

Youth Messenger

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Editor: Brian Jaksic
 Associate Editor: Barbara Monteiro
 Design/Layout: Katherine Lee

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It Is Time

*It is time to be brave; it is
 time to be true;
 It is time to be finding the
 thing you can do;
 It is time to put by the dream
 and the sigh,
 And work for the cause that
 is holy and high.*

*It is time to be kind; it is
 time to be sweet,
 To be scattering roses for
 somebody's feet;
 It is time to be sowing; it is
 time to be growing;
 It is time for the flowers of
 life to be blowing.*

*It is time to be lowly and
 humble of heart;
 It is time for the lilies of
 meekness to start;
 For the heart to be white,
 and the steps to be right,
 And the hands to be weaving
 a garment of light.*

— Mary Wheaton Lyon

Editorial

Challenges

During my recent trip to the South American countries where I was attending youth seminars, conventions and youth workshops, a wonderful opportunity was given me to hold conversations with many young people from various backgrounds. The topics discussed ranged from their years in the church to their convictions about salvation, church membership, education and, in particular, the relationship between modern society and their personal connection with Christ. As we discussed these things, a number of them expressed gratitude for being able to speak freely and openly with a more senior person in the faith about some of their struggles, doubts, temptations, and aspirations.

We hope to promote more of this type of open dialogue with our youth, that you young people may enjoy more fully the assurance that you have a church family genuinely interested in your present needs, as well as your future, both in this world and in the great, glorious eternity.

Living in a world of stimulating ideas, different social and economic structures, and constant pressures, we realize that our young people face unique challenges. The influences at work, schools, and universities do not usually tend to promote faith. Yet the needs of the youth are not only physical or intellectual; most importantly, they are spiritual and social.

To fill these needs they often rely heavily on the church. How their

needs or expectations are met can often influence their attitudes about faith in general. That is why we want to establish quality relationships with our youth.

Today's young people are inundated with decisions about jobs, schools, universities, entertainment, clothing, choice of music, and possible marriage (to name just a few). The church needs to present faith in Christ as a dependable guiding factor for every aspect of life.

To young people who loathe the thought of hypocrisy, Christ offers the challenge: Make your experience with Jesus real. Taste and see that the Lord is good. The pious "holier-than-thou" snobbery of the Pharisees had no place in the life of Christ. When you come in contact with those of other religions and/or no religion, they will not ask what you believe, but why you believe.

People want to see practical evidences of Christianity. Are there any evidences of a changed life? Are justification and sanctification a reality in us or just a theory?

People are turned off by those who just thoughtlessly boast, "We are the ones, we are the chosen ones, the peculiar people" without showing the fruits of genuine Christianity. Another thing people look for is a warm atmosphere in the church. What can you do to make your church a friendly place, responsive to the needs of others? All have a need for acceptance and to be nurtured in the warmth and love of Christ. By personal experience of Christ's converting power we not only draw others to the Saviour, but we get a chance to share in the great finishing work, to hasten the day when Jesus will come to take His faithful ones home to that better land.—B. Jaksic. 🌿

The Book of Truth

*“All scripture is
given by inspiration of God . . .”
(2 Timothy 3:16).*

by Daniel Campodonico — Genova, Italy

Is the Bible really a book inspired by God? Is it possible to consider it as an authority for history and a good guide of faith? Or is it merely a collection of myths and legends? Do evidences exist to prove that it is a book of truth—evidences that prove its authority in matters of faith and history?

These are only some of the questions we can ask when we open this book and confront its message. If we put the Bible to the test, we will discover that it is truly the book of truth concerning both faith and history. The evidences which prove the divine inspiration of the Bible are the following:

- 1) its indestructibility and permanency;
- 2) its unity;
- 3) its beneficent power;
- 4) its prophecies;
- 5) its historical truthfulness.

Its indestructibility and permanency

“The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.” Isaiah 40:8. God declares that His Word lasts forever,

unlike the flowers that bloom and adorn nature with their scent and colors for only a few days before fading.

Over the past centuries, the Bible was forbidden, burnt, confiscated, destroyed. Strict laws and decrees were made in order to prevent it from being circulated, and to prevent its message of peace, love, and hope from reaching people. It was sneered, mocked, and a quick disappearance and end were predicted for it.

In our century, too, many conscience-opposing totalitarian regimes have tried to forbid and destroy God’s Word. Most of these regimes have fallen and today the Bible is still here in our hands, ready to let us know its message. The whole Bible, or parts of it, have been translated into more than 2,000 languages and every year millions of copies are printed and spread throughout the world.

Its unity

“For I am the Lord, I change not.” Malachi 3:6.

The Bible is not just one book. It consists of 66 books written by about 40 authors over a period of 1,500 years. The various authors lived during different ages and were

of different social and cultural origins. For instance, the author of many psalms was David, a shepherd chosen as a king; the author of the Pentateuch (the first five books) was Moses, a Jew educated at the court of Pharaoh; John was a fisherman who wrote one gospel, three letters and the Revelation; Ezekiel, the author of an important book, was a priest deported to Babylon during the time of the captivity.

Notwithstanding, the Bible presents a unified message. In it there are no contradictions, no inconsistencies, no conflicting ideas. This is logical, as the inspirer of these books is God, and He states of Himself that He does not change.

Every page of the Bible is willing to let us know that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. The only begotten Son is Jesus, who died for the salvation of us sinners.

Its beneficent power

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:16.

The words of the Bible have a beneficial influence on man and the power to change him. Millions of people have experienced for themselves the power of the word of God. Thieves, murderers, intemperate people, swindlers, blasphemers and others have become honest, pure, kind, temperate, polite people of trust. How was this possible? It was possible because these people listened to God’s word

and accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour, becoming a new creature and living to the glory of God.

All who read this wonderful book and follow its teachings will be able to experience this power in their life.

Its prophecies

“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” Isaiah 46:9, 10.

In the Bible there are about 1,000 prophecies, almost one on every page. A prophecy is the announcement of a future event through divine inspiration. The only method of proving whether a prophecy is right or wrong is to see



whether the announced event is fulfilled. If we put the biblical prophecies to the test, we will see that they pass that exam. It is possible to state that history confirms the biblical predictions.

The prophets announced the destruction of Ninevah, Babylon, Jerusalem, and all this happened. They announced in detail the time and place of the Messiah's birth, His life, and His death—and that all happened without a detail unfulfilled. These are only two examples.

It is necessary to have in mind that many prophecies refer to future events, for example, the second coming of Jesus and the purification of this planet to bring it back to the condition of Eden. It is possible to be sure that these prophecies, too, will be fulfilled in the exact way. For this reason, the apostle Peter exhorts us: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1:19.

Its historical truthfulness

"And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." Luke 19:40.

Although the Bible is not a history textbook, it is full of historical, cultural and social reports and references. Kings, pharaohs, people, places, wars and other historical details are quoted. Before the archaeological discoveries, much of this historical data was considered false and unreliable; consequently the Bible was viewed as a mass of

tales, myths, and legends. But the archaeological discoveries of the past 150–200 years have only confirmed the validity of the historical references of this book.

Among the many discoveries we can remember, some allow us to confirm the exactness of the biblical texts. Archaeology has proven that:

- 1) The use of writing existed already before Moses—not only in Egypt, in Mesopotamia, but also in Palestine (Exodus 17:14).
- 2) The Hittites were not a legendary people, but a people who really existed (Genesis 15:20).
- 3) The historical references in the book of Daniel are correct.
- 4) The biblical text of the Old Testament has been accurately handed down.
- 5) The history of patriarchs is in harmony with the usages and customs of that historical period.
- 6) The writings of the New Testament are correct (Luke 1:3, 4; 1 John 1:3, 4).

Conclusion

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Revelation 1:3.

As we can see, these evidences allow us to prove the reliability of the Bible. We can open this book with confidence that we will find in it truths and not tales, a guide for our life, the way to salvation from our human frailties, and hope for the future.

Dear reader, open your Bible every day, read some pages of this wonderful book and do not be afraid that you are losing any time in so doing. 🌿

The Bible and Archaeology



by John J. Skorich – North Carolina, U. S. A.

The prophet Isaiah received the message from the Lord God of heaven and earth in the form of a question and an answer. God asked: "Who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me." Isaiah 45:21. What God is trying to tell us is that He is the only one who knows the past from the eternity; He is the only one who really knows what is happening in our world today; and He is the only one who knows what the future will be from now through eternity.

All the knowledge that pertains to the human race and that is important for our salvation is recorded in the Bible. Ellen White wrote the following words in her book *Education*, page 173: "The Bible is the most ancient and the most comprehensive history that men possess. It came fresh from the fountain of eternal truth, and throughout the ages a divine hand has preserved its purity. It lights up the far-distant past, where human research in vain seeks to penetrate. In God's word only do we behold the power that laid the foundations of the earth and that stretched out the heavens. Here only do we find an authentic account of the origin of nations. Here only is given a history of our race unsullied

by human pride or prejudice." Further, on page 178, she continues, "The history which the great I AM has marked out in His word, uniting link after link in the prophetic chain, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tells us where we are today in the procession of the ages, and what may be expected in the time to come. All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order."

These are shocking statements for a skeptic. Yet they are true. Of course, God is never going to remove all doubt. There must be room for a man's faith. However, God provides many solid facts that are designed to strengthen our faith in Him and His word. Biblical archaeology, even without trying to prove the Bible, is doing just that. I have selected a few of the latest and quite amazing discoveries that will strengthen your faith in God and His word. Please join me in the search of the archaeological discoveries:

Victory Stone

Last summer, archaeologists discovered the one-square-foot fragment of a victory stone in northern Israel. This victory stone, from the 9th century B.C., was written in Aramaic and contains the first non-biblical ref-

erence to the dynasty of King David. Specifically, it refers to a battle that involved David's great-great-grandson Asa, King of Judah (913–873 B.C.). King Asa, according to 2 Chronicles chapters 14–16, was one of Judah's few kings who were faithful to God. He tried to rid the kingdom of idolatry and won many battles with the help of the Lord, including the great battle against a million-soldier-strong Ethiopian army.

Clay Bullae

In October 1975, Professor Nahman Avigad of the Hebrew University purchased four bullae (a bulla is a small lump of clay impressed with a seal bearing a person's signature and it was attached to an ancient document). To these four bullae were eventually added



over 250. All of them were dated back to Jeremiah's time shortly before the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

Two of the seal impressions carry names found in the Bible. One of them has the name of Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe (see chapter 36). Its literal translation reads as follows: "Belonging to Berekhyahu, son of Neriyaahu the scribe." Another bulla carries the name of King Jehoiakim's son Yerahme'el, who was sent to arrest Baruch and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 36:26). Finally, the last seal impression was excavated by the late archaeologist Yigal Shiloh and it reads: "Belonging to Gemaryahu, son of Shaphan" (Jeremiah 36:10).

Two more names were discovered, not on the seal impressions, but on the seals themselves. One seal reads: "Belonging to Seriahu, son of Neriyaahu." Seriah was the brother of Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe (Jeremiah 51:59–64). The second seal ring belonged to Hanan, son of Hilkiyahu the priest. This ring may have belonged to the son of the high priest Hilkiyah who found a scroll of the law in the temple during the reign of King Josiah of Judah (639–609 B.C., 2 Kings 22:8).

Another recently discovered seal may have belonged to Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab of Israel (874–853 B.C.) and the daughter of Ethba'al, king of a major Phoenician city, Sidon. The seal is carved in the Phoenician style and below the heathen images there are four letters that in mirror image spell "yzbl", Jezebel. They are written in mirror image form so that they will be read correctly when the seal is impressed in the clay.

King Hezekiah's Tunnel

In 1867, British Captain Charles Warren and Sergeant Britles discovered and explored the famous "Warren's Shaft." This shaft was a part of the water system that was dug during the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah. King Hezekiah dug the tunnel to improve the water supply of Jerusalem before the Assyrian siege of the city under Sennacherib (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:2–4, 30). In 1880 boys that were playing inside the tunnel discovered the Siloam Inscription in the wall, 20 feet from the Siloam Pool. The Inscription reads: ". . . Breakthrough. And this was the account of the breakthrough. While the laborers were still working with their picks, each toward the other, and while there were still three cubits to be broken through, the voice of each was heard calling to the other, because there was a . . . in the rock to the south and to the north. And at the moment of the breakthrough, the laborers struck each toward the other, pick against pick. the water flowed from the spring to the pool for 1,200 cubits. And the height of the rock above the heads of the laborers was 100 cubits."

This was an amazing engineering feat for those days (around 700 B.C.)—to start digging at the opposite ends of the tunnel and meet each other.


The Tomb of Caiaphas

Underneath what is now a stretch of road in Jerusalem's Peace Forest, to the south of the Golden Dome of the Rock mosque, workers accidentally uncovered an ancient burial cave. Inside the cave they dis-

covered 12 ossuaries (bone boxes). These were used in the period roughly one hundred years before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. The deceased was placed in a recess carved into the wall of a burial cave and after the flesh had decomposed, the bones were collected and placed in an ossuary-container made of decorated limestone. Inscriptions on the two of them carry the family name of the Caiaphas family and one of them may have held the remains of the high priest Caiaphas, who interrogated Jesus and handed Him over to the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate for the trial and final crucifixion (Matthew 26:57–68).

Paul's Prison in Caesarea

Archaeologists have uncovered a building that seems to be King Herod's Praetorium in the seaside city of Caesarea. This building, called praetorium, includes a palace, administrative offices, a bath house, and number of courtyards. The building is significant because it was the apostle Paul's prison for two years before he was sent to Rome. In Acts 23:35 we read that the governor Felix said: "I will hear you when your accusers also have come. And he commanded him (Paul) to be kept in Herod's Praetorium" (NKJV).

These discoveries and many others speak of the accuracy of the Bible. The Word of God has never failed and it never will. Through His Word, nature, history, archaeological discoveries, and the changed lives of real people, God speaks to us and calls us back to Him. Will you not answer His call and come back to Him? 

Wanted, Men of

*Men of principle and courage
Are the men we need today,
They who will their firm convictions
E'er acknowledge and obey.
They who stand when all oppose them,
They who truth will e'er befriend,
Are the men our world is needing,
Rights and virtues to defend.*

*Men of principle and courage,
Men who'll dare to stand alone,
Men who make great sacrifices
To uphold the view they own,
Men who, conscientious ever,
Waver not from side to side,
Are the jewels of a nation,
Rarely found, but dearly prized.*

*Men of principle and courage,
Who for liberty will stand,
Not alone for toleration,
But for freedom pure and grand,
Who will fight life's hottest battles,
Not with sword, or carnal power,*

Principle and Courage

*But with truth—God's only weapon—
To dispel dark error's hour.*

*Men of principle and courage,
Who will never compromise
With the foes of their convictions,
Who above themselves will rise,
Self-forgetting in the conflict,
Striving not for worldly gain,
But who try to raise the nation
To a higher, nobler plane.*

*Men of principle and courage
Number few within our land,
Yet their presence much is needed—
For them now there's much demand.
Shall we now augment their number,
Though 'gainst odds we e'er may fight,
To uphold the views of conscience,
To stand firmly for the right?*

— John McCarthy

To All Young People Around the World

My Dear Young Friends,

Greetings in the precious name of Jesus. It has been quite some time since you have received a letter from my desk. I think it was in 1997 just before the memorable Youth Congress in Hungary. Since that time a lot has happened in the world, among us as a people, and to me personally. The Lord took me through some experiences that have certainly brought me closer to Him, and made me realize how fragile our lives are. However, He has also showed me how precious we are to our Lord.

During my travels it has been my privilege to meet many of you whom I have not met before, and also to make new friends. We are not only friends, but sons and daughters of God, which make us the members of one family — the Heavenly Family. We all need to give praise to our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ, for if it were not for Him who loves us so much that He gave His life for us, we would perhaps have never met. But Christ made the difference. Through Him we are also the heirs of salvation. Think of this, the children of the Creator of the Universe, you and I, if we accept Jesus as our personal Saviour. A note of caution: We are not His if we accept Him by profession only; we need to testify of Him in our lives.

Sister E.G. White presents some

very interesting questions: "Suppose that today Christ should appear in the clouds of heaven, who . . . would be ready to meet Him? Suppose we should be translated into the kingdom of heaven just as we are. Would we be prepared to unite with the saints of God, to live in harmony with the royal family, the children of the heavenly King? What preparation have you made for the judgment? Have you made your peace with God? . . . Are you seeking to help those around you, those in your home, those in your neighborhood, those with whom you come in contact that are not keeping the commandments of God? . . . Remember that profession is worthless without a practice that enters into the daily life. God knows whether we are keeping His law in truth. He knows just what we are doing, just what we are thinking and saying. Are we getting ready to meet the King? When He comes in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, will you be able to say, 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us' (Isa. 25:9)?" — In Heavenly Places, p. 356.

Well, have you read this? What do you think? Yes, all of us must take some serious accounting of our lives. My trip to Romania, August 1997, has caused me to count every day as another gift and a blessing from God. Perhaps most of you know of the ordeal

I went through with my two young brothers and friends. All three of us ended up in the hospital with cuts and broken bones. But the loving Saviour did not allow our lives to be extinguished. He preserved that which only He can give. Now, our Lord is directing us to tell the world of His saving power. My dear brother and son in Christ, George Nicholson-Nikolov, is a full-time Bible worker in Australia, and my dear brother and friend, Aurel Covalenco, is also in Australia. Their wish is to proclaim the love of Jesus to all with whom they come in contact. I personally thank the Lord for being able to continue the work for which He has called me. Since the youth congress in Hungary, I have attended the GC Council meeting in Virginia and a youth meeting in Los Angeles. This event was well organized by the youth. Sister Susie Lausevic, Brother Jay Pamintuan, and many others put a tremendous effort into the planning of these meetings. The Lord indeed blessed all present.

Johannesburg, South Africa

After arriving home to my family, it was a unique joy for my wife and all our family to attend our daughter Esther's graduation from medical

school. After being with them only a short time, the Lord called me to go together with Brother B. Burec to South Africa. There we spent six weeks with Brother and Sister Doss and their dear children. We held many meetings with most of our brethren there. What impressed me very much about our brethren in South Africa is their praising the Lord. Before every meeting there was singing. Many of us need to adopt this custom. The meetings were held in Johannesburg, Soweto, and other places. We also visited many brethren and sisters in their homes. I was especially happy to meet again Brother Siphoshe Moshoshe whom most of you who attended the Pacific Region Youth Congress in New Zealand and the World Youth Congress in Bobbio Pellice, Italy, would remember. Now, the good news. While there I met with a group of very keen young people, and we made plans to hold a Youth Congress in South Africa in December 1998 for the whole African continent. We plan to invite all who can possibly come from any and every part of the world. Soon we shall give you more details.

Elim Heights, N.S.W., Australia

Elim Heights Youth Camp has witnessed the gathering of many represen-



Attendees at the youth congress in Australia



Discussion group in Australia

journey that would last three months. I left home on January 9, 1998. The first stop was Tahiti. If you ever wish to experience warmth and true welcome by people, then go to Tahiti. Our brethren

there are especially good at that. There is a brand-new church that can accommodate up to 200. We held meetings in that church. It was good to see many in attendance. We studied, and we praised the Lord and related experiences. October 1998 was set to hold a Seminar. Let us pray that the Lord will help us to hold this much needed event.

Fortaleza, Brazil

After leaving Tahiti, the next stop was the Youth Congress in Fortaleza, in northern Brazil. Fortaleza means fortress. It was indeed the Lord's fortress during that memorable Youth Congress. There were about 700 gathered to study, pray, and praise the Lord. Many timely topics were presented that concern young people in particular. Workshops were held on courtship and marriage, health and missionary work. Every evening there were spiritual studies presented that covered such timely messages as "Cleansing of the Soul Temple," "In the World But Not of the World," "From Carnal to Spiritual Nature — Justification and Sanctification," and many others. The highlight was, as always is the case, the Sabbath. "The Visions of the Present and the Future

World" was the theme presented for the divine service. The Holy Spirit touched many hearts to the call to surrender to Jesus. More than 300 came forward in demonstration of their decision to give their lives to Christ. It was difficult saying good-bye to these young people. But when the parting hour came, we all expressed the hope that we shall meet again.

Sao Paulo, Brazil

"A Porta, o Principe da Paz" — "The Prince of Peace at the Door" was the theme at this very spiritual, active, warm and lively youth meeting. The camp was situated in the beautiful hills about 70 km outside Sao Paulo. The views were breathtaking. The lovely green hills and the beautiful weather added to the atmosphere of youthful activities. "Peace in the Heart," "Peace in the Home", "Peace in the Church," and "Peace in Heaven" were the topics presented and discussed. There were also question-and-answer meetings. Praising and singing to the Lord filled the whole of the camp for most of the time. At this meeting the brethren invited me to attend a gathering for the youth in July of this year. They are expecting "a big number" of youth to come. My response was, "If it is the Lord's will, I shall come."

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

If you wish to meet young people who want to know the truth and many issues that concern the youth, then go to Rio. For me it was indeed an experience. For the first time in my life, by the Lord's help, I spoke for over six-and-a-half hours with only a short break, without losing my voice. And not only I, but my dear brother in Christ and good friend, Marcus Pedrasas, who was my translator for the whole time, did not get hoarse either. We were not

able to accommodate all the questions. We promised that we would continue "some other time."

Arequipa, Perú

"De la mano con Jesus" — "Holding Hands With Jesus," composed by Sister Guisela Gutierrez Dias, was the theme song and the theme of the youth congress held just outside this "city on the hill" situated 2,200 meters above sea level. A high school was kindly provided free-of-charge to the more than 700 youth and brethren that attended. The meetings began on Monday, February 16, and closed after Sabbath, February 21, 1998. The thrust of the message was evangelism. Many other topics were studied and discussed: "Justification and Sanctification," "Christian Standards," "Why Some Youth Leave the Church," "Living for Christ," and "Health" to mention just a few areas covered. The highlight of the congress was the baptism of 20 souls who testified of their decision to follow their Lord. Our young people in Peru love to praise their Lord in a way that He will accept, the praise most favorable, that is, through the choir. There were many choirs, almost from every field and church represented. They all had different gowns identifying from which field they came. The meetings closed with an appeal to follow Christ and work for Him. The response was overwhelming. All called for another meeting not too far in the future.

Quito, Ecuador

If you want to visit "The Center of the Earth" and also a very high "City on the Hill," or rather the city on the mountain, 2,800 meters above sea level, then you must visit Quito. They will take you to "The Center of the Earth," the equator line latitude 0°, about 26 km from Quito.

Papeete, Tahiti

Soon after the Youth Congress in Australia, it was time for me to start my

About 3 hours by car from Quito in a place called Santo Domingo (literally “Holy Sunday”) is where the youth from many parts of Ecuador traveled to attend this “very wonderful gathering.” Due to the unusually heavy rains and broken roads, many who wished to come could not. However, despite the conditions, there were more than 200 in attendance. Here, as in other meetings, we had lectures and workshops that proved a wonderful blessing. The young people took a particular interest in the discussions, this being the first time that they had had such meetings where the opportunity was given them to express their ideas about the truths we hold, and other issues that are particularly of interest to them. We also held open forums where many questions were answered. Such timely topics studied and discussed were “Youth Ministry,” “Conversion,” “Changing into the Image of Christ,” “Relationships — Courtship and Marriage,” and finally, on Sunday, March 11, 1998, we had to sing the rather sad, yet full of hope song, “God Be With You Till We Meet Again.” It was not easy to say good-bye. To the question, “Shall we meet again soon?” all hands went up.

Venezuela

On Monday, March 19, Brethren

Romero, Jaime Campos, and I set out for Venezuela. Brother Campos went directly to Caracas, while Brother Romero and I went to Bogotá, Colombia. There we visited our church, talked with some brethren and prayed together. In the afternoon, we continued on to Venezuela. In the evening we arrived at Brother Romero’s house. It was good to meet his family and some other young people. To go to the camp where the youth congress was to be held, we traveled about four hours by bus on a rather dangerous road. I would call it the road for the brave. Not that I was very brave — my prayers were continuous during the whole journey. Thank the Lord we arrived safely at the camp.

Here again, the meetings centered around the need to accept Christ as our personal Savior and be His witnesses. Such themes as “Transformed Into His Image,” “Come Out and Be Ye Separate,” “Home-Family,” “Christ Is Coming Again,” and “Outer Space Travel” were studied and discussed. The open forum was very important to most young people since it gave them the opportunity to ask many questions and to receive answers. It was a real joy for all when three souls were baptized. The Sabbath, as in all other conventions, proved a great blessing. After the service, many young people responded to the call to give their lives

to the Lord, and not only young, but also many adults and visitors. Finally, on Sunday, March 15, it was time to say good-bye. “Shall we meet again?” was the question asked by all. Yes, we shall meet again, that is, if it is the Lord’s will.

Now, my dear young brothers, sisters, and friends, we need to send our

petitions to our heavenly Father to grant us faith, the victorious faith, that will hold us in the hand of Jesus until He shall come to take us to the beautiful home that He has prepared for us.

Your brother and friend in Christ,

B. Jaksic



First youth convention of Central America

In the coastal city of La Ceiba, Honduras, C. A., the first Youth Convention in Central America was held from April 6–11, 1998. Young people came from Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Honduras. The young people gathered were about 80% of the attendees. On the last day of the convention, about 400 people were present. One of the many happy events of this youth gathering was the baptism of 20 souls—most of them young people.

Daniel Dumitru



Choir from the church of Tegucigalpa

Upcoming Youth Conferences

- July 22–26, 1998
- July 29 to August 2, 1998
- October 19–29, 1998
- December 18–27, 1998

- Sao Paulo, Brazil
- Colombia
- French Polynesia
- South Africa

(This will be the first Youth Congress held for the entire African Continent.)
More details will be given later for each of the above conferences.



BEWARE!

In Proverbs 6:16–19 are listed 7 things that we should be sure to avoid. In the following puzzle are 14 words which are found in those verses. They can go up, down, backwards, forwards, or diagonally. Can you find them?

P	F	H	S	I	S	G	N	X	C	P	Z	A	E	M	L	X
I	R	A	A	O	N	N	N	V	I	R	J	H	V	V	I	H
V	L	O	L	X	W	N	O	C	V	P	X	O	L	R	R	V
D	I	L	U	S	V	E	O	I	V	O	X	T	R	V	Z	M
X	E	O	J	D	E	D	T	C	T	G	K	B	S	B	W	X
G	S	O	R	S	W	R	E	H	E	A	D	V	Z	B	P	K
I	T	K	O	S	N	J	B	K	A	N	N	I	C	Z	C	A
Z	I	V	R	V	W	M	P	V	C	V	T	I	L	W	Z	K
F	B	R	N	G	B	X	E	F	K	I	K	H	G	T	O	N
F	I	U	O	Z	S	H	P	M	L	D	W	W	O	A	E	G
E	U	A	R	T	G	G	F	Q	Z	H	Q	N	D	R	M	G
I	B	K	C	B	C	L	W	R	S	N	G	R	H	Q	E	I
H	V	O	L	L	U	V	P	Z	R	U	O	T	D	S	X	X
C	F	H	W	C	E	Y	W	K	E	C	E	O	D	G	T	D
S	X	J	B	F	C	C	H	B	S	R	O	N	Y	G	B	Q
I	H	L	X	D	T	M	T	I	B	L	A	J	L	B	X	S
M	K	Y	Q	O	K	D	D	M	B	H	F	D	L	W	J	D



The Gentle Giant

by Barbara Monteiro — Virginia, U.S.A.

The giraffe is the world's tallest animal, and today it is found only in Africa. This gentle giant is so tall that even a newborn calf can be 6 feet in height and grow 9 inches in a single week. The giraffe may seem awkward-looking, but to see it in motion is to behold a certain imperial grace. The only animal even remotely like it is the okapi. The giraffe is generally mild-mannered but has the power to render a deadly kick with its 6-foot legs, usually aimed only at predators seeking to snatch its young. Its cloven hoof may be as large as 12 inches in length and width, but the creature can walk only on hard, firm earth.

There are 12 species of giraffes, each distinguishable by their particular colorings and markings. In equatorial regions where sunlight is direct and shadows dark, their spots and lines stand out strongly. In cooler regions with softer light and diffused shadows, the markings are paler and gradually fade into white.

Even with its long neck, the giraffe has the same number of cervical vertebrae as man—7. It grows to be 14 feet tall and can weigh 2,500 to 3,000 lbs. Though this swift

creature can run 35 miles an hour, it does tend to tire out quickly due to its heavy bone structure.

The favorite foods of giraffes are the twig tips and leaves of the acacia tree. The giraffe is equipped with long, hairy lips to protect against the stab of thorns and an 18-inch tongue to pluck the watery leaves; acacia leaves can consist of up to 74% water. The animal's oversize lungs compensate for the extra volume of dead air in the long trachea. Without this extra air-pumping capacity, a giraffe would breathe the same used air over and over again. And in order to drive the blood 8 feet up to its head, the giraffe's heart is exceptionally large and thick-musled, with a blood pressure 2 or 3 times that of man—probably the highest in any animal. Control valves and a special network of blood vessels in the head work as a circulatory buffer to keep the blood pressure from hemorrhaging when the animal lowers its long





neck to drink. This also prevents draining when the head is rapidly raised.

Well adapted for reaching up, but awkward in reaching down, in order for giraffes to feed on a bush, drink from a pool or lick salt in the dirt, they have to spread their front legs wide apart, making these creatures an easy prey for lions. They are also vulnerable whenever they sleep lying down—a practice often avoided; they usually prefer standing.

Interestingly, a herd of giraffes spotting a lion afar off may walk toward it to get a better view, making the enemy hesitate to attack prey that is stalking him. Few adult giraffes are captured by predators, but 3/4 of giraffe babies die in their first year to lions, leopards, cheetahs, crocodiles, and hyenas, as well as to disease. This natural cropping helps keep giraffe numbers from outstripping the available food supply. But it also contains a spiritu-

al lesson for all youth. Our young need to especially be on guard against enemy attacks. Often when we overestimate our growing strength and maturity, the enemy of our souls can readily pounce on us with his deceptions.

While giraffes possess powerful weapons of offense and defense, they rarely do damage to one another. Competition for females is done by the males' hammering each other with their heads. Usually they will stop when they simply become tired. Herds of around 70 gather in family groups of 4 to 20 individuals.

One interesting point is that the giraffe rarely makes a sound, except on rare occasions when a cow will beckon her calf with a low moo. There is a certain quiet dignity about these animals which should make us pause to ponder: Of what character qualities might the Lord be seeking to remind us, as we observe these majestic natural skyscrapers?

What does God want to teach us through the giraffes?

The following thoughts come to mind: "The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools." Ecclesiastes 9:17. "God, who created everything lovely and beautiful that the eye rests upon, is a lover of the beautiful. He shows us how He estimates true beauty. The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is in His sight of great price. Shall we not seek earnestly to gain that which God estimates as more valuable than costly dress, or pearls, or gold? The inward adorning, the grace of meekness, a spirit in harmony with the heavenly angels, will not lessen true dignity of character, or make us less lovely here in this world."—*The Youth's Instructor*, May 6, 1897.

"We have in our ranks too many who are restless, talkative, self-commending, and who take the liberty to put themselves forward, having no reverence for age, experience, or office. The church is suffering today for help of an opposite character—modest, quiet, God-fearing men, who will bear disagreeable burdens when laid upon them, not for the name, but to render service to their Master, who died for them."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 340.

"Christ never murmured, never uttered discontent, displeasure, or resentment. He was never disheartened, discouraged, ruffled, or fretted. He was patient, calm, and self-possessed under the most exciting and trying circumstances. All His works were

performed with a quiet dignity and ease, whatever commotion was around Him. Applause did not elate Him. He feared not the threats of His enemies. He moved amid the world of excitement, of violence and crime, as the sun moves above the clouds. Human passions and commotions and trials were beneath Him. He sailed like the sun above them all. Yet He was not indifferent to the woes of men. His heart was ever touched with the sufferings and necessities of His brethren, as though He Himself was the one afflicted. He had a calm inward joy, a peace which was serene. His will was ever swallowed up in the will of His Father. Not My will but Thine be done, was heard from His pale and quivering lips."—*This Day With God*, p. 263. 🐘



Why Wait?

*O ye who know the truth and feel
Its power, why wait?
Delay may mean so much, dear soul,
Perchance, "too late."*

*Obey and lo! A blessing sweet
Will fall like dew.
The light which lighteth all the earth
Will shine for you.*

*List not to Satan's wily words;
They but beguile.
Push forward, trembling one, and bask
In Jesus' smile.
Step out upon God's word by faith;
It will uphold;
Angels are near, and naught can harm.
Be brave, be bold.*

*Lift ye the cross, though flesh may shrink,
And you will know
The peace which, like a mighty stream,
Doth onward flow.*

—Eliza H. Morton

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