

Il-Lehen tat-Tama

"THE VOICE OF HOPE"

47, Mannarino Road, Birkirkara BKR 08, Malta - www.adventist.org.mt. Tel. 00356/21470238

BY THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN MALTA

YOUR HOME IS ALMOST READY, WILL YOU GO IN?

One day, Jesus told His disciples that He was going to prepare a home for them: "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:2,3)

This home is not something we can experience here and now. It is not a part of the present world and life. It is a heavenly reality and we will enjoy it when Jesus, according to His promise, will come again to take us with Him.

Our present homes, however good and nice they may be, will not last forever, as everything that is part of this present world. Only our character will remain, if it has been purified and developed by Jesus' grace. But the home that Jesus is preparing will last for ever and ever as all that God does.

We work so much for our present homes, and we do not feel well if we

haven't one that we can call "ours". But we risk to invest all our physical and spiritual energies for what passes away, and forget that the most valuable home is the one that Jesus Himself is preparing for us and which, one day, we will receive for free.

The book of Revelation calls this home, "New Jerusalem," the city of God. It is so wonderful and extraordinary, that the prophet John can only describe it as made of all the most precious things he could find in His world: pearls, gold, silver, precious stones (Rev. 21).

The ancient patriarch Abraham was living in Ur, one of the best and advanced cities of his time. But when God called him, he left that city, and spent the rest of his life "in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The patriarchs were happy to accept the new experience God was inviting them to live, for they were looking for a better country, "that is, a heavenly

country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them." (Hebrews 11:8-16).

Nowadays, God is calling for a people who may be ready to go in, when Jesus returns in glory, and the door of the New Jerusalem is open. Then a voice will be heard: "Come in my people, enter into the joy of your Lord." (Adapted from Matthew 25:23).

Will you be there, that moment, my brother and sister? Will those words be addressed even to you? Do you love Jesus and His heavenly home more than everything else? May your good will and Jesus grace lead you there to rejoice with Him and with all the others who are getting ready for that wonderful moment. May God's love give you joy now while you search for His love and truth.

Pastor Giovanni Leonardi

JOIN US IN STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD AND IN WORSHIP

Wednesday, 7.00 P.M.

Family Bible study in private homes. Call for the address of the meeting.

Friday, 7.00 P.M.

Songs and Bible meditation.

Saturday, 9.30 A.M.

Communitarian Bible study in groups. At present we are studying the extraordinary prophecies of the prophet Daniel.

Saturday, 11.00 A.M.

Divine service to worship God and listen to His Word.

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CHRISTIAN FAITH

AN ENEMY DEFEATED:
DEATH AND RESURRECTION

Death haunts human life in every age and every place. The oldest buildings in the world, the colossal pyramids of Gaza, are monuments to its poignant power in human consciousness.

The ancient Egyptians were preoccupied with death. It was the central theme in their religion. As soon as a Pharaoh ascended the throne, he started planning his tomb. And the elaborate paintings and exquisite artefacts that filled the royal burial chambers were designed to assist their occupants as they journeyed in the afterlife.

The Pharaohs tried to face death bravely, but the art of other ancient people reveals the sorrow and suffering it always brings. A large room in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens is filled with funerary monuments from ancient Greece. The faces on those stone reliefs are etched with grief. In one scene after another, a figure reaches out to someone dear—a mother, father, brother, child, or friend—but there is no contact. The dead are unresponsive, withdrawn, forever beyond their grasp.

The sad profiles of those ancient mourners, frozen in time, illustrate perfectly the apostle Paul's reference to those who grieve and have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13).

Until the advent of modern medicine, death was something everybody knew about firsthand. There wasn't a family of any size who hadn't lost a child and often a parent as well. In nineteenth-century America, someone once told me, a bride and groom who promised to love, honour, and cherish each other "until death do us part," had, on the average, 12 years together until that happened.

Nowadays, of course, things are drastically different, at least in the developed countries of the world. It is not unusual for children to reach adulthood without having lost a single close relative. We may hear about death and read about death, but for many of us it's a vague possibility, not a present reality.

Or is it? The truth is that death is all around us. In the past several months, thousands have perished in Iraq. In the United States last year, more than 43,000 died in traffic accidents. In Africa, the number of AIDS victims reaches into the millions. And all this on the heels of the twentieth century, "the century of death,"

as many call it, in which up to 120 million people died at the hands of their fellow humans.

In spite of its gruesome visage, people often try to paint a positive picture of death. Some respond with "sentimental acquiescence" Death comes to all of us, they purr, but there is no reason to fear it. The end of our existence is as natural as the beginning, and we should approach it with complete peace of mind.

The ancient Stoics looked on death with resignation. If something is bound to happen, don't stress over it, they argued. Accept it with equanimity. "I was not. I was. I am not. I care not," an ancient tombstone read.

In sharp contrast, the poems of William Ernest Henley and Dylan Thomas approach death with something like "desperate defiance." This life may be all we have, they concede, but we should hang on to it tenaciously. Resist death to the bitter end—that's their advice. "Beyond this place of wrath and tears looms but the horror of the shade," exclaimed Henley, "And yet the menace of the years finds and shall find me unafraid." In a similar vein Thomas cried out, "Do not go gentle into that good night. Rage, rage against the dying of the light."

The Christian view of death

None of these attitudes or their variations, ancient or modern, expresses the Christian response to humanity's deepest fear. The Christian perspective on death is more complicated than any of them. On the one hand, there is nothing sentimental in the way Christian faith views death. It looks death squarely in the face and sees exactly what it is. Death is a destroyer, an intruder, an enemy. It was not meant to be, and it is horrifying.

On the other hand, Christian faith looks past death. Death is undeniably powerful, but it is not supremely powerful. There is something, some-one, who is even more powerful. Furthermore, that power has confronted death and gained the victory over it. So, not only is death defeasible, death has been defeated: its power is broken, and its reign will end. So, even though death is still a part of things in this world, it is on its way out. The last word on human existence belongs not to death but to life. Let's look at each element in this perspective.

Seventh-day Adventist
Statement of Faith N°25:
Death and resurrection.

The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, the resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later. (Rom. 6:23; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Eccl. 9:5, 6; Ps. 146:3, John 11:11-14; Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; John 5:28, 29; Rev. 20:1-10.)

Death and sin in the Bible

In its first description of death, the Bible makes a crucial connection between death and sin. There is nothing natural about death. Death is a consequence of sin; it is the fruit of rebelling against God.

As described in the early chapters of Genesis, our first parents were meant to live forever, in perfect harmony with their environment and perfectly loyal to God. As long as they accepted God's sovereignty and faithfully served Him, their joy would know no end. Their obedience, however, was voluntary. Instead of forcing them to do His will, God invited them to do it. He gave them the freedom to accept or reject His love. Since God was the source of life, they would live as long as they remained connected with Him. If they rejected God, they would lose their connection to life, and eventually they would die.

As the book of Genesis describes it, "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat it you shall die'" (Gen. 2:16, 17, RSV). As these words suggest, death is a natural consequence of sin. It wasn't an arbitrary penalty that God imposed. God wasn't telling Adam what He would do to punish him if he sinned. He was warning him what would happen; in other words, what he was in effect doing to himself.

Centuries later, the apostle Paul makes a similar connection between death and sin. "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

If death is a consequence of sin, and sin doesn't belong, then death doesn't belong either. It was not part of God's original plan for humanity. According to the Bible, then, death is not our destiny. We are susceptible to death; we are mortal. But we are not meant for death. We were meant to live forever.

This view of death goes hand in hand with a certain view of life. It means that physical experience is an essential aspect of all our experience. We are fundamentally physical organisms in a physical world. We are not just bodies, of course. But the Bible knows nothing of human experience without a body.

This contradicts some popular views of the future. Many people believe that each person has a physical body and an immortal "soul" or "spirit." The two are connected during our lives, but when death comes, the body dies and the soul or spirit goes on to future experiences.

How the Bible looks at death

The Bible does not support this view, however. It uses the words "soul" and "spirit" quite differently. Consider this important verse in Genesis, as it appears in the most popular English version of the Bible: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).

The word for "breath" here could also be translated "spirit," and the expression "living soul" could also be translated "living being." According to this text, then, the first human life began when God placed breath in a body he had formed from the earth.

When someone dies, according to the Bible, the opposite happens: "the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7). At death, then, the person as such ceases to exist. Physical, mental, social, spiritual experience—everything that makes us what we are comes to an end. "The living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no more reward, and even the memory of them is lost. Their love and their hate and their envy have already perished; never again will they have any share in all that happens under the sun" (Eccl. 9:5, 6).

As the Bible uses the words, then, neither "soul" nor "spirit" refers to something that could exist apart from the body. The "soul" is the person as a whole, the entire being, body included. And the "spirit" is simply the animating influence that comes from God. It does not exist apart from the body; it is what makes the body alive. So, the body is essential to human life.

As the Bible describes it, a human being is not an incarcerated soul but an animated body. A person is a complex, highly integrated being, but not a combination of a material physical form and an immaterial substance. Because we are inherently physical beings, any future beyond death must include physical existence. And that is exactly what the Bible claims. Life after death begins with the resurrection of the body.

The earliest book in the New Testament describes this event in these words: "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have died." "For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first" (1 Thess. 4:13, 14, 16).

These verses tell us three important things about the life to come.

First of all, it is "eschatological." That is, it begins at the end of time. Until Christ calls them to life. God's people wait in the grave, a condition the Bible sometimes refers to as "sleep" (1 Thess. 4:13). Second, the future life is inherently social. It begins for everyone at the same time. We do not enter heaven one by one as our lives end. The dead along with the living meet Christ together in one glorious reunion. And forevermore their lives are linked to another and to him. Third, the power that raises the dead to live forever is the same power that brought Jesus back to life. Christian hope for the future is thus anchored in the past. It directly depends on our confidence that Jesus came to life from the dead.

Jesus and death

While it is true of everything that Christians believe, the centrality of Christ is nowhere more important than in the hope for life after death.

The apostle Paul puts it this way: "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain" (1 Cor. 15:13, 14).

To paraphrase, if Christ came to life

from the dead, then we have everything to hope for, and if he didn't, we have nothing to hope for. Everything depends on the resurrection of Jesus. Not only is this true of the life to come, it is true of life here and now.

And this brings us to a fourth element in the future life.

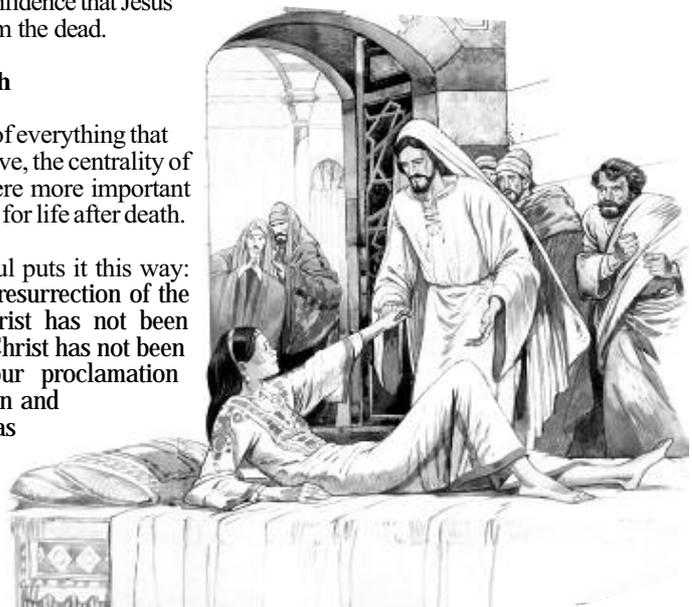
Although life after death does not begin until the return of Christ, the resurrection life begins as soon as we experience the saving power of Christ. For the apostle Paul, our solidarity with Christ in death and resurrection begins with baptism. Our old life comes to an end, and a new life begins.

We see this idea in passages such as Colossians 2:12, 13: "When you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses."

"So if you have been raised with Christ," Paul continues, "seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory" (Colossians 3:1-4).

The resurrection has both future and present dimensions.

[Continues on the next page]



As Jesus raised the young daughter of Jairus from the dead, so He will resurrect all his children at His return in glory.

SOCIAL LIFE

HAS HONESTY BEEN LOST?

Time was, when to be honest meant something. There were many old sayings: "Honesty is the best policy," "As honest as the rising Sun," "An honest day's work for an honest day's pay." Can we continue to say so?

Time was, when a man's integrity and his good name were matters of great importance to him. This doesn't mean, of course, that everybody was honest but, may it be that in our times the situation has become worse? We have come to live with dishonesty as a part of present living to such an extent, that we risk we don't even recognize it for what it is.

There are lots and lots of ways of fiddling: taking tools and materials from work, taking souvenirs from hotels, etc.

People try to do the customs man in our own country. It is our wits against his and there is a great glow of satisfaction, in getting away with something. And what about the Income Tax man? Are we honest enough to declare everything?

Even in sports! What about football? The many, many ways of kicking the man and not the ball! And what about injuries? A familiar sight nowadays is people who are involved in accidents

and who continue to appear injured and to act injured until the Insurance damages have been assessed. Then the limp disappears. Even in a minor accident, where no human beings are injured, it's amazing how a small bump, magically turns into seventy pounds of damage when a few other dents are hammered out!

Let's face it: it's not easy to be strictly honest. But are we even honest enough to be able to admit that we have some problems about honesty?

If we know there is a problem, then we can ask God to help us. And, even if sometimes it may appear difficult, with His help we can learn how to be honest in every thing.

God gives a great importance to honesty. For instance, the Bible says to the merchants: "You shall have honest scales, an honest ephah [a measure for solids], and an honest bath [a measure for liquids]" (Ezekiel 45:10). "Honest weights and scales are the LORD's; All the weights in the bag are His work" (Proverbs 16:11), which means that nobody should alterate them.

To everybody Jesus says to be honest in what we say, without trying to cheat people with false words: "But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For

whatever is more than these is from the evil one" (Matthew 5:37).

And the apostle Paul specifies: "Do not lie to one another" (Colossians 3:9).

To the soldiers who wished to enter the kingdom of God, John the Baptist commanded: "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages." (Luke 3:14).

In short, Christians are invited to be honest in all the aspect of life.

Somebody wrote: "As Christians, we bring our religion with us as we enter the workplace. Absolute honesty and integrity - as well as love, compassion, and justice - will characterize our conduct. While we seek to display these values ourselves, we will try to bring the best in others and to do what we can to make them realize their full potential."

The patriarch Job, misjudged by his friends, used the image of honest scales to ask for a better judgement: "Let me be weighed on honest scales, That God may know my integrity" (Job 31:6). Yes, God will judge everybody with honesty, both the honest person and the dishonest. May we all rejoice in His judgement when our honesty will be weighed on His scales.

Miss Rosalie Chetcuti

AN ENEMY DEFEATED (Continues from the previous page)

The resurrection of Christ thus provides us a basis for living with confidence here and now. When Christ came to life from the dead, He broke the power of death for all of us. Even though death is still a fearful enemy, it has suffered a mortal blow, and its reign will soon come to an end. As John Donne wrote, "Death, thou shalt die."

Death, a defeated enemy

The notion that death is a "conquered enemy" justifies the complex feelings we have in its presence.

First of all, it honours our revulsion as we look death in the eye. In spite of everything that people have said in recent years to demystify death and treat it as a

perfectly normal, natural process with nothing for us to fear, our hearts know better.

Death is horrible. It is the antithesis of life. It brings physical, mental, social, and spiritual existence to an end. It violates everything that God wants for us. It is an intruder and an enemy. Death is the ultimate fear. Richard Rice [a notion that death is a "conquered enemy" justifies the complex feelings we have in its presence.

But death does not have the last word. We can face it with confidence and hope, because Jesus fought it and defeated it. He died on the cross and rose from the tomb, and in doing so, he broke the power of death.

So, the great enemy has been conquered. Jesus' resurrection gives us the hope of life everlasting, and it gives us the power to live victoriously here and now. We can experience its death-conquering, life-transforming effects day by day as we await the day when death will be expelled from God's good world once and for all.

Dr. Richard Rice

[Richard Rice, Ph.D., is professor of religion at Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California. Article reprinted from, *Ministry, International Journal for pastors*, September 2004.]

Note 1: The Hebrew expression behind these words, literally "dying you shall die,"

does not mean that death would follow sin instantaneously. It means that once sin occurred, death was inevitable. Sooner or later, life was certain to come to an end.

Note 2: The expression "conditional immortality" is sometimes applied to this viewpoint. It expresses the conviction that eternal life was possible for human beings not because they possessed "natural immortality," that is, not because they were inherently immortal, but because they were loyal to God. They would receive life as long as they were connected to the Source of life. In other words, their immortality was conditional on their continued relationship to God.

NEWS FROM THE WORLD

2004 BAPTISMS IN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH PASS ONE MILLION MARK IN OCTOBER

Seventh-day Adventist General Conference Secretary Matthew Bediako reported that 1,006,492 people have been baptized and joined the Adventist Church so far this year as a result of church-growth initiatives. The one-million milestone has been reached only once before in Adventist church history. This brings world membership to a total of 13,663,497. On average, 2,756 people are being baptized each day.

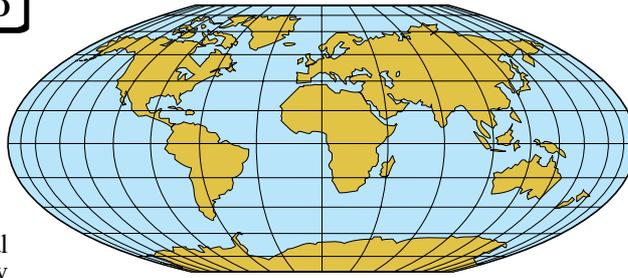
ITALY: ROMAN CATHOLIC FOCOLARINI AND SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS LIVE A SPIRITUAL RETREAT TOGETHER



Pastor Leonardi addressing the SDA-Focolarini meeting

For the second consecutive year (September 25-26), Seventh-day Adventists and Focolarini met at the Mariapoli Centre in Bra (Cuneo) to search for reciprocal knowledge and for friendship.

The Focolarini movement, born in the Roman Catholic Church by the initiative of Chiara Lubich and her friends, has the great merit of letting the great principle of love come down from the theoretical teaching and become a practical way of living. Their contribution consisted mostly of personal testimonies about Christian life. Pastor Giovanni Leonardi, special guest of the meeting on the part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, says that it is a privilege for him to share these testimonies with his Maltese community, for they



can help everybody in our Christian advancement.

Seventh-day Adventists, on their part, have offered their testimony about the importance of Jesus. In this perspective, Pastor Leonardi, led the group into two Bible studies. The first focused on Isaiah 53 and showed God's great love for us by giving Jesus as our Saviour. He took on Himself our sins and provided forgiveness and salvation for all those who believe in Him. The second study focused on John chapter

1, and revealed Jesus' love for us in the framework of His divine and creative glory and power. As a consequence, since in Jesus all is provided - Pastor Leonardi added- we do not need any other mediator to feel comfortable with God or about our salvation.

The retreat included a Mass for the Roman Catholic friends and Seventh-day Adventists respectfully as-

sisted even if, as one of the local Focolarini leaders said, it isn't easy for them to feel totally well in a rite with many controversial aspects. On the other part, Seventh-day Adventists had to enjoy their moment of worship, but pastor Leonardi suggested they would have instead their Sabbath School, a moment when all the community takes active part in

the study of a Bible subject. That day, the topic at study was "Christians embrace the world" which perfectly corresponded to the situation we were living. All Roman Catholic friends, even if not used to study as we do, took part in the event and enjoyed the opportunity.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS BELIEVE IN CREATION

Even many Christian Churches have nowadays surrendered to the evolutionist theory for the existence of the world. Holding on to the Biblical faith in a perfect creation made by a loving and powerful God in six literal days - as the Bible plainly teaches - appears to many as being out of fashion and in contradiction with the results of modern science. To discuss this issue, the Seventh-day Adventist leadership organized in 2001 a Commission and several meetings. Hundreds of scholars, pastors and administrators from all the world-wide church have met and deeply discussed it.

Their report strongly reaffirms the church's historic position on a literal six-day creation and underscores the importance of this doctrine to the system of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs.

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MISSION STORY

CHILDREN FOR THE MISSIONS

Sometimes it is easy to understand why children hold a special place in God's heart.

When Kathy Seeley, primary unit teacher at the Greeneville (Tennessee) Adventist Academy, saw her children fervently drawing pictures one day, she asked what they were doing. The children announced that they were going to sell the pictures. Mrs Seeley smiled at their enthusiasm — until she saw the children selling their pictures in the parking lot for three cents each. The children brought the money to her and announced that it was for the missions.



Later the children made bookmarks to sell. After another parking lot selling spree, Mrs Seeley decided the children were serious about raising money for the missions and provided craft supplies to help them. The children decided they wanted to use their money to build a church in Papua New Guinea.

But school would close in just two weeks. How could the children raise any substantial amount of money in such a short time? They busily made more bookmarks and refrigerator magnets to sell. One child

even sold an empty bird's nest he had found abandoned!

In three days the children raised nearly \$40; in just over a week they had raised more than \$80. By the end of the school year the children had raised \$123 toward a church in Papua New Guinea.

The children were determined to continue their fund-raising for their church in Papua New Guinea when school started in the fall. Mrs Seeley contacted an Adventist missionary in Papua New Guinea who knew of a new group of believers who had no church. And yes, \$123 would go a long way to help build a church there. The missionary family even volunteered to send the children e-mails and pictures of "their" project to encourage them toward their goal.

The story isn't finished yet, but stay tuned for an update. And don't be surprised to hear that these children will raise enough money to complete "their" church in the mountains of Papua New Guinea, halfway around the world.

QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

Where did we get "Lucifer"?

The name Lucifer commonly refers to Satan, but I looked for it in my Bible and I couldn't find it. What am I overlooking?

This is a case in which finding what you are searching for depends on which Bible translation you use. The name "Lucifer" shows up in the King James Version in Isaiah 14:12 ("Lucifer, son of the morning!"), but is not usually found in more recent translations. Your question gives us the opportunity to examine the role of ancient translations in the interpretation of a biblical text. My answer may seem a bit technical, but follow the discussion and you'll understand some of the complexities of the topic. Fortunately, we know how the name Lucifer was introduced in the Bible, and thus we can establish how accurate the translators of the King James Version were in employing it.

1. Origin of the title "Lucifer": The term Lucifer is the English rendering of the Hebrew term *hêlel* ("shining or brilliant one"). The meaning of the Hebrew noun was preserved in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible through the Greek term *heosphoros* ("bright one," "morning star"). The English "Lucifer" comes from Latin; it renders the Greek *heosphoros* into the Latin *lucifer*, which simply means "light bearer, morning star." The early Church Fathers employed the Latin *lucifer* as a proper name to refer to Satan. The translators of the King James Version decided to retain the Latin term in their translation, and it became "Lucifer," another name for Satan. The Hebrew term was not a proper name, but an epithet.

[Continues at p. 11]



Please, send without obligation, and free
(Mark what you wish)

Next issues of *Il-Lehen tat-Tama* (if you do not already receive it regularly).

The illustrated Bible Correspondence Course "Discover" in 26 lessons.

I would like to have a personal meeting with Pastor Leonardi to know better about your faith and/or discuss some problems.

■ You can use the space below for a question or an opinion. (Card n° 34)

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel. (optional): _____

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Why not tell us what you think about the articles you read in *Il-Lehen tat-Tama*? Many find them very inspiring and/or challenging. If you wish, tell us your opinion, whatever it may be, either positive or negative. Your opinion may help us correct ours, or maybe clarify it better. If you like we will keep your opinion private, just tell us, and we will respect your wish. May God bless you in your search for truth and fidelity.

We suggest that you may take this page out of the magazine and place it in a visible place

Appointments with God's Word

Seventh-day Adventist Church, Adventist Centre, 47 Mannarino Road, Birkirkara

SPECIAL LECTURES

WE CAN TRUST GOD!

Eight good reasons to believe

- 1) Can we trust God?
Monday 22 November, 07.00 P.M.
- 2) Can we trust God's Word?
Wednesday 24 November, 07.00 P.M.
- 3) Can we trust God's salvation?
Friday 26 November, 07.00 P.M.
- 4) Can we trust God's promises?
Monday 29 November, 07.00 P.M.
- 5) Can we trust God's judgement?
Wednesday 1 December, 07.00 P.M.
- 6) Really a new world?
Friday 3 December, 07.00 P.M.
- 7) Can we trust God's law?
Monday 6 December, 07.00 P.M.
- 8) Can we trust God's church?
Wednesday 8 December, 07.00 P.M.

WEEKLY SERMONS

Why did God create us free?

Saturday 6 November, 11.00 A.M.

Citizens of the Kingdom: Enjoying our future now.

Saturday 13 November, 11.00 A.M.

How can a dirty man become clean? Only God can provide the soap!

Saturday 20 November, 11.00 A.M.

How to face family problems and be happy?

Saturday 27 November, 11.00 A.M.

Without works, faith is dead. (James 2:26)

Saturday 4 December, 11.00 A.M.

Can we still believe that God created the world?

Saturday 11 December, 11.00 A.M.

Jesus, our healer

Saturday 18 December, 11.00 A.M.

Christmas meditation: Jesus is born, but where does He live now?

Saturday 25 December, 11.00 A.M.

[All lectures and sermons are offered by Pastor Giovanni Leonardi. The language used is English, but, in case of need, translation can be offered in Maltese and Italian. The lecturers are given with visual aids.]

New Year's Eve

Thanksgiving and Prayer Service

Friday 31 December, 05.30-06.30 P.M.

ALL ARE WARMLY WELCOME

MISSION STORY

MY DISCOVERY OF GOD

From my fathers' faith to my personal relationship with Jesus. Second part: My teenage and youth years.

At age fifteen I finished secondary school and went to work as an apprentice in the sheet metal trade. I didn't have much time for church meetings in those days for I spent the next five years working and going out with my friends, socializing and travelling long distances to see other parts of Australia, the big country where my family had emigrated to, when I was just five years old. We also went hunting and camping for I always enjoyed nature.

Only nature between me and God

Nevertheless, although I stayed away from religious meetings, my mind still focused on the creation around me. Many times, as my friends and I camped under the open skies in the middle of nowhere, we would gaze into the never ending blackness of space and watch the countless number of stars. That gave us a wonderful opportunity to discuss the universe and all that existed in this vast cosmos. We talked about God's existence and man's theory of evolution: "How can everything we see and touch and feel come from chance and evolution? Surely someone must have created the universe and everything in it!" This we discussed without ever having read the Bible (God's Word). In those days we did not know about King David, who wrote in the Bible: "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers. The moon and the stars, which You have ordained. What is man that You are mindful of him" (Psalm 8:3-4). David also must have watched the skies at night thinking about God as the creator of all things!

Only two decades later I had the opportunity to read this Bible text for the first time. Then I reflected on those days when my friends and I were asking so many questions about creation and the very existence of mankind.

What happened to my teenage friends?

I haven't seen most of my teenage friends for over thirty years now, and I wonder if they also have found the true God of the Bible, and the true meaning of those many questions. Have they been born again as Christians? Have they given their life to Jesus as their personal Saviour? Jesus once said to Nicodemus,

"unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

Nicodemus was a Pharisee, a teacher of God's law. He was an expert in the traditions inherited by the fathers, and loved God. Yet Jesus explained to him that he must be born again. He must live a new experience with God, know Him better, and become a new person. It was very difficult for Nicodemus to understand and let God change his life. The same happened to me. When the time came for me to take a decision and make a stand for Jesus, it was hard to persevere. I was tempted to look back and go to my former habits and ideas, but the Gospel says that we must go forward and grow spiritually in God's Word. This is what Jesus said, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

Jukebox café instead of church meetings

In my late teen years I stopped attending church meetings altogether, for the pulls of this world and my friends just weighed me down. Instead, my friends and I started meeting every Sunday morning at a popular jukebox café. We didn't do anything bad, I could say. We just shared and had a good time without any violence whatsoever. We enjoyed singing along with the latest Elvis hits and most of my friends still continued to go to mass.

Starting reading the Bible

At about the age of nineteen, I started reading Protestant literature and listening to evangelical radio programs. I had many questions but I couldn't find anyone in my church to help answer and satisfy my heart and mind. Not even my parents could help, for they themselves hadn't as yet read the Bible - let alone teach us the Bible ways.

It was at this time in my life that I was encouraged to read the Bible for the first time. I remember a friend at work telling me of evangelical meetings but I never attended any. He also tried to encourage me to start reading the Bible, but again without success. One day my younger brother came rushing into our bed room. He pulled me by the hand saying, "Come quickly and listen to what this preacher is saying on the radio." I told him, "Ho! not another religious preacher!" But he insisted and so I had to listen. Only after a while I started to realize that these people were reading from the same Bible the priests read from every Sunday. Dad objected that we listen to these programs: "They will make you fall away from our faith!" he said. Dad didn't want us to go to hell for he was looking after our soul as a good father should. Today I only wish that I had the chance to show him the truth that is written in God's Word for he himself had never read or studied the Bible to prove his faith and the traditions of our fathers.

My younger brother was always eager to listen to different preachers and to receive literature from other denominations and evangelists. I would often read some of it, but it was confusing because these people always referred to the Bible and I didn't know it.



Camping with friends in the Australian forests (old photo by A. Stagno)

So, at last, I started reading this book, but with some difficulty, for most of what I was reading was all a new teaching and I wasn't used to it. I started to wonder and to talk to God about the many questions I had, but it was all confusing again. As a consequence, I backed away from religion altogether. However, realizing that there was a great pull towards faith, quite often I would attend church but with many doubts, confusion, and frustration.

Growing into manhood

At age twenty I had an unexpected change in my life. After finishing trade school, I was called up for national service. For the first time in my life I had to leave my family and friends not knowing the freedom of civilian life for the next two years. Army life was hard; I felt that I no longer belonged to myself. I couldn't do the things I was used to do. I wasn't free, so to speak: I was a servant of the State and I was trained for action when it was needed. I was never a violent person and I couldn't see myself hurting anyone.

If ever I learned anything in the army, it was discipline along with yet another trade. But, looking back, I thank God for this experience for, even if I didn't understand that moment, now I know that God used it to prepare me for a better future experience.

Within another few years, in 1972, after listening to other Bible preachers, I sent in for a Bible correspondence course. I started to see the Bible for what it really represented: "God's word and truth". Nevertheless, after studying for some time, I was discouraged because everything that I ever had been taught about my Christian faith appeared to be just the opposite of what the Bible was telling me.

Then I started to reason within myself and ask more questions: "Why are the teachings I have received so different from what the Gospel says? Why have God's commandments been taught to me in a different way than they are given by God? Is it possible that millions of people world-wide are wrong? What shall I do? Whom shall I believe? God or Man?"

What shall I follow, my former teaching or God's Word?" The strength of tradition was great, but I had to confront what the apostle Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Again in Malta

When I was twenty four, I was off to Europe on a holiday in my home country in the middle of the Mediterranean sea. I took with me a copy of the Old King James Version hoping to privately study the Bible and better my understanding of God's Word. At times I would go to a solitary place to study where I could meditate in peace.

Time passed by, with all the worries and privileges of common life. Within the next couple of years, I settled down and got married starting to raise a family. Still, even if burdened with many duties and some problems, I continued to study the Bible privately. Strange to say, it was my newly formed family that gave me a new courage and determination to go on in the search for a new life according to the Word of God. A long time had passed since when I started hearing about the Bible, but now the time had come to start studying it seriously in a way that would change my life, for I wanted my family to grow up knowing the true Gospel and not just a tradition.

Dialoguing with my priest and friend

I started to realize that I had to change the way I was worshipping God, in accordance to His commandments. Since the decision was serious and important, I did my best to be prudent and not be misled. So I visited the local priest and friend to ask for his opinion. We talked about the Bible teachings and the traditions of the church. He was very understanding but what could he say? He just explained that he himself was on a mission and he had to please his congregation in their traditions for this was his belief and life long study. Later that evening we departed as friends, but I never looked back at my former teachings again. That evening, I made my stand with Jesus Who said: "All too well

you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition" (Mark 7:9).

Starting a new experience with God

I don't regret the way I was brought up. Mum and dad had done their best for us and I loved them for that, but now I had to decide what was best for my family and for my personal spiritual life.

My wife and I would study together for months to come. As God was helping us grow in the knowledge of His Word, we did our best to trust and obey Him. By reading the Gospel we discovered how the first Christians were used to live, and we did our best to imitate them.

My wife would also keep the Sabbath, according to God's commandments, on the seventh day, and do no physical work on that day. As for myself, I had still some problems about the Sabbath for a while. We lived like this for months, changing where and when it was needed. My wife and I lived this way until we were introduced to a small group of believers who kept God's commandments, the Sabbath, and other healthy ways of living. My wife and I were thirsty for God's truth. Jesus says, "If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the scriptures said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living waters" (John 7:37-38). Are you thirsty for God's Word? This is wonderful, for God's Word, as Jesus says, is our spiritual bread, and without it we cannot really know, love, and follow our precious Saviour. In the book of Revelation 3:20, Jesus Himself says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." Jesus wishes to have communion with each one of us. It is up to us to open our hearts and let Him come in. It took a long time for me to understand, but I can give my testimony that Jesus may become in our life the most precious reality we can ever imagine.

Mr. Anthony Stagno

[To be continued]

A PRAYER

My dear heavenly Father and Friend,

I daily live knowing that You are my Father. It is a precious privilege for it gives my life meaning, dignity, and strength. As the apostle Paul said—"I know Whom I have believed," help me know You as You really are, that I never may confuse You with others, and Your will with that of men. Help me love and follow You in all truth and love for only where truth and love abide I can find You.

(Pastor Giovanni Leonardi)

CHRISTIAN HISTORY

PROPHETIC EXPERIENCES

The stories you are going to read come from quite a long time ago. What is most important, they come from a very special person, Ellen G. White, one of the first Adventist pioneers who, toward the middle of the eighteenth century, listened to God's call to prepare themselves and others for the second coming of Jesus. At the time of these experiences, she was a very young lady and mother. As Seventh-day Adventists we hold our faith on the Bible but we are open to the charismata, the spiritual gifts that God gives His church to strengthen, correct, and encourage her. One of these gifts is the "spirit of prophecy" (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10,28; 14:1; ph. 4:11), the privilege of receiving revelations directly from God to share them with His church. We believe that Mrs. Ellen G. White received such a gift and, through her ministry, God has blessed us in many ways.

Through the few testimonies we have chosen for you, you will feel the faith, the love, and the pain of these first pioneers. We hope that it may encourage you in your own Christian experience, and also in considering with attention our present faith and testimony.

[Pastor G. Leonardi]

A MOTHER'S PAIN

[At the time of this testimony, Mrs. White was twenty three years old. She had married four years before and had two children. She and her husband were travelling to meet some Adventist believers and encourage them.]

In the spring of 1850 we decided to visit Vermont and Maine. I left my little Edson, then nine months old, in the care of Sister Bonfoey, while we went on our way to do the will of God. We labored very hard, suffering many privations to accomplish but little. We found the brethren and sisters in a scattered and confused state. Almost everyone was affected by some error, and all seemed zealous for their own opinions. We often suffered intense anguish of mind in meeting with so few who were ready to listen to Bible truth, while they eagerly cherished error and fanaticism. We were obliged to make a tedious route of forty miles by stage to get to Sutton, the place of our appointment.



Mrs. Ellen G. White

The first night after reaching the place of meeting, despondency pressed upon me. I tried to overcome it, but it seemed impossible to control my thoughts. My little ones burdened my mind. We had left one in the State of Maine two years and eight months old, and another babe in New York nine months old. We had just performed a tedious journey in great suffering, and I thought of those who were enjoying the society of their children in their own quiet homes. I reviewed our past life, calling to mind expressions which had been made by a sister only a few days before, who thought it must be very pleasant to be riding through the country without anything to trouble me. It was just such a life as she could delight in. At that very time my heart was yearning for my children, especially my babe in New York, and I had just come from my sleeping room, where I had been battling with my feelings, and with many tears had besought the Lord for strength to subdue all murmuring, and that I might cheerfully deny myself for Jesus' sake. In this state of mind I fell asleep, and dreamed that a tall angel stood by my side and asked me why I was sad. I related to him the thoughts that had troubled me, and said, "I can do so little good, why may we not be with our children, and enjoy their society?" Said he: "You have given to the Lord two beautiful flowers, the fragrance of which is as sweet incense before Him, and is more precious in His sight than gold or silver, for it is a heart gift. It draws upon every fiber of the heart as no other sacrifice can. You should not look upon present appearances, but keep the eye single to your duty, single to God's glory, and follow in His opening providence, and the path shall brighten before you. Every self-denial, every sacrifice, is faithfully recorded, and will bring its reward."

HELP AGAINST HYPOCRISY

While in Oswego, New York, early in 1850, we were invited to visit Camden, a town about forty miles east. Previous to going, I was shown the little company of believers there, and among them I saw a woman who professed much piety, but who was a hypocrite, and was deceiving the people of God.

Sabbath morning quite a number gathered for worship, but the deceitful woman was not present. I inquired of a sister if this was all their company. She said it was. The woman whom I had seen in the vision lived four miles from the place, and the sister did not think of her. But soon she entered, and I immediately recognized her as the woman whose real character the Lord had shown me.

In the course of the meeting, she talked quite lengthily, saying that she had perfect love, and enjoyed holiness of heart, that she did not have trials and temptations, but enjoyed perfect peace and submission to the will of God.

From the meeting I returned to the home of Brother Preston with feelings of great sadness. That night I dreamed that a secret closet filled with rubbish was opened to me, and I was told that it was my work to clear it out. By the light of a lamp I removed the rubbish, and told those with me that the room could be filled with more valuable things.

On Sunday morning we met with the brethren, and my husband arose to preach on the parable of the ten virgins. He had no freedom in speaking, and proposed that we have a season of prayer. We bowed before the Lord, and engaged in earnest prayer. The dark cloud was lifted, and I was taken off in vision, and again shown the case of this woman. She was represented to me as being in perfect darkness. Jesus frowned upon her and her husband. That withering frown caused me to tremble. I saw that she had acted the hypocrite, professing holiness while her heart was full of corruption.

After I came out of vision, I related with trembling, yet with faithfulness, what I had seen. The woman calmly said: "I am glad the Lord knows my heart. He knows that I love Him. If my heart could only be opened that you might see it, you would see that it is pure and clean."

The minds of some were unsettled. They did not know whether to believe what the Lord had shown me, or to let appearance weigh against the testimony I had borne.

Not long after this, terrible fear seized the woman. A horror rested upon her, and she began to confess. She even went from house to house among her unbelieving neighbors, and confessed that the man she had been living with for years was not her husband, that she ran away from England, and left a kind husband and one child. Many other wicked acts she confessed. Her repentance seemed to be genuine, and in some cases she restored what she had taken wrongfully.

As a result of this experience, our brethren and sisters in Camden, and their neighbors, were fully established in the belief that God had revealed to me the things which I had spoken, and that the message was given them in mercy and love, to save them from deception and dangerous error.

MODERN SPIRITUALISM

[Modern spiritualism started in 1847, when some rapping were heard in the house of the Fox's family, New York State. These rappings were understood to be a way for the soul of dead people to communicate with the living. When the following testimony was given, spiritualism had but just arisen and was small; there were but a few mediums. Since then, as Mrs. White plainly writes, it has spread all over the world, and counts its adherents by millions. As a general thing, spiritualists have denied the Bible and derided Christianity. Individuals have, at different times, deplored this, and protested against it, but they were so few that no attention was paid to them. In later years spiritualists have changed their method, and many call

themselves "Christian spiritualists," declaring that it will not answer to ignore religion, and affirming that they have the true Christian faith. Bearing in mind also, that many prominent clergymen are in sympathy with spiritualism, we now see the way open for the complete fulfillment of this prediction, given in 1850.]

August 24, 1850, I saw that the "mysterious rapping" was the power of Satan; some of it was directly from him, and some indirectly, through his agents, but it all proceeded from Satan. It was his work that he accomplished in different ways; yet many in the churches and the world were so enveloped in gross darkness that they thought and held forth that it was the power of God. Said the angel, "Should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" Should the living go to the dead for knowledge? The dead know not anything. For the living God do ye go to the dead? They have departed from the living God to converse with the dead who know not anything. See Isaiah 8:19, 20.

I saw that soon it would be considered blasphemy to speak against the rapping, and that it would spread more and more, that Satan's power would increase, and some of his devoted followers would have power to work miracles, and even to bring down fire from heaven in the sight of men. I was shown that by the rapping and mesmerism, these modern magicians would yet account for all the miracles wrought by our Lord Jesus Christ, and that many would believe that all the

mighty works of the Son of God when on earth were accomplished by this same power. I was pointed back to the time of Moses, and saw the signs and wonders which God wrought through him before Pharaoh, most of which were imitated by the magicians of Egypt; and that just before the final deliverance of the saints, God would work powerfully for His people, and these modern magicians would be permitted to imitate the work of God.

That time will soon come, and we shall have to keep hold of the strong arm of Jehovah; for all these great signs and mighty wonders of the devil are designed to deceive God's people and overthrow them. Our minds must be stayed upon God, and we must not fear the fear of the wicked, that is, fear what they fear, and reverence what they reverence, but be bold and valiant for the truth. Could our eyes be opened, we should see forms of evil angels around us, trying to invent some new way to annoy and destroy us. And we should also see angels of God guarding us from their power; for God's watchful eye is ever over Israel for good, and He will protect and save His people, if they put their trust in Him. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.

Said the angel, "Remember, thou art on the enchanted ground." I saw that we must watch and have on the whole armor, and take the shield of faith, and then we shall be able to stand, and the fiery darts of the wicked cannot harm us.

Ellen G. White

CONTINUED FROM P. 6: QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

2. The Hebrew meaning: The Hebrew expression used in Isaiah 14:12 could be translated, "shining one [hêlel], son of dawn [ben-shachar]." Traditionally hêlel, used only here in the Old Testament, has been understood as designating something that is shining or brilliant, from the verb halal, "to shine." It has been suggested that the Hebrew term refers to Venus, the "morning star," but there is no linguistic evidence to support that. The suggestion could be supported by the use of the term heosphoros in Greek and lucifer in Latin, both of which are sometimes employed to designate Venus.

Another argument that could be used is based on the meaning of the phrase "son of dawn." In this case the term son expresses the idea of "belonging to," that is to say his brilliance belongs to or is the brilliance of the dawn. The Greek and Latin versions read "[the morning star] which rises early," instead of "son of the

dawn," strengthening the idea that the "morning star" refers to Venus. The noun shachar is used in the Old Testament to designate the first light or brightness of the morning, the dawn. The Hebrew could then be rendered, "the shining one [star], the brightness of the morning," and could be referring to Venus, as it appears in the morning sky. This interpretation is very likely, but it is still far from certain and relies too much on ancient translations.

It is probably better to understand the title "shining one, son of the dawn" as emphasizing the glory of this being, as well as his leading position. He is being compared to the beauty of the brightness of the dawn, to the first light of the morning that announces the beginning of a new day. This glorious and leading position is metaphorically employed to refer to this glorious, celestial leader. The name "Lucifer" came to express the idea of a celestial being, and to that extent it expresses the basic idea of the biblical text.

3. Theological implications: The New Testament image of the bright morning star, suggested by the Greek, applies to Jesus. Originally "Lucifer" was not fully satisfied with his celestial position and aimed to ascend to heaven, to enthrone himself on the heavenly mount of the assembly (Isa. 14:13). This search for greatness resulted in his fall from heaven. In contrast, Jesus did not seek greatness. He voluntarily descended from His high position to serve others, and God "exalted him to the highest place and gave him a name that is above every name" (Phil. 2:9, NIV). Christ is the only one who can now truly claim the title "bright and morning star" (Rev. 22:16). We look forward to the moment when our morning star will appear to bring us salvation (cf. 2 Peter 1:19).

Angel Manuel Rodríguez [Director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists].

CHRISTIAN HEALTH

THE FRENCH PARADOX

These last years we have been used to hear that a little amount of wine can reduce heart diseases. French people, who drink more wine than Americans, for instance, have less heart attacks. We offer here some information to know the truth about these “facts”.

The French paradox

What about “the French paradox”? Let us examine the French lifestyle to see why heart disease may be lower there than in America. Along with comparing American and French alcohol consumption, we must also assess other dietary factors.

French consume more butter and lard than the Americans but they have less heart diseases. May it be that their advantage is due to their much higher intake of red wine?

However, we must look further. Cigarette smoking and obesity do not appear to be factors; French rates in these areas are comparable to those in America. The French also have another dietary distinction: they drink very little milk. The news media has failed to publicize this fact. Dairy fat is strongly related to heart disease. In fact, if you look at the consumption of dairy products in one country compared to another, including France, the heart disease rate is proportional to the amount of dairy products consumed. Thus, the lower consumption of dairy fat would help to explain the lower levels of heart disease in France. Another factor that would be expected to decrease French heart disease risk is their high consumption of vegetables and fruits. This important fact has also not been widely publicized.

Another important but unpublicized fact: there are certain groups in America that have a much lower rate of deaths due to heart disease than the French. American Seventh-day Adventist vegetarians have far less risk of heart disease than does the average Frenchman. But they drink no wine or alcohol.

Are there any factors in addition to lower milk consumption and higher fruit and vegetable consumption that would explain the apparent French advantage? What about wine—might there be something to the wine connection after all? Having looked carefully at the issues, we will see that wine does have some heart-

protective benefits. But before we jump to any conclusions, I must point out the obvious: wine contains much more than alcohol. Dr. Demrow and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin looked directly at the constituents of red wine, white wine, and juice made from red grapes. This study provides some amazing insights into the French paradox.

Before they embarked on the aforementioned study, the University of Wisconsin group already knew several things. First, if the blood's clotting cells, the platelets, become sticky, the risk of heart attack and similar problems increase. Second, wine and alcohol consumption had been demonstrated to make platelets less



Not red wine but red grapes really benefit the heart.

sticky. Third, the tendency of platelets to make heart problems worse could be measured in a special dog model that had been developed in their laboratory. There was still a burning question, however: how much of the effect of wine was due to alcohol and how much was due to other properties in the grapes?

To find the answer, the researchers obtained 47 mongrel dogs. In preparation for the test, after anaesthesia, each dog had a single coronary artery experimentally narrowed and damaged in a way that reproduced the blockages occurring in humans with coronary artery disease. These artery changes included damage to the inner lining of the blood vessel known as the intima. Intimal damage, in turn, stimulated platelets to clump periodically and form sticky little clots

referred to as thrombi. Collectively, these processes caused periodic interruptions of flow in the affected coronary arteries, known as “cyclic flow reductions” or CFRs. This experimentally induced condition thus mimicked the exact mechanism for human heart attacks.

After these changes were induced in the dogs, they were then divided into three major groups. Group 1 received red wine, Group 2 received red grape juice, and Group 3 received white wine. What the researchers were looking for was a reduction in the tendency of the platelets to clump and a resulting decrease in the cyclic flow reductions (CFRs). They carefully measured these CFRs to see if adding the wines or grape juice would decrease platelet stickiness. Their results are the following:

Red wine	- Reduced risk
White wine	- No reduction
Grape juice	- Reduced risk

The test results indicated that there were one or more substances in both red grape juice and red wine that should significantly reduce the risk of a heart attack. That substance cannot be alcohol, because there was none in the grape juice. Moreover, white wine contains alcohol but had no significant effect. In another study, the same lab found that alcohol alone, in very large amounts, could decrease CFRs. Extremely high levels were needed—the equivalent of about 12 drinks for a 180 pound man—producing blood alcohol levels well over double the legal limit for drivers. In contrast to the study with pure alcohol, the red and white wine in the Demrow study was given in amounts typically attained in social drinking—approximating one drink in a 180 pound man—only eight percent of the amount needed to decrease CFRs. This amount produces blood alcohol levels within legal limits at about 0.02 or 0.03 gm/dl.

If it was not the alcohol, what are the substances that made the difference in the effects of the red wine and the grape juice? The most likely candidates were a group of substances called flavonoids that are known to prevent platelet clumping. They are found abundantly in grapes, red grape juice, and red wine. In fact, compared to the white wine, the red grape products—the wine and grape juice—had four to five times as much of two key flavonoids (quercetin and rutin) by actual measurement. It is likely that the presence of these substances caused the reduction of blood clot formation.

Dr. Neil Nedley, M.D. (adapted from)
(From: Proof Positive).



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