



Newsletter

ISSUE 9—MAY 2006

Supporting the proclamation of the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14: 6-12 through education, evangelism, health ministry, and research.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Brisbane Seminar—27 May 2006, 516 Mt Petrie Road, Mackenzie - Dr Barry Harker will present two PowerPoint presentations from a developing series entitled "The Everlasting Gospel."

2.30pm - Evolution in the Air
3.45pm - The Most Amazing Epoch

The first presentation examines the rise of popular evolutionism and its significance for the fledgling Seventh-day Adventist movement. The second presentation explores the legacy of the 1840s upon the world and Seventh-day Adventism.

Close of Sabbath - 5.02pm - will take place at the conclusion of the final presentation, followed by a social period and soup and buns (provided). *An expense collection will be taken at the 3.45pm session.*

For information on **Perth** and **Adelaide** meetings in **June 2006**, see page 4.

WINTER YOUTH CAMP—7-9 July 2006, Log Cabin, Numinbah Valley, South East Queensland.

Craig Jacobson is the organizer for the camp and can be contacted at (07) 3297 1094 or at cjacobson@edessa.org. More information is available on page 4 or from the Events page at www.edessa.org.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK...

We are now into the second third of the year and our work is steadily progressing. International students have commenced since the last newsletter was published, exhausting our sponsorship funds. Another international application is currently being processed. Ten thousand copies of our newly designed promotional card will be distributed through the June mail out of Keep the Faith Ministry. This card will reach many who are not currently aware of Edessa International's Online Bible Instructor's Course. The Help Presentation, which was added to the website in early February, is functioning well and will be very helpful to those who visit our website for the first time.

Meetings have been conducted in Brisbane, Melbourne and Hobart. Meetings will be held in Perth and Adelaide in June and details are available on page 4 and on the Events page of the website - www.edessa.org

The Summer Youth Camp, held in the Bunya Mountains, 10-12 March, was a very enjoyable weekend. Ben Pitt has written a report that is included on page 3, along with Jared Warden's talk on bats that he presented at the camp. The Bible Corner this issue has been written by Jana Lauter, who presented this material in a devotional at the camp. Information on the Winter Camp 2006 is available on pages 1 and 4.

On the last weekend in June, the Board and other interested people will be spending a weekend discussing plans for health ministry. Discussions have been taking place for some time and this weekend planning retreat is designed to advance our work in this area. It is also planned to begin adding short research pieces to the website as time permits.

This will be the last newsletter that will be distributed. In future, news and events will be posted exclusively on our website under News or Events. Most people now have access to the Internet and the overwhelming majority of those who have requested the newsletter recently have email addresses, so it seems a good time to make the transition to web news and events. Previous newsletters have accomplished their task of informing people of our objectives and services, so the need to commit time and resources to printed newsletters is much less today than previously. To access the News and Events pages, go to www.edessa.org and click on News or Events. The last two newsletters have been added to the website and can be accessed as selected articles or as the full newsletter.

Grace and peace to all
Barry Harker

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OUR PURPOSE

Edessa International was established in 1998 by Seventh-day Adventist lay people to help equip the laity to fulfill the Gospel Commission in this generation.

Our Objectives

1. To hasten the Second Coming of Jesus Christ through the education of self-supporting Seventh-day Adventist missionaries, evangelists, and gospel workers for domestic and foreign fields.
2. To proclaim the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14: 6-12 through the support of a range of relevant programmes, activities, and collaborative projects.
3. To promote purity of life as a necessary preparation for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Website Developer—Zone4 Digital Media
(webmaster@edessa.biz).

BIBLE CORNER**SNOW—A LESSON FROM GOD'S BOOK OF NATURE**

BY JANA LAUTER

"The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world..." (Psalm 19:1-4).

How true are these inspired words! Even the smallest thing in nature is an object lesson for us. There is absolutely nothing in nature which does not have a meaning and cannot be applied to our lives. The whole creation draws our attention to the creator and reveals His character.

I would like to share with you a few thoughts about snow and the wonderful and precious lessons God wants to teach us through these fascinating crystals.

First of all, where does snow come from? We find the answer in Job 37:6, "For He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain and to the great rain of his strength." These beautiful crystals of snow don't come into existence by accident. The mighty creator Himself is the inventor. It says in Psalm 33:9 that when he speaks, it is done.

Another interesting question is how does God send the snow? Have you ever tried to count all these tiny snowflakes? It is impossible as it is impossible to count the sand at the beach. But it shows us the following principle: God gives in abundance, in wealth. This is a divine principle!

"Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail...?" (Job 38:22). Have you seen God's treasures? God always gives abundantly and he longs to bestow his grace, his mercy and his blessing upon us, as he says in Matthew 7:7, "Ask and it shall be given unto you." Do you believe this?

Every single snowflake is unique. There are not two snowflakes which are alike. For years scientists have researched the form, shape and pattern of snowflakes and they are amazed at the endless variety.

It's the same with you and me. Each one of us is a one-of-a-kind. You are God's special design. There is none like you. And He who knows every single snowflake – don't you believe that He also knows you personally too? He, who knows the very hairs of your head, also knows your feelings, thoughts, desires and needs.

When you are in trouble, when you have problems or when you don't know what to do – lift your eyes towards heaven and think of the snow. So numerous and different as the snowflakes are, that's how it is with the countless ways in which God can provide for you. His wisdom is infinite!

How is it that the snow is white?--a question that I'm often asked by little children. Actually the snowflakes are transparent, but they appear white because they reflect the light. In winter I like going for walks in the early morning when the sun is rising. It's just beautiful to watch the snow when it turns red, pink and violet. Often the snow is so bright, that it almost hurts your eyes. Because of the reflection of light, it's sometimes necessary to wear sunglasses. In fact, you can get sunburnt, even in winter.

But that is exactly how it should be with us: We should expose ourselves to the Sun of righteousness so that we can be as shining

*(Continued on page 4)***Sponsor Libby and His Bush Friends to your local library...**

Edessa International Press is willing to send sponsored copies of Libby and His Bush Friends to a library of your choice for \$12, including postage. Contact Cecily Harker at charker@edessa.org or through the above address if you wish to be involved in this outreach.

REPORT ON 2006 SUMMER YOUTH CAMP

by Ben Pitt

Situated approximately three hours drive north-west of Brisbane, the Bunya Mountains were a spectacular setting for Edessa's first summer youth camp.

'In the heart of the tranquil Bunya Mountains Rainforest...' (Brochure) we felt all the nearer to the heart of God. What a marvelous way for youth to come together under the victory banner of Christ and learn of His mercy and loving-kindness.

The chirp of the birds, the gentle sway of the mighty pines and the vivid freshness of the cool breeze, all transported the soul into a peaceful condition and excited the higher senses.

Two dozen and more youth came out of the woodwork to join one another to praise God and to rejoice in the precious truths of God's word.

The speaker for the weekend camp was Craig Jacobson, who gave a series of talks entitled: "Identity by Performance vs. Identity by Relationship" – which was the camp theme. The message must have touched many hearts, as it certainly touched mine.

Several young people participated in the reverent song and worship services, making for an embracing spiritual experience.

As at previous camps, one of the highlights of the camp was Edessa's anticipated group activity from which many lessons were drawn.

Between services, group activities, and deliciously healthy meals (praise be to God), the group explored the lavish surrounds of the trails winding through the ever changing forested mountains. All rejoiced together as the precious truths about God's desire to have a soul-nourishing connection with us were put forth. Even the walks, over hills, through valleys and amongst the mighty trees that stood like fortresses,

reminded youth of their ever-caring Creator. After closing the Sabbath on the top of Mt Kiangarow, overlooking a beautiful sunset, most stayed up to praise the Lord around the campfire.

Barry Harker summed up the experience at the camp close: "Let's all go away from this camp being kinder, more tender-hearted Christians".

It was the best camp yet; be sure not to miss the next one!

Nature Talk—Bats

by Jared Warden

I have a bat here for today's nature talk and I will explain how I caught him.

I went for a walk at one of the camping sites and, while searching for animals, I looked in a hole above the board where you fill out your camping form and pay camp fees. On top there is a gap between the two boards and that's where I found a pile of dead chocolate bats.

I found this sole survivor and rescued him and looked after him by feeding him some moths which he ate with an appetite. (In the evening, he was discovered flying around the room and was released successfully).

The bat was pursuing food, which was an insect of some kind and the insect led the bat into the hole, which is the pit mentioned in Zechariah 9:11.

Luke 1:79 says, "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." The bat was dying and was also lost. He was delivered from death by God through me.

Zechariah 9:11 says, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein there is no water." The bat was dying of hunger and thirst and was provided with food and water.

Psalms 146:7 says, "Which executeth judgment for the op-

pressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners." The bat had food and was also delivered, experiencing freedom.

Matt 24:3-4 says, "And as he sat on the mount of Olives: the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? 4. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you." I hope that we are not deceived like the bat as he was deceived by false appearances. They cannot escape from level ground. They need a slope from which to take off. We need to take care where we walk spiritually and not be deceived by temptations and we need to help each other in our spiritual walk.

Edessa International Press News and Products

Working Together for Christ is the latest resource produced by Edessa International Press. It is a three-session workshop for forming effective seminar and small group evangelistic teams. It contains workshop formats, model planning and evaluation documents, and model registration and record keeping documents. Working Together for Christ is available as an e-book or in hard copy. It is currently available for \$10 plus postage.

This resource is particularly useful for those who want to engage as a team in seminar or small group evangelism, either publicly or in the home. It provides guidance to a team leader or facilitator in forming and equipping a small evangelistic team with the understanding, skills and unity needed to present the everlasting gospel efficiently and effectively in the public domain. The process takes from 3-5 hours to complete successfully and covers all necessary aspects of forming a team.

(Continued from page 2)

crystals in this cold world.

What else can we learn from these tiny objects, which are so small that we can hardly see them with the naked eye?

In God's eyes there is nothing of minor importance. He pays attention to everything and everybody. By the way, even during night, when everybody is asleep, he keeps on sending these beautiful crystals. This is how our God works. His work is perfect always!

God also wants us to care for the small and seemingly unimportant things in life. Let us do our daily duties faithfully, even when nobody seems to notice our efforts. Nothing and nobody is unimportant in God's eyes.

Isn't it interesting that God doesn't pour out the snow like a bucket of water? I have never heard anybody saying, "It's snowing cats and dogs." Snow falls down to earth with a speed of 0.9 km/h (whereas rain comes down with a speed of 36 km/h) and it falls softly, it whirls and dances. It's a real pleasure to watch the snow falling and God wants us to enjoy it.

Have you ever seen the snowflakes push or shove each other? No! If two or three snowflakes meet, they will unite. What a wonderful illustration for our Christian life!

In the late autumn the countryside doesn't look very nice. Everything is grey or brown. There are neither colourful flowers nor green trees. That's why many people get depressed. But did you know that snow prevents depression? It covers all the ugliness and everything looks bright and friendly. The purity is refreshing: no dirt, no rubbish and no mud. It even cleanses the air. Again – an illustration of our responsibility as Christians in this gloomy world.

What a joy it is especially for children when they get up in the morning and everything is white

outside.

This is another indication of how God works. Sometimes we wake up during the night because of heavy rain or a thunderstorm. But that's not how it is with the snow. Snow falls softly and quietly. God also works that way: softly and quietly. It's the same when he works on our hearts. And he wants us to work in the same way: without noise and pomp.

Did you know that snow works as a noise protector? Indeed, it's strikingly quiet when it is snowing. It's even hard to hear any cars.

We also need the quietness for our spiritual growth and should be a noise protector from the noise of the world. It's very sad when you hear noise in Christian congregations today.

Another quality of snow: When the sun shines, it melts.

If God touches us with his love and warmth, then our cold and hardened hearts become softened. The only question is; are we willing to let our hearts be transformed by God?

Ever since I thought about the miracle of snow, the verse in Isaiah 1:18 has become a far deeper meaning to me. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." No matter how deep the stain of your sins, God can take it out and make you as clean as freshly fallen snow.

There was a man in the Bible who longed for such a clean heart. "Create in me clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51: 10, 7).

May this also be our daily desire and prayer.

Jana Lauter is studying languages in Germany and this article is based upon her talk at the Summer Youth Camp.

More Upcoming Events

Perth—10 June 2006, Woodlupine Family Centre, Hale Road, Forestfield. Dr Barry Harker will present a three-part series of PowerPoint presentations entitled, "Understanding the Times." The three presentations and their times are as follows:

9.30am—Revelation, Reason and Myth in Sacred History

11.00am—The Time of the End

1.45pm—Where We Are Today

An expense collection will be taken at the 1.45pm meeting. At the conclusion of the final meeting, a brief illustrated report on the work of Edessa International will be made.

Adelaide—17 June 2006, Goodwood Primary School, Goodwood Road, Goodwood. Dr Barry Harker will present a three-part series of PowerPoint presentations entitled, "Understanding the Times." The three presentations and their times are as follows:

2.00pm—Revelation, Reason and Myth in Sacred History

3.15pm—The Time of the End

4.30pm—Where We Are Today

An expense collection will be taken at the 3.15pm meeting. After closing of Sabbath, a brief illustrated report on the work of Edessa International will be made.

Winter Youth Camp, 7-9 July 2006—Log Cabin, Numinbah Valley, South East Queensland.

The cost is \$60.00 per person, which includes accommodation and food. The cost for day visitors is \$10.00, which includes one meal. Additional meals are \$5.00 each.

Correction

The last issue of the newsletter (Number 8) was incorrectly labelled as February 2005. It should have been February 2006. Our apology for this mistake.

Final Issue

As announced by the Executive Director on page 1, this is the final issue of the printed newsletter. Future news and events can be accessed at www.edessa.org