

Perspective Digest

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The Road to Emmaus: Come Walk With Me (The President's Page)

Richard M. Davidson

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Since its inception eight years ago, ATS has had a major goal: to uplift the Word of God incarnate (Jesus) and written (Scripture) as the world's only true Light. I'd like to tell you how God worked in 1996 to advance this goal and share my vision for the society's future missions.

The past year has been one of unprecedented opportunity! In June, ATS uplifted the Word through its first International Bible Conference at Montemorelos University. Present for the week's study of major Adventist doctrines were more than 500 of Mexico's Adventist pastors and their families. In November, ATS convened another Bible conference in Jackson, Mississippi. Focusing on the Book of Revelation, Adventist scholars shared insights with pastors and laymen at the Jackson SDA church, and, during the annual Evangelical Theological Society convention, held at a nearby hotel, with dozens of their theologians.

The Road to Emmaus: Come, walk with me!

Special thanks to Ed Zinke, past ATS president, and to Norman Gulley, president-elect, who masterfully planned and coordinated the summer and fall conferences respectively; to all the Spirit-filled presenters and attendees; and to the General Conference Biblical Research Institute, the Inter-American Division, and the Gulf States and Arkansas-Louisiana conferences, whose leaders co-sponsored these meetings.

Along with uplifting the Word in 1996 through ATS meetings, the society launched *Perspective Digest*, which, under the creative editorship of Roland Hegstad, has unblushingly uplifted the authoritative Word in highly readable, yet in-depth articles, columns, and departments. In *PD3* you likely savored "Christ's Inauguration," digested from a chapter in Frank Holbrook's *The Atoning Priesthood of Jesus Christ*, itself drawing on the vast research of the Daniel and Revelation Committee series.

Dreams and Realities

Over the next two years I'd like to see *Perspective Digest's* subscription list grow to 10,000. Tell a friend about it; sponsor a sub for one of the hundreds of pastors and teachers in developing countries who want *PD* but can't afford to pay the full subscription price. One subscriber has offered \$1,000 toward this project if others will match this sum by July 1. About \$5,000 is needed. Will you help?

Two issues of the *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society (JATS)*, containing scholarly articles presented as papers at ATS conventions, will be produced annually. (*JATS* has fallen behind its publication schedule, but I'm assured that it will be back on track by the end of 1997.)

A Russian edition of *JATS* awaits funds to print and distribute it to pastors throughout the former Soviet Union. The late Gerhard Hasel's book *Understanding the Living Word of God* is also translated into Russian and

ready for printing. Fifteen thousand dollars is needed. Also proceeding:

- Further volumes in the ATS dissertation series, a monograph series, and a number of occasional papers.

The Great Controversy Theme

"The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, [that is], the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden to that last glorious promise in the Revelation, 'They shall see his face; and His name shall be in their foreheads,' the burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme,—man's uplifting,—the power of God, 'which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' He who grasps this thought has before him an infinite field for study. He has the key that will unlock. . . the whole treasure-house of God's word" (*Education*, pp. 125, 126).

- A spring convention (May 15-17) at Walla Walla, Washington, on "The Authority of Scripture in a Pluralistic Age."

- A convention and Bible conference in the San Francisco area November 20-22 (watch *PD* for more specific information).

- Most exciting: a global congress on the Bible to be held in Jerusalem June 7-12, 1998, the year designated by the SDA Church as "The Year of the Bible." For the first time, leading SDA centrist theologians, administrators, pastors, and laypersons from around the world will meet to make the Word come alive in the setting of the Bible lands! A special feature: Join theologians garbed in the robes of Bible days on a re-enactment of the biblical walk to Emmaus. Hear a running translation of the Old Tes-

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tament prophecies that Jesus shared with His disciples to establish His mission as Messiah! Bring your camcorders, cameras, and tape recorders to capture this unforgettable experience! Circle the dates on your 1998 calendar; we'll share further details as they are released. Also being considered: side trips to Petra and Egypt, with ATS theologians and archaeologists!

• Local chapter events: ATS chapters have been formed in the U.S.A., Europe, Asia, and Africa. I invite you to get involved in stimulating theological digging and spiritual fellowship in your area. If you have no chapter, form one! How-to-do-it materials are available from our ATS office (P.O. Box 86, Berrien Springs, MI 49103). I'd love to see groups

studying the Bible with the commitment to uphold the full authority of Scripture.

• Continued membership growth: ATS membership has climbed to about 1,500. I'm convinced that active membership in ATS study groups would be of mutual benefit to the church and ATS. How exciting it would be to see youth and young adults—especially college and seminary students—involved. All need to become aware of the issues involving biblical authority that confront the church. We need the energy and resourcefulness of youth in meeting this challenge.

Next time: I plan to share my vision for the future of ATS. You're right at the heart of it, along with Incarnate Truth. □

GOALS OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

- To affirm the centrality of the cross
- To reaffirm the surety of the Word
- To confirm the Spirit of Prophecy
- To seek revealed truth
- To consider principles of interpretation
- To investigate unsettled questions
- To fellowship with believers
- To pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit

See page 57 for information on how to become a member of ATS and to receive its publications.
