

# From the G.C. President

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■ **An Important Question to Ponder:** Thursday, March 19 was a historic day at the World Headquarters Offices. On this day, leaders from the GC and its Divisions met with leaders from various media ministries in Adventism to discuss new technology and the future of evangelism and educational support in the Adventist Church. As part of a day-long agenda, we heard presentations by various entities in the church who are already making effective use of this technology. Dwight Nelson reviewed plans for NET 98 and Mark Finley described the plans for ACTS 2000—a series of 10 satellite crusades—each conducted and uplinked from a different division beginning in 1999. A new and fascinating use of satellite technology is the North American Division’s Distance Education in Elementary Schools Program. Funded with the assistance of Versacare, this pilot program delivers interactive education to eight Adventist schools throughout the United States. The sites chosen are small schools, typically with several grades in one room and one teacher. Students receive lessons via satellite on a regular basis and have the ability to interact at will with their satellite instructor. Loma Linda University also demonstrated its distance learning through technology. With this foundation of satellite ministry already built, the following question of commitment must be asked, prayerfully pondered, and answered by all church leadership. Do we embrace this fast-emerging technology and develop a coordinated effort to build and support a global satellite network for the Seventh-day Adventist Church? I believe the answer to this question must be YES! As recent years has taught us, technology can be used for both good and evil. But our mission demands that we utilize this technology to reach beyond many walls to offer hope in Christ. To do otherwise would be immoral.

■ **A New Perspective from Scientists:** The Research News section of the January 2 edition of *Science Magazine* ([www.sciencemag.org](http://www.sciencemag.org)) reports a discovery that is of interest to creationists. The article, “Calibrating the Mitochondrial Clock” explains one method by which scientists (operating within the framework of evolutionary assumptions) date ancient skeletal remains. Based on the assumption that 5 million years ago humans and the great apes shared a common ancestor, they compare the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) between samples. By comparing the samples they estimate how many mutations separate the mtDNA in the two samples. From the estimated number of mutations and the assumed time of evolutionary divergence, they have created a “clock,” with each mutation being a “tick” of that clock. Based on their evolutionary assumptions, they have estimated that the “clock ticks” every 300 to 600 generations. (6000 to 12000 years). Now the clock’s calibration is being challenged by new research based on actual measurements, rather than evolutionary assumptions.

The research was stimulated by the process of DNA testing done in 1992 to identify the last Russian tsar. Researchers were stunned to find evidence supporting a rate of one mutation every 40 generations (800 years). The enormity of the problem to evolutionists becomes apparent when the article declares the following: “Regardless of the cause, evolutionists are most concerned about the effects of the mutation rate. For example, researchers have calculated that “mitochondrial Eve” – the woman whose mtDNA was ancestral to that in all living people—lived 100,000 to 200,000 years ago in Africa. Using the new clock, she would be a mere 6,000 years old.” Rather than questioning their assumptions, evolutionists have begun to “...think twice about the mtDNA clock they depend on.”

## Off the Back Burner

**Segment #106:** One evening, long ago in Battle Creek, Michigan (probably January 1, 1881), James White picked up his ill wife, Ellen, in his arms, and took her out to their waiting carriage. Mrs. White was sick with a cold and could only talk in a whisper, but she had a speaking appointment that night at the Dime Tabernacle. Arriving at the church, James White walked slowly down the aisle, his wife leaning heavily on his arm and moving as if every step was painful for her. Arriving at the rostrum, he helped her to her seat. After opening the service and speaking for a few moments, he assisted her to the pulpit.

Grasping the pulpit with both hands, Mrs. White tried to steady herself. She then began to speak in a faint, hoarse voice, but only a few in the front rows could hear her. In the audience that evening were two college girls, Ella King and Edith Donaldson. Ella had not yet joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but was attending Battle Creek College because her mother had become a member. Her friend, Edith, had traveled with the Whites as they had come from Oregon to Michigan. That evening, though, Edith was resentful as she saw Ellen White struggle to speak in a barely audible voice. Edith felt bitter toward a God who would force Ellen White to strain so hard to be heard when so many prayers had been offered asking that she be healed. As Edith sat there, she wondered to herself how she could serve such an unjust God. And try as hard as Ellen White might, her message that night was just not getting through because of her illness.

Suddenly, a feeling like an electric shock went through Edith Donaldson. She trembled all over as she saw a light of dazzling brightness enter the church through what looked like an opening in the ceiling. Simultaneously, Ella King’s attention focused on the gallery window to the left, nearest the pulpit, where the bright light “moved like the waving of wings.” “An angel,” the two girls whispered to each other in almost the same breath.

The brilliant light passed overhead directly to Mrs. White, who stood leaning on the pulpit. It enveloped her, and then everything on the rostrum was hidden from the sight of those two girls. Momentarily, they were blinded by the brightness. When they could see again, the light had vanished, and Mrs. White stood strong and erect at the edge of the rostrum, holding her Bible in one hand. Her voice rang out like a bell, and her first words were, “God has sent His angel and has strengthened me.” She gave her full sermon in her usual stirring voice. God had healed her.

Later that evening James White asked Edith, “Did you see the angel?” When she replied that she had, he said, “Thank the Lord that He opened your eyes. He did it for a purpose.” James White and Mary Kelsey White, the wife of Ellen White’s son, W. C. White, had also seen the angel.

All who were in that large congregation saw the healing that was performed, but as far as could be determined, only those four were privileged to see the angel. What those two girls saw that night they never forgot. Edith felt she had been a faithless, doubting Thomas, and that the Lord in mercy had awakened her to a new life. She and Ella were baptized, and as Edith Donaldson Brownsberger and Ella King Sanders both lived long lives of service for the Lord. In fact, during her long teaching career, Ella recounted to her students the story of the night she saw the angel. (Adapted from *Review and Herald*, September 30, 1943, pp. 3, 4; Ella Robinson’s *Stories of My Grandmother*, pp. 55 and 56; Paul Ricchiuti’s *Ellen*, pp. 122-124, and statements by Edith Donaldson Brownsberger and Ella King Sanders found in White Estate Document File, no. 542.)

