ministry in these last days, then surely at the least we should question our reason for maintaining the hospital.

In the Hongkong Adventist Hospitals we have our own nursing school. Many of our nurses and staff have graduated from it. Its strong religious influence carries over into our wards. At the present, approximately 60 percent of the combined staffs of our two hospitals are Adventists. In my recruitment of Adventist doctors I have found that those willing to come want to practice medical missionary work—which, by the way, is not confined, in my definition, to overseas service. Many, including those unable to come, inquire about how we combine our medical work with soul winning.

**Q.** The doctors themselves want to be involved in soul winning?

**A.** Yes. I've found that many of them become tired of the everyday work of caring for patients when they have no higher goal. And this is true of staff as a whole. We get too involved in seeing too many patients, adding new services, multiplying committees. We have no time for follow-up visits with our patients, no time for Bible studies or just socializing. In recent recruiting visits to the United States and Australia I found many doctors who wanted to be something more than mere health-care professionals. In my years as a hospital administrator I've found that patients do not come to one of our hospitals primarily because of its name or its reputation, but because of its doctors. It is true that some come because it is an Adventist hospital, but the majority come because of a doctor who practices there. It is the doctor who makes the most impact on the patient. The hospital administrator must ensure the Adventist doctors opportunity to make a spiritual as well as a medical impact on every patient.

**Q.** In addition to recruiting committed physicians and nurses, how do you reflect "uniqueness" in the Hongkong Adventist Hospitals?

**A.** We try to make health education central here. In Hongkong we have a number of outreach programs—Five-Day Plans, stress- and weight-control seminars, nutrition and cooking classes, a running clinic, prenatal classes, and cardiac rehabilitation. And we offer these programs free to the community. When people ask us why we do this, we are able to share our philosophy of overall health and what we consider the mission of a hospital to be. Increasingly our hospital ministry is revolving about this program. And, of course, our physicians are involved. They donate their time to lecture, to attend programs, to jog with patients.

**Q.** So your physicians actually do the work of the ministry?

**I** have found that there are doctors willing to work on the Adventist wage scale. All our physicians are paid denominational wages. I believe the denominational wage scale to be the ideal for our hospitals.

**A.** They share in it because they share in the minister's conviction that the ultimate goal of witness is to draw people to Christ. I would say that our doctors have a specialized ministry, with their emphasis on medicine. We seek to foster a close relationship between physician and minister through medical/ministerial retreats. Qualified ministers are involved in health-education programs.

**Q.** You have emphasized the need of committed Adventist staff. Do you have a closed staff, so far as your Adventist doctors are concerned, or do you operate like a community hospital in the States?

**A.** We have a strong core of Adventist physicians who are on denominational salary and involved deeply in the hospital's health-education programs. In addition, we have a courtesy staff of community physicians who admit patients to the hospital. These doctors are not involved as deeply as are our Adventist physicians in operating the hospital, though they support the hospital and its programs. An Adventist hospital can operate as an Adventist hospital with an open staff, but the hospital must have a strong team of SDA physicians to set the tone for the hospital.

**Q.** We hear occasionally that times have changed so much that it simply isn't possible anymore to operate a hospital according to "the blueprint." Evidently you don't concur.

**A.** No, I don't. I think it is more difficult to do so today than early in our denominational history, for a number of reasons—government-imposed regulations, health-care plan requirements, et cetera. But, basically, we can do it if we have the committed people we need. With the number of Adventist institutions competing, in a sense, for such Adventist staff, the challenge is substantial. If our philosophy is wrong—if we think we must be the same as the community hospital—the challenge is

even more difficult. If we will retain our commitment to three principles—be small, be unique, be spiritual—I believe we can operate a truly Adventist hospital.

**Q.** How is being a truly Adventist hospital reflected in your approach to patient diet? Do you serve meat?

**A.** Until three years ago, no. Then we set up a committee of physicians, pastors, and administration to look at the question. Today we are serving meat as well as a vegetarian diet. On the first day a patient is in the hospital he gets the vegetarian diet. On the second day our dietitian visits him and explains why we emphasize a no-meat diet. The patient is told, however, that if he insists, he may have a meat menu. We don't feel that the four or five days when a person is sick is the best time to reform his eating habits. Education is the motivator for change. We find that 75 percent of our patients choose the vegetarian menu after the dietitian explains why it is emphasized in our hospital.

**Q.** You mentioned that your physicians at the Hongkong Adventist Hospitals are on the denominational pay scale. Can we keep a top-flight SDA staff without paying top wages?

**A.** You really want me to jump in with both feet, don't you! Let me say this: I have found that there are doctors willing to work on the Adventist wage scale. All our physicians—approximately twelve on the staff—are paid denominational wages. At times all of us probably think we aren't being paid quite enough, but to this point we surely haven't demanded that we be put on another plan. There are benefits—furloughs, study leave, vacations with families. I believe the denominational wage scale to be the ideal for our hospitals.

**Q.** Do you provide any additional spiritual benefits to your physicians?

**A.** We conduct two Spiritual Emphasis weeks each year in which we review church goals. And you'll be glad to hear that we send MINISTRY magazine to every physician and dentist.

**Q.** What is the relationship between the hospital chaplain and the pastor of the hospital church?

**A.** The pastor of our church is also the associate chaplain, and our chaplain is the associate pastor. This arrangement is ideal, with both working together within the hospital and the community.

**Q.** Do you have a community advisory group to counsel the hospital board?

**A.** No, I do not favor that arrangement. Rather than having a community advisory group to inform us of community affairs, we become so involved in the community that we know their concerns. Advisory groups usually consist of influential businessmen. When for some reason their recommendations cannot be implemented, they tend to feel they are only a token presence.

**Q.** Do you have a perspective on general medical plans that offer free medical care to patients?

**A.** Socialized medicine is not a nice phrase in the medical community. And certainly it would bring problems or, at the least, mixed blessings. Recently I heard a speaker describe the potential problems of a proposed national health program. Among other things, he referred to government representation on our hospital boards, problems with maintaining dietary standards, curtailment of preventive-medicine programs because of the costs, regulation of medical staff privileges, and numerous social problems, including abortion. A national health scheme may benefit many people, but it can cause real headaches for the hospital—particularly one that insists on maintaining its uniqueness.

# A Christmas litany

*Ever felt a need for more congregational participation in the worship service? The author shares a Christmas litany he used successfully last year, and why and how it came to be. □ by Roger W. Coon*



*Seventh-day Adventist congregations have few opportunities to be directly involved in the various components of the Sabbath morning worship service. Traditionally the two (occasionally three) congregational hymns have provided for some public response. However, in certain circles there is a growing tendency*

to limit this form of expression by abandoning the closing hymn and having the preacher move directly from his message into a benediction prayer.

In some churches the responsive reading of the Scriptures has played a prominent part in providing for congregational interaction. Unfortunately, the proliferation of modern-English translations and paraphrases of the Bible tends to make it difficult to invite members to participate directly by reading alternate verses in unison out of one's own Bible. (One solution to the wide-variety-of-versions problem was found by the Takoma Park, Maryland, Seventh-day Adventist church. It installed special separate bookracks under the seat of each pew, with a copy of the Revised Standard Version placed in each.)

Then, too, our present *Church Hym-*



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nal in North America has such a limited selection of responsive readings in the back of the book that many pastors have simply discarded recourse to that worship aid almost entirely. Perhaps the General Conference-appointed committee now at work to provide the church with a new hymnal will rectify this singular omission; our Methodist and Baptist brethren in particular are far ahead of us in publishing in their hymnals a diverse collection of responsive readings covering a wide spectrum of topical and thematic material. Some enterprising pastors have stepped into the breach by creating their own custom-made litanies, weaving together passages of Scripture particularly appropriate to the occasion and/or to the sermon. Such are printed either in the order of worship in the church bulletin itself or as an insert in the bulletin. (The example of a succession of pastors at the Kettering, Ohio, Seventh-day Adventist church during the past seven or eight years is

# **O**ur present Church Hymnal in North America has such a limited selection of responsive readings that many pastors have simply discarded recourse to that worship aid almost entirely.

especially praiseworthy, and many of their "tapestries of the Word" would truly grace our new hymnal!

Last Christmas, when the holiday itself fell on Sabbath, I was invited to preach at the Triadelphia Seventh-day Adventist church in Clarksville, Maryland, north of Washington, D.C. Wanting to make this service different because of the season, and at the same time wanting to create more interaction within the congregation and between members and the leader of worship, I attempted to do so in two ways.

First, the music for both Sabbath school and the worship service was to be provided by a soprano soloist. We therefore chose three simple Christmas carols, all from the *Church Hymnal*, and the soloist agreed to sing the odd-numbered stanzas alone and to lead the congregation in singing the even-numbered stanzas.

For the Sabbath school I selected "O Little Town of Bethlehem," primarily because I would later make mention of several experiences in the life of the composer, Phillips Brooks, in my sermon. In the worship service we sang "Angels From the Realms of Glory," chosen because it seemed to provide an especially praiseworthy introit to the litany it preceded (see "A Christmas Litany for the People," this page). This litany, in turn, provided the introduction to the sermon. Then, in the place of the usual closing hymn, the soloist and congregation alternated singing stanzas of "Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne," selected partly to acquaint the congregation with the beauty of a comparatively unknown carol and partly because it seemed most appropriate to the sermon conclusion.

Second, since my sermon dealt with the meaning of Christmas as developed by our Lord's parable of the householder who rented his vineyard to tenant farmers (Matt. 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12), I used Matthew's account as the compositional base for the litany, weaving in other passages of Scripture to highlight and amplify the development of the narrative theme.

I also (admittedly with some hesitation) incorporated one especially apt passage from Ellen White's *Desire of Ages* toward the close of the litany, not only because of its rhetorical beauty but also because it seemed to epitomize what the various writers of Scripture were saying from different perspectives. I was conscious of the potential risk in mixing the words of Scripture with the words of a modern writer—the risk of theological misunderstanding in the area of inspiration/revelation, and the potential risk of divisive controversy. In this instance I

decided to go ahead; in other possible settings I might well decide to stick solely with Scripture.

The dialogue that was created, with its interaction among leader, men, and women, proved to be a blessing to some in the congregation that Christmas Day. It is offered here in the hope that perhaps you may be able to glean ideas from it that will bless your congregation. The litany alone illuminates enough of my homiletical use of the Matthew 21 parable to enable you to construct your own Christmas sermon on the passage.

## A Christmas Litany for the people



**Leader:** Hear another parable:

**Men:** There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

**Women:** And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

**Men:** And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

**Women:** Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise (Matt. 21:33-36).

**Leader:** And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling

**S**ome enterprising pastors have stepped into the breach by creating their own custom-made litanies, weaving together passages of Scripture particularly appropriate to the occasion and/or to the sermon.

place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy (2 Chron. 36:15, 16).

**Men:** But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son (Matt. 21:37).

**Women:** God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds (Heb. 1:1, 2).

**Leader:** For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich (2 Cor. 8:9).

**Men:** Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

**Women:** Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us (Matt. 1:22, 23).

**Men:** For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

**Women:** Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this (Isa. 9:6, 7).

**Men:** And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:21).

**Leader:** But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance (Matt. 21:38).

**Women:** He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

**Men:** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name (John 1:11, 12).

**Women:** God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not

perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

**Leader:** And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him (Matt. 21:39).

**Men:** He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

**Women:** He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

**Men:** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53:3, 5, 6).

**Leader:** Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

**Women:** Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

**Men:** But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

**Women:** And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

**Men:** Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

**Women:** That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

**Men:** And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:5-11).

**Unison:** Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. "With his stripes we are healed."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.

**Leader:** When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? (Matt. 21:40).

# Apocalyptic prophecy and the church—2

*Daniel, Paul, and John the revelator all depict an antidivine power to arise after the decline of the Roman Empire. The end-time judgment, which involves both investigative and executive phases, vindicates God's people and pronounces against this power a verdict patterned after the law of malicious witness of Deuteronomy.*

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The Called Church □ 7 Kenneth A. Strand

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## Summary

Dr. Strand's previous article (October, 1983) examined two significant characteristics of apocalyptic prophecy—vertical continuity (the close connection between heaven and earth) and horizontal continuity (the sequential arrangement of the prophetic forecast in which history is viewed as a continuum). A correct interpretation of Daniel and Revelation, the two major examples of Biblical apocalyptic prophecy, will take into account these features and their literary structure, which is one of repeated sequences. In each book the prophetic sequences dealing with the historical era extend from the prophet's own time to the great eschatological consummation. Revelation exhibits a broad chiasmic structure (inverse parallelism) that emphasizes the book's twofold theme—Christ's presence with His people now and His second coming, which will end sin and usher in everlasting peace. The first major division (chapters 1-14) sets forth the historical sequences, while the second division (chapters 15-22) highlights the eschatological

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consummation. Thus the apocalyptic nature and literary patterns of both Daniel and Revelation indicate that the proper hermeneutic for these books is a recapitulational-historical one.

These apocalyptic prophecies have been especially comforting to called-out Christian groups through the centuries, and because of their specific emphasis on end-time, they have come to have particularly rich meaning for called-out Christians of our own day.—Editors.



Both Daniel and Revelation depict a fierce antidivine power in the last days, God's judgment upon that power, and the vindication of His saints who have been oppressed and persecuted by that power.

In Daniel this entity is symbolically portrayed in chapters 7 and 8 as a "little

horn." In Daniel 7 the horn comes up out of the head of the fourth beast after ten horns had already arisen. That is to say, the little horn appears after the tenfold division of the Roman Empire, the fourth beast of the prophecy. (See verses 7, 8, 19, 20; cf. verses 23, 24; chapter 2.) In chapter 8 the little horn comes from one of the four winds after the rise and wane of the Persian and Greek empires, symbolized by the ram and goat, respectively (see verses 8, 9; cf. verses 2-7).

English translations tend to obscure the Hebrew text. According to the Hebrew original of verse 8, the little horn "comes forth [the verb indicates horizontal movement] from one [the antecedent of this word is "winds"] from them [the antecedent of this word is "heavens"]." Thus, the suggestion that the little horn comes up out of one of the four horns (the interpretation of those who identify the little horn with Antiochus Epiphanes) is an impossible one as far as the original Hebrew text is concerned, both on the basis of its verb and more particularly because of the gender of the nouns and pronouns used. To make it grammatically possible for the little horn to arise from one of the

# The preterist interpretation of the first beast of Revelation 13 as the Roman Empire contemporary with John is impossible. Even more untenable is the approach that combines futurism with preterism.

four horns, one would have to emend the Hebrew text, and there is no good reason to do so.<sup>1</sup>

Daniel 7 describes this little horn thus: "He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, two times, and half a time" (verse 25, R.S.V.).<sup>\*</sup> In chapter 8 this horn "magnified himself even to the prince of the host," and it terminated "the daily," and trampled the sanctuary and host under foot (verses 11-13).

Revelation 13 pictures a leopardlike sea beast whose description parallels that of the little horn in Daniel 7:25. "And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months; it opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and tongue and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it, every one whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. 13:5-8, R.S.V.).

A further description of the same entity is given by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2. The apostle declares that the day of the Lord will not come until "the man of lawlessness [or "man of sin" (K.J.V.)] is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God" (verses 3, 4, R.S.V.). Moreover, there was still in existence at that time a restraining power: "He who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming" (verses 7, 8, R.S.V.).

This antidivine power mentioned in



Daniel 7, Revelation 13, and 2 Thessalonians 2 was *still future* in New Testament times. This much could already be deduced from Daniel, inasmuch as the little horn arose *after* the ten horns on the fourth beast came into being—that is, after the division of the Roman Empire (see chap. 7:8, 24). Paul looked to this antidivine entity as still future when he wrote to the Thessalonians. And the picture in the book of Revelation is precisely the same: the antidivine power represented by the leopardlike sea beast was to arise after John's time, as is clear from the fact that that beast has the crowns on its ten horns (chap. 13:1)—horns explained as not yet having received regal power when John wrote (chap. 17:12).

Significantly, the early church recognized the Roman Empire as being the restraining force that the apostle Paul had pointed out would hold back the appearance of "the lawless one."<sup>2</sup>

Because the first beast of Revelation 13 was not to come into power until after Rome was broken into its ten divisions, the preterist interpretation of that beast as the Roman Empire contemporary with John is impossible. Even more untenable is the approach that combines futurism with preterism, as enunciated, for example, by George Eldon Ladd and Leon Morris, who see a last-day personal antichrist foreshadowed by the Roman Empire.<sup>3</sup> This interpretation shares the

weaknesses of the preterist view, but adds the further difficulty of introducing a dual focus instead of recognizing the horizontal continuity characteristic of apocalyptic prophecy.

Interpreters of prophecy during the past century or two have taken a special interest in the 1260-day time period of Daniel 7:25 (stated there as "a time, two times, and half a time" [R.S.V.]) and 12:7 (cf. Rev. 12:6, 14; 13:5), as well as the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14. Though these time periods had interested some Christian, as well as Jewish, expositors before 1800, the first half of the nineteenth century saw an upsurge of attention among Christians. Numerous interpreters in both the Old World and the New began to look upon the 1260 days as stretching either from A.D. 533 to 1793 or from 538 to 1798. The 1830s and early 1840s saw an especially strong focus on the 2300 days, with the date 1844 finally settled upon as the terminal point. These prophecies had been reckoned, of course, on the year-day principle—a principle recognized as being used by the Hebrews for certain types of numerical statements and calculations. Among the Bible texts that illustrate the principle are Genesis 29:27, 28; Numbers 14:34; and Ezekiel 4:6.<sup>4</sup>

That the year-day principle should be applied in Daniel 8 is apparent from the context itself, inasmuch as the question in verse 13—"How long?"—applies to the *vision* itself, not just the work of the little horn. ("How long the vision?" is the literal reading of the text.)

What time span is covered by the vision of chapter 8? It begins with the Persian ram, moves on to the Greek goat and the goat's four horns, and then finally to the little horn. Obviously, 2300 literal days could never begin to span such a time period. But 2300 *years* could. From 457 B.C., the seventh year of Persian King Artaxerxes, 2300 years reach to A.D. 1844.<sup>5</sup>

As for the 1260 days of Daniel 7:25, this time period pertains solely to the little horn and should be reckoned at some time in the future from John. It was to begin after the rise of the ten horns,

**O**n the basis of a study of these very prophetic passages, a great Second Advent movement did arise at their end. And the rise of this movement at this time appears to be more than mere coincidence.

thus signifying a time subsequent to the division of the Roman Empire. Generally, a period from the 530s, when Emperor Justinian proclaimed the Roman bishop to be head over all churches, to the 1790s has become the most common interpretation of this particular time period.

In regard to these prophecies, Daniel was instructed to "shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end" (chap. 12:4), when knowledge of the book would be increased. And on the basis of a study of these very prophetic passages—the 1260 days and the 2300 days—a great Second Advent movement did arise at their end. This is a well-established historical fact, and the rise of this particular movement at this particular time appears to be more than mere coincidence.

### Interludes in Revelation

Revelation enlarges Daniel's focus on the end-time. Figure 1 shows an outline of the historical series in the first major division of Revelation. Notice that in each series an interlude focuses on last-day events. These hold special

meaning for the last-day church. In the seven seals, for instance, the sealing of the 144,000 has relevance in depicting God's protection over His people and their special mission in the last critical time of earth's history.

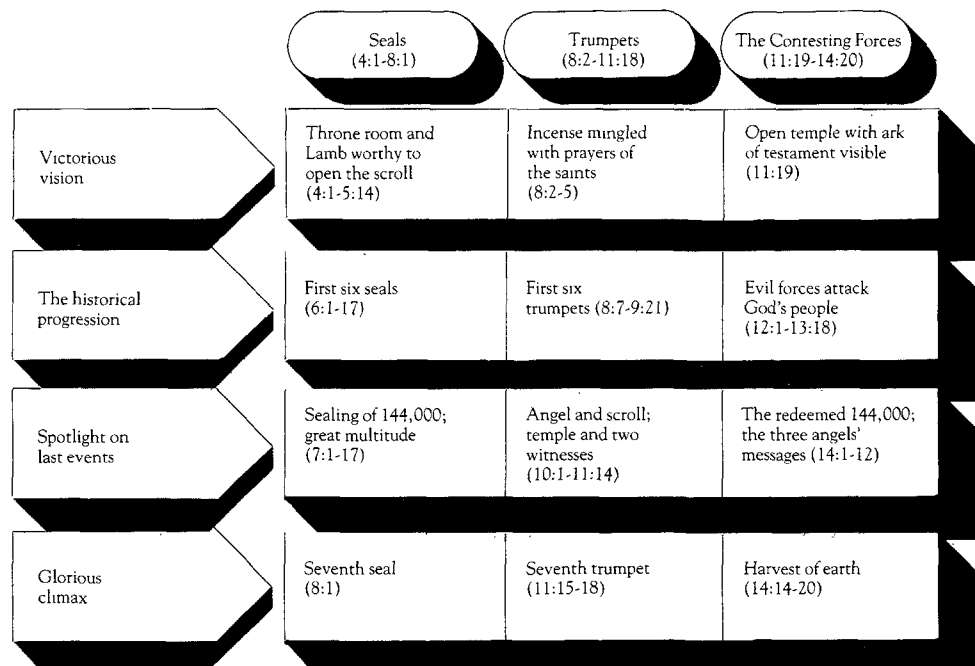
The second interlude comes in chapters 10 and 11, between the sixth and seventh trumpets. Here as the vision begins, in chapter 10:1-7, an angel stands with one foot on land and one on sea, holding a little book open and proclaiming, in verse 6, "that there should be time no longer" ("that there should be no more delay" [R.S.V.]). This particular prophecy cannot help reminding us of the fact that the book of Daniel was sealed to the time of the end and that the response to the prophet's twice-asked "How long?" indicated 2300 days and 1260 days. Prophetic time, rather than absolute time, is intended in Revelation 10, as is clear from the fact that absolute historical time does not come to an end in the prophetic portrayal. After the angel's "time no longer" proclamation, the prophet is instructed to eat the book, which he does. It leaves a bitter taste in his

stomach after being sweet in his mouth (verses 8-10). Following this he is commissioned to go forth prophesying again to many peoples (verse 11). Could there be a more fitting description of the events surrounding the great disappointment of 1844 and the subsequent outreach of the gospel message in worldwide proclamation?

The very next chapter in Revelation calls attention to a concurrent work going on in the heavenly temple, where symbolically the sanctuary, the altar, and the worshipers are measured (verse 1)—a work of judgment. The outer court, where the Gentiles gather, is left out (verse 2). Indeed, the "two witnesses" continue to testify—making it clear, once more, that absolute time has not come to an end, even though a great prophetic fulfillment has occurred (see verses 3-12).

Another temple scene in chapter 11 deserves mention, although it occurs within the next series rather than the spotlight-on-last-events interlude. In verse 19 John states: "Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his

**Figure 1. Parallel Structures in Revelation 4-14.**





**T**he book of Revelation also depicts this last-day judgment. But in Revelation 18 both the investigative phase and the executive phase of the judgment are put into bold relief.

temple" (R.S.V.). In the Old Testament Temple the ark was kept in the inner apartment and contained the ten-commandment law, covered with the mercy seat. This "victorious vision" of Revelation 11:19, with its focus on the ark of the covenant in the heavenly temple, has special relevance, therefore, for the end-time, the time when the dragon goes forth against "the remnant," or "offspring" (R.S.V.), of the woman's seed, who "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (chap. 12:17).

The third interlude spotlighting final events occurs in Revelation 14. Here three angels proclaim a warning message. The first proclaims the everlasting gospel, calling attention to the Creator of heaven and earth and to the fact that the hour of His judgment is come. The second angel announces that Babylon has fallen. And the third angel calls out the last warning—an appeal not to worship the beast and receive his mark. A called-out church of the last days would obviously see this threefold message of Revelation 14 as the essence of its proclamation to the world.

### **The judgment that vindicates**

In Revelation 12:17 the last-day church is called the "remnant." It is the group of faithful ones depicted in Revelation 13:15-17 as being victims of adverse laws—the death decree and denial of the right to buy and sell. The issue revolves about "the commandments of God, and . . . the testimony of Jesus Christ" (chap. 12:17). These called-out Christians of the last days recognize that here is a special twofold mark of identification, and they must know precisely what is entailed in these expressions.

The judgment scene in Daniel 7, forming the climax of the prophecy and occurring toward the end of history, has been a particularly meaningful portrayal for God's people. So often oppressed and persecuted, they can find comfort in the judgment of the heavenly court, which renders its verdict against the little-horn oppressor and vindicates them. "Thrones were placed and one that was

ancient of days took his seat. . . . The court sat in judgment, and the books were opened'" (verses 9, 10, R.S.V.). "But the court shall sit in judgment, and his [the little horn's] dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them'" (verses 26, 27, R.S.V.).

The book of Revelation also depicts this last-day judgment. We have already noted some references to it: the measuring mentioned in chapter 11:1 and the judgment-hour messages of chapter 14:6-12. But in Revelation 18 both the investigative phase and the executive phase of the judgment are put into bold relief. This chapter has a chiasmic structure, with five main parts, as indicated in figure 2.<sup>6</sup>

The introduction and conclusion both describe the condition of Babylon. The introduction describes her as she appears when indicted for judgment, and the conclusion portrays her after the execution of the judgment. B and B̄ are interludes: B is a call to come out of Babylon in view of the verdict against her, and B̄ is a call to rejoice because of that verdict. The central section, C, is a litany over the execution of Babylon, wherein earth's kings, merchants, and seafarers weep and lament as they see the symbolic city in flames.

The central litany of verses 9-19 portrays the *execution* of judgment on Babylon and consists of several hymns or hymn groups, each concluding with a climactic refrain: "In one hour has thy judgment come" (verse 10, R.S.V.). "In one hour all this wealth has been laid waste" (verse 17, R.S.V.). "In one hour she has been laid waste" (verse 19, R.S.V.). The execution of judgment pictured here is different from the judgment on Babylon alluded to in the introductory section (A) and in the interludes (B and B̄) because it comes subsequent to and as a result of that

judgment.

The basic reference to the earlier judgment of Babylon comes within interlude B, whose primary function is to provide an appeal for God's people to come out of her "lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues" (verse 4, R.S.V.). Her plagues are still future at this time, for she claims, "A queen I sit, I am no widow, mourning I shall never see" (verse 7, R.S.V.). But God's answer is that her plagues shall "come in a single day, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she shall be burned with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who judges her" (verse 8, R.S.V.). The verdict statement itself, patterned after the law of malicious witness in Deuteronomy 19:16-19, is given in Revelation 18:6: "Render to her as she herself has rendered, and repay her double for her deeds" (R.S.V.).

Like the adversary who accused Joshua in the vision of Zechariah 3, and like Haman, who prepared gallows for Mordecai in the book of Esther, Babylon has been a malicious witness. Christ's true followers have been condemned, as was our Lord Himself, by a kangaroo court. The assurance of Revelation 18 is that a higher court has now come into session, has made diligent inquiry regarding the accuser Babylon, and has found her to be a malicious witness. Consequently that heavenly court reverses the decisions of the earthly courts, rendering upon Babylon's own head her verdicts against God's children, who are now fully cleared and vindicated.

In short, we have in Revelation a portrayal parallel to that in Daniel 7:22-27, wherein judgment is rendered in favor of the saints of the Most High and against the little horn. But Revelation enlarges the picture to reveal that although the antichrist power (Babylon, in the terminology of Revelation) has the verdict rendered against her at the beginning of the pre-Advent investigative judgment, individuals still have a time of probation while the judgment is in session. They may still choose where to place their loyalty—with God or with Babylon.

**T**he length of this investigative judgment does not relate to the amount of time it takes God to go through records; obviously that could be done in a moment! It relates rather to a soteriological concern.

The length of this investigative judgment does not relate to the amount of time it takes God to go through records; obviously that could be done in a moment! It relates rather to a soteriological concern: "The Lord is not slow about his promise as some count slowness, but is forbearing toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (2 Peter 3:9, R.S.V.). The three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12 reveal the same soteriological concern: God does not stop with but one warning message; He adds appeal to appeal during the judgment hour, while probation still lingers.

God's faithful children can indeed rejoice because of the verdict rendered against Babylon by God's investigation of this malicious witness. Revelation 18:20, the second interlude in this chapter (B), comes into focus here as a call to rejoice because (as the Greek literally says) "God has judged your judgment on her [Babylon]." Here again, the reflection of the law of malicious

witness is obvious, especially so when the parallel with verse 6 is kept in mind.

What a cause for rejoicing! The judgment that Babylon has maliciously passed upon God's children has now reverted to her, and they stand fully vindicated!

\*The Scripture quotations marked R.S.V. in this article are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952 © 1971, 1973.

\*All Scripture quotations in this figure are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952 © 1971, 1973.

<sup>1</sup> William H. Shea, *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation* (Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1982), pp. 41-43.

<sup>2</sup> Irenaeus of Gaul (c. A.D. 185) equated Paul's "man of sin" with Daniel's little horn (referring to Dan. 7:8 and 8:12) and John's leopardlike beast. He also pointed to the fact that the ten kingdoms would precede the rise of this Antichrist (see *Against Heresies*, book 5, chaps. 25-27, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, pp. 553-557). A few years later Tertullian wrote in his *Apology* (c. A.D. 197): "For we know that a mighty shock impending over the whole earth—in fact, the very end of all things threatening dreadful woes—is only retarded

by the continued existence of the Roman empire."—Chapter 32, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3, pp. 42, 43. In the fifth century Jerome was among interpreters who could see the beginning of the dissolution of the Roman Empire through the barbarian invasions. In A.D. 409, referring to 2 Thessalonians 2:7, 8, he wrote: "He that letteth is taken out of the way, and yet we do not realize that Antichrist is near. Yes, Antichrist is near whom the Lord Jesus Christ shall consume with the spirit of his mouth."—Letter 123, to Ageruchia, section 16, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, vol. 6, p. 236.

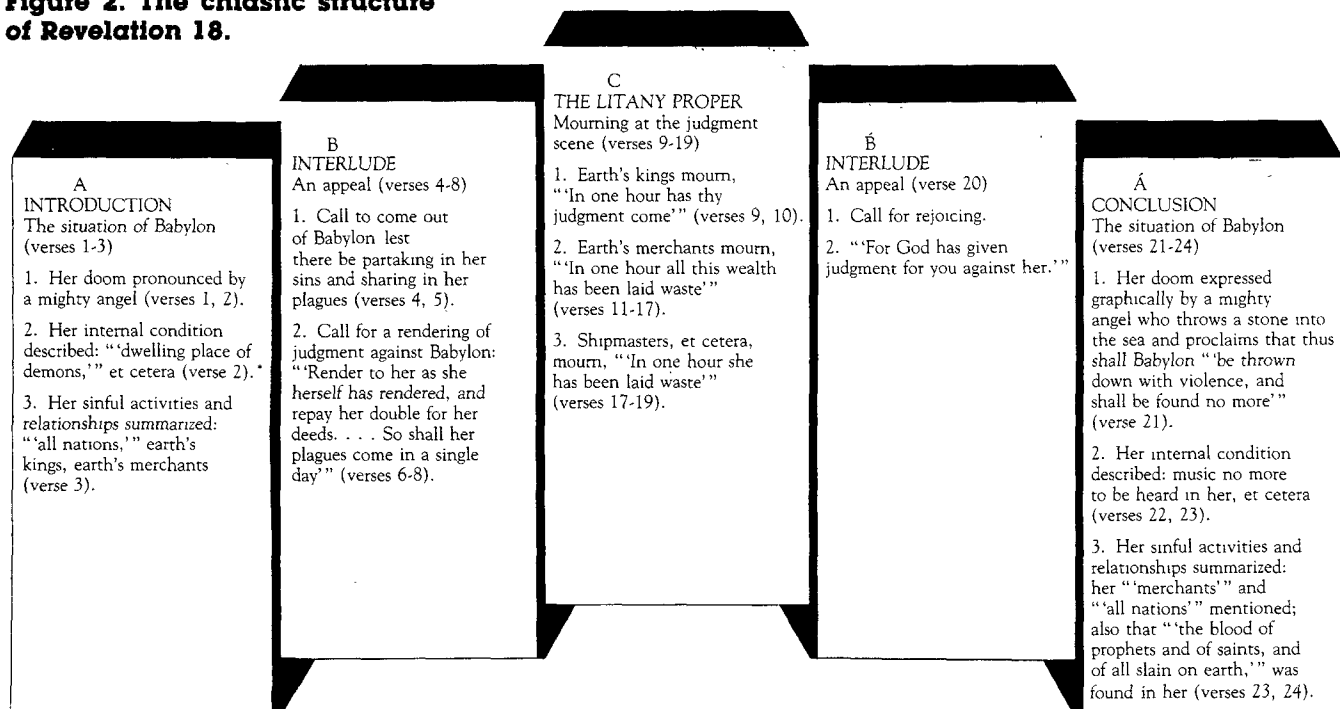
<sup>3</sup> George Eldon Ladd, *Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 13; see also his article "Apocalyptic, Apocalypse" in *Baker's Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 53: "The beast is Rome and at the same time an eschatological Antichrist which cannot be fully equated with historical Rome." Leon Morris, *The Revelation of St. John: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1969).

<sup>4</sup> Shea, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-93.

<sup>5</sup> S. H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood, *The Chronology of Ezra 7* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1953); cf. Julia Neuffer, "The Accession of Artaxerxes I," *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 6:1 (1968), pp. 60-87.

<sup>6</sup> The diagram is from Kenneth A. Strand, "Two Aspects of Babylon's Judgment Portrayed in Revelation 18," *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 20:1 (1982), p. 54. The complete article (pp. 53-60) treats certain aspects of the subject in more detail than can be given in the present article.

**Figure 2. The chlastic structure of Revelation 18.**



# Is your church staffed to grow?

Sometimes significant growth doesn't take place in spite of all that a local church tries to do. The author suggests ways to break through the impasse.

□ by Don Jacobsen



*If you are the sole pastor of a typical (that is, noninstitutional), white, one-church parish, and your Sabbath attendance is near 200, don't be surprised if your church doesn't grow—no matter how hard you work or how much you pray. I recently read (and reread) a very disquieting and enlightening book by one of*

the most respected researchers in the church-growth movement today. The book is Lyle Schaller's, *Growing Plans*, and here is what I learned:

A one-pastor church of 200 (even with a competent secretary), is staffed to plateau. If you do most of your own secretarial work, as I do, the problem is compounded.

A note of perspective is in order here. Dr. Schaller is not suggesting that in every congregation an instant growth spurt will result each time a staff member is added. There are many reasons why churches do not grow. But the research indicates that it is virtually impossible for a pastor to give growth leadership to a congregation of 200 while meeting all of the denominationally imposed, congregationally imposed, and self-imposed expectations.

Dr. Schaller's insights came at a most propitious time for me. I left teaching at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in the summer of 1979 and came to Stone Mountain, Georgia, a new church of eighty members. Our growth was most encouraging for three years during which time we attained, by baptism and transfer, our present 200 members. There we reached a plateau,

and passing the 200 barrier has seemed to defy everything we have done. We have fasted, prayed, knocked on doors, done mailings, given Bible studies, broadcast, telecast, advertised, held public meetings—still, 200 members.

Meanwhile, I was catching discontent from some of the members. Why wasn't I visiting our members more? Why wasn't I spending more time administering the church? Why wasn't I—well, you know the story.

Enter Lyle Schaller.

As I reflected I realized that during the time of our optimum growth I had had an associate. Even working sixty hours a week after he left did not fill the hole caused by his departure. But the frustrating, guilt-ridden agony could have been dissipated if I had known.

So, what to do?

The dilemma is only partially solvable by a local congregation. Part of the solution, of course, is to turn more responsibility over to the members. And I agree. We are working at that. However, in a voluntary organization, such as the church, someone has to follow up on the delegating. Our members are extremely capable and highly motivated. Yet, pragmatically, someone must coordinate and oversee. If the programs within a church are to function as smoothly and effectively as we believe they should, there must be a place where the buck stops.

We have made some progress in helping the church assume responsibility for itself. The chairman of our board of elders and I went visiting together on Thursday nights for a couple of months. Then we split up, and each of us now takes another elder. We meet at the church at seven o'clock for our assignments and to pray together. Each team then makes two visits and returns to the church at nine-thirty to debrief. This will mean more than 200 calls a year and is proving to be productive for those visited and good training for the visitors. No doubt, other areas exist where we can delegate and train.

My other two suggestions go beyond the prerogatives of the local church, but if Dr. Schaller's research is dependable, it is imperative that we give them serious denominational consideration.

First, permit some portion of the tithe to be retained in the local church to provide an executive secretary for the pastor. Note that this is different from a church secretary who might do the reports, mailings, and perhaps the treasurer's and/or clerk's work. The pastor's secretary would be available to do typing, filing, phoning, scheduling, correspondence, et cetera. Her goal would be to free him to do that which he is primarily there to do.

If the departmental director at each

(Continued on page 25)

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# Leadership in crisis

*Change necessarily accompanies growth. But change can be hard to handle, because we hold political, theological, and emotional stakes in our church. These can lead to problems of perception both as to the ideas and the personalities of others. The author offers his views as to how we should handle change. "If we split as a church, let's do it right—on real issues and hard facts!"*

Viewpoint

Gordon Bietz



*t was a tough job to pull the early church together. "Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.' This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them" (Acts 15:1,*

2).<sup>\*</sup> The Jewish party and the Gentile party were not having parties together. They had argued themselves into different camps and were taking potshots at each other.

The Jewish party was the sanctifica-

**Viewpoint is designed to allow readers an opportunity to express opinions regarding matters of interest to their colleagues. The ideas expressed in this feature are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Seventh-day Adventist Church or the opinions of the MINISTRY staff.**

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tion-perfection wing of the church. They kept many laws and traditions. They had "the truth" and had been "in the way" for many years. They feared that the Gentiles who were flooding into the church would cause them to be no longer a peculiar people. They questioned whether the Gentiles were really being changed by the gospel, at least as changed as they should be. The flood of Gentiles were "polluting" the pure Jewish church, and the Christian Jews were getting nervous about where this would all lead.

The Gentile party was the justification-libertine element. They lived rather free lives and were not uptight about the Jewish traditions. In their minds the Jewish party was a holier-than-thou group who wanted to put them under the law. They were a threat to their freedom in the gospel.

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One need not be too perceptive to note the similarities between the problems then and ours today. We have the conservatives and the liberals, the perfectionists and the new Adventists. We have FROGS (Friends of the Gospel) and TOADS (Traditional Old Adventists). This lack of unity in the body of Christ and the fragmentation over easily applied labels does an immense disservice to the church. If we are to fulfill our God-given responsibility as a people of God, we can't polarize and fragment into camps. We must discover a solution.

Now, the cry for unity can be a two-edged sword. I remember conference constituency meetings in which appeals were made for unity because there was a threat to an officer's position. I'm not talking about that kind of unity, the unity that is a papering over of ineptitude. I'm not talking about uniformity, but unity, and there is a vast difference. Uniformity tries to make all men simply reflectors of others' thoughts, to make things look smooth at

**T**he fact that we are not yet in the kingdom leads me to believe that there must be some changes in the way we are presently doing things if we expect our generation to usher in the second coming of Christ.

least on the outside. Uniformity casts everyone in the same mold. God forbid that we have uniformity!

What we need is the unity and oneness that comes with the Spirit of Christ. "There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:4-6).

I can't imagine Christ coming to receive His own if His own are tearing one another apart with criticism, rumor, and innuendo. I can't imagine living in different camps in heaven.

"It is the purpose of God that His children shall blend in unity. Do they not expect to live together in the same heaven? Is Christ divided against Himself? Will He give His people success before they sweep away the rubbish of evil surmising and discord, before the laborers, with unity of purpose, devote heart and mind and strength to the work so holy in God's sight? Union brings strength; disunion, weakness."—E. G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 240. We need unity, not of thought, but of love. We need a unity, not of style, but of the Spirit.

What stands in the way?

One obstacle is perception problems. Everyone approaches reality through the filter of his past experiences. Those experiences frequently distort perceptions. As Nisbett and Ross have said: "The perceiver . . . is not simply a dutiful clerk who passively registers items of information. Rather, the perceiver is an active interpreter, one who resolves ambiguities, makes educated guesses about events that cannot be observed directly, and forms inferences about associations and causal relations."—*Human Inference*, p. 17.

For example, pollsters find that unemployed adults tend to overestimate the percentage of the work force who are currently unemployed, but currently employed workers tend to underestimate it. Again Nisbett and Ross point out, "People give inferential weight to information in proportion to its vividness.

Vividness is defined as the emotional interest of information."—*Ibid.*, p. 62.

All of us are very active observers of present phenomena in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We all have a lot of emotional interest in what is happening. For one reason, we have a political stake in the issues; our jobs are often affected. Second, we have a theological stake in the issues; our religious convictions are involved. Third, we have an emotional stake in the issues; our very lives are tied up in the outcome of the struggle.

We are not unbiased, unattached observers. The level of distortion within our perceptions is directly related to the impact that such observations have on our lives. As leaders in this church we need to be very sensitive to how our perceptions of present issues in the church can be significantly distorted because of the emotional vividness the issues have to us personally.

Here is how perception can affect reality. Jane is a trusting and secure person. She enters a room full of people and waves at Bill on the other side of the room. He does not wave back. Her perception: "He must not have seen me."

Sue is a suspicious and insecure person. She enters a room full of people and waves at Bill on the other side of the room. He does not wave back. Her perception: "He must be angry at me."

We are confronted, then, with the likelihood that our perceptions of issues and people are distorted. Distorted perceptions result in suspicion, and suspicion results in more distortion. All of this complicates the search for unity. The result? We pull apart instead of press together.

Because of perception distortion, I believe that the general church membership and some of us as leaders are becoming paranoid about attacks on the church. What happens when you feel under attack? Especially when the stakes are high? You find sides; you identify the other side with an appropriate label. You get into a them-and-us mentality. We use catchwords to identify, categorize, and stigmatize people as enemy or friend.

Code words indicate sides (words like "sanctuary," "remnant," "faith," even TOADS and FROGS).

The result of these perceptions distorted by suspicions is that mutual trust is gone. Who will tell on you? What can you feel safe to say, and who can you feel safe to say it to? The trusting fellowship of the body disintegrates. But the church is built on trust and confidence and cannot survive in such a climate.

We are in danger of a kind of McCarthyism in the church. I can imagine nothing more effective in stifling theological growth and Christian maturity than such an atmosphere of suspicion. Someone expresses a thought that seems to put him in a certain camp; he is labeled and classified. Receiving this unsubstantiated stigma, he becomes suspect and unemployable. Theological growth, spiritual growth, and organizational movement are threatened by such a creeping miasma of intimidation. Teachers become increasingly unwilling to speak in public on controversial issues because of the propensity of the misguided few to label, tape, and misquote for the purpose of publishing and discrediting. Ministers become reluctant to preach on sensitive subjects for fear of raising the ire of the publishing letter writers. In an organization as relatively small as ours the poison of the grapevine can murder the career in short order.

"Floating rumors are frequently the destroyers of unity among brethren. There are some who watch with open mind and ears to catch flying scandal. They gather up little incidents which may be trifling in themselves, but which are repeated and exaggerated until a man is made an offender for a word."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Prov. 26:20-22, p. 1163.

Instead of moving into the future with intentional, planned direction we become prisoners of events, reacting to crises and responding to telephone calls. Perceiving that the enemy is all around us, we become unwilling to develop the necessary confidence and trust in one another to move into the future. Preoccupied with internal strife, we cannot

**T**oo many malnourished minds exist in the work of God. Too many retired minds still inhabit unretired bodies, unwilling to be change agents for fear of the results of change in themselves and the church.

become involved in external action.

The church is under attack. I do not deny it. Satan is seeking to blunt its efforts and to destroy its influence. But I suggest that his goal is realized more by those seeking to identify the good guys and the bad guys than it is by some who truly may have wrong theological conceptions. The major damage to the body of Christ comes, not from theological misfits, but from our paranoid response to them.

So how can leaders in today's Seventh-day Adventist Church lead in this environment of suspicion and distrust? I am not suggesting that we ignore real problems and convince ourselves that an elephant is only a mouse with a glandular condition. Let's face real issues, but let's make sure we are facing substantive issues and not someone's misperception of another's supposed statement. If we split as a church, let's do it right—on real issues and hard facts!

We must fight some change and fight for some change. There is a significant danger in our church of allowing paranoia and fear of any change to lock the pillars of the church in the archives of the nineteenth century. We must be change agents—conversion agents—in our church. The fact that we are not yet in the kingdom leads me to believe that there must be some changes in the way we are presently doing things if we expect our generation to usher in the second coming of Christ. Something is wrong, and it is time we faced up to it. Israel could not wander in the desert for thirty-nine years and continue to give good reports to the constituency. They could not claim wonderful progress no matter how optimistic the administration. No matter how many miles were covered, no matter how many children were born, no matter how many statistics they compiled, no matter how strong their educational system, they were not where they were supposed to be, and that pointed to problems. We are not with our Lord, and that means problems.

Some things must change. The church, of course, tends to resist change, especially in an environment of suspi-

cion and mistrust. Ralph W. Neighbour points out that change need not make us nervous; it should cause us to become enthusiastic about the potential ways God has to use this church, and us, in the future. Yet no one is more threatened by change than those whose bread and butter may be affected. Church workers have a built-in incentive to opt for the status quo and increasingly so the closer they get to retirement.

The SDA Church will not grow or deepen its understanding of its doctrines if no one is allowed to teach more than the church has taught historically. In that case, are we not simply bowing before tradition? It is nice to say that truth can bear investigation and that our understandings of truth grow, but if no avenue exists for the thoughtful exploration of and application of church doctrines, then our minds really are closed. The real threat to the future of our church is the tendency to be politically safe. The trend toward safe thinking, teaching, and preaching will truly doom the growth of our church as it seeks to move into the future and minister the grace of Christ in the twenty-first century.

Too many of us who are workers in the church have been guilty of theological malpractice. It is painful to do the work necessary to be a skillful teacher or preacher, so many of us have taken the easy way out. We do our jobs, keep our noses clean, and don't rock the boat!

Controversy and crises can bring some benefits. Mrs. White wrote: "The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. . . . I have been shown that many who profess to have a knowledge of present truth know not what they believe. . . . Agitate, agitate, agitate. The subjects which we present to the world must be to us a living reality. . . . When God's people are at ease and satisfied with their present enlightenment, we may be sure that He will not favor them."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 707, 708.

Unfortunately, too many malnourished minds exist in the work of God, minds that have atrophied rather than enlarged, withered rather than grown. Too many nongrowing minds are passed from church to church and school to school when the supply of sermons or lesson plans dries up. Too many retired minds still inhabit unretired bodies, unwilling to be change agents for fear of the results of change in themselves and the church.

The danger is merely to reflect the thoughts of others. The habit of uncritical credulity—of taking the ideas of books, magazines, and tapes without independent thought—encourages a dependent dogmatism that will not stand the spotlight of criticism that is descending on our church. Don't borrow unexamined convictions from others simply to avoid paying the price of disciplined, thoughtful study. The unexamined life is not worth living, and the unexamined belief is not worth holding.

We can be instrumental in answering the prayer of Jesus that He offered for all believers: "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:20, 21).

What does it mean to be one? I know what it means for marriage. It means to be as interested in the welfare of my wife as I am interested in my own welfare. What does it mean to be one in Christ? It means that only in Him can we have the security that will relieve us from the suspicions that destroy our unity. Only in Him and with Him as our head will we be able to build a church that can live in theological security while it moves into the twenty-first century.

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## The best gift

*Christmas Eve's packed agenda included supper with the in-laws. Despite the hectic schedule, all went well—until the time to exchange gifts. This story points us again to the One who is the reason for Christmas.*

*What does Christmas mean to you? Faith in all that is good in the world? A selfless spirit of doing for others? Laughter and friendship? Spreading of cheer? The sweet joy of families united? Knowing that you are loved by someone and that you have someone to love? Believing in prayer and the Power who answers it? The joy of giving? Christ's presence, fellowship, and spirit in your life?*

*I hope Christmas means all of this to you. Yet, in the excitement and anticipation of preparing for and thinking of others, it is so easy to forget Christ and His sacrifice, the very reason for which we celebrate Christmas. So easy to forget giving to Him, as well as to others.*

*After reading this article, perhaps you can share with members of your church the author's concept of what Christmas really means, so that they, along with us as ministers' wives, will place Christ first in their lives and give the best of themselves to Him—not only during this special season but throughout the entire year as well.—Marie Spangler.*

'Twas the day before Christmas, and all through the house every creature was stirring—especially me! Sound familiar? At dawn, 5-year-old Kristy bounced into the bedroom, squealing, "Is it Christmas yet?"

My husband, Jim, turned over with one eye open and hissed, "Go back to bed. It's still dark."

"When is Jesus' birthday?" Kristy persisted, burrowing under the covers between us.

"Tomorrow," I said, getting out of bed. Visions of the day's chores danced in my head. Christmas Eve, and I had a

Carole Gift Page writes from Garden Grove, California. Reprinted from the November/December, 1982, *Virtue*. Used by permission.

million things to do! Where had I gone wrong? Hadn't I started preparing for the yuletide holidays even before we had consumed the leftovers from Thanksgiving?

Still groggy, I made a mental list of the day's activities. First thing that morning I had to pick up the gifts of food from each of the neighbors on the block. Each year we gathered food for a needy family in the neighborhood and presented our gift on Christmas morning. This year Jim and I would do the honors.

Hopefully I would have the food gathered and be home in time to fix an early lunch for Kristy and Janice, our 8-year-old. In the afternoon, I would clean house, wrap gifts, and put dinner in the oven to bake while I went to have my hair done. At six, Jim's parents would arrive. Everything would have to be ready, perfect for my hard-to-please in-laws.

The morning passed smoothly enough. I arrived home at eleven, the trunk of the car loaded with boxes and sacks of canned goods, cereals, bread, powdered milk, pastries, and even a turkey.

"Where's the loot?" asked Janice when I entered the house carrying only the turkey.

"In the car," I answered, looking in the refrigerator for a place to stuff the turkey.

"Where's the food we're giving?" said Janice, following me into the kitchen and taking two bottles of milk I handed her.

I removed several Tupperware containers whose contents were questionable and squeezed in the turkey instead. Then, by stacking leftover peas and fruit salad on top of the egg carton, I was able to jam the milk bottles in next to the eggnog and cottage cheese. "The groceries we're giving are in your old Easter basket in the pantry," I answered patiently.

"Easter basket, Easter basket!"

squealed Kristy, running to open the pantry door and clapping gleefully.

"Shut the door," I said.

"Who gets the stuff this year?" said Janice.

"The Clarks," I said, shutting the pantry door.

"The ones with five kids?"

"Yes, Mr. Clark has been sick and out of work almost six months."

"Why do they get our food?" asked Kristy, reluctant to move away from the door.

Opening a can of spaghetti for lunch, I explained. "When it's Christmas we give gifts to others to show our love for Jesus."

"But that's our good food," Kristy argued.

"Of course," I said. The spaghetti was sticking to the pan. "Jesus taught us that if we give to those in need, it is as though we are giving to Him."

"But our food!"

"Kristy, please!"

"What can I give Jesus?" she chirped.

"You don't have nothing," laughed Janice.

"Mommy, I love Jesus," Kristy continued eagerly.

"That's wonderful, darling," I said, dishing up the spaghetti. "Now go wash your hands—and tell Janice to come eat."

After lunch I dusted the furniture, vacuumed the carpet, straightened the kitchen, and baked a cake. Then I hid out in the bedroom, wrapping packages—Kristy's Big Bird from Sesame Street, a transistor radio for Janice, dresses for both the girls, a shirt and cuff links for Jim. And the gift I was proudest of—a beautiful pendant watch for Jim's mother. How I had scoured the stores for just the right gift, something for the woman who has everything. At least it seemed to me that my mother-in-law had everything. What did she lack in possessions, in graciousness, in talents? Somehow, by comparison, I managed to feel slightly awkward and incomplete.

"It's your imagination," Jim would tell me whenever I complained of feeling all thumbs around his mother. Nevertheless, I felt compelled to make everything as perfect as possible for her. And that included tonight—Christmas Eve!

"Now where's the good wrapping paper?" I said, perplexed. All I could find was orange tissue paper and a silver foil with little pink angels riding burros.

I went to the kitchen, where my cake sat cooling. I decided to frost it and then look for the paper. I was putting the last touches on the cake when Kristy skipped blissfully into the kitchen, the pendant watch swinging back and forth.

"Kristy!" I shouted, nearly defacing my glistening chocolate masterpiece with the frosting knife.

"Look at me, Mommy," she purred, her face beaming.

"Put that back!" I cried. "That's a very expensive Christmas gift. It's not to play with."

Kristy looked disconcerted. "Is it the best gift, Mommy?"

"Yes," I snapped. "Now put it back."

I glanced at the clock and saw with alarm that it was time to put the dinner in to bake. And I had only half an hour before my hair appointment. Would I ever have dinner ready by six?

Jim arrived home from work just before it was time for me to leave for my appointment. I kissed him hello and whispered, "Did you get the stocking stuffers for the girls?"

He nodded. "In the car."

"The oven should be all right, but keep an eye on it, OK?" I said, kissing him goodbye.

"What time will Mom and Dad be here?"

"Six. Have the girls put on their good dresses—the red ones hanging on the closet door."

"Will do. It's starting to snow. Looks like we'll have a white Christmas."

"I noticed," I said. "If I'm not back in an hour, turn the fire on under the potatoes."

"This is a terrible time to get your hair done," said Jim.

"I know, darling, but it's the only time Angie could take me today, and I want to look nice for your folks."

"I don't know why you worry about what they think."

"I just want to look my best," I insisted, going to the door.

"Bye, Mommy!" called Janice from the living room.

Kristy came running to kiss me goodbye, a piece of orange tissue paper in one hand, several wax crayons in the other.

"How do you spell *Jesus*?" she asked breathlessly.

"J-E-S-U-S," I answered, leaning down to kiss her.

"I'm making Him a card," she said, holding out the paper for me to see.

"How do you make a J?"

"Ask Daddy," I said, and escaped out the door.

Already darkness was beginning to mute the sky. Christmas carols rang joyously from the car radio, and small dazzling snow flurries floated earthward in a spiraling, slow-motion ballet. I tried to summon some fragment of Christmas spirit, but alas, all I felt was exhausted.

I was Angie's last appointment for the day. She worked quickly and efficiently, talking nonstop all the while. I sat under the dryer, drooling over Christmas recipes in a women's magazine. Occasionally I wondered, Would Jim turn on the fire under the potatoes? Was he watching the oven? Would his parents arrive early?

While Angie combed my hair she told me in detail what she was giving each of

her relatives for Christmas and what she hoped they were giving her. We each said, "Merry Christmas!" as I left the shop, going out into the darkness and the bright, cold taste of new snow. On the way home, I stopped and bought the best foil wrapping paper I could find.

At home the girls were properly dressed, the house was clean, the dinner done, and happily Jim's parents had not yet arrived. Quickly I set the table, cooked cauliflower, and made cheese sauce. I was stirring the gravy when the doorbell rang. I heard Jim say, "Merry Christmas," then his folks echo the greeting. I took off my apron, put on a smile, and went to welcome them.

Actually the dinner went very well. Everyone ate heartily and laughed frequently. It seemed that I had forgotten nothing. The girls were well-behaved, and Jim's mother complimented me on handling everything so well.

After dessert, Kristy and Janice hung up their stockings, kissed everyone good night, and went to bed. The lights from the tree were vivid with color, and the room was warm and cozy. I felt great.

Then I remembered the pendant watch. I hadn't wrapped it yet! As

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## Prayers from the parsonage

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"Your attitude should be the kind that was shown us by Jesus Christ, who, though he was God, did not demand and cling to his rights as God, but laid aside his mighty power and glory, taking the disguise of a slave and becoming like men" (Phil. 2:5-7, T.L.B.).\*

You left a loving Father to live with an adoptive father.

You left streets of gold to walk dusty roads.

You left harmony to cope with political tension.

You left heavenly mansions to sleep on the ground.

You left the tree of life to eat barley loaves.

You left privacy to be jostled by crowds.

You left the heavenly sanctuary to be chased from Your hometown synagogue.

You left adoring angels to deal with quarreling disciples.

You left health to cure disease, holiness to cast out demons.

You left loyal ambassadors to face scheming men.

You left garments of light to be stripped naked.

You left a royal scepter to clasp a broken reed.

You left a dazzling diadem to wear a crown of thorns.

You left kingship to be treated as a criminal.

You left eternal life to risk eternal death.

How could You do it?

I don't know.

But this Christmas I want to say Thank You.

I owe You everything!

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Cherry B. Habenicht



unobtrusively as possible I excused myself and stole to the bedroom. I spread the expensive foil paper out on the bed and went to get the watch. It wasn't on my dresser. It wasn't in any of the drawers. It wasn't on the floor under the bed. It wasn't anywhere in the room! Panic rising in my chest, I hurried to the girls' room. In the darkness I groped among their things, looking for the watch. I couldn't find it! I looked in the hallway and the bathroom. Nothing.

Jim called me. I returned to the living room and glanced about furtively.

"When are we going to open the gifts?" he asked.

"Soon," I said hopefully.

"Is anything wrong, honey?"

"No, not at all," I said, glancing behind the couch.

"Did you lose something, dear?" asked Jim's mother with concern.

"I don't think so," I said.

I scurried into the kitchen and searched counter tops, cupboards, and corners. I found nothing except several pieces to one of Kristy's puzzles and a recipe I had lost a month ago.

In desperation I rushed to the bedroom and wrapped a set of lavender towels I had planned to give my sister.

Jim's mother seemed delighted with the towels, but I felt absolutely deflated. Jim gave me a questioning glance (What happened to the watch?), but I looked away, smiling brightly, and told Jim's dad how much I liked the tie Jim picked out for him.

At ten-thirty Jim's folks left, and I considered the possibility of collapsing into the nearest chair.

"What happened to the watch?" Jim asked as he unbuttoned his shirt.

"I have no idea," I cried dejectedly. "I must have misplaced it. And I wanted everything to be so perfect!"

"It was, honey," said Jim, kissing my cheek. "We'll look for the watch tomorrow, OK? Merry Christmas."

"We still have an hour to go," I mumbled, about to cry. Instead, I blew my nose and went to the kitchen, where the dinner dishes sat in stacks ready to be washed.

"I'll fill the stockings," said Jim. "Then I'm going to bed. How about you, hon?"

"As soon as I finish these dishes," I told him.

It was nearly midnight before the dishes were done and put away. Jim was already asleep, and the house was dark

except for the soft glow of the kitchen light.

Here it is nearly Christmas, I thought, and all I feel is depressed. Somehow, looking back, I felt that the day seemed almost wasted. It had been so filled with activities, and yet now it seemed that I had missed something. Or something was missing in me. The Christmas spirit? Yes, but something even more important than that. What was it?

With this vague emptiness inside me, I dreaded thinking about the morning—the girls' glee and excitement as they opened their gifts, the hurry and bustle as Jim and I took the boxes and sacks of food over to the Clark family.

A practical thought occurred to me then. I had better take our basket of food out of the pantry, or we might forget it in the morning. Opening the pantry door, I reached for the basket, then hesitated as I saw something unfamiliar nestled among the canned goods. A package. Clumsily wrapped in newspaper with an orange tissue paper card attached. I stared at the card—a crude, whimsical drawing of a Christmas tree and underneath, in awkward letters, the name "Jesus."

Quickly I tore open the newspaper wrapping, knowing already what I would find. Yes. The pendant watch. Kristy's gift to Jesus. Of course, the best gift. The best gift to Jesus.

I sat down and stared out the window at the lightly falling snow. For the first time that day, I thought about Jesus my Lord, and my heart began to fill with love for Him. With the love came an ache as I realized how seldom I ever gave Him the best of myself. I was so concerned that I do my best for everyone—except for the One I loved most of all.

Now it was midnight. Christmas. Christ's birthday. I had spent myself preparing for this celebration, but no time had been spent on Him. Or with Him. Nothing for Him.

Yet Kristy wanted God to have her best. She found what she thought was the best gift, wrapped it, made a card, and placed it in the basket as her offering to Jesus. In her own way she had been more faithful than I.

In the quiet of my kitchen I began to pray softly, asking God's forgiveness, asking Him to take first place in my life again. Then I rejoiced, praising God for His gifts to me, for His willingness to forgive and cleanse.

Impulsively I wanted to wake up Jim

and the girls and tell them it was Christmas and that the secret to having the Christmas spirit is Christ—His presence, His fellowship, His Spirit! But I would have to wait. In the morning they would see my joy and recognize the difference in me. Tonight all I could do was gently, lovingly, return Kristy's gift to its rightful place in the Christmas basket.

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## Is your church ...

From page 19

denominational level has a personal secretary who is paid from tithe funds, how much more should that be true of our front-line troops—our local pastors.

It may be argued that in any major corporation, the executives in the home office have secretaries who are hired and paid from company funds, and not the individual salesperson out in the field.

The fallacy of that argument lies in the dissimilarity of the two organizations. In the commercial enterprise the troops are out in the field for the benefit of "the company." Their success is predicated on their making a profit for the home office and a living for themselves in the meantime.

A church is different. The success of what we're about is not in what we "send in to the office." The basic organizational unit in this denomination is the local church. All else is only support structure. And that support structure must stay as lean as possible in order to pour maximum resources back into the local church.

And that leads me to a final suggestion. A formula should be devised under which a church meets a set of criteria and is then eligible for an additional staff person. The research is available to indicate when staffing is the determinative factor in a church's growth pattern, and at that point it would not only be advantageous for the local church, it would also be an excellent investment for the Conference.

If we provide secretaries and additional staff members in our churches, will that mean that our pastors can take it easy? No committed pastor wants to. But it will mean that many of our churches will break through previously unattainable growth levels. And that is what we all want.

## Sermons in stones

*What insights does a geological neophyte gain into the first eleven chapters of Genesis after spending sixteen days and 2,800 miles on the 1983 Geoscience Field Conference? Here are five conclusions.*

Why would a group of church leaders, editors, and administrators (including the General Conference president, secretary, and treasurer, as well as the presidents of the various world divisions) spend more than two weeks on a bus traveling over Montana, Wyoming, Utah, and Arizona looking at rock formations and listening to lectures on geology, biology, chronology, paleontology, and assorted other ologies?

Why indeed? Don't such persons have more pressing and important matters to occupy their time and attention?

There is never a lack of pressing and important matters clamoring for attention, but the presence of these individuals on the 1983 Geoscience Field Conference indicates the significance with which they view the issues involved in creationism at this time.

The basic issue, of course, is whether chapters 1-11 of Genesis are to be considered as a historical and factual account of the origin of this world and the life that is on it, and of a subsequent global inundation by a catastrophic flood of water. At one time church bodies and their members had few doubts about the historicity of Genesis in this area. Then, as evolutionists formulated their theories and marshaled their scientific evidences, a process of accommodation by Christians began. Today at least eight models for origins exist between the creationism described in Genesis, on the one hand, and naturalistic evolution, on the other. Each of these eight models attempts, in varying degrees, to combine both ends of the spectrum.

A September, 1982, Gallup poll of the U.S. population 18 years of age and older suggests how successful such intermediate concepts have become. The sample showed that only 9 percent believe that man has developed over millions of years from less advanced life forms without any participation by God. Forty-four percent felt that God had created man in his present form at one time within the past

ten thousand years. But 38 percent took some intermediate position in which God guided the evolution of man through millions of years of advancement from lower forms of life.

Informal surveys among Seventh-day Adventist students and faculty at church institutions of higher learning seem to indicate that, although the percentage of those agreeing with a creationist viewpoint is higher than among the general population, a discernible lessening of belief in the historicity of Genesis 1-11 has taken place in the past two decades.

This is disquieting, of course, to a church that has always seen clearly the connection between a literal Creation week of six days and the Sabbath memorial to that historic event. It was to acquaint ourselves with the issues, the geological evidences for creationism and a worldwide flood (as well as the problems), and to understand better the relationship between nature and Scripture that twenty-one of us accepted the invitation of the Geoscience Research Institute personnel to attend the 1983 field conference September 13-28. After sixteen days and 2,800 miles, the group felt it had accomplished these objectives—and more.

The five Geoscience Research Institute staff members had carefully organized each day's activities—planned the amount of time required for each activity and spelled everything out with scientific precision in a fat syllabus. They had even prepared a detailed road log for each portion of the trip, giving almost a mile-by-mile geological and historical description! The typical day began at seven-forty-five, when we boarded the bus, and continued until nine-thirty in the evening, when we concluded the final lecture. Practically every moment between was filled with traveling, observing, discussing, hiking, listening, and learning. (There were a few free periods scattered throughout the schedule, and no one ever complained about

the long days.) In addition to the members of the Geoscience Research Institute, resource personnel from Loma Linda University, Andrews University, and the Ellen G. White Estate shared their expertise with us.

We met in Bozeman, Montana, and got off to an arduous start the first full day with a six-mile hike into the petrified forests of Yellowstone National Park. Then we wound through the Wind River range of central Wyoming and into the Flaming Gorge area of Utah. We observed coal seams in central Utah, beautiful and graceful red sandstone arches at Moab, and the pillars of Monument Valley. At the Grand Canyon we hiked for several miles down through the various geological strata on narrow, twisting trails shared with mules. We saw the colorful patterns of Bryce Canyon and the majestic cliffs of Zion National Park. We climbed mountains, hunted fossils, walked through caves, and even forded a shallow river with a Trailways bus!

An added benefit was the fellowship. For sixteen days we were able to eat, talk, and pray together, to become acquainted with people from all over the world, many of whom we had not known before. We laughed together and teased one another; a half dozen even got sick from the water together!

Driving back to our hotel from the Wasatch Hills SDA church in Salt Lake City (where we had our final meeting and where the ladies fed us a lovely meal), our driver for the entire trip, Paul Keplinger, came on the microphone. "I have something I'd like to say to this group," he announced. "You are observant people and you've noticed that I'm not a particularly religious person. But I have to say you have impressed me on this trip—not so much by what you say, but by what you do. If you make the same impression on others as you have on me I'm sure your church will prosper."

We soon arrived at the hotel, and as

we left the bus for the last time it seemed strange for a moment to think we wouldn't be getting back on the next morning as we had every day for the past two weeks.

What did I personally gain from this field conference? Many things. Some I have tried to describe in this report. From a scientific standpoint I'm sure I would disappoint the Geoscience Research Institute staff if I had to take an exam on the material we covered. I didn't have the background to absorb all the technical details, but I'll never forget such terms as Morrison formation, Navajo sandstone, and Mancos shale. I did assimilate a great deal of information and impressions, however. Here are the five most central concepts I took away from the tour:

1. Neither Creation nor evolution can be proved scientifically. The question of origins lies basically outside the realm of science, since it is a unique event that has not been witnessed and cannot be replicated. This is not to say that evidence does not exist or cannot be studied. There is a great deal of solid evidence for creationism. However, one's view of origins is essentially a

matter of faith.

2. The geological record in the rocks and the scientific evidence in other areas hold problems for the creationist, but the same is certainly true for the evolutionist, as well. Often we were shown where two rock layers from separated areas of the geological column lie one atop the other, causing a "gap" of several million years. Where they join, the two layers mesh perfectly, showing no evidence of erosion. Because these layers represent to the evolutionist widely different time periods, he is forced to postulate that the lower strata existed for millions of years undisturbed by erosion, waiting for the deposition of the missing rock layer that never came—an unlikely occurrence at best.

The creationist is not without his problems too. For example, how do we explain the fact that most marsupials are indigenous only to Australia if we believe that all the animals emerged from the ark following the Flood and spread out over the earth from a common source?

3. There is an increasing trend among geologists to recognize the role of catastrophe in producing what we currently

see in the earth's crust. This does not mean at all that these individuals are leaning now toward creationism. Many, however, are rejecting the rigid uniformitarianism of the past as inadequate. In this new view, long ages of undisturbed, gradual change are punctuated by brief periods of catastrophic activity.

4. Creationists have a definite responsibility to examine the scientific evidence candidly, to conduct their research as reputable scientists who accept the recognized principles of their particular field, and to admit problems when they occur. Scientific evidence may often be interpreted in a variety of ways, but it does not increase one's credibility in the scientific community to ignore or deny the evidence.

5. A personal conviction grew as I continued to observe the scenes we were being shown: Only an all-wise, all-powerful God could have devised and fashioned such mighty works. Only such a God could have caused the upheaval and violent catastrophe necessary to produce such evidences in the earth as those I saw. Only such a God could have brought out of this incomprehensible violence a new kind of beauty.—B.R.H.

## Statement of affirmation

We, the participants of the 1983 Geoscience Field Conference, affirm our belief—

1. In the validity of the scriptural record as an authentic and historical description of the origin of our world. We rejoice in the creative power of God and with the psalmist declare, "The Lord he is God; it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Ps. 100:3).

2. That the Biblical record requires a short chronology of approximately 6,000 years in contrast to tens of thousands or millions of years.

3. That the Old Testament narrative of a global flood is supported in the New Testament by our Lord, who compared earth's final destruction to that of Noah's day (Matt. 24:37-39). It is spoken of also by the apostle Peter, who reminds us that "the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water" (1 Peter 3:20).

4. In the importance of honoring the seventh-day Sabbath as a memorial of a literal Creation week in accord with God's Ten Commandments, the Sabbath being a

vital element of God's last appeal to the world, calling every nation, kindred, tongue, and people to "worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:7).

5. That secular humanistic theories such as the evolutionary model or those theories intermediate between Creation and evolution that extend the Creation process into a long, indefinite period have no place in the belief system of our church (see 2 Peter 3:3-6).

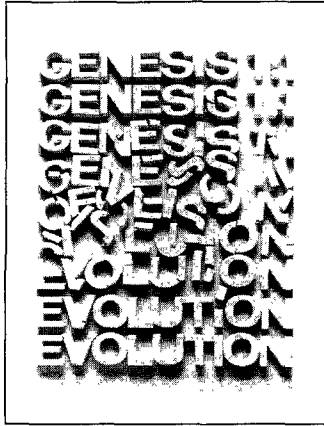
6. That there is fundamental agreement between God's book of nature and the revealed Word when they are correctly interpreted.

7. That the creationist-catastrophic model best explains that information derived from revelation and science. At the same time we recognize that limits of understanding and a personal belief system characterize all approaches to interpreting data touching on the earth's past. We further believe in the value of scientific study as a method of approaching natural phenomena, a premise that underlies denominational sponsorship of the Geoscience Research

Institute.

### List of participants

C. E. Bradford, North American Division  
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L. L. Butler, General Conference  
G. J. Christo, Southern Asia Division  
W. T. Clark, Far Eastern Division  
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B. Heye, Eastern Africa Division  
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## Authors

- Anderson, David L. *The People of God in Ministry*, by William K. McElvaney. Mar 32
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- Beaven, Winton H. *The Family: Bulwark Against Alcoholism*. Jul 4
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## We need your advice

In the past several issues we've been announcing that our Parson to Parson feature will begin with the January issue. As you will remember, it's to consist of particularly prickly problems the practice of ministry poses to pastors, and a variety of responses volunteered by readers as to how they have handled or would handle the situations. We still are soliciting questions (we will pay \$15 for each question used), but now we also need responses to questions we will be using in our April and June issues. (As you can see, we have to work quite far in advance! We need your responses right away, especially for our April deadline.) The questions are:

1. The *Church Manual* states relatively clearly the circumstances under which we should disfellowship members. But the criteria for censuring them are not so clear. One of my members had a baby out of wedlock. She admits what she has done is wrong and plans on rebaptism. Because her attitude is good, I do not want to have her censured, but some members of my church insist that according to the *Manual* she must be. What should I do?

2. We are bringing a number of new, young families into our church through evangelism. The Adventist life style is foreign to them; their role models for family life, discipline, et cetera, have not been Adventists. How can I help them with family worship, handling children in church, and other parts of the Adventist

life style that are so unfamiliar to them?

Send your suggestions to: Parson to Parson, MINISTRY, 6840 Eastern Avenue, NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

## CPE training

Kettering Medical Center is offering five positions in a twelve-month residency in clinical pastoral education (CPE) beginning September, 1984. The program is designed for those who wish to improve their pastoral care and counseling skills for parish ministry or to work toward certification as a hospital chaplain. Stipends up to \$12,000 are available, but your application must be received by January 15, 1984. A seminary degree and at least one unit of basic CPE are prerequisites for the residency. Application forms and further information may be obtained from Chaplain Darrell Nicola, Kettering Medical Center, 3535 Southern Boulevard, Kettering, Ohio 45429. (513) 296-7240.

## Laser-disc concordance

The laser-disc *Ellen G. White Concordance* has been marketed recently and already has proved to be of immense value in EGW studies. Produced by an Adventist lay concern known by the trade name of Select Video Products, this unabridged concordance provides an in-context list for every significant word used in the EGW writings. By taking advantage of the newly developed laser technology, it can incorporate a large amount of data into a relatively small storage area.

The five discs display a total of 500,000 pages of material. Each page has eighteen entries, or eighteen lines, and each line gives approximately an eight-word context for each indexed word. That's a total of more than 70 million words! The advantage of the concordance is that it gives fairly quick access to virtually any statement made by Ellen White in her published writings (and even much of her unpublished material). For example, she made one reference to "marmalade" and three references to "millionaire," which probably you would never locate without the concordance. All that you need to accompany the discs is a laser-disc player and any television set. The discs and the player are sold as a unit or separately. Contact either your local Adventist Book Center, or Select Video Products, Bakersfield, California, (805) 322-5053.

## Evangelistic slides

After years of field testing and refining, Pastor Orley Berg, who for almost fifteen years was associated with MINISTRY and the General Conference Ministerial Association, has developed an evangelistic series, complete with slides, that is ready for the pastor to use.

Comprised of twenty-six fully illustrated lectures, the series has 351 pages of script indicating just where each slide is to be used. A summary sheet for each lecture reviews the high points of the subject and opens the way for intensifying the appeal. A large portion of

the pictures in the series are the result of Berg's frequent travels through Europe and the Middle East, the most recent being in 1982.

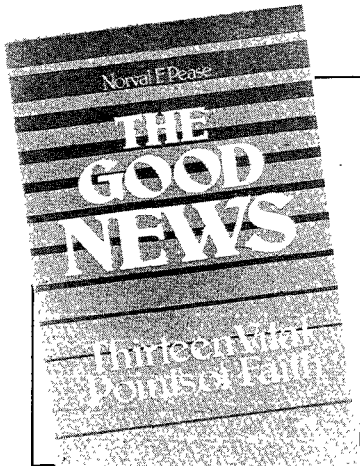
The first nine lectures cover the history of the Christian church in the framework of the seven letters to the seven churches of Revelation. Lecture ten introduces the Millerite movement and the Advent Awakening as foretold in Revelation 10. Revelation 12 and 14 are covered in the setting of the Advent Movement.

Church history comes alive in the remaining lectures with actual views of the places where great events took place—from the Rome of the Caesars to the scenes associated with the popes, the Reformers, and the preachers of the eighteenth-century Great Awakening.

The slides are produced on regular Ektachrome film and are guaranteed not to fade. Both the film and the E6 processing it requires are considerably more expensive than that usually used in mass production. Yet special cost-cutting arrangements make it possible to make these slides available at less than half the normal cost. The entire set, including syllabus and summary sheets, costs only \$599.

Send check with order directly to: Bible Lands Pictures, 45356 N. Oak View Drive, Oakhurst, California 93644. Or write for further details and descriptive materials. Printed lectures with summary sheets are available separately for \$6.50 per set. Postage not included.

# Recommended reading



## The Good News

Norval F. Pease, *Review and Herald Publishing Association*, 1982, 126 pages, \$4.95 paper. Reviewed by B. Russell Holt, executive editor, *MINISTRY*.

Here is a book pastors can use in preparing prospective church members for baptism. Norval F. Pease, a pastor, college president, and professor of applied theology at both Andrews University and Loma Linda University before his retirement, has taken the thirteen articles of the baptismal vow as printed in the *Church Manual* and prepared a chapter on each. Every doctrine is presented in the context of good news, hence the book's title.

According to Dr. Pease, each belief is "centered in Christ, and all are intended to show how a person can become a Christian, how he can be a Christian, and how he can finally be among the redeemed in the kingdom of God." The author disclaims having written an exhaustive theological treatise on each doctrine. Rather, the subjects are dealt with on a practical (and quite readable) level.

The book should be valuable for prospective and established members alike.

## Psychic Healing: An Exposé of an Occult Phenomenon.

John Weldon and Zola Levitt, *Moody Press*, 1982, 250 pages, \$4.95, paper. Reviewed by Michael E. Cafferky, Pastor, Swanton, Ohio.

For those interested in a summary of the world of paranormal healing experiences, this volume offers a conservative Christian approach to the topic. It asserts that almost all psychic healing methods involve contact with supernatural "powers." By analyzing the claims of psychic healers, it demonstrates the remarkable similarity to primitive occultism. When a psychic healer is experiencing an "altered state of consciousness" during a healing experience, his rational intelligence is usually bypassed by the "higher" power that controls him. Even though research on cure rates is incomplete, the authors suggest that the healings are generally ineffective apart from any placebo effects or natural remissions that occur. While they have raised some helpful points in their portrayal of the Biblical view of the occult, they could have provided a more thorough analysis of Biblical statements on the subject.

## Early Adventist Educators

George R. Knight, ed., *Andrews University Press*, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1983, 250 pages plus 12 pages of photos, \$9.95. Reviewed by W. H. Johns, associate editor, *MINISTRY*.

Long overdue has been a book of this nature dealing with the critical formative years of Adventist education. Now Seventh-day Adventists have a definitive treatment of their educational beginnings that can be of value not only to the church as a whole but also to the world of scholarship seeking to unravel the marvel of how a very successful worldwide educational endeavor came to be.

*Early Adventist Educators* is unique in that it follows a biographical approach, in contrast with previous works that have been written from the perspective of institutions or general SDA history. The focus is upon eleven individuals who have left a lasting impact on SDA educational work: James White, Ellen G. White, Goodloe H. Bell, Sidney Brownsberger, J. H. Kellogg, W. W.

Prescott, James Edson White, E. A. Sutherland, Frederick Griggs, P. T. Magan, and Anna Knight. Written for the most part by experienced educators of the church today, the book is scholarly and readable, providing information that has not been readily accessible heretofore. Three chapters are outgrowths of recent doctoral studies on Bell, Sutherland, and Griggs. This work should serve to correct many misconceptions long promulgated about our early history. For example, Sidney Brownsberger has been depicted almost as a scapegoat for the failures at Battle Creek College because of his emphasis on classical education. Calling him "a forgotten man in Adventist education," Joseph Smoot points out that Brownsberger did make positive contributions not only at Battle Creek but also at Healdsburg in establishing what is now known as Pacific Union College.

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