



The Sabbath Watchman

May-June 2016

Spiritual Midwives

page 4

Report—Special Sabbath School Offerings

page 14

The Daily—Then and Now

page 19



Peace and Vengeance

It is turning out to be another busy summer, not only with conferences and other church-related activities, but especially in the world. For one, another full-size Noah's Ark is getting ready to open to the public, this time in America. But this model is not made to float like the one in Holland, that was constructed a few years ago. The one near Cincinnati, Ohio, will be full of displays on how it was possible for Noah and his family and all the different "kinds" of land animals and birds to survive for a year on that huge boat. It is getting a lot of attention from the liberal press, mostly negative. The dominant press is clearly closed to any possibility of the Bible's being true. Meanwhile, more and more scientific studies are showing that geological and other evidence supports catastrophism as the origin of the earth, not slow and gradual change over millions of years. But most scientists "cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door."

"On the 9th of January in 1997, famous American evolutionary biologist and Harvard professor Richard Lewontin published a review of [Cornell University's] Carl Sagan's book *The Demon-Haunted World* in *The New York Review*. Lewontin noted that a number of ideas in science don't make a great deal of immediate sense. "What seems absurd," Lewontin wrote, "depends on one's prejudice." -https://www.khouse.org/enews_article/2010/1675/print.

In that review, Lewontin made another startling admission, now widely circulated, that demonstrates the bias of scientific materialism: "We have a *priori* commitment, a commitment to materialism. It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our *a priori* adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door."

Today anyone employed in mainstream "science" who opposes the assumptions of materialism is either marginalized or terminated. When one assumes in advance that God does not exist, he will never see a designer as even a part of the answer to anything—ever.

A decade before Lewontin and Sagan, another Cornell professor, philosopher Allan Bloom, published the book, *The Closing of the American Mind*. The dustcover defines the scope of the book as "how higher education has failed democracy and impoverished the souls of today's students." Bloom argued that "openness" has vanished from almost all universities and has been replaced with absolutist dogmas. He also categorically declared that the degree of freedom to form different opinions and exercise critical thinking within any society defines that culture.

An indication that we are at the end of time (and one that is not usually mentioned) is that people's minds are becoming increasingly polarized—closed, if you will. See Revelation 22:11. While some minds are already closed, not all are, so we still have a little time to reach out.

This issue provides evidence for faith in God and the Scriptures. While many in the world are using violence against those who disagree with them—or are using violence to try to overcome violence—let us heed the words of the apostle Paul: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Romans 12:19.



"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Romans 12:18.

The Sabbath Watchman

Vol. 91, No. 3

Beacon of hope, faith, and truth in a confused world.

We believe:

- The all-wise, loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ; He is its Owner and Sustainer.
- He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh.
- The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth, convicts of sin, guides into truth, and, when abiding in man, overcomes all unrighteousness.
- The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine; the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform.
- His people, in harmony with God's Word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus.
- Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

THE SABBATH WATCHMAN is the official publication of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement, International Missionary Society, General Conference, 625 West Avenue, Cedartown, GA 30125. Phone 770-748-0077 / Fax 770-748-0095 / Email info@sda1844.org / Website www.sda1844.org.

Published six times per year by the General Conference Publishing Department. Printed and distributed by Religious Liberty Publishing Assn. Mail or email subscription orders to 9999 East Mississippi Avenue, Denver, CO 80247 / info@sda1888.org. Annual rate (U.S. funds only): U.S.A.-\$30; Foreign-\$45. Phone 916-765-3389 / Website www.sda1888.org.

In this issue

Spiritual Midwives

Idel Suarez, Jr.

Every believer must be swaddled in the garment of the Lord Our Righteousness.

4



A Powerful Witness in Senegal

Judicael Luboya

If one chooses a different religion, this is synonymous with leaving the community.

10



On Predestination

John Wesley

God is clear from the blood of all men, since whoever perishes does so by his own act and deed.

11



Report—Special Sabbath School Offerings

"Thank you" to all who have given for and managed the Special Sabbath School Offering projects!

14



The Touch

Ellen G. White

It is for our own benefit to keep every gift of God fresh in our memory.

17



The Daily—Then and Now

Larry Watts

"Daniel 8 and 9 provided direction for this church as a compass directs a ship."

19



INSETES 25th Anniversary

The missionary school in Colombia has educated ten graduating classes.

24



News to Inspire

Story from Hewa Bora, Congo. Going forward in Burkina Faso. African Division gathering in Malawi. Uplifting the word in South Africa. Activities in Senegal. Devastating earthquake in Ecuador.

25



Finite Man Will Wonder and Adore

Amazing things are ahead.

28





Spiritual Midwives

By Idel Suarez, Jr.

Let us discuss some archaeological and historical evidence of midwifery in Egypt and then draw parallels between the events related to the Hebrew midwives in Egypt as a spiritual lesson and the prophecies concerning the work of the saints in the last days before the exodus of God's people from this earth to the heavenly Canaan.

Two noble midwives

"And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiprah, and the name of the other Puah." Exodus 1:15.

King of Egypt. The king of Egypt was called Pharaoh—the son of the sun god Ra. He was a king of a new dynasty. He must have known about Joseph but did not care to acknowledge Joseph's good deeds nor the Hebrew God of Joseph. Prophetically speaking, that Pharaoh of Egypt represents all worldly powers at the end of time before the mass exodus of God's people from earth to heaven.

Hebrew midwives. The office of the midwife was an ancient profession for women. In English the word "midwife" means "to be with the mother," or "the women that stood by" at birth.¹

There is archaeological evidence of midwifery in Egypt. There is an Egyptian relief in Dendra dating to the time of the Ptolomeic period showing a birthing scene. Two cow-horned Hathor goddesses, acting as midwives, assist a woman in labor. One holds the pregnant woman's left elbow, and another holds her right elbow while raising her hand as if consoling the pregnant woman suffering from labor pains.²

Midwifery is a very ancient profession held primarily by women. The first mention of midwives in the Bible is in the book of Genesis. A midwife assisted Rachel during the birth of her son Benjamin. Rachel was dying, but the midwife offered her hope that the infant would live.

"And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also." Genesis 35:17.

The midwives were Hebrews, as the Scriptures clearly state. Every believer needs to be a spiritual midwife and to train others to become "soul winners." Why? Because no person will be welcomed into heaven without having brought someone else to Christ, the reason being that, as Paul writes to Timothy, in saving others we contribute to our own salvation by God's grace. "For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." I Timothy 4:16. Or, as the wise Solomon wrote, in helping others we really help ourselves. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself. Proverbs 11:25.

Like the midwives of the Bible, every pastor, elder, and lay missionary member of God's church is to inspire other people to hope, especially in their dying moments. Through Christ, salvation can be offered even to those on their deathbeds. I recall a counseling course I took, in which the professor said, "In counseling, you must never cease to offer hope to those in need."

Moreover, there are many who are in "hard labor," and they need to hear words of hope. Everyone in the ministry is to offer hope. The apostle Paul writes to the Romans that the whole creation is in labor pains, waiting for the return of Christ; and everyone needs hope when they

Pharaoh of Egypt
represents all
worldly powers at
the end of time.

are in pain. We are saved by grace, through faith, but also by hope. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope." Romans 8:22-24.

Shiphrah, and Puah. Interestingly, we know the names of the two midwives, but the Scriptures do not mention the name of the ruling Pharaoh! Before God, the names of the righteous are remembered and written in His book of memory. Yet the names of the wicked will be blotted from the books of heaven and from the memory of the saints in the millennia to come. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name." Malachi 3:16.

Hollywood has a sidewalk with plaques for the names of movie stars, but God has a book of remembrance that records all the good deeds that His children do in this life for His glory and through His grace.

The Midrash says that "Shiphrah" is similar to the Hebrew word "*she-paru*," meaning "multiplied."³ It was through this woman's faithful, conscientious actions that Israel multiplied. Others claim that "Shiphrah" means "to be beautiful."⁴ Truly, those who fear to offend God and who keep His commandments are "beautiful" in His sight.

The Midrash also states that "Puah" means "to revive," because she revived infants by resuscitating those who were not adequately breathing. Puah used "artificial respiration by blowing into the child's mouth."⁵

According to Hebrew tradition, Shiphrah was the leader, and Puah was her assistant. "Shiphrah being the one who dressed the infant, Puah, the one who whispered to it... [and used] artificial respiration" if the infant needed it.⁶

There is extrabiblical evidence for the name "Shiphrah" in Egypt. This name appears in an Egyptian papyrus found in Thebes and now kept at the Brooklyn Museum. In June 2015, during a layover in Brooklyn, I had the privilege of seeing firsthand the Brooklyn Papyrus,

dating to the Middle Kingdom. It was kept under covers to protect it from damage from light. The Papyrus includes the names of a total of 40 Asiatics or Hebrews who were kept at a Thebean household as slaves.⁷ Although the Thebean slave Shiphrah was probably not the same person in the Exodus narrative, it provides evidence that it was a common Hebrew name in Egypt before the exodus.

A hidden evil agenda

"And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live." Exodus 1:16.

Stools. Pharaoh mentioned the position in which women typically gave birth in Egypt, using birthing stools. The Egyptian relief mentioned earlier shows such a woman squatting over two bricks inside a birthing-like chair.⁸

The Egyptian hieroglyphic word for birth is *mswt*. It has a pictograph of a woman squatting and giving birth.⁹ It seems that the Egyptians used birthing bricks or stools to give birth. "The woman in labour normally squatted in a birthing stool."¹⁰

The Egyptians even have a song that says, "I sat upon the brick(s) like the pregnant woman."¹¹ This further corroborates the Biblical account of women crouching on two bricks to give birth in Egypt, which Pharaoh referenced.

Similarly, the book of Samuel tells that, when Phinehas' wife gave birth, she squatted or "bowed down" to deliver her baby. She was assisted by midwives, who tried to console her, but they were unable to save her life in this childbirth. "Phinehas' wife, was with child, near to be delivered: and ... she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came upon her. And about the time of her death the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast borne a son. But she answered not, neither did she regard it." 1 Samuel 4:19, 20.

Back to Egypt, Pharaoh was frightened of the multiplication of the Hebrews in the land of Egypt. He, like Herod, was inspired by the evil one to try and prevent the coming of the Deliverer. In the case of Pharaoh in Egypt, this

God has a book of remembrance that records all the good deeds that His children do in this life for His glory and through His grace.

infanticide of males was to prevent the birth of Moses. In the case of Herod in Judah, the infanticide mandated by Herod was to kill the promised Messiah—Jesus Christ.

For many years, there was a similar practice in China. The government mandated that families could have only one child. Hence, many women opted for abortion and infanticide if the gender of their child was female. China eventually abandoned that practice, since the ratio between men and women was so skewed that it caused problems in their nation. Also with so many one-child families, the elderly population would come to be an economic burden on the new generation, making it unable to meet the desired economic development.¹²



Civil disobedience

“But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.” Exodus 1:17.

“Did not as the king commanded.” Some claim that these two Hebrew midwives are “history’s first recorded case of civil disobedience in defense of a moral cause.”¹³ Although the reigning Pharaoh ordered them to kill every male infant, they did not. They upheld the Biblical principle championed by the apostle Peter 1,500 years later. “But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.” “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 4:19; 5:29.

During the Nuremberg Trials after World War II, many Nazis war criminals were questioned as to why they had participated in the cruel torture and death of Jews, Roma, Polish, and other individuals in concentration camps. Their reply was simply that they were carrying out the orders from higher officials. The Nazis war criminals claimed that only the “state,” not “individuals,” could be held responsible for war crimes.¹⁴

However, the Hebrew midwives demonstrated a higher level of morality and represent the faithful who throughout time choose to obey God’s law rather than the laws of men when such laws mandate immorality.

Ellen G. White wrote that it is a Christian “duty in every case to obey the laws of our land, unless they conflict with the higher law which God spoke with an audible voice from Sinai, and afterward engraved on stone with His own finger.”¹⁵

“He who has God’s law written in the heart will obey God rather than men, and will sooner disobey all men than deviate in the least from the commandment of God. God’s people, taught by the inspiration of truth, and led by a good conscience to live by every word of God, will take His law, written in their hearts, as the only authority which they can acknowledge or consent to obey. The wisdom and authority of the divine law are supreme.”¹⁶

Therefore, the two midwives represented the faithful people in the last generation before the exodus to heaven who will not obey the state’s mandate to keep a Sunday law. They will exercise civil disobedience, because, like Peter, they regard Heaven’s laws as above human laws. Like the midwives, they will fear God and not do as the king or governor commands.

“And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive?” Exodus 1:18.

Saved the men children alive. Pharaoh personally summoned the midwives and questioned them as to why these women saved the male infants. He realized that the male babies were not being slaughtered as he had commanded. These midwives were deliberately preserving the lives of the male infants; they did not sanction infanticide. They regarded infanticide as transgression of God’s law. Here is a powerful argument against abortion and infanticide. Christian ministers and members are to bring salvation and life, not condemnation and death, to their communities. Jesus said, “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10:10.

Midwives’ responsibilities

“And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for

The Hebrew midwives demonstrated a higher level of morality and represent the faithful who throughout time choose to obey God’s law rather than the laws of men.

they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them." Exodus 1:19.

Delivered. The midwives explained to the Pharaoh that in many cases the Hebrew women delivered their own babies by the time the midwives arrived. My paternal grandmother was such a woman. She gave birth to her children by herself, cut the cord, washed the little one, and swaddled it without any assistance.

"There is no record in the Bible of a male assisting at birth.¹⁷ This was a profession exclusively for women in the Biblical narrative.

In fact, Sister Ellen G. White advised that only women should do the services of midwifery. She encouraged women to enter the midwifery field. She did not believe that men should attend women in labor nor perform the duties of obstetrics and gynecology. Her thoughts were very similar to those of many Hindus and Muslims today. They despise the thought of any man attending their wives.

"It is not in harmony with the instruction given at Sinai that gentlemen physicians should do the work of midwives. The Bible speaks of women at childbirth being attended by women, and thus it ought always to be. Women should be educated and trained to act skillfully as midwives and physicians to their sex. This is the Lord's plan. Let us educate ladies to become intelligent in the work of treating the diseases of their sex. We ought to have a school where women can be educated by women physicians to do the best possible work in treating the diseases of women."¹⁸

When the pregnant woman's water breaks—that is, the fetal sac tears open and its fluid leaks out—the pregnant woman in labor knows that her baby is coming soon. Within 24 hours of the "water break," the infant must be born to avoid complications.

There is a striking similarity between the natural birth of an infant assisted by a midwife and the spiritual birth into the kingdom of grace. As the infant is born with water and blood, so the Christian completes his or her spiritual birth with baptism by water. Conception itself refers to the joining of the sperm with the ovum, so the spiritual conception refers to that awakening in the heart that is brought about by the Holy Spirit.

The Old Testament tells how the midwives were to attend a woman in labor, receiving the infant as it passed through the birth canal. They would then dress the baby as the prophet Ezekiel described was not done to disobedient Israel. "And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all." Ezekiel 16:4.

As a matter of fact, the Egyptian Westcar Papyrus, which dates to the 15th dynasty of the Middle Kingdom,¹⁹ mentions the same steps as given by Ezekiel of a midwife taking care of a newborn. "Then they washed him, and his umbilical cord (*khepa*) was cut (*shad*). He was placed in cloth...."²⁰

The umbilical cord cut. The text in Ezekiel not only describes the post-partum responsibility of the midwife, but it also shadows or mirrors the role of the pastor, elder, or lay missionary in the salvation of a soul. After birth, the midwife was to cut the umbilical cord.

I remember when each of my three daughters was born. I was in the room next to my wife and assisted the midwives. They clamped the umbilical cord which connected the infant to the placenta, but I was given the scissors and the honor of cutting the cord. Such an event has huge Biblical implications.

Those in the ministry are to assist the newborn Christian to cut his or her ties with the world, with sin, and with the evil one. The infant cannot remain attached to his previous situation. Neither can the new being in Christ Jesus retain the old habits and customs of unbelievers. There must be a complete separation.

The apostle Paul reminds us that as Christians we are called to separate from the world, to come out from spiritual Egypt, to abandon all spiritual uncleanness. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18.

Washed with water. Babies are born wet, covered by vernix, a white waxy or cheese-like substance, and sometimes very bloody. It is necessary to give them a warm bath and remove all blood and vernix from their skin.

The infant cannot remain attached to his previous situation. Neither can the new being in Christ Jesus retain the old habits and customs.



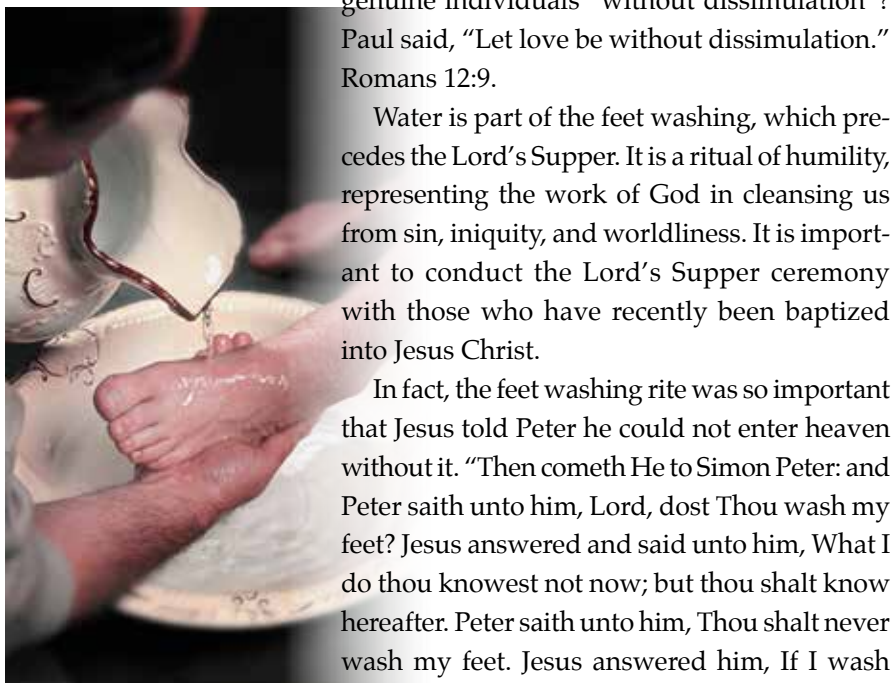
The swaddling
which midwives do
is a symbol of the
righteousness of
Christ.

Jesus is the water from the fountain of Jerusalem that cleanses the whole house of David. Every believer belongs to the house of David, a forefather of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus alone can wash our sins and uncleanness away by His blood. Zechariah portrays Jesus as a living fountain, a deep well, and an overflowing spring. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." Zechariah 13:1.

Each of my daughters had a different birth experience. Likewise, every believer has a unique conversion experience. My first daughter was bathed in blood at birth. My wife lost a lot of blood with her first natural delivery. My second daughter was born with a mask. The embryonic sac which holds the baby and the fetal fluid was wrapped around her face. The midwife had to remove it quickly to keep her from suffocating. And my third daughter was born "sunny side" up. Most infants are born looking down, but she was born facing toward heaven. Should not all of us be born again facing heaven? Should not all spiritual midwives help the newborns in Christ to remove their masks and learn to be genuine individuals "without dissimulation"? Paul said, "Let love be without dissimulation." Romans 12:9.

Water is part of the feet washing, which precedes the Lord's Supper. It is a ritual of humility, representing the work of God in cleansing us from sin, iniquity, and worldliness. It is important to conduct the Lord's Supper ceremony with those who have recently been baptized into Jesus Christ.

In fact, the feet washing rite was so important that Jesus told Peter he could not enter heaven without it. "Then cometh He to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost Thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all." John 13:6-10.



Furthermore, just like a baby cannot be born naturally without water and blood, so a Christian cannot be saved without baptism and faith in the blood of Christ. Both the water and the blood show Jesus' role in the salvation of the soul. "This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." 1 John 5:6.

Salted. Salt is an antimicrobial agent. The midwife rubbed the newborn's skin with salt.²¹

When the salt concentration in a particular food increases, it is preserved from being spoiled. The ancient sailors who crossed the Atlantic would salt their food so as to preserve it. Likewise, salt was used to kill off any dangerous microbes that the child may have picked up while passing through the birth canal.

Salt can be equated with speaking a word in due season, or proper words at the right time. Paul tells us that as Christians we need to learn how to speak the right word at the right moment. This is a true Christian virtue, science, and art. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Colossians 4:6.

Jesus said all Christians are to be the "salt of the earth." Matthew 5:13. We can produce a thirst for Christ in others. It is said that you cannot make a donkey drink water, but you can put salt in his mouth so that he desires water. Spiritually, we need to do the same. We need to create a natural thirst for the living water of Jesus Christ by God's grace.

Swaddled. The newborn must be quickly clothed so it does not lose body heat. I recall dressing each of my daughters in fresh new clothes immediately after they were washed. In America, infants usually are dressed in 100% cotton clothes, in a garment which covers their entire body with a zipper in the front. A small cap is also placed over their heads and gloves over their tiny hands so they do not scratch their eyes or skin unknowingly. Only natural fibers should be used on newborns and infants to avoid any allergic reactions and to allow for natural breathing of the skin.

The swaddling which midwives do is a symbol of the righteousness of Christ. Every

believer must be swaddled in the garment of the Lord Our Righteousness. It is that heavenly garment that covers our nakedness.

Isaiah states that although the moth and the worm may destroy garments of wool, God's righteousness remains forever as the token of salvation. It cannot fade away. "For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but My righteousness shall be for ever, and My salvation from generation to generation." Isaiah 51:8.

The blessing of obedience

"Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that He made them houses." Exodus 1:20, 21.

Dealt well. The scriptures say "God dealt well with the midwives." He would not deal well with Pharaoh as the Exodus story developed into a grand crescendo. The Midrash interprets the blessing of God upon the midwives for their faithfulness as making them the foremothers of priestly and royal families.²² We cannot ascertain whether that actually happened or not; but we do know that, spiritually speaking, all the saints will become members of the priestly and royal family of God. "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him...." Revelation 20:6.

Peter adds that those who minister with the word will be a "royal priesthood" in the age to come. 1 Peter 2:9. There is no more wonderful blessing for obeying Jesus' mandate to be spiritual midwives and bring children into the kingdom of grace than to be with Him for eternity as His priests and royal family!

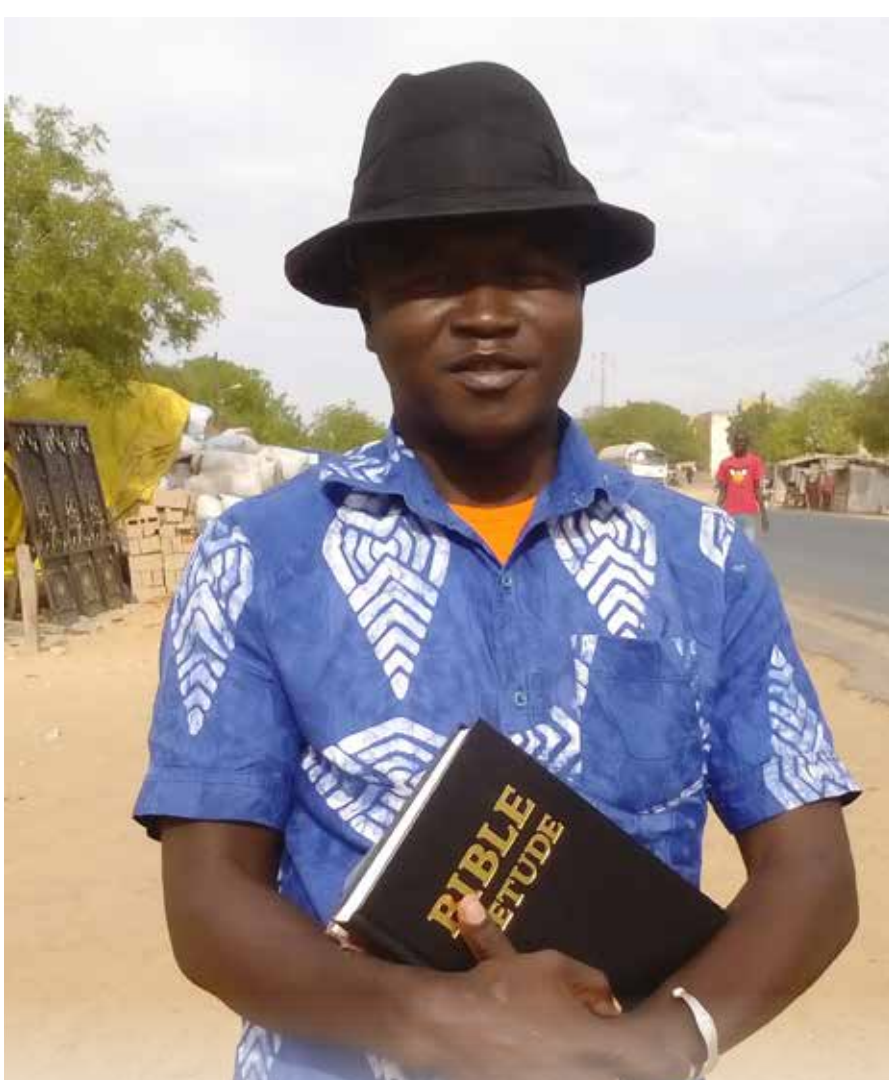
Made them houses. What does it mean that God "made them houses"? Simply, God allowed them to have nice homes filled with descendants. He preserved their descendants. He multiplied their offspring. A house has no warmth without family and children. As the midwives preserved the life of others' children, God preserved theirs.

In a spiritual sense, Jesus told all His believers not to be afraid of the world, but to believe in Him. He promised to prepare houses for them in the heavens and in the age to come. This is

the reward of the faithful ministers, elders, Bible workers, and lay missionaries who labor to save lives for eternity no matter what the government commands to the contrary. Jesus will come again one day to gather His own and take them home to live in heavenly mansions. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3. **SW**



- ¹ Alex Macalister, "Midwife" in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 3, James Orr, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939), p. 2050.
- ² Denise Dersin, ed., "Pregnancy and Childbirth," *What Life Was Like on the Banks of the Nile* (Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1996), pp. 52, 53. John F. Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine* (London: British Museum Press, 1997), p. 193.
- ³ *Midrash Rabbah: Exodus*, Rabbi Dr. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, eds. (London: The Soncino Press, 1961), p. 17.
- ⁴ Nahum M. Sarna, "Exploring Exodus: The Oppression," *Biblical Archaeologist*, 49, no. 2 (1986), pp. 77, 78.
- ⁵ *Midrash Rabbah: Exodus*, p. 17.
- ⁶ Alex Macalister, "Midwife" in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 3, James Orr, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1939), p. 2050.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁸ Idel Suarez, Jr., "Was there an Exodus?" *The Sabbath Watchman*, vol. 90, no. 3 (2015), pp. 14, 15.
- ⁹ John F. Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*, p. 193.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 194.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹² J.B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), quoted in Nahum M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus: The Oppression*, p. 78.
- ¹³ Laurie Burkitt, "China Drops One-Child Policy as Gray-ing Population Poses Risks," *Wall Street Journal*, Friday, October 30, 2015, vol. CCLXVI, no. 103, p. A7.
- ¹⁴ Nahum M. Sarna, "Exploring Exodus: The Oppression," p. 78.
- ¹⁵ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., vol. 8, s.v. "Nuremberg Trials," p. 834.
- ¹⁶ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), p. 361.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸ Nahum M. Sarna, "Exploring Exodus: The Oppression," p. 77.
- ¹⁹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9 (1909) (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), p. 176.
- ²⁰ Jacques Kinnar, "Ancient Egypt Literature: The Story of King Kheops and the Magicians (Westcar Papyrus)," *The Ancient Egypt Site*. Accessed on November 18, 2015, <http://www.ancient-egypt.org>.
- ²¹ John F. Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*, p. 194.
- ²² Nahum M. Sarna, "Exploring Exodus: The Oppression," p. 77.
- ²³ *The Midrash: Exodus*, p. 22.



A Powerful Witness in Senegal

"Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." Zechariah 4:7.

I want to tell you a special story about a young man in Senegal. He and other interested individuals live about 35 to 40 km from Dakar. They have accepted the Sabbath. One of them is an ex-politician named Esther Nzaly (he is a man but was named by his father after a female family friend who had just passed away when he was born).

I wrote elsewhere that the Senegalese are very social people who live in communities; having the same religion makes their social relation-

ships even stronger. If one chooses a different religion, this is synonymous with leaving the community. And that community can make one's life miserable by every possible means until one returns.

Esther is already experiencing rejection and persecution from his family and church. He let his fellow Catholics know about his new-found faith by asking the priest and a student priest a question. When they mocked him, saying that he has become a Seventh-day Adventist, he replied, "Yes, though I am not yet baptized, I am planning to be."


We have not even presented health reform to him, but he is looking forward to doing away with flesh meat completely. This is because he knows that we are vegetarians and has eaten our food a number of times at home and when we meet for Bible studies. Sometimes my wife goes with me for such Bible studies, and she takes along vegetarian food that she has prepared. Senegalese people love to eat in community style—all together from one platter.

The priest who is the director of the Catholic school for priests admitted the truth about the change of the Sabbath. We received an invitation to present the message at that school. We hope that the invitation will materialize and all will go well.

Esther's family and fellow Catholics say that he has joined a sect. He is considered mad, since he is always seen with his Bible and quotes from it whenever he meets his friends. I want you to know that, in Senegal, any religion other than Catholicism and Islam is considered a sect or cult by most people. This usually leads to persecution and rejection even by one's own family members. Esther has not changed his diet, but it could get much worse when he does.

The rest of the people we are having Bible studies with are also challenging their ministers. These young people have become very interested in the message, and they share it with all their friends. We hope the number of Bible studies will thus soon increase by God's grace. All of the students are between 20 and 29 years old, except for Esther, who is 37 years old. Your prayers are requested for these courageous young people. **SW**

By Judicael Luboya



"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son,... whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified." Romans 8:29, 30.

On Predestination

By John Wesley (1703-1791)

Summarized and modernized from Sermon 58

The apostle Peter explains that the apostle Paul in some of his writings spoke of "some things hard to be understood." 2 Peter 3:16. The above passage may well be one of them. Many who seemed to be well established in the truths of the gospel have for several centuries "wrested" these passages "to their own destruction." I know not how it is that writers upon earth appear more positive on this difficult topic than on any other. In fact, it seems that the same men who, writing upon any other subject, are remarkably modest and humble, on this alone lay aside all self-distrust.

While much has been said about every part of this subject, may I, in all modesty, present a few thoughts that may cast some light on the above Bible verse. The approach here will be to show *the method in which God works, the order in which the different parts of salvation constantly*

connect with each other. I will not assume, as have many before me, that the text is describing a chain of causes and effects, but will outline the work of God both forward and backward.

Going forward

(1) To begin, let us look at the whole work of God for man's salvation, considering it from the beginning until it terminates in glory. The first point is God's foreknowledge. God *foreknew* all who would believe, from the beginning of the world to the consummation of all things. But it should be well understood that when we speak of God's foreknowledge, we do not speak according to the manner of men. With God there is no such thing as either foreknowledge or after-knowledge. All time, or rather all eternity, is present tense to Him. He sees all at

All time, or rather all eternity, is present tense to Him.



John Wesley

once, whatever was, is, or will be, to the end of time. But consider: We must not think that all are because He wills them to be. No, He knows them because they are. Think of it this way: I now know the sun shines, but not because I know it; rather, I know it because it shines. In like manner, God knows that man sins, for He knows all things. But we do not sin because He knows it; rather He knows it because we sin. His knowledge grasps our sin but in no way causes it. In a word, God, looking at all ages, from the creation to the consummation, as a moment, and seeing all at once whatever is in the hearts of all the children of men, knows everyone who does and everyone who does not believe, in every age and nation. Yet what He knows, whether it is faith or unbelief, is in nowise caused by His knowledge. Men are as free in believing or not believing as if God did not know it at all.

Think of it this way: If man were not free, he could not be accountable either for his thoughts, words, or actions. If he were not free, he would not be capable either of reward or punishment; he would be incapable either of virtue or vice, of being either morally good or bad. If he had no more freedom than the sun, the moon, or the stars, he would be no more accountable than they. Supposing that man had no more freedom than they, the stones of the earth would be as capable of reward and as liable to punishment as man; one would be as accountable as the other. It would be as absurd to ascribe either virtue or vice to him as to ascribe it to a tree trunk.

(2) But let's proceed: "Whom He did foreknow, them He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." This is the second step. Read carefully! All the verse says is this: God has decreed, from everlasting to everlasting, that all who believe in the Son of His love shall be conformed to His image. That means that those who believe shall be saved from all inward and outward sin; holiness and piety will be seen in their lives. Accordingly, it is a plain, undeniable fact that all who truly believe in the name of the Son of God now "receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls;" and this by virtue of the unchangeable, irreversible, irresistible decree of God, "He that believeth

shall be saved;" "he that believeth not, shall be damned." Mark 16:16.

(3) "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called." This is the third step: According to His fixed decree, that believers shall be saved, those whom He foreknows as such, He calls both outwardly and inwardly—*outwardly* by the word of His grace, and *inwardly* by His Spirit. This inward application of His word to the heart seems to be what some term "effectual calling." He calls them children of God and accepts them "in the Beloved," then justifies them "freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." Romans 3:24.

(4) "Whom He called, them He justified." This is the fourth step. It is generally considered that the word "justified" here means He made them just or righteous. He executed His decree, "conforming them to the image of His Son," or, as we usually say, He sanctified them.

(5) It remains, then, "whom He justified, them He also glorified." This is the last step. Having made them "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," He gives them "the kingdom which was prepared for them before the world began." This is the order by which, "according to the counsel of His will"—the plan He laid down from eternity—He saves those whom He foreknew, the true believers in every place and generation.

Looking backward

The same great work of salvation by faith, according to the foreknowledge and decree of God, may appear in a still clearer light if we view it backward, from the end to the beginning. Suppose you stand with the "great multitude which no man can number, out of every nation, and tongue, and kindred, and people" (Revelation 7:9), who are redeemed, to "give praise unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever!" Revelation 5:13. You would not find one among them all that were entered into glory who was not a witness of that great truth that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Hebrews 12:14. Every one of all that innumerable company was sanctified before he was glorified. He was prepared for glory accord-

God has decreed,
from everlasting to
everlasting, that all
who believe in the
Son of His love shall
be conformed to
His image.

ing to the invariable will of the Lord. The crown, purchased by the blood of His Son, is given to none but those who are renewed by His Spirit. He is "the Author of eternal salvation" only "to them that obey Him" inwardly and outwardly. "But as He which hath called you is holy, be ye holy in all manner of conversation." 1 Peter 1:15.

On the other hand, if by some means you could take a survey of all upon earth who are now sanctified, you would find that not one of them is sanctified until after he is called. He was first called—outwardly by the word and the messengers of God, and inwardly by His Spirit applying His word. This enabled him to believe in the only-begotten Son of God and thus become a child of God. And it was by this very means that all were sanctified. By the Spirit of God, His love is shed abroad in man's heart, enabling him to love God. And, loving God, he loved his neighbor as himself and had power to walk blameless in all His commandments. There is no exception to this rule: God calls a sinner His own, that is, justifies him, before He sanctifies him. And by this very thing, the consciousness of his favor with God through Jesus Christ, God works in him that grateful, filial affection from which spring every good temper, word, and work.

And who are those who are thus called of God, but those whom He had before predestinated, or decreed, to "be conformed to the image of His Son"? This decree (speaking after the manner of men) precedes every man's calling: Every believer was predestinated before he was called. For God calls none, but "according to the counsel of His will," according to this plan of acting, which He had laid down before the foundation of the world.

Thus we see the whole process of the work of God, from the end to the beginning: Who are glorified? None but those who were first sanctified. Who are sanctified? None but those who were first justified. Who are justified? None but those who were first predestinated. And to what are they predestinated? They are "predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son." Romans 8:20.

Thus the purpose and word of God stand as unshaken as the pillars of heaven: "He that

believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." And thus God is clear from the blood of all men, since whoever perishes does so by his own act and deed. "They will not come unto Me," says the Saviour of men, and "there is no salvation in any other." They "will not believe," and there is no other way either to present our eternal salvation. Therefore, their blood is upon their own head; and God is still "justified in His saying" that He "willeth all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of His truth."

What is it, then, that we learn from this? It is this, and no more: (1) God knows all believers, (2) wills that they should be saved from sin, (3) to that end, justifies them, (4) sanctifies them, and (5) takes them to glory.

Oh, that men would praise the Lord for this His goodness and that they would be content with this plain account of it, not endeavor to wade into those mysteries which are too deep for even angels to fathom! **SW**

The complete original of this sermon can be found at: <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/sermon-58-on-predestination/> **SW**

By this very thing, the consciousness of his favor with God through Jesus Christ, God works in him that grateful, filial affection from which spring every good temper, word, and work.



Report

Special Sabbath School Offerings

The last report of the Special Sabbath School Offerings appeared on pages 18-21 of the March-April 2015 issue of *The Sabbath Watchman*. To see that issue, go online with the following link: <http://www.sda1844.org/TheSabbathWatchman204.cl>. To open the file, scroll down and double click on the issue name.

Before providing information concerning the current list, it is important to say, "Thank you!" to certain people.

CONTRIBUTORS. Every two months, a Missionary Report appears in the *Sabbath School Lessons* of the country or project for which the Special Sabbath School Offering has been designated. To the contributors who have given for these countries and projects, "Thank you!"

TREASURERS. Local church treasurers send the tithes and offerings to their field or union treasurers, who then report and send payments to the General Conference so the projects and ongoing work can go forward. Without your conscientious, prompt service, the work would stop. "Thank you, and God bless you in a special way!"

SACRIFICING SERVANTS IN THE FIELD. "Thank you!" to those who receive and manage the funds for the countries and projects. "Thank you!" to the gospel laborers in those countries who sacrifice so much to share the living word with searching souls. May God increase your strength and skill and protect you from all danger and evil.

Every country on the list of Special Sabbath School Offerings has a story to tell. A year ago,

we printed pictures of many churches and buildings that had been purchased with funds from the Special Sabbath School Offerings. Some projects are still in the red and need additional help. When you see a minus (-) in front of a balance, it means that more money was sent for

the project than was gathered in offerings. Funds may be given to make up these deficits. Eventually they will be funded either by direct contribution or from a general fund.

Following are details and updates for open projects. When the balance shows 0, the

funds for the project have been disbursed to those responsible for managing the funds.

BANGLADESH. The senior worker in Bangladesh suffered a stroke and survived by the miracle of God. Violent events are endured in this country, and the believers need special prayer.

SPECIAL SABBATH SCHOOL OFFERINGS (U.S. DOLLARS)

Offering Date	Beneficiary	Balance 6/1/2012*	Income	Expenditures	Balance 3/31/2016
2004/07	Bangladesh	5,152.01	0	14,758.87	-9,606.86
2005/04	Malawi	9,230.33	1319.72	10,550.05	0
2006/01	Pakistan	12,226.63	0	12,226.63	0
2006/10	Seychelles	20,572.35	0.00	22,882.51	-2,310.16
2007/01	Nigeria and Chad	2,805.08	0.00	0.00	2,805.08
2007/07	Angola	22,764.79	0.00	22,764.79	0
2007/10	Turkey	31,873.33	0.00	20,592.39	11,923.91
2008/04	Mongolia	19,619.76	0.00	10,716.36	8,903.40
2009/01	Ethiopia	41,125.66	42,997.89	29,766.00	54,357.55
2010/01	Liberia	-25,130.74	2,095.00	9,900.00	-32,935.74
2010/04	GC Multimedia Dept.	0	632.05	632.05	0
2010/07	Cuba	2,218.70	12003.58	18,008.84	-3,786.56
2011/01	Nepal	36,835.97	7,728.33	7,138.94	37,425.36
2011/04	South Sudan	40,666.42	6,986.01	15,356.00	32,296.43
2011/07	Togo	32,763.85	6,497.12	5,641.06	33,619.91
2011/10	Bolivia	32,555.70	4,816.08	36,348.76	1,023.02
2012/01	Haiti	6,449.44	36,663.77	62,071.34	-18,958.13
2012/04	Norway	295.00	40,282.77	31522.49	9,055.28
2012/07	Primary Schools		32,168.69	37,444.26	-5,275.57
2013/01	GC Canvassing Dept.		48,535.61	48,535.61	0
2013/04	Arab Countries		37,620.13	9,368.73	28,251.40
2013/07	West Africa		55,563.27	69,829.86	-14,266.59
2013/11	Myanmar		37,099.15	4,100.00	32,999.15
2014/01	United Kingdom		34,293.10	34,293.10	0
2014/03	Asia Miss. School		40,107.99	2,241.07	37,866.92
2014/05	GC Missionary Ministry		30,270.49	29,776.06	494.43
2014/07	Sri Lanka		32,160.05	21,804.76	10,355.29
2014/09	Gambia/Senegal		31,293.38	46,975.90	-15,682.52
2014/11	Belize		34,477.30	22,108.64	12,368.66
2015/01	Sierra Leone		26,117.85	49,000.00	-22,282.15
2015/03	Malta		26,477.57	00.00	26,477.57
2015/05	Caribbean Countries		28,914.87	00.00	28,914.87
2015/07	GC Bdcasting/Website		21,723.18	19,092.00	2,631.18
2015/09	Ethiopia		24,866.03	5,000.00	19,866.03
2015/11	Intl. Health Organization		24,772.74	24,043.85	728.89
2016/01	<i>Sabbath Watchman</i>		309.75	309.75	0
2016/03	Guatemala School		2,842.86	7,450.00	-4,607.14

*Balances carried over from the previous General Conference administrative term as of June 1, 2012.

ANGOLA. The funds for Angola will be disbursed according to the leaders' instructions, including reimbursement to Brazil for support provided to this Portuguese-speaking country.

TURKEY. Two workers are supported for the advancement of God's cause in this strongly Muslim country that suffers from terrorist attacks.

MONGOLIA. Workers from Philipines have helped to establish churches in this country that has many languages and a unique culture.

ETHIOPIA. The main purpose for this offering and the one in September 2015 is the purchase of adequate headquarters and church facilities in the main city of this important African country.



Despite major difficulties, past and present, God's work continues to advance in Liberia, where these four souls were baptized.

GC MULTIMEDIA DEPARTMENT. In the last three years, there has been a push to reach out with multimedia—Internet, Internet broadcasting, new websites, and Facebook news and pictures. Several additional Special Sabbath School offerings have been gathered that help to support specific parts of this department. These include offerings for the GC Missionary Ministry and the GC Broadcasting/Website.

NEPAL. A setback in Nepal has been reversed as new believers have taken hold of the precious message carried by the church.

A careful work will be done so the funds gathered for Nepal will be well managed.

SOUTH SUDAN. God is opening doors in this area of Africa that has suffered greatly from civil war. Time is needed to develop a strong presence there.

NORWAY. Funds from this Special Sabbath School Offering have been used for introductory work in Norway. It takes people with special dedication and talents to do such work.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS. Those who are interested in education may want to donate to this project and also for the school in Guatemala to educate children in the church and those whose parents want them to learn basic Christian principles.

ARAB COUNTRIES. The General Conference has been particularly inspired to carry the gospel into countries in the Middle East. Interest has been generated in countries that are often considered too dangerous even to attempt. Nevertheless, God is opening the way for funds to be used to produce materials for careful outreach. Pray for all the young people who stand courageously for Jesus there.

WEST AFRICA. Expansion of the gospel in West Africa continues, especially after the establishment of Gilead Adventist Missionary Institute (GAMI) in Accra,

Ghana. Buildings have been purchased, putting some projects in the red. The Special Sabbath School offerings for other West African countries on the list, including, Gambia/Senegal and Sierra Leone, join Liberia in needing additional funds for land and church buildings and to cover deficits.

MYANMAR. Similar to Nepal (and separated from it primarily by Bangladesh), Myanmar has a complex

society; we are fortunate to have faithful believers who devote their time and efforts to finding souls for Jesus. Some students from Myanmar were part of the first class of the Asia-Pacific Missionary School.

UNITED KINGDOM. The believers in the UK have projects for which they will use the funds disbursed to them. We hope to hear more about this in the near future.



These four young people were baptized recently in Lome, Togo, West Africa; at right is Elder Lencha Tekle.

ASIA-PACIFIC MISSIONARY SCHOOL. The first class of the Asia-Pacific Missionary School ended successfully with ten students

returning to their countries, carrying new knowledge for advancing the gospel. Plans are being laid for the next phase of this school.

SRI LANKA. The believers have made good progress in constructing the headquarters building.

BELIZE. The fledgling work that seemed to stay a fledgling has



Several buildings have been erected in Haiti. Here work is done on the church in Fond Michel.



A health seminar conducted by Brother Christian Gadoxor in Gambia was well attended..

responsibilities in that special country.

MALTA. Just waiting for the organizers to present their plans, the funds are ready to be used in Malta where it is best.

CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES. The hopes for the countries of the Caribbean to be combined into one union are contingent on finding willing hands and hearts to combine forces to begin. The amount that was gathered for this Special Sabbath School Offering will not stretch too far, primarily because of travel costs between islands. Our prayer is that God will multiply the means and efforts for this tropical region.

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH ORGANIZATION. The activities of the International Health Organization have primarily included the travel expenses of the leader of the General Conference Health/Medical Department and staff, as well as costs to establish health centers in numerous places around the world where the health message opens the door to the gospel. It is expected that the offerings for this project will increase when fields and unions that are behind on their reporting send their data.

THE SABBATH WATCHMAN. In 2012, the delegates meeting at the

World Assembly voted that *The Sabbath Watchman*, the official church magazine, should be published by the General Conference and made available in English and Spanish. This has been done very successfully on the websites of the General Conference and the American Union. Distribution of printed



Participants in the health seminar in Gambia.

copies has advanced in the churches of Latin America.

We encourage everyone regularly to put down their cell phones and iPads and read *The Sabbath Watchman*. The articles in this magazine are timely and very important in helping the believers think in depth—indeed, to learn how to think in a spiritual way, from cause to effect. With-

out this ability, we will be totally confused when confronted by the issues that will challenge our faith in the near future.

Every local church is asked to purchase subscriptions so every family receives one printed copy of every issue in Spanish or English. The subscription is renewed in December of each year. The members can pay by donating to the local church Literature Fund. Note on page 2 that there is a discount for multiple copies sent to one address. Individual and gift subscriptions are also available.

GUATEMALAN SCHOOL. The technical school for computer and office training in Coatepeque, Guatemala, has been in operation for two years. The plan is to expand the school through construction of new facilities. Some funds were already paid to meet urgent needs, in anticipation of the Special Sabbath School Offering that was to be gathered in March of this year.

by the General Conference have limitations as to what they can be disbursed for.

The greatest needs encompass the support of mission fields, especially new ones. Countries that have never had a Reform Movement presence generally begin with just a few people who share interest in the Holy Scriptures. With time, as interest grows and expands, the General Conference seeks for qualified people to transfer to far-off places to carry the word of life and establish a spiritual presence that can grow naturally under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. See the "News to inspire" section for stories from these places so you can pray for them.

As explained elsewhere in this issue, it can be extremely difficult for new people not only to change their way of thinking about God but also to face the displeasure and even persecution of family and friends. This requires the strong spiritual support of those who present the message to them as well as the attention of the General Conference brethren who manage the human resources, funds, and infrastructure in every place.

Our prayer is that at every level the will of God will be sought and His strength and miracle-working power will be seen visibly in the society where His people live, work, and move. All praise and honor be to Him as each of us does everything possible to advance His kingdom on earth. Maranatha! **SW**

May God be the center of this school at every level.

General and specific questions concerning the Special Sabbath School Offerings and other General Conference financial matters may be addressed to Elder Douglas Francis, Treasurer.

It is important to stress that all of the offerings that are received

"We should know for ourselves what it means to stand firmly for God, ever learning that which Providence designs to teach us. But too often we think as others think, and do as they do." —The Youth's Instructor, January 29, 1903.

The Touch



Jesus had met, in the crowd, a poor woman who for twelve years had suffered from a disease that made her life a burden. She had spent all her means upon physicians and remedies, only to be pronounced incurable. But her hopes revived when she heard of the cures that Christ performed. She felt assured that if she could only go to Him she would be healed. In weakness and suffering she came to the seaside where He was teaching, and tried to press through the crowd, but in vain. Again she followed Him from the house of Levi-Matthew, but was still unable to reach Him. She had begun to despair, when, in making His way through the multitude, He came near where she was.

The golden opportunity had come. She was in the presence of the Great Physician! But amid the confusion she could not speak to Him, nor catch more than a passing glimpse of His figure. Fearful of losing her one chance of relief, she pressed forward, saying to herself, "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole." As He was passing, she reached forward, and succeeded in barely touching the border of His garment. But in that moment she knew that she was healed. In that one touch was concentrated the faith of her life, and instantly her pain and feebleness gave place to the vigor of perfect health.

With a grateful heart she then tried to withdraw from the crowd; but suddenly Jesus stopped, and the people halted with Him. He turned, and looking about asked in a voice distinctly heard above the confusion of the multitude, "Who touched Me?" The people answered this query with a look of amazement. Jostled upon all sides, and rudely pressed hither and thither, as He was, it seemed a strange inquiry.

Peter, ever ready to speak, said, "Master, the multitude throng Thee and press Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me?" Jesus answered, "Somebody hath touched Me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me." The Saviour could distinguish the touch of faith from the casual contact of the careless throng. Such trust should not be passed without comment. He would speak to the humble woman words of comfort that would be to her a wellspring of joy—words that would be a blessing to His followers to the close of time.

Looking toward the woman, Jesus insisted on knowing who had touched Him. Finding concealment vain, she came forward tremblingly, and cast herself at His feet. With grateful tears she told the story of her suffering, and how she had found relief. Jesus gently said, "Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee

By Ellen G. White

He would speak to the humble woman words of comfort that would be to her a wellspring of joy—words that would be a blessing to His followers to the close of time.

whole; go in peace." He gave no opportunity for superstition to claim healing virtue for the mere act of touching His garments. It was not through the outward contact with Him, but through the faith which took hold on His divine power, that the cure was wrought.

The wondering crowd that pressed close about Christ realized no accession of vital power. But when the suffering woman put forth her hand to touch Him, believing that she would be made whole, she felt the healing virtue. So in spiritual things. To talk of religion in a casual way, to pray without soul hunger and living faith, avails nothing. A nominal faith in Christ, which accepts Him merely as the Saviour of the world, can never bring healing to the soul. The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere intellectual assent to the truth. He who waits for entire knowledge before he will exercise faith, cannot receive blessing from God. It is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour; which appropriates His merits to ourselves. Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power.

After healing the woman, Jesus desired her to acknowledge the blessing she had received. The gifts which the gospel offers are not to be secured by stealth or enjoyed in secret. So the Lord calls upon us for confession of His goodness. "Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." Isaiah 43:12.

Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked by our own individuality. These precious acknowl-

edgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christ-like life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls.

When the ten lepers came to Jesus for healing, He bade them go and show themselves to the priest. On the way they were cleansed, but only one of them returned to give Him glory. The others went their way, forgetting Him who had made them whole. How many are still doing the same thing! The Lord works continually to benefit mankind. He is ever imparting His bounties. He raises up the sick from beds of languishing, He delivers men from peril which they do not see, He commissions heavenly angels to save them from calamity, to guard them from "the pestilence that walketh in darkness" and "the destruction that wasteth at noonday" (Psalm 91:6); but their hearts are unimpressed. He has given all the riches of heaven to redeem them, and yet they are unmindful of His great love. By their ingratitude they close their hearts against the grace of God. Like the heath in the desert they know not when good cometh, and their souls inhabit the parched places of the wilderness.

It is for our own benefit to keep every gift of God fresh in our memory. Thus faith is strengthened to claim and to receive more and more. There is greater encouragement for us in the least blessing we ourselves receive from God than in all the accounts we can read of the faith and experience of others. The soul that responds to the grace of God shall be like a watered garden. His health shall spring forth speedily; his light shall rise in obscurity, and the glory of the Lord shall be seen upon him. Let us then remember the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the multitude of His tender mercies. Like the people of Israel, let us set up our stones of witness, and inscribe upon them the precious story of what God has wrought for us. And as we review His dealings with us in our pilgrimage, let us, out of hearts melted with gratitude, declare, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people." Psalm 116:12-14. —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 343-348. SW

It is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour; which appropriates His merits to ourselves.



The "Daily"

Then and Now



By Larry Watts

"A ship was once wrecked on the Irish coast. The weather had not been so severe as to account for the divergence of the ship from its course. The master [captain] was competent. No proper explanation could be given of the disaster. A diver was sent down to bring up the compass, to see if any reason could be found in it, and on examination a bit of steel was detected, which looked like the point of a pocketknife blade. It was learned that, the day before the wreck, a sailor had been sent to clean the compass and had used his pocketknife in doing so. Unknowingly, he had broken off the point and left it in the box. That bit of steel had deflected the needle, and thus made the compass unreliable. That *little bit of steel wrecked the vessel.*" –G.B. Thompson, *The Ministry of the Spirit*, p. 142, © 1914, Review and Herald Publishing Assn.

“History shows that the pioneers’ view was held practically unanimously by our people until about 1900,…”

In a paper written about forty years ago, Adventist Pastor Robert J. Wieland (1916-2011) presented a version of the above story to point out that if any doctrine of the Advent movement can be compared to a ship’s compass, it is the truth of the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. Elder Wieland then stated that about 1900 a “new” understanding of the ministry of Christ came into the Seventh-day Adventist Church and changed its course.

Elder Wieland’s assumption is only partly true. The compass of the Advent Movement was and still should be the understanding of Daniel 8 and 9 and the heavenly ministry of our great High Priest. But his view that the “new view” changed the course of the church is questionable. The General Conference in Minneapolis in 1888 showed that the church was already on a wrong course. The “new view” was simply a way to justify the new direction that had been taken—conciliation with the world.

The foundation of our faith

“The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith.” —(Letter 208, 1906) *Evangelism*, p. 221.

“This [sanctuary] subject ... is the central pillar that sustains the structure of our position at the present time.” —(Letter 126, 1897, p. 4.) *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, p. 244. See also *Evangelism*, pp. 221-225.

After quoting the above statements, Elder Wieland goes on to say that “Daniel 8 and 9 provided direction for this church as a compass directs a ship. Our pioneers were virtually unanimous in their understanding of it. A key element was Daniel’s figure of ‘the daily’ taken away by the little horn. [Daniel 8:11-13.] What they saw locked 1844 into Daniel 8:14, making the sanctuary in heaven the only one that could be cleansed, or justified. History shows that the pioneers’ view was held practically unanimously by our people until about 1900, and enjoyed Ellen White’s support....” —http://gospel-herald.com/questionsondocctrine/cunning_fables.htm

Interpretation of “the daily” (1843-1900)

In *Early Writings*, p. 75, Sister White wrote: “When union existed, before 1844, nearly all were united on the correct view of the ‘daily’;...” The 1843 and 1844 prophecy charts that were used before the expected return of Jesus defined “the daily” as “paganism”—more specifically, pagan Rome—and “the abomination of desolation” as the rise of papal Rome.

The Advent pioneers understood that these powers were earthly religious and political systems. Thus the early Adventist leaders saw an earthly event (not a heavenly event) in the removal of “the daily” by the “little horn.” In contrast to this polluting event that transpired in an earthly sanctuary through an “abomination of desolation” (Matthew 2:15; see also Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11), the pioneers understood that a cleansing was to take place in a heavenly sanctuary through the ministration of a heavenly High Priest. Daniel 8:14; Hebrews 8:1, 2.

The following statement of Elder Wieland attests to the importance of this understanding in the growth of the early Advent Movement. About 1895, or shortly after 1888, “Louis R. Conradi deflected our compass by introducing his new view.... One of the first to accept this view, E.J. Waggoner, forthwith repudiated Ellen White, for he saw clearly that she upheld the pioneers’ view. This was the beginning of his [open] apostasy. Next, W.W. Prescott embraced Conradi’s view, followed by A.G. Daniells, the General Conference president. These two gave the new view wide publicity against Ellen White’s counsel. In time, Conradi apostatized completely, and Prescott, in the end, virtually abandoned the sanctuary doctrine. Others were Ballinger, Fletcher, Grieve—a questionable track record for new light.” —http://gospel-herald.com/questionsondocctrine/cunning_fables.htm.

The new view

What, then, is the new view that came in through this “new light”? The “old view,” which was supported by the early pioneers and Sister White, interprets “the daily” as “paganism.” In the new view, “the daily” is considered to be

the antitypical ministry of our heavenly High Priest, which was taken away, or displaced, by the “abomination of desolation,” or by an earthly priesthood (usually considered that of papal Rome).

However, those who pursue Conradi’s view to its logical conclusion usually point to Antiochus Epiphanes as the “primary” fulfillment of the taking away of “the daily” of Daniel 8:11, 13; 10:31; and 12:11. This scheme leaves little room for an 1844 application except by a contrived “secondary” fulfillment, and yet this is where most modern “scholars” point.¹ Antiochus is a very appealing figure, because such an interpretation would remove the papacy from being the desolating power. But there are not a few problems with this application. (1) If “the daily” is Christ’s heavenly ministry, how can any earthly power or event take it away? (2) About two hundred years *after* Antiochus ruled, Christ stated in Matthew 24:15 that “the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet” was still in the future. (3) This new view approach is openly ridiculed by non-Adventist theologians as a “face-saving” accommodation and change in the original explanation for the 1844 disappointment. (4) The 2,300 evenings and mornings would then have to be understood as literal days, not prophetic years, making the understanding of the 1844 cleansing of the sanctuary unsupportable hermeneutically. (5) Some Adventist theologians see the new view as a good reason for relegating Sister White’s writings to the “dustbin of history,” since she was a strong supporter of the heavenly priesthood of Jesus.

While Sister White’s 1910 counsels (*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 164-168) do not endorse the new view, they also do not settle the issue completely. The main point of her statements is a warning against airing any controversy such as this publicly. “Regarding this matter under present conditions, silence is eloquence.” It is in this context that she says, “My writings shall not be used as the leading argument to settle questions over which there is now so much controversy.” When difficult issues arise, the brethren are to get together and study the Bible carefully on linguistic grounds and prayerfully find the true view. See *Evangelism*, p. 182.

Now let us look more closely at the linguistics of the word “daily” as it appears in Daniel 8 and 9, for each of the enumerated points above.

(1) The idea that “the daily” means Christ’s heavenly ministry. The Hebrew word for “daily,” “*tamiyd*,” comes from a word that means “to stretch” or a “continuance.” It is usually translated “continual” (76 times) and is most often associated with the “morning and evening” sacrifice. Therefore, humanly speaking, it probably seemed logical for the translators to add the word “sacrifice” to the passage in Daniel 8:11-13. But “the word ‘sacrifice’ was supplied by man’s wisdom, and does not belong to the text...” —*Early Writings*, p. 74.

When the pioneers pointed to the *Tamiyd* as paganism, they were correct, most of all from a Jewish perspective. The Jews came to look at the continual, or “the morning and evening” sacrifice, as a *Tsadaq*, or a “righteous act” required for forgiveness. Even today Orthodox Jews (and even many Christians) are looking forward to the restoration of the temple and its services in Jerusalem. Only then, they assert, will a millennium of peace begin on the earth. But for such a thing to come about, the *Tamiyd* (or morning and evening sacrifices) must be reinstated. This idea is pagan in nature. The sacrifices in the earthly sanctuary all pointed to the “lamb of God which

It is significant that a great amount of the tension in the Middle East today is based on this false view of Scripture.



Wailing wall (what is left of Solomon’s temple) in Jerusalem, with the Muslim Dome of the Rock on temple mount in the background.

Adventists changed their belief about the meaning of “the daily” supposedly to save face. It thus destroyed the power of the three angels’ messages in Adventist preaching, especially the call to come out of Babylon.

taketh away the sin of the world.” John 1:29. They were “the figure of Him that was to come” and were fulfilled on “the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” Romans 5:14; Galatians 6:14. It is significant that a great amount of the tension in the Middle East today is based on this false view of Scripture.

When the sinner took his lamb for a sin offering to the temple under the typical ceremonial system, it was not a *Tsadaq*. Rather, it was a complete expression (a body language) of repentance, confession, humility, and faith in the Messiah, who was to come and shed His precious blood to atone for man’s sin. “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” Hebrews 10:4. Salvation is not a result of man’s actions but of Christ’s atonement for sin, “which He hath purchased with His own blood.” Acts 20:28.

(2) Jesus’ statement two hundred years after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. One of the strongest arguments against Antiochus’ being the fulfillment of the prophecy of the little horn that blasphemed God in Daniel 7 and the “abomination of desolation” in Daniel 8:11-13 was Christ’s statement in Matthew 24:15 that the abomination of desolation was in the future. By His time, Antiochus had been dead almost 200 years. He did persecute the Jews for a specific part of his reign. That is why some expositors correctly point out that “2,300 hundred evening and morning” sacrifices are performed in 1,150 days, or about three plus years. Antiochus did cause the earthly sacrifices and offerings to cease for exactly three years, or 1080 days, according to Jewish reckoning, or 1,095 actual days.² But that is not 1,150 days.

Therefore, no matter how interpreters try to squeeze Antiochus into the role of fulfilling the prophecy of the little horn, he was only one of a long line of many others who persecuted God’s people down through the ages. While “even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time” (1 John 2:18), there is one system that meets all the criteria of the little horn perfectly. That evidence has been detailed in many other studies, so it will not be provided here.

(3) The charge that the new view was a “face-saving” device to explain the Great Disappointment. Truth is progressive³ and is often expressed in different ways, even by the same writer; but truth does not change. Eternal principles are eternal, and light and knowledge concerning such principles is constantly increasing. The central question here is, “Did the Millerites get the interpretation of ‘the daily’ wrong?” It is very clear that they considered the earth to be the sanctuary, for which there is no Biblical reference; that mistake was even prophesied in Revelation 10. But did they also miss the true meaning of “the daily”? Was the new idea in 1895 about the meaning of “the daily” just a face-saving device to make the Advent message more acceptable—a way to take the Seventh-day Adventist Church out of the category of cults? Or was it something that was needed to better understand the present truth? Regardless of the reason for the change, it occurred; and Seventh-day Adventists ended up abandoning doctrines that were the pillars of the faith. See *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 204.

So, we must say, Yes, Adventists changed their belief about the meaning of “the daily” supposedly to save face. It thus destroyed the power of the three angels’ messages in Adventist preaching, especially the call to come out of Babylon. That change made it appear that Christ’s heavenly ministry passed into the hands of corrupt earthly priests. This view thus exalted Rome above the true Mediator in heaven.

(4) The 2,300 days as literal evenings and mornings (days). A direct translation of Daniel 8:14 reads: “And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” *American Standard Version* (ASV). In the first place, the passage speaks of “evenings and mornings,” not “mornings and evenings,” which could be said to refer to the *Tamiyd* if that had been the wording. But at the end of Chapter 8, the angel repeats the phrase to the bewildered prophet, telling him that “the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true.” Verse 26, first part. In the next verse Daniel confesses, “I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.” *Authorized King James Version*.

Time went by—years, in fact—and Daniel still could not figure out the vision, so God sent the angel Gabriel back to fulfill his original commission to “make this man [Daniel] ... understand the matter, and consider the vision.” Daniel 8:16; 9:23.

While the above points strongly tie together chapters 8 and 9, another even stronger connection between them is found in Daniel 9:24: “Seventy weeks of years be abridged on thy people....” *Wycliffe Bible*.

This phrase in the original language, which Wycliffe translated correctly into the common language in the Fourteenth Century, is clear. (1) It was seventy prophetic weeks—490 literal years, not days—to the coming of the Messiah. This part of the prophecy came true in the exact timing of Jesus’ crucifixion. One doesn’t even need the usual “day for a year” texts to prove that the prophecy is speaking of years. The text states it, and Christ’s crucifixion is the proof. (2) The word “*chathak*,” which is usually translated “determined,” means, “to cut off, i.e. (figuratively) to decree.” *Strong’s H2852*. Seventy prophetic weeks (490 literal years) are cut off from something, and it is impossible for them to be cut off of 1,150 or even 2,300 literal days. Therefore, the 2,300 evenings and mornings must be 2,300 years, NOT days, because there is nothing else in the book of Daniel to cut them off of.

2,300 minus 490 equals 1,810. Therefore, the process of cleansing the sanctuary was to begin 1,810 years after the Jews ceased to be the favored people of God. When the leaders of Israel refused to believe Stephen’s witness concerning Jesus as the Messiah and stoned him to death, despite the clear evidence of what he was saying, they rejected the only One who could save them and committed the sin against the Holy Spirit. From that point on, the gospel would be given in power to the Gentiles. Something similar will happen to this world at the end of time. When the rulers of this world reject the blessings offered to them in the gospel, they, too, will commit the sin against the Holy Spirit. Then God’s mercy will be withdrawn from people who do not even want it. Jesus will stand up and declare for the third time, “It

is finished.” Revelation 22:11. See also Genesis 1:31; John 19:30.

(5) Assertions that Sister White’s writings belong in the “dustbin of history.” On this point, we will return to the presentation of Elder Wieland as he quotes and comments on the words from the inspired pen:

“‘The past fifty years [written in 1905] have not dimmed one jot or principle of our faith.... Not a word is changed or denied. That which the Holy Spirit testified to as truth after the passing of time, in our great disappointment, is the solid foundation of truth ... [that] made us what we are—Seventh-day Adventists.’—*Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7 pp. 57, 58. Is this a comment about the ‘daily’?”

“‘Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. The spirit of compromise and conformity was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism. But ... her doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions were incorporated into the faith and worship of the professed followers of Christ.

“‘This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of the “man of sin” foretold in prophecy.... That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan’s power....

“‘In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established.... Paganism had given place to the papacy.’—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 49, 50, 54.” **SW**

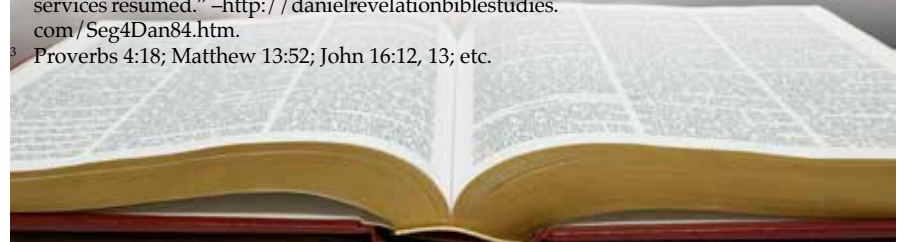
¹ “Antiochus Epiphanes, ruling Judea 175-164 B.C., robbed the Temple, set up a statue of Zeus in the Holiest, ordered swine for sacrifice there, forbade circumcision, destroyed all sacred Writings of the Jews that could be found and tried to force Grecian paganism on the Jews.”—*The Holy Bible, The Berkely Version in Modern English*, Oliphants, Ltd., London, © 1959 by Zondervan Publishing House, Fifth Edition, 1962 (footnote under Daniel 9:24).

² Biblical years are counted as having 360 days (360 x 3 = 1,080). It was in the month of Chislev 25, 167 B.C., that “Antiochus ended daily services ... at the temple....

“Three years after offering a pig on the altar, to the very day, on Chislev 25, 164 B.C., a new altar was installed and dedicated in the temple at Jerusalem and the daily services resumed.”—<http://danielrevelationbiblestudies.com/Seg4Dan84.htm>.

³ Proverbs 4:18; Matthew 13:52; John 16:12, 13; etc.

When the rulers of this world reject the blessings offered to them in the gospel, they, too, will commit the sin against the Holy Spirit. Then God’s mercy will be withdrawn from people who do not even want it.





INSETES

25th Anniversary

El Instituto Superior de Educación Testimonial Sinai (INSETES), the missionary school of the International Missionary Society in Colombia, opened on June 3, 1990, under the leadership of Elder Omar González, president of the Colombian Union; Reinaldo Porras, president of the Latin American Division and General Conference Regional Representative; and Elder Gerhard Hunger, leader of the General Conference Evangelism Department. Eighteen male students were present to begin their missionary education. Located in Quinchía, Risaralda, the institution enjoys a rural setting on 34 hectares of land.

On August 25, 2015, 25 years of uninterrupted service were celebrated with prayer and honor to God. Fifty graduates out of 120 from previous classes were present. Graduation ceremonies for the tenth class were held, and the opening of

the eleventh class took place. Family members and friends brought the number attending the 25th Anniversary to more than two hundred people. Present were Elder Danilo Monterroso, President of the Latin American Division, and members of the Colombian Union Committee and Ministerial Committee.

Performance awards were handed out. Donations were received from the General Conference, and pledges of future donations were made by former graduates, all of which will help to provide improvements for the school. Several of the graduates today hold positions as pastors carrying responsibilities in the Colombian Union and fields, as well as Bible workers and teachers not only in Colombia but in other countries as well.

As did the prophet, we can say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." 1 Samuel 7:12. **SW**



Brother Kayombo, ordained elder, gave his empty plot of land temporarily to erect a house of worship in Hewa Bora, Congo, until the church can afford to buy its own land.

Story from Hewa Bora, Congo

Hewa Bora is a local church that was newly organized on March 27, 2016. Before that, it was a group of believers (branch). This branch was opened when some members were traveling a very long distance to attend the church where they were members, the Bel Air church. Because families had a hard time traveling such long distances with children on Sabbath, they decided to start worshipping in a private home, after informing the church and Field leaders.

Some brothers were opposed to this group starting a new church, for a variety of reasons. In fact, in 2013 the branch was unfortunately accused of being a rebellious group by the former Field leaders (Southeast Congo Field). The believers in Hewa Bora explained that they were opposed by leaders who they believed did not have the proper care or concern for gospel growth.

During the Congo Union delegates' meetings held in Kinshasa in 2014, the group, since it was not duly organized, could not send a delegate to attend the sessions. But the believers continued in the message, principles, and religious activities, including studying the Sabbath School Lessons and winning souls to Christ. Brothers from the South Congo Field (Suedi, Mulongoy, Mande, Kiambe, etc.) brought the matters relating to this group to the officiating General Conference officers (Elders Pablo Hunger and Parmenas Shirima).

The Hewa Bora group was very happy to hear of the new Union leaders who, they believed, would resolve their difficulties, so they requested a meeting with Elder Sevith Moyo, the newly elected Congo Union President. In March-April 2014, Elder Moyo and the Union executive committee members and Field leader Brother Mulongoy, as well as two other members of the Union committee, met with the believers from Hewa Bora, as

requested. Brother Mulongoy, the Field Leader at the time, on behalf of all the former leaders, apologized to and reconciled with the Hewa group, acknowledging every wrong deed that offended them. It was agreed that the Field would see that they were properly organized and supervised, after visiting them and putting everything in order. Unfortunately, this was delayed.

In June 2015, new Field leaders were elected, and the delegates elected a commission to investigate what had happened with the Hewa Bora group and to discover the reality. The new Field President, Brother Muyumba Kalunga Léandre and his committee visited the group.

During Elder Alfred Ngwenya's evangelism visit in Congo (August 2015), he also determined

that the Hewa Bora group was not a rebellious group but true IMS members. New souls were baptized from the group at the conference during Elder Ngwenya's visit. The Bel Air church was commissioned to supervise the group as a branch, since they had previously been members of that local church, and only distance from a local church had motivated them to start a branch. Furthermore, the Bel Air church was made responsible to begin the organization of the group as a local church and to let the Field committee know what other action needed to be taken.

Two significant Sabbath meetings were held, one on January 16, 2016, and the other on March 26, 2016. At the first meeting, six new souls accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour and joined the church. We prayed together with and for those souls.

The Field president organized the local church with 31 full members on March 27, 2016. A big Sabbath fellowship preceded that day at Hewa Bora. Several churches came together and were happy to gather at the new church. About 282 people attended the assembly. Members were happy to share their



New members in Hewa Bora, Congo.

News to inspire

experiences with Elder Kiambe, who understood his responsibilities to strengthen the believers' efforts and the group. He officiated at the Lord's Supper in the afternoon. He was also happy to meet the believers from Hewa Bora and others from different local churches. Also, five souls gave their lives to Jesus and were fellowshiped with the church. It was a wonderful, impressive Sabbath and fellowship. We greatly enjoyed different choirs and groups of singers praising the Lord with inspiring, well-chosen songs. God bless this church with His Spirit and with many souls.

—Victor Shambuso
Congo Union Secretary



Brothers Louis Joe Mensah and Benjamin Soshriel (left to right) work in Ghana and Burkina Faso, respectively.

Going forward in Burkina Faso

Brother Louis Joe Mensah, from Ghana, and Brother Benjamin Soshriel are working together in Burkina Faso to reach precious souls for the kingdom of heaven. Several families are receiving Bible studies, souls have been baptized, and others



Brother Daniel Boakye and Sister Ramatu Seney were baptized April 4, 2016, in Burkina Faso.

are preparing to make their covenant with the Saviour.

African Division gathering in Malawi

March 23 to April 3, 2016, I traveled to Malawi with other leaders from Malawi, Mozambique, Lesotho, Tanzania, and Uganda, to join Elder Larry Watts, General Conference Missionary Ministry leader, for a seminar focusing on Marriage and Family Life. It was a special occasion, and the participants eagerly anticipated the meetings.

While Elder Watts dwelt more on Marriage, presenting the Biblical background, I presented the obligations of family ties and responsibilities. I also explained the objectives and roles of the Family Department in the church at its various levels.

Meetings were held with the Malawi Union Committee to address their needs and concerns. Elder Watts took note of the requests that were presented and responded to them as much as possible. Our prayer is that God will give His great wisdom to all who bear responsibilities in His cause so that blessings

will come to the people and the heavenly kingdom will soon be brought to completion.

—Parmenas Shirima
African Division Leader

Uplifting the word in South Africa

Elders Parmenas Shirima and Andrew Mangwe conducted a seminar in early April for Union workers on (1) revival and reformation for successful missionary work, (2) action plan, (3) steps to promote love and unity, (4) election of officers to vacancies, (5) legal standing of headquarters buildings, and (6) clarification of finances.

The following subjects were studied: Authenticity of God's Church, Church History—Eden to Eden, Church History—Separation, A Working Church Is a Growing Church, Church Doctrines: Marriage/Sabbath/Tithe and Offerings/Health Reform, Bible Teaching on the Art of Conversation, Christ Our Righteousness—Christ as the Center, Church Administration, Church Finances, Family Relationships and Responsibility, Evangelism, and Home Missionary Work.

In addition, plans were laid to involve all of the believers, and meetings were held with the South African Union Committee. May God bless every effort to strengthen His cause in this important place.

—Parmenas Shirima
African Division Leader

Activities in Senegal

May the peace of God be with you!

We do not yet have people who regularly attend the Sabbath services. But we have one or two visits on Sabbath. Senegalese people are not easy to convince to make changes, especially when the church is not yet established.

Before the people commit to a new church, they want to be sure that it is here to stay, especially when it is an organization coming from a foreign country.

In fact, to commit to a different church for a Senegalese would mean to expect to give up one's family and friends and be considered an outcast. Then, if one makes such a sacrifice and is later disappointed by the church leaving the area or disappearing,



Brother Judicael Luboya has help from these friends in Senegal to get the church registered.

he or she would have lost more than just family and friends.

Therefore, it is imperative to plan to purchase church property as soon as we receive the registration papers. This is important not only for confirming the interested souls but also for the approval of the government.

I learned that when the government conducts interviews for church registration they stress such points as the welfare of the communities, including schools and training centers, clinics, community outreach projects, and social programs. Social programs, such as assisting communities with food and clothing (charity), empowering families, farming, and free health awareness, mean a lot to the Senegalese government and communities. I sent you an email describing social work for three months, as you have asked, and for the long term as well.

The house in which we are meeting belongs to an interested man about 40 km from Dakar. In the picture, the other man is a police officer who is helping us with the registration process. He is a friend of Esther. We are in contact with him. He has already started helping us and promised to make sure we get the registration papers as soon as possible. He also mentioned about the above social programs as matters that the government wants to be very sure about when they interview us. They want to be sure we are here to benefit the community.

Please keep praying for the work here and continue to provide support so the Lord may help us confirm souls for baptism.

—Judicael Luboya
Senegal Mission Field

Devastating earthquake in Ecuador

On April 16, 2016, an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.8 (Richter scale) struck the coast of Ecuador. The epicenter was near the town of Muisne, 110 miles northwest of the capital, Quito. Although the epicenter was in a remote rural area, several towns in the coastal provinces were affected. A few days after the earthquake, I visited the churches closest to the epicenter to take aid and food for those in need.

With regard to the church of Manta, I can say that when I saw the suffering there, my heart sank. Ten families were badly impacted, having no food, water, electricity, or medicine. They cried for water. The church building was damaged when part of the walls at the front and the back collapsed; the mission house



Looking toward the back of the church building in Manta, Ecuador. See the major damage to the back wall below the roof.

also had damage, and one of our brothers lost part of his home. The aid provided by the government has not been adequate for our believers because it consisted primarily of rice and canned sardines. Since the market in Manta was completely destroyed by the earthquake, there were no vegetables to buy.



Looking toward the front of the church building in Manta, Ecuador. The front wall beneath the roof is gone at the top (see where it is black).

In the church of Porto Viejo, we have eight families. This place suffered a flood that ruined the families' crops, houses, and belongings after the earthquake destroyed two houses.

The church of Bahia de Caraquez suffered the most, because the whole town was destroyed. There were bodies under the rubble, and the smell


The church in Ecuador has some economic resources that have been used to help with food for our believers and the public, but we do not have enough. The families in Ecuador usually have five or six members.

We conducted two campaigns to gather food, clothing, and medicine. We have visited the places suffering most from the earthquake three times, including Bahía, Manta, Portoviejo, Cojimies, and Pedernales. We transported medical people and volunteers who gave aid.

In Manta, the believers held a series of meetings, even though part of the front and back walls were missing; the results were wonderful. These meetings went on for several days and included providing aid for at least a hundred people every night. God is calling many souls; let us pray that this effort will result in many souls for His kingdom.

We request the help of the General Conference, the Good Samaritan Department, and our fellow believers around the world. Please pray for us, for we have a very good opportunity to reach out to others in a practical way. Please help us in the name of the Lord! God will reward you.

—Raymond Rosales
Ecuadorian Union President



Finite Man Will Wonder and Adore

“We are now approaching a period when principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness will increase, when the deceiving power of Satan will be so marked that we are warned in the Word of God that if it were possible he would deceive the very elect. The discernment of the people of God must be sharpened by divine illumination to know what spirit is of God, and to not be ignorant of Satan’s devices.

“There will be an accumulation of divine agencies to combine with human effort that there may be the accomplishment of the work for the last time. The work will most assuredly be cut short in a most unexpected manner. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and no one will be able to say when the movings of God’s Spirit will be realized or what direction or through whom It will manifest Itself. But I speak not my own words when I say It will pass by those who have had their test and opportunity and have not distinguished the voice of God or appreciated the movings of His Spirit. There will be thousands converted to the truth in a day, who at the eleventh hour see and acknowledge the truth and the movements of the Spirit of God. ‘Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed.’ Amos 9:13.

“The accessions to the truth will be of a rapidity which will surprise the church. God’s name alone will be glorified. Finite man will wonder and adore. The church is now highly privileged to bear a vigorous part as active agents with heavenly instrumentalities. Every Christian now should become men and women of intercession with God. They will evidence how much they love Jesus and the soul that He has purchased with His own blood.” –*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 754, 755.