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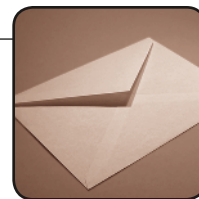
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“IT SEEMS THAT RIGHT NOW WE SHOULD BE EMPHASIZING THE NEARNESS OF JESUS’ COMING THROUGH BOTH THE SPOKEN WORD AND MUSIC; YET WHAT IS OFTEN PRESENTED IN OUR CHURCHES IS JUST ‘BUSINESS AS USUAL.’”

Mark of the beast

I have been very blessed by the May and June 2010 issues and wanted to comment on one particular article found in the June issue. I was excited to read Anthony MacPherson’s article (“When ‘the Mark of the Beast’ Was a Biochip!”—June 2010). All of his points were solid, informative, and helpful; but I’d like to share another insight I believe is being overlooked.

After the commandments of God are first viewed in Revelation 11:19, they become a central theme in chapters 12–22 (for example, Rev. 12:17; 14:12). The issue, as the article pointed out, is worship and a battle over the commandments of God. The beast with lamblike horns breathing life into the image is a direct challenge to God having breathed the breath of life into Adam, the image of God. The land beast challenges God’s claim of being sole Creator—the basis for the reason to worship God (Rev. 4:11).

Worship and the commandments are front and center in the final showdown between truth and error, and the only commandment that addresses God as Creator is the fourth commandment. Thus, some kind of direct attack upon the fourth commandment is going to be waged that will create a clear demarcation between those that worship God (getting the seal) and those that worship the human system (the mark of the beast). That formation of seal or mark is only indicative of the character one has formed, or nearly formed, *prior* to the crisis. When

the crisis hits, it will expose which character we have developed.

—Kevin R. James, Decatur, Georgia, United States

The article by Anthony MacPherson on the mark of the beast was interesting, with some valuable insights. But the direction he took in interpreting the number 666 is questionable. There doesn’t appear to be any logical conflict between looking at the number “mathematically or numerically,” as well as “scripturally and theologically.”

There does not seem to be a clear basis for viewing the number 666 as “the number of humanity.” There are linguistic reasons for preferring the translation (Rev. 13:18) “it is the number of a man” (KJV, NKJV, ASV, the Jerusalem Bible), to “it is a human number” (RSV). It is well to take a close look at the text. Revelation 13:17 clearly indicates that 666 is specifically the number of the beast’s name. Therefore, it is incorrect to view it as the number of humanity in general.

Furthermore, the challenge posed by the text (Rev. 13:18) is to calculate the number of the beast’s name. To do this, one must first look in history for who the beast may be. The next step would be to examine the names or titles of that suspect to see if the number 666 can be calculated from any of them. This has been the traditional Adventist approach to this text, and it appears that it is on a reasonably secure footing.

—Lewis Anderson, Allendale, Michigan, United States

Christ at work within the believer

I do appreciate the article by Bryan W. Ball (“Saving Righteousness”—June 2010). Paul is said to have written in the book of Romans on what Jesus has done for us—the objective side of salvation. But little is said about what Paul has written about what Jesus is doing in the life of a believer, giving victory over sin—the subjective side of salvation. Dr. Ball is correct in saying that the book of Romans presents both aspects of salvation: justification and sanctification. Failure to do so is not doing justice to what Paul is saying in the book.

—Lameck Mwamukonda, Kampala, Uganda

The Second Coming

I read with interest the editorial by Dr. Hucks (“The Blessed Hope”—June 2010) and share many of his viewpoints. It seems that right now we should be emphasizing the nearness of Jesus’ coming through both the spoken Word and music; yet what is often presented in our churches is just “business as usual.”

When God called me into ministry, He placed a heavy burden on my heart to preach Christ’s soon coming, a calling to which I trust I am faithful. Pastor Hucks, may God also continue to bless you in your ministry. I pray that the recent General Conference session will be the final one—at least on this earth.

—John Anderson, San Marcos, California, United States



Put yourself in their sandals

I met a minister and his wife, who were visiting from India, through my parents. On several occasions, this couple stayed with them in New York City and became good friends. Even though I had lived in several different countries in my life, I focused on New York City—one of the most important places in the world for me at that time.

Through this couple, my eyes were opened to a different part of the world though—Asia, and more specifically, the Indian subcontinent. I was intrigued by the stories they told, and concluded that Asia had its own distinctiveness, challenges, and opportunities. But, at that point, I never thought I would have the opportunity of traveling there. Since that encounter, I have traveled to India a number of times, along with other countries in that region.

As we have done for several years, the October issue features a specific part of the world, and this issue focuses on a part of Asia also referred to as the south Asia subcontinent. What have I seen in these countries? Am I still intrigued by that part of the world, as I was when I met the couple from India? Here are some of my observations.

Differences

One of the significant differences is that Christianity has a very small presence there. I cannot think of any part of the world where Christianity is as underrepresented. Not only are the various non-Christian religions dominant, but they seem to be evident in all aspects of life—in the people, how they dress, public events, life in the cities, and life in the rural areas. One can even go to a restaurant in some of these countries and see the presence of their faith

evident in the menus, decorations, and surroundings.

Challenges


It is not unusual to hear that some of these countries—India especially mentioned—are becoming economic powerhouses. Indeed, over the years, one can see the progress that some of the countries have made, but that does not remove many great challenges they have. Consider Bangladesh—a large population in a small area and a landmass that often experiences floods. I recall passing an area where I saw some smokestacks in what appeared to be a large lake. I assumed it was a sunken ship, but instead of a lake, it was a brick factory that was covered with water (except for the smokestacks) during the rainy season.

The capital, Dhaka, has numerous destitute people who do not know when or from where they will receive their next meal. Even as I write this editorial, another country in this region, Pakistan, is experiencing devastating flooding. Millions have been displaced and a great fear exists that various diseases will spread. India, with more than a billion people, is the world's second most populous nation. It has countless villages but also very populous cities where people are crowded and air pollution makes breathing difficult.

Opportunities

Indeed, this region has many challenges, but the church has never shied away from going to challenging places. Christian missionaries, including Seventh-day Adventist missionaries, have been sent to this part of the world even when results seemed remote. Because of the

commitment of these missionaries, we see an active church in these countries. Today, in spite of many challenges, the church actively proclaims the gospel by personal contact, print, health work, radio, and television. Another area in which the church makes a positive presence is education. During one of my visits there, I recall meeting several individuals who did not belong to any Christian group but were then attending a Seventh-day Adventist college. Their experience on the campus will remain with them. In many of these countries, our church shows evidence of gaining a reputation of providing a quality education; thus a number of people have a very positive view of the church.

As you read this issue, you will notice that most of the articles are written by individuals from southern Asia and the topics focus on the same region. We can always benefit from listening to individuals whose experiences differ from our own. But there is another reason why we should all be interested in this part of the world. We see a great movement of people; as a result, their ideas, faiths, and philosophies also travel to various parts of the world. Even if you live far away from southern Asia, your part of the world is still influenced by southern Asia—and that means our ministry and commitment to proclaim the gospel are influenced by that part of the world. Understanding the practices and beliefs of others is important for effective ministry. In addition to understanding, we need to pray for each other and pray for the work of the church in all parts of the world. After all, we are one church and we serve the same Lord. 

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Understanding Hinduism:

A practical guide for Christians

So, you are a Christian. Why would you embrace a religion from the West, a product of Western culture, when we, here in India, have the finest of philosophy and religious thought?"

The question is neither strange nor new. One of the principal charges made against Christian missiology states that the West attempts to impose its culture and ethos on the simple and weary population of the East. Yet those who level such charges forget that Christ came from the East. He was born in Palestine, lived all His life in an Eastern culture, taught His gospel amid the background of that culture, and died in that land. Just before He ascended to heaven, He reiterated to His disciples that neither He nor His message should be limited to any one geographical region. He is the Lord of the universe with a message for the entire world. With that, He commissioned His disciples and every successive generation to " 'go therefore and make disciples of all the nations . . . teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age' " (Matt. 28:19, 20).¹

Long before Christianity reached the West as we know it today, it was in the East. Indian history and tradition trace the origin of Christianity to the first century through the ministry of the apostle Thomas in the southwestern coastal tip of the subcontinent. Since then, Christians

in that part of the world have had a continuous ecclesiastic link to the Syrian Orthodox Church, and many of them call themselves Thomas Christians. Fifteen centuries later, the first missionaries from modern Europe landed in India, but the early Christians still retained their first-century liturgy and tradition. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister and one of the founders of modern India, often in his public speeches and historical narratives corrected the misconception of his countrymen that Christianity is a Western religion. He had a conviction that Christianity was as much a religion of their country as any other.

Mahatma Gandhi, the father of modern India, often found solace in the New Testament. His philosophy of nonviolence had its roots in the Sermon on the Mount. Among his favorite hymns were such Christian classics as "Abide With Me," "Lead, Kindly Light," and "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." Once Gandhi wrote, "There have been many times when I did not know which way to turn. But I have gone to the Bible, and particularly the New Testament, and have drawn strength from its message."² To say all this does not erase the fact that Christian existence, missiology, and practice continue to face philosophic and sociological hurdles. The systematic, coherent, and vibrant nature of Hindu philosophy and sociology poses the greatest challenge to the proclamation of the Christian gospel.

Therefore, every Christian, particularly pastors and ministers, should have at least a generic understanding of what Hinduism is all about. Once that understanding develops, dialogue, communication, and witness become possible within a context of mutual respect, friendship, and sharing. Sidney J. Harris noted that Thomas Aquinas once said, " 'When you want to convert someone to your view, you go over to where he is standing.' " ³

Well said. This article shall discuss three areas that are fundamental to a Hindu-Christian dialogue: the nature of the human, the doctrinal differences between Christianity and Hinduism, and a common ground for dialogue.

Human nature

In the vast universe of the imponderable, Hindu philosophy holds that human beings are simply microcosmic creatures. How they came into being is not as important as what they are and where they are going. Hinduism's central understanding of human nature and destiny is conditioned by the fundamental of the law of karma. Karma is the moral law in which the cycle of birth-death-rebirth—known as the eternal process of reincarnation—takes place, giving endless opportunities to escape from the limitations of life and ultimately from death itself. Hinduism does not recognize the reality of sin; it views good or evil from the active principle of karma, and religion's principal

HINDUISM	CHRISTIANITY
<p>God: Although Hindus believe in one all-pervasive, impersonal supreme being, they hold that this being exists in multiple forms, both male and female, thus making the Hindu religion polytheistic. Because the divine cannot be limited, he exists everywhere and in everything, hence Hinduism is pantheistic as well. At the head of the innumerable forms are Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva—the supreme triad.</p>	<p>God: The Christian faith is rooted in monotheism—that is, God is One. He is the Creator, the Redeemer, and the eternal Judge. Although the Christian doctrine of the Trinity speaks of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Three are One in thought, action, and purpose. Neither polytheism nor pantheism exists in the Christian doctrine of God.</p>
<p>The world: Hindus see the world as an extension of the Brahma, the supreme principle. However, the extension did not involve any active participation on the part of Brahma. Instead, the world evolved through successive stages of matter, consciousness, and spirituality. Being the extension of the Brahma, nature and God are contiguous, giving way to a pantheistic faith.</p>	<p>The world: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). So begins the Bible in its pronouncement that this world resulted from God’s creative activity. In so creating the world, God stands as the Lord of creation, standing over and apart from it. Thus, the Christian faith exalts Him as the Lord of the universe and refuses to identify the Creator with the creature (pantheism).</p>
<p>Humans: To the Hindu, the Christian concept of God creating human beings is an illusion. The human being, like all other animate and inanimate things, is an emanation—an extension—of the Brahma, the supreme being. While existence proceeds from him, that production is neither independent nor free but subject to the supreme law of karma, which in its cyclical process of birth–death–rebirth keeps humans ever in search of the eternal.</p>	<p>Humans: Humans did not proceed from God; nor did they evolve from preexistent forms of life. Instead, God chose to create the human being in His image (Gen. 1:16, 17). Having created humanity as His handiwork, God gave humans freedom of choice, responsibility for procreation, and gave them stewardship of the earth. A human being is thus a responsible being, with a beginning, duty, and destiny.</p>
<p>Sin and salvation: Hinduism does not recognize sin as a willful personal rebellion against God nor as a revolt against His moral law such as Christianity teaches. The human being is not a sinner in that sense. However, human beings do commit acts of wrongdoing against nature and their fellow beings because of their karma—the predetermined principle that controls the movements of their lives. Salvation comes by one of three ways: knowledge, devotion to deity, and good works.</p>	<p>Sin and salvation: Sin is real; it is human rebellion against a personal God. Sin has created a vast gulf between humanity and God, which cannot be mended by any good deeds humans do. Salvation is freedom from sin, effected by God’s love and grace through Jesus Christ, who paid the penalty of sin through His own death. No human works can bring about salvation, only by faith in and acceptance of Christ as one’s Savior (John 3:16; Eph. 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5).</p>
<p>Ethics and conduct: Although there is no ultimate code of morality like the Ten Commandments, Hinduism finds its moral basis in the law of karma: what one does or fails to do affects their destiny and the eventual process of reincarnation. So moral living is an essential part of life. Two significant forces of this moral living are respect for life, both human and nonhuman; and <i>ahimsa</i>, the principle of nonviolence.</p>	<p>Ethics and conduct: Human life is to be lived in relationship with God and fellow man, governed by the law of love—unselfish, sacrificial, and all-encompassing—for God is love. This love is expressed in practical terms through the Ten Commandments—the moral law of human life and conduct (see 1 John 4:16–18; 5:3; Luke 10:25–28; Exod. 20:1–17).</p>
<p>Ultimate destiny: History is cyclical. Humanity is caught in an endless cyclical process of birth–death–rebirth, with each stage of the process controlled by the law of karma. The ultimate end, after unknown stages of reincarnation, is merging with the universal principle of Brahman.</p>	<p>Ultimate destiny: History is linear. Under God’s direction, it moves toward its ultimate climax when God will destroy sin, sinners, and Satan, the original cause of evil in the universe. With this cleansing process, God will create a new earth and new heaven that will be the home of those who have accepted His salvation (Rev. 21:1–6; John 14:1–3).</p>



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*Joseph Nesbit,
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duty is to provide an escape from karma by concentrating on what one can do. One philosopher places the responsibility to escape on individuals themselves: “A believer in the law of karma is a free agent and is responsible for all the good and bad results of his own actions that attend to his life. He knows that he create[s] his own destiny, and moulds his character by his thought and deeds.”⁴

Thus one’s destiny lies in one’s own hands, one’s own works. A human being must strive to do good to eradicate the past record of evil not only in this life but in previous lives as well. Says the Bhagavad Gita (“Song of the Lord”), the most widely read Hindu Scripture: “Do thou therefore the work to be done: for the man whose work is pure attains indeed the Supreme.”⁵

Thus Hinduism finds in one’s good works the ultimate goal of *moksha*, or salvation that brings complete liberation from the cycle of endless births and deaths. One can do it in one’s own strength without outside help from any deity. The Gita prescribes three possible ways of *moksha*: (1) *karma-marga*, the path of duties that include ritual and social obligations; (2) *jnana-marga*, the path of knowledge, the use of meditation, intellectual discipline, and contemplation; and (3) *bhakti-marga*, the path of devotion, a life of worship and service given to a chosen god. A person may choose one or a combination of these ways to achieve release from karma’s perpetual hold on the cycle of life.

Hinduism and Christianity: Doctrinal differences

A Christian’s dialogue and communication with a Hindu demands an understanding and comparison of the basic tenets of these two major faiths of the world. Without going into details, the chart on page 7 compares and contrasts the positions

of the two faiths and some of their major teachings.⁶

Adventist dialogue with Hindus

From what we have seen thus far, we can note that the Hindu belief system is complex, with a philosophy and logic of its own, and varies with the doctrinal position of most Christian theology. In that context, to approach a Hindu with the gospel becomes difficult. However, the Hindu system is not a closed system but open, tolerant, and ready for dialogue. Because of this, we can approach a Hindu without intellectual arrogance, thinking we have a monopoly on truth or are superior. What we need is humility, understanding, and respect for each other. Even though Christian theology and Hinduism may differ in basic positions of the nature of God, man, sin, salvation, and the future, there is some common ground from which Christians can proceed to dialogue with their Hindu friends.

1. Both Christians and Hindus have a tremendous respect for life—arising from the image of God for Christians, and the oneness with Brahma for the Hindu. This provides a talking point for the doctrines of Creation, sin, and the incarnation of Christ for the restitution of the image of God, and the final restoration in the new heaven and new earth. The Christian concept of stewardship over creation, flowing from our understanding of Genesis, can lead us to speak of the Lord of creation and redemption.


2. The preferred Adventist lifestyle, based on vegetarianism and healthful living, provides more common ground for dialogue with Hindus who, for the most part, are vegetarians. Often the Christian practice of adopting Western culture and its habits of eating and drinking sets up a negative barrier to communication. A witness, faithful to the biblical values, will be readily heard among Hindus.

3. The Hindu doctrine of non-violence gives a perfect background to teach Jesus’ way of being selfless and loving one’s neighbor—so uniquely given in the Sermon on the Mount.

4. Every human being suffers from guilt and inner unhappiness. What better opportunity to speak of Jesus, who offers eternal happiness and rest from guilt?

Conclusion

The uniqueness of Jesus should be emphasized and preached, not as a philosophical battle to be won but rather as a way open to all people. He is the Lord of all men and women everywhere. He is the Light that lightens the entire universe. His promise has no limitation, and His gift is free. His invitation is universal: “ ‘Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light’ ” (Matt. 11:28–30).

The invitation of Jesus is open to all without respect to nationality, language, color, caste, or tribe. The Christian has the privilege of extending that invitation to all so that the gentle and loving Jesus may indeed provide freedom from sin and assurance of eternal life. 

1. All scripture passages in this article, unless otherwise noted, are from the New King James Version.
2. Mahatma K. Gandhi, quoted in William W. Emilsen, ed., *Gandhi’s Bible* (Delhi: ISPCCK, 2001), v.
3. Sidney J. Harris, quoted in John C. Maxwell, *Be a People Person*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2007), 92.
4. Swami Abhedananda, *Doctrine of Karma* (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 1989), 14, 15.
5. The Bhagavad Gita, tr. Juan Mascaró (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1962), 3:19.
6. Chart information from the following sources: Thomas Berry, *Religions of India* (New York: Bruce Publishing, 1971); Josh McDowell and Don Stewart, *Handbook of Today’s Religions* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983); S. Radhakrishnan, *East and West: The End of Their Separation* (New York: Allen & Unwin, 1954); Thomas Samuel, *Bible Speaks to Hindus* (Bangalore: Quiet Corner Ministries, 1988); and Ed Viswanathan, *Am I a Hindu?* (Noida, India: Rupa & Co., 2005).

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A missionary who forged a highway for God in India

When we speak of missions, great names surge to the surface of our minds and carve a path of wonder and gratitude. Paul, Peter, and Thomas; Luther, Calvin, and Wesley; Carey, Hudson, and Schweitzer are just some of the well-known names. Among Adventists the names White, Andrews, and Spicer come to the forefront. Many others also come to mind, but one common characteristic identifies them: faithfulness to the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus to go into all the world, teach, baptize, and make disciples of all nations (see Matt. 28:19, 20).

My life as a pastor has been touched, shaped, and continually challenged by one such person of missions. He was a simple man, desiring to share the gospel in the villages of India, pioneer Christian education as a vehicle of transformation, train local people to share his vision and work, bring healing to torn hearts and broken bodies, and walk humbly in the footprints of his Master, Jesus Christ. He was Theodore Flaiz.

When the Flaiz family arrived in 1915 in Narsapur, a little town in the delta of the river Godavari in southern India, Pastor Flaiz was armed with a Bible and a gun: the former, the most essential tool for his spiritual nurture, growth, and mission; the latter, something he did not cherish but carried for self-protection from tigers and cheetahs that roamed the night at will. He and his wife lived in a small house with no electricity, no running water, and no modern facilities. Food was available but simple:

rice, lentils, other local greens, and seasonal vegetables and fruits. The young couple had no friends when they moved to Narsapur, but soon acquired many, for they adopted the local culture and learned to speak Telugu, the local language. What concerned the Flaizes the most was the mandate from the India Union Mission, headquartered in Lucknow, a British garrison town in north India. The mandate was to witness to the Telugu-speaking people in and surrounding the Godavari Delta.

Education—opening the mind

Pastor Flaiz, tall and handsome, young and dashing, was quick to make friends and influence people. Before long, the town knew him well and accepted his wife and him as friends. As friendship gained its first step to sharing one's faith and message, soon the young couple were sharing the wonderful news of Jesus with their neighbors and newfound friends. Pastor Flaiz enjoyed sharing with them the wonderful promise of the second coming of Christ and the blessings of the Sabbath. One significant need immediately touched their hearts, and with what little they could afford, they constructed a thatched-roof school to teach the boys and girls of the village the rudiments of education. A village grows in proportion to the level of education it offers to its young people: this was an article of faith for Pastor Flaiz, and he knew that education not only opens the doors of intellectual and social

development, but also the means to study the unsearchable riches of God's Word. Soon the roots of a strong Adventist educational center took hold in Narsapur, which today has mushroomed into the first college in that part of India, appropriately named Flaiz Adventist College.

Between the thatched room beginning and the elegant marble-floored college stand 85 years of Adventist growth, whose seeds were sown by the humility and dedication of Pastor and Mrs. Flaiz. However, the school was only a stepping-stone. Within months, Pastor Flaiz started a worker training school and an institute for training literature evangelists, who were to sell religious books and magazines to the general population. A school for children, a seminary for future workers, and an institute for literature evangelism—with these three, the work among the Telugu-speaking people grew rapidly. But the work grew too fast, and the funds coming in were not sufficient to meet the needs. So Pastor Flaiz became his own fund-raiser. He often visited nearby towns and villages, establishing a network of well-wishers and supporters. On one such mission, he was going to Bezawada (today Vijayawada), a distant town. Riding with him was a student.

As the car passed through village after village, the student insisted that Pastor Flaiz change the route from Hanuman Junction (the main village) and go to a particular town (Nuzvid), which he knew well, where a rich *zamindar*—a "petty king" who ruled

over several villages—lived. If the two men could meet, the student assured, something great might come about.

Healing ministry—caring for the sick

Pastor Flaiz and the maharaja of Threlapole met. After hearing the Adventist pioneer's plans to uplift the lives of people in the region, the maharaja offered him five acres of land, three uncompleted buildings, 10,000 rupees in cash, and requested

other predators—that would attack the villages, kill the cattle, and often pose a threat to the lives of people. Flaiz went to the village, spending nights in vigils. Even as he waited, he would tell the villagers stories about Jesus and the salvation He offers. During the days, he would gather the villagers under the trees and give them Bible studies. A few days of camping, alert vigils, and his readiness to help would eventually take care of the danger from the predators.

dividing wall contoured the hamlets, defined people as high and low and in-between, with respect and dignity reserved only for one's own kind, looking down upon others as outsiders, untouchable, low, or mean. The low were to bow and serve the high, and the high had reserved human dignity only for themselves. To such a divided society, Flaiz brought the good news of Christ's kingdom that recognized no wall of partition. The message that all are equal under

HE BROUGHT NOT ONLY THE SPIRITUAL DYNAMIC OF SALVATION AND THE SOCIAL RESTORATION OF HUMAN DIGNITY, BUT HE ALSO NEVER FAILED TO LINK THE GOSPEL WITH THE NEED FOR HEALTHFUL LIVING.



Photo: General Conference Archives and Statistics

that Pastor Flaiz build a hospital. The maharaja's only condition—naming the hospital after his friend, Giffard, a British officer. Thus was born the Giffard Memorial Hospital in Nuzvid, which grew to serve nearly 200 villages that had no health care facility.

Today, the hospital in Nuzvid and its nursing graduates around the world stand as testimonies to what the Spirit can do through faithful people. The Flaizes loved the people in the villages, learned the local language, talked to the people, and preached to them in a way that only true missionaries of Christ can.

Mission to Madhavaram—generational impact

Thousands of people flocked to listen to Flaiz and receive his blessings. Their safety was his concern, and here's where his gun often came to the rescue of helpless villagers. On one such occasion, the elders of Gudem Madhavaram village, 52 kilometers from Nuzvid, came to see Pastor Flaiz. The village had recently become a persistent target for dangerous animals—tigers, cheetahs, and

Flaiz fully identified himself with those whom he came to share the message. He visited the villagers in their homes, sat on their floors, ate their common meals, and always prayed with them. Among those who heard and accepted the good news were my grandparents. His influence reached out and touched four generations. As Paul Hiebert said, true missionaries came into a cross-cultural setting "often knowing that they faced death in a few short years, and those who survived gave their whole lives to the task." There were many who were completely dedicated to the call of God and lived their whole lives in extending the kingdom of God.*

Pastor Flaiz was not only a bearer of the good news, but also a har-binger of social reformation. My grandparents often told me how divided and oppressive the social structure of their village was. Caste, poverty, social positions, and religious distinction often brought rancor and recrimination among the people that populated the villages. Even small villages were socially split; a

God's creation and all are precious and dear under God's redemptive plan introduced a new element of social ethos and spiritual dignity into the minds of people like my grandparents. The walls of separation did not altogether collapse, but a wide and welcoming door was thrown open through which many entered the kingdom of God.


Wholeness of ministry

Flaiz believed in the wholeness of humans. He taught not only the spiritual dynamic of salvation and the social restoration of human dignity, but he also never failed to link the gospel with the need for healthful living. Attention to the body was as important as the appeal to the soul, and this doctor-minister (he was once the secretary of the medical department for the Seventh-day Adventist Church) always insisted on letting his hearers know that Jesus is the Lord of the soul, mind, and body. While he began his work by starting a school at Narsapur, he expanded his work by establishing a hospital in Nuzvid and clinics in other places.

The concept of holistic ministry was a major part of his mission. As the health component played a crucial part in the early work of Pastor Flaiz, before long, he had established strong centers of Adventism, that cared for the whole person in several villages.

Pastor Flaiz also made sure to train laypersons to take up leadership responsibilities. Just as Paul needed Timothy, Titus, and Sylvanus, Flaiz trained these individuals to be spiritual leaders of their faith communities. When a thatched-roof mud-wall church was inaugurated in Madhavaram in 1950, Jacob Pedapudi was moved by the Holy Spirit to offer a prayer of power and hope. "May there be some pearls from this church for the growth and continuation of God's ministry."

I often wonder why God sent Pastor Flaiz to my village when there were hundreds of other villages to choose from. Over the years, the church at Madhavaram has grown and matured. Today, the whole village observes the Sabbath with an evangelistic thrust that has established 35 other churches. This church has been responsible for producing 30 pastors, 25 teachers and educational leaders, and 20 workers in government leadership positions. Currently, 75 students from here are studying in Adventist schools and colleges.

True mission is a march of the gospel to wherever God calls—to the mountains and the vales, to the cities and the villages, to the rich and to the poor—to the ends of the earth. True mission is the work of the Spirit through human beings to sow the gospel seed, restore the image of God through holistic ministry, and prepare a kingdom here in preparation for the kingdom to come. Dr. and Mrs. Flaiz were indeed true missionaries. 

* Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 9.

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Nikolaus Satelmajer, DMin, is editor of *Ministry*.
Willie E. Hucks II, DMin, is associate editor of *Ministry*.



An interview with church leaders in southern Asia

Editor's note: For the past several years in the October issue, we have featured the work of the church in particular geographic areas. In this issue we are featuring southern Asia—not only what the church refers to as the Southern Asia Division but several countries in that part of the world. For this issue, we interviewed John Rathinaraj, president of the Southern Asia Division; Harald Wollan, at that time the secretary of the Trans-European Division on behalf of the president of the church in Pakistan, who could not be present; Saw Muller Kyaw, leader of the church in Myanmar; and Eric Monnier, president of the church in Bangladesh, which is a part of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division.

Nikolaus Satelmajer (NS): Give us an idea of the vision you have for the area you represent. What would you like to see happen in the coming five to ten years?

Harald Wollan (HW): In Pakistan, we hope to have a better trained workforce. We have focused on the pastors' education in order to make sure they are better equipped. And part of that is to make sure they can train and equip our members to be effective in their Christian lives. In Pakistan, many of our members come from a poorer background. Therefore, it is not always easy to reach the more affluent society; but we are striving to reach them as well.

NS: How many pastors do you have in Pakistan?

HW: We face a problem when it comes to the number of pastors because their financial situation in Pakistan is limited. Some of the workforce are actually supported through Gospel Outreach. And their income has dropped, so around fifty percent of their usual income had to be reduced.

NS: It's not available now?

HW: No, this makes it necessary for the church in Pakistan to reduce the number of Global Outreach workers. Now, we need to make sure that the pastors in Pakistan can take care of more than one church. And that will be a mental shift. One step towards that was making sure all ordained pastors received a motorbike from us, so they are mobile.

John Rathinaraj (JR): India has over seven hundred thousand villages, but only one hundred thousand of them have been entered by Christians. Furthermore, we have twenty-eight governmental states and seven governmental unions, and the Christians have formed more in the southern part of India, not in the northern part. The northern part of India is mostly unentered territory. There are more than one-and-a-half-million Adventists in India currently, and our plan is to add another million over the next five years.

Saw Muller Kyaw (SMK): Myanmar is a beautiful country. We have a population of fifty-three million, with one hundred and thirty-five different

ethnic groups. But we have reached only about fifty of these groups thus far. Also, our situation is such that we have to work under some restrictions. We cannot conduct evangelistic meetings publicly, but we are allowed to conduct them inside a church building. And we are also not allowed to build a church building, so at this time we built a house church and let the worker stay on the ground floor.

NS: So the pastor shares the house, and the worship is in the same building?

SMK: Yes, the same building. It is not easy to build in the city. But it is in the rural area. If we have an understanding with the [local] authority, we can build the house church. We also have, in many places, one pastor for one church because of the difficulties with transportation.

Eric Monnier (EM): It's very interesting listening to the other leaders. Basically, we have some very strong similarities in all the countries that are involved, such as many ethnic groups. Bangladesh has something, I believe, that is very interesting—a very small area, but extremely populated, with around one hundred and fifty million residents. It's a very populated Muslim country that has experienced many natural disasters: flooding, earthquakes, tsunamis, and so on. The city of Dhaka has seven million residents. One of our main goals is to reach Dhaka, which is extremely difficult because it's very



Harald Wollan

expensive to buy a piece of land to make a place of worship for the people.

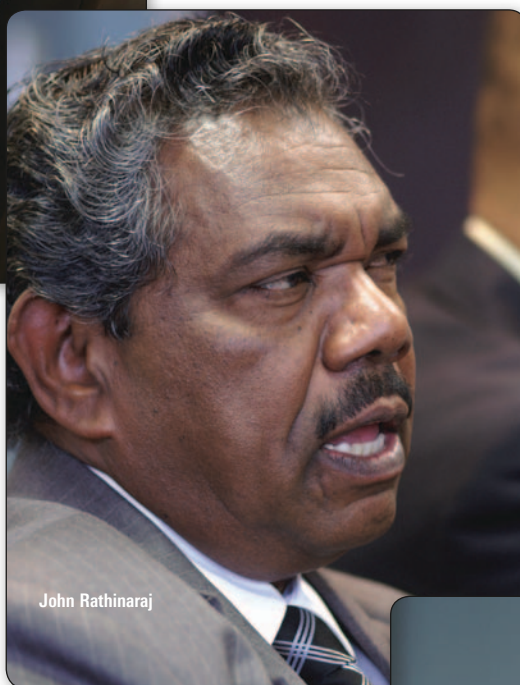
One of our goals over the next five years is to install a satellite dish for each congregation that has access to electricity. This is another huge issue in Bangladesh. There are places where we do not have any electricity, and where we have electricity, it's kept off during the day. It's not very easy, but using the satellite, we may be able to prepare evangelistic broadcasts in the native language.

Willie E. Hucks II (WH): *Over the last five years, what are some of the positive events that have taken place? What are some of the significant developments that occurred in your territories?*

JR: In addition to India's twenty-eight states, it has five hundred dialects. The government has recognized sixteen major languages. Where our headquarters is situated, very recently the Christian population has increased from two percent

to seven percent. Then in one more state, Andhra Pradesh, many people are receptive to the gospel. We have more members in Andhra Pradesh than in any other state; over fifty percent of our membership is in one state.

We have also been given permission to operate Hope Channel in India by download. The license has been granted.



John Rathinaraj

HW: We have focused, as I mentioned, on training our pastors through specific workers' meetings, such as Evangelism on the Go where we train pastors to do evangelism. In Pakistan each of the two missions—we call them sections because we cannot use the word *mission* in a Muslim country—decided to go ahead with eleven evangelistic series this year, the year of evangelism. And that is a culmination of specific targeting, training

pastors, making them more efficient in reaching out, so the membership growth in Pakistan has been very positive. And that's a good thing over the years; more people now have the minimum education of what we see is needed in a country like Pakistan. A minimum of what is close to a bachelor's degree in theology.

SMK: Our vision is to tell the world. We conduct many evangelistic meetings, especially in the cities. We encourage everyone to conduct evangelistic meetings, not only the pastor, but administrators, teachers, and lay members. So, I organized groups and conducted two evangelistic meetings. Hundreds were baptized as a result. To convert pure Burmese people is very difficult. In the past, we converted only tribal people because they were more receptive to the gospel. But nowadays, we have converted pure Burmese people into our church. We try to reach other parts of Myanmar close to Thailand and China. Those places are very hard to reach, and we have transportation difficulties also.



Eric Monnier

EM: What I've seen is something very interesting in the education area. There are more than eight thousand students in our schools,

and more than half of them are sponsored students. And this has been a real blessing for Bangladesh because one of our ways to reach people and baptize them is through the young people who are studying in our schools, after they get baptized and become professionals. And this part, I believe, really has been a tremendous work. But all the departments also have done tremendous work: women's ministry with different projects and health ministries, as well, because this is very well accepted and respected by the community, including the Muslims.

When you are a leader, to whom do you turn? Therefore, we speak to each other on the phone, the leaders often call us and we call them to talk through some of the issues. The leader is often on the phone, asking advice and seeking, at the same time, encouragement, and we at the division office feel that we need to give as much support as possible. We send, as often as we can, someone from the office to visit Pakistan. Twice a year, someone from the office visits the field and in this way, there is a small outlet and recharging of the batteries for the wounded.

NS: *How do you personally keep yourself spiritually alive, refreshed? How do you feed your soul spiritually?*

HW: We realize that being in Pakistan is difficult. It is lonely.

EM: The unity of the family. My wife has always stood by my side and has been very supportive of my ministry. And I also have a supportive church family around the world. They help us with their words and prayers; and we find this encouraging. 📖



Photo: Anthony R. Kent

Saw Muller Kyaw

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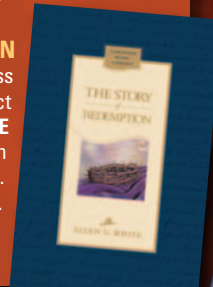
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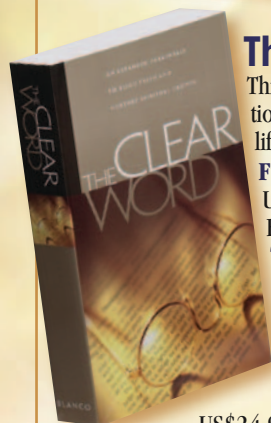
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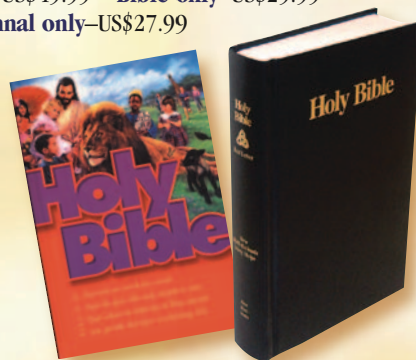


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in heaven, he had a pretty good idea of what he was talking about.

In Job 9:33, 34, Job asked for a *mokiah*—an Arbitrator—“‘to remove God’s rod from’ ” him (NIV). Job’s reasons for this request make his intentions clearer. Once God’s rod was removed, Job would no longer be frightened by His terror, and he would be able to speak without fear. The Arbitrator, by His very presence, brought confidence. The rod, a symbol of punishment, would no longer threaten. This removal of the threat of punishment could be accomplished only by removing guilt, and that is possible only through forgiveness. It appears that Job had confidence that the Arbitrator would win a pardon for him.

Job did not refer to the Mediator again as an Arbitrator, but obviously, he envisioned the same Person when he talked about his “‘*witness . . . advocate . . . intercessor*’ ” (16:19, 20, NIV; emphasis added) because this important Person was required to arbitrate (from the same root as arbitrator in 9:33) with God on his behalf. The need was not only for one who could arbitrate but who could witness and advocate—who not only could testify to Job’s innocence but was also willing to plead in his behalf.⁴

Finally, Job referred to this Mediator as his *goel* (19:25). The primary function of this Kinsman-Redeemer was to redeem from danger or difficulty. A price was often paid for this redemption. Job envisioned that his Redeemer would function on his behalf even after his body was destroyed.

Job’s Redeemer has several characteristics that qualify Him as a *goel* even after Job’s death: (1) He lives, (2) He lives to the end, (3) He is in heaven, and (4) He will descend to this earth at the end (19:25). He is thus especially able to witness and advocate in heaven after Job’s death.

The heavenly Judge

Job himself had once functioned as a local judge, for he had sat at the city gate and dispensed justice.

He saved the poor and needy and punished the oppressors (29:12–17, 21–25). Job, the just judge (29:14), finally had to ask for justice in his own case. As plaintiff, he asserted that if God placed him on “‘honest scales,’ ” he would be vindicated (31:6, NIV). When God tested him, he would come out as gold (23:10).

Job recognized God as the ultimate Judge of the earth (34:13). Though he spoke all through the book about justice perverted, when he contemplated his Redeemer, he spoke confidently of justice. Job would be vindicated, and his tormentors punished (19:25–29).

Removal of sins

Job asked God, “‘Why do you not pardon my offenses and forgive my sins?’ ” (7:21, NIV). This is not a simple acknowledgment of guilt and request for forgiveness. We may assume that just as Job regularly sacrificed for the inadvertent sins of his children, he would have done the same for himself. Even more surely, we may consider him as having confessed and sacrificed for all his known sins. More likely here, he supposed that God was still holding him accountable for sins he had already confessed.

Job once expressed confidence that his offenses would be “‘sealed up in a bag’ ” and that God would “‘cover over’ ” his sins (14:17, NIV). Job used the word *chatam* “to seal” and *tapal* “to cover.” Moses used the same word *chatam* to refer to the sins of Israel that would be “‘sealed in’ ” vaults until the day of judgment (Deut. 32:34–36).

Job had earlier used the word *tapal* to refer to his friends smearing him with lies (Job 13:4). Now he asked God to smear over his sins. This does not refer to the permanent removal of sins but was only a temporary, cosmetic measure until the day of final judgment.


Conclusion

While it is difficult to determine in detail Job’s understanding of the

atonement and the sequence of events as envisioned by him, he did express the idea of a final end-time judgment. He wished his words were recorded, written (19:23), to survive until the end (v. 24) when his Redeemer would stand upon the earth (v. 25). He envisioned his resurrection, in order that he might benefit from that judgment (vv. 26, 27). He expected to be vindicated and his detractors to be punished (vv. 28, 29).

“The vocabulary here is echoed by the passage in Daniel 12:1–3—the classic eschatological judgment passage. Daniel declared that when Michael stood up, a book with writing would be examined, as a result of which some would be resurrected to everlasting life but some everlasting contempt. Job had confidence in this same final judgment that would bring vindication to the righteous.”⁵

The book of Job is set in a cosmic controversy between God and Satan.⁶ The concept of salvation in the book includes (1) a system of animal sacrifices that provided only temporary relief from sin; (2) a ransom that ultimately needed to be paid by a divine Redeemer; (3) a judgment in which deeds would be examined, condemning the wicked and vindicating the righteous; (4) God the Judge; and (5) a heavenly Mediator who would speak on behalf of the righteous on the basis of a ransom paid. Job envisioned this would take place at the end of time.

In short, we see in Job the plan of salvation, including a final judgment at the end of time. 

1. God’s statement about Job’s character forms the center of a chiasm in chapter 1. The heavenly scene is set in a framework of Job’s character, children, wealth, and the feasts. God’s statement of Job’s character is the middle of three speeches to Satan in the heavenly scene.
2. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (Chicago: Moody, 1980), s.v. “pada.”
3. See Numbers 35:12ff. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody, 1980), s.v. “ga’al.”
4. The Hebrew word that Job uses for “intercessor” is the same that Elihu uses in 33:23 to refer to the angel-mediator.
5. For a fuller treatment of this topic, see Gordon Christo, “The Investigative Judgment in Job 19:21–29” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 1992).
6. See Edwin Thiele and Margaret Thiele, *Job and the Devil* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1988).

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The pastoral benefits of visiting church members

Editor's note: From the reports we are receiving, it seems to us that there is a worldwide decrease in pastoral visits to church members. Various reasons are given by pastors. Nevertheless, members seem concerned about what they see as a decrease in visitation. This article explores the benefits of visiting not from the perspective of members, but from a pastoral perspective.

Visit your members! How often do pastors hear these words? They are spoken by congregational leaders, church members, and pastoral supervisors. Certainly visitation is an important part of ministry and members are blessed by such visits. In this article, I will not explore the principles of visitation or the reasons why pastors should visit members. I wish to look at visitation from another perspective. What do *pastors* gain from visiting members? Are pastors simply fulfilling their responsibilities or do pastors receive a professional and personal benefit from the visits?

While pastoring three churches, I visited my members. In this article, I will share from a personal perspective and other sources, the benefits that pastors receive when they visit their members. These benefits, I believe, bring blessings to the pastor both professionally and personally.

By their faith, our faith is strengthened

Visiting people who have become discouraged because of crises in their lives, or because

they have received good news, or have not been at church for a few weeks—whatever their situations—after the visit, the pastor will often leave the home encouraged. The blessing of a pastoral visit reaches past those whom the pastor chooses to visit. It also becomes a blessing to the pastor. When Jesus lived on this earth, He visited people for “Our Saviour went from house to house, healing the sick, comforting the mourners, soothing the afflicted, and speaking peace to the disconsolate.”¹ The Bible records such experiences to show that, by the faith of a believer, pastors are strengthened by the trust that members have in the pastors.

In Acts 10:1–7, Luke describes Cornelius and his faith-building experiences. Acts 10:9–19 describes Peter’s vision about a certain vessel from heaven, but Peter doubted those instructions.

When Peter went to visit Cornelius, according to the command of the Lord, Cornelius had faith and an understanding of Scripture. He wanted Peter to visit him and present the gospel. This visit brought not only a great blessing to Cornelius but to Peter as well. Peter understood the meaning of the dream while he was in the house of Cornelius.² This visit changed Peter’s perspective about mission.

As pastors, when we visit, we receive a spiritual blessing—or what we might call a divine intervention—to assist us in understanding certain things in a better way. Let me illustrate with an experience I had during one visit I made.

I visited a member who was hospitalized for several weeks. He was a regular church member, but he had missed attending church for two or three weeks, so I went to visit him. As I spoke to physicians in the hospital, they told me that the man was suffering from sickle cell anemia (a disease of the blood). When I spoke to the member during my visit, he said, “Pastor, Jesus shed His own blood for me, His blood is enough for me.” I was shocked and at the same time amazed to learn about his faith in spite of his sickness.

What a faith! At that time I was not really happy about my pastoral work, and I was becoming discouraged in my ministry. I was losing enthusiasm; but during this visit, that particular member’s faith encouraged me to look beyond my problems.

By visiting, we understand our members better

A member was asleep during a recent sermon—or so it seemed. I paid him a visit the next week, and while we conversed, he told me exactly what topic I preached, all the texts I used, and the illustrations I shared. Evidently, he was not as sound asleep as I had thought. If I had not visited him, I would have had the image of him sleeping during the sermon, and no pastor likes to see the members asleep during a sermon. The wrong conclusion on my part was corrected because of the visit.

In Acts 16:25–34, Paul’s encounter with the jailer brings to mind one important element of visitation. Before this incident, Paul had not known the

jailer. After the miracle of Paul and Silas not having escaped, the jailer gave his heart to Jesus. As Paul and Silas were visiting the house of the jailer, and as he washed their wounds (v. 33), he himself was washed from his own sins. This particular visit brought a new understanding to Paul about the jailer, especially when they visited his house, because of the hospitality shown to Paul and Silas that was such an encouragement and made them rejoice. Before this visit, Paul and Silas may have misread the jailer, may have treated him as a stranger or even as an enemy. But Paul baptized the jailer's family on the same night, and Paul also received a blessing as he baptized new believers (Acts 16:33, 34).

Visitation helps us know the needs of our members

Often pastors are reminded to know the needs of their church members—their spiritual lives, family practices, and social needs—and how to meet them. Although most of the time we should not preach on topics that members discuss with

us during a visit (though sometimes members ask us to address certain topics), that visit will assist us as we plan our preaching schedule.

In 2 Kings 4:8–17, the story records a time when the prophet Elisha traveled to Shunem, and an affluent woman gave him a place to stay. He used to visit this house often. As Elisha visited, he came to know their family needs through his servant Gehazi. That family did not have a child. Prophet Elisha prophesized that by the following year she would have a son (2 Kings 4:16). This visit by Elisha was a great blessing for the family, and through Elisha's visit, their need was met. Elisha uplifted and restored that family by his visit.


Our visit may help us know our members' needs. Their needs may be different from the others we visit. We may not be able to fulfill all their needs, but we can direct them to God who has the capability to meet their needs.

When we show an interest in the needs of our members, we will have a good relationship with our members. Our visits may not solve a

problem, but these visits can help us better understand the causes of the problems our members face. Through our visits, we have the opportunity to help our members spiritually, physically, mentally, and socially.

Conclusion

In some cultures, pastors may receive gifts from their members, but these small tokens of appreciation should never be a motive for visitation. However, we must express our appreciation. The far greater gifts we receive during visitation are the gifts of faith strengthening by listening to our members' spiritual journeys, their faith-building experiences, their approach to life, and the gift of having the opportunity to listen to their needs.

The next time you plan your member visitation schedule, remember that while the members will receive benefits, you, as the pastor, will also receive lasting benefits, both personally and professionally. 

1. Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1948), 188.
2. Francis D. Nichol, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6 (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1956), 252.

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BENEFITS OF VISITATION

Information provided by Chor-Kiat Sim, DMin, chaplain at Washington Adventist Hospital, Takoma Park, Maryland, United States.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH. Without a deep personal experience with God, pastors cannot make meaningful visits. Spiritual preparation before visiting is important. Without communion with God, visitations can become social events only. Mutual interactions between pastors and members evoke a desire to know each other better. Thus it enhances both pastors and members with a better knowledge of God and themselves.

RELATIONSHIPS. Pastoral visits cement relationships between pastors and their members. Since relationships are vital in Christian ministry, these visits help parishioners know their pastors. Pastors also can encourage members to visit one another. The pastor's

sincerity in making effective visits is certain to produce results.

PREACHING. Pastoral visits give pastors insights into the lives of members, which enables the minister to preach with a particularly focused relevance.

NURTURE. Pastoral visitation is an integral part of church ministry. Jesus' parting words to Peter urged him to feed His lambs (John 21:15–19). Coming close to people is essential in nurturing them. Each day their minds are bombarded with unwelcome ideas. Attaining nurture through shepherding is crucial, and it includes healing, sustaining, and guiding. (Seward Hiltner, *Preface to Pastoral Theology* [New York: Abingdon Press, 1958], 28.)

STEWARDSHIP. Pastoral visitation is key to communicating the relevance of stewardship. There is no better motivation to giving than for the pastor to provide a member with effective pastoral care through preaching and visitation.

PERSONAL GROWTH. Visiting others reveals inadequacies in the pastor's own life. One professor at the Adventist Theological Seminary confided that "most seminarians are poor in comprehending the weaknesses and needs of their own inner being." Ministers need to rediscover themselves by asking, "Who am I and what is a pastor?" This can be clarified for the pastor in their visitation of people.

Benjamin D. Schoun, DMin, at the time of this writing, was president of Adventist World Radio. He currently serves as a general vice president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.



Sixty years of radio in southern Asia

India, Bhutan, Nepal, and the Maldiv Islands are the countries that make up the Southern Asia Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Historically, this has not been an easy place to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. The subcontinent of south Asia has been the cradle of several of the world's large, non-Christian religions, including Hinduism and Buddhism, and their variations that have developed into religions of their own. Statistically, only slightly more than one-tenth of 1 percent of the population is Adventist. There are no reported members, officially, in either Bhutan or the Maldives.

India

The author of a recent book on Christianity in India, Robert Eric Frykenberg, states that while Christian missions in India have had a lengthy and rich history "[n]owhere, at the same time, has cultural, social, and political opposition or resistance to Christianity become more pervasive, powerful, or subtle; and nowhere today are threats to the very Christian survival more serious. (Scarcely a week passes without some church building being destroyed or some Christians being killed.)"¹ Nevertheless, Jesus did not tell us to avoid the difficult areas of the world, and radio broadcasting has been an important part of this mission outreach.

The use of radio in the countries of southern Asia goes way back to the very early era of experimental radio broadcasting, according to Adrian Peterson, one of the radio pioneers in this part of the world field.² In the year 1925, an Adventist missionary from New Zealand, Reuben E. Hare, made the historic first radio broadcast on a medium-wave radio station in Bombay (now Mumbai). The first Adventist broadcast on

TODAY, AWR IS PREPARING PROGRAMS IN 80 LANGUAGES, AND THEY ARE BEING SENT OUT THROUGH SHORTWAVE, FM, AND INTERNET (INCLUDING PODCASTING) NETWORKS.

international shortwave was made by L. B. Losey in 1937, over the radio broadcasting station operated by the Travancore government in Mysore, India. Actually, at the time, this was a series of radio broadcasts on behalf of Spicer College. International radio broadcasting on shortwave was introduced on a regular basis in 1950 with the usage of the large, old half-hour disc recordings of H. M. S. Richards and the *Voice of Prophecy*. Radio Ceylon, in Colombo, Sri Lanka, became the primary transmitter site for broadcasts to India. This means

that 2010 commemorates the 60th anniversary of radio in southern Asia.

Adventist World Radio (AWR) was founded in 1971, with a mission to reach the hardest to reach places of the world in the people's own languages. In 1987, the AWR flagship station on Guam began fulfilling its purpose by transmitting to Asia, including southern Asia. Today, AWR is preparing programs in 80 languages, and they are being sent out through short-wave, FM, and Internet (including podcasting) networks. All of these programs are produced by local individuals of the respective countries, who grew up with the language and culture.

Currently, the media center in Pune prepares programs in 8 of the 15 official languages of India, with 2 more languages slated for production in the near future. Besides the studio in Pune, another studio was opened in 2003 in Aizawl, Mizoram, in northeast India, where two languages, Mizo and Assamese, are being broadcast and two additional languages are being planned. Besides these two studios in India, AWR operates a production facility in the country of Nepal, where exciting new things are taking place. In 2009, there were 1,373 listener responses from these studios.

One of the long-told stories from the radio broadcasting efforts in



India features Michael Hembrom. Years ago he served as a lay leader for the Roman Catholic Church in his area. Somehow, he started taking the Voice of Prophecy Bible correspondence course. He finished 20 lessons in 1966, and although he had some questions about the Sabbath and other topics, he immediately began a second course. At that point, he was removed from his church. He did not know anything about Seventh-day Adventists and neither did he know any Sabbath keepers. Through the years, he kept asking himself why he was going to church on Sunday when the Bible said to keep the Sabbath.

Naseeb Krishna Basnet, director of the AWR studio in Kathmandu, Nepal, was born to a Hindu family. His mother died when he was two years old. In school, he found a leaflet that said, "Jesus is the Son of God." His father stopped him from reading it because Christianity was considered a foreigners', low caste, and cow eaters' religion. He then contracted a severe, painful fever that lasted for months, which turned out to be rheumatic fever, and damaged his heart.

One day he saw a Bible and sought permission to read it. He knew what his father had said, but he wanted to find out about this Bible for himself. Hindus have more than 330 billion gods, and he fearfully "worshiped stones, dogs, elephants, monkeys, rats, tree[s], rivers, mountains, sun, moon, and everything." At first he did not understand the Bible, but then he started having dreams. In his dreams, he was shown many wonderful answers to his questions. He

began experiencing peace of mind and felt a Power ruling over all things.

He then met a man who was visiting the remote area where Naseeb was living, and Naseeb asked him how he could understand this Book in a better way. The man referred him to the Scheer Memorial Hospital at Banepa. Naseeb was so thirsty to know about the truth and which was the true religion in this world that he left his permanent and secure government job and traveled to Banepa.

After one week of study, he knew that this was the religion he was looking for. Following studies with a pastor, Naseeb wanted to be baptized but the pastor was afraid since there was much persecution during that time. Naseeb insisted and was baptized in a nearby river on March 28, 1975. After studies in Pune, India, at Spicer Memorial College, Pastor Basnet and his wife, Rama, became the speakers for the AWR broadcasts in the country of Nepal.

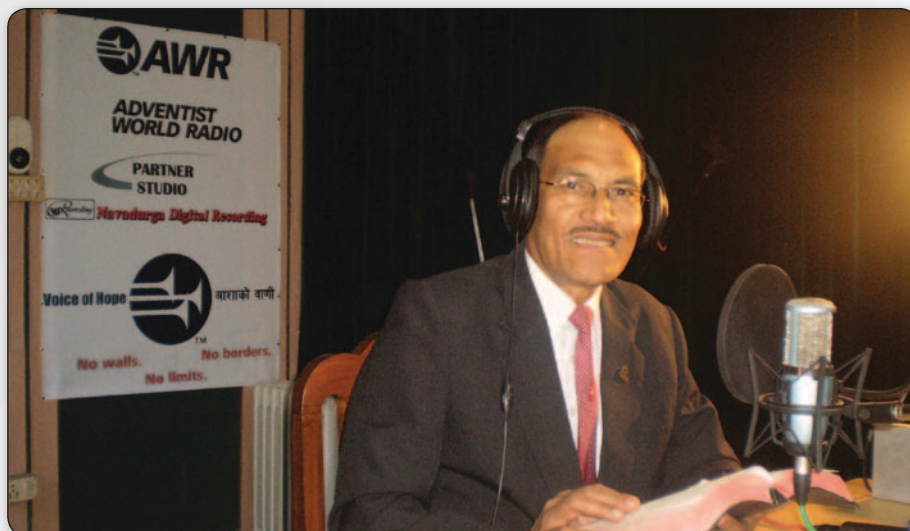


Photo: Adventist World Radio

More Stories

If you would like to hear the stories of more people from India and Nepal, whose lives have been changed by listening to AWR broadcasts, go to the AWR Web site at www.awr.org, click "Learn More," then "Making Waves," and go to "Season 1."



Michael had a small radio and would listen to various Christian programs. A program he really liked was one where Daniel Jacob was teaching from the Bible books of Daniel and Revelation. Then he heard about the Sabbath and all the other things he had studied. He knew these teachings were right because they were in the Bible. He was convicted, but still did not know where to find the seventh-day people. One day Michael's wife met another woman who lived 15 miles away. In their conversation, Mrs. Hembrom discovered that the other family kept the Sabbath. With excitement, she told her husband, who went to see that family—whose name, by the way, was also Hembrom. Finally, in 1998, more than 30 years after studying the Voice of Prophecy lessons, reading his Bible, and listening to Adventist World Radio, Michael was baptized.

Nepal

Nepal, historically, has been a Hindu country and more recently also officially Hindu by constitution. There were severe limitations on what witnessing could be done in this country. It was not even possible to have an AWR studio in Nepal. But our producers, Naseeb Krishna Basnet and his wife, Rama, prepared the scripts in their home. The programs were then sent to Guam, where they were broadcast back to Nepal by means of shortwave radio. A small,

but continuous number of responses from listeners came back to our producers. Many of these were from people who had never seen a Bible and had not heard of Jesus Christ or the religion of Christianity. In one case, a group of young Nepali girls, working in the Bombay circus, listened to AWR and began to believe what they heard. After several years, they told how their bosses heard the radio programs also, and their work situation improved greatly. They were treated with more courtesy, were paid on time, and had fewer quarrels.

Nepal went through a period of conflict among rebels called Maoists, the king, and the operational government. After several years of bombings and killings, the parties decided to try to make peace. Albeit an uncertain peace, it did improve things greatly and included changing the constitution to name the country as a secular state. From that time forward, AWR was able to begin broadcasting on local FM stations. AWR is now broadcasting on 12 local FM stations.


Here is a typical response from an FM listener in eastern Nepal: "[Until I heard your radio program] I did not know there was another religion besides Hindu and Buddhist in the world. You talked about the true Bible and all the things that are happening according to the Bible. I believe it totally. In our ancestors' religion, there are no such things

mentioned about the future; there is only the cycle of reincarnation. But it is so nice to believe that Jesus loves us personally and gives us the assurance of eternal life. [The] Bible must be a wonderful book. Please help me get one copy and I will try for myself. We do not have any Christians in my village at all. Please pray for me."

The most recent good news is that our technician, after some years of listening to the broadcasts, has decided to become an Adventist. He was baptized in May of this year. This was a major change for his family, but the Lord worked among his family members in wonderful ways.

Future plans

Our next major project includes a broadcast into the largely unentered country of Bhutan in the Dzongkha language. There are already two former Buddhist monks who have been baptized in Tibet. AWR's new podcasting service will be another means for people to hear the Bible messages anywhere that Internet is accessible, particularly in the cities.

We praise the Lord for His guidance in this specialized ministry and ask for your continued prayers so that many more will hear the Word of God and fall in love with our Lord Jesus Christ. 

1. Robert Eric Frykenberg, *Christianity in India: From Beginnings to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), viii.
2. Adrian Peterson, email message to author, June 18, 2010.



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The Hope Channel in southern Asia

How long does it take to count to a million? If you said one number every second, that would be more than 16,000 minutes, which is just over 11 1/2 days—and that is without stopping!

What about counting to 500 million? That would require counting nonstop—no sleeping or eating for about 5,800 days—nearly 16 years!

Five hundred million households—nearly all the television viewing public in India—is the potential audience Hope Channel could soon be reaching in India this year. But this breakthrough did not happen overnight.

With its diverse religions and languages, and a population of more than one billion, India is a challenge to Christians seeking to fulfill the Great Commission. Television offers one potential for meeting that challenge and Hope Channel is poised to step into the gap.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in India voted in 2008 to establish Hope Channel India, and since then God has blessed this endeavor that is under the leadership of Hope Channel's coordinator in India, Pastor Swamidass Johnson.

One of the challenges of working on the Indian subcontinent is the vast array of languages. More than 1,000 languages and dialects are

spoken. Hope Channel is targeting the three largest language groups—Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu. English is also widely spoken, and many of Hope Channel's best English programs will help fill the schedule. Additional programming in other languages and dialects will be added as it becomes feasible.

In 2009, India's minister of information and broadcasting signed the necessary documents allowing Hope Channel to begin broadcasting down-linked programming. In the same year Pastor Johnson began negotiations to

"Hope Channel is acquiring the license to distribute on all the cable networks of India. This license costs twenty-five thousand dollars. In faith, we have committed to supply this. In addition, a Hope Channel production studio is being built in Chennai (southeast India)," Thorp adds.

One man, one camera, one mission

In 2006, Pastor Ron Watts, when he was president of the Adventist Church in southern Asia, approached Thorp, asking Hope Channel to assist with local TV production. That is when Hope Channel provided Pastor Johnson with a small camera, a microphone, and a few hours of in-studio training with Hope Channel studio manager Joe Sloan.

"With an investment of just five thousand dollars, God used Pastor Johnson and his team of volunteers to produce an amazing amount of contextualized programming to air on Hope

Channel International," said Thorp.

To date, Pastor Johnson and his team of volunteers have produced more than a thousand programs. In addition, the Tamil programs have been broadcast on local cable in Chennai, and have generated thousands of letters from people requesting prayer, asking questions about the Bible, sharing their

FIVE HUNDRED MILLION
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INDIA THIS YEAR.

include Hope Channel in distribution systems seen by 500 million households—nearly all TV viewers in India.

"This is nothing short of a miracle and will be a phenomenal opportunity for sharing the gospel and message of Hope with sincere seekers in India. Obtaining this permission has been a long, difficult process," says Brad Thorp, Hope Channel president.

personal stories, and thanking him for the programs.

In fact, shortly after boarding a plane in the Philippines, Pastor Johnson bowed his head in prayer, as was his custom, without realizing that another passenger was watching him closely. When he finished praying, this gentleman approached him and said, "I knew you were Pastor Johnson. I watch your programs on TV." This viewer, a businessman based in Yemen, watches Pastor Johnson every week on Hope Channel International.

In 2009, Kandus Thorp, vice president for programming and international development, visited Pastor Johnson and regional church leaders to assess the viability of Hope Channel India. The result was a plan that Hope Channel India will also feature relevant English programming subtitled in the languages of Tamil, Hindi, and Telugu.

All things are possible

And, if recent progress is any indicator, Hope Channel India may already be on the air by the time this article is published. With the studio functioning, but not fully completed, local interest continues to build. The studio will also house a Bible school and a better living center, both of which will be tied into the channel's programming.

Hope Channel's Indian programs can currently be seen on Hope Channel International. Those wishing to watch can visit www.HopeTV.org and click on the Hope Channel International button on the left side of the screen.

Getting results ahead of the launch

As mentioned, the Tamil programs, already being broadcast on local cable in Chennai, have produced a massive response with thousands of letters requesting prayer, asking Bible questions, and sharing stories of how these programs have touched lives. Television presentations in the Hindi language have been

broadcast outside India and are also reaping big results.

Various programs on Hope Channel India will attract viewers who would never attend a traditional evangelistic campaign. Johnson believes that with Hope Channel India programming, the gospel message will reach into millions of homes currently inaccessible.


"The citizens of India are particularly attracted to information about education, medical concerns, and parenting," says Johnson. "These are the areas where we will place much of our focus. Hope Channel India will seek to remove barriers that lead to mistrust and misunderstanding. This will be twenty-four/seven programming reaching into the hearts and lives of countless Indian homes across the nation."

Most Christian programming in India is American or European, and often misses the mark in being engaging or even relevant. To overcome this challenge, Hope Channel will conduct a production blitz, called "Project Hope," to develop hundreds of locally contextualized programs. Hope Channel has conducted Project Hope efforts in several other countries with great success, producing hundreds of programs in a few weeks' time that cover the full spectrum of Bible

teaching, healthy living, social and cultural issues, music, and programs for men, women, and children.

Seventh-day Adventists across India are preparing for the expected response when Hope Channel India begins broadcasting. Members and Bible workers are preparing to follow up on requests for prayer, Bible study, and other activities. A call center to receive viewer requests is under development and staff training is taking place.

Prayer support is still needed for the Hope Channel India project. Specifically ask for God's Spirit to be poured out on the 1.5 million Seventh-day Adventists living in India. Also pray for those involved with the production of shows and that the hearts of new viewers will be open to hearing about a God who wants to draw near to them and share His love and forgiveness.

For more information or to support Hope Channel's outreach in India, contact the network at 888-4-HOPE-TV (888-446-7388) in the U.S., or +1-269-471-6050 for international callers. The email is info@HopeTV.org or visit www.HopeTV.org. 

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The “Seventh-day Adventist” name turns 150 years old

Several years ago, while on vacation with my wife, we decided to visit the museum of another denomination. My career has been mostly involved with preserving and promoting Adventist history, so I was curious to see how another church promotes its history, specifically to its own members.

The exhibits were professionally presented. Upon entering the main exhibit gallery, there was a large sculpture on the left. As we passed it, a father holding the hand of his small son was explaining the significance of what they were viewing. My wife and I did not stop to hear the entire conversation, but what little I heard still reverberates in my memory. That father was introducing his church heritage to his young son. Immediately I asked myself, *What opportunities does the Seventh-day Adventist Church provide for me to introduce the heritage of our movement to my children, grandchildren, or even to fellow church members?* For a church that remembers the seventh-day Sabbath every week, I wonder if we have done enough, collectively, to recall God’s leading in the history of the Adventist movement.

I am well aware of, and deeply appreciate, such preserved historic Adventist sites as Elmhaven in California, Sunnyside in Australia, and Historic Adventist Village in Battle Creek, Michigan, plus other heritage sites owned by the denomination. I also know that some churches conduct an annual Spirit of Prophecy Day or Heritage Sabbath in October each year. And we publish

books about our past, with Adventist history taught in our schools. But I realize that many more church members would be greatly blessed and encouraged were we more proactive and creative in our local congregations about recalling God’s leading in our denomination’s history. Knowing from where we came historically, and why we exist, gives direction and purpose to our current and future endeavors as a church.

Sabbath, October 2, 2010, provides an opportunity to combine Adventist heritage with visioning by the members of your congregation. The previous day, Friday, October 1, marks the 150th anniversary of when the pioneers of our movement chose the name *Seventh-day Adventist*.

October 1, 1860

The men and women who gathered in Battle Creek, Michigan, from September 28 to October 1, 1860, knew something had to be done as relating to coming up with a name for the church. Consequently, during the services Friday evening and Sabbath, the 28’ x 42’ Meeting House¹ was reported as being full.² Among the 25 men named as being in attendance at the conference,³ at least 15 were ministers from five states—Iowa, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Wisconsin.⁴ A number of them had not previously met.⁵ Although no women are listed by name, they are mentioned as being present for the Sabbath services, though if any also attended the business sessions that followed, this was not recorded.⁶ One woman who apparently was not present was Ellen White—still home

recuperating after giving birth to her fourth son on September 20.⁷

After sundown Sabbath evening, the first business session began. The immediate problem was the future of the publishing house. For the previous several months, discussions regarding what to do had been underway both in the church paper, then called *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, as well as between traveling ministers and lay members. Although many individuals had contributed to the press, legally it was owned by James White.⁸ Even the Meeting House in which they met that weekend was owned by Stephen Belden,⁹ a member of the Battle Creek congregation. James White did not like the situation and felt that something must be done. After all, if anything happened to him, the publishing house would go to his heirs, not to the members who had contributed to it. Consequently, he and three others called for this meeting to decide what should be done.¹⁰

Complicating the issue in the minds of many present that weekend was their belief that taking any steps at all toward anything that might be viewed as organization constituted Babylon. Coming out of the Millerite movement of the 1840s, during which they had either been forced out of or had voluntarily left their former churches, these pioneers did not now want to organize and thus in their minds return to what they had so recently left. But others argued that without some form of organization there was no way they could legally hold property and thus protect the publishing house or

even the meeting houses that then existed.

Eventually, following considerable discussion Saturday night and most of Sunday, the conclusion was reached by all that some kind of simple organization could be undertaken.¹¹ With that decision behind them, the need for a name was discussed. Obviously, they could not legally incorporate the publishing house without agreeing upon a name for the new organization. Again, a theological concern surfaced. Revelation 14:11 warns against worshipers of the beast as well as against those who receive the mark of his name. Therefore, taking a name was also problematic for some. Eventually, most agreed that naming the publishing association they were forming must also happen.¹²

During the discussion that followed, on Monday, October 1, the name initially favored was “Church of God.” Among its supporters was James White.¹³ However, it was pointed out during the discussion that other churches already used that name, not to mention that it really was quite generic. Some thought that calling ourselves “Church of God” sounded presumptuous. Those present, whether pastors or lay delegates, wanted to choose a name that, in the words of James White, “would be the least objectionable to the world at large.”¹⁴

In time, the name *Seventh-day Adventists* was discussed. David Hewitt, Joseph Bates’s first convert to the Sabbath in Battle Creek seven years earlier,¹⁵ eventually moved that they *take* the name *Seventh-day Adventists*. After more discussion, Hewitt’s motion was withdrawn and a reworded resolution was substituted in its place—that we *call ourselves* “Seventh-day Adventists.” Apparently, the change in wording satisfied those conscientious delegates concerned over *taking* a name. The revised motion passed with only one vote in opposition and was then voted to recommend “the name we have chosen to the

churches generally,” again passing with only one dissenting vote. Regarding the name chosen 150 years ago, the October 1, 1860, minutes record that, “Seventh-day Adventists was proposed as a simple name and one expressive of our faith and position.”¹⁶

A short time later, Ellen White wrote, “The name Seventh-day Adventist carries the true features of our faith in front, and will convict the inquiring mind.”¹⁷


The 150th anniversary weekend—October 1, 2, 2010

This year, as Seventh-day Adventists worldwide recall the 150th anniversary of choosing our denomination’s name, churches, schools, healthcare institutions, publishing houses, and conferences are urged to seriously consider the question, “How can we maximize the impact of our Seventh-day Adventist presence in our community?” A Web site, www.150sda.org, containing ideas and resources, has been created to assist those wishing not only to celebrate the 150th anniversary of our name but also to explore this important question. A suggested weekend program, beginning Friday evening and continuing all day Sabbath, is included on the Web site, as are historical and other resources.

A suggestion includes individual members considering what it means to them, personally, to be a Seventh-day Adventist. Other questions worth considering include, What difference does having a Seventh-day Adventist family living on my street make? Or, What, if any, differences can my customers/employer expect because I am a Seventh-day Adventist? If I am a student attending a public school, what difference does it make having a Seventh-day Adventist student in my school? In short, what does it mean to me to be a Seventh-day Adventist living in the twenty-first century? Obviously, no single right or wrong answers exist, but no

answers at all means that I’m not serious about being an Adventist because my faith should be making a difference—in my family as well as in my community.

As a congregation, irrespective of how long your church has been in your community, if it were to close tomorrow, would anyone notice? If not, what can you as a church do to change that reality? Even if your church is well known locally, are there ways of further enhancing—both spiritually and physically—the lives of those living in the community where your church is located? In short, in what ways can you more effectively share the message of Christ’s soon return that is embodied in our church name?

We encourage you to use the 150th anniversary weekend not merely to recall the past, but also to look to the future by finding ways to even more effectively accomplish the prophetic mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. What God has done in the past assures us regarding what He wants to do for us now, as well as in the future. Therefore, commemorate the name while visioning for the future—what a unique and profitable way to celebrate our Adventist heritage. 

1. J. N. Loughborough, *Rise and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (Battle Creek, MI: General Conference Association of the Seventh-day Adventists, 1892), 217.
2. *Review and Herald*, October 2, 1860, 156.
3. *Review and Herald*, October 2, 1860, 156; October 9, 16, 23, 1860.
4. *Review and Herald*, October 2, 1860, 156.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White, The Early Years, 1827-1862*, vol. 1 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1985), 419, 425.
8. *Review and Herald*, October 9, 1860, 162; October 23, 1860, 177.
9. *Review and Herald*, October 9, 1863, 163.
10. *Review and Herald*, September 11, 1860, 136.
11. *Review and Herald*, October 23, 1860, 178.
12. *Ibid.*, 179.
13. *Ibid.*, 179.
14. *Ibid.*, 179.
15. J. N. Loughborough, “Second Advent Experience—No. 7,” *Review and Herald*, July 26, 1923, 5; “Sabbath Services,” *General Conference Bulletin*, vol. 1, Extra No. 6, February 17, 1895, 208.
16. *Review and Herald*, October 23, 1860, 179.
17. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1 (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), 224.

Tell us what you think about this article. Email MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org or write to 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904.



Church organized in unentered area with the help of radio

Silver Spring, Maryland, United States—Not everyone knows about Northeast India, the territory east of Bangladesh. The Indian state of Mizoram is located there, and about seven years ago, **Adventist World Radio (AWR)** established a production studio at the mission office in the capital city of Aizawl. The responses have been growing, with new churches and many new believers in Jesus Christ and the Adventist message.

The south part of Mizoram, an area sandwiched between Myanmar and Bangladesh, is a remote territory—undeveloped and unentered as far as evangelism is concerned.

Two pastors were recently transferred to this area as part of a plan by the Mizo Conference to begin

outreach. Interestingly, both **Pastor Rohlua** and **Pastor Sabbathanga** have been speakers on the Mizo radio programs that Adventist World Radio (AWR) broadcasts to North-east India.


Their first evangelistic effort was in the village of Bualpui—known locally as a center of business and shopping for surrounding villages. While the meetings took place, a man from the neighboring village of Kawrthindeng, who had come to shop, asked the team if they could come and conduct meetings in his village. While Pastor Rohlua continued the evangelistic meetings in Bualpui, Pastor Sabbathanga went to Kawrthindeng and launched meetings in this village of 150 families.

As the meetings began, Pastor Sabbathanga was pleasantly surprised that the people were quite receptive to the message. One day he asked them if they ever listened to the radio. They said that the radio was the only medium of communication

they had in their village and that they listened to regional programs and Adventist World Radio. Then Pastor Sabbathanga told them that he was one of the speakers on the AWR program.

The people said, “That is what we thought!” They had talked among themselves about how his voice and the way he presented his messages sounded familiar.

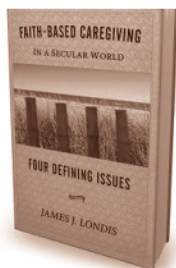
Pastor Sabbathanga says, “I realized that right before my eyes, ‘the Word’ [the message] was becoming ‘flesh’ [personal] and ‘dwelling among us,’ and the bonding work of the Holy Spirit was taking shape, uniting these people in a relationship with God and to our church fellowship!”

The evangelistic meetings closed with 55 newly baptized members. A new church has been planted with a congregation of nearly 80 people gathering in a house church on the Sabbath where the name *Seventh-day Adventist* had not been heard of before. [Benjamin D. Schoun] 

R E S O U R C E S



Faith-Based Caregiving in a Secular World: Four Defining Issues, by James J. Londis, privately published, 2009.



James Londis, an experienced healthcare administrator, currently directs the Office of Ethics and Corporate Integrity for the Kettering Medical Center Network. His journey is shaped by his past pastoral and teaching experience and his doctoral

studies in philosophy. He writes from this perspective of healthcare and ministry.

This book, direct and to-the-point on key issues of faith-based healthcare and spiritual caregiving, may be considered an excellent text for health institutions and students entering health and pastoral care fields.

Londis paints a background from which he addresses several issues: Healing Beyond a Cure; Christian Spirituality and Healthcare Ministry; God’s Cure for Caregiver Burnout; and Suffering, Prayer, and God’s Plan for Our Lives. He begins with

the description of the challenges facing today’s healthcare in its governmental and corporate mandate to treat wounds, but its seeming ineffectiveness in treating the spiritual dimension of woundedness. He reviews illness from a biblical perspective and from that of the current medical model that desires to take control of the disease (cure). He sums up the challenge: “Healing restores meaning, . . . and this is the religious and spiritual task of modern healthcare”—and no small task as pressured practitioners deal with the individuals and the families



questioning their faith in God when the prayers offered in faith seldom result in a cure.

Londis points to Christ's example and asserts that the caregiver must become "willing to engage in a spiritual ministry of healing by learning to *feel* as God feels about the patient" (xiii; emphasis added). Learned empathy, or what some might call spiritual development, is the ability to be able to open oneself up to another and respond through a profound awareness of the other person's experience—to not only deliver compassionate treatment but also *develop the capacity to feel*

as God feels. This could become a part of the preparatory process for healthcare practitioners regardless of their religious affiliation. Sabbath rest is recommended in order that caregivers recover and are refreshed. The author adds that there exists a responsibility to design systems, policies, and procedures that provide adequate rest for caregivers so that they may be healed even as they are healing.

Lastly, the author describes the struggle of finding meaning in the suffering and tragedies of life within the concept of a loving God. Whether or not the reader has formed an

opinion on why bad things happen to good people, Londis shares his views of freedom of choice, and the consequences of those choices, without assigning blame to God or ascribing God's direct involvement in determining every turn of life's journey. When healthcare practitioners and their pastoral counterparts are prepared to understand these themes, they will comfort their patients in ways that promote healing.

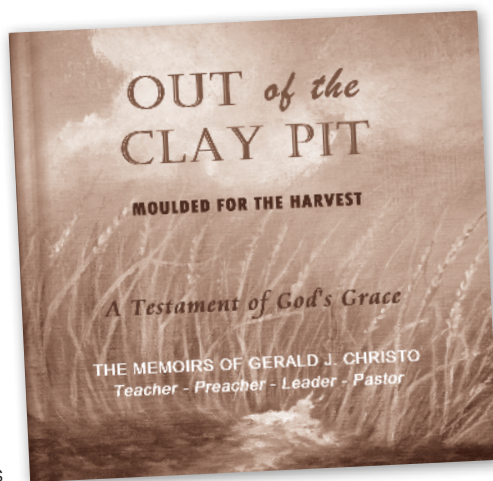
—Reviewed by Candace Huber, MPH, BSN, RN, FCN, director of the Florida Hospital Center for Community Health Ministry and the Parish Nurse Institute, Orlando, Florida, United States.

Out of the Clay Pit: Moulded for the Harvest,

by Gerald J. Christo, Hosur, India: Maranatha, 2009.

For those of us who have walked the streets of India's cities or the dirt tracks of its villages as pastors and evangelists, reading the pages of *Out of the Clay Pit* by Gerald Christo compares to the times when we watch family home videos on a quiet Sabbath evening. The places and those we know and worked with come before us, even if these are just glimpses, but they become sufficient to call to mind our own memories of association of places and people and what they did in building up the church in southern Asia.

Christo has gathered together valuable and historic details to tell his story, including how often he saw God's hand in his life and in the church to which he had dedicated himself. The difficulties he faced in his preparation for the ministry and




the positions of leadership that lead him to being elected president of the Southern Asia Division of Seventh-day Adventists, is a gripping story.

The book, *Out of the Clay Pit*, gets its title from a clay mine that Gerald Christo's father ran. The clay, collected in long tanks, surrounded the mine. When nobody was around, Gerald, as a young boy, liked jumping from one tank to another. One day, when only he was out near the pits, he missed his step and fell into the wet clay and started sinking. A messenger just passing by saw the boy struggling for his life, jumped in

and pulled young Gerry Christo out, saving him from sinking in the mire.

Pastor Christo, who says he has often been thought of as coming from the Anglo-Indian people (he is Bengali) because of his speech and many friends from this community, pays tribute to Anglo-Indian church workers, both men and women, by devoting three pages of his short book to their dedication and vision in building up the church in southern Asia in all phases of its work, even listing them by name and their fields of labor.

For sixty years, standing close at his side, helping him daily, was his wife, Birol Charlotte Kharkongor, from the hills of Shillong, the "Scotland of the East." Together, they raised three sons and two daughters, with three of their children working in the church. Christo's only regret as a pastor was that he missed out on graduate studies. "Nevertheless," he says, "Andrews University conferred an honorary doctorate on me for reasons best known to them."

—Reviewed by Reginald N. Shires, a retired pastor living in Beltsville, Maryland, United States. 

Faith
for Today PRESENTS



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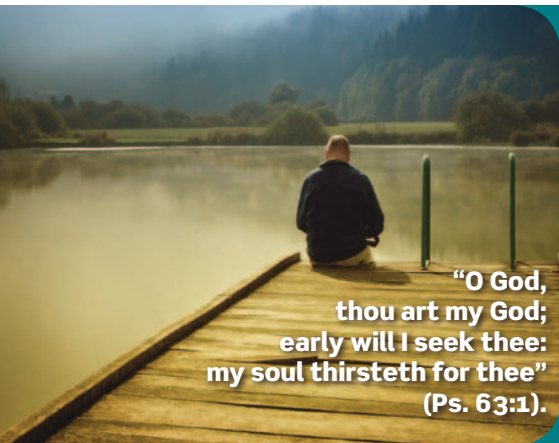
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thou art my God;
early will I seek thee:
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(Ps. 63:1).**

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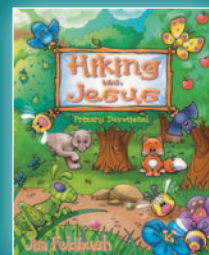
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