

MISSION UPDATE

MARCH 2017

GOING COUNTERCULTURE

BY JAMES RAFFERTY

MY 19-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER RECENTLY shared for our family worship some insights from a book she is reading for her university Bible class. When she finished, my mind went to the following scripture:

“As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time” (Daniel 7:12).

This verse describes both the military dominion and cultural influence of four great kingdoms: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome (Daniel 7:17, 23). The prophecy indicates that while each kingdom’s dominion and military control was lost to each succeeding power, the lives of these conquered nations were prolonged.

Defeated but living?

The life of a nation is found in its culture—the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively. These four cultures, though they differ in expression, are characterized by exonerating man and displaying his achievements. This is the culture of “I”,

expressed today in things like the iPhone and social media, which enable our self-centered way of living.

This “I” culture is foreign to God’s original plan for creation. First introduced by Lucifer in heaven (Isaiah 14:12-14), the “I” culture later entangled Eve, then Adam, thus conquering planet earth (Genesis 3:1-6). It ruled the world in every generation until it met its only Conqueror, Jesus Christ, God in the flesh. Through Jesus, God’s original other-centered culture was restored in humanity. **Jesus turned the culture of “I” upside down.** “Not I but Thy” was His mantra.

In Christ the entire human race is called out of the self-destructive culture of “I.” The way out is found in the other-centered love of God. To embrace this counterculture is to accept the completeness of the gift of our salvation, accomplished in the doing and dying of Jesus, and to use the gifts He has given to us in a way so that He alone is exalted. As fallen human beings we naturally tend to take credit even for the work of believing in Jesus (John 6:29).

God’s other-centered culture of love will eventually crush to powder every selfish act of “I.” His grace will remove every last layer of the culture of “I” from all who will look to Jesus. Then not only the dominion, but also the lives (the “I” culture) of these four prophetic “beasts” will be taken away. Amen. 🔥



A BANKER SEES AN OPPORTUNITY

BY MEIRING PRETORIUS

“Many whom God has qualified to do excellent work accomplish very little, because they attempt little. Thousands pass through life as if they had no definite object for which to live, no standard to reach. Such will obtain a reward proportionate to their works” (Ellen White, Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 331).

A man by the name of Master Makore worked for a major bank in Harare, Zimbabwe. Someone gave him three Light Bearers Bible lessons to read, which changed his life. He soon felt a deep conviction to share this newfound truth with his colleagues during his lunch breaks. So Master’s co-workers would sit under a big tree as he taught them

from the three Bible lessons he had, which covered the state of the dead, the Second Coming, and the health message. He had so familiarized himself with the topics that he could answer the questions that naturally arose.

During one of the lunch hour discussions, two men came to interrupt the conversation. They told Master that he should stop using the Bible lessons because they were not the truth. Because he’d only recently been exposed to these new teachings, Master wondered if these men were correct. After they had gone, Master asked his audience if they had seen the two men. They said, “No, we did not see any men.” He wondered if maybe the men had been angels who came to warn him.

That night though, he had a dream in which he was entering a sanctuary in heaven. The person ministering in the sanctuary turned and told Master not to stop using the Bible lessons and explained that He would give Master an open door to use these lessons. Master realized that God had

plans for him. He realized that the two men who told him not to use the Bible lessons must have been evil angels trying to stop him from doing God's work.

He wondered if maybe the men had been angels who came to warn him.

Finally, in 1999, Master left banking and decided to work for the Lord full time. One of his skills as a banker was to write proposals. After he left banking, he continued to use this skill but for the Lord. Master went to the government's Ministry of Education with a proposal. The approach of Master makes me think of Jesus' words, "Be ye as wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16). His proposal offered to teach ten skills to primary and secondary students, including HIV education and health training, and his proposal indicated that the course he was offering would not be complete without the students going through a series of Bible studies. He told the government officials that the lessons would improve morality in the schools and improve the grades of the students. These Bible lessons, he said, were the secret to the success of his whole program.

The Ministry of Education approved the proposal, but only as a trial. He was given just one school, which had the worst morality and academic performance. He eagerly enrolled the students in the Bible study course. Master had absolute faith in God's Word to transform the students. At the end of the year, the results were remarkable enough for the

government to give him an additional five schools to further test his approach. God is faithful. The Bible study program did, indeed, improve morality and brain power among the students, and more schools were given to Master.

In 2006, Master moved to Botswana, believing God would give similar success there. He followed the same procedure of writing a proposal to the Ministry of Education. His proposal was approved and God has given him at present open doors to all the schools in Botswana. What a blessing!

Master has refined his program and has included a series of Bible lessons from the General Conference Children's Department called, *God Loves Me 28 Ways*. With astounding results, he uses these lessons for the primary schools and the study guides from Light Bearers for the secondary schools. His ministry under the government is called Home Health Education Services Support. The government now sponsors Master's program.

God gives us opportunity to share His Word. The question is, do we see those opportunities? 🔥



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SPEAKING SCHEDULE

JANUARY 31-APRIL 4

ARISE Australia
Kingscliff, NSW
David Asscherick
www.ariseaustralia.org

MARCH 24-26

Mjøndalen Adventkirke Youth Event
Norway
Ty Gibson
anders.wiik@gmail.com
www.reddet.no

APRIL 13-16

Victorian Conf. of SDA Camp Meeting
Victoria, Australia
Ty Gibson
vic.adventist.org.au / vicinfo@
adventist.org.au / 03 9264 7777

APRIL 20-23

ASI Northwest Spring 2017
Boise, ID
Ty Gibson, Rise Rafferty
asinw.netasi.org

APRIL 24-MAY 13

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