

Il-Lehen tat-Tama

"THE VOICE OF HOPE"

47, Mannarino Road, Birkirkara BKR 08, Malta - www.adventist.org.mt

BY THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN MALTA

SPECIAL EVENTS YOU ARE INVITED TO

(You are also invited to all the programmes listed in this page)

September 14th (Wednesday), 6.00 P.M.

VEGETARIAN COOKERY DEMONSTRATION by Mrs. Gianna Leonardi: How to use dehydrated Soya. Wonderful tasteful balls and ragout without the danger of animal fats.

September 24th (Saturday), 7.00 P.M.

RECREATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR EVERYBODY. A fun context between young people and adults with games, songs, and much much more. A refreshment will be offered. A wonderful opportunity to enjoy friendship. Children are welcome.

October 7th (Friday), 7.30 P.M.

FROM DRUG ADDICTION TO THE SERVICE OF JESUS. The personal experience of our special guest, the young Swiss pastor Mathias Maag. An inspiring opportunity for all sensitive people.

SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER PROGRAMME FOR SATURDAY SERMONS (each Saturday at 11.00 A.M.)

Sep. 3: Jesus in the experience of the apostle Paul.

Sep. 10: Are you an umbrella, a sponge, a piece of wood, or whatever else?

Sep. 17: How to grow and be strong in the Christian faith.

Sep. 24: Show the way! Invite others to come to Jesus!

Oct. 1: Reasons why I am a Seventh-day Adventist. (Mrs. Gianna Leonardi)

Oct. 8: My experience with Jesus (guest pastor M. Maag)

Oct. 15: What is the duty of a pastor?

Oct. 22: When Jesus passes by, don't let Him go away! (Mrs Dora Stagno)

Oct. 29: Like a child in Jesus (Mr. Tony Stagno)

Nov. 5: The Sabbath of God and our testimony to God's love.

Nov. 12: Jesus as a medical doctor (Dr. Timothy Muchay)

Nov. 19: Do you remember Shammua, Igal, Sethur and their mates? If you don't, this is very meaningful to you!

Nov. 26: There is a spring of eternity in God's kingdom.

FRIDAY BIBLE STUDIES (Summer time at 7.30 P.M. Winter time at 7.00 P.M.).

From Friday 10 of September we will start a series of wonderful multimedial Bible Studies which will be followed by an open discussion. This is a unique opportunity for most people in our islands to know all the main Christian doctrines as they really are in the Holy Bible, in a simple attractive way. Take your Bible with you, if you have one.

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WEDNESDAY PRAYER MEETING (Summer time at 7.30 P.M. Winter time at 7.00 P.M.). Come and enjoy an hour of spiritual rest and Bible communitarian meditation. To know more about God's love, and the meaning and the values of Christian life.

CHURCH EVENTS

A LARGE FAMILY OF 30 MILLION PEOPLE

An interview to pastor G. Leonardi about the last SDA's General Conference

Past. Leonardi, you have just returned from the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church held at St. Louis, Missouri, USA. What was it all about? In our church, a General Conference is held every five years to consider the situation of our worldwide experience, and project our future and that of our mission.

What do you mean by "mission"? The Seventh-day Adventist Church is strongly mission oriented. It means that we do not exist for ourselves, but to serve others in announcing "the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth — to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people" (Revelation 14:6). We believe that this Gospel, preached as it was given by God, in all its fullness, without human changes, is the only way to really help people become ready to meet Jesus when He soon comes to redeem His own and restore the kingdom of God.

How many people took part in this experience? The official delegates were about 2,000, and on Saturdays, about 50,000 visitors shared this wonderful experience. But we can say that all the world-wide Adventist community had a



Part of the Dome Hall, with believers participating in the 58th SDA's G.C.

What is the difference from other Christian organizations? No human organism can live without a form of organization, and also Christian Churches get organized one way or the other, but not all in the same way. The most know-

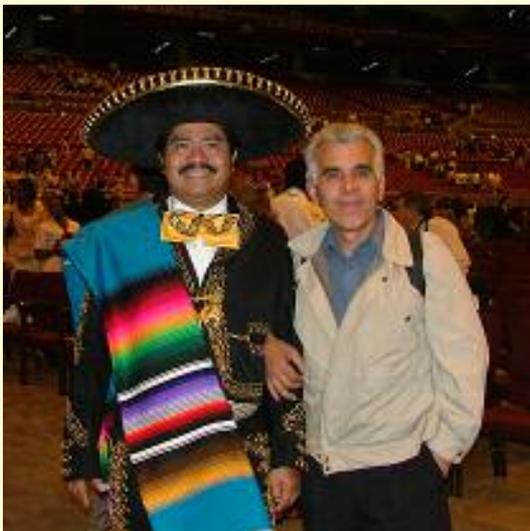
ing kind of organization is the Roman Catholic. It is characterized by a very strong hierarchical structure, with the Pope at her apex, assisted by the cardinals and the bishops that the Pope himself chooses. On their turn, cardinals and bishops choose the priests. The people as such have no direct relevance in this process. The system works very well and is very successful in keeping unity and stability in the Church. On the other extreme there are the Congregationalist churches which hold on the idea that each Christian community should be totally independent. Usually they elect their own local leaders and co-operate

with other churches holding on the same faith. Between these two extremes there are other models. As for us, we believe that the Gospel encourages Christians to be organized democratically (so overcoming the hierarchical vision of the church) and being just one united fellowship in all the world (so overcoming the Congregationalist model). Apparently, the other models should work

better, but with God's help we are demonstrating that democracy can well match with unity and efficiency since ours is one of the fastest growing Christian bodies in the world. We have to thank God for His blessing, since our message is not easy and we have to face extraordinary challenges. But our aim is only to be faithful to God, and honest to people: God will take care of all the rest.

How much is the Adventist Church growing world-wide? In the last 5 years more than 5 million people joined the church, which means 2 persons each minute. When we think that in 1844, we were about 50 people, isolated, discouraged and without a vision, and we consider that we are now more than 14 million people (about 30 million with children and friends) we have only to thank God for His blessing and assistance.

Where are we most successful? The regions where we have more members in comparison to the population are those of what sociologists call the South of the World, Latin America, Black Africa, South Pacific. Just to give some figures, in Jamaica there is a ratio of 1 Adventist for each 13 persons, in Rwanda 1 over 23, in Papua New Guinea 1 over 26. It is as if in Malta there were 15,000 Adventists. For now we are a small group, but God holds the future and we are sure that with His help, as the people understand the importance of the Gospel message, our number will increase dramatically.



Past. Leonardi with a Mexican representative

part to play in it. And this for two reasons, 1) because they were all interested in what was happening, and 2) because the delegates are really the expression, through different levels of representativity, the expression of each single member of the church in the world.

Does it mean that the Adventist Church is a democratic organization?

Does the SDA Church just limit herself to preach our message? We have first to clarify that the message we preach is not ours. Christians are such only if they give testimony to the message they received from God through the Apostles and the Prophets. This is what we are bound to do. It doesn't matter if people like it or not, if it is easy or difficult. Our mission is to represent God's will to everybody as it is, and to learn how to practise it ourselves faithfully. Christianity is love and love reveals itself by giving people hope through the Gospel message, and help in their physical, social, and emotional needs. This is why the Seventh-day Adventist Church is deeply engaged in social work through her thousands of schools, hospitals, refugee camps, agricultural projects and much more.

Whom did the delegate elect to the church leadership? The previous main officers have been confirmed in their responsibility for another five years. They are Jan Paulsen, of Euro-

evangelistic campaigns. In one of these, they enjoyed the help of a young musician, a blind man whom the ambassador gave hospitality in his home. Used to play dancing music and rock&roll, he didn't know Jesus and His love, but accepted to help in a series of lectures by playing and singing Christian songs. At the end of the campaign, an appeal was made for people to give their hearts to Jesus and being baptized in His name. Sadly nobody had the courage to manifest his faith and give his heart to Jesus. The young musician had been listening to all the lectures too, and a new vision had entered his heart. He couldn't see what was happening in the hall, but he understood the situation and felt the indecision of the people. So he stood up and said: "You have eyes but you do not see the light that God is offering you. I'm blind but I can see it and I decide today to give my life to Jesus. Why don't you do the same?" Little by little tens of people stood up and an-



A Russian pastor and a Chinese Adventist with their wives. Both are living witnesses of Christian martyrdom. Both were imprisoned in a forced labour camp, the first for 5, and the second for 20 years.



Children ministry

pean origin, as president; Matthew A. Bediako, from Ghana, Africa, as general secretary; and Robert. E. Lemon from USA, as treasurer. Their different nationality is a sign of the world-wide reality of our church.

Is there anything special about other people being elected? Everybody is a special person and has a unique experience. As an example, I can mention Dr. Ella Simmons for she has been the first woman in our church to be elected at the office of vice-president at the level of the GC. Even this is a sign of our growth, not just in number but in a better understanding the role of women in accomplishing the Gospel mission.

Can you tell us some special stories? Facts worth of mention are many, but I wish to share with you just one personal story. One of the Philippine ambassadors is a Seventh-day Adventist and, even if he is a very busy person, he and his wife enjoy spending times for

answered the Gospel invitation. As this young man, is used to say now, "I have passed from rock&roll to the Rock of Ages," Jesus Christ.



A native American Adventist



Adventists coming from the Pacific Islands

BIBLE MEDITATION

RUTH, AN EXAMPLE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

I love reading and studying the Bible. For me it is not only the inspired Word of God but also a manual that helps me through all situations in life. There are many characters and stories that through history have left a remarkable example for us to acknowledge and follow. The first and foremost is Jesus Christ Our Saviour, but today I would like to consider the story in the Book of Ruth. This Moabite woman lived in the time of the Judges, before Israel the chosen people of God had a king.

In the story we meet an Ephrathite family, Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and their two sons Mahlon and Kilion from the land of Judah who, because of the famine in their land, had to move and settle in Moab, a land very rich and fertile. A few years had passed when Elimelech died and his two sons married two Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah. These two women were gentiles and worshipped many foreign gods. But this Israelite family was faithful to their God and did not adopt the foreign gods of Moab. So these two women came to know the God of Israel, the One and only true God Creator of the heavens and the earth.

After ten years of marriage Mahlon and Kilion died leaving their wives childless. Now Naomi, hearing that the famine was over, wanted to go back to her home land. The three women started off their journey to Jerusalem. On their way Naomi asked her two daughters-in-law to go back to their families, for being still young they had no future with Naomi. Orpah did as was told but Ruth refused and stayed with Naomi (Ruth 1:16-17).

Making the right decision

Ruth found the One true God and desired to love and obey Him and also to stay with the people who worshipped Him. She forsook her former life of paganism and adopted a new life in the God of Israel.

Making a difference

God had blessed Naomi with a special gift in Ruth. These two widows returned to Jerusalem empty handed, but Ruth was a hard working woman and she sought to look after her mother-in-law who was old and lonely. She shared with Naomi the fruit of her labour in the fields of harvest where she gleaned the left over wheat from the harvesters. Sometimes we overlook God's blessings in our lives as we look for what satisfies us and our needs, but God gives us more and if we are in con-

stant relationship with Him we will be able to see and acknowledge His goodness and love for us. At first Naomi couldn't recognize the gift that the Lord gave her as she kept lamenting her grievances. So here I ask myself if I am like Naomi or if I do give thanks to God for the mercy and grace He shows me day by day. But Ruth did all she could to keep Naomi happy and well.

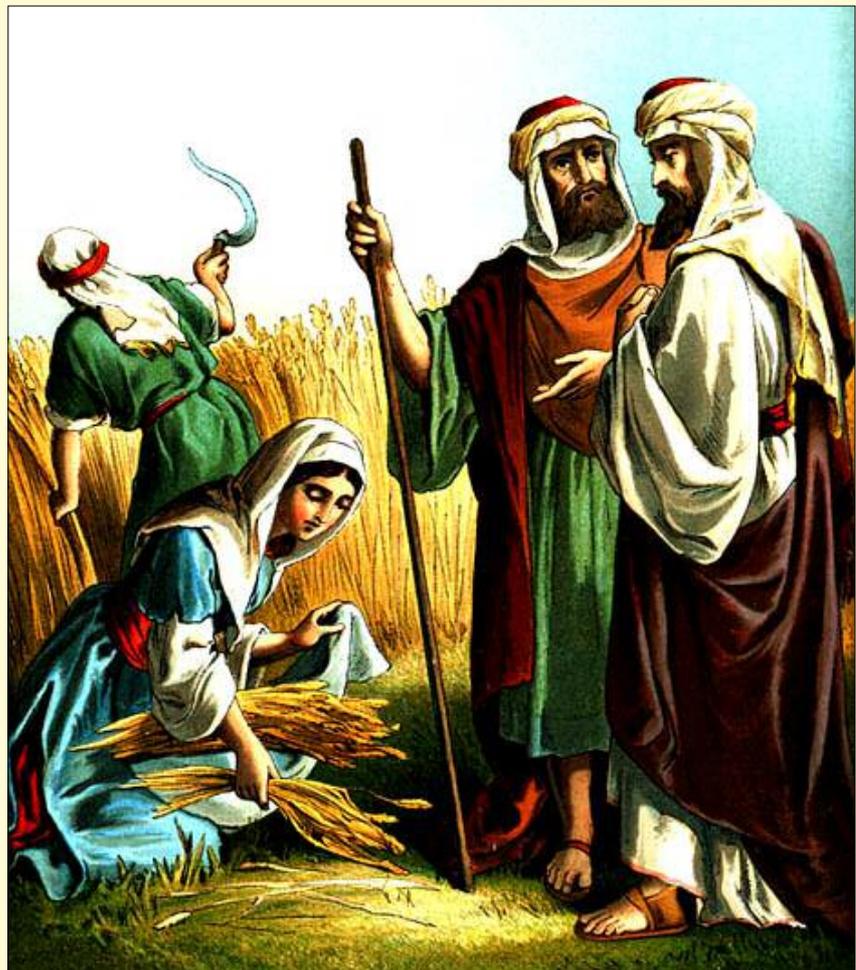
A light that so shines

Reading further into the story, we see how Ruth met Boaz and later became his wife. Boaz saw the noble character that Ruth possessed. The people around her at work and in the community all gave a good report of her conduct and the love and respect she showed her mother-in-law. This made it even more obvious for Boaz to love and marry her, becoming a blessing to Naomi's family. Not only that, Naomi had the privilege to see grandchildren through Ruth. Ruth and Boaz are the great grandparents of David king of Israel, through whom Jesus, our Lord, came as the incarnated Son of God to give salvation to all humanity.

Ruth leaves me a good example of unconditional love, honesty, faithfulness, gentleness, kindness and caring. She was a very humble person. While Orpah decided to go back to her foreign gods, Ruth chose to stay with Naomi and look after her in serving the One and only true God.

Sometimes I compare Ruth's choice when she came to know the true God and the young man who met Jesus but chose his own riches and not the Kingdom of God. So, she gives me great encouragement and helps me to set my priorities straight, that God is first and foremost in my life. I am to be faithful and obedient to Him always (Heb.10:23-24). I must stay positive, put my trust in God, show that I believe through my actions and not in words only. I have to make right choices, let God be my vision, assurance and hope. Ruth's example helps me seek after treasure in heaven where my Lord and God is. Thanks be to God for His word (the Bible) and the wonderful lessons within.

Mrs. Dora Stagno



CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCES

THE MAN WHO COULDN'T BE KILLED

An incredible story of faith and persecution during China's Cultural Revolution

In 1927, at the age of almost twenty, Glorious Country Wong* had left the native Anhui Province and moved to Shanghai in search of a better life. But, alone, without the money a pickpocket had stolen from him, and unable to find a job, he was contemplating suicide. Lacking the courage to jump into the river, he hid in a corner and swept.

Another man camping under the Whampoa River bridge saw him. "Look at this newspaper," the stranger said, "You look like a person who'd qualify for this ad for policemen." Being vigorous and possessing a winning personality, Mr. Wong was enrolled and soon became an officer. The salary and the customary bribes that, thanks to his grade, he could get from people, made his life quite and comfortable. He could even take his wife Lu to the Opera. But Mr. Wong only distractedly was listening to the music and watching the representation. His attention was attracted by the main actress, whose beauty and grace conquered his heart. Being strong, handsome, and rich enough to go to the Opera, he thought the lady would not resist his charm. He tipped his head so he could speak into his wife's ear without disturbing the other spectators: "Lu, I think the singer is very pretty. What do you think?"

"Yes, she's pretty."

He whispered: "I think I want her for my second wife. Do you object?"

Silence. Lu wanted to keep him for herself, but she whispered, "No, I don't mind if she'll keep your eyes from looking at other women." And so, since the wife didn't object, and the opera singer didn't resist his charm, he got a second wife. Soong was her name.

War time

In 1937, the streets of Shanghai, usually crowded with people, were almost dead. Though the shops were open, no one, not even owners, were inside. World War II was in full swing. Cross-fire Japanese occupation forces and Chinese snipers from the resistance had made Shanghai's streets a battlefield. Wong, was exploring the area with his gun in his hand. Stepping into

* The name is fictitious, but the story is totally true.



a pharmacy he considered quite natural to take home some of the traditional Chinese medicines for free, but he also noticed something else, two black books with golden edges. The two Bibles didn't mean anything to him. He only saw that the paper was of very good quality and his wife Lu could use it to make shoe models, and so get some extra money for the family.

Weeks passed. The Japanese left Shanghai, and Mr. Wong got a job as supervisor policing the area around the Wah Tung Garment Factory.

One day, answering the door, Lu welcomed Ma Lizhi, one of the textile workers at the factory.

"May I have a shoe pattern?" he asked.

And so one of the two Bibles started to be used. The room had a tatami, a sort of carpet made of woven rice straw, and a paper-thin wall with a sliding door dividing the children's sleeping room from that of the parents. In the corner her son Lee and the daughter Mei-Mei played near a large wooden bed. Lu

reached under it, pulled out one of the Bibles and tore out two pages. She knelt down and placed the paper on the floor. "Stand on this, please." Lu traced his foot on the paper, and so those Bible started to accomplish their job.

While Lu was working, the man gave a look at the book. "Do Christians tear their holy books?"

"Aiya! We're not Christians," Lu snapped. "I wouldn't believe their foreign-devil religion. We have the book only because I need paper. Due to war, paper's too expensive. And this paper is of a very good quality."

Changes for worse

Just that moment, Mr. Wong returned home and asked for Soong. It seemed he needed her urgently and Lu could easily guess why. The second wife, with her singing, had started contributing a lot to the wealth of the family, and Wong had started to exhibit his new status in front of the others, which required more and more money. Even worse, he had started gambling and this habit was creating a bad atmosphere at home.

“The end of the road for gamblers is a lonely place filled with nothing but poverty,” Lu said.

“I’m a policeman married to a wealthy second wife. I need money for my status.” He lighted another cigarette. “Poverty will never knock at my door. If I’m desperate for money, I’ll demand higher bribes.”

Lu detested his arrogant pride. She poked the needle into the shoe and pulled the thread along. “Just because you’re a policeman doesn’t mean you are above the law.”

“Aiya, woman, mind your insolence. I know what I’m doing. If I want your advice, I’ll ask you for it.”

Just then the door opened and Soong pattered toward the living room. Mr. Wong smiled affectionately. “It’s Soong, Soong’s here.” He almost jumped up and down like a school boy. Lu felt hurt. Soong was obviously his favourite for they never quarrelled about anything, not even when Wong asked for money. Soong seemed to think that because money came easily, it should be spent freely. Lu and Soong were very good friends but they had different attitudes. “Doesn’t she realize,” Lu thought, “that things could change?” Soong was pregnant. Didn’t she know that as her belly grew, her time on stage would shrink? Lu wondered how Soong would adjust when money became tight or when her pretty face faded and she could no longer sing at the opera.

A joke that became a blessing
Mr. Ma Lizhi had just finished his workday at the clothing factory and was going again to Mr. Wong’s house to receive his new pair of cloth shoes. While walking he noticed a sign, “Long-Distance Study.” Curious he went close to the door that opened before he could even knock. A receptionist led him into a classroom and introduced him to an American missionary woman. The missionary smiled: “Welcome to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

Hoping to find something else than just a Christian church, Ma Lizhi asked what kind of courses were they offering.

“We have fourteen courses that help you learn about the Bible. “Would you like to sign up for the long-distance study?”

He didn’t want to study, but he remembered the Scriptures with golden edge Lu had grabbed from the bed. An idea struck him that that Bible had to be studied. Thinking the price would be high, he asked, “How much?”

“It’s absolutely free.” The woman smiled. “Interested?”

Sure, why not? If it doesn’t cost anything.” But he had not himself in mind as a student. On the application form he wrote the name and the address of Wong. What would he think when he started receiving a Bible-correspondence course in the mail?

Becoming a Bible student

Mr. Wong awoke early and slipped out of bed and went to the family shrine donated by His Number Two Wife Soong. The shrine consisted of two shelves. On the upper shelf stood three traditional heroes cast of colourfully hand-painted ceramic: Mr Prosperity, Mr. Happiness, and Mr. Longevity. Inside a mini Buddhist temple, on the shelf below the three figurines, rested ceramic bowls holding sticks of incense that the family kept burning.

Five books, considered Confucian classics, sat on a low table in front. In these books Confucius describes how all good Chinese should behave.

Mr. Wong faced the shrine, placed his hands together, and meditated. He burned some incense before the shrine and was starting reading a book of Confucius, when suddenly Lu’s voice interrupted his thoughts.

“There’s some mail for you.”

“What is it? A Bible lesson sent by the Seventh-day Adventist Church? How did they get my address?”

“Shall I throw it away for you?” Lu asked.

“Where are those Bibles I gave you for making shoes patterns?” Lu handled one to him, but invited him to consider the implications of studying the Christian Scriptures: “What’ll our ancestors think? How’ll they eat? Where’ll they stay when their houses decay from neglect. Do you want the angry gods to send misfortunes on us?”

Mr. Wong smiled: “There is no harm in studying the Bible. I’ll search for truth and weed out falsehood. I won’t do anything foolish.”

So he started studying the Bible and got many new ideas. He learned about a loving God who had sent His Son to die for sinners. Jesus wanted to be his best friend and wished to intercede for him before God on the basis of His crucifixion. Through Jesus, God would enable him to put away his sordid past and obey the Ten regulations written in Exodus 20. He also learned about the signs of the times saying that the end of the world was coming and Jesus would take His friends with Himself forever. A special small group of people, that the Bible calls “The Remnant” would follow the truth

and be persecuted, but God would take care of them.

He memorized the Ten Regulation and learned that he had to worship only the One True God. But many problems arose in his mind. How could he keep the first regulation that commands to worship only the true God and still honour Mr. Happiness and his mates? How could he keep the second regulation which forbids carved images and still have the figurines of his traditional gods and kneel in front of them? How could he honour the fifth regulation which forbids adultery and still have two wives? Should he send one away as Abraham did with Hagar? And what about the fourth commandment which commanded to rest on Saturday according to the will of God?

He learned that God wanted him to control his mouth and his temper. Had he to abandon gambling and disputing with his first wife about money? And what about the violence he had used as a policeman?

Wong was realizing that Christ was offering him a better life and he started regretting his misdeeds. He wished eternal life with Jesus, his Friend.

His wife Lu was still continuing to kneel in front of the ancestors images and offer them sacrifices so that they could enjoy their after death life, but Mr. Wong knew that the Bible teaches that the dead do not know and do not need anything for they just sleep waiting for the resurrection. What should he do?

The time had come for commitment and he prayed, “Jesus, my Friend, I’m determined to believe You and Your Word. Change my character. Make me refined steel, able to face any test, even pain and disaster. The earth means nothing for me anymore. The Bible says those who don’t believe you will vanish someday like animals. I choose heaven and long to become Your missionary here and now, ready to sacrifice myself for You, my Friend and Saviour, Jesus, who died for me.”

The decision was not easy: the ancestors left the house. But what about the other problems? How would God help him solve them? And what about the persecutions he had to suffer?

Reduced from, *The Man Who Couldn’t be Killed*, written by Stanley Maxwell

[To be continued in the next issue. Be sure you do not miss it. If you do not receive **Il-Lehen tat-Tama** on a permanent base, use the included card at page 8 to apply for a free subscription.]

NEWS FROM THE WORLD

CHAD: MEDICAL MISSIONARIES CONFRONT THE EXTREMES

August 23, 2005 Béré, Chad [Wendi Rogers/ANN]

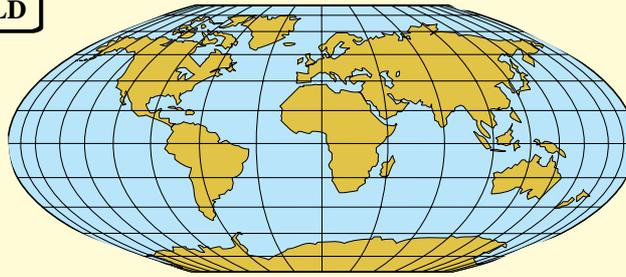
"If you go to the hospital, you'll die." That's what many in the Béré region believe because, as Dr. James Appel explains, they go to the witchdoctor or "nurse" in their neighbourhood who "treat" people out of a house, or they buy medicine in the market, and will only come to the hospital as a last resort. Such as when their baby is about to die. "Then we do our best, but often they die anyway," Dr. Appel says, which is why locals associate the hospital with death.

This "hospital" is in a remote area reached via dusty roads that lead to a dilapidated building. There are few of the necessities found in modern medicine; there's no EKG device, no X-ray machine, no glucose monitor. Years of civil war, a harsh climate, and being landlocked make importing difficult and expensive.

"Getting medicines can often be impossible due to the difficulties of importation and lack of local resources to pay for services. Then, the lack of education due to poverty and years of war makes it very difficult for people to understand the need for health care and especially preventative services," says the hospital's only physician, who is also a Seventh-day Adventist missionary.

"There is also a huge spiritual darkness and oppression as, even if people convert to Christianity or Islam, they still hold onto many animistic beliefs which include beliefs in poisonings, spells and curses as causing disease, which means you should go to a witch doctor or traditional healer to be cured," Dr. Appel, who came here from California in early 2004, says.

"I've never seen this before," Dr. Appel had to admit when examining one baby who was constipated to the point that his bowels came out. He will see other things as well that don't come close to his norm. Yet they are the norm for this part of the globe where death and disease are a part of life.



They have electricity four to five hours a day by a generator, and no phone service. Béré has 60,000 people, most of whom "live in mud huts and barely survive through subsistence farming of rice, millet and peanuts." Temperatures can reach 54 degrees Celsius (130 degrees Fahrenheit), but at least there's air conditioning in the surgery area.

It's not easy to see if God is using this place to introduce people to Him. "I wish I could say it was obvious, but that's one thing I haven't figured out," says Dr. Appel. "It often seems that nothing is happening for the good spiritually. I have to believe that God knew what He was doing when He placed the hospital here and as His ways are so mysterious, maybe they are meant to be hidden until the day He chooses to reveal His purposes."

There hasn't been a regular doctor at the hospital since the early 1990s. For the most part, it was nurses. He went to medical school with the "sole purpose of doing missionary work. I honestly can't say any lives have been affected except for mine and my wife's," says Dr. Appel, who met his wife, Sarah Andersen, a registered nurse from Den-

mark, when he arrived in Béré. She had been serving at the hospital as a volunteer nurse for several months already.

"Even though it may be hard to live where people do things totally opposite of what I always just expected was the norm, I've learned that maybe in many respects their culture is closer to a Christian culture than Western culture is," Dr. Appel says. "For example, the emphasis on community and sharing of resources instead of individualism and hoarding of resources..." This small hospital, operated by Adventist Health International, is not well known, even within the Adventist community.

"The world we live in America [or in Europe], that's not a good portrait of where the world is. Most of the world is suffering in a way that you cannot even imagine."

The Appels have committed to work in Béré for at least six years. After that, he says, "If [God] wants us to stay, we will."

"Risks must be taken since the biggest danger in life is to risk nothing," Andersen says. "Only the person who takes risks is truly free."

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BIBLE GAME

CAN YOU FIND WORDS OF LOVE?

Among all the letters are hidden at least 18 words, most of them taken from 1 Corinthians 13, where the apostle Paul explains what true love is. You can find the solution at p. 10, but don't go there before you try to discover yourself what love really is. The words you look for are written horizontally, vertically and one obliquely.



KDEMCCADHKDSABDSVSCFDAAGHJAPMLNSJS
 QERFGEOPATIENTMFHOXUIEDASJKNDAFEIG
 LERTYUFHERPRUTGHKARTEILJMUQEVCAVBC
 DAVFLOTREUBLIBPROTECTSPLITGHRIIGRE
 AIORTYVXZSSPRILFERLMINTKKINDGTTAAG
 GROITELLCTRUTHCJLPERSEVERESTOHHILT
 BAGENEROUSSGRUPOIUYTFGEGHEMONPFUKL
 YLMDGROTKALMHMLIOIVGSTCVLOTTATLUGLO
 DRELLMAGBELTKBKKGFLOYHAGLIGHMOLMIK
 ALTRUISTTPPAULLRRGLGENTLEPLABANGEG
 CKOTHABLATASTEZXA AVOKLONMTRENEE IOL
 BROHERFALNESFGETCTRDBLOGTRENXTSSTR
 GHOPESLOFELTRAGEGHRIFORGIVENESSSB
 GRALETGFIOLFERTJDNVBGRTXCXWUSTVLLR

KNOW
 THE BIBLE
 ON YOUR
 TELEVISION



This was just one of the many games we played with our friends during a special Ladies-Gentlemen context Saturday evening, last 6th of August. Ladies are happy to announce that they won, but Gents make them notice that only with this last game were they able to overcome them and only because they were much more numerous than men.

“And now abide faith, hope, love, these three;
 but the greatest of these is love.”

(The apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:13)

Many friends are enjoying the Gospel through the television. Why don't you join them?

What you need is either a satellite system pointing to Hotbird or an ADSL Internet connection to receive them on your computer.

We offer you two worldwide networks: The 3ABN (Three Angels Broadcasting) Networking and Hope Channel.

The first is privately held by some members of the Adventist Church, the second is the new official network of the church herself. Both are equally worth watching. You will not find any artificial religious excitement but a quite, spiritual atmosphere, and a sound explanation of the Holy Scriptures.

For more information, visit their web sites: WWW.3ABN.ORG and WWW.HOPETV.ORG.



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 (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° 39)

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel. (optional): _____

FAITH & REASON

AMAZING FACTS ABOUT CREATION

What do you believe about your origin? Do you come from a loving God who created everything good and perfect, or do you believe that everything comes from a long violent development of history. Otherwise, do you believe in Bible Creation or in Evolution? Are you a son of God or a son of the original amoeba? Is your destiny in the hands of God or in those of Chance?

Nowadays it seems even stupid to ask such questions for even the majority of Christians have surrendered to the so called "scientific evolution" and deny the Bible story of the origin. Nevertheless, can it be that at the end, it will be discovered that evolution is only a myth believed true only because of the many times it is repeated, and that the Bible is right as past Christians believed? We invite you to consider three facts. Sorry we cannot do more in just one page.

1 Oxygen on Venus. Evolutionists assume that, to give origin (by chance) to the first original elements that form the living matter, the original atmosphere of the Earth had to be oxygen free. In fact, if oxygen existed it would have destroyed at once every form of biologic pre-life elements. In 1978 Venus was invaded by six U.S. and two Soviet spacecrafts to study it. The surprising discovery of atomic oxygen in its atmosphere was made and the data support the idea that it must be part of the original atmosphere of this planet. So, if oxygen existed at the beginning of Venus, and if, as evolutionists claim, the origin of Venus is quite similar to that of the Earth, we have to assume that oxygen existed in our own original atmosphere. If it is so, life couldn't be born by chance. (Idea drawn from George Javor, *Evidences for Creation*, 2005).

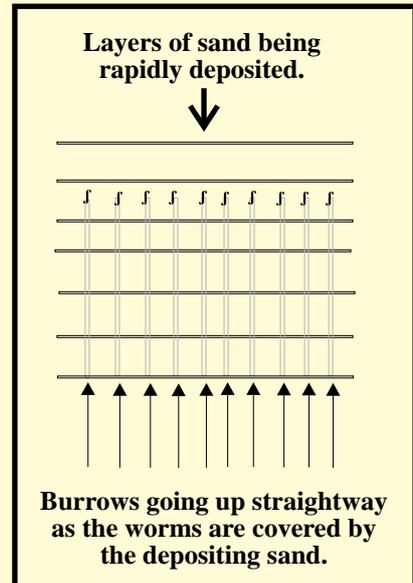
2 Worms and the speed of the sedimentary process. Evolutionists suppose that all the sedimentary rocks formed during extremely long ages. And since they contain remains of past living beings, it is supposed that life has been in existence on our planet for million of years. This would be in contradiction with the Bible data which presuppose that God created life some thousands of years ago. Are evolutionists surely right? One of the many proofs that rocks can develop in a short time is given by some fossil worm remains.

In northwest Scotland there is a series of Cambrian Sandstone about 200 metres thick. "The upper part consists of 63 metres of pipe rock and two upper divisions.

The pipe rock contains as many as 7,000 burrows of *Skolithos* sp. [the marine worm we are talking about] by square metre. The burrows are vertical, continuous, and straight. There are no worms casts except on the upper surface of the pipe rock." How can it be? These worms live in the sand where they form holes. If the rock were formed during thousand of years by different worms being successively buried by sand, we would find many short broken pipes. Instead all these pipes are continuous and about 63 metres long. Must we assume that each single worm lived hundred of thousand of years trying to find their way out through the slowly falling sand? Or can we better assume that all these worms made their holes during their normal life span while a large quantity of sand was continuously falling down? "Modern marine worms can bore at a rate of 20 cm in three minutes and so a single worm could traverse 63 metres in about sixteen hours." Even if we allow these worms to work at a lower speed, it would mean, 1) that there was a large catastrophe allowing all that large amount of material to be sedimented quite fast into the sea, and 2) that all sedimentary rocks could have formed in just a few days, weeks or months. What could be the cause of such a catastrophe? Can we think of the Biblical flood whose water covered the Earth for about one year? (Adapted from Colin Mitchell, *Creationism Revisited*, 1999)

3 What is life? All our planet is boiling with life. You can count about 10,000 invisible living beings in each gram of soil. What is life? What makes a living being live? What we know is that each living being is a complex reality made of many parts and that no one can work without the complexity and the harmony of all its parts.

An eye is made of a lens, but the lens has no effect if the light it concentrates and directs does not reach the extraordinary surface of the retina where millions of light sensitive cells are impressed and develop messages for the brain. But the brain must be there, ready to receive and elaborate these signals, otherwise they are meaningless. These signals cannot reach the brain if the optical nerves are not there to convey them. Nothing of all these parts can work if the cells of each part are not nourished by the blood transported by the vascular system. The vascular system cannot do anything without the breathing and the digestive system etc. All these parts have to exist together for them to work out their functions, and you cannot imagine a moment when some of these



parts were working without the others. It would be as if you had a car without the wheels, or the engine, or the breaks, or any other part. If you haven't them all together, harmoniously assembled, you cannot use your car at all. You cannot say, "For now I use my car without the engine and I'll buy it when I have enough money."

But life is much more than this harmonious complexity for it exists also in a just dead organism. Everything is still there, but life. Life doesn't just depend on the presence of the macro elements that form the body, but on the even more extraordinary nature of each cell where the harmonious complexity we have described is even greater. And there is much more for, even at the cell level, the presence of each necessary element is not enough to make the living cell live. Life is not just the presence of the necessary materials but also of their "non-equilibrium" condition as Scientists call it. To create this "non-equilibrium" condition is even a more extraordinary enterprise than creating the physical body as such, for it implies to work with single atoms in all the parts of the molecule and in them all in the same time, for the cell to live.

Chance cannot create living beings through a slow series of accidental steps. Life is the result of an intelligent design and of a power so great that we cannot even imagine. Our reason tells us that there must be a wise powerful being who wished and created life. The Holy Scriptures call Him, God the Creator. You and me are His sons, and we can have hope, for the Gospel says that He created life because He loves and that He loves each one of us—you and me.

MISSION STORIES

BEDSIDE EVANGELISTIC SERIES

It was an ordinary day, the kind we seldom remember until something unexpected happens. On Saturday evening as I prepared to bathe my two-month-old son, Florin, I noticed a lump on his body. We called the doctor, who told us to take Florin to the regional hospital in Tula, Russia, an eight-hour train ride away.

“Why Lord?” I prayed over and over as we made our way to the hospital and as we waited anxiously for the doctor to examine our son.

The doctor told us our son's condition was not serious but that he needed surgery, which he had scheduled for two days later. He urged me to remain in the hospital with Florin and complete necessary paperwork while my husband returned home.

I was taken to a ward where other mothers waited with their children for surgery. I unpacked my bag and laid my Bible on the stand near the bed. One woman noticed the Bible and began asking questions. As I answered her questions, I noticed the other mothers were listening too. We talked for two hours about God, the Bible, and life. Then she asked for some Christian books to read. When the other women heard her request, they, too, asked for books. “And bring children's books, too,” they added.

The next day my husband brought a box of books, which the women eagerly grabbed. The children's ward became eerily silent as each mother began reading. Suddenly I understood that God had a purpose for our son's unexpected emergency and was turning a crisis into a blessing. Every woman in the ward

needed assurance of God's love, and through us God was providing that assurance.

Later I invited the children to come and sing with me. I taught them songs of faith in Jesus. The mothers joined in with us as we sang. The dreary hospital ward was filled with songs of joy. The nurses heard the singing and came to see what was happening. Doctors and nurses from other wards stopped by. Some asked for books.

My son's surgery was successful, and soon he was well enough to return home. I do not know how many people's lives were changed as the result of our bedside evangelistic series, but I am just glad that God could use us in a surprising and unexpected way.

Natasha Yunak (Mrs Natasha and her family live in western Russia)

THE MISSING SATURDAY EXAMS

As many as 700 Adventist students study at the state university in Butari, Rwanda. The Adventist church in the area is too far away and too small for the students to attend. So the Adventist students worship in the university's stadium on Sabbath morning.

Adventists are well known in Rwanda, and most of the professors at the university accommodate Adventist students when giving their exams. But occasionally visiting professors from other French-speaking countries are not so generous.

Nyira and Irene were seniors at the university. One of their required courses was being taught by a visiting professor. As exam time neared, the students studied fiercely, for their grade depended entirely on the final exam. But when the exam schedule was posted, the exam for this course fell on the Sabbath. The girls went to see the professor and asked to take the exam on a different day.

“No,” the professor answered abruptly. “You must take the examination with the other students.”

The girls prayed for two days, and then they returned to request a change in their exam date again. This time the professor was even more harsh than the first time. Friendly students who knew their dilemma counselled them. “Surely your God will understand. You ought to take the exam.”

But the girls refused. “Even if we must take the entire class again, we will not dis-

honour God's Sabbath.” Early on Sabbath morning, the girls slipped out of the dormitory and into the forest nearby to pray. They returned to the school stadium in time for Sabbath School.

After church ended, Nyira and Irene walked back to their dormitory. On the way they met some of their classmates, returning from the examination hall. “Your God surely does love you,” they said. “The examination has been rescheduled.”

The girls listened, amazed, as they learned that the other students waited from 8:00 until 10:00, but their professor never came. Finally a teacher appeared and told the students that they could not find the examination papers, and the exam would have to be rescheduled.

Nyira and Irene rejoiced that God had overruled the stubborn professor and showed a classroom of students that He does care for His children.

J. H. Zachary

The fourth commandment of the Decalogue says: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”



CAN YOU FIND WORDS OF LOVE? Solution of the game at p. 8.

HEALTH FOR YOUNGSTERS

THE CLUB OF THE TYRANTS



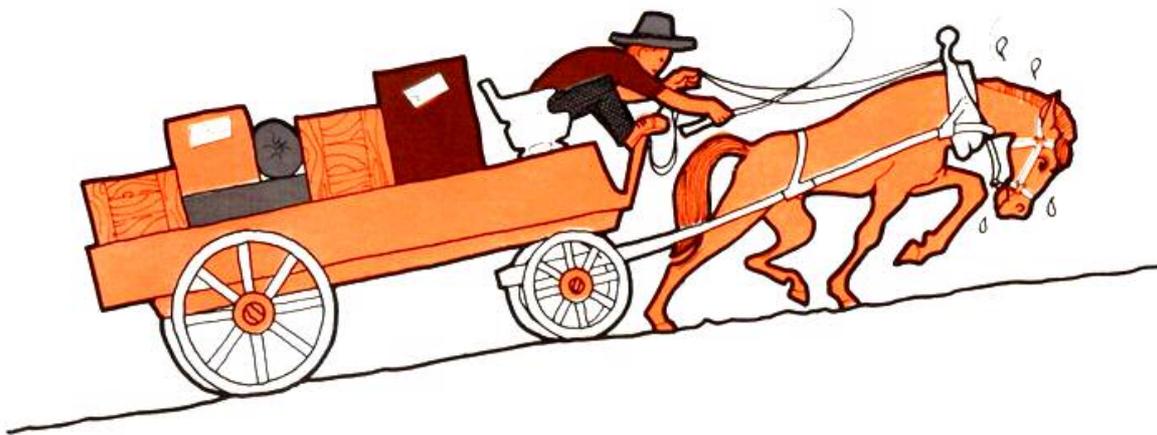
I irritate your nerves and make a slave of you. When I call for you, come at once or you feel lost!

I whip your heart and force it to work rapidly. At first you feel strong but later you become weaker than before!



I make holes in your teeth and torture your heart.

They are not your friends! Beside, most of the soft drinks are not made with true fruit juices. Often they just contain artificial substances, sugar and dyes! Drink pure water. It helps your body to go on better with its work.



Would you whip your horse to force him pull a heavy cart when he is tired and what he needs is only oats and water? Coffee, tea, and cola based drinks are like lashes that oblige your body while it just needs rest, food, and a little water!

If he continues to whip his horse, I start shouting!

But if you drink coffee, it is as if you were whipping your heart!



Coffee is hurtful even for desert mice like us!

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

VEGETARIAN COOKERY PROGRAMME

Does eating meat give more strength? What you should know is that the strongest animals living on earth, elephants, rhinos, hyppopotamous, bulls ..., are all vegetarians. And if you object that they are not humans, we tell you that we know of a man who survived 20 years of forced labour camp in the China of Mao being a strict vegetarian. And if you again object that Chinese are not Maltese, I can tell you that many Maltese are vegetarians too and enjoy a very good healthy life. Vegetarianism is becoming a social trend in our society. Many people become such for health or spiritual reasons.

If you wish to become vegetarian or to just reduce the meat you eat, you have to know how to deal with vegetarian food for vegetarianism requires a little more attention than just cooking a steak. This is why the Adventist Women Association has included some lessons of vegetarian cuisine led by Mrs. Gianna Leonardi. The first lesson was held on the 19th of last July. Other lessons are in programme and if you wish to assist you are really welcome (see first page).



Mrs. Gianna Leonardi and the ladies following the vegetarian lesson at the SDA premises in Birkirkara.

The first lessons dealt with some Soya recipes prepared with Soya chunks. Soya is a legume very similar to beans but with a very high rate of proteins, the basic muscle maker in living beings. You need some proteins (even if not so much as people usually suppose) every day and you can get them in many simple ways by eating legumes, almonds, nuts, bread, milk etc. Soya gives them in a concentrated way.

The ladies received a demonstration of how to prepare three simple recipes, all so tasty that even children liked them. We give you the one shown in the photo below.

SOYA CHUNKS WITH PEAS AND ONIONS

The following recipe is 4-6 persons and is a special creation of Mrs. Gianna.

Ingredients: 100g of dry Soya chunks (you should be able to find them in most supermarkets), 1 big onion, ½ a glass of olive oil, ½ a glass of white wine, 150g of boiled peas, pepper (if you like), ½ pkt. of savoury gravy sauce, 1 glass of water, 1 and ½ spoon of vegetable stock.

Preparation: Put the Soya chunk in hot water for about five minutes. Squeeze them to take away the water. Cut the onion into slices and fry them slightly with the olive oil. When the onion is soft, add the Soya, the wine, the water, the vegetable stock, and a pinch of pepper. Cover the frying-pan and let everything cook slightly for 10 minutes (mix everything once in a while). Add the boiled peas and let everything cook for another 5 minutes. Add the savoury gravy after having mixed it with a glass of hot water and leave everything on the stove for two extra minutes. If you like, serve them with mashed potatoes.



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