

# The Final Chapter

A South African Adventist Publication for Mission and End-time Events

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## Edition One - Founding Editorial

This is the only academic journalistic text readers will receive from me from now and in the future. Seventh-day Adventists are – officially – end-time conscious people. Many, though, in this land, live as if historical time is still on our side.

I come from a family of Adventist pastors from both my paternal and maternal sides. As the late favourite preacher of mine, North American. Morris Venden, once said, *“My father was a pastor, my uncle was a pastor, my brother was pastor. I am stuck.”*

I am surrounded by seven Ngwenya pastors and three Nkosi pastors. I cannot avoid being an Adventist and a preacher as well. My father taught my mother, Myra Kate (Khathiza) Ngwenya in Bethel College. This whole Adventist “thing” is so thick and loud around me that I can’t run away from speaking on and teaching Adventism. This is also the reason why I speak my mind freely and boldly in and on Adventism. My fear of men and women in this church is below zero. My great “addictions” though, are youth development and writing. This is the

reason why we are rebirthing the **New DestinySA** education camp before June, that some uninformed pastors and members mistook for a competitor against the Youth Ministries camps.

Listen:

*I am in academic education and not in youth ministry.* I do pedagogy and not homiletics. This is the reason which I find myself unavoidably analysing sermons when I am in the audience.

I also carry a book as my “sacrilegious” companion so that when the sermon is below sensibility to me, I zip-open my bag to collect a book to read. I cannot tolerate infradig sermons. This is the reason why when young graduates from Helderberg deliver sense behind the pulpit, I congratulate them after the service. Listen: **It is too late now in earth’s history to tolerate infradig homiletics.**

I am an educator by training and love. I took theological education from my father’s library and an institution in Johannesburg after being in two universities. I also married a pastor’s

daughter. As Venden once said about himself, “I was stuck!”

My library has a combination of theological, educational, philosophical, sociological, and scientific books. Some are in the lounge, while others are in one of my wardrobes. I am irrepressibly drawn to texts. I cannot go to a shopping mall and not visit a bookstore. In one shop a lady often sees me from the door and asks me to follow here to their newest cohort of texts. Even now, at 4h10 in the morning I have woken up to see my texts and to write.

In my first year in Bethel College, teacher Sibbert Mema used to see me and say, the affirmative. He would then say, “Nkosi, usaphenya ndoda?” He said this in reference to reading. He was the teacher I most loved on campus for his dry philosophic talks during the Chapel Period. One day he delivered a talk titled, “Ten Points of a Perfect Fool.” The Basement Hall in Bethel went “chaotic” with laughter.

Persons who have not been to Adventist institutions do not know what a chapel period is. It is not worship, but a special period in the timetable when the school gathers in the hall for an enrichment lecture outside of the official curriculum. This is why I pinned a flower on the lapel of Mema’s coat during my graduation.

Mema and I became close friends for two reasons: (1) his philosophic bent of mind, and (2) he was my Master Guide teacher. In my time in the school, you would not graduate from teaching without a Master Guide qualification. I doubt if some in the ministry now ever raised a flag in their pastoral training.

Mema contributed signally to my stay at Bethel after I was taught by excellent but atheistic refugee teachers in Manzini Central School in Eswatini. Christian P. D. Ntsikeni was the only Adventist. He was the principal and also us English with Miss Thandiwe Mbiuiza from Soweto.<sup>1</sup>

In my first year there after I left Nazarene High School, I scored the highest marks in geography in the whole school. When school reopened, I found my name and those of others on the notice board. A similar “thing” when I went to the University of Johannesburg, then Vista University, in the East Rand. I earned the Vice-Chancellors Academic Award for scoring the highest marks in English in my first year. This is the reason Professor Jenkins would always aske me to teach his first-year classes when he was away on university errands. I was also the Religious Leader in the Students Representative Council (SRC). I had left the University of the Transkei (now Walter Sisulu University) became half of my papers were to be written on Sabbath. This is one reality I cannot compromise.

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<sup>1</sup>In his classes, Ntsikeni would often say to us that if we would need to dream in English to know the language. I first meet him when he taught in St Augustine’s College near

Dundee, when my family lived in eMnambithi. We worshipped with his wife, Gloria neePikoli. Both were pastors’ children from the Eastern Cape.

Each time I am confronted by a Sabbath issue in study or work, I know I am heading for an academic blessing.

- A short narrative: When I was hired in the Khanya African Theological Institute in Johannesburg, late Reverend Makhubu told me that He would not expect me to be at work on Saturdays because my CV indicated that I was a Seventh-day Adventist. I headed the Course Writing Department. This is one of the reason why putting idea on paper is one of

my major addictions. Sometimes I sit in church and hear an idea from a sermon that takes me into a new text. I get home and grow the text. Some of my papers begin during the main service in church! I am never without paper and pen. Some of my texts will be published posthumously. My computer has become a literary library. I keep three memory sticks wherever I go. []

## DEAR ADVENTISTS, IT IS TIME FOR LEGACY FORMATION

What shall we say about you in your inevitable funeral? Late African American singer, Brook Benton, used to sing, “We are all going to die someday. No man can time it.” I cannot forget that line. Sometimes I recall that line with tears flowing down my face.

One day I was driving. I had to stop the car and park near the road because I was overwhelmed by the realisation that “no man can time it.” I wiped tears from my face for some time, thinking that someday, I shall leave the world of the living.” Hey, have you ever thought

about yourself inside a coffin? This thought often draws water from my eyes. **This thought of not being in this world!! It keeps coming. Shakespeare say that death is a necessary end!**

**But there is a definite resurrection! Thank you, Jesus. I shall see my grandparents, my parents, my senior brothers, my aunts, and my wife again!! “Weeping may last for a moment, but joy comes in the morning!”**

**Come, Lord Jesus!!**

Late North American Adventist pastor, Morris Venden,  
tells a story of a young man who left home for college.  
Sometime after enrolling, he remembered home.

On a Friday, he took a bus home.

After ten hours he reached home, opened the kitchen door, and shouted a  
statement he was used to say each time he came home. "Let's eat!"

The father was amused, but his mother was not.

The boy asked, "Mom, aren't you surprised I am here?"

Mom responded, "I knew you were coming!"

Venden then says,

"There's is something in mothers that we do not understand."

He then concludes his sermon by saying,

"One day when Jesus comes back, we shall land on the shores of heaven.

Jesus will take us to the largest dining hall in the universe, and say,

**"Let's eat! I knew you were coming!"**

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## **SPECIAL MEETING FOR ACADEMIC TEACHERS**

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In recent weeks I have been called by some Adventist parents who  
experience challenges in the current public education system with regard  
to heresies their children face in the curriculum.

***I kindly invite concerned Adventist teachers in Soweto  
to an urgent special consultation.***

***Let us meet in the Zola Church on Sabbath afternoon.***

***Date – Last Sabbath of March.***

***Time – 14h00 – 16h30.***

***We shall call concerned parents for a subsequent meeting.***

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## A Special Academic Challenge

The South African education system is also embattled by the Darwinian challenge of evolutionary science. I also faced this reality when I took geography in the University of the Transkei, now Walter Sisulu University in the Eastern Cape. My German professor told me in clear terms that I stop challenging his scholarship in class. In that institution half of my examinations were set for Sabbath. I did not write them. I know some respected Adventists who sat for them. I then left for Vista University (later renamed in the East Rand where I earned the Vice-Chancellor's Academic Award in English in my first year there. My English marks were the highest in the university. Professor Jenkins would ask me to teach first-year students each time he was away on university errands. I also enjoyed the love of the Jewish professor, Dr Roth, a Jewish woman, who allowed me to submit my assignments late because of my pastoral duties in the district.

I narrate the above facts to motivate concerned Adventist to join me in setting up a tertiary institution in our district. Some persons in the Kelvin Church know the story. A similar programme will run from there soon this years,

All that I need are seven serious-minded teachers in Soweto. Call me at 076 681 9039. Dr Simon N. Kekana, with whom I taught in a high school in Tshwane, is giving me for free a curriculum to establish my own tertiary institution. He is the Vice-Chancellor of a local university that teaches business education and nothing else. He will register us with all the relevant state organs. Realities associated with the death of my wife interfered with the original appointment.

In the next edition I shall discuss empirical facts that refute the assumed validity of the theory of evolution. I once was an atheist and an evolutionist in the home of a pastor when my family of birth lived in Eswatini. I even received a scholarship to study medicine in Glasgow in Scotland. But God had other plans. In the next edition I shall tell the story. I gave my science teachers trouble in Bethel College until I was retrenched to the teacher education faculty. I was prematurely trained as a teacher. Today I have amazing evidence to denounce the falsity of evolutionism.

**It is for this reason that I question pastors  
who fund state schools with tithe!**