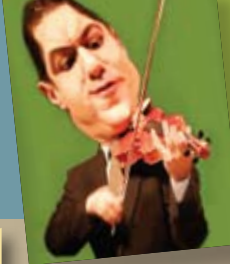




Gold Medalist
Mary Whipple



The Church
in Israel



Adventist
Caricatures

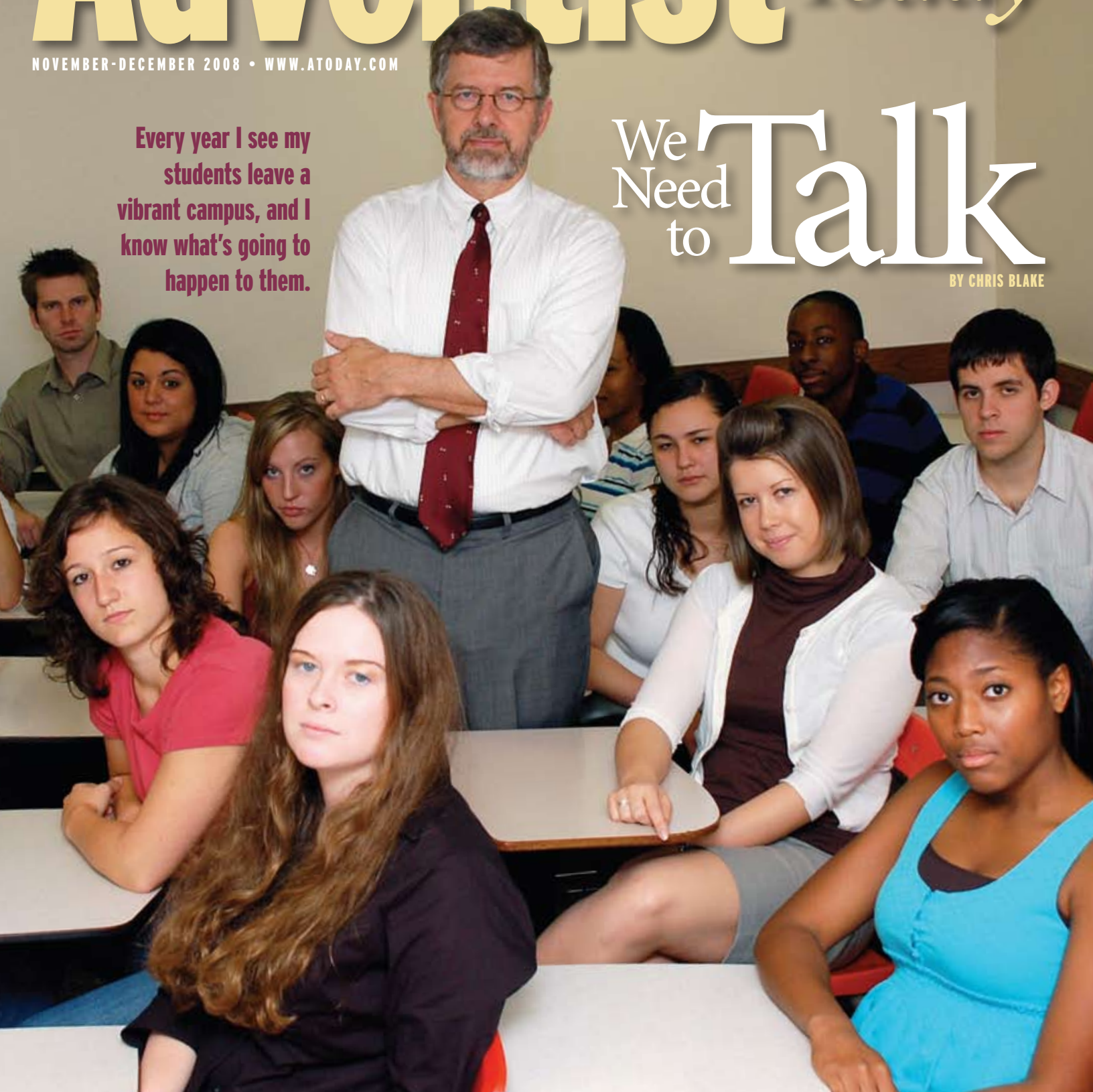
Adventist *Today*

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2008 • WWW.ATODAY.COM

Every year I see my
students leave a
vibrant campus, and I
know what's going to
happen to them.

We
Need
to **Talk**

BY CHRIS BLAKE



Executive Publisher

Ervin Taylor

Editor

Andy Nash

Copy Editor

Debra J. Hicks

Contributing Editors

Chris Blake, John McLarty,
David Newman, James Walters

Art Director

Chris Komisar

Online Editor

Marcel Schwantes

Webmaster

Linda Greer

Director of Development

Edwin A. Schwisow

Office Manager

Hanan Sadek

FOUNDATION BOARD

Larry Downing – Board Chair, Ervin Taylor – Board Vice-Chair, Eugene Platt – Treasurer, Virginia Burley, Keith Colburn, Elwin Dunn, Edmund Jones, John McLarty, Chuck Mitchell, Jim Nelson, Randy Roberts, Nate Schilt, J. Gordon Short, Dan Smith, James Stirling, Eldon Stratton, David Van Putten, John Vogt, James Walters

RAYMOND F. COTTRELL ENDOWMENT BOARD

James Walters – Board Chair, Douglass Ewing, James Nelson, Nate Schilt, Ervin Taylor

SENIOR LIFETIME ADVISORS (\$25,000+)

Beth and Elwin Dunn, Patricia and Douglass Ewing, Kathi and Richard Guth, Judy and John Jacobson, Betty and Al Koppel, Joan Ogden, Lori and Thaine Price, J. Gordon Short, Marilyn and Ervin Taylor, Priscilla and James Walters

LIFETIME ADVISORS (\$10,000+)

Susan and Hernan Barros, Kathryn and James Dexter, Rosemary and Marilyn Duerksen, Patricia Hare, Judy and Gordon Rick, James Stirling, Nancy and John Vogt

UNDERWRITING ADVISORS

(\$2,500+ during last two years)
Kelli and Robert Black, Mariel Lynn and Edwin Hill, Tracy and R. Craig Reynolds, Marie A. William Sandborn

GENERAL ADVISORS (\$500+/year plan)

Barbara and Almon J. Balkins, Theresa Buchholz, Diana and Ken Bauer, Jeanne and Gary Bogle, Ginny and Todd Burley, Charlotte and John Cassell, Ruth L. Christensen, Judy and Keith Colburn, Patricia and Ronald Cople, Judy and John Curtis, John Cutts, Josephine and Joshua Dee, Larry Downing, Mary and James Dunn, Anders Engdahl, H.O. Engen, Sharon and Gary Fraser, Annette and Gary Frykman, Karen and Brent Gardner, Sandra and Samuel Geli, Don Halsell, Jackie and Thomas Hamilton, Sheridan and Richard Hannon, Linda and Lyndon Harder, Dolores and Robert Hasse, Jackie and Jim Henneberg, Jolene and Dennis Hilliard, Sally and Russell Hoenes, Virginia and Donald Jeffries, Erika and Brian Johnson, Ruth and Edmond Jones, Marga and Elton Kerr, Dolores and Dean Kinsey, Helen and Frank Knittel, Doreen and Irvin Kuhn, Carmen and Yung Lau, Darrell Litvin, Beryl and Ralph Longway, Felix Lorenz, Florence and Ken Lorenz, Frances and Donald Miller, Joan and Chuck Mitchell, Janet and Barton Moore, Alicia and Rick Murray, Adele and James Nelson, Elaine Nelson, Susan and Daniel Paulien, Steve Pawluk, David T. Person II, Eugene Platt, Ruthe-Marina and Gary Raines, Judith Rausch, Joyce and Phil Reiswig, Ruth and Beryl Rivers, Dee Dee and Nate Schilt, Barbara and Eldon Stratton, Betty and James Webster, Stephanie and Tim Welebir, Anne and Ralph Wiseman

As an independent press, Adventist Today relies on donations to meet its operating expenses. To make a donation, go to www.atoday.com or mail to Adventist Today, P.O. Box 8026, Riverside, CA 92515-8026. Thanks for supporting Adventist Today with your regular tax-deductible donations!

COVER STORY

8 We Need to Talk

by Chris Blake

A college professor shares his heart.

features

12 'God Wants Israel Back'

Andy Nash interviews Richard Elofer, president of the Adventist Church in Israel.

DEPARTMENTS

3 Editorial

4 Letters

6 News & Analysis

"Claim L.A." Evangelistic Series Meets Resistance Among California Pastors, by Andrew Hanson

25 Alden Thompson

The Eye Doctor

26 Remnants

7 Questions for . . . Mary Whipple—Olympic Gold Medalist

Adventist Man: Sacred Hierarchy, Language Vegan, Sabbath No-No

22 A Time to Laugh

Adventist Caricaturist bursts onto the scene.



Adventist Today brings contemporary issues of importance to Adventist Church members. Following basic principles of ethics and canons of journalism, this publication strives for fairness, candor, and good taste. Unsolicited submissions are encouraged. Payment is competitive. Send an email to atoday@atoday.com. Annual subscriptions \$29.50 (\$50/2 years) for individuals, \$19.50 for new subscribers, \$40 for institutions. (Payment by check or credit card. Add \$10 for address outside North America.) Voice: (800) 236-3641 or (951) 785-1295 Fax: (951) 785-1595 Email: atoday@atoday.com Website: www.atoday.com.

Adventist Today (ISSN 1079-5499) is published bimonthly by Adventist Today Foundation, P.O. Box 8026 Riverside, CA 92515-8026. Periodical postage paid at Riverside, California, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Adventist Today, P.O. Box 8026, Riverside, CA 92515-8026. Copyright © 2008 by Adventist Today Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering open dialogue in the Adventist community.



Daughters of Jerusalem

Andy Nash

We wake up earlier than planned—Ally, Morgan, and I. Our first morning in Jerusalem.

I've dreamed about coming here all my life; what I never dreamed was that I'd get to share the holy city with my two oldest daughters, ages 10 and 8. My youngest stayed home in Chattanooga with Cindy, who has traveled here before and who prayed us across the Atlantic.

Yesterday was a pulsating drive up to the Old City and a rush through aggressive markets—Jewish, Muslim, Christian—to the tranquil Garden Tomb. It was everything we'd imagined.

We will do anything to give our children joy, and when we actually have the chance, well, try stopping us.

Today is supposed to be a big day too. It's Thursday, the last day of the week that non-Muslims are allowed to visit the Temple Mount. We're leaving Sunday for Masada and then up to Galilee, where I'll baptize my girls in the Jordan.

Today is our only chance to visit the place where the orthodox still fear to tread; they don't want to risk walking where the Holy of Holies might have been.

I had heard how beautiful it is to approach the Temple Mount from the east, in the morning light, hiking down from the Mount of Olives and Gethsemane, so that was our big plan for today. But our plans have taken a turn. Morgan threw up several times last night.

This morning she says she's feeling a little better and that she wants to see the Temple Mount. I quickly deem her fit enough, and we slip into the required long pants and skirts, respectively.

We take a taxi to the Lion's Gate and enter the Old City on foot. Immediately to our left I see a Temple Mount entrance. As we approach security,

they call out, "Are you Muslim?" When I say no, they motion to continue on the road we were already on. Keep walking up the Via Dolorosa, they say, and then take the next left.

The road is cobbled and uphill, and Morgan begins to tug on my hand. Morgan doesn't usually let me carry her anymore. Like all twinkle-eyed daughters eventually, she has grown beyond her dad's arms. But she keeps tugging.

"Sweetheart," I ask, "do you want me to carry you?" She nods and lifts her arms. She's my little girl again.

Morgan puts her arm around my neck and sips her water bottle as we trudge along together. In time we turn left and find the entrance meant for us, near the Western Wall.

We spend two special hours on the Temple Mount. By the end Morgan is rejuvenated and her old self. She pours her water bottle over Ally's head.

Only later that afternoon, as I watch the girls giggle away a hot day with a cool swim, does it dawn on me. The street where I'd carried Morgan was the Via Dolorosa, the way of the cross. Intellectually I had known this, but I wasn't thinking of it at the time. I was thinking only of Morgan.

As she had leaned softly against me, my sole desire at that moment was simply to hold her, to ease her burden—the strange yet welcome love that, probably more than anything else, lets a sinful parent know the heart of the Father. We will do anything to give our children joy, and when we actually have the chance, well, try stopping us.

I'm so grateful for this experience—when carrying my daughter felt lighter than not carrying her. It helps me to understand.

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame . . ." (Heb. 12:2, NIV).





Adventist Salaries

I must say that "At What Price" (Sept.-Oct.), by Edwin A. and Edwin D. Schwisow, raises my blood pressure.

My ministry is among non-Adventists. Among other denominations, salary determines the "quality" of clergy they get. I consistently boast that Adventists pay ministers of small, rural churches virtually the same as ministers of large city churches. I even told the hospital board on which I serve that the pay scale for Adventist healthcare workers is equal to that of ministers. Obviously, I was mistaken.

FELIX A. LORENZ, JR.
Northville, Mich.

I read with interest "At What Price?"

In comparing Adventist pastors' salaries to other denominations, it is my understanding that many of the other Protestant denominations provide housing for their pastors at no out-of-pocket cost to the pastoral family. Add that to the salary of a non-Adventist pastor.

Adventist pastors also get a large reduction in their annual salary for tax purposes. The "housing allowance" allows them to have a deduction of their annual salary that reduces their potential tax liability considerably.

Adventist pastors are considered to be self-employed for Social Security purposes. This means that they must pay

the total amount of the Social Security premiums, whereas employees in other areas (such as secretaries) have half of their premiums paid by the denomination. It is interesting to note that Adventist pastors are not considered self-employed, however, for federal tax liability because they receive a W-2 at year's end.

When I was a pastor in the Carolina Conference, I was also required to sign a letter that authorized conference personnel to "audit" me to make sure I was returning tithe. As I recall, the Levites were not required to "tithe," and I think it is wrong to require this of any pastor.

I also believe that a pastor should be able to do other things to make an income as long as it is done on his own time (his day off, for example). Pastors

are required to be available for work six days a week. Again, I think this is asking more than should be required.

CHARLES W. GODFREY
Ravenna, Ohio

Big Apple Greeting(s)

I appreciate the way *Adventist Today* is keeping me connected with my church. Thank you for your hard and creative work.

I am buried in work here in Manhattan, sharing life with Muslims, Jews, atheists, and a plethora of other Christians, away from mainstream Adventism. Greetings, and Shalom, and Salaam, and Peace of Christ to you from New York!


SAMIR SELMANOVIC
New York, New York

Know a Kid Filled With Passion?

Have We Got the Book for You!



Andy Nash helps kids learn to use their character traits to glorify God as they watch Tatum and her tiger, Passion, have lots of fun at the spring picnic—until the gunnysack race. Then Grandpa shares a wonderful secret that makes Tatum (and her tiger, Passion) laugh and laugh. Hardcover, 32 pages. **\$9.99**





3 Ways to Shop

Visit your local Adventist Book Center®

Call toll-free 1-800-765-6955

Order online at AdventistBookCenter.com

Price and availability subject to change. Prices shown in U.S. funds.



REVIEW AND HERALD®
PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
Since 1861 | www.reviewandherald.com

Adventist Woman?

Adventist Man. Is he for real? I wonder if the "historic Adventists" will bring out the tar and feathers? What about equal time? Where is his counterpoint, Adventist Woman?

I have enjoyed *Adventist Today*. Keep up the good work.

SCOTT M. PARMELE
Coos Bay, Oregon

Adventist Man (page 27) seems to have upset about everyone at some point. Adventist Woman is an intriguing possibility. We'll keep an eye out for her.

LETTERS POLICY

Send to atoday@atoday.com or to Letters to the Editor, *Adventist Today*, P.O. Box 8026, Riverside, CA

A Message from the Executive Publisher

First, the good news. All *Adventist Today* stakeholders can be justly proud of what has been accomplished over the last two years at *Adventist Today*. As the result of the dedicated efforts of the *Adventist Today* team and with the financial support of members of our Board and Advisory Council, we embarked two years ago on what we called a Quantum Leap. As a result, our subscription numbers have risen by 40 percent over the last 12 months, and the traffic on our web site has almost doubled. In 2007, donations rose to their highest level in 10 years.

Now, the less than good news: Unless you have not had access to a newspaper or have not looked at your 401k statement recently, you are aware that the United States is experiencing a serious

economic downturn, which is now spreading into the European and Asian markets. There now seems to be no question that our economy has slipped into recession. Like many non-profit organizations, *Adventist Today* has experienced—particularly within the last 60 days—a sharp reduction in the level of donations. Since approximately 50 percent of our income is derived from this source, this has made an immediate impact on our financial condition.

Adventist Today has been at the forefront of providing unbiased and honest reporting of stories that other church media either could not or would not publish. This is the time for those who value *Adventist Today* to vote with a contribution that will assist us in weathering this storm. You are invited to mail a contribution in the reply envelope inside this issue, to donate online at www.atoday.com, or to email me at erv.taylor@atoday.com. Thank you. —Erv Taylor

Gifts for Friends & Family

The Perfect Gift by Lee Venden

God wrapped His extravagant gift in humanity. Catch a glimpse of that Child and watch that Man give Himself to save you. Hardcover. Regularly \$14.99, **Christmas Special \$10.99**

The Story of Christmas Advent Calendar

Open the gate of this unique Advent calendar to find 25 small numbered books that tell the amazing story of the first Christmas using Bible texts. **\$19.99**

Stocking Stuffers

Bible Board Books by Noelle Huntington

ANGELS IN THE BIBLE
PARABLES OF THE BIBLE
STORIES OF THE BIBLE **\$6.99 each**

NEST Family Entertainment™
Animated Stories DVDs and Read-A-Long Sing A-Long DVD Storybooks

Stories from history and the Bible are brought to life in these award-winning DVDs. See the large selection available at AdventistBookCenter.com **\$14.99 each**

3 WAYS TO SHOP

Visit your local Adventist Book Center®
Call toll-free 1-800-765-6955
Order online at AdventistBookCenter.com

REVIEW AND HERALD®
PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
Since 1961 | www.reviewandherald.com

Price and availability subject to change. Prices shown in U.S. funds.

"Claim L.A." Evangelism Project Meets Resistance Among California Pastors

Pastors say that conference administrators should have consulted better with local churches in planning joint effort with It Is Written.

By Andrew Hanson

A major evangelistic project is being questioned by a number of Adventist pastors in Southern California.

Claim L.A. will combine the resources of the Southern California Conference and the It Is Written evangelistic team to conduct public meetings in several locations around the greater Los Angeles area in 2009 and 2010. The cost is projected to exceed \$1 million and will involve more than 40 Adventist churches.

The Claim L.A. concept originated when Shawn Boonstra, It Is Written Speaker/Director, telephoned Larry L. Caviness, president of the Southern California Conference, outlining what an evangelistic campaign had to offer the Conference, whose membership has dropped from 50,000 to 40,000 over the past decade. Boonstra offered to conduct an outreach in Los Angeles similar to those conducted by It Is Written in Phoenix and Portland. Caviness viewed Boonstra's call as providential—an answer to his prayers. On many occasions, Caviness told his pastors, he had climbed the hill behind his Glendale home to pray for the city of Los Angeles, seeking God's direction in sharing the gospel with those who live there.

But interviews with Adventist pastors in the Greater Los Angeles area reveal widespread unease with the decision-making process that led to adopting the Claim L.A. project as the primary conference evangelistic program for the next two years. The pastors have requested not to be named because they are employed by the conference. According to these pastors, Caviness made the decision without sufficiently discussing the plans with the pastors.

One pastor said that he attended a Claim L.A. meeting held at the White

Memorial Church in Los Angeles, knowing that the conference had already committed the pastors to participate in the project. The meeting was chaotic and filled with tension, said the pastor, adding that input from the area pastors wasn't taken as seriously as they had hoped.

"It's not the way I'd have chosen to do it," added another pastor. "Our administrators decided it was the right thing to do. [But] it's not the best use of the money."

Funding for Claim L.A. comes from a single donation, not from the conference budget. And several pastors affirmed Caviness for his leadership in rescuing the financially stressed conference over the past few years. Their concern, they said, is not with Caviness personally or with his desire for membership growth in Southern California, but with how the Claim L.A. project is being handled.

Several local pastors said that the plans for evangelism could have been improved if they had been more closely consulted.

"Is the It Is Written staff going to sit down to learn what's going on in the local churches?" asked one pastor. "Does It Is Written assume that one message fits all? Do these people assume that we don't know anything? If we were given the resources and support, we could bring the gospel message to our communities in ways that are tailored to meet specific needs. Can't we be trusted to achieve a common goal?"

Following their complaints, said several pastors, Conference Vice President James Lee apologized for not having involved the pastors more closely in the planning.

Phone and email messages requesting interviews with Lee and Caviness haven't been returned. Co-speaker and It Is Written Evangelism Coordinator for North America Joe Cirigliano, however,

previously sent a letter to *Adventist Today* responding to some of the criticism of Claim L.A. in the blogosphere. Cirigliano cited several meetings going back to 2006 between the Southern California Conference, It Is Written, and area pastors, and said the communications will be ongoing. "During 2009 and 2010," he wrote, "there will [be] a strong emphasis on retaining new members through small groups, retreats, training, and other methods."

Pastors have also expressed concern about the demographic focus of the meetings and the expected emphasis on prophecy. "Statistics show that people come to Christ before age 32," one pastor said. "Boonstra's meetings are addressed to the 55 and older." Several pastors expressed their concern that their neighbors might connect them with the handbills that are mailed out.

Another pastor cited a July 2008 article in *Ministry* magazine reporting that 0.5 percent of Adventist growth in America comes from evangelism, while more than 70 percent comes through personal relationships. "This is what churches do on the local level," he said. "Why do we put so much of our resources into a method that has such a small return and so little into a method that is effective?"

The Southern California Conference has made \$109,000 available to Los Angeles-area churches that support Claim L.A., according to conference pastors.

One pastor expressed his concern that those who critique traditional evangelism are branded as foes. "I care about people and I want people to come into God's kingdom and be God's people," he said. "I have no desire to tear down the church. But if I'm not on the bandwagon, then I'm labeled as anti-evangelism."



WE Need to Talk

We co

BY CHRIS BLAKE





Continue to lose our next generation. But we don't have to.

EVERY YEAR I SEE MY STUDENTS LEAVE A VIBRANT campus, and I know what's going to happen to them. Many will walk inside a small Adventist church, where they expect or hope to encounter excellent preaching; soul-stirring music; honest, deep friendships characterized by open dialogue; and attractive, imaginative, courageous discipleship.

Soon they will be disappointed. Soon after that, they will bolt.

Every Adventist college sets up graduates for this sad exodus. We do it by offering years of excellent preaching, soul-stirring music, and honest, deep friendships ...

Yeah.

If you haven't yet heard the stories or witnessed firsthand the Adventist young adult hemorrhage in North America, you are not plugged in to current realities.

Unfortunately, today's young adults are not being trained to thrive in hostile and sterile spiritual environments as tough disciples of the Carpenter from Nazareth. Students are instead recruited, targeted, coddled, and wooed like discriminating indie music fans.

They emerge from college unprepared to face older Adventists who believe, deep in their hearts, that most contemporary Christian music is from the devil. That only a traditional order of worship is sacred. That God honors entitlement. That the week exists to point us toward the Sabbath. That church is a denomination or building. And that what ultimately matters most to God is what happens inside that denomination or building.

Younger Adventists believe, deep in *their* hearts, that virtually all musical styles can laud God. That Jesus handed down no specific order of service. That God honors creativity and accountability and love. That the Sabbath exists to launch us into the week. That church is a community of uneven believers. And that what ultimately matters most to God is what happens on streets, in schools, and in homes outside any denominational building.

Can these two heartfelt perspectives merge and flourish? What other differences exist? Moreover, what about those who are not in the church?

Emerging Portrait

In their riveting book *unChristian* (Baker Books, 2007), David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons document a three-year, groundbreaking study from The Barna Group using thousands of interviews with people who are outside of Christianity—“outsiders.” The researchers focused their questions on 16- to 29-year-olds—parts of Busters (born between 1965 and 1983) and Mosaics (born between 1984 and 2002)—highlighting distinctions, as shown in the following table.

Generation	Age (in 2007)	Percent outside of Christianity	Size in U.S.
Older Mosaics and Young Busters	16-29	40%	24 million
Boomers	42-60	27%	21 million
Elders	61+	23%	12 million

Because they have been the target of more marketing and media than any previous generation, Busters’ and Mosaics’ mindset is “incredibly savvy and unusually jaded.” Relationships (think mobile phones, texting, blogs, MySpace) are their driving force, with one of the highest values “being loyal to friends.”

Furthermore, they:

- Engage in a nearly constant search for fresh experiences and new motivations.
- Disdain self-proclaimed experts and “talking head” presentations. (“Being skeptical of leaders, products, and institutions ... they do not trust things that seem too perfect.”)
- Quickly move on if not permitted to participate in the process.

- Prefer casual and comfortable to formal and stiff.

- View life in a nonlinear way; they don’t mind contradiction and ambiguity.

In analyzing research results, Kinnaman and Lyons refuse to sugarcoat the situation. “The title of this book, *unChristian*, reflects outsiders’ most common reaction to the faith: They think Christians no longer represent what Jesus had in mind.” As one outsider observed, “Christianity has become bloated with blind followers who would rather repeat slogans than actually feel true compassion and care. Christianity has become marketed and streamlined into a juggernaut of fearmongering that has lost its own heart.”

Many outsiders hold negative opinions of Christians “not because of any specific theological perspective. What they react negatively to is our ‘swagger,’ how we go about things and the sense of self-importance we project. ... *We have become famous for what we oppose, rather than who we are for.*” In other words, we’re barking up the wrong tree of life.

The book spotlights six broad, objectionable themes raised by outsiders:

Hypocritical. Christians “pretend to be something unreal, conveying a polished image that is not accurate.”

Too focused on getting converts. Outsiders too often “feel like targets rather than people.”

Anti-homosexual. Christians “show disdain for gays and lesbians.”

Sheltered. Christians “do not respond to reality in appropriately complex ways, preferring simplistic solutions and answers.”

Too political. Christians are “overly motivated by a political agenda.”

Judgmental. Outsiders doubt “that [Christians] really love people as we say we do.” We are too quick and too willing to judge.

What appear as self-evident truths to Christians are anything

No More Making Crazy-makers

By Chris Blake

Because they can’t or won’t discuss feelings and beliefs openly, people can become “crazy-makers”—using (often unconsciously) passive-aggressive techniques to vent their resentments. Crazy-makers employ a variety of indirect tricks and sneak attacks.

The following five crazy-making characteristics appear in many Adventist young adults when they intersect with their church.

The Avoider. Avoiders refuse to discuss or engage. No vital, deepening friendship can develop because they simply won’t show up.

The Pseudoaccommodator.

Pseudoaccommodators pretend nothing at all is wrong. When the going gets rough, however, they leave, explaining, “It was never good.”

The Joker. Because they are afraid to face reality squarely, jokers constantly kid around. This behavior blocks expression of important feelings. Eventually, jokers opt out for something more “real.”

The Blamer. Blamers would rather point out faults than solve problems. Through a torrent of criticism, they place everyone else on the defensive—then are sorely wounded when others strike back.

The Benedict Arnold. Arnolds “get back at” the church or God by ridiculing, failing to defend from attackers, and sabotaging united efforts.

In the final analysis, the antidote to passive-aggressive behavior exists in enabling direct, responsible communication, in creating sanctuaries—safe places—for open, caring dialogue. Ironically, too many church sanctuaries are anything but safe.

When a church offers safe, honest, redemptive avenues for expression, it stops making crazy-makers.

else to others. “A minority of outsiders perceives Christianity as genuine and real, as something that makes sense, and as relevant to their life.”

As the book maintains, it’s not a pretty picture.

Then the really troubling news: “We must grasp the idea that young people in our churches are ... bringing up some of the same challenges, questions, and doubts facing those outside the church.”

Recently I introduced my book (a supplemental text) *Searching for a God to Love* to a Union College physician assistant class. Of the 23 postgraduate students, only four are Adventist. When I surveyed the class’s overall perceptions of Christians, all of the six *unChristian* themes surfaced.

“They’re two-faced hypocrites,” said one student.

“Usually I get the idea,” observed another, “that they just want to ‘save’ me.”

“They have all the answers. But, really, they don’t even know the questions.”

Not one responded with hostility. They were simply being honest.

Conversation Over Conversion

Thankfully, Mosaics and Busters compose “the ultimate ‘conversation generations.’ They want to discuss, debate, and question everything.” Unfortunately, outsiders convey that “the overarching concern of Christians often seems more about being right than about listening.” Even Christian young adults worry that the actual message of Christians has become “one of self-preservation rather than one of world restoration.”

Adventist Today is superbly positioned to check two of the six broad objections. To combat hypocrisy, we need to be transparent about flaws while maintaining balance with redemptive suggestions. To counter the “sheltered” problem, we can engage and inform readers through thoughtful responses to real, complex issues people face.

Jim Wallis, editor of *Sojourners*, states: “The young people I meet ... [are] not happy with Christianity being either a list of things you shouldn’t do, or just about being nice. They want to go deeper.”

David Kinnaman writes, “I was amazed in our research to see how comfortable young people are with nuance and subtlety, expressing awareness of context in complicated and intricate issues.” He concludes: “A faith that does not effectively address convoluted and thorny issues seems out of tune with a generation asking big questions and expressing candid doubts.”

For a generation that prizes authenticity, a posturing faith will not supply nourishment. In a world that is fast unraveling, a

Adventist Today Pilot Drops In on College Campus

By Sierra Hatcher, sophomore, communication, Wisconsin

The students of Union College were happily surprised when stacks of *Adventist Today* began raining down on campus. Chosen to test the September/October pilot issue, students overwhelmingly responded positively. Here’s what they had to say:

“I was really impressed that *Adventist Today* is willing to tackle issues that we just don’t like to talk about—how much people are making, for one. That’s a topic that makes people uncomfortable, but *AT* sparks a dialogue by putting it right in our faces: on the cover! I think our generation appreciates honesty and authenticity, and it’s cool to see a branch of the church tackling the unspoken issues with candor. The Adventist Church needs more of that.”

—Emily Carlson, junior, elementary education, Pennsylvania

“I had never heard of *Adventist Today*, but while skimming through it I was caught up in one of the articles. After finishing it, I read the rest. The magazine is relevant, insightful, and interesting. I really enjoyed the one I read.”

—Michael Adams, freshman, exercise science, Nebraska

“Honest, open, a very good effort! Why don’t we have more Adventist stuff like this? Why do people see it as taboo to ask questions? Isn’t that the only way to learn?”

—Jeremy Sterndale, senior, international rescue and relief, Delaware

Adventist Today is earning respect from Union College students with its sincere and candid approach to difficult issues. Most importantly, it is a place for discussion on subjects that Adventist college students struggle with.

Adventist Today has great potential to reach a new, young audience and provide them with the tools they need to grow. Here at Union College, we students are looking forward to the next issue ... and not just because it has this sidebar.



sheltered faith will not rise to the challenge. This generation echoes the thoughts of the Apostle Paul: “The kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power” (1 Cor. 4:20, RSV).

To stanch the hemorrhage, young adults must be engaged and educated to thrive in our churches and world as compassionate, creative, tough disciples.

We need to listen. We need to act.



Chris Blake teaches English and communications at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska. His latest book is called *Swimming Against the Current* (Pacific Press).

'God Wants

HE WAS BORN AN ORTHODOX JEW, HE ACCEPTED CH



Israel Back'

**RIST, AND HE SPREADS THE GOSPEL IN JERUSALEM.
HE'D LIKE TO SEE THIS HAPPEN ABOUT A MILLION MORE TIMES.**

Andy Nash interviews Richard Elofer,
president of the Adventist Church in Israel

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL—If you're looking for a reason to feel good about being a Seventh-day Adventist, try visiting the Western Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem on a Friday evening. There you'll see Jewish families streaming to the wall from all over modern Jerusalem—dressed up to welcome the Sabbath with joy. You'll see Jewish girls dancing hand-in-hand together to the Lord. Some of the worshippers won't turn away from the wall all evening; even when they leave, they'll face the wall, walking backward. Why would they *want* to turn away? This same wall once protected the temple of God.

As you watch the singing and dancing and praying and socializing, you might think: *What an interesting people that God chose to make himself known to. What an interesting way they dress and eat and act.* And then you'll remember: *God didn't choose a people who dress and eat and act this way. The people dress and eat and act this way because God chose them.*

At the Western Wall on Friday night, you'll feel good to be an Adventist because the things that are so important to the Jewish people—the Sabbath, the Law, the whole life of faith—your church hasn't rejected. Rather, your church, perhaps more than any other Christian church, intersects naturally *with* Judaism.

Among those working at this intersection is Richard Elofer, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Israel. A Jew himself, Pastor Elofer heads the 1,000 members and 30 congregations that comprise the Adventist Church in Israel.

In June Elofer met with Andy Nash of *Adventist Today*. Portions of the interview were later supplemented.

Is the mission of the Adventist Church here in Israel to reach out in particular to Jews, to Muslims, to other Christians, or to everyone?

Everyone. Jews, Muslims, Christians—everyone who wants to accept the second coming of Jesus and the law of God, including the keeping of the Sabbath—is welcome in our church.

And you change your approach, obviously, as you reach out to these different groups?

Yes. We contextualize because each

similar to the Jewish worship than to the [traditional] Adventist worship.

What's your sense of the view of many Jews in Israel toward the Adventist Church, perhaps when compared to other Christian churches? How do they relate to and view the Adventist Church specifically?

The people who are joining us are joining us because we are a Sabbath-keeping church. We want to be faithful to the Torah and to be faithful to what is written in the Bible. I think this is the

Jesus. The only Jesus they know is the Jesus of the church. This is quite difficult because when they speak about the church, they automatically think about the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, and that's not really a good picture of Jesus. Not a good image of Jesus.

They call this Jesus “Yeshu,” which is an acronym of a sentence of three words about Jesus that are not very good. That's why when I speak with a Jew here in my office or in his or her own room, I say first



RICHARD ELOFER

Position: President of the Adventist Church in Israel

Background: Born in Casablanca, Morocco; raised in a Jewish Orthodox family; grew up in France; became an Adventist at age 20; pastored 18 years in France.

Family: Wife, Liliane (who works at the Adventist headquarters and guesthouse, called Advent House, in Jerusalem); three adult children (one daughter, two sons); four grandchildren.

Languages Spoken: French, English, Hebrew, and Arabic Moroccan

group has a particular specificity, and we have to cater to that specificity in order to reach them in their context.

Give some examples of context with regard to Jews and Muslims.

When we speak about God to Muslims, we don't hesitate to take the Koran and to make a study “Bible” with the Koran and to show them that much of what we teach is already in the Koran. This means that Muslims can believe what we believe. The Sabbath is in the Koran, Jesus is in the Koran, the second coming of Jesus is in the Koran—much of what we teach is in the Koran. That is one way of contextualization.

For the Jewish people, contextualization occurs much more when we worship God because we try to worship in a contextualized manner. However, this is not true for all of our congregations here in Israel because we have 30 congregations, and not all of them are contextualized for Jewish people. But we try in some areas to contextualize for them, and then the worship is more

main reason why people join our church.

Some church members might wonder: When Jews join the Adventist Church, do they fully accept the teaching of righteousness by faith—saved by grace? Is there any tension with hanging onto points of the law or fully accepting the grace that we know in Christ?

In this regard, we normally have a wrong understanding of the Jewish people. The Jewish people don't believe in salvation by works. For the Jews, salvation has always been by faith. Thus, when they enter the Seventh-day Adventist Church, they continue to believe in salvation by faith, but the faith is about Jesus. When they were in Judaism, the faith was just because they were Jews. But it is always by faith.

Can you give a general sense of the feeling of Jews here in Israel toward Jesus himself? I had an interesting conversation the other day with a Jewish man here in Jerusalem. The sense I got from him was that many Jews didn't feel strongly one way or the other about Jesus. He remarked, “If Jesus was the Messiah, he will come back. And then we'll know.” From your standpoint, what's the feeling of Jews here toward Jesus?

Most of the people in Israel don't know

that I am not speaking about Yeshu. Yeshu is not my Messiah. I separate myself very much from what the Catholic or Orthodox churches say about the Messiah. I say, “I want to speak to you about Yeshua,” which is a different name and is the Yeshua of the Bible. In Hebrew, the name of Jesus is Yeshua. I make a big difference between Yeshu—who keeps Sunday, who has the idols and icons and churches, etc.—and the Yeshua of the Bible.

So when you explain “Yeshua” to Jews, what kind of reaction do you get?

Most of the time the reaction is positive, not in the sense that they agree that Jesus is the Messiah, but more and more we see people accept Jesus as a great Jewish man who was martyred by the Roman Empire—crucified by the Romans like other thousands of Jews who were arrested by Rome. For them, and I think that they are correct, Jesus was a Jew all of his life; he was born as a Jew and died as a Jew.

In many Jewish schoolbooks, Jesus is presented as a teacher and there's not a negative position about him. They don't put the responsibility of what the church

has done during many centuries on his shoulders. Paul is seen with a much more negative perception as the founder of the Christian Church. Of course, you will also find a corner of Orthodox Jews who do not like Jesus at all.

This year Israel celebrates 60 years of statehood. In a 2006 interview with Mark Kellner of the Adventist Review, you said: "Today it is not rare that Jews come to me and ask me, 'What does your Church believe about Israel?' Have they been rejected and

We have to be clear with this statement in order to understand what the status of the Jewish people has been since the time of Jesus until today.

Romans 9 through 11, and especially chapter 11, is Paul's interpretation of the 70 weeks of Daniel 9 because the point is *what happened to the Jewish people after the 70 weeks of Daniel 9, or after 34 A.D.?* Paul is very clear. People—the Jewish people—have been put aside in order for the pagans—the Gentiles—to enter

will not be happy because they think the Sabbath is a special sign God has given to Israel—Exodus 20. It is not for the Gentiles. Thus when we come to the Jews, I don't say that we are "the" people of God; I say that we are "a" people of God.

But even when we say that we are a people of God and that we keep the Sabbath and want to be faithful to the Bible, they at first don't understand and become confused because today there are more Adventists who keep the Sabbath



replaced by the Church or not? If we say the traditional answer to this question, we have no chance to be listened to in Israel." What's your personal view of the place of the Jewish people in the end time?

To understand my point of view, we have to understand what the Bible says about the Jewish people. In Romans 9-11 where Paul is speaking about the Jewish people, he asks a very clear and easy question: "Has God rejected his people?" And he answered "No." It is clear that in this text Paul is speaking about Israel as a people, not as individuals. And he didn't say, "Has God rejected Israel?" He said, "Has God rejected his people?" That means when Paul wrote Romans, Israel was still his people. That is the first part.

In Romans 11:28 it is written: "As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs." That means, according to Paul, that they are still God's elected people. As far as election, they are loved by God. He didn't say that they are no more elected by God, have been rejected by God, or are no more the people of God.

the covenant with God. It is true that the Jewish people were an obstacle for the Gentiles to come to the church. They were not ready for that. We can see that even the church was not ready for that, because when Peter baptized Cornelius, he came back in Acts 11 to Jerusalem, and the leadership of the church in Jerusalem approached him and said, "Why have you been in the house of Cornelius; what have you done there; why did you baptize him?" They were not ready for that. We can imagine how much more the rest of the Jewish people wouldn't be ready for that. That's why God put aside the Jewish people for awhile until the Gentiles came into the church and then altogether, the remnant of the church and the remnant of Israel, will be all Israel, which is spoken of in Romans 11.

How do you understand Paul's statement in Romans 11:11 (NIV) that "salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious"?

When you speak today to the Jewish people or go to an Orthodox Jew and say that you are Christian and that you keep the Sabbath, they will be very angry. They

than Jews. There are about 20 million Adventists, including children, and there are only 13 or 14 million Jews. That means that today the Adventist people are more and more becoming the witnesses for the Sabbath. In this way, we can understand the Jewish people's views.

So most Jews aren't happy that Christians are keeping the seventh-day Sabbath. But earlier you mentioned that it's because of Sabbath that some Jews join the Adventist Church.

If some Jews join the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it is because they recognize that Jesus is the Savior, the Messiah, and then they understand that the Sabbath is for all children of God, not only for Israel.

You referred to Paul in Romans 11:1 (NIV) where he says, "Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself." Your understanding is that God's people are Israelites, correct? And you also referred to two tracks: God's people by a spiritual remnant and by a literal remnant. Is that a parallel people of God?

Yes, but the people of God have always been a remnant. Even if you speak about

the literal Israel, it has been a remnant. That's why in this passage, especially in chapter 9, Paul is speaking about Elijah [and] his experience when he thought he was alone serving God, and God said to him "No, no, [there are] 7,000." It was a remnant. We don't know how many Jewish people there were in the time of Elijah. Maybe 2 million to 3 million. But the true believers—the remnant—numbered 7,000.

Then during all of history, God had a remnant among the Jews. And God had a remnant among the Christians. We see that in Revelation chapter 11 with the two witnesses, because we have the two witnesses who are witnessing during the 1,260 days of the supremacy of the papacy. Why two witnesses? Because each group, each witness, has experience in apostasy. The Christians have rejected the law and the Sabbath. The Jews have rejected Jesus. To have the full truth, we need both of them. These two remnants are the people who are behind the Old and the New Testaments, who are understood traditionally by the church as the two witnesses. Just don't forget that behind the paper, the Bible is the remnant Israel and the remnant church. The beast can try to burn all the Bibles of the world, but the two witnesses are still there, and they are here among us today.

Now the State of Israel itself—is that significant to you?

Yes, because I think if we continue to see what is the purpose of God for Israel at the end of time, we see that in Romans 11 God wanted to get them back. He said that the true branch will be grafted into the olive tree. That means it will be grafted again into the olive tree—that God wants Israel back to the olive tree. That means God wants them to convert to him by faith at the end of time. Hosea 3:4 (NIV) says, "For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones."

They have been without king, without prince, without sacrifices, without anything for two thousand years. The

text continues: "Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the LORD and to his blessings in the last days." Hosea 3:5, NIV.

Are we today in the last days? I believe so. I believe this text will be fulfilled; the Israelites will return and seek the LORD their God.

For me, God is the master of the human history. We have seen in Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, and 11 that God is leading human history; he allows Gentile nations to rise in order to pursue his plan of salvation for his people. That's why we can see in the event of the independence of the State of Israel how God is using this to call his remnant to wake up, to discover that Jesus is the Messiah, and to join his last-day people, the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Ellen G. White said that a "multitude" of Jews will join the church. We are at the very beginning of the fulfillment of this prophecy, but to give a chance for Jews to come to the church, it is better to be positive and not negative about the State of Israel.

Your view on this point is a little unconventional within the Adventist Church. Do you feel comfortable speaking on this?

Very comfortable, because it is a biblical point of view.

Are you frustrated at all with the official view on this—that there isn't biblical end-time significance to the State of Israel? When other Adventist leadership is asked about Israel, are you frustrated?

Of course I am frustrated. It is not very comforting when I read in many books that we see the end of the 70 weeks of Daniel 9 as the rejection of Israel. But that is more a new theology, because I have read some very old books of Adventist pioneers. For example, I have just read *Daniel and Revelation* by Uriah Smith. You will not see there the rejection of Israel. For Uriah Smith, as for Ellen White, the end of the 70 weeks of Daniel 9 has been the opening of the gospel to the Gentiles. Not at all the rejection of Israel.



ISRAELI WORSHIP: (above) The Adventist congregation in Haifa holds contextualized worship in the Jewish style. Here, Pastor Oleg Ilkine celebrates the bar mitzva of a 13-year-old church member. (right) The Ramat Gan church was founded in 2000, and its hundred-member congregation worships in a more conventional Christian way.

Ellen White, in *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 233-234, gives an explanation of Daniel 9. When she summarizes what really happened in the last week of the 70-week prophecy, she says: "The time of Christ's coming, His anointing by the Holy Spirit [that is A.D. 27], His death [that is A.D. 31.], and the giving of the gospel to the Gentiles [that is A.D. 34] were definitely pointed out. It was the privilege of the Jewish people to understand these prophecies" (p. 234). She didn't say that what happened at the end of A.D. 34 was the rejecting of Israel; she said it was the giving of the gospel to the Gentiles.

But in the 20th century we have shifted our interpretation, going very strongly to the rejection of Israel. Why? Because we wanted to fight the dispensationalist theology. This theology says that the third temple will be rebuilt—we don't believe in that. Jesus was sacrificed once for all time, and that's all. But we don't need to be very strong in the rejection of Israel just to fight this theology, which is wrong. We have to stay balanced.

In addition, talking that way about Israel is to doubt that God has an unconditional love for his people. And

the consequence of saying that “Israel has been rejected” is that we will never be sure that the Adventist Church is still the church of God. Let me explain how we can be sure the Seventh-day Adventist Church has not been rejected. The reformist movement says that the Seventh-day Adventist Church today is Babylon and has been rejected. Why can’t we accept that? Because we believe in the love of God, and even though the nine volumes of the testimonies of Ellen G. White are full of the sin of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we continue to believe we are the



people of God because God has chosen us. He has elected us. The more I am convinced about the love of God for Israel, the more I will be convinced about the love of God for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

What you’re emphasizing is that the end of the 70 prophetic weeks and the beginning of the early church was more about the gospel being thrown wide open to the Gentiles, not about the rejection of the Jews. The focus was on expanding to all peoples, not on rejecting one people.

Our mistake has been to think that this period of 70 weeks has been given to Israel to “to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin,” but that is nonsense. If we require Israel “to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin,” then we have to require the same thing from the people of God of today—that means the Adventist Church—and it is clear that the Adventist Church has not “finished

the transgression” or “put an end to sin.” We cannot ask from Israel what we cannot accomplish ourselves. In fact, all of the actions of Daniel 9:24 are the actions of the Messiah. It is the Messiah who will finish the transgression, put an end to sin, atone for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal both vision and prophet, and anoint a most holy place.

Here is where intervenes the Acts 7 story of Stephen. Stephen has pointed out the fulfillment of the prophecy by the Messiah when he had the vision of the heavenly sanctuary. He said, “Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” (Acts 7:56, NKJV). Daniel 9 says that the Messiah will “anoint a most holy place”—it has been done and [is] proven by the vision of Stephen. However, the prophecy does not finish with the end of someone (the stoning of Stephen); the prophecy finishes with “a strong covenant with many”—what we call the new covenant. The prophecy announces the opening of the gospel to the Gentiles.

According to Acts, the one who was called by God to preach the gospel to the Gentiles was Paul (Acts 9:15). So the end of the 70 weeks of Daniel 9 is really in connection with the conversion of Paul. That’s why Ellen White says that the last week finishes with the “giving of the gospel to the Gentiles.” The conversion of Paul was a few days or weeks or months after the stoning of Stephen—still in A.D. 34.

It’s interesting that at the end of Revelation you have the description of the New Jerusalem, and you have the 12 gates, the 12 names of the disciples, and you also have named the 12 tribes of Israel. There is an interesting correlation there, isn’t there?

Yes, yes. That’s why we have the 144,000—because 12 times 12 is 144, and 144 times 1,000 is 144,000. The 12 tribes and 12 disciples all combined together are the people of Israel. The people of God encompasses God’s people of the Old Testament and God’s people of the New Testament.

You mentioned the third temple, and there’s a lot of speculation on this right now. What do you hear about any attempt at some point to build a third temple?

We have to be very clear that the Jewish people will not try to rebuild the temple. You will never see a law in the Knesset or in the government of Israel saying that we have to make plans to destroy the mosque in order to build the temple. Never.

Who is interested by that? A very small minority of Orthodox Jews who have created the Temple Institute and are trying to prepare everything for the third temple. But they will say to you when you interview them: “We will not try to build the temple.” Then when and who will build the temple? “The Messiah. When the Messiah will come, he will build his temple.”

Are they collecting furniture?

Yes, they are preparing furniture. They have already made candelabras, they have made a lot of furniture, and they also try to train priests to do the service because they believe [that] right away when the Messiah comes, the temple will be rebuilt and they will have to start the sacrifices in the temple.

So they’re preparing, but it’s all dependent on the appearance of the Messiah. They will not try to lay the first stone themselves.

That’s correct. In fact, you have to remember that most of the Ultra-Orthodox Jews are in fact against the State of Israel. They don’t support the State of Israel because for them, the State of Israel is not a religious state—it was founded by socialists—and therefore it cannot fulfill the prophecy of the Bible. Only the Messiah when he returns will establish the State of Israel as God would like, because they want to see a theocracy like in the Old Testament.

On a personal level, what do you like most about living in Israel?

I feel here like I do in my home country of France. I am a Jew, and I feel very comfortable living in Israel. My parents are still alive, and they live in Israel. It is my country.

AT



◀ **BARRY BLACK**, the first Seventh-day Adventist to serve as the chaplain for the United States Senate, has a somber, stoic look befitting a man of his rank and position. But there is the slight smile present at the corner of his mouth.

FEATURE

A Time to LAUGH

Introducing ... the Adventist Caricaturist

The Adventist Caricaturist burst onto the blogosphere in March of 2008 with a hilarious and good-natured array of caricatures and editorial cartoons that poke fun at Adventism's history and prominent cast of characters, past and present. Aimed to "exaggerate the contours of Adventism," this caricaturist brings out the lighter side of our faith community and has people talking. And laughing.

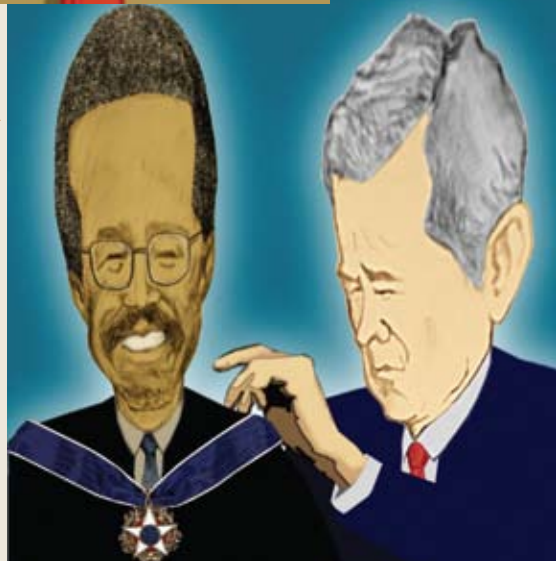
Originally started as an outlet to express his creativity, this self-taught caricaturist also offers commentary on the church. His blog is now being viewed by a worldwide audience, including those he sketches. When asked what prominent church leaders have seen and commented on his art, he responded, "Jose Rojas said, 'It's good to just sit back, giggle, and thank God for the fact that I'm just a cartoon trying to make a difference.'"

Other caricatures he has featured include Doug Batchelor, Shawn Boonstra, Ted N.C. Wilson, and Marvin Moore as well as Sarah Palin, Michael Phelps, and Shawn Johnson.

So far he prefers to remain anonymous to avoid any sort of reprisal from the saints lacking humor. He states, "Perhaps someday I will come out of the cartoonist's closet. At present, I am just an Adventist artist."

The Adventist Caricaturist can now be viewed weekly on our homepage at www.atoday.com.

▶ **DR. BEN CARSON**, world-renowned neurosurgeon and author of the autobiographical *Gifted Hands*, nearly used his gifted hands to put a knife in someone's stomach as an angry youth. Had Dr. Carson not been thwarted by a large belt buckle, he likely would never have had the opportunity to receive the Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush in June of 2008!

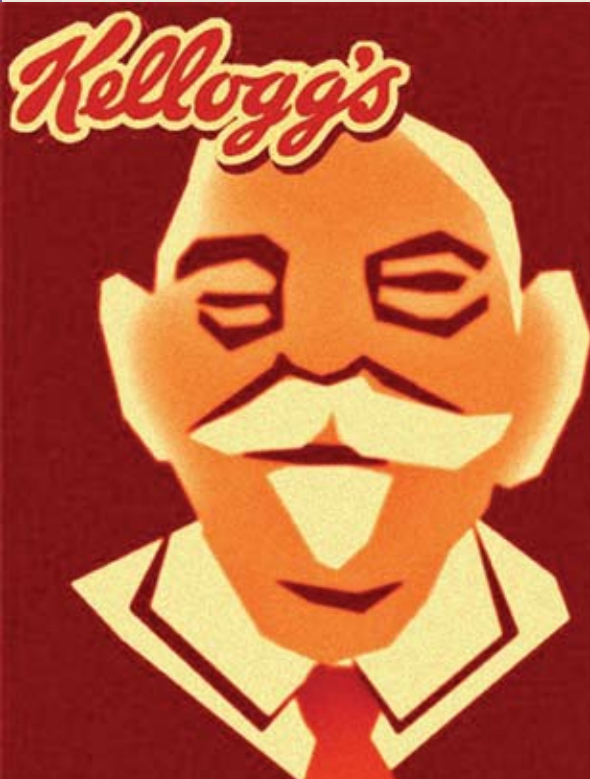


▶ **DR. ELLA LOUISE SMITH SIMMONS**, former provost at La Sierra University, is the first woman ever to hold the title of vice president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Hers is the highest position attained by a woman in the Adventist Church since the days of the pioneers. Here's to your broken glass ceiling, Dr. Simmons!



▶ **HYVETH WILLIAMS** has the distinction of being the first black American woman to pastor a Seventh-day Adventist Church. Williams is senior pastor of the Campus Hill Adventist Church in Loma Linda, Calif. Dr. Williams hails from Jamaica, and her roots are often evident in her energetic preaching and flamboyant fashion sense, which is a caricature in itself!





WINTLEY PHIPPS is arguably Adventism's most famous singer. He has performed for every U.S. president since Jimmy Carter. His soulful rendition of *Amazing Grace* is one of the most frequently viewed religious YouTube videos, with several million hits! Tellingly, when he sings, Wintley Phipps' arms, face, and gestures direct attention upward. He is, after all, an ordained Adventist minister.



KENDRA HALOVIK, PH.D., is a professor of Greek and New Testament studies at La Sierra University. She completed a doctoral thesis in Apocalyptic Literature (focusing on Revelation) at Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. She pastored at the Kettering Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ohio, the All Nations Church at Andrews University, and the Sligo Adventist Church in Tacoma Park, Md.



◀ **JAIME JORGE** is one of Adventism's most recognizable musicians. A talented violinist, Jaime Jorge has recorded several albums of inspirational instrumental music. But to see him perform live, you might be excused for thinking that he is trying to make his violin explode through sheer mental force, judging by his notorious facial expressions!

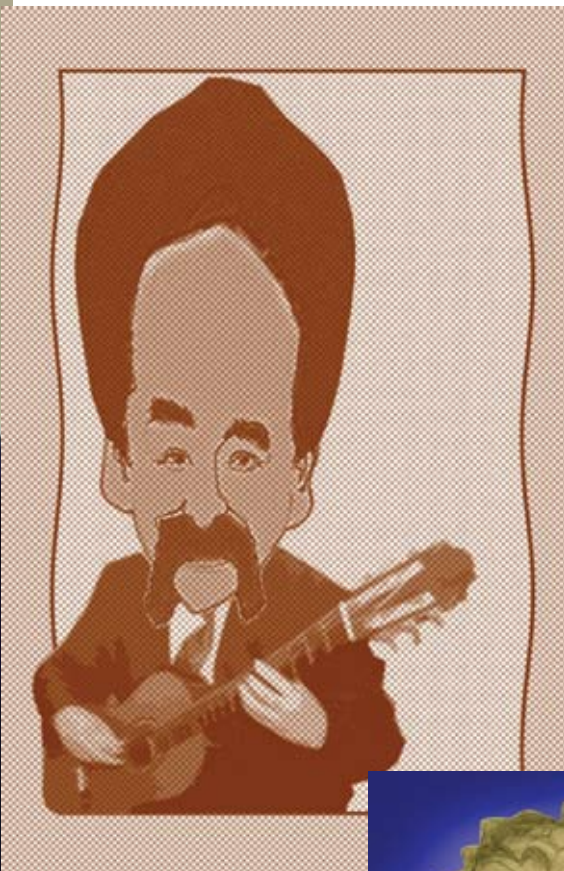
◀ **JOHN HARVEY KELLOGG** ranks among the top controversial figures in Adventist history. One of the pioneers of the Adventist health work, Kellogg was instrumental in the opening and operation of the Sanitarium in Battle Creek, Mich. He is perhaps best known as the inventor of Kellogg's Corn Flakes, the result of Kellogg's attempts to create a food that would lower libido. Bless his heart.

RAJMUND DABROWSKI, director of the Communication Department for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, has two major innovations to his name: the Adventist News Network and the Global Internet Evangelism Forum. Dabrowski comes from Poland, where as I understand it, people generally make very good caricatures. Ray, with his overzealous coif and imposing 'stache, is no exception. ▼



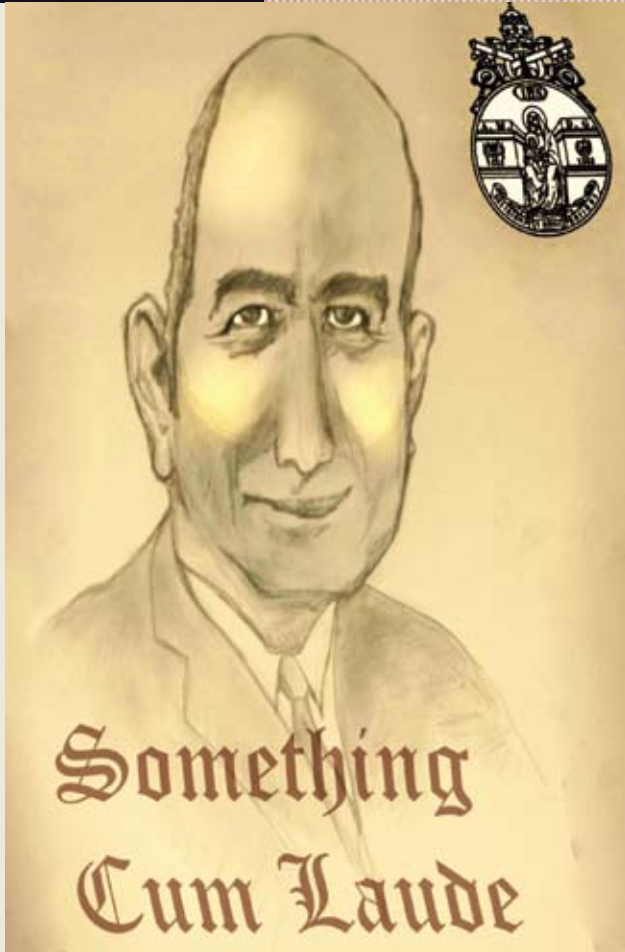


▶ **ROBERT S. FOLKENBERG** was president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists from 1990-1999. As president, things didn't end very well. He resigned in 1999 over allegations of financial impropriety. As an evangelist, Folkenberg is faring far better. His flowing jawline and meticulous mane ensure a great caricature.



▶ **JOSÉ VICENTE ROJAS** serves as director of Volunteer Ministries for the Adventist Church. Rojas is an accomplished musician in his own right as well as a speaker, writer, and church leader. But his most endearing quality is his great signature mustache that reaches out to greet you when you meet him. It's the sort of feature caricaturists dream about!

▶ If you've been in Adventist circles long enough, you will have heard paranoid rumors of Jesuits infiltrating Adventist institutions to do whatever it is that Jesuit infiltrators would do. **SAMUELE BACCHIOCCHI**, an Adventist scholar born in Rome, Italy, turned the tables by becoming the first non-Catholic to attend the Pontifical Gregorian University. His courageous act of infiltration made him a hero to many Adventists who would undoubtedly love to do the same thing. Unfortunately, a dispute recently arose between Bacchiocchi and the university over his use of the university's imprimatur on a book and the question of whether Bacchiocchi graduated magna cum laude or summa cum laude.



Something
Cum Laude



▶ **SHAWN BOONSTRA** replaced Mark Finley on the Adventist TV program *It Is Written*. Boonstra is Adventism's resident televangelist, and he was tapped by the Southern California Conference of SDAs to conduct a major satellite evangelistic series in Los Angeles. But we love him most of all for his wonderfully wooly locks and robust, caricaturable smile.



The Eye Doctor

By Alden Thompson

She knew she needed glasses but wasn't happy about the prospect. She slipped into the doctor's chair and waited.

When the doctor arrived, the questions began. Is it clearer this way, with John, or this way, with Paul?

What does a touch of Matthew do? Help or hinder?

How about a little bit of Proverbs. Better or worse?

Lamentations? Too much Lamentations?

Philippians?

Here's a psalm. What does that do?

She was delighted with her new glasses. She could see! And she was grateful the doctor had not used all of his lenses just for her. Some of them would be more helpful for him.

Their eyes were different. Their glasses, too.

But each could see more clearly because the lenses matched their particular needs.

Sometimes they would switch glasses—not in order to see more clearly, but to remind each other that their eyes really were quite different.

Then they would both be grateful for their own. And with those very different glasses they would gaze together at the distant mountains, rejoicing that they could both see them so clearly.

In our schools the work of teaching the Scriptures to the youth is not to be left wholly with one teacher for a long series of years. The Bible teacher may be well able to present the truth, and yet it is not the best experience for the students that their study of the word of God should be directed by one man only, term after term and year after year. Different teachers should have a part in the work, even though they may not all have so full an understanding of the Scriptures. If several in our larger schools unite in the work of teaching the Scriptures, the students may thus have the benefit of the talents of several.

Why do we need a Matthew, a Mark, a Luke, a John, a Paul, and all the writers who have borne testimony in regard to the life and ministry of the Saviour? Why could not one of the disciples have written a complete record and thus have given us a connected account of Christ's earthly life? Why does one writer bring in points that another does not mention? Why, if these points are essential, did not all these writers mention them? It is because the minds of men differ. Not all comprehend things in exactly the same way. Certain Scripture truths appeal much more strongly to the minds of some than of others.

The same principle applies to speakers. One dwells at considerable length on points that others would pass by quickly or not mention at all. The whole truth is presented more clearly by several than by one. The Gospels differ, but the records of all blend in one harmonious whole.

So today the Lord does not impress all minds in the same way. Often through unusual experiences, under special circumstances, He gives to some Bible students views of truth that others do not grasp. It is possible for the most learned teacher to fall far short of teaching all that should be taught.

It would greatly benefit our schools if regular meetings were held frequently in which all the teachers could unite in the study of the word of God. They should search the Scriptures as did the noble Bereans. They should subordinate all preconceived opinions, and taking the Bible as their lesson Book, comparing scripture with scripture, they should learn what to teach their students, and how to train them for acceptable service.

The teacher's success will depend largely upon the spirit which is brought into the work. ... Let not the spirit of controversy come in, but let each seek earnestly for the light and knowledge that he needs.¹

¹ Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 432-433.

The whole truth is presented more clearly by several than by one.

7 QUESTIONS

for...Mary Whipple, Olympic Gold Medalist *By Debra J. Hicks*



This summer in Beijing, China, 28-year-old Mary Whipple won an Olympic gold medal in the women's eight rowing event. As the coxswain, it is her job to guide, motivate, and unify the eight rowers in the boat. She sits in the stern and is the only one who can see forward during the 2000-meter race. Mary and her crew set a world best time of 5 minutes, 56.55 seconds during the qualifying heats at the 2004 Olympic games in Athens, and set it again in 2006 with a 5:55.5. They won back-to-back world championships in 2006 and 2007.

Mary is an eight-time member of the U.S. national team and led her crew to victory in the 2007 and 2004 world cup races in Lucerne, Switzerland. She began winning rowing competitions in high school, when she and her twin sister, Sarah, became star coxswains. Too small to be rowers, they loved the challenge of being on-the-water coaches in charge of a crew.

Both sisters won NCAA titles while in college, and Sarah is now the assistant women's rowing coach at UC Berkeley.

I caught up with Mary after the Games in her hometown of Sacramento, where she and her sister graduated in 1998 from Sacramento Adventist Academy. Mary grew up attending the Orangevale SDA Church, sitting with her parents in the fourth pew on the left. While a student at the University of Washington in Seattle, Mary attended the Green Lake Church and enjoyed their active young adult group. Currently in the process of moving back to Seattle, she looks forward to going back to Green Lake once her busy public-speaking itinerary settles down.

Olympics, I have to be the calming factor. The rowers are filled with adrenaline, and sometimes that can affect our rhythm in a negative way. I'm in charge of getting the boat down from a quick start to a long, steady but relentless speed/rhythm. From there I tell them what it is going to take to win, and they are good enough to execute exactly that.

How did your Adventist background influence your value system? Were there times when your beliefs were at odds with your goals?

Growing up Adventist gave me a strong work ethic, integrity, and a sense of accountability. I don't think I have to give up my belief in being an Adventist and belief in God to achieve my goals. My

At the starting line of a major race like the Olympics, I have to be the calming factor. The rowers are filled with adrenaline, and sometimes that can affect our rhythm in a negative way.

Winning an Olympic race and receiving a gold medal on the winner's podium are without a doubt indescribable experiences. But for most Americans, those few minutes of glory wouldn't be worth the years of sacrifice and commitment they demand. What specifically kept you going in pursuit of this dream?

Being great at something doesn't come often in life. Rowing gives me the chance of being the best. I have stayed with rowing for 14 years now because it is truly a team sport where we actually rely on each other and need to be there for one another on our team to be successful. We've created a dynamic team atmosphere where it feels more like a family, and knowing that everyone on our team is committed to excellence makes the sport addictive. Plus when we get our boat moving well, there is nothing like it in the world.

You've described your leadership style as "cool under pressure, calm and relentless." Tell us more about your role in the rowing team.

Being the coxswain means that I'm the voice of the boat. I have a microphone, and there are speakers in the boat so all the women can hear me. At the starting line of a major race like the

belief system has helped me achieve my goals and given me perspective on my athletic career to help me through stressful times.

With half of the Adventists in North America over age 60, church leaders are recognizing the need to better engage young people in the vision and work of the church. As a young adult, what aspects of Adventism do you feel are relevant and which are not?

I think a lot of young adults feel judged by the older members of the church. I also feel like the older members of the church want to protect the church faith and make sure we don't try to water down the message. I agree with them because I feel that a more celebration-style church service is not appropriate during the formal service. I love the fact that our church has Sabbath School before church so that there is more interaction and dialogue about our faith. I love going to vespers, especially when it is at a church member's home. It helps me to bring God out of the church, off of the pew, and into my everyday life. As a young adult I feel like it is not so much Adventism being relevant or not to our lives but rather how can we fit Adventism into our overscheduled lives. Time management (or the lack

thereof) makes young adults put attending church low on their list of things to do.

You graduated from an Adventist academy but also attended public high school for two years and earned a communication degree at the University of Washington. In your estimation, is an Adventist education a worthwhile investment? Is there anything you wish Adventist schools would do differently?

If I didn't have rowing in my life, I probably would have gone to an Adventist college. I think that an Adventist education is an amazing one, especially if you want to go into the medical field. For me, though, I'm glad I got out of the "bubble." Without any disrespect, I feel like Adventist education teaches students about outreach to the world, which is amazing. However, I feel like some students are too sheltered and don't know how to navigate the world without giving up their Adventist values. It is a fine line to walk when a 20-something Seventh-day Adventist is trying to "fit in." I would like to see a greater network and outreach to universities and public schools so young Adventists don't feel like they have to leave the Church to experience the world and then come back when they start having kids and want to teach their children the values that they were brought up to have.

As a young woman of influence who has traveled all over the world, what do you see as the most significant issue(s) facing our nation and the planet today?

Selfishness. Me, me, me, now, now, now. A lot of people today forget to "Do unto others..." Throughout all my travels, I've learned that people are the same no matter where you are. Everyone wants love, and everyone has family that they care about. I just wish everyone would be more selfless and less selfish.

As you look to the future, will rowing continue to be part of your life, or do you plan to channel your energy and determination in a different direction?

Rowing is a lifestyle, and it's been my life for quite some time now. I would love to keep racing for the rest of my life, but I don't know if that is going to be possible. I do have a dream to coach one day and help collegiate athletes learn to row and use rowing for life lessons. I think rowing teaches great leadership skills, teamwork, and accountability. All those skills are valuable to life and in the workplace.

Adventist Man

Sacred Hierarchy Language Vegan Sabbath No-No

I know that whenever I place a Bible and a hymnbook or a Sabbath School quarterly beside me on the church pew, the Bible goes on top. What happens if I'm carrying two or three Bibles? Which version or translation goes on top of the other? —Andrew V. Marttinen

Brother Andrew V.,

Simply place the Bibles next to one another in a straight, unbroken line on the pew. Beginning with the most modern version, grace-orientedly "work" your way toward the older, venerable versions. If you must clear people from the pew to do this, you may feel as sanctified as Samson.

If you absolutely cannot avoid making a stack, Adventist Man recommends that you place the Authorized Version on top. Then, on top of that, of course, *The Clear Word*.

Additionally, *never* place a Sabbath School quarterly over a hymnbook—unless the quarterly has been edited by Clifford Goldstein.

Cliff Goldstein trumps Isaac Watts.

I have learned that we have been using the word "vegan" incorrectly! Vegans don't eat honey or wear leather belts. "Total vegetarians" can eat honey and wear leather belts.

Pure vegans are noble as far as they go, but Adventist Man takes his holiness to the next level: he is a "language vegan." Thus he declines to even mention the word "honey" as a term of endearment and avoids uttering the Hindu phrase "Holy cow!"

Moreover, Adventist Man never "meets" appointments, will not "pig out" at meals or "chicken out" in challenges, doesn't seem "fishy," and has no "beef" with anyone, ever.

Could someone please point out to Adventist Man that it was Eowyn that killed the witch king, not Galadriel? BTW, I enjoy the Adventist Man segment and would hate to see it go.

—Kevin Riley

Brother Kevin,

Thank you for pointing this out. Adventist



Man regrets the grave error. He is as stunned by this revelation as Gandalf was when he sank with the ring beneath the magma.

What should we avoid doing on the Sabbath? Give me a list.

Adventist Man notes that many Christians tend to require lists. Otherwise, they feel listless. Fortunately, Jesus did indeed create a list of prohibitions for Sabbath. Here it is, in Matthew 12:7 (RSV):

"If you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless."

There we have it. In addition to "doing" acts of justice and mercy (Matthew 12:12 says: "It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath"), the one thing we should always "avoid doing" on Sabbath is to criticize how anyone else keeps the Sabbath.

Adventist Man trusts you understand.

Do you have a tough question? Adventist Man has "the answer." As a former member of "the remnant of the remnant," Adventist Man was ranked 8,391 of the 144,000—and working his way up. Now he relies solely on grace and friendship with Jesus. You can email him at atoday@atoday.com



Candid. Faithful. *Adventist Today*.

Dear Reader:

Many of you are receiving this issue of *Adventist Today* “on the house.” The house hopes you’ll pay next time.

If you’re new to Adventist Today, here’s who we are:

- We’re absolutely committed to the health and growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- We’re absolutely committed to balanced, respectful journalism. Just as the Scriptures themselves recorded the ups and down of Israel and the early church, *Adventist Today* reports with candor on the Adventist Church. Together we celebrate the successes and learn from the setbacks.
- We’ve grown by 40 percent in 2008 alone. We’re honored by the Adventist membership’s support of our new format.

- We would love to have you join us in 2009. Inside this issue is a reply envelope with a special rate of \$19.50/year for new subscribers. Send it back right away, and you’ll get our next issue in your mailbox—plus full access to the *Adventist Today* website. (You can also subscribe to our online-only edition at www.atoday.com for \$8.00/year.)

Welcome to *Adventist Today*. See you in 2009.

COMING IN ADVENTIST TODAY

- How the North American Church Can Thrive Again
- 10 Adventist Leaders Share Their Biggest Personal Regrets
- The Adventist Church—and Women
- The People Around You (the Mechanic, Hairstylist, Cashier): What If You Knew What They Really Thought About God?
- Contest: New Columnist Search!