

ADVENTIST REVIEW

MAY 2022: CAN ANYTHING GOOD COME FROM
SPORTS + SPORTS IN ADVENTIST SCHOOLS +
SCIENCE FICTIONS + EVOLUTION IN THE
NEWS + WARM GREETINGS FROM THE DESERT



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LAST MONTH:

1



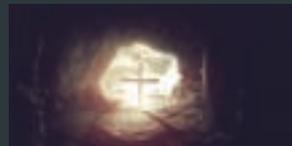
Vegans Can Fight Disease Better
Than Meat Eaters, Study Shows

2



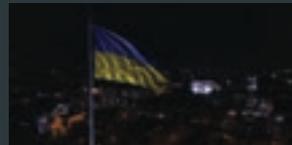
Science Fictions

3



The Absent Presence

4

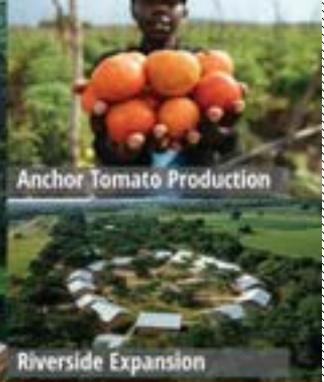


Executive Committee of the Adventist
Church Votes to Temporarily Attach
the Ukrainian Administrative Office
to the General Conference

5



How Do We Experience the Cross Today?



Twing Memorial School

Anchor Tomato Production

Riverside Expansion

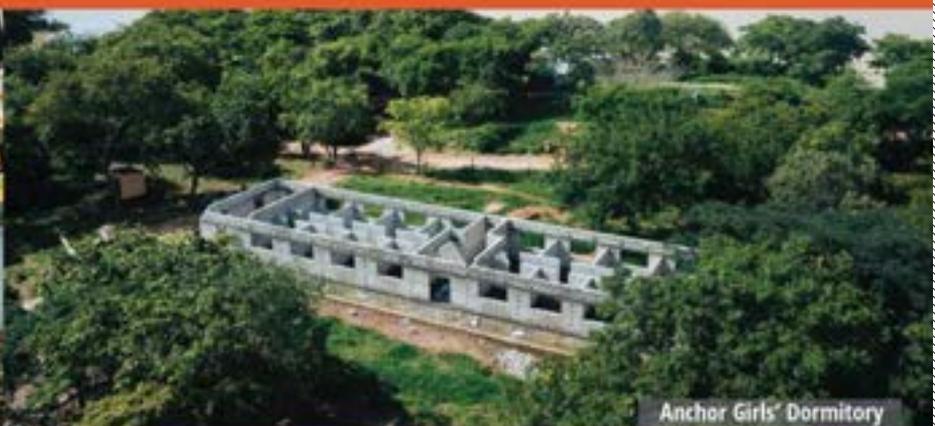
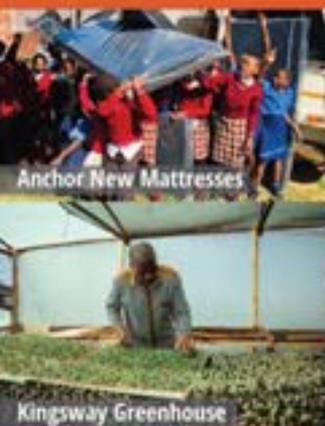


ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO EXTEND OUR IMPACT IS A GIFT TO THE WHERE NEEDED MOST FUND.

Our **Where Needed Fund** is critical to our operations. Curious where your dollar goes? We have funded major projects with recent gifts to the Where Needed Most Fund in addition to supporting our day-to-day operations. Your donations will enable us to respond quickly to new opportunities to expand our impact.

Recently, this is how some of those funds have been used:

- Greenhouse expansion at Kingsway Preparatory School, allowing the school to provide all its own produce for the 300+ children.
- Install perimeter fence around Twing Memorial School to increase safety and security.
- Completion of the girls' dorm, purchasing mattresses for the boys' dorm at Anchor School. Girls are currently sleeping two to a bed which is not only uncomfortable, it is out of compliance with local COVID regulations.
- Adding five classrooms to the primary school at Riverside Farms to serve 360 more children.



Anchor New Mattresses

Kingsway Greenhouse

Anchor Girls' Dormitory



Scan the QR code to learn more about the Where Needed Most Fund. Visit [ChildImpact.org](https://www.childimpact.org)

BILL KNOTT



"I sing these words against the news."

The Songs of the Redeemed

*This is my Father's world,
And to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings
The music of the spheres.¹*

There is a comfort found in hymns that anchors us when times are rough. When well-conceived, and grown mature through echoing the thought of Scripture, they circle in the mind when sermons fade. Who hasn't known some aged loved one—lost, it seems to all cognition—still singing hymns deep-planted in the soul?

Because we know hymns—and remember—through the agency of tunes, they stay with us. The words and melodies still merge when our minds are harried by a hundred grim distractions, or when our fears have got the better of our faith. Somewhere in the basement of our lives we murmur hymns when all the house seems blown away: *"Be still, my soul, the Lord is on thy side."*²

This is no argument for older hymns or tunes I like: my preferences are only that. They help me when my days seem bleak, or I forget the promises of Scripture. In all those moments "in between"—while traveling; in waiting rooms; while waiting on short nights for sleep that sometimes never comes—the deep assurances of much-loved hymns provoke my trust and stir my faith. Their genre, age, or rhythmic beat are not essentials of their value. I can rejoice as fully with Andrew Peterson as with Charles Wesley; with Lauren Daigle as with Fanny Crosby. *"You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing; You say I am strong when I think I am weak."*³ *"O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise."*⁴

And yet, with all that's rattled with the earth, I turn again to words—and tune—I learned some 60 years ago: *"This is my Father's world."* These words are both assurance and defiance, comfort when I crave protection, and confrontation with the powers that seem to rule the planet. Like David's joyous exultation—"The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1)—they challenge what the net-

works doubt, that "above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, [are] silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will."⁵

*This is my Father's world:
Oh, let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.*

This is a truth I'm tempted to forget when tank battalions smash across the Ukraine border; when Chinese warships prowl the waters off Taiwan; when soaring prices for essentials threaten travel, food and shelter. "He looks on the earth, and it trembles; He touches the hills, and they smoke" (Ps. 104:32).

I sing these words against the news, for God's unhurried sovereignty seems far away when breaking headlines make us worry about the politics in Pakistan, or unlit corners where White zealots spew their race-laced hate. *"A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing . . ."*⁶ The hymn itself, like the Lord it celebrates, is a "refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps. 46:1).

So pick a hymn; engage with it; rehearse it till it seems a prayer. Yours won't be mine, nor should it be, as though God only could be praised in English, or in twentieth-century lyrics. Make sure it sings with Bible truth and finds a dozen touchpoints with the Word. Then let both time and memory do their work until the hymn, though authored by another to someone else's composition, is fully, finally your own.

You will be singing for a while.
*When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.*⁷ ♣

¹Maltbie D. Babcock, "This Is My Father's World," 1901.

²Katharina von Schlegel (translator: Jane Borthwick), "Be Still, My Soul," 1855.

³Lauren Daigle, "You Say," 2018.

⁴Charles Wesley, "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing," 1739.

⁵Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1917), p. 500.

⁶Martin Luther, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," 1529.

⁷John Newton, "Amazing Grace," 1779.

A MULTIMEDIA REVIEW

Thanks for the “good old *Review*,” soon to be 175 years old, which has morphed into a full-fledged multimedia powerhouse! Nothing better to describe the impact of the worldwide magazine in the life and ministry of our church, and it has blossomed into many countries. I’ve read the English and Portuguese editions for many years, and it has been a privilege not only to contribute but to receive inspiration and learn about the progress of our church worldwide. Praise God for Ellen White and other pioneers who had the vision to start the printed ministry to help our members to be informed and prepared for the second coming of our Savior. May the Lord continue to bless the excellent team and the responsibility of the editor, as he said, “to pay attention to the Spirit.”

Leo Ranzolin, Sr.
Estero, Florida



THE LAB OF NEW THINGS

In your March 2022 issue I was surprised to read in Daryl Gungadoo’s article, “The Lab of New Things,” that the new VR First multiplayer game Babylon-Quest has placed the famous Hanging Gardens in Babylon, even though no Babylonian writings or modern archaeological evidence supports that view. According to Cambridge University archaeologist Stephanie Dalley’s 2014 research, the Hanging Gardens were built by King Sennacherib in Nineveh, not by Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. Dalley found evidence of aqueducts 100 meters wide and 50 meters deep capable of bringing 300 tons of water daily from the nearby Khinis Mountains; that water was then raised by an Archimedeoan screw device into elevated canals built from 2 million stone blocks.

Brian E. Strayer
Berrien Springs, Michigan

RETURN TO NORMAL

As I read the article by Bill Knott about the state of affairs in the churches after the trauma of the past two years, my heart filled with thanksgiving for my local church. While we do have some who have not as yet returned, the fear and foreboding of the

DURING THE INTERNMENT OF JAPANESE-AMERICANS

We applaud you for being brave enough to write and have printed in the *Review* such a serious and factual account of what was happening during that time. What happened was wrong. We have a camp not far from us that has been made into a historical site. Sobering. However, what have we learned as a church from our lack of backbone to

take a stand for what is right? We see the same issues today in our church that no one is willing to address correctly. Enough said. We pray for our church administrators that God will give them the wisdom to make wise decisions and that they will have the courage to follow His lead.

God bless. We’re blessed by your weekly GraceNote devotions.

Louise and Don Driver

2022 GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION

Official notice is hereby given that the postponed sixty-first session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held June 6-11, 2022, in the America's Center in St. Louis, Missouri, United States. The first meeting will begin at 8:00 am, June 6, 2022. All duly accredited delegates are urged to be present at that time. This Session will also be accessible for delegates remotely by electronic means.

Ted N C Wilson, General Conference President

Erton C Köhler, General Conference Secretary

past have gone and the life and joy of worship and study is again very much a part of church. And to add to the blessing, several additional families have joined us and become a very great blessing. I am very thankful that the “return to normal” has returned to our local congregation.

Junior Scoggins

Ozark, Arkansas

MISREADING SCRIPTURE WITH WESTERN EYES

Upon reading the review of this book, I immediately ordered it on Amazon. All the subtleties of how I have in many instances been misreading the Bible began to appear, and it's not just me—it relates to how I've been taught as well. I highly recommend this book; it's an enjoyable read.

Jack Waller

GRACENOTES

I would like to express my thankfulness to you for the quite fantastic and extraordinary GraceNotes, which I now with great pleasure and benefit have read. I am a former pastor and college teacher from Denmark. Two Sabbaths ago I made even a PowerPoint sermon on the subject “Stay in Grace”—giving you of course due credit for some titles and the *Review* for some

pictures. Thank you for your meaningful thoughts. I would like to encourage you to publish these GraceNotes as a worship book.

Richard Müller

Daugaard, Denmark

COMMENTS FROM FACEBOOK

TOXIC TEACHING

Very well-written article describing what the relationship between men and women should look like, with the ultimate goal being to honor God.

Carina Gisela Ramos

BATTLE CRY (BATTLE CREEK ACADEMY TO CELEBRATE 150TH ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR)

My great-grandmother Clara Alice Barnum and her brother George attended Battle Creek Academy in the late 1870s or early 1880s.

Connie Florey Wright

YOUR TURN

We welcome your letters, noting, as always, that inclusion of a letter in this section does not imply that the ideas expressed are endorsed by either the editors of the *Adventist Review* or the General Conference. Short, specific, timely letters have the best chance at being published (please include your complete address and phone number—even with e-mail messages). Letters will be edited for space and clarity only. Send correspondence to Letters to the Editor, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; Internet: letters@adventistreview.org.

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE CORPORATION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

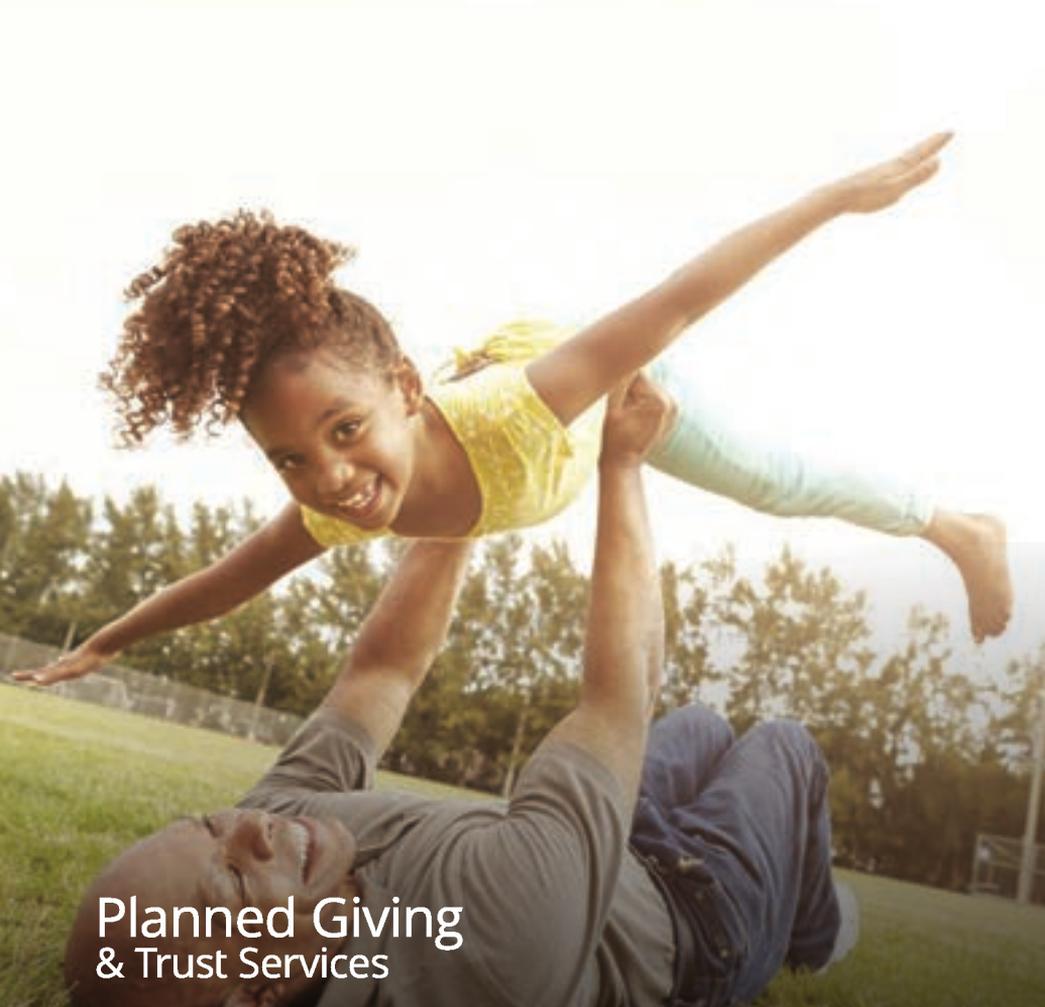
Notice is hereby given that the next regular meeting of the members of the General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in The Dome of America's Center, St. Louis, Missouri, in the United States of America, on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. for the transaction of any business that may come before the meeting. The members of this corporation are the delegates to the sixty-first session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Daisy Jane F. Orion,
Corporate Secretary

“Giving makes an
eternal difference—
for yourself and others.”

—Olan Thomas

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“We see how the families come to us dehydrated and exhausted. Many of them arrive with just their clothes on their backs, carrying their children, hurting, stressed, and hungry.”

Jesús Manueles, p. 15



Group photo of the honorees with the President’s Lifetime Achievement Award in Washington, D.C., on March 20, including Calvin Rock (far left) and Prudence LaBeach Pollard (second from left) PHOTO: COURTESY OF PRUDENCE LABEACH POLLARD

TWO ADVENTIST LEADERS AWARDED THE VOLUNTARY SERVICE HIGHEST HONOR

PRUDENCE POLLARD AND CALVIN ROCK RECEIVE THE PRESIDENT’S LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD.

BY LAEL CAESAR AND MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

Adventist scholars Calvin Rock and Prudence LaBeach Pollard were among four individuals awarded the President’s Lifetime Achievement Award in Washington, D.C., on March 20. The award is the highest possible civil award for volunteer service awarded by the president of the United States. Pollard, currently acting vice president of Oakwood University, was particularly recognized for spearheading the university’s ministry to the so-called food deserts in Huntsville, Alabama, United States, where the school is located. Rock, a former

president of the same institution as well as a former vice president of the world church of Seventh-day Adventists, was cited for his more than 60 years of service in a variety of areas, including academe, pastoral ministry, and church administration.

President Joseph Biden’s letter of recognition stated that America’s success depends “not on one of us, or some of us, but on all of us.” He added, “By sharing your time and passion, you are helping to discover and deliver solutions to the challenges we face—solutions that

we need now more than ever.” Biden wrote that today we live “in a moment that calls for light and hope and love.” His letter concludes, “The country is counting on you.”

Rock drew laughter from attendees to the ceremony at the Army and Navy Club when he said that he was “righteously embarrassed” to receive this recognition, “but at the age of 91, I’d better take it while I can get it.”

Pollard thanked President Biden and the people of the United States for the award. She mentioned specifically those “who died on the campus of Oakwood University when it was a slave plantation.” Pollard explained that she has realized that she stands on a legacy that exposed her to the idea of service to the community and to the people around where she lives.

During her brief remarks Pollard



Live broadcast in the new studios after the March 6 opening ceremony. PHOTO: MANELISI VALA AND NOEL SIBANDA

IN SOUTH AFRICA, ADVENTIST CHURCH OPENS NEW RADIO FACILITIES

STATION IS DRAWING PEOPLE TO STUDY THE BIBLE AND ACCEPT JESUS, LEADERS SAY.

SOUTHERN AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

also highlighted the Healthy University Initiative, which seeks to improve health markers, especially among African Americans at Oakwood and the surrounding community. The school was certified as a Healthier Campus in 2018. She also mentioned the initiative of delivering fresh fruits and vegetables in the community around Oakwood. “We call that ‘campus beautification,’ and ‘having a healthier campus,’” Pollard said.

The ceremony, sponsored by the Lowcountry Rice Culture Project, recognized two other honorees: Brigadier General Terence Adams and Kimberley Jeffries Leonard. Adams, currently special assistant for Cyber Effects Operations, Air Force Headquarters, works to facilitate students’ access to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) subjects. Leonard is the seventeenth national president of The Links, Incorporated, and The Links Foundation, Incorporated. The Links, Incorporated, works for equity in education, easier access to health care, criminal justice reform, and an end to environmental racism.

At the start of the program, Barry Black, chaplain of the United States Senate, offered an invocation. Black thanked God for His generosity in giving us the gift of the four honorees and prayed that their service may be an inspiration. “May it help all to be ready to answer the six questions of Matthew 25 concerning care for the hungry and thirsty, for strangers and the naked, for those who are ill and people in prison,” he said. 📌

There was joy and jubilation at the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID) headquarters in Pretoria, South Africa, on March 6, when church leaders participated in the long-awaited launching of the Adventist World Radio (AWR) online radio station powered by SIDmedia. More than 150 people, including leaders and guests, attended the event.

The launch of AWR powered by SIDmedia was a true testimony that indeed dreams do come true, church leaders said. Dressed in their African regalia, guests helped to ensure that the event marked a day to remember.

Guest of honor was AWR Africa regional director Immanuel Ogwal, from Uganda. He celebrated the historic launch, calling it “a game changer in evangelism.”

Ogwal was one of the first guests to be interviewed live by Sibongile Lugube, one of the station’s presenters/producers. “The launch of this radio station will complement the church’s strategic plan ‘I Will Go,’ as the church intensifies the spreading of the gospel using all forms of media platforms,” Ogwal said. Radio is indeed one of those platforms that can reach some of the most remote areas in the territory, church leaders said.

SID president Solomon Maphosa commended the media ministry, saying this was “the best news and music to my ears, as the church embraces media evangelism as a tool for spreading the gospel.” Maphosa, who is passionate about radio ministry, added, “It gives me great pleasure to be part and parcel of this new vehicle for evangelism. I have worked in radio before, so I know the power of radio. Radio can reach places where some of us as pastors cannot go,” he said.

Speaking at the same occasion, SIDmedia board chair Hopeson Bonya celebrated the work of SIDmedia in using technology to share the good news of Jesus. “The work being done by SIDmedia is very commendable,” Bonya said. “As leaders, we want to promote media evangelism in all its forms so that we can finish the work ahead of us.”

SID executive secretary Gideon Reyneke did the honors by cutting the ribbon at the new SIDmedia studios. Taking to the airwaves, AWR SIDmedia station manager Sipho Kaleni could not hide his excitement as the station harvested the firstfruits of its ministry. Grace Maoka, who tuned into AWR SIDmedia on the second day of its live broadcast, called the station to say she wanted to give her life to Jesus.

On the first Sabbath after the launch, SIDmedia took the radio to the people by visiting Mooikloof Seventh-day Adventist Church in Pretoria, South Africa. During this live broadcast activation eight more people decided to give their lives to Jesus. Leaders believe these firstfruits are a sure sign that God’s hand is at play. “We give Him all the praise and glory for all this wonderful work,” they said. 📌



VEGANS CAN FIGHT DISEASE BETTER THAN MEAT EATERS, STUDY SHOWS

RESEARCH SUGGESTS THEY HAVE BETTER CAPABILITIES OF FIGHTING DISEASE.

LINDSEY CRUMLEY, LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH

Vegans show significant differences in their metabolic profiles compared to nonvegetarians, which may help explain their lower risk for chronic diseases, according to a recent study conducted by researchers at Loma Linda University, Brigham and Women's Hospital, and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Fayth Miles, lead author of the paper and assistant professor at Loma Linda University School of Public Health and School of Medicine, says certain metabolites found in significantly lower abundance in vegans likely place them at lower risk of cardiometabolic diseases. Vegans showed lower concentrations of metabolites that appear to be associated with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and inflammation, which were consistently higher in nonvegetarians. This suggests that high consumption of plant-based foods may lower the risk of metabolic diseases.

"These are very interesting findings because they suggest meaningful, favorable biological responses in vegans, attributable to a plant-based dietary pattern," Miles said.

The study on the biology of veg-

anism was published in *Nutrients*, a journal of human nutrition, on February 8.

The study used metabolic signatures, which are measurements of 67 metabolites produced in the process of metabolism that circulate in the bloodstream. With the metabolic signatures of plasma obtained from 93 individuals, the study found the metabolic profiles of vegans compared to nonvegetarians to be notably different, with more than 60 percent of almost 1,000 different biomarkers showing significant differences between the two groups.

Evidence from AHS-2 indicates more favorable outcomes for vegans and other vegetarians, including better cardiometabolic profiles, and reduced risk of diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular and overall mortality. This study provides evidence for causal links between dietary patterns and disease by showing robust differences between vegans and nonvegetarians on the molecular level.

The authors state that a strong association exists between the vegan dietary pattern and metabolic signatures relevant to disease prevention and control.

Findings from this study agree

with previously reported favorable health outcomes for vegans. For example, the study found lower levels of several types of fatty acids or other lipid metabolites that evidence suggests are associated with inflammation and insulin insensitivity.

This study also supports previous findings from AHS-2 of higher amounts of beneficial plant compounds in blood, urine, and adipose samples of vegans—biologically active compounds believed to have anti-inflammatory and cancer-fighting activity.

Some metabolites showing differences between the two dietary groups in this study are markers of dietary intakes or behaviors, whereas others may have additional biological activity, thus preventing or promoting disease.

Vegans in AHS-2 consume the highest amounts of plant foods and were compared with nonvegetarians to maximize the contrast in metabolic profiles. For the purposes of this study, vegans were defined as those who never or rarely (less than once per month) ate meat, eggs, and dairy, and nonvegetarians were defined as those who ate at least 28 grams of red meat per day, although the majority consumed at least 56 grams.

Looking forward, Miles hopes to apply this research on a larger scale and to identify metabolic and genomic biomarkers linking dietary and lifestyle behaviors with cardiometabolic and other diseases, with a focus on addressing health disparities. 🌱



Students talk with ministry representatives at the Engage Conference. PHOTO: DARREN HESLOP

CONFERENCE EMPHASIZES MINISTRIES FOR STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY ORGANIZERS HOPE YOUNG PEOPLE LEARNED HOW TO LIVE WITH PURPOSE.

ISABELLA KOH, MORIAH MC DONALD, AND PEARL PARKER, ANDREWS UNIVERSITY, AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

The Engage: Live on Purpose Conference was held at Andrews University (AU) in Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States, March 9-13. The event aimed to inspire and equip students and young professionals to be world changers by living mission-based lives. It was the first of what organizers hope will become an annual event.

Programming included corporate worship, prayer-focused gatherings, exhibits, small-group interactions in conversation corners, and the opportunity to connect with the community during a Sunday canvassing and GLOW tract outreach.

"The different worship experiences were well attended, and the speakers were able to engage students during the presentations," Matías Soto, director of the Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at AU, said.

On March 10 Pastor Natasha Richards spoke on purpose and passion. She began by guiding the audience on how to craft mission and vision statements for their lives,

explaining that her own calling is to "help people live positively empowered lives." Her talk centered on Jeremiah 29:11 and focused on God's promises to His people throughout the Bible. Richards challenged the gathered students and faculty to take every chance to live out their purpose in spite of fear, doubt, or despair. "You are born for greatness wherever God is sending you," she said. "You are born to be what God created you [to be]."

Later that day at a dynamic worship session in University Towers, Boubakar Sanou, assistant professor of world mission in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, spoke on living missional lives. He began by defining "missionality" as "partnering with God in what He wants to do in the lives of people we interact with on a daily basis." Sanou continued his message by reminding listeners that Christ's followers have been called to do priestly work and make disciples. "This work is for everyone, not just a select few, and those

who do this work can be a blessing to others," he said.

On March 11 Heather Thompson Day, associate professor in the Department of Visual Art, Communication, and Design, delivered a message at the Engage: Live on Purpose vespers. Day spoke about the importance of being intentional with one's actions and words. Even if one doesn't know their purpose, they can still rest assured that God will not abandon the work of His hands. Day spoke about the misconception that as soon as someone receives a diploma or gets married, they find purpose and meaning. "Purpose is not something that happens to a person later or that they wait for—one can walk in their purpose right now by living as if things matter right now," she said.

Soto said that after vespers on Friday evening, most attendees stayed in the lobby area for refreshments and visited the exhibit floor. Many interacted with staff at the mission exhibit booths and learned more about current projects taking place through various Seventh-day Adventist organizations and on-campus ministries, he reported.

"I hope attendees understood what it means to live on purpose and saw examples of how to find and engage with their purpose," Soto said. "I also hope many will take the next step and get involved with a ministry, a literature evangelism program, or as student missionaries—that they experience living life with purpose." ❖



Jacob Prabhakar examines a patient's eye during the 2022 annual clinic in Hariakol of Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh, India. PHOTO: IT IS WRITTEN

FIRST EYE CAMP AFTER THE PANDEMIC RESTORES SIGHT TO THOUSANDS

IN INDIA, LONG-RUNNING INITIATIVE OFFERS FREE CATARACT SURGERIES.

JACOB PRABHAKAR, FOR IT IS WRITTEN, AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

Eyes for India is the long-running It Is Written initiative restoring sight to the blind through cataract surgeries in that South Asian nation. Every year ophthalmologist Jacob Prabhakar and his medical team hold an eye-surgery camp at a temple in northern India. Below, he shares a report from the event held in January.

The temple camp conducted every year in a remote village—Hariakol of Barabanki, in the most populous and poverty-stricken Indian state of Uttar Pradesh—is the highlight of all community services rendered by the Ruby Nelson Memorial Hospital. This unique mega eye camp (resumed for the first time since 2020 because of the pandemic) creates a tremendous impact, in that Hindus steeped in superstitious beliefs acknowledge Christ's methods of medical ministry and are convinced that this kind of phenomenal healing that they witness year after year is possible only through a God who is very much foreign to them.

Despite a cold, misty night and a 24-hour journey in the It Is Written-gifted bus—loaded heavily with medical supplies and equipment, navigating at times through zero visibility—the spirit and enthusiasm of the medical team was not dampened. They are committed to serving the poor.

Patients also traveled long distances in the biting cold, mostly on foot, carrying the blind and the disabled either on shoulders or makeshift beds. Others reached the campsite on two-wheelers, buses, or trains. To these marginalized poor in the far-flung areas of northern India, the free eye camp is a flickering ray of hope that will make their dream of restored sight come true. This drives them to brave the risks and challenges of an arduous journey through forest lands in inclement weather.

We are motivated to complete these camps by the high success rate of a seemingly simple cataract surgery, which can drastically transform lives. Having understood the

importance of wholistic health, the temple priests, volunteers, and camp organizers are receptive to the distribution of spiritual and health literature and health and hygiene talks.

The eye clinic opened early every morning. We screened, on average, 500 people each day and carefully selected for surgery the bilaterally blind—those with hypermature, hard cataracts, which over time will turn into a permanent, painful blind eye. The selected patients then undergo a detailed preoperative workup and then surgery for cataracts, wherein they are implanted with an intraocular lens under sterile conditions.

The backlog of patients encountered this year was greater than before because of the ongoing pandemic, which had kept those who needed help indoors and prevented them from seeking timely medical attention. The surgeries were also reduced to 200 per day because of the COVID restrictions on spacing of beds. Sadly, nearly 2,000 patients registered for surgery had to be turned away because of lack of time and surgical supplies.

Despite these setbacks, a total of 2,628 people received the precious gift of sight. The patients who received the operation and had their sight restored beamed with joy and were filled with gratitude. They left the camp praising God, knowing that they can now lead independent lives and earn a livelihood. ▀



A group of migrants show off their voucher provided by ADRA Honduras before they go purchase food and supplies. PHOTO: ADRA HONDURAS

ADRA ASSISTS EXHAUSTED MIGRANT FAMILIES IN HONDURAS

AGENCY IS HELPING HUNDREDS TREKKING NORTH.

LIBNA STEVENS, INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION NEWS

For nearly six months the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Honduras has been assisting more than 750 migrant families who day by day make the long trek from South America through Honduras in their quest north.

The assistance, which started as an effort to help Haitian migrant families, saw ADRA leaders and volunteers moving quickly to provide food and basic needs. More than 3,000 Haitians passed through the cities bordering Honduras and Nicaragua in 2021.

“We are seeing an average of 200-300 Haitian migrants each week, but it can fluctuate, with

some weeks increasing significantly,” ADRA Honduras director Luis Trundle said.

RECEIVING ASSISTANCE

The project was originally slated to provide a hygiene kit to each Haitian family selected, but it was modified to instead offer vouchers or cards so that families could obtain what they most needed in local grocery stores, Trundle explained. Although the assistance is mainly for Haitian migrant families, the project has expanded to assist migrant families from other nationalities as well.

It is estimated that some 1,000 to 1,500 migrants from Venezuela,

Cuba, Senegal, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and other countries have recently come into Honduras, Trundle said.

With a voucher worth US\$23, a migrant family of four is able to buy canned foods, bread, crackers, peanut butter, personal hygiene products, medicines, and anything they choose to help them on their journey.

ADRA Honduras has set up assistance with volunteers, translators, and coordinators in Choluteca and El Paraiso, which are bordering cities close to Nicaragua, where migrants can register.

ADRA Honduras emergency response officer Jesús Manueles has

been overseeing the response and ensuring that migrant families are able to get what they need when they arrive. “When each person comes to these specific shelters, they make an appointment to register, and the next day they are assisted by volunteers who help them purchase goods with their vouchers,” Manueles said. On the third day they can continue their journey.

MAKING THE ARDUOUS JOURNEY

“We see how the families come to us dehydrated and exhausted,” Manueles said. “Many of them arrive with just their clothes on their backs, carrying their children, hurting, stressed, and hungry from not eating anything for three days.”

Migrants report they are robbed four or five times throughout their journey in the jungles of Central America. “They are stripped [of] any personal belongings like watches, cell phones, money, and basically everything,” Manueles said. Women and underage girls report they are sometimes assaulted and raped, and most arrive with lacerations on their arms and legs, with fungus on their feet, and many other infections, he explained.

“It’s just heartbreaking,” said Rony Tabora, an ADRA Honduras program officer who assesses the needs of the migrant families and designs assistance projects. “I’ve heard many stories of how they travel for 12 days through the jungle, a trip that usually takes six days. But guides work with armed

groups to tire the migrants until they have no food left, are exhausted and disoriented, and then they are robbed and abandoned,” Tabora said. Many are disoriented but somehow find their way to the next border, he added.

CARING DURING THE MIGRANT CRISIS

ADRA Honduras has been very involved in caring for the migrants for several years now, alongside other nongovernmental organizations, Trundle said. In addition to the current voucher program, ADRA has been running hydration stations for thousands of migrants heading north in coordination with UNICEF and other nongovernmental agencies in Choluteca and El Paraiso cities.

The project has been budgeted to benefit 950 migrant families thanks to assistance from ADRA International and ADRA Inter-America. Leaders at ADRA Honduras are hoping to extend the project for two additional months. Plans are also under way to provide personal kits in coordination with UNICEF.

“We are bringing hope to many migrant families,” Trundle said. “Our country is their halfway point of travel, and for us it feels wonderful to be part of this project,” he added.

“We want these migrant families to find comfort and basic needs here in Honduras, like a small oasis, so they can continue their journey with a little bit more hope,” he said. ▀

With a voucher worth US\$23, a migrant family of four is able to buy canned foods, bread, crackers, peanut butter, personal hygiene products, medicines, and anything they choose to help them on their journey.



David Smith



Gordon Bietz

PHOTOS: SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY HONORS TWO FORMER SCHOOL PRESIDENTS

GORDON BIETZ AND DAVID SMITH ARE VOTED AS PRESIDENT EMERITUS.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

At its February 27 meeting, the board of trustees of Southern Adventist University (SAU), a Seventh-day Adventist school in Collegedale, Tennessee, United States, honored two of its former school presidents. Gordon Bietz and David Smith were awarded the title of president emeritus for their leadership and long-standing support to the school, leaders said.

PRESIDENT EMERITUS GORDON BIETZ

“As Southern’s longest-serving president, Dr. Bietz played a huge part in shaping Southern as we know it today,” Ken Shaw, SAU’s current president, said. “We are pleased to recognize and honor Gordon for his Christ-centered leadership, commitment to Adventist education, and rich legacy of service to the Southern community.”

Bietz served as Southern’s president from 1997 to 2016. During his 19-year tenure the university’s enrollment nearly doubled, campus facilities expanded to meet that growth, and the Vision 20/20 Strategic Plan that he spearheaded set a strong foundation for the institution’s ongoing success. Students and employees alike appreciated and respected Bietz, who once said, “I love people and hope that was reflected in everything I did. If you

really care about people, they know it, they trust you, and they allow you to be their leader.”

When he became president, Bietz was no stranger to Southern. From 1981 to 1994 he served as senior pastor of the Collegedale Church of Seventh-day Adventists, located on campus. His Fenton Forest parables and thought-provoking sermons were popular as he ministered to the Southern community. He went on to serve as president of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, providing leadership to the Adventist Church in the region surrounding Southern until becoming the university’s twenty-fifth president.

In October 2021 Southern held a ribbon cutting for the long-awaited Bietz Center for Student Life, named in honor of the former president and his family’s long-standing dedication to Adventist education. It serves as a brick-and-mortar reminder of Bietz’s legacy and his strong belief that students are the reason Southern exists.

PRESIDENT EMERITUS DAVID SMITH

President Smith dedicated nearly 30 years of his career to the Southern community. “In every role, Dave’s love for Jesus, as well as the

students, employees, and church members he interacted with, made a significant impact and leaves a lasting legacy,” Shaw said.

Smith’s long relationship with the institution began in 1981 as an English professor, serving 17 years teaching and then as department chair. His wife, Cherie, and their two daughters are graduates of Southern. After leaving the area to serve as president of Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, from 1998 to 2011, Smith returned as senior pastor of the Collegedale Church of Seventh-day Adventists, located on Southern’s campus—a position he held for five years.

During that time he served on the university’s board, gaining an intimate understanding of the institution’s finances, operations, and mission. In 2016 Smith was unanimously elected as Southern’s twenty-sixth president. During his five years as president, Smith emphasized growing Southern’s endowment fund to make Adventist education more affordable, while demonstrating a deep commitment to serving God and nurturing a Christ-centered environment on campus. Upon his retirement in May 2021 Smith said, “Southern Adventist University is God’s school. Its future is in God’s hands, not our hands. If we humble ourselves, if we pray, and if we submit to His will, God will deliver the future He knows is best for us and for those we serve. With each step into the future, we must learn to trust Him fully.”



ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY IN PERU LAUNCHES LITERACY INITIATIVE. With the ultimate goal of encouraging the habit of good reading, Peruvian Union University (UPeU) recently launched its 2022 literacy initiative at a school in Carapongo, Peru, in the Lurigancho district, east of the capital city of Lima. The project seeks to help low-income women in the area learn how to read or improve their reading skills. Classes are taught by senior students majoring in education at UPeU, in a joint effort with the nearby Chosica municipal government



WOMEN'S CONFERENCE MEETS FACE TO FACE FOR FIRST TIME SINCE START OF PANDEMIC. For the past two years, because of COVID-19 restrictions, women of the Adriatic Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church have met virtually. Thus, a recent event became a particularly joy-filled experience for a group of Adventist women as they were able to meet face to face again and enjoy the camaraderie of the group. Gathered in Zagreb, Croatia, from March 4 to 6, they came to enjoy their fourth annual weekend of spiritual encouragement. The guest speaker was Karen Holford, author and family therapist, who is the Trans-European Division women's ministries director.



MAJOR RENOVATION WILL IMPROVE MAMARAPHA COLLEGE IN AUSTRALIA. A groundbreaking ceremony was recently held at the college, a Seventh-day Adventist educational institution for the indigenous population in Australia. The planned \$1.5 million expansion and refurbishment of its campus started in mid-April. "Since the beginning of Mamarapha College in 1997, God has grown His college," principal David Garrard said. "In the last five to 10 years, applications have exceeded seating capacity, giving evidence of the significant impact the college is having among our First Nations communities."



SOUTHEASTERN ASIA UNION MISSION (SEUM) INAUGURATES NEW HEAD-QUARTERS IN THAILAND. On March 29, church leaders and members attended the inauguration of the new SEUM headquarters in Muak Lek, Thailand. Muak Lek is located in Saraburi province, in the eastern part of Thailand. The new offices are located beside their well-known neighbor, Asia Pacific International University. The dedication of the new SEUM headquarters also served as the consecration service for the newly elected leaders of the church in the territory, as well as the new leaders of the Thailand Adventist Mission and Bangkok Adventist Hospital.



ZERO CAVITIES INITIATIVE RESUMES. After a delay caused by the pandemic, students and faculty of the Department of Dental Technology at Montemorelos University in Montemorelos, Nuevo León, Mexico, have resumed offering free dental services to the community. The initiative, called Zero Cavities, is part of a special program under the coordination of the Health Promoting Universities (HPU) in Montemorelos. It offers dental checkups, cleanings, endodontist services, extractions, and resin fillings. "It is also about providing access to basic dental treatments to people . . . in the area surrounding our campus," said Roel Cea, HPU director.



ADVENTIST REVIEW MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

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Anthony Kent, left, the great-great-grandson of Tom Kent, and the author, Torben Bergland, are two of the seven cyclists who will participate in the "I Will Go" ride this May.





CAN ANYTHING GOOD COME FROM SPORTS?

*We were made to
both think and move.*

TORBEN BERGLAND

It is a one-mile race. I'm 12 years old, and I am racing my cousins. It's a warm, sunny summer day on the island where my grandparents live by the otherwise windy and rainy Norwegian Atlantic coast. We are running down the narrow, quiet, one-lane country road where only a few neighbors will drive to their small farms, and occasionally some tourists to watch the ocean. When we reach the main road across the island, we turn around and race back. The finish line we've agreed upon is where the paved road ends and the gravel road begins. We give everything our young legs have got. We have no breath left. Our legs and even our lungs hurt. But only for a brief moment. The next day we go out and do it again.

I can't remember who won. Maybe it mattered a little bit then, but it doesn't matter now. What matters now is that it is a nice childhood memory. And that it was the beginning of my life in sports. From running to skiing, cycling to mountaineering, it's been a journey of pain and pleasure. Has it been worth it? What has it added to my life? Have others benefited from it?

MISSION

On May 22, 2022, seven other cyclists and I will embark on our most challenging sports adventure ever. The "I Will Go" ride¹ will start at Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Two weeks and 1,000 miles later it will end in St. Louis, Missouri, the day before the General Conference Session starts.

We have been inspired by Phillip Reekie, a literature evangelist who on his bicycle rode to remote parts of Australia selling Christian literature. In the town of Eugowra, Phillip met Tom Kent, who had just lost his wife and was left with the care of their 11 children. Just prior to her death, she had called her husband to her side and said,



PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTHOR

The book, *The Great Controversy*, sold to Tom Kent.

“Tom, I am going to leave you. Bring the children with you.” But how could he bring the children to heaven to be reunited with their mother when he did not know the way himself? As Tom searched for the way, Phillip found him and sold him the book *The Great Controversy*. As Tom read the book, his life was transformed. But not only his life. Tom lent that book to his neighbors and five other families. They and their families were moved by the book, received Christ, and went on to contribute significantly to the development of the Adventist Church in Australia and beyond.

On our ride we will likewise share *The Great Controversy* and other books with people we meet; we’ll pray with them and share Christ. We do not know what the fruits of this sports and mission adventure will be, but we hope and pray that lives will be touched and blessed.

Whether by sharing Christ through a mission project like the “I Will Go” ride, or by interacting with people through everyday sports activities and events, sports represent a wonderful opportunity to connect and make new friends. In the mutual interest and time spent together, we may share Christ and our faith. If we do not go to those who are engaged in sports, meet them where they are, join them in what they are doing, will they come to us? Who will reach them if we do not go to them? As Jesus went everywhere to seek and save (Luke 19:10), so should we, including those who are into

sports. If you are into sports, you’re in a position to use that talent you’ve been given as a witness in that space. Why not pray for and seek opportunities to be Christ’s ambassador in the world of sports?

COMMUNITY

Almost every time I climbed mountains in the Alps, I promised myself that I’d never do it again. There wasn’t pleasure in the altitude symptoms, carrying a heavy backpack, sleeping poorly in a tent, eating simple food, or being in the cold snow. On the contrary, it was truly unpleasant. Of course, there were spectacular views, satisfaction in making it to the top, the joy and blessing of being in nature. Still, on those long days of walking and climbing, I sometimes questioned, Why am I doing this?

The answer was quite simple. I did it with friends. And I made new friends by doing it. Even though I had mixed feelings about the climbing itself, the reward of community made it worth it. Strong bonds were created when suffering together, seeing each other’s strengths and weaknesses, fears and triumphs. The joys of succeeding together were pure. The evening conversations we had in the camp about life and faith were open and honest.

Shared interests and passions are excellent gateways to meaningful and rewarding connections. Some of my best and closest relationships have developed in the context of doing sports with others. Relationships emerged that might not oth-

erwise have grown deep and strong. We all need connection. We all need to spend time with others. By doing sports together, you may not only satisfy your own needs for connectedness, but also meet the needs of someone else who desires exactly that.

HEALTH

When I was in medical school, I was usually most regular in exercising when I was having exams. I chose that in order to function optimally physically and mentally, I needed the boost that exercise gave me. Maybe there also was an element of procrastination in it, a good excuse for taking a break from studying. Anyway, I believe it was an excellent investment of time.

The benefits of exercise to our physical health are well known, proven, and undisputed. Equally, the benefits to our mental health are just as important and often even more immediate. Few things boost our mood and provide a sense of calm as fast as vigorous exercise. My motivation for exercising is just as much what it does for my mind as what it does for my body.

Our bodies, minds, and souls were not made for the motionless life many of us would live if we didn't exercise. In the Creation story we are told that "the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it" (Gen. 2:15, ESV).² In the original and natural world, as God created it, physical activity was a natural, God-ordained part of everyday life. Today most of us live far removed from that world. Most of us are sedentary throughout most of the day. We were given muscles and bones so we would be able to move: 30 minutes a day or more is what we need. And if you struggle to make it happen, make appointments to exercise together with someone. It is easier to do the right thing when you are accountable to someone. You may be helping someone else as much as you are helping yourself.

DISCIPLINE AND CHARACTER

A mountaineering friend of mine who was single at the time said he would never marry someone with whom he hadn't climbed a 13,000-plus-foot (4,000-plus-meter) mountain. Why? Isn't a dinner date just as good for getting to know someone? No, it's not. Climbing a mountain requires perseverance, the ability to endure suffering, soundness, self-control, calmness, and courage in the face of risks. What

is the other person like when they are tired, cold, hungry, in pain? Do they become grumpy, miserable, uncooperative, self-centered, aggressive, passive? Or do they keep going; do they see and care about others and help them; do they work together in a constructive, pleasant, and supportive way?

Who people are when they engage in sports says something about who they are in general. Sometimes engaging in sports is criticized for bringing out the worst in people. And yes, some people behave and relate in deplorable ways in the context of sports. But sports really can't bring out something that isn't already there. Sports may bring things to the surface, but sports do not create appalling traits in people.

Therefore, sports can reveal to us who we are and who others are. Through sports we may learn about ourselves and others, and we can help each other grow and develop through practicing self-discipline and other-centeredness. This way, sports can help us develop and cultivate desirable character traits and weed out undesirable ones.

The apostle Paul in his writings used metaphors from the world of sports. In writing to the Corinthians, he said:

"Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified" (1 Cor. 9:24-27, ESV).

Participating in sports, particularly solo or small group sports, is a good metaphor for life in general, even for the spiritual life. If one is to grow, discipline, patience, perseverance, and even tolerance for pain will all be needed at some time. But the rewards are plentiful. With that understanding I'll continue to enjoy the pain and pleasure, the challenge and growth, the fellowship and witness of sports, for as long as I can. 🏆

¹ <https://www.iwillgoride.org> and <https://www.instagram.com/iwillgoride/>

² Scripture quotations marked ESV are from *The Holy Bible*, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Psychiatrist **Torben Bergland** is associate director of Adventist Health Ministries for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland.

CINTIA AND MARCOS PASEGGI

A few years ago we were watching a soccer game in our neighborhood. Parents usually try to support their kids and encourage them when they make a mistake or when things are not going well in the game. That day we were particularly drawn to a father whose son was playing in the goalie position. The boy was getting crushed, with one ball after the next ending in the back of the net. We could tell he felt a failure, almost about to cry. But then his dad stepped in. Standing up from his folding chair, he walked forward to the sidelines and started yelling. “Shake it off! Just shake it off! Focus on the next one!” That dad knew that if his son began focusing on his mistakes or failures, he would perform poorly, so instead he challenged his son to look forward to the next ball coming his way.

That summer afternoon the deflated goalie got a life lesson he likely will never forget. No matter the final score, he got a character lesson that will undoubtedly help him along the way—a lesson in character development that carries great physical, moral, and spiritual implications.

CHILDREN, SPORTS, AND CHARACTER

Adventists, in particular, are much concerned with character. Discussing the books and authors we should use in our schools to prepare students for “the future immortal life,” Ellen White wrote that “the lesson book, the Bible, contains the instruction of the character they must have, the moral excellence of character which must be cultivated, which God and heaven require.”¹ Character is important because “only those will enter heaven who in probationary time have formed a character that breathes a heavenly influence.”²

Character is defined as the mental and moral qualities distinctive

CHEERING THEM ON

Sports values for kids

to an individual.³ Those qualities, as given in this definition, are in themselves neither good nor bad. Thus, an excellent question to ask ourselves as parents is: What kind of mental and moral qualities would we like our children to develop? Sports help children develop natural performance qualities such as drive, grit, competitiveness, determination, and resilience. There are also moral qualities that can be developed through sports, such as cooperativeness and kindness.

Research says kids develop lifelong habits by age 9, so the sooner you are intentional about helping your child develop good habits, the better.⁴ One of

those good habits may be practicing sports. You may ask why this is so. Also, how does the good habit of sports develop the right kind of character?

SEVEN VALUES

The following paragraphs list and comment on seven ways sports may help children develop a sound character.

1 Getting Out of Their Comfort Zone. Engaging in sports can push children out of their comfort zone and foster self-confidence. We remember teaching our firstborn when he was 5 years old how to ride a bicycle with no training wheels. He told us very firmly that he had no interest in learning that. Reading between the lines, he was telling us, *I'm scared to try something new that I don't know if I'll be able to do.* After letting him know that this was non-negotiable, Mom explained the procedure, and then he tried once, and off he went. Now, as a teen, he's taken over our adult bikes! Looking back, he laughs at





how much he would have missed out on if he had never taken that leap out of his comfort zone to learn something that, at the time, seemed scary.

This lesson from sports may be applied in life's most significant spiritual areas. Abraham, known as the father of the faithful (Rom. 4:11), may have laughed when God called him out of his comfort zone to a place where he would be a blessing to the whole world (Gen. 12:1-3). And Abraham's wife, Sarah, did laugh when she heard what God had in store for her: she was going to deliver a baby at 90 years old (Gen. 18:9-12). We can lose the best that God has for us if we settle too well into spiritual comfort zones where being good keeps us from striving to be better.

2 Tolerating Disappointment. Sports can help children tolerate disappointment and learn to lose with their heads held high. Particularly in an age of constant entertainment and pleasure, loss and disappointment are especially important experiences that a child must go through to learn how to work through difficult emotions, for losing and disappointment are generally major issues at a young age, and are indispensable experiences for maturing Christian character. Realizing that Jesus' return to earth would not take place as soon as they thought was a painful disappointment to first-century Christian believers. They needed to learn to deal with it positively, holding on to their beliefs and supporting each other with words of encouragement (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

3 Perseverance. In an age of instant gratification, sports can be one way of ensuring that children

develop the ability to start something that they may not be good at, and keep working away for a whole season (or more) to improve their skills. It helps them to tolerate frustration at not getting something they want right away; also, of not getting something right the first time. As coaches often say: "Repetition, repetition, repetition!"

Perseverance, it turns out, is a fundamental characteristic of Christ's faithful last-day followers: when we are pointed to "the patience of the saints" (Rev. 14:12), what is actually being highlighted is perseverance, "the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus" (NASB).⁵

4 Teamwork. When children play team sports, they have an opportunity to work together to accomplish something, even if some of them tend to be loners or introverts. Team sports create an immersive experience of interdependency that will be used throughout their lifetime in their most intimate relationships, friendships, churches, and work settings. Teamwork forces you to get along with someone who may be annoying, not as good as you, or better than you. Solomon may have been tempted to do many things on his own. After all, he was smarter than everybody around. However, life taught him that "two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor" (Eccl. 4:9). Great wonders of his world, whether Egypt's pyramids or his own world-famous temple, required united effort. In the case of the temple he built for God, there were more than 150,000 workers involved (1 Kings 5:13-16).

Sadly enough, success in such grand endeavors has had to depend too much on forced labor, whether by slavery or by cheap labor that exploits the needy, extracting much effort from them for little financial reward, if any. The sports equivalent is the boss who lets his players know that they had better quit complaining about the pressure. They are cattle, easily disposed of or replaced if the team doesn't produce as demanded: "We can always get new cattle."⁶ Thus, simply doing something together is not the true lesson on teamwork. It takes more than performance together or common club membership to teach kids team spirit and teamwork's best lessons. Rather, it is what Jethro taught his world-famous son-in-law, Moses: the privilege of sharing duties, instead of doing it all alone. By sharing the story in Exodus 18:13-26, Moses teaches us what he learned. It makes for a good read and a good lesson.

5 Resilience. Just as in the experience of the fledgling goalie, developing the habit of thinking negatively about themselves because they don't succeed can cause long-term damage to children's self-esteem. Sports may provide a platform where children are forced to fight against themselves, to overcome the desire of giving up when they make mistakes or underperform. It forces children to keep working to improve and look forward to the next goal, the next challenge. It also helps kids know who their biggest supporters in life are—those who cheer them on from the sidelines. Resilience, sticking with it, being undaunted, is as essential a Christian virtue as any. Paul testifies, "I press on," and repeats, "I press toward the goal" (Phil. 3:12, 14). Like the best athletes, the Christian keeps keeping on, undaunted.

6 Physical Health and Lifestyle Habits. Childhood obesity is a severe problem, especially in North America. Children who engage in sports regularly are less likely to develop harmful lifestyle habits as adults. If, when growing up, children don't get a chance to get into sports and practice them regularly, it is less likely that they will take up sports as adults. In that case, their health is more likely to be negatively impacted. And here the spiritual implications of responsibly healthful living cannot be missed. Athletes need physical fitness so their bodies can produce the results they aim for. Chris-

tians commit to the rules of health whether they are in a race or not. Their stewardship of the body temple transcends any ambition in the physical world: "You are not your own" because the blood of Jesus has bought you for God. Therefore: "Glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6:19, 20). Kids will also find that sound physical condition lets them think more clearly, understand more quickly, and perform more intelligently.

7 Self-discipline. Children often struggle to stay on task when they are not motivated. Clients young and old often come to Cintia for help to get more motivated to make the changes they know they need to make in their lives. What do you turn to when motivation isn't there to push you forward? Self-discipline. Sports force people—children, in this case—to show up, rain or shine, motivated or not. Over time, children develop the discipline to keep going because that's what they have committed to doing, or because their parents are taking them, or because parents remind them that they have already paid for their classes. Children's willpower will undoubtedly become stronger if they just learn to go on against the odds.

Sports can be a powerful tool to teach children lessons that will help them throughout their lives as they learn to keep going despite challenges to ultimately thrive. The apostle Paul couldn't have said it better—which is why he's so often referenced on this: races normally have many participants, but only one winner; and a fading prize (see 1 Cor. 9:24, 25). Still, temperance really matters—for them, and for us: a small price to pay to help children develop characters worthy of a better world. ♣

¹Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1923), p. 385.

²Ellen G. White, in *Signs of the Times*, Nov. 14, 1892.

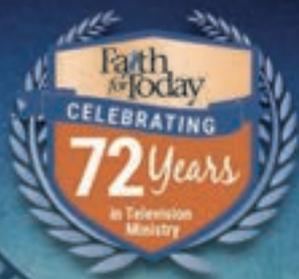
³https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american_english/character.

⁴See Rebeca Jackson, "Study Finds Habits in Children Take Root By Age 9," *Psychology Today*, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/school-thought/201502/study-finds-habits-in-children-take-root-age-9>.

⁵Texts credited to NASB are from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. All rights reserved.

⁶<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2008/football/nfl/01/31/upshaw0214/1.html>: Gary Smith, "Bitter Battle for the Old Guard," posted Thursday, Jan. 31, 2008, 1:56 p.m.; updated Tuesday, Feb. 5, 2008, 1:40 p.m., retrieved Nov. 11, 2013.

Cintia Paseggi is a family counselor in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. She and **Marcos**, a news consultant with the *Adventist Review*, are parents of Aidan, 13, and Elie, 10.



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A TURTLE ON A FENCEPOST

One of my favorite Sabbath afternoon activities is watching songs and sermons on YouTube. On one such occasion Claude Alexander, a professor, prolific author, and powerful preacher, said, “If you should ever see a land turtle on a fencepost, know that it didn’t get there on its own; someone picked it up and put it there.”¹

Because I knew nothing about turtles, land or otherwise, I turned to Google, where I learned that there are two kinds of these shelled reptiles—the sea turtle and its land counterpart, commonly known as a tortoise. I also discovered that land turtles are fascinating creatures. They feed on plants and vegetables, can range in size from a half inch to six and a half feet long, thrive in a variety of different climates, and can live more than 100 years. In fact, it’s reported that a land turtle named Adwaita lived for a record 255 years in India.²

Land turtles can also survive a long time without water or food. The North American desert turtle, for example, can last a year without hydration, and during the very hot, dry seasons will hibernate and live off water stored in its body, including what’s in its bladder.

Land turtles are resilient, yet for all their adaptability, ambidextrous accomplishments, and longevity, they cannot climb or fly. Because of this major handicap, if you ever see a land turtle on a fencepost, you can know it didn’t get there on its own; instead, someone picked it up and put it there.

I’m using land turtles and that application of the saying about ‘turtle on a pole,’ as a metaphor for successful Christian education: it’s the result we see at

graduation time. I’m the product of Christian education which—to God be the glory—includes a bachelor’s degree in theology, a Master of Divinity, a Doctor of Ministry, and this coming August, a doctorate in leadership. I know its power to put turtles, like me, on the fencepost of lifelong success. I feel qualified to extol the benefits of Christian education. Although I have no silver, gold, or billion dollars to pay off all the debts incurred to acquire this kind of education, what I do have is a mighty, prevailing prayer, accompanied by an appeal: that as parents experience or watch the unfolding of graduation’s memorable moments, they resolve to keep doing whatever it takes to ensure our children receive this blessing in all its fullness.

I have seen and am living with an unprecedented confidence that there’s no mountain too high, no giant too big, no challenge too great, to overcome; and I have this confidence because of having been a recipient of Christian education.

To the students who are graduating this year—whether in May, August, or December—when your diploma is conferred, don’t forget to pay tribute, privately or publicly, to those who contributed to this particular achievement. And when you reach the zenith of your career in coming years, remember, like turtles on fenceposts, you didn’t make it on your own, and give thanks to God, who inspires others to support Christian education. ▀

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post_turtle

² <https://animals.mom.com/land-turtles-3456.html>

Hyveth Williams is a professor at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

CURE FOR THE
COMMON LIFE
HYVETH
WILLIAMS



THERE’S NO
MOUNTAIN TOO
HIGH, NO GIANT TOO
BIG, NO CHALLENGE
TOO GREAT, TO
OVERCOME.



SPORTS IN ADVENTIST SCHOOLS

Highlighting the underlying principles

No Adventist discussion on the importance, value, and significance of sports, and our involvement in it, would be complete without presenting the perspective of Adventist Church cofounder Ellen G. White, God's special messenger to His people at the end of time. This article provides just such a perspective. The original, more ample document, written by Arthur L. White in 1967, gives a thorough review of Ellen White's statements on sports, providing proper historical context on the questions of playing sports, and of organized sports as a part of Adventist educational programs. The complete statement is available from the Ellen G. White Estate at <https://ellenwhite.org/media/document/2436>.

PRINCIPLES EARLY AND GRAND

In the book *Education* Ellen White lays down a basic principle on sports through her analytical comments on recreation:

“There is a distinction between recreation and amusement. Recreation,

ARTHUR L. WHITE



when true to its name, re-creation, tends to strengthen and build up. Calling us aside from our ordinary cares and occupations, it affords refreshment for mind and body, and thus enables us to return with new vigor to the earnest work of life. Amusement, on the other hand, is sought for the sake of pleasure, and is often carried to excess; it absorbs the energies that are required for useful work, and thus proves a hindrance to life's true success.¹

White acknowledged, in an 1867 note "Recreation for Christians," that Sabbathkeepers generally work much and rest inadequately; and that "recreation is needful to those who are engaged in physical labor and is still more essential for those whose labor is principally mental. It is not

essential to our salvation, nor for the glory of God, to keep the mind laboring constantly and excessively, even upon religious themes."²

White's basic article on the subject of education, written in 1872, gave three reasons Adventist school programming should be well divided between mental and physical activities: (1) the physical activity would lead to strong physical development, which is essential; (2) it would prepare young people for the practical things of life, as they should engage in various industries or trades in connection with the school program; (3) it would guard against immorality: a constant study program without adequate physical exercise would lay the foundations for immoral practices.

White's writing early set the church's ideal for all our schools—an educational program well divided between mental and physical activity.³

VISION VERSUS REALITY

The small site chosen in the city of Battle Creek for our first college deeply disappointed Ellen White. She broke down and wept when she took in the situation at Battle Creek, a college right in town, instead of her vision of a school far from the diversions and temptations of city life, which would foster and encourage industry and agriculture, the practical side of education. Youth would leave there prepared for life in a doomed world, and prepared for service in heralding the message of Jesus' coming again.

As Battle Creek College developed football teams, baseball teams, basketball teams, and even some boxing, Adventist youth, with their healthful living, and free from alcohol and tobacco, were able to perform well. But the thrills of competition against teams in and out of town significantly shifted student interest from a total focus on preparation for service to the cultivation of excitement and pleasure. Left unchecked by messages from the Lord, the sports program would have largely destabilized our educational identity.

White's words of warning specifically mentioned certain games—football, baseball, boxing. She wrote to the president of Battle Creek College in early 1893 at a time when the Spirit of the Lord was poured out in a special way following revival meetings: "When the students at the school went into their match games and football playing, when they became absorbed in the amusement question, Satan saw it a good time to step in and make

of none effect the Holy Spirit of God in molding and using the human subject. Had the teachers to a man done their duty, . . . they would have had spiritual strength and divine enlightenment to press on and on and upward on the ladder of progress reaching heavenward. . . .

“It is an easy matter to idle away, talk and play away, the Holy Spirit’s influence. . . . If the one blessed becomes negligent and inattentive and does not watch unto prayer, . . . if his love of amusements and strivings for the mastery absorb his power or ability, then God is not made the first and best . . . , and Satan comes in to act his part in playing the game of life for his soul. He can play much more earnestly than they can play, and make deep-laid plots for the ruin of the soul.”⁴

White’s response to a letter by a medical student in Michigan shows the real reasons for certain counsels that she gave about sports.

“I do not condemn the simple exercise of playing ball; but this, even in its simplicity, may be overdone.

“I shrink always from the almost sure result which follows in the wake of these amusements. It leads to an outlay of means that should be expended in bringing the light of truth to souls that are perishing out of Christ. The amusements and expenditures of means for self-pleasing, which lead on step by step to self-glorifying, and the educating in these games for pleasure produce a love and passion for such things. . . .

“The way that they have been conducted at the college does not bear the impress of heaven. It does not strengthen the intellect. It does not refine and purify the character. . . .

“Is the eye single to the glory of God in these games? I know that this is not so. . . . The Lord God of heaven protests against the burning passion cultivated for supremacy in the games that are so engrossing.”⁵

White’s statement “I do not condemn the simple exercise of playing ball” balances innocent use of a ball in a game over against the perils in sports programs: the expenditure of time and money out of proportion, glorification of the players, the encouragement of the love of pleasure, until it’s more than loving God.

She writes: “The way that they have been conducted at [Battle Creek College] does not bear the impress of heaven.”⁶ Recreation is certainly essen-

tial, but White understood that as young people grew older, recreation could be found in useful occupations that produced something worthwhile. In the ideal set before us, true recreation includes varied missionary activities: “There are healthful methods of exercise that may be . . . beneficial to both soul and body. . . .

“It is our duty ever to seek to do good in the use of the muscles and brain God has given to youth, that they may be useful to others, making their labors lighter, soothing the sorrowing, lifting up the discouraged, speaking words of comfort to the hopeless, turning the minds of the students from fun and frolic which often carries them beyond the dignity of manhood and womanhood to shame and disgrace. The Lord would have the mind elevated, seeking higher, nobler channels of usefulness.”⁷

White’s emphasis on useful labor is one reason we located our schools in the country, where there is opportunity for industries and agriculture, in Cooranbong, Australia, for example, some 75 miles north of the city of Sydney. White took an active part in the establishment of this school. While assisting there, she received many visions that more fully opened up the principles that should govern the operation of our colleges.

THE AVONDALE EXPERIENCE

White’s multiple messages on sports given during the establishment of what is now Avondale University should be read carefully to see the underlying principles.⁸ Australia is a sports-loving land. Observing Australians’ love of sports, Mark Twain exclaimed, “Restful . . . Australia, . . . where apparently it is always a holiday—and where, when you have no holiday and nothing else to do, it is always a horse race.”

White saw that if Seventh-day Adventists were to accomplish their divine assignment, our schools should be far from the excitement of sports and celebration in the cities.

Avondale’s location in the country, on 1,500 acres of land, gave ample opportunity for all of the student labor that was available. Despite the limited means of students and their families, a good spirit existed at the school. The various lines of employment offered by the school gave ample recreation to the young people. There was a program of study and work.

White felt that with the Lord’s blessing they had

succeeded in separating the young people from the allurements and distractions of the world. At the union conference session in 1899 she said: "We desire to take the students away from the foul atmosphere of the city. Not that Satan is not here. He is here, but we are trying to do all we can to place the students in the very best circumstances, in order that they may fasten their eyes on Christ." Commenting on the "great multitude" she saw in Sydney for a cricket match, she explained that "while men were playing the game of cricket, and others were watching the game, Satan was playing the game of life for their souls. Therefore we decided to locate our school where the students would not see cricket matches or horse races. We are just where God wants us to be, and many conversions have taken place in this school."⁹

But some months later, in 1900, the faculty of the school, largely workers from America, planned to celebrate a holiday with White addressing students in the morning, and spending the afternoon in games. Students collected money to buy sports equipment, and the afternoon program blossomed out with activities and games, some of which fed the love of pleasure and engrossment in sports. This was the specific historical context of White's counsel referenced in endnote 8.

READING IN CONTEXT

Read out of its context, that counsel has led some to feel that it is sinful to engage in any games, especially games in which a ball is used. But careful reading of principles such as set forth in her 1872 letter referenced in endnote 5 points to a larger, deeper, and more far-reaching issue, namely, encouraging the love of pleasure; engaging in activities that in themselves may be innocent but may in their infatuations develop into idolatry.

These principles disclose a distinct difference between a day of recreation at which certain games may be played, and our schools' developing trained teams to engage in a sports program. When a group of Christian young people, or the members of a church or an institutional family, gather for a day of recreation, they may play. After a few hours together the games end, and the day has been one of recreation. How different from a program demanding hours in training day after day, glorifying certain players, and developing teams for highly exciting competition where a few

get the exercise while the others stand around shouting! This is not true recreation. The difference is obvious.

INTERCOLLEGIATE SPORTS

Intercollegiate sports intensify everything. For weeks in advance of such events the conversation is focused on the coming events. Once they are over, the conversation is about what happened. The excitement and love of pleasure lift our young people clear out and away from the serious world that is going down in doom. This is reasoning against encouraging intercollegiate sports in Adventist institutions. The fruits these activities yield do not measure up to the ideals set before us in the Spirit of Prophecy.

As the decades have advanced it has proved increasingly difficult for our schools to meet God's ideal of a program of work and study; more difficult for the young people to find activities that bring remuneration on the school campus. But absent such income, aren't there activities other than organized competitive sports that can accomplish something worthwhile for the overall benefit of the student body and the school?

Have Adventist schools given up on their ideals? Do we have new answers to the fundamental questions? What are our objectives in operating or attending Christian schools? Are all of our activities contributing toward those objectives? Is it time to abandon our ideals? Is the Lord still able to bless us as we dare to stand for His ideals though the heavens fall? Tell us what you think at letters@adventistreview.org.—Editors ♣

¹ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1903), p. 207.

² Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 1, p. 514.

³ See E. G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 131-160.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958, 1980), book 1, p. 131.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1952), pp. 499, 500.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 499.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 509.

⁸ See Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1913), pp. 348-354.

⁹ Ellen G. White, "The Avondale Health Retreat," *Australasian Union Conference Record*, July 26, 1899.

Arthur L. White prepared this statement in 1967 while secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate, a responsibility he bore from 1937 to 1978. White also authored the definitive biography of Ellen White, in six volumes of almost 3,000 pages.

SCIENCE FICTIONS



All about the reliability of science

CLIFFORD GOLDSTEIN

Stuart Richie's *Science Fictions: How Fraud, Bias, Negligence, and Hype Undermine the Search For Truth*¹ is a fascinating read for anyone still brainwashed by scientism, the idea that the science is the purest, if not the only, way to truth.

INTRODUCING THE FARCE

In the preface Richie wrote: "Other books feature scientists taking the fight to a rogue's gallery of pseudoscientists: creationists, homeopaths, flat-Earthers, astrologers, and their ilk, who misunderstand and abuse science—usually unwittingly, sometimes maliciously, and always irresponsibly. This book is different. It reveals a deep corruption within science itself: a corruption that affects the very culture in which research is practiced and published. Science, the discipline in which we should find the harshest skepticism, the most pin-sharp rationality, and the hardest-headed empiricism, has become home to a dizzying array of incompetence, delusion, lies, and self-deception. In the process, the central purpose of science—to find our way ever closer to the truth—is being undermined."²

Deep corruption, incompetence, delusion, lies, and self-deception? A dizzying array, thereof?

All this in science—supposedly the unalloyed fount of rationality, objectivity, and certainty, especially because it employs the much-ballyhooed "scientific method"? Stuart Richie said it, not me. And obviously he's not a biblical "fundy" like me, and yet what he wrote about science was astonishingly eye-opening, especially for a biblical "fundy" like me. I long ago learned to reject claims—such as evolution, such as no universal flood, such as no original Adam and Eve—that have been overwhelmingly "proved" by science.

His first chapter is titled "The Replication Crisis." Replication is foundational to science, the idea that a scientific study can be replicated, repeated by others in order to see if they get the same results. What a

powerful way to confirm scientific claims, especially after they have been published in reputable journals, which seems to be a big goal of many scientists: get your findings published, and in the best journals, too.

IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM

Only problem? As the title "The Replication Crisis" suggests, there has been, well, a replication crisis: that is, in many scientific studies, some famous, those who tried to replicate them couldn't because some of those original (and famous) studies were, it turns out, either based on much weaker evidence than first proclaimed; or flat out false; or even fraudulent—even though in some cases they were published in reputable journals. Richie goes through example after example—from psychology, economics, evolutionary biology, medicine (including cancer studies), biomedicine—and shows where replication failed, at times at an astonishing rate, too.

Writes Ritchie: "Nearly 90 percent of chemists said that they'd had the experience of failing to replicate another researcher's result; nearly 80 percent of biologists said the same, as did almost 70 percent of physicists, engineers, and medical scientists."³

Many people, for instance, have read of the Stanford Prison Experiment by Philip Zimbardo, who became one of the world's most respected psychologists because of the experiment. Based on this experiment, Zimbardo testified as an expert witness at the trial of U.S. military guards accused of abusing prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. The only trouble was that later studies showed just how poorly conceived the experiment was, and that despite the enormous attention the experiment had received, the results, as Ritchie writes, were "scientifically meaningless."⁴

Ritchie continues: "There are countless other examples: almost every case I'll describe in this book involves a scientific 'finding' that, upon closer scrutiny, turned out to be either less solid than it seemed, or

How many detailed studies are being conducted based on the false premise that life evolved billions of years ago?

to be completely untrue. But more worryingly still, these examples are drawn just from the studies that have received that all-important scrutiny. These are just the ones we know about. How many other results, we must ask ourselves, would prove unreplicable if anyone happened to make the attempt?"⁵

That's just replication. His next chapter was titled "Fraud," the next "Bias," the next "Negligence," and the next "Hype," each one showing, well, that fraud, bias, negligence, and hype can lead to false claims, all coming with the power and prestige that the name "science" lends to anything it gets attached to.

UNELECTED CANDIDATES

Ritchie wrote, for example, about "candidate genes," genes believed linked to very definitive character traits, such as depression, schizophrenia, and cognitive test scores. These "candidate genes" were apparently a big deal, though within a few years the whole idea became almost entirely discredited.

Listen to what Ritchie writes concerning these highly touted scientific studies, some published in prestigious journals, about candidate genes: "Reading through the candidate gene literature is, in hindsight, a surreal experience: they were building a massive edifice of detailed studies on foundations that we now know to be completely false. As Scott Alexander of the blog *Slate Star Codex* put it: 'This isn't just an explorer coming back from the Orient and claiming there are unicorns there. It's the explorer describing the life cycle of unicorns, what unicorns eat, all the different subspecies of unicorn, which cuts of unicorn meat are tastiest, and a blow-by-blow account of a wrestling match between unicorns and Bigfoot.'"⁶

A "massive edifice of detailed studies on foundations we now know to be completely false?" God alone knows how many other massive edifices of

scientific studies have been, and are now, being conducted on foundations that we don't yet know are false, and maybe never will (at least before the millennium). But what about the ones that we know are? How many detailed studies are being conducted based on the false premise that life evolved billions of years ago and that life was never preplanned, never consciously designed, and never orientated toward specific goals? The fact that your eyes see, ears hear, mouths taste, noses smell, and brains think is, to these studies, just the luck of the draw, that which aided in your survival, and nothing else. After all, science stands behind these findings, and woe to the foolish ones who dare hint that these things, from the structure of mitochondria to the processes that create consciousness, have been designed.

UNKNOWN UNKNOWNNS

And if studies about what exists now—about what can be seen, felt, touched, X-rayed, dissected, and analyzed down to their atomic composition—can be so flimsy, what about the "massive edifice of detailed studies" on events that have, supposedly, occurred billions of years out of our reach? How many millions of Christians, who claim the Bible as the foundation of their beliefs, will compromise those beliefs—accepting such unproven theories as theistic evolution, or progressive creation—in obeisance to whatever proclamations are uttered in the name of science?

But compromise among Christians is nothing new. From the acceptance of Sunday instead of the biblical seventh day, to the worship of saints, Christianity has never successfully protected itself against culture. So why should it be any different today?

And though, of course, there are many diligent, hardworking, and honest scientists out there, as Ritchie's book shows, there are also many who aren't. And we don't always know the difference. It's yet another reason we shouldn't fall under the spell of scientism, especially when some of its claims contradict any reasonable reading of the Word of God. ▀

¹ Stuart Ritchie, *Science Fictions: How Fraud, Bias, Negligence, and Hype Undermine the Search For Truth* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2020).

² *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 7, Kindle edition.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

Clifford Goldstein is the editor of the *Adult Bible Study Guide* and a longtime columnist for the Adventist Review.

HIS Impact On Me

75 Year of Stories Like These



For a deeply broken teenage girl to grow up in a cycle of poverty and abuse, and still be able to build a stable family of her own, says a lot. To be able to love again—to have hope and a future—when everything around you seems to suggest the opposite, this is the tale of story-book dreams. For Jovannah Poor Bear-Adams, she would tell you: “Breaking the cycle isn’t a clean cut. It is a process.”

Charlotte Beyal became a judicial magistrate in Flagstaff, AZ. Charlotte also became a pillar of representation for the Native American community in this non-Native city.

“On the bench, Beyal explains city law to Native Americans so they can relate it to their own culture and serves as a role model to the children of her community. She smiled as she remembered a woman coming into court shortly after she was appointed and telling her daughter: ‘See, if she can do it, you can do it!’” –Arizona Daily Sun, 1999

For both Jovannah and Charlotte their success and influence speak to the power of God through the help of others. Thanks to Divine intervention through the faithful support of Holbrook Indian School, Jovannah and Charlotte can celebrate life with purpose and impact. Yet their stories are only a sample of others like them and many to come.

For 75 years, Holbrook Indian School (HIS) has had stories like this. On March 6, 2022, Jovannah joined other alumni and past staff in celebration of the school’s 75 years of service.

To watch the story of how God has used one little school in the Arizona desert to transform lives for 75 years, visit HolbrookIndianSchool.org. With your support, you can enable more stories to be told in the grand celebration in the kingdom to come.



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EVOLUTION IN THE NEWS



Interpretation masquerading as fact

GARY SWANSON

As the Olympic medal count ticked up in the charts—what nations were tallying the most golds, silvers, and bronzes—stirring images of victorious athletes graced the media, both digital and print. In a competition of its own unique kind, writers and editors were vying for the attention of readers and viewers. They sought every opportunity to focus on the drama and background for the Games.

Even the publications whose focus is on science sought to offer reporting and comment on sport. In one such example, *Smithsonian* magazine presented “Five Ways Humans Evolved to Be Athletes.”¹

SIGNIFICANT EVOLUTIONARY TRAITS?

“Much of what makes our bodies capable of athletic prowess,” this article asserted, “comes from well before we were *Homo sapiens*.”² And science writer Anna Goldfield then outlined five of today’s fairly basic human qualities that we may often take for granted, but connected them in a meaningful way to the abilities of gifted athletes.

1. We run. The connection, of course, to many sports would surely be obvious. And, for example, the evolvement of a bipedal animal from its primate predecessor could be considered advantageous.

2. We sweat. Though this may not at first seem to be any kind of advantage for the hominid, we “are unique in our capacity to sweat all over our bodies, creating evaporative cooling.”³ In what is considered the earliest human evolutionary stage in Africa, moving from forested to hotter plains made the cooling of the body through perspiration an obvious improvement.

3. We throw. As our prehistoric ancestors gave up our arboreal lifestyle and learned better how to get around on the ground, the article added, we still retained in our upper body—shoulders and arms—abilities to swing in the trees. And this

enabled us to throw objects, at first interpreted to mean such things as weapons for hunting and defense. Olympic contestants in the discus and shot put, it was observed, may trace their refined skills back to these physical capabilities, originating millions of years ago.

4. We are handy. Here the *Smithsonian* article comes to the development of that opposable thumb for which humankind thinks it has distinguished itself. The evolutionist asserted the development of this unique grip about 2 million years ago to today’s athletes’ ability in competition to hold a baseball bat, a golf club, a tennis racket, a javelin, or a variety of firearms.

And here is an interesting note offered by recent research that may bring a smug smile to left-handers. “A study of how many elite athletes are left-handed across different sports showed that the more competitive the sport, the greater the proportion of lefties.”⁴ Could this suggest that left-handers may have some advantage if evolution goes on another million years or so?

5. We play with balls. Here, it seems, the author of this article drifted maybe a bit from prehistoric evolution to actual historic archaeology. “The generally accepted theory for the evolutionary origins of play,” they say, “is that it allows children to learn actions and tasks that they will need to master as adults.”⁵ And there is actual physical evidence of ball games in ancient Egypt as early as 2500 B.C. But the most famous evidence, of course, would probably be observed in the ceramic figurines, murals, and actual ball courts of the Olmec, Aztec, and Mayan peoples of the Americas of as early as 1700 B.C.

ALLEGED CONNECTION

This article, “Five Ways Humans Evolved to Be Athletes,” was only one of several others headlined the same day across one Inter-

There truly is a fascination in origins on this planet.

net home page. In addition to the reporting of the worldwide news and sports appeared such other headlined titles as “Tyrannosaurs Dominated Their Cretaceous Ecosystems” and “This Sponge Fossil May Be the Earliest Record of Animal Life.” Information regarding the publication of scientific research that interprets data from an evolutionary worldview is reported as fact.

Throughout the media—newspapers, magazines, television, radio, and the Internet—there now appears to be an almost natural impulse in the presentation of news and information to explain it in evolutionary terms. So during the couple weeks’ world focus on the Olympics, the media reporting was often related in some way through the occasional lens of evolution.

The title of another recent article in *Smithsonian* reads like this: “Woolly Mammoths Roamed Far and Wide Just Like Living Elephants.”⁶

As is sometimes the case in journalism and the media, a close reader may observe that this one could maybe have needed the copy editor’s closer scrutiny. A wag may wonder whether, indeed, mammoths, whenever they roamed, could have done so like dead elephants. But to be fair, it’s obvious, after some charitable thought, to conclude that the writer meant that the behaviors of prehistoric mammoths was similar to that of today’s elephants. The connection between the two species, after all, has long seemed obvious, even to the nonscientific mind.

But this article is like so many others in today’s daily media—the reporting of ostensible news that may or may not have actually happened. It wasn’t an event that could be reported as a narrative. Instead, it is an interpretation, an inference based on observation of a body of information.

Included in the online version of this “woolly mammoths” article are two vivid visual illustrations. The first is a beautifully executed piece of art by a James Havens captioned, “An adult male woolly mammoth navigates a mountain pass

17,100 years ago.”⁷ The second is a cross-section photograph of striations of a tusk: “Researchers analyzed variations in strontium isotopes in parts of the mammoth’s tusk to piece together where it traveled over the course of its life.”⁸

All of this makes for interesting reading to a significant enough portion of the public that it was deemed worthy of its own headlined publication. There truly is a fascination in origins on this planet. It is related to one of life’s deepest existential questions.

But it is also too often overlooked that such reporting is not a result of the actual empirical observation of occurrence. It is interpretation—based on unobserved assumptions.

ONE GREAT WONDER

One could wonder—not too many, maybe—but at least one may wonder in where the five human capabilities to run, to sweat, to throw, to handle, and to play with a ball may have first exhibited themselves in human life. Is evolution the inevitable answer to this question? Could they not possibly be the result of gifts received from a loving Creator who set out to bring into existence creatures like Himself with such qualities?

The current recording of scientific studies, however, is presented instead from a faith that has been placed, rather than on a transcendent God, on the divinity of the human self. And the results of this kind of thinking—this kind of science/scholarship—seems to appear everywhere today in a kind of cultural brute force. ▀

¹ Anna Goldfield, “Five Ways Humans Evolved to Be Athletes,” *Smithsonian*, Aug. 3, 2021, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/five-ways-humans-evolved-be-athletes-180978333/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+smithsonianmag%2Fscience-nature+%26+Nature+%7C+Smithsonian.com%29, accessed Oct. 6, 2021.

²*Ibid.*

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶Riley Black, “Woolly Mammoths Roamed Far and Wide Just Like Living Elephants,” *Smithsonian*, Aug. 12, 2021, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/woolly-mammoths-roamed-far-and-wide-just-living-elephants-180978418/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+smithsonianmag%2Fscience-nature+%26+Nature+%7C+Smithsonian.com%29, accessed Oct. 6, 2021.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Ibid.*

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EVERY RAINBOW A LIE

Everyone knows the story of Noah's ark, though not everyone believes it, especially because science denies it.

How, though, could science, which limits itself to natural phenomena only, determine that something supernatural never happened when it won't address the supernatural? It's like saying that because quantum physics, which never looks for angels, finds no angels, angels don't exist.

Nevertheless, one of the world's most well-known Christian apologists, William Lane Craig, writes: "It is even more fantastic that the earth suffered a worldwide deluge that wiped out all of humanity not aboard the ark as well as all terrestrial animals. Modern geology and anthropology have rendered such a catastrophe all but impossible."¹

Science, the final arbiter of truth, denies a worldwide flood; therefore, proclaims this defender of the faith, it never happened.

Or, instead of flat-out denying Noah's flood ever happened, many will argue for a local flood instead, which does raise such questions as *Why build the ark? Why not just get out of the flood zone?*

However, this position leads to a deeper dilemma for the Christian. Scripture reads: "And God said: . . . 'I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh'" (Gen. 9:12-15).

According to God Himself, in His own words (verbatim, like the Ten Commandments), the rainbow is His covenant sign that "the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh." However, because science claims no universal flood could have happened, "all flesh" must simply mean "all flesh" killed in local floods.

Yet how many local floods have washed the dirt, and swept away "all flesh," since Noah's? So far in 2022, local floods in Ecuador, Columbia, Alabama, Madagascar, Brazil, Australia, and elsewhere have wreaked devastation and death. "Intense rainfall caused by two different tropical weather systems which have impacted Madagascar over the last week has driven flooding, landslides, destruction of infrastructure and loss of life."² Or this: "From late February to early March 2022, Australia's Queensland and New South Wales (NSW) were hit by extreme flooding following days of rain, including 'rain bombs.'"³

If Noah's flood were only local, not worldwide, every flood since then makes God a liar, and every rainbow a lie—a dramatic testimony, not to God's faithfulness but to His broken promises. Either the science, which denies the universal flood, is wrong; or God is a liar, and, with every exquisite arc of color and light, He pushes that lie in our faces.

¹ William Lane Craig, *In Quest of the Historical Adam*, Kindle edition (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2021), p. 151.

² <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/st-2022-000138-mdg>

³ <https://disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/2022-australian-flooding/>

Clifford Goldstein is the editor of the *Adult Bible Study Guide* and a longtime columnist for *Adventist Review*.

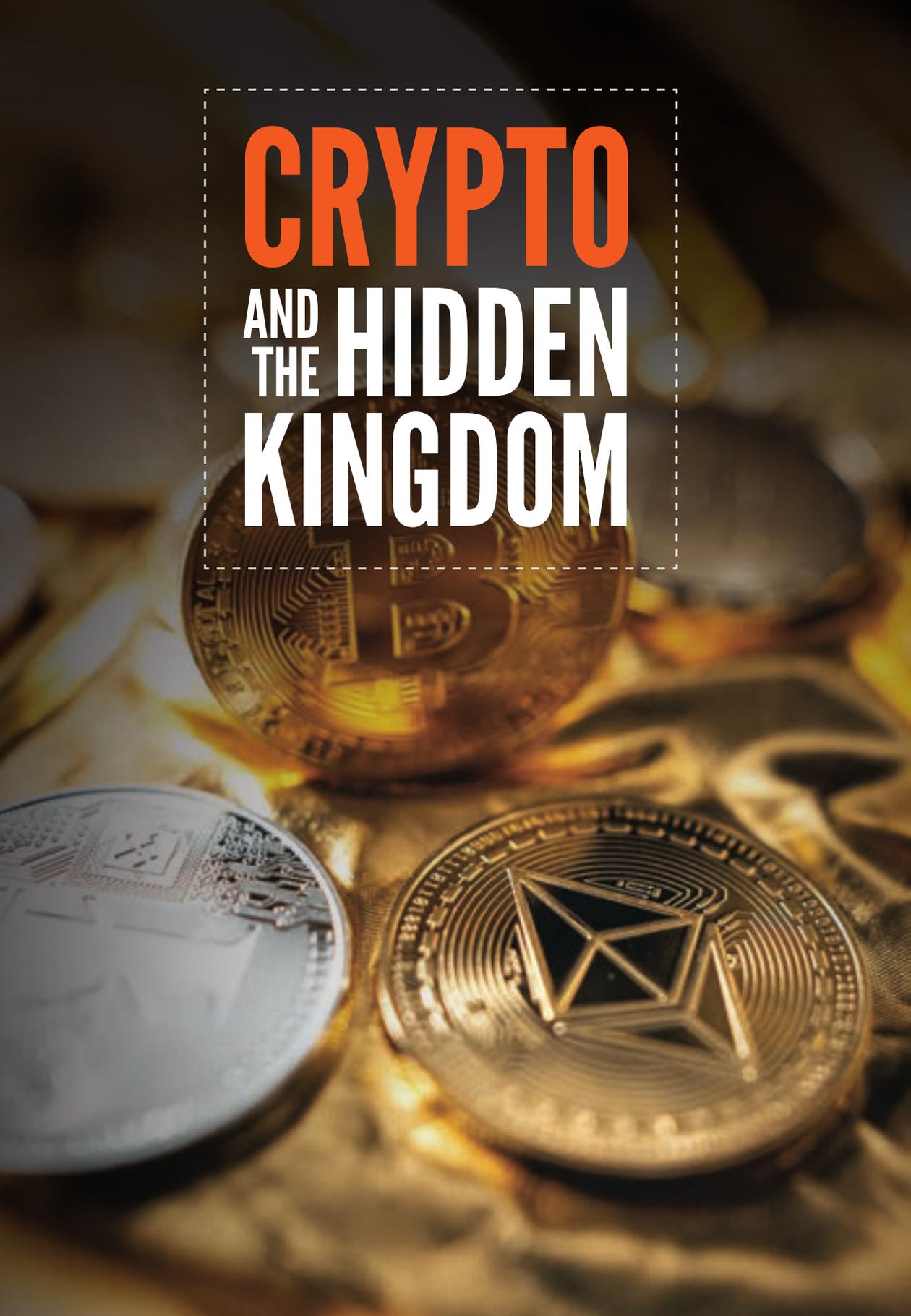
CLIFF'S
EDGE
CLIFFORD
GOLDSTEIN



IF NOAH'S FLOOD
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CRYPTO

**AND THE
HIDDEN
KINGDOM**



*Thoughts on the
intersection of
cryptocurrencies,
blockchain, and
Adventist innovation*

TIM AKA

What do you think about an NFT as a birthday gift?

Kids and young adults might say, “Cool.”

Just about everyone over 50 years of age is saying, “A what?”

You know, a non-fungible token.

What’s That? And So What?

An NFT is a unique and noninterchangeable unit of data stored on a blockchain (digital ledger). Still not clear?

You may remember Napster back in the 1990s, an Internet site that shared music by allowing anyone to download music files onto their MP3 player. (All readers under 20 years of age just said, “A what?” It’s like an iPod but, like, really bad.) Once music went digital, it was easy to share to the world with a mouse click. The downside—and the illegal part—was that most files were pirated, which means stolen.

Today we send millions of files of every kind all over the world. But what if there were a system that protected digital assets from being pirated, kept track of who owned what digital file, and showed where it’s been transferred to? Sounds impossible, right? Well, not so much anymore.

Enter blockchain, a distributed ledger system that allows everyone to keep track of digital assets: who owns what, and what transactions have been made with it. Most have heard of Bitcoin, a digital currency built on a blockchain platform. Now that I’ve mentioned Bitcoin, you’ll find yourself in one of three groups: (1) the Bitcoin maximalists, who are ardent Bitcoin believers and evangelists; (2) the no-coiners, those who can’t understand why anyone would put their hard-earned dollar into such a crazy idea; and (3) everyone else—those who are still trying to figure out what all the fuss is about. Full disclosure: I’m in group 3.

Whether it’s Bitcoin, Ethereum, or one of hundreds of other “coins” (the preferred name for

cryptocurrencies by their proponents), the new technology is attractive because it levels the playing field in finance and offers potentially large gains for participants. Of course, that’s assuming you are part of group 1 above. It’s like banking without the bank fees, transactions without the tracking, and savings without the intervention of central banks. Each of these coins represents a community of users and believers. The coins work and gain value as more people join their network.

A small example of the power of this network effect is Dogecoin, a cryptocurrency that was set up as a joke. People wanted to be in on the joke and started to join the network. In fact, so many joined in on the Dogecoin joke that it caught the attention of a major sports team, the Dallas Mavericks of the National Basketball Association. The Mavericks made their merchandise purchasable with Dogecoin. Boom? The joke became a real medium of transaction and has gained more than 5,200 percent in price during the past year. Just to be clear, I’m not recommending Dogecoin or giving investment advice here.

The no-coiners scoff at the idea of crypto as something hatched in the dark mind of a computer hacker to be used by groups of renegades and criminals. It’s not for reputable, experienced investors, they have decided. Yet it’s becoming hard to ignore the fact that \$2 trillion in various coins are now in “existence,” and these networks are growing at an exponential rate. The rate of growth of these platforms now surpasses the speed at which the Internet and the World Wide Web were adopted.

YOUNG, HUNGRY, AND. READY FOR THE NEW

Younger generations are more open to not only embracing this new technology but to eager participation in the digital economy, where the old



How things will play out is yet to be seen, but it would be short-sighted to dismiss the new ideas and technologies when a very large cohort of generations is embracing it.

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ways are replaced by new ideas and technology that facilitates them. Young adults seem to understand that the systems that allowed their parents to prosper as middle-class, affluent asset owners won't be so generous to them. They recognize the current world as a place where brokers and bankers, the functional and financial intermediaries, have siphoned much of the wealth out of the system for decades into the future, leaving bleak prospects for those without hard assets.

Many people are thus looking to cryptocurrency, decentralized finance, and tokenized assets as a more viable option. They see their future in Bitcoin, Ether, smart contracts, NFTs, and Web 3.0, which will radically change how we transact—and how we decide what's considered valuable. The new technology and ideology will bypass the old financial systems and allow coming generations to circumvent the mountains of debt incurred by previous generations.

In this new digital world the old borders are removed. The structures of national borders and national currencies are replaced by communities of participants. This provides access to financial services that were difficult for some segments of the population to acquire. There's a belief in a network effect of these new digital assets as users grow exponentially—according to what's called Metcalfe's Law. The value of these networks will be realized only in the years to come, but there's a growing belief in their accumulating power. As viewed by advocates of cryptocurrencies, the "old guard" is still desperately holding on to its "hard assets" and doesn't understand the value of a currency that seems to be created out of nothing but computer code. Ironically, this is notwithstanding the reality that investments in the stock markets and housing are skyrocketing because central banks are printing money "out of thin air."

We've all heard that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. Perhaps younger generations understand this and see the insanity of the current economic systems. Perhaps they intrinsically have more faith in their own energy, ingenuity, creativity, and community. Perhaps this is the true core of any economy anyway: the energy and dedication of the people who work in the economy, not those who hold "ownership rights" to the profits. Maybe they've come to understand that something is valuable only when enough people believe it's valuable.

We're headed for a collision between old and the new systems of money, finance, and transaction. How things will play out is yet to be seen, but it would be shortsighted to dismiss the new ideas and technologies when a very large cohort of generations is embracing it. They favor a more egalitarian world over an opportunistic, winners-and-losers approach. Maybe it signals a shift from the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, which has created enormous wealth for many historically Protestant nations but left entire continents behind, with little chance of ever catching up. Perhaps now that the children of that work ethic also face a bleak future, the handwriting is on the wall.

TRANSITIONS OF ERAS

As these enormous tectonic shifts take place in the bedrock of modern economies, it's grounding—and reassuring—to remember the incarnation of Jesus. More powerful than even the most media-hyped NFT, a societal revolution began with the birth of Jesus. Jesus came to the world to tear down the old foundations and build a new kingdom. Believers ought to study how such profound transitions of eras unfold.

Bitcoin is certainly not to be equated with the gospel, but both realities hold out the promise of something better to people who have little, a community of believers for the disenfranchised, and opportunities for those without hope.

Jesus couldn't have sent a stronger message to our world today than by His choice to become a poor peasant from an undesirable town, born under a cloud of impropriety, living in a nation under siege. He didn't choose to come as part of the wealthy old guard, but was fully embedded as a member of the new kingdom He was revealing. The old ways of doing things had yielded in casteism, elitism, and division. The poor were downtrodden in this world, with little hope for salvation into the next. Jesus completely rejected that "higher" class, condemning their materialism, hypocrisy, and lack of compassion.

When Jesus walked this earth, He didn't go about to "change the world," at least in the customary ways. He walked with a small group of men and women to help them see this new kingdom. He shared His joy, energy, and enthusiasm to build a new community of faith. He offered a new way of valuing people, their actions and intentions. This small community of believers was to become the evangelists for His kingdom. And when these 120 people caught the vision and received the power of the Spirit, they set the world on fire with a power never before seen.

The gospel proclaimed by Christ to people without hope had enormous power, and the message went viral. That same message proclaimed today may also have tremendous impact. Not because the language employed is different, but because, once again, there are actions that match the words. In the twilight of our economic era, actions of generosity, compassion, and care for our community are a stark differentiator. In Jesus, people saw a Son of David. Jesus acted with the authority, dignity, and benevolence of a king, in contrast to earthly rulers.

What if the world saw in us a son, a daughter, of the King, a joint heir with Christ, who breathes the air of royalty? As one who has a seat at the table, and not as those fighting for the scraps that fall from it? What if we actually believed we have already received the inheritance as a son or daughter? Would we continue our strivings for material wealth? Would it change the way we treat each

other? In spite of the chaos, strife, corruption, and injustice in the world, would we find peace and joy? Would we become a beacon in a dark world that attracts those groping in the shadows?

Jesus came to this earth near the point of failure of the old Hebrew social and economic systems. He used the failure of those systems as leverage to usher in His new kingdom. The dichotomy revealed to many the real virtues of God's principles. It's fitting that His return seems near as we approach the point of failure of our current capitalist system. While the old guard desperately tries to maintain this system, new generations are looking eagerly for change.

Young adults are turning to Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies, where they see the promise of something better. They are building communities and systems that seek to break down barriers and provide fresh approaches. They eagerly embrace change because they see the current system as broken. Inspired by a new world of potential and optimism, they evangelize, while others who see the system as a zero-sum game tend to hoard and protect. It's not yet clear whether this new currency will work; whether this blockchain revolution succeeds; but the energy driving the idea is palpable. The objectives and goals of this movement, of creating a fairer world with more opportunities for everyone, is one many are embracing.

WHY IT WORKED AND STILL WORKS

People of all ages, cultures, status, and religions flocked to Jesus as they heard the promise of something better. Jesus proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of heaven that broke down the barriers in His era—and every era. He revealed the transformational power of catching a glimpse of that new world. Once you see it, you can't unsee it. That glimpse changes you when you encounter it.

The power of this kingdom is real. It transcends all the power, position, and money our culture believes is crucial. Kindness knows no status. Real joy has no price tag. Peace in our hearts is more powerful than an army. According to the Word of God, citizens of the kingdom of heaven will inaugurate a new era in a final glorious display of the principles of His kingdom. ♣

Tim Aka is an associate treasurer and director of investments for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTHOR

PURPOSE

At the intersection of faith and sport lies possibility.

WILONA KARIMABADI

campuses. So how did Douglas find himself spearheading this new initiative at one of the top public universities in America and the world?

“I was born and raised in Bermuda,” Douglas says. “I think about my story, and when I think about my life, I think about DEIBJ. I think it’s important to ground it there because I believe how we begin matters. I just know that God has always had His hand on me, and as I lean into that reality of how I began, I think it’s etched deep within my soul—this knowledge that my life has a purpose, and I’m here by design to influence other lives.”

A GOD-LED TRAJECTORY

Douglas was born on a Sabbath to a mother determined to bring her baby into a world where she would love and raise him to be something wonderful. “So when my mom had me on that Sabbath morning, she lifted me to God and said, ‘Lord, I need You to give me wisdom. I need You to give me a village to raise my son.’ And that’s been my experience. When I think about DEIBJ, when I think about my journey, my educational journey, and the experiences I’ve had in my community, God gave her that.”

The circumstances surrounding his birth to a young single mother led to her being estranged from her local Adventist church. Ty-Ron’s baby dedication did not occur during the divine worship service. Church leaders chose to do that after the service so members of the con-

gregation could choose to leave. Douglas's mother couldn't continue her education at Oakwood.* Naturally, she soon withdrew from that Adventist community and initially chose to raise her son away from it.

Yet during Douglas's adolescent years, even as Adventism wasn't pressed upon him, he chose to attend church with extended family. In school Douglas showed great talent not only in academics but athletics. Cricket—a game regarded with great passion among Bermudans—was one in which he excelled. “At that age I was one of the best, if not the best, cricketer in my age group. I remember thinking at a young age—even though Adventism wasn't forced on me and I attended church by choice—that I wanted to be so good in cricket that I would be chosen to play Cup Match in Bermuda and not have to compromise the Sabbath.” That match—a national event—extended over a two-day period, which included tryout matches on Sabbath.

An injury negatively impacted the trajectory of his progress in cricket, which led to frustration. Douglas played soccer as well, but it wasn't what he wanted it to be. “I played a high level of soccer in Bermuda, but even in that space I never really thrived. I played for the top team on the island. We won a championship, but my playing time wasn't the best. I never scored a goal in a game for that team. I scored for some other teams, but I never scored for the top team, and I prayed for a goal! Who does that? I was annoyed at God.” Douglas's love of sport began to wane.

After a stint at community college, Douglas transitioned to Oakwood University and enjoyed campus life and involvement, singing in the choir and the acclaimed group Dynamic Praise, and getting back into team sports. He even coached the women's soccer team and was instrumental in creating a tournament league. “I had this passion for sport as a young person, so I just did what I could in college to use whatever gifts I had and connect people.”

Following Oakwood, Douglas earned a master's degree and returned to Bermuda to teach. “After five years I wanted to try to address some of the issues I was seeing in our community. At the time there was a proliferation of gang violence and shootings of Black men, and I just

I believe that this work—the diversity and inclusion work—is the work of Christianity.

felt as though I wanted to find solutions to problems beyond my classroom and address them,” Douglas says.

USING GOD-GIVEN GIFTS

Douglas soon applied to doctoral programs, in particular to two in North Carolina, one at UNC Greensboro (UNCG) and the other at UNC at Chapel Hill—the latter being the more acclaimed institution. Naturally, Chapel Hill was quite a draw for Douglas. But plans were ordered in ways he couldn't see. “It was some God stuff. I had full-ride scholarships from Bermudan entities, so I could have gone anywhere I wanted based on money, resources, and scholarships I had access to. But my acceptance letter from UNC at Chapel Hill got sent to Malaysia, and in the interim I accepted UNCG's offer. I'm a loyal guy, even when Chapel Hill reached out, asking, ‘Hey, what are you going to do?’ Because they're thinking like, yeah, you got into Chapel Hill. Surely you're coming here.”

But that's not how it went. “I went to UNCG, and I had an amazing experience. I earned dissertation awards. I had many publications, etc. And from UNCG I got a job as a tenure track faculty member at the University of Missouri,” he adds. While at Missouri, Douglas wasn't only busy with teaching, writing (*Border Crossing Brothas* and *Campus Uprising*), and speaking; he also managed to plant a church—Salt City

“Some people wonder: ‘How do you do that as a Christian?’ And I ask them, ‘How do you *not* do that as a Christian?’”

church in Columbia—and earn a second master’s degree in pastoral ministry from Andrews University.

DEIBJ AT BERKELEY

The murder of George Floyd in 2020 served as the impetus for academic institutions nationwide to make serious changes in their approach to caring for their students of color. UC Berkeley’s creation of a new role for DEIBJ in athletics was one such major change on campus. How did Douglas find his way to California’s Bay Area in the middle of all he was accomplishing at the University of Missouri?

“Most people are either academics or practitioners. I’m a border crosser; so, I’m an academic, I’m a scholar, I’m an author, but I’m also a practitioner, and Berkeley is the space for all that,” says Douglas.

The interview process was wrought with unforeseen issues. A miscommunication led to Douglas missing the first interview altogether. When Berkeley came back to him for a new interview, the audio would not work during the Zoom appointment. But through all that, Douglas felt the hand of God leading him, and when the position was offered, he knew it was the right move. “I got the job in part because I believe preparation met opportunity. I’ve had some pretty blessed moments when God has allowed me to go where people get a glimpse of what I believe God has called me to do.”

The acronym DEIBJ is the crux of the difference Douglas is making in Berkeley’s athletics as well as throughout the entire campus. “I tell my student athletes: ‘You have all the rights and privi-

leges whether you hit the home run or not, whether you hit the game-winning shot or not, whether you run your best time or not—you belong, and you are valued.’ I believe that this work—the diversity and inclusion work—is the work of Christianity.”

Adventism and competitive athletics have always had a contentious relationship. Douglas asserts there is a place for the athletic talent that exists within this faith movement, and that the presence of believers in these spaces can lead to positive change. “Some people wonder: ‘How do you do that as a Christian?’ And I ask them, ‘How do you *not* do that as a Christian?’ It’s so easy for me because I see the intersections. It’s amazing to be able to live authentically and to love all people. That’s where I’m at in my journey; so when you ask what it is I do, I respond, ‘I love people. I build systems of healing. I help to influence policy, procedures, sensitivities, and understanding. I get to teach and pursue justice. And I get to do all that as a denominationally-endorsed chaplain and scholar administrator serving in Division 1 and professional athletic spaces that have been historically underserved missionally by the Adventist community.’”

To learn more about Ty-Ron Douglas and his passion for people, love for Christ, and commitment to the athletic talents of all God’s children, visit his website at <https://drtydouglas.com>, or find him on social media @DrTyDouglas.

* Oakwood, then Oakwood College, is now Oakwood University. Notably, Douglas’s mother is now a licensed counselor and doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri.

Wilona Karimabadi is assistant editor for *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World* magazines.

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LESSONS FROM SPORTS LESSONS FOR LIFE



The people you meet in the next three articles share recollections of the pleasure, the pain, and the privilege of witness they enjoyed as young Adventist Christians in a variety of sports contexts. Memories range from little league, through high school to Olympic Games participation. Each testimony is unique, spiritually grounded and instructive of faithfulness: engage, enjoy, be inspired, and visit the *Adventist Review* website at www.adventist-review.org, to learn much more of the story each of our interviewees has to tell.—Eds

AN INTERVIEW WITH ISAIAH JONES

Isaiah Jones is a shipping agent at the General Conference and an elder of Emmanuel-Brinklow Adventist Church. Learning the fundamentals of athletic skills in his small, segregated Southern town in North Carolina, he says, gave him life skills. He played Little League football and baseball until he matriculated to basketball.

ADVENTIST REVIEW: Why basketball?

IJ: I just felt I was better, more talented, in that area.

I see.

IJ: I went to basketball and played team sports. I've never, I guess, engaged in a sport in which I was solo; it was all team sports. And as I said, I felt that it taught me how to be a team player. It was the good of the team versus me. On some teams I was one of the better players, but you just learned that as in Christianity, it's not so much about you, but about the gospel message reaching others. . . . That's the victory. So from early on, we were taught about being a team player and just supporting your teammates, being your best, doing whatever you had to do for the team to win.

Any prizes?

IJ: Yeah, all the way from Little League sports. We won championships and got a trophy: individual trophies, team trophies. In high school it was the same, all the way up to my first year at community college: playing basketball, we won the championship.

Today, if you are a superstar athlete and you say something, it seems to weigh as much as if you are the governor or the premier, the prime

minister or the president. Did involvement with sports give you credibility with your family or with your community, or with the Adventist church you were a member of?

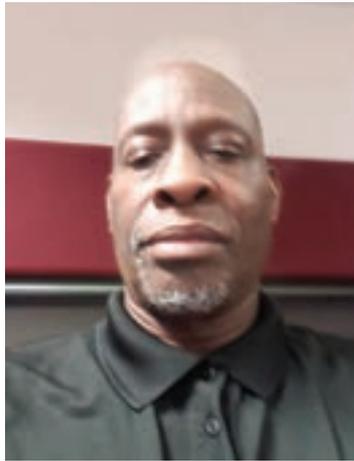
IJ: More so in the community. My Adventist church did have a basketball team, which I played with. And so you were just respected. You were not revered—just respected, but you know. When I started in the church, part of the ministry of the church team was going to other Adventist churches to play with them. But to be a part of that, you would have to give the AYS [Adventist

Youth Society] program.

And we were encouraged to have non-Adventist people come and be a part of the team so they could get to know the ministry. So from that perspective, that involved us. And even when I came into the Maryland area and they had a basketball league here, that was the same thing we did as we traveled—we presented programs; and other non-Adventist people got to see what a Christian athletic program was like.

What else can make you say, Sports did this for me; sport taught me this?

IJ: It taught me that I had to persevere. When you're training and going through the preparation of being a team member, you learn that you have to work through the pain. Some coaches would tell you to win at any cost; but most taught you values: you didn't cheat; you didn't try to injure the other player, though you wanted to win. It helped my church life. Growing up Adventist, you have church friends and you have non-Adventist friends, but it helped transition. A lot of the values



“You have to be grounded, and true to yourself.”

I got playing sports were the same as those at church.

Were there other things that you saw besides the good in sports?

IJ: Yeah. There’s always that temptation, you know. If you have talent and skill, you’re invited to parties. There’s revelry, drinking, drugs. There were some athletes who were very highly skilled, and they would do whatever they needed to do. When you have values instilled in you early on and through the church, it conflicts with your morals. Not saying that I never made any mistakes or anything, but faith was in you and part of your DNA, so you just could not. And believe it or not, most players respected you for the stand you took and your beliefs. They would always say, on Friday, “Oh, Isaiah, I know your Sabbath’s coming, so I know you’re not gonna come with us to this event or that event.”

Were there times the team pressure was on you to do something for the sake of the team that wasn’t . . . ?

IJ: Yes. Yes. On the championship teams, when you’re pursuing a championship or you get to the playoffs, they want you to play. When I was younger, I did have a decent skill level, so they would say, “Well, we can’t win if you’re not here”; or “We need you.” So that pressure was big. And it was very hard not to give in to that pressure, because you feel like you’re gonna let the team down, or if they didn’t win, maybe if I was there, I, I could have helped them win. But God always worked it out, and they won the games on Friday nights. But I did feel that pressure.

Here’s my biggest question: What kind of counsel do you have for kids who are at the age you used to be when you were playing sports and winning championships?

IJ: You have to be grounded, and true to yourself. One person that I have come to admire is former NFL player Colin Kaepernick for taking the stand that he did to call attention to racial injustice in the United States. I would encourage young players to

stand for what they believe in, ‘cause there’s gonna be pressure, whether it’s for money, fame, especially if you’re very talented. You just have to be grounded and stand for what you believe. Many young people don’t get the advice that you and I got about right and wrong and how the choices you make affect your life. So that’s what I would pass on to them: that the choices you make will affect you.

You want to say something about how sports teaches you about God . . .

IJ: Well, in the Black community, church was such an integral part of the community, that all of that came together. You were being told that the talent and gifts you had were given to you by God, and that you used them to benefit others—the team, your community. The world doesn’t revolve around you. I was a team player, and so when we would not listen to some of the things the coaches would say, they would sit you down on the bench [laughs]. And you had to think about your behavior. And it just made you realize that there were consequences to your actions. And if you didn’t listen, there were also consequences. So . . .

That sounds like a God who’s got commandments and we’d better obey them.

IJ: Right. Sports taught me perseverance. If your skill set wasn’t what you thought it should be, then you persevere, you practice—that is, you pray daily and communicate with God, your spiritual life will increase. If you read your Bible and study and pray, you get better understanding, and you’ll be better able to witness to others about God and who He is, versus a quick prayer here and there, hit or miss. . . . I always told my children, “You can’t introduce somebody to somebody you don’t know.” If you don’t know God for yourself, you can’t introduce other people to Him. 🦋



For a more in-depth discussion with Isaiah Jones, see soundcloud.com/adventistworld/isaiah-jones



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PICKING SPORTS FOR LASTING VALUES

Loyalty to God and/or the team?



Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, the lone sprinter, running for Newark High School, in Newark, New York.

AN INTERVIEW WITH LISA BEARDSLEY-HARDY

Before Lisa Beardsley-Hardy was Education Department director at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, she was on both track and swim teams at public high schools in upstate New York, competing in the low hurdles, the 100-yard dash, and the quarter-mile relay. In the pool she raced in freestyle and butterfly events. Sabbathkeeping forestalled much of her competitive participation. Memories of those days on the boys track team include the coach giving his athletes little Snickers bars for energy, and her dad giving her icicles or ice cream to run with him. Less-pleasant memories include a teammate setting a hurdle at irregular distance, causing her to crash and hurt her knee—she’s still dealing with the aftereffects. We take up the conversation as she talks about winning and losing.

ADVENTIST REVIEW: *In athletics I imagine sometimes you or the team won and sometimes you didn’t. What did losing teach you?*

LBH: That it’s just a game. Learning to lose fairly and without carrying that around with you. There’ll be another meet, there’ll be another game, and we need to continue training. It’s not a matter of luck. It’s a matter of training.

What good life lessons has sports taught you?

LBH: It was an athletics director at Andrews University that summed it up well years later and put a label on what was my experience. He said that there’s a role for athletics in an Adventist school because athletics, and participation in athletics, teaches things that you could never learn in an English class or a history class.

Yes.

LBH: It teaches you to manage your emotions. When you’re all pumped up and the adrenaline is going and you are just out for winning and you’re part of a team—in that context, one can lose one’s temper. One can become a sore loser. One can say things that they would never say if

JOSHUA BURDICK

they were in a classroom. So it activates a part of you that is simply not activated in a traditional learning center, and gives you multiple opportunities to learn to manage your emotions, to be a fair player, to be a good sport, to be Christlike even in the heat of the moment.

Did you see other sides [of sports]?

LBH: Yes. Injuries. Coaches that are too focused on the win and not mindful of the health and well-being of their young people. And something like football is quite barbaric. The pounding. Because I was out there on the track, running around, I'd see the football players in the middle doing their training. It's brutal. Just the training itself. And the coach shouting and pressing and . . . And then a game can be even worse.

Things like boxing I don't think should be considered a sport at all. Even high school level football . . . , I feel that the risks to health, potential head trauma, the emotions that it arouses, are ones that are not helpful and have long-term consequences. So, personally, I think that the

noncontact sports are in an entirely different class. But even there, there can be some injuries.

Superstars like tennis player Naomi Osaka and gymnast Simone Biles have brought to public focus the issue of mental health. Do you have something to say about that?

LBH: Well, thank you for raising that. I pointed out the effects on physical health, but absolutely, there is also the pressure for mental health. And when individuals' very sense of self and identity gets so tied up, and they make compromises as believers, Seventh-day Adventists, and make compromises and play on the Sabbath. . . . I know of some instances in which they sacrificed their most cherished values, allegiance to God. Then, when the athletic career did not move forward, they were emotionally damaged and spiritually damaged. I thank the Lord now, in retrospect (although at the time I felt embarrassed), that I did not go to meets on Sabbath, though on Friday night I felt like I was letting down my team. But I see now that those were opportunities for me to



keep my life in balance, and to guard my mental and spiritual health. Those at the extreme ends, they get pushed. They get pushed like fine thoroughbred horses. They get pushed by their parents, by their peers, by their coaches, and emotionally it's not a healthy level of pressure. And for most of them there's not a Sabbath that helps them put all of this in the proper perspective that God is first and allegiance to God is first.

I'm wondering what you do about that as a high school kid. What can a high school kid do in the face of all this pressure from the school in general and, specifically, the athletics department and, directly, their coach? And then, of course, parents who've got wondrous illusions?

LBH: Those are real pressures. And a young person does not have the emotional maturity or the years or perspective on life that an adult would have. Much of this responsibility needs to go to the parents. And yes, parents, I have heard the arguments: exercise is good. It's healthy. It builds team spirit. But I have seen lives severely impacted when parents have allowed the thrill of the sport to cloud and to rearrange their own values.

From a distance now, what two or three bits of counseling would you have for yourself that you learned from your involvement and that you want to carry with you as a professional woman, as informing your career?

LBH: For me the most valuable part was the training. And even if I had not competed in a single [race], that developed attitudes toward wellness and habits of relating, and understanding the relationship between effort and outcomes; the need to be a positive team player; to be a good team member on and off, out of the game. And those are things I couldn't have learned in an English classroom.

What counsel do you have for 16- and 17-year-olds who are where you used to be?

LB: I would say remember the Sabbath day.

Anything beyond the Sabbath you might want to tell them?

LB: That's a good question. I would say to honor God, and that's the Sabbath, a tangible way to seek balance, development. And parents have to be partners in it. And teachers have to be partners in that. This is why a Seventh-day Adventist education is so important. Teachers are partners. In

my public school it was very disaggregated. The coach did this. The teachers did this. The principal is over here. Your classmates are here. There wasn't anybody bringing that all together in an integrated fashion for wholistic education in me. Adventist education does bring that together and teachers are partners in a way that doesn't happen in public schools.

The second thing I would say is for parents to send their kids to an Adventist school and for students to ask their parents to send them to an Adventist school so that they can grow wholistically—physically, emotionally, academically, absolutely. And for those who are in public schools, I would say you have to be the captain of your own team and honor God in all things.

Are there any overarching principles you would say that a young, athletically gifted Christian youth can never afford to forget?

LBH: It comes again to honoring God, to seeing athletics or the performance in the context of the giftedness that God gives you, the opportunity that you have for witness, and that witness might be in keeping the Sabbath. It can be in playing fair. Whatever that context is, that's an opportunity to use the gifts, and point to God, and realize God's plan for you.

Finally, what are some of the greatest challenges you are aware of to keeping the principles that you've mentioned?

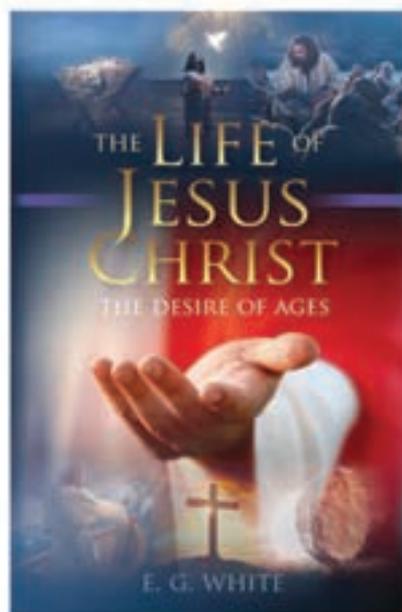
LBH: I think one of those is learning to be in the moment in a Christlike way; not allow that rush of adrenaline [laughs]. You're pumped when you're going all out and you don't want to let your team down. It's a very powerful experience, physiologically and emotionally. So learning to tame the tongue, to manage the emotions, to be a good sport, to recognize that whether you win or lose is not your worth as a human being. Your worth as a human being is assigned by God and cannot be earned and cannot be taken away by performance. To recognize the opportunities in that moment. ▀



Learn more about how track and swimming in high school helped to shape Dr. Beardsley Hardy's life at soundcloud.com/adventistworld/lisa-beardsley-hardy

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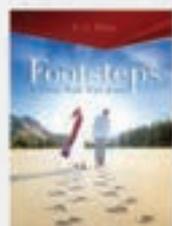
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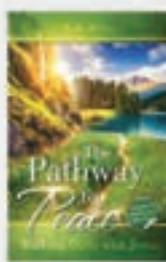
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GOD AND GAMES AND HANGING WITH THE BEST

It's not about the medals.



AN INTERVIEW WITH SHERIDON BAPTISTE

Sheridon Baptiste is a Canadian three-time Olympian, and former national long jump and field hall of fame, Baptiste was a top performer through high school, university, and beyond. He seemed to sparkle in all things sport-like: team sports—basketball, football, hockey; individual events—from track sprints to table tennis. He traces it all back to when, as a little boy in Guyana, his mom told him, “Go outside and play.” After graduation from Queen’s University he was drafted for Canada’s pro-football league, the CFL, by the Ottawa Rough Riders. Though he graciously yet determinedly resisted discussing his championships and trophies, he was willing to answer queries about how he was treated.

ADVENTIST REVIEW: *How did people at home, friends and relatives, people at school, people in the community, relate to you, because of . . . ?*

SB: I’ll be honest with you, I never thought about things like that. But obviously at this point in my life, or even much earlier, it gave me the opportunity to do a lot of things: to go into schools and speak to kids; to be a communicator and an advocate for sport. It opened up so many doors.

If somebody asked you, “What does sports—track, swimming, bobsledding—have to do with real life?” What would you say?

SB: It teaches you discipline. You have to be on time; you have to take care of things you’re supposed to take care of. It teaches you hard work, it teaches you honesty, and it teaches you dedication, trust, setting goals, loyalty, all the kinds of things that are really important, I think, in life.

What do you think of medals and ribbons as a way of defining life and success?

SB: It’s not a way to define success; it’s not a way to define life. I’ve been on both sides, you know. I was inducted into the Queen’s [University]

MEL-NIK / ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES PLUS



I chose to compete because I wanted to serve my Lord;
to glorify my Lord in the abilities that He has given me.



STOCKBYTE

track and field hall of fame. It's like the equivalent of Ivy League.

You're telling me it isn't really the best way to define life and success.

SB: It isn't, because I've done stuff, I've won stuff, but I've lost a lot too. And I think there's just as much value in losing as there is in winning.

Really? I don't know anybody who wants to be called a loser.

SB: Well, being called a loser, I think that's something that's defined by you. If you want to consider yourself a loser, that is your prerogative. But I believe that in everything in which you lose, for instance, a race, you can go back and look at that race and figure out why you lost and try to improve on that. Otherwise, you've failed. So you have to learn how you can get better from the things that you have lost in. I think a lot of people probably use the word "loser" because it makes them feel better.

Now, I'm thinking, You know what? He can say that because he has won a lot. So what about the

people who have never won a ribbon? never won a medal? never won a prize?

SB: I honestly believe that every person has something in them that they are good at, that they can succeed at. I don't care what it is. If you're a great server, you're unbelievable at what you do. The losing, I think, is something defined by people who want to put you down personally. If you allow them to put you down, then you have a problem.

You've been talking about the bright side of sports, even if it involves some people getting medals and others not. But sometimes it seems that sports have another side, a dark side. Tell me what you make of that. How do you respond to that side of sports?

SB: That's a fair question. And again, it's choices that we make, right? I chose to compete as a Christian athlete. I chose to compete because I wanted to serve my Lord; to glorify my Lord in the abilities that He has given me. Some people compete because they want fame, they want glory, they want money. They

want all the things that the world has to offer them. And they're willing . . .

What two or three principles do you see undergirding sports across the board—track and field, team sports, swimming?

SB: For me it's fair play. And that was one of the biggest for me—only because of the way I grew up. I really didn't have that much. And I just remember a few instances of sneaking into the gym or the weight room because I just didn't have the money.

What would you say to youth—high school, college, or university youth—who are now at the age you were at in the late 1980s? What would you like to tell them about sports and athletics?

SB: Well, I honestly believe it's important in life to find something that you love doing. And if that's sports, so be it; if that's sewing, so be it. Just find what you love and serve your Lord. I would also say, "Don't allow others and your circumstances to determine who you are." You determine that for yourself. Set goals, and don't be ashamed to change those goals once in a while. Set lofty goals, but don't be afraid to modify those goals.

Amen. On the other side, are there some principles that good athletes could never afford to forget?

SB: A lot of people probably think that most athletes think about the great things that they did, such as the medals they've won, the races they've won, the prize money. But I'll let you in on a little secret: most athletes who really care about themselves and really have a sense of being a good athlete—they remember the failures.

Huh?

SB: As strange as that is, I can vividly remember my failures; I can remember that touchdown pass that I dropped, or that basket I missed at the end. And I think, *I can't believe I missed that shot*. You might have scored 30 points that game, but what you remember is *I can't believe I missed that shot*. Those are the things that most athletes actually remember.

So what happens if you forget the shots you missed?

SB: Well, I think that if you forget those, then you fail. You honestly do. You need to think, *If I'm in that situation again, this is what I'll have to do to do*

better. And it's probably like that for everyone in every job. Is it not? You remember the scenarios that you didn't succeed in, but you do your best to make sure that if it happens again, you'll know what you're going to do to make it better.

You're not a current Olympian. What, from those days, do you still hold before you always?

SB: For me personally, it's not the medals, it's not the winning. It's the relationships that you developed, the people that you have influenced in a good way. I remember that when I was an athlete, the guys were always on me: "Sheridon, you never go out with us. Why don't you go out with us? You don't drink. Why don't you drink? You don't eat pork. Why don't you eat pork?" And I just talked to them about those things and talked about my religion and influenced them in whatever way that I could. Those are the little things that I remember. We won a lot of medals. We were very successful, though I didn't win any Olympic medals.

You don't get to the Olympics without winning gold medals.

SB: We won a lot of stuff on the world cup circuit in bobsledding. We went to different countries and competed in a lot of different venues, and that was our circuit. And track and field was the same way. But those things were just not as important as the relationships that I formed over the years. For instance, when I was on the circuit, one of the people who competed was Prince Albert of Monaco. Things like that are what you remember—you know, the camaraderie you had. I don't miss the training. I don't miss the hard days. But you miss just hanging out with the fellows and talking.

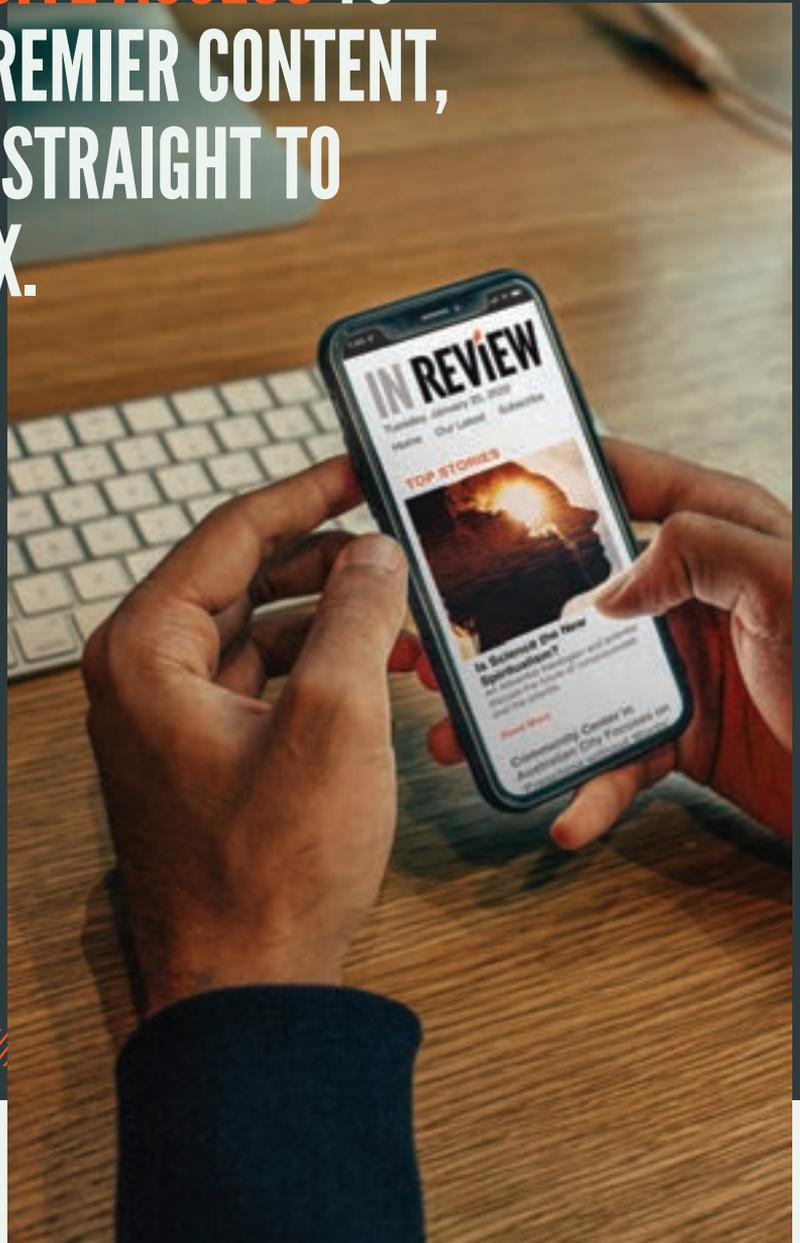
Isn't that beautiful, because there's a lot of that in heaven. We may not be competing to see who finishes the track faster, but we have a lot of time to hang out.

SB: The greatest champion is Jesus. The greatest Teammate lifts all those around Him. The greatest Captain builds an everlasting team. 🏆



Olympian Sheridan Baptiste has a lot more to say about the thrills and spills of top level sports competition. Meet him at [adventistreview.com/programs/sheridon-54f482](https://www.adventistreview.com/programs/sheridon-54f482)

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PETER N. LANDLESS ZENO L. CHARLES-MARCEL

GOOD SPORTS

Moving experiences!

Q: Is playing sports a good way to get fit?

A: Getting “fit” may mean different things to different people, so let’s get on the same page. To be “fit” means that you have enough strength, endurance, and flexibility to do everything that your normal day requires, and that you have reserve capacity to get through a typical crisis, an emergency, or an additional desired activity (such as climbing a flight of stairs when the elevator is out of service or climbing a hill to see a spectacular view). To the athlete, getting “fit” may mean preparing for a triathlon or climbing to the summit of a challenging mountain. So who you are and what you aspire to achieve make a difference.

Whatever the situation, however, getting fit requires movement and a “load” that you work against or carry (e.g., your body weight is considered a “load”). As you regularly repeat the activity with more or faster movement and with greater load, you become more “fit.” Whoever you are, though, being fit requires more than just exercise; it also requires a healthful lifestyle that accommodates the level of activity that’s needed.

Most sports involve movement and “load,” so if practiced regularly, they will improve fitness. Aerobic sports cause the heart to beat faster. Enjoying them regularly strengthens the heart, improves circulation, and increases lung capacity. These together improve the body’s ability to deliver oxygen to all the cells. Adding load on the muscles (e.g., weights, basketball, baseball bat, water for swimming) improves total fitness, strengthening bones, tendons, and ligaments and increasing lean-muscle mass, benefiting weight management.

You don’t have to be a star athlete to engage in

sports for fun and fitness. Twenty to 30 minutes of a low-intensity sport may be a healthy starting point for sedentary adults. Swimming, cycling, bowling, pickleball, rowing, and kayaking all can be done at low intensity to start and increased as you go. Table tennis and pickleball are the lowest cardio-intensity workouts of the racket sports. You

can also do a search on the Internet for other examples of low-impact, no-contact, and variable-intensity sports.

Here are some suggestions when choosing a sport:

- Choose from among sports that you like and will likely stick with, are accessible, are easy to learn and engage in, and are not too costly.

- Choose a sport that’s at the level of fitness you want to achieve.

- Consider the risks involved, and check with your doctor before you start.

- Avoid violent or highly competitive sports.
- Learn how to play appropriately to avoid unnecessary injury.

- Follow the safety rules.

- Get together with sports partners.

- Enjoy and increase your exertion level comfortably over time.

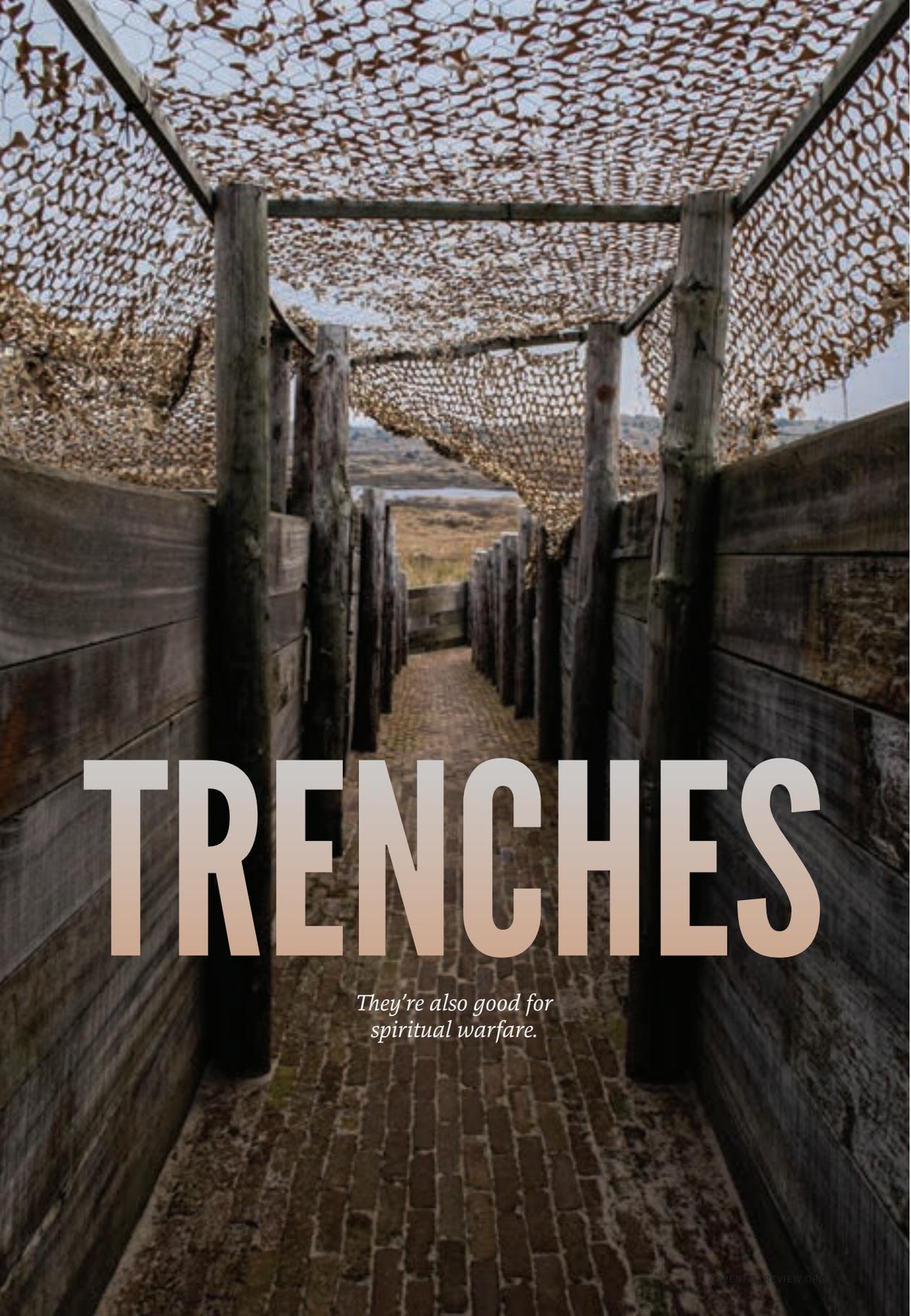
- Plan on at least one full rest day each week, depending on the sport. More isn’t necessarily better.

- Sore muscles, fatigue, sleeping issues, reduced performance, emotional changes, or pain may be signaling you to stop or slow down.

Enjoying a friendly sport safely with friends and family is a good way to get fit! 🏆

Peter N. Landless, a board-certified nuclear cardiologist, is director of Adventist Health Ministries at the General Conference. **Zeno L. Charles-Marcel**, a board-certified internist, is an associate director of Adventist Health Ministries at the General Conference.

Being fit requires more than just exercise; it also requires a healthful lifestyle.



TRENCHES

*They're also good for
spiritual warfare.*

BRENDA LANGFORD BILLING

The images found on news reports haunt me: enemy soldiers attacking not only military installations but also civilian targets such as hospitals, churches, and homes; families displaced and separated; children injured and dying; people without access to food and water. In some areas the populace flood the streets, locking arms in solidarity to declare, “We will not be moved—even if we have to die.” What courage amid confusion! What determination amid destruction!

Indeed, the kingdom of heaven (and of earth) suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. It seems, however, that national television’s familiar practice of audience exposure to brutal attacks whether recently or through the years slowly benumbs our senses, and in time tragedies becomes more “normal.” But the reality of current events calls for focused contemplation.

The brutal attack that we witness in the physical realm replicates what’s happening in the spiritual realm. The enemy is viciously attacking our churches. We repeatedly hear of the “bombings”: large numbers of young adults have left the church (worldwide numbers as high as 62 percent have been cited by church leaders),¹ and even older adults are wrestling with the challenge of “belonging.”² North American Division membership has been declining since 2017,³ and experienced only minimal growth in 2022.⁴ People are wounded and hurting in the pews, and sometimes our response seems to be one of nonchalance. Why might this be so? It’s because we’re in a war zone, and because we’ve let the enemy be the only one who has a battle plan to win.

A CONVERSATION WITH GOD

During my devotions one morning the Holy Spirit whispered to me, “If you’re experiencing spiritual warfare, you must be ready to respond as a valiant soldier.” God has assured us, in 2 Corinthians 10:3,⁴ that “though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds.” Yes, we *do* have to fight,

but Matthew 18:19 assures us that “if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.”

I got even more excited when I read Isaiah 49:25: “I will contend with him who contends with you, and I *will* save your children.” Is God willing to be the commanding officer who guarantees victory? Yes, He is, says Isaiah 55:11: “So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void. . . . It shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”

As I read those passages, hope was ignited in my heart, giving birth to a strong conviction that with God’s help I *can* fight the spiritual battle to help connect my children and other loved ones to Christ.

Some spiritual wars can be won only by following Jesus’ example of prayer, fasting, and the Word (see Matt. 4:1-11; also 17:14-21). Isaiah 58:5-8 explains, however, that “fasting” doesn’t mean simply abstaining from food. The true fast that God requires involves a sacrifice of time, energy, effort, and resources. Prayer and self-denial is only half the equation. Sacrificial involvement is the other half.

What would prayer and fasting look like if we want to retain and regain our children, young adults, and other loved ones who have walked away from the church? How can we connect them with Jesus? If physical warfare gives us insight into what happens in spiritual warfare, then it would make sense to study the military strategies involved in physical warfare, to learn from soldiers on the battlefield.

IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE

Sometimes in warfare soldiers have dug long, deep trenches, where they both sheltered from and attacked the enemy. Anyone exposed to enemy fire could seek refuge in them and launch their firepower against them.

This same strategy can be used in a spiritual sense as we wrestle against principalities and powers and rulers of darkness (see Eph. 6:12). Some of

With a mustard-seed faith, and with prayer and fasting, nothing is impossible.

our loved ones are already bruised and injured, but we still can win if we all get down in the deep spiritual trenches together, bending our knees in prayer and using the firepower of the Word of God against the enemy. With a mustard-seed faith, and with prayer and fasting, nothing is impossible.

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER

My phone beeped in the middle of my conversation with God. A familiar name was listed with a phone number requesting a return call. I held my breath in disbelief. It was from a young man I'd adopted as my son more than 25 years ago, when he was just a teenager beginning college. After graduation I continued my commitment to pray for him every Friday, even though I'd not heard from him in more than 20 years. When I returned his call, my son shared that he'd been incarcerated, sentenced to seven years in prison for drug trafficking. God had intervened, however, and he had been released after serving only three years.

"I want to say 'Thank you' for praying for me," he said. "It was rough in prison, and at times I felt as if I would lose my mind. But every time that feeling surfaced, I would turn my face to the wall, close my eyes, and envision you praying for me. That mental image preserved my sanity for the three years I was in prison!"

It was Friday, and I'd just prayed for him. God confirmed by my son's call that He still answers prayer. This was all the confirmation I needed to officially organize a new prayer-and-fasting movement called Trenches.

I invited my sisters, along with two Adventist friends and three non-Adventist friends, to join me in my "trench" to pray for our children and grandchildren. We outlined a prayer schedule where we would all be praying for the same child

on the same day, utilizing promises from the Word of God (supernatural resources) to meet the needs of each child. Not complicated; just coordinated.

Every day we would pray individually according to the schedule,⁵ and once per week we would assemble to pray collectively for all the children. SOS prayer requests for any emergency would be added to the schedule during the week. We would pray and fast for three weeks.

We experienced dramatic results. Everyone without exception received an answer from God; some received multiple answers. Some answers were huge—reduced seizures, complete healing, academic success, hugs and apologies, a job opportunity, a real estate purchase, COVID deliverance, an internship, a successful childbirth, wisdom/discernment, and so on. These happened not because we were such great prayer warriors, but because God was confirming that He still hears and answers prayers. I believe that God also wanted to convince the recipients that He loved them and was working on their behalf.

Some of the young adults whom we interceded for started new specialized trenches with their friends. The best result, though, is that we experienced unified trench evangelism—people coming together to connect with God and to utilize His Word to defeat our common enemy.

IN 21 DAYS . . .

In 21 days of prayer and fasting huge prayers can be answered, and God's words can win. As spiritual soldiers we're fully persuaded that what God has promised, He's more than able to perform.

Our prayer team encourages everyone to enlist in the spiritual army, to commit to digging deep prayer trenches, and to intercede for your loved ones, claiming God's promises. God indeed is mighty to save! 📌

¹ https://www.adventistresearch.info/wp-content/uploads/NR2017TED_2.pdf; see also <https://www.adventistresearch.info/research-reports/presentations-by-astr-staff/reports-by-astr-staff-organized-by-topics/>.

² <https://www.adventistresearch.info/wp-content/uploads/Revised-Leaving-the-Church-combined.pdf>

³ https://www.adventiststatistics.org/view_Summary.asp?FieldInstID=5720

⁴ <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Statistics/ASR/ASR2020.pdf>

⁵ Use this link to see a sample schedule: [Designer, please include a link here to the sample schedule.]

Brenda Langford Billingsy is a retired associate ministerial director of the North American Division.

I MISS HER

She was such a little thing as she lay on the metal table, pink nose pressed into my fleece. I stroked her gray fur, now streaked with white, with trembling hands. *Why hadn't we noticed her weight loss?* The signs had been there, but we'd always chalked it up to old age. After all, we'd had Pebbles for almost 14 years. She had become the child we never had, the one who climbed on our lap after a hard day, who rolled on her back in the sunshine, who loved unconditionally.

The issues had been minimal until that last night, when we got home from work and she couldn't walk. She'd try to stand, back hips swaying, and then she fell, dragging her hindquarters behind her. Amazingly, she never made a sound. *God, why does she have to suffer so much?* There was nothing we could do. A snowstorm had come up, all the vets were closed, and we had to wait until morning.

I lay on the floor beside her and gently stroked her body, tears soaking into the carpet. *What was wrong with her?* It was painful to watch as she struggled to breathe, eyes fixed and staring. She had brought so much joy, this little cat we had adopted as a stray tabby. Initially she resisted when we held her, cowered during storms, and jumped when we approached her. That changed over the years as she learned she could be safe with people who loved her. She relaxed and learned to trust, following at our heels when we walked and always trying to be as close as possible. *God, I can't let her go.*

The night seemed endless: snow and sleet pelted the house while anguish

wrung my heart. Finally, morning broke, and we began to search for a vet open in this weather. Pebbles hadn't eaten; she'd barely even lapped at the water we held in front of her. She was fading. We found a vet open and headed out, Greg driving through the snow-covered roads while I whispered reassurances to her. She lay still in her box.

Now here we were, X-rays and heart ultrasound finished, results grim. Who would have known that her heart had given out? She had been so brave. She purred and snuggled closer to me as the doctor inserted the needle and the room began to spin. I heard my voice as if from a distance call her name and tell her how much she was loved. How much she would be missed. And then it was over.

The first week was the worst. Every time I shut my eyes I saw her, just a little ball of gray fluff, on the metal table. Slowly the raw edges of pain softened to a dull ache. Greg and I talked about her a lot, reliving the memories and joy she had brought. Our family and friends prayed and supported. *God, why does it hurt so much?*

Yet somehow amid that pain came the reminder of the unconditional love of my Father. He reminds me I can be safe because He loves me. I'm slowly learning to relax and trust Him. Because I know He'll hold me while I sit on His lap. ♡

Jill Morikone is vice president and chief operations officer for Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN), a supporting Adventist television network. She and her husband, Greg, live in southern Illinois and enjoy ministering together for Jesus.

JOURNEYS
WITH JESUS
JILL
MORIKONE



YET SOMEHOW AMID
THAT PAIN CAME THE
REMINDER OF THE
UNCONDITIONAL
LOVE OF MY FATHER.



FIZKES / ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES PLUS / GETTY IMAGES

January 7. In order not to be found taking sides while seeking to evangelize the people, the Seventh-day Adventist Church had chosen to make a big deal of New Year's Eve instead. So I had resigned myself to simply enjoying the family and all their unique cultural ways.

Marija, my sister-in-law, was more like a mother toward us. She was the eldest child of 11 and my husband was the tenth, so the gap in years made her behavior understandable. I learned that she had once been engaged to a Swiss young man who was attending the Bible school in Zagreb, where she was also a student. They were both passionate about winning people to Christ. Marija was a gifted people person who drew others to her through her warm personality. I knew that from experience. She had always been generous and loving with me.

But the marriage never happened. One afternoon as she and her fiancé strolled along the sidewalk, they came upon two French-speaking men who were arguing loudly. Her fiancé spoke up: "My brothers, why are you fighting?" At that, one of the men whipped out a knife and stabbed him! Before her horror-filled eyes, Marija saw her beloved sink to the ground dead.

The tragedy pursued her until she again found love. Her husband, a successful watchmaker and businessman, had provided a comfortable home, the home we were staying in at the time. So on the evening of December 24 my husband and I lay down on the couch bed next to the coffee table and drifted off to sleep.

CROSSING THE BARRIER

Loving those who've lost a loved one

A frigid wind whipped around our car as we drove south to my husband's homeland, Yugoslavia. Newly married and living in France while he finished his theology degree, we were on our way to his oldest sister's home for Christmas break. I looked forward to seeing his family and having more time with my spouse, except for one thing: Adventists in Yugoslavia at that time didn't celebrate Christmas—at all. It would be a first for me to do nothing special on December 25.

NO CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

My husband had told me why they didn't observe Christmas. The Catholic and Orthodox churches dominated the religious scene in Yugoslavia, one observing December 25 as Christ's birthday, the other

YES, CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION!

Hours later light filtered through the lace curtains, awakening me on Christmas morning. As I turned, I caught the glimmer of something on the table. A small clear plastic tree with tiny colored ornaments sparkled amid a few packages. I was shocked and moved. How could it be? How could my precious Marija, who had never set foot outside her country or much beyond her Adventist culture, do this for me? I cried as I opened one package to find the practical gift of stockings. Then, another package with chocolates, my favorite treat. And finally, a larger gift—a set of exquisite crystal glasses.

I still have four of those glasses today. They remind me that love knows how to cross over into the lives of others. We who have also loved and lost know something about what the grieving widows and widowers around us are experiencing. We know some of what is needed as we step over the barrier that threatens to keep the mourner alone in their emotional pain. A hug, sympathetic tears, a listening ear, a plate of food, a few words of understanding, a visit or phone call or card from time to time, help to keep the routines of life moving along while the person is temporarily paralyzed.

They hugged me and played a beautiful song.

My neighbors did this for me more than six years ago. They had lost a brother in the mission field and understood. They came and sat quietly with me in my living room. They hugged me and played a beautiful song. They spoke peace and hope. They listened. Throughout the following months they brought me flowers, worked in my garden, rescued me from household dilemmas my husband had always cared for. Busy as they were, they spent themselves on my behalf. They showed me that I was a treasured part of their lives, and I will always love them for that.

Marija, Lois, Laurence, and a host of others populate my widowed world and give me the desire to do for others what they have done for me—cross the barrier, step into a griever's life, and whisper, "You are not alone." 🍀

Brenda Kiš writes from Berrien Springs, Michigan, where she happily devotes her days to whatever agenda God puts before her!

15 WAYS TO CROSS THE BARRIER

1. After attending the funeral or memorial service, continue to visit or phone the grieving one for a short chat and prayer.
2. Talk to them about the good things you remember about their loved one, or recount personal stories of your interactions with them.
3. Ask them to show you pictures and tell you about the life of their loved one, and listen carefully.
4. Use appropriate touch to convey that you care.
5. Show up to clean the house, wash the car, or do yardwork in their early stages of grief.
6. Bring them a special dish of food after a month or so, when food isn't coming in anymore.
7. Be a resource person to help with practical needs (plumbing, electrical, mechanical, etc.).
8. Invite them to join a small group, prayer group, or Bible study group.
9. Give them a sacred music CD with beautiful hope-filled songs.
10. Invite them for a walk in a park or other natural area. Being outside is healing.
11. Invite them for an outing (mini golf, a concert, bird-watching) or to eat out together.
12. Invite them to a Sabbath meal.
13. Sit with them in church or at other meetings you both attend so that they aren't alone.
14. If they have low vision, offer to read to them on a regular basis from a book of their choice.
15. On the anniversary of the first year of grief, do something special for them that shows you have been listening to their words, their heart.

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WARM GREETINGS FROM THE DESERT

I'm writing from the desert.

No, not the spiritual desert, where I've traveled plenty of times before—and may have even crossed paths with you.

I'm writing from "The Desert" itself. The desert of Sinai.

The past few days, as I've journeyed across the dreary expanse, and last night, as I sat alone in the bulwark of Sinai, I've been processing the journey that led one person—and later 2 million—to this very place.

I've realized that there are two pathways to the desert: our choices and our circumstances.

Like Moses himself, we might take a wrong turn and pay the price. Moses found himself here because he took his calling into his own hands, rather than letting God lead. Who knows: God might have been close to delivering Moses' people (perhaps even through the princess Hatshepsut, who was about to become an unlikely pharaoh). Instead, Moses set things back 40 years.

I recently visited a young man serving an eight-year prison sentence. He said the first few minutes of prison brought the full weight of his mistakes crushing down on him. I asked his advice for young people. He said if you feel yourself headed down the road of darkness, talk to someone *now*. Now—before it's too late.

The other pathway to the desert is simply our circumstances. You might be in the desert because of what someone else did. Or even this: You might be in the desert because God is patiently allowing someone else's cup to fill up, giving them

every chance possible (such as the Amorites in Canaan). This isn't easy stuff, but the more we have a heart like Christ's, the more we can bear the cup He gives us.

Whatever brought you to the desert, whether it was your actions or someone else's, there are two ways you can respond: you can let it refine you, or you can let it destroy you.

Moses was willing to let the desert refine him: to grow him and prepare him for a special work. God needed to get Moses out of Egypt—and Egypt out of Moses. While Moses' dramatic new identity in the desert might have seemed embarrassing by his former world's measure of success, Moses stayed faithful, and he stayed busy: the two things we must do in the desert. During those 40 years, Moses humbly tended his father-in-law's sheep—and wrote a couple of books: Genesis and Job.

One of our daughters was recently battling some disappointments in life—some things hadn't worked out as she'd hoped. Then she realized she hadn't read her Bible for a while, so she began a journal study of Romans. Planting gardens in her personal desert.

Most of Moses' people didn't allow themselves to be fully refined in the desert. This didn't mean (necessarily) that they'd lost their salvation. But it did mean that they'd lost the abundant life that God desired for them.

As I write, the sun is setting in the desert. But tomorrow is a bright new day. 🌄

Andy Nash (andynash5@gmail.com) is an author and pastor who leads biblical study tours to Israel.

THE LIFE
OF FAITH
ANDY
NASH



I'VE REALIZED THAT
THERE ARE TWO
PATHWAYS TO THE
DESERT: OUR
CHOICES AND OUR
CIRCUMSTANCES.

WINNERS AND/OR LOSERS

Coaches are the prima donnas of sports, and their quips are its unforgettable arias. There's tautology from the legendary Yogi Berra: "It ain't over till it's over." And contradiction: "No one goes there anymore. It's too crowded."¹ And euphemism from Vince Lombardi: "We didn't lose the game; we just ran out of time."²

Words from the sports world, whether from a coach or other source, often bear compelling import for Christians in their striving for the mastery. Paul acknowledges the spiritual power of evocations from the athletic world: "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training" (1 Cor. 9:25, NIV).

Here, now, are words to hear—from the world of sports and from the Lord of life—on (a) effort—what it takes; (b) quality—what's better, or worse; (c) personnel—who qualifies; (d) the goal—hitting the bull's-eye and knowing you've made it:

MICHAEL PHELPS, ON EFFORT

Phelps, the most decorated Olympian ever, with 28 medals, including 23 gold, says:

"I think goals should never be easy. They should force you to work, even if they are uncomfortable at the time."³

And sacred Scripture says:

Ecclesiastes 3:1, 3, 7, 8:

"To everything there is a season, . . . a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time of war, and a time of peace."

Leviticus 26:18, 20: "if you do not obey Me, . . . your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its produce."

Psalm 127:1, 2: "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep."

Hebrews 12:1-4: "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, . . . For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, . . . You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin."

BILLIE JEAN KING AND MARNELLI DIMZON, ON QUALITY

King, American tennis star, founder of the Women's Tennis Association, says,

"Champions keep playing until they get it right."⁴

Dimzon, also called "Coach Let," former Pilipino soccer player, national team assistant coach, says, "I took note of all the things Master Kim would say."⁵

And what does the Bible say about quality?

Isaiah 13:12: "I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold, a man more than the golden wedge of Ophir."



Job 23:10:

“But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.”

1 Peter 5:10: “[M]ay the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.”

Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 31-32, 33-34: “You have heard . . . But I say . . . You have heard . . . But I say . . . Furthermore it has been said, . . . But I say . . . Again you have heard, . . . But I say . . .”

VINCE LOMBARDI ON PERSONNEL

Lombardi, perhaps the most oft quoted coach in American sports, said: “The measure of who we are is what we do with what we have.”⁶

Who qualifies, according to the Bible?

1 Corinthians 1:30, 31: “But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, as it is written, ‘He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.’”

John 3:15, 16: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

“COACH LET,” ON THE GOAL

“The thing with me is when I set my mind to things I do them.”⁷

And in the mind and program of God, who makes it? How does anyone know they’ve made it?

Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in

the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Revelation 7:9: “I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all na-tions, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands.”

1 John 5:4: “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.”

¹ “The Random Vibez: Quotes, Memes and Sayings,” <https://www.therandomvibez.com/yogi-berra-quotes-sayings/>. Yogi Berra, baseball catcher, manager, and coach, won 10 World Series titles—more than any other player.

² https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/vince_lombardi_103598. Lombardi coached the Green Bay Packers football team to five national championships in seven years.

³ <https://www.swimmingworldmagazine.com/news/4-michael-phelps-quotes-to-keep-you-motivated/>

⁴ King insisted on women being fairly reimbursed; she was awarded the 2009 Presidential Medal of Freedom. Find her quote at <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/209337-champions-keep-playing-until-they-get-it-right>

⁵ Female Coaching Network [FCN], “Marnelli Dimzon – Interview,” Feb 7, 2016: <https://femalecoachingnetwork.com/2016/02/07/marnelli-dimzon/>

⁶ https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/vince_lombardi_382625.

⁷ See again, note #5.

GOOD BYE-LINE

There's a real and wonderful place, beyond the reach of starship *Enterprise*, where few men or women have gone before: I can hear Guyanese children singing of it now, seated on the ground by the hundreds, in front of a screen where the words go by, backgrounded by artists' impressions of the ever, ever, never, never land: "There's no disappointment in heaven." I hope Randy Pausch knew about it.

Brilliant scientist Randy Pausch was not the first academic to give a last lecture. Other scholars before him had given their answers to the question: "What wisdom would you try to impart to the world if you knew it was your last chance?" But their answers, to press the pun, had been, well, academic. His was real, literally his last: In August 2007, doctors gave him three to six months more of good health. At the time of the lecture, December 2007, he didn't feel like he was dying. He even dropped to the floor to do push-ups.¹ Unlike Pausch, I have no medical deadline. I've worked with enough deadlines, though, to know that they can be stressful. But they weren't from doctors. Also, the kind of death you die by failing to meet a publishing deadline is survivable. Somewhat.

Now, I do have another kind of deadline, a goodbye deadline, a good bye-line, I trust, scheduled for the month after this issue of your magazine should arrive at your address.

Randy Pausch's last lecture reviewed what became of his childhood dreams. One of them was to be Captain Kirk.

Awkwardly, perhaps, I have no list of childhood dreams to review. As far as I recall—not very far, given my wandering memory—my wife is the only person I remember sharing my list of youthful fantasies with. If she chooses, she may share with you how much of my list, if any, came to be realized.

Pausch reflects on how "really cool" it was to meet his childhood idol, Captain Kirk, and even "cooler" to have the captain visit his research lab.

I've thought on that. Jesus is not my idol: He's my God, Lord, and Savior. I remember Him answering a prayer of mine on the morning of my fifth birthday. These days He comes to my lab every Sunday, every Friday, and every other day, to see what I'm doing with words, and suggest how I can work them better. He has plans for me, plans to take me where few men or women have gone before.

Celebrated astrophysicist and planetary scientist Neil deGrasse Tyson tells CNN anchor Erin Burnett, in the video *Go Out of This World With Neil deGrasse Tyson*, that the universe is headed for its doom. "Get over it," he advises. Then he adds, "The end I just described is a slow death."²

I've thought on that. Maybe that's the dream Jesus will let me fulfill: to meet the charismatic Tyson and tell him about the wonderful place where few men have gone before: Jesus has plans to take us there.

¹ To show that he felt as good as he looked. His words and calisthenics are all there for the seeing and hearing at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ji5_MqicxSo&t=260s.

² <https://plus.cnn.com/plus/interview-club/interview/kiPunLIZ/go-out-of-this-world-with-neil-degrasse-tyson/answer/860229d1-649b-452b-8e3f-21ef3417a181>, accessed Apr. 7, 2022.

Lael Caesar is an associate editor of Adventist Review Ministries. Until the month of June, 2022.

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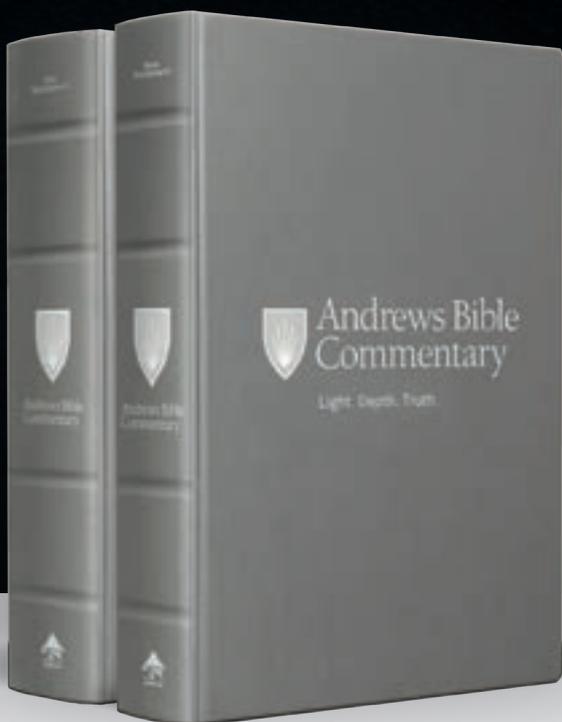
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