

# From the President

The Seventh-day Adventist Church

October 26, 1998

## UPDATE

**IAD Year-end Meetings:** Last week, I attended the Inter-American Division (IAD) Year-end Meetings held on the island of Antigua. I was joined at these meetings by Pastors Athal Tolhurst and Robert Lemon (Undersecretary and Undertreasurer respectively of the General Conference). On Wednesday afternoon Pastor Janson Trotman, president of the North Caribbean Conference, took us to see some of the Adventist churches on the island and to survey the damage done just a few weeks ago by Hurricane Georges. We also visited the neighboring island of Montserrat which has been devastated by the on-going eruption of Mt. Soufrier. This volcano transformed ash, soil and rock into an intensely hot liquid that flowed down the mountain at speeds nearing 100 miles per hour! The island's population of 11,000 had to evacuate. Still, many have not returned to the island, and many who returned no longer have homes. The island's Adventist Church (built with the help of Maranatha Volunteers International) provides shelter to homeless families and serves the island's 150 members.

Before the IAD Executive Committee got to work, its members were invited to a banquet by Sir James Carlisle, Governor General of Antigua/Barbuda and a dedicated Adventist. During the meetings the further development of satellite evangelism was discussed as well as other issues of current importance to the church in Inter-America. I am pleased to report that the church in the IAD is growing and prospering.

### **Adventist Heritage—Good Public**

**Relations:** So far this year approximately half of the visitors to the William Miller farm in upstate New York are not Adventists. These

individuals represent a large portion of the travelers who see the farm's historic roadside signs and make an unscheduled stop. The total number of visitors to the Miller farm to date for 1998 is 2,170. Thanks to a recent donation, a new heating system will be installed in the farmhouse. This will allow tours to continue throughout the entire calendar year.

Also, the first attraction of the Historic Adventist Village in Battle Creek, Michigan opened this past week. The Dr. J. H. Kellogg Discovery Center unfolds the story of the Adventist Church in Battle Creek.

## FOCUS ON FAITH

### **The Book of Daniel and the Canon:**

The last segment looked at the Apocrypha. Now we turn our attention to the book of Daniel. Seventh-day Adventists have a special interest in the Book of Daniel and its place in the canon. In the Greek, the Latin, and all succeeding translations of the Bible, the Book of Daniel is always found among the prophets. In the Hebrew Bible, however, Daniel is placed not among the prophets but among the writings.

Historical-critical scholars for the past two hundred years have used this fact to deny the prophetic character of the book. They believe that Daniel was written by an unknown Jew during the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.), and that all the predictions in the book are, therefore, *vaticinia ex eventu* (prophecies written after the event).

L. F. Hartman and A. A. DiLella in the Anchor Bible Commentary on Daniel refer to the possibility that the rabbis did not consider the Book of Daniel as a

prophetic writing. "More probable, however," they say, "is the theory that because the book appeared so late (second quarter of the second century B.C.) it could not be included in the prophetic corpus which the rabbis held to be closed with the death of the fifth century B.C. prophet Malachi" (*Daniel*, p. 25). Thus, historical-critical scholars have "made the incorporation of Daniel among the writings a cornerstone of the so-called Maccabean Theory" (K. Koch, "Is Daniel Also Among the Prophets?" *Interpretation*, 39 (1985), 2:118).

What, however, is the historical evidence? As Koch (pp. 121-123) has shown, there are a number of early witnesses which place Daniel among the prophets.

1. Matthew 24:15 calls Daniel a prophet.
2. The Septuagint places Daniel among the prophets.
3. Josephus (ca. 100 A.D.) includes Daniel among the prophets.
4. The people at Qumran considered Daniel to belong to the prophets. *4Q Florilegium*, 2.3.20 refers to "the Book of Daniel, the prophet."
5. Even among Jews the tradition is not unanimous. Moshe Ben Asher, the author of the Codex Cairensis, which does not place Daniel among the prophets, wrote "all the prophets from Moses . . . to Daniel and Malachi number 117."
6. A Hebrew-Aramaic-Greek canon list (ca second century A.D.) lists Daniel after the three other major prophets. ■

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