

# From the President

The Seventh-day Adventist Church

November 2, 1998

## UPDATE

### NET '98—In the Midst of a

**Successful Campaign:** At this writing I am in Manila attending the Southern-Asia Pacific Division's year-end meetings. I believe this will be a valuable trip on many levels and I am planning to give you a detailed report in future editions of *From the President*. However, for this issue we will focus on news from around the world about the progress of NET '98 as we are right in the middle of a successful worldwide out-reach campaign.

**New Life in Christ:** On Saturday night, October 31, as millions of people around the world mock and commemorate the dead during Halloween, Pastor Esther Ramharacksingh-Knott, from the Pioneer Memorial Church, led a new believer out of the watery grave of baptism and into a brand new life in Christ. Pastor Knott said that this candidate had asked to be baptized on Halloween as a symbol of turning from evil and giving himself wholly to the service of God. This young man was led to the Adventist faith by a group of Andrews University students who he met at a restaurant.

**Update:** Brad Thorpe, NET '98 coordinator, has recently prepared a progress report on the many elements that make this program a success:

**Technical:** For the first time the new uplink equipment of the General Conference has been used. We are now fully equipped for production, encoding and full broadcast anywhere in the world. The uplink equipment is a "fly-away" system so we now have full capability for traveling anywhere in the world for production. A special thanks to each technical support team operating in each footprint area for the

outstanding work you are doing.

**Translators:** During each meeting 37 different languages are being broadcast. In reality, 40 are being recorded. The translator team has an excellent spirit! Before each program the translators meet for worship, prayer, orientation and reports from different sites around the world. You can help the translation team in two ways: 1. Pray for their challenging work; 2. Please share progress reports with them. News from each language group is very important.

**Feedback:** Paul Richardson and his team from the Center for Creative Ministry, conducted the first research on the effectiveness of NET '98 to date. This research shows that 95 % of respondents are very confident in this evangelistic out-reach.

## FOCUS ON FAITH

**Daniel and the Canon (cont.):** In segment 16 we discovered that there are a number of early witnesses which place Daniel among the prophets. "One is forced to note," says Koch (p. 123), who is himself a historical-critical scholar, "that there is not a single witness for the exclusion of Daniel from the prophetic corpus in the first half of the first millennium A.D. . . . In fact the earliest literary evidence of Daniel's inclusion among the *Kethubim* is to be placed somewhere between the fifth and eighth centuries A.D." Though he admits that the oral tradition must go back to the second century A.D. What is remarkable is that here a critical scholar places Daniel among the prophets. At the beginning of this century, the conservative scholar Robert D. Wilson, after examining the

evidence, concluded that "all the direct evidence that precedes the year 200 A.D., supports the view that Daniel was in the earliest times among the prophets" (Wilson, p. 49).

Why then did the rabbis place Daniel among the Writings? Koch believes that the important role played by some of the prophecies of Daniel during the first and second revolt of the Jews against the Romans was the decisive cause. Josephus refers to one of these prophecies: "What did most elevate them in undertaking this war, was an ambiguous oracle that was also found in their sacred writings, how, 'about that time, one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth.' The Jews took this prediction to belong to themselves in particular and many of the wise men were thereby deceived in their determination. Now, this oracle certainly denoted the government of Vespasian, who was appointed emperor in Judea." (*The Jewish War*, 6.5.4).

The oracle Josephus was thinking of could have been Daniel 7:13-14 or 9:26. Removing Daniel from the prophetic corpus and including him in the narratives of exilic and post-exilic times would have lessened the force of the argument. Whatever the reason for the shift, there is good historical evidence that the Book of Daniel originally was part of the prophetic corpus.

In conclusion it must be clearly stated that Seventh-day Adventists, with other conservative Christians, believe that the Old Testament is what it says it is, and it arose in the way it claims. ■

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