

to the theological dictionary. While he had committed himself to write several articles, he and I were mutually interested in his further involvement by serving as associate editor of the dictionary project. We pursued this more than a year ago. He received administrative permission by the Spring of this year, and was looking forward to giving more time to writing and editing. In God's providence, he was taken away from us. I shall miss him, his scholarship, and his interest in making biblical theology accessible to the Christian community.

Gerhard has left a legacy, but not a vacancy. This is because he was unique, and there is no successor to carry his mantle. Gerhard was here to reflect the glory of God, and in his departure, the glory of God to whom he has borne witness continues to speak of God's greatness, majesty, and splendor. I conclude with the familiar words of Ps 145:3: "Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise, his greatness no one can fathom" (NIV).

TRIBUTES TO GERHARD F. HASEL

FROM

STUDENT FRIENDS

During the summer of 1975, I was a student at Newbold College in England where I took courses under Dr. W. G. C. and John Murdoch. I particularly remember one morning as we were studying the archaeology of Jerash with Dr. W. G. C. Murdoch, he asked, "Do any of you know Gerhard Hasel?" Unquestionably, he is a brilliant archaeologist; he has written a dissertation on Jerash's temple of the "reborn." This was the first time I heard of Dr. Gerhard Hasel. I was so impressed by what I learned about him that I desired to meet him.

My desire was fulfilled only a few weeks later on the historic city of Vienna that summer when the General Conference session was being held in the North American continent. I attended the "Stadthalle," a church in Vienna. He was in the upper gallery with many other students. Even though I was a student, I was taken to a man who would be my quest for higher education. I have always felt that philosophy and learning must be employed in the service of faith, and I saw a shining example of that in Dr. Hasel. As a teacher and scholar he deserved the title *Paterfamilias*. He expounded the Scriptures with authority and confidence. He gave his students a deep insight into the subtle propositions of the so-called "historical-critical method" as a hermeneutic tool, which tends to obscure the joy and the Word of God. I still remember the joy and the insight that he explained to us as he explained things in his

"For I know that my Redeemer lives,
And He shall stand at last on the earth;
And after my skin is destroyed,
this I know,
That in my flesh I shall see God,
Whom I shall see for myself,
And my eyes shall behold,
and not another."

to the theological dictionary. While he had committed himself to writing several books on this subject, he had not written a word of them. He was a busy man, and he was always saying, "I am not writing any more books, but I am writing you." He was a man of words, and he was always saying, "I am not writing any more books, but I am writing you." He was a man of words, and he was always saying, "I am not writing any more books, but I am writing you."

Gerhard has left a legacy, but it is not a legacy of books. It is a legacy of a life. He was a man of words, and he was always saying, "I am not writing any more books, but I am writing you." He was a man of words, and he was always saying, "I am not writing any more books, but I am writing you." He was a man of words, and he was always saying, "I am not writing any more books, but I am writing you."

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During the summer of 1975, I was a student at Newbold College in England where I took courses under Drs. W. G. C. and Ruth Murdoch. I particularly remember one morning as we were studying the eschatology of Jeremiah with Dr. W. G. C. Murdoch, he asked: "Do any of you guys know Gerhard Hasel?" He continued, "he is a brilliant eschatologist, he has written a dissertation on Isaiah's concept of the 'remnant'." This was the first time I heard of Dr. Gerhard Hasel. I was so impressed by what I learned about him that I desired to meet him.

My desire was fulfilled only a few weeks later in the historic city of Vienna that summer where the General Conference session was being held for the first time outside the North American continent. I met Dr. Hasel at the huge central city hall—the "Stadthalle," after he had just finished addressing the world church in session. He had a remarkable appearance—a dapper gentleman with shiny hair and clean spectacles who walked with a straight gait. Even though it was a brief meeting, it had a lasting impression on me, but little did I know that I had just spoken to a man who would be my mentor and benefactor in my quest for higher education in the service of God.

I have always believed that philosophy and learning must be employed in the service of faith, and I saw a shining example of that in Dr. Hasel. As a teacher and scholar he deserved the title *Fidei Defensor*. He expounded the Scriptures with authority and erudition that inspired confidence and faith in God. He gave his students a deep insight into the subtle presuppositions of the so-called "historical-critical method" as a hermeneutic tool, which tends to undermine faith in the Word of God. I still remember the joy and the relief which came over me as he explained these things in his lectures.

As an author, he had the remarkable gift and the ability to compress an enormous amount of material covering a vast expanse

of time into relatively few pages. His books dealing with basic issues in both the Old and New Testament speak for themselves in this respect. No wonder these works are being used by many seminaries. Apart from textbooks, he authored numerous articles which have been published in scholarly journals.

He had the gift of an analytical mind, by which he examined the evidence critically and constructively. His encyclopedic breadth of knowledge in theological matters was very outstanding. He was generous and unselfish in his teaching, always sharing vital information with, and inspiring his students to greater heights of achievement. I remember him always exhorting us to read, write, and attend professional meetings.

Many a time at the Seminary library, where I work, I have seen him in a pensive mood, brooding over an open book. He wore a serious mien, and it appeared he was getting ready to take on the whole world. But beneath that visage was a man, true, kind-hearted, gentle and loving—a Christian and a gentleman. Indeed, he was a man with an uncanny sense of humor. On one occasion, he invited me to his office to inform me that the committee had given generous financial help toward my doctoral studies. He explained that the help covered my tuition only. "However," he continued, "in the German army, as it is usually said, Hermann, you must survive on air." I felt like clicking my heels and responding "jawohl, Herr General!" But, I waited till he had finished talking and replied, "Freut mich, ich bedanke mich." He lifted up his eyes slowly from the paper, looked at me, and asked, "Where did you learn that?" It is needless to say that we both had a good laugh together. On another occasion, I was at his office again for some consultation when Dr. Johannes Erbes my Aramaic teacher came in to say something to him. As he entered, he played upon my name in Aramaic by shouting "qum!" I immediately stood up to attention, and the three of us could not contain our laughter!

Gerhard Hasel was a pastor and a man of God. When I arrived on campus in 1992 to start my doctoral studies, the first words he said to me were, "What shall we do to make you happy?" Despite his busy schedule, he had time for individuals and especially needy students like me. I remember how he prayed fervently for me and assured me by the words of the prayer that my needs had already

been met by God. He did not hesitate to give me his personal copy-card to make photo copies of material that would help me in my studies, and when he became aware that I did not have a personal computer, a tool that is necessary for doctoral work, he made sure that the funds were provided for me for that purpose! In fact, I am just one of many students for whom he arranged financial packages.

The tragic death of Dr. Gerhard Hasel is an irreparable loss not only to his immediate family, but to the world church and the world of biblical scholarship. It is even more painful because he was snatched from us in his prime. Cicero once said "Ad bene vivendum breve tempus satis est." (For living well a short time is long enough.) However comforting these words may be, they are devoid of the eschatological hope that Gerhard Hasel believed, taught, and lived for. He was a child of God, and like Job he would say: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25-27).

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Throughout the centuries of time, great leaders for God—Moses, Deborah, Elijah, Nehemiah, John the Baptist, Paul, Luther, Calvin, Owen, Wesley, James and Ellen White, to mention but a few—have been characterized by a resolute faith in God, and a holy zeal for His honor and glory. The zeal spoken of here should be understood in the manner defined by the prominent Anglican scholar, James I. Packer:

It is not fanaticism; it is not wildness; it is not irresponsible enthusiasm; it is not any form of pushy egoism. It is rather, a humble, reverent, businesslike, single-minded commitment to the hallowing of God's name and the doing of his will.¹

Whenever situations occur in which God's truth and honor are being jeopardized, rather than allowing the matter to go away by default, God raises up these leaders to impress the issue upon people's attention in order "to compel if possible a change of heart about it—even at personal risk."² The effectiveness of their respective ministries abide in the force and power of their lives and the eloquence of the truth which they teach. But because their convictions are stronger than their apathy, such leaders are not only admired, but they are also misunderstood.

The late Dr. Gerhard F. Hasel possessed and displayed the above kind of faith and zeal during his ministry as pastor, theologian, and church administrator.³

The tribute that follows was delivered at his funeral, on August 18, 1994, at the Village Seventh-day Adventist Church, Berrien Springs, Michigan.⁴ Borrowing the title from a Ghanaian proverb, the eulogy is designed not only to measure the height of the deceased, but also to give comfort, assurance, and direction to the bereaved. Beyond its immediate context, however, this tribute may also be read as an encouragement to those who find themselves in grief, on account of their dedication to and proclamation of the message of *The Magnificent Disappointment*.⁵

A Mighty Oak Has Fallen

Today, in Africa we would say, "A Mighty Oak Has Fallen!" For at this solemn hour, and in this quiet place, we have come to bid farewell to our pastor, our teacher, and our friend.

It was here, in this small Berrien Village, that this world-class scholar chose to spend much of his professional life. It was here that he lived, worked, and suffered. It is therefore, significant that the world has compressed itself into this little township so as to pay its final tribute to a gallant Christian statesman, a courageous preacher of the gospel, and a visionary church leader.

But as we pay fitting tributes to Dr. Gerhard F. Hasel, we need not forget that during his lifetime, his labors were not always appreciated. He was often misunderstood, sometimes misrepresented, and occasionally vilified.⁶ Permit me to share with you, from Dr. Hasel's experiences, some of the things he has taught me on how to respond to criticisms:

Employing Wit and Humor. Dr. Hasel earned his worldwide recognition by demonstrating that it is possible to become an eminent scholar without surrendering Biblical truth. But those who misunderstood him saw this effort as turning back the clock of "progressive" Adventism by 27 years.

If Dr. Hasel were to respond to this, I think, he would just smile, and with characteristic sense of humor and wit, he would whisper: "I wish I could have turned the clock back by 2,000 years—to the days when Christ established the foundations of Seventh-day Adventism."

Citing Historical Precedence. Dr. Hasel possessed an unwavering and a determined spirit. But those who could not comprehend the force and persuasiveness of his moral and Biblical convictions, misinterpreted his commitment as dogmatic, intolerant, and even authoritarian.

If Dr. Hasel were to respond to this, I think, he would reply in words reminiscent of Martin Luther: "My conscience is bound to the word of God, and unless I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture I cannot do otherwise."

Illustrating with Biblical Examples. Dr. Hasel prized the quest for Biblical truth over theological tranquility. But those who were uncomfortable with him would have preferred him to be an

Obadiah in the house of Ahab and Jezebel. They wanted him to maintain the *status quo*, rather than rock the boat in Ahab's house and risk the lives of God's prophets.

If Dr. Hasel were to respond, I think, he would open his Bible to 1 Kings 18, and after a rigorous exegesis and an insightful theologization, he would conclude in this manner: "*Although God can use god-fearing Obadiahs in times of apostasy in Israel, the roles of Elijahs are equally indispensable. Without Elijahs to confront Ahab, Obadiahs will always be forced to 'find grass to save [Ahab's] horses and mules alive,' instead of finding grace to save men and women for eternity. Therefore, Elijahs are needed—despite the fact that they are always misrepresented, branded, and attacked as "they that troubleth Israel."*

Responding with Silence. Dr. Hasel was loved and greatly admired by different classes of people. But those who sowed doubts concerning him could not understand what there was about him that attracted students and teachers, church members and pastors, church leaders and even little children. To his distractors, Dr. Hasel was egocentric or even politically ambitious. They, therefore, whispered to his admirers: "Flee from his presence; can't you see that he is exploiting you and manipulating you for his vested interests and ambitions?"⁷

If Dr. Hasel had heard such remarks, I think, he would have responded with silence. For he believed that those who knew him best will one day have the opportunity of giving their own testimony.

What then do those who knew Dr. Hasel say in response to these misrepresentations?

To these, *we* can only smile and reply: "Did you really know Dr. Hasel? Did you spend time to visit and pray with him? Did you understand what really motivated him in life? Did you make an effort to know *who he was*, and *for what he stood*? If you did, you would know him as we did:

—*We knew him* as a man of integrity: and because of this integrity he would not twist the words nor misrepresent the positions of others—however much their views differed from his.

—*We knew him* as a man of principle and boldness: and because

of this boldness he would not wait until his retirement to declare and articulate his true theological views.

—*We knew him* as a model Christian teacher: not only did he possess a deep intellectual and spiritual insight that made him alert and ever ready to analyze and to challenge every departure from Biblical Christianity, he was also able to make complicated theological issues very simple. Even more, he was humble in his professional accomplishments.

—*We knew him* as a Christian gentleman: one whose countenance repelled every form of arrogance, mediocrity and pettiness, and one whose deportment and personal appearance were worthy of emulation.

—*We knew him* as a sympathetic friend: one who was very firm in the discipline of his friends, and yet, extremely sensitive in caring for their needs.

—*We knew him*, above all, as a noble Christian: one who had a love for Christ, a deep respect for Scriptures, a ready commitment to costly discipleship, and a lifelong yearning for the second Advent.

Because *we knew him* and *what he stood for*, we could not flee from his presence while he was yet alive, and even now in his death, we cannot banish him from our memory, nor discredit his tremendous contribution to the Remnant Church.

In just a few minutes, we shall all file out of this sanctuary to the Rosehill Cemetery where we shall commit the perishable remains of this great man to the ground. We do so, secured in the knowledge that the body we shall place in the ground will be a seed which will soon germinate (1 Cor 15:42-44; 51-57).

Yes, "A Mighty Oak Has Fallen!" But let not those who neither know our Lord, nor His providential leading, think that the departure of Dr. Hasel will deal a fatal blow to the cause of Christ for which he gave his life. For we do know that mighty oaks do not necessarily fall because they are old, tired, or even cut down. Mighty oaks fall in order to give room for many more oaks to grow.⁸ Thus, our Heavenly Father has deemed it fit to call His mighty warrior to lay down his sword and shield so as to raise not one Hasel, but many more Hasels in his place. His personal life may now be ended, but what he stood for cannot die.

The Challenge Before Us

Today, at this very hour, the torch is being passed on to another generation of Bible-believing Adventist scholars and preachers from all the different regions of the world. To us has been bequeathed a priceless legacy of Adventist faith.

Let us, now, also make a commitment to love Jesus Christ as our Lord, to have a respect for Scriptures as His Word, to stand for Him at whatever cost, and to hasten the Second Coming of our Lord.

Let us, now, also make a pledge to pursue the highest form of theological scholarship that will not surrender "the Truth."

Let us resolve to cherish a pastoral concern, an evangelistic fervor, and a prophetic daring to speak for God wherever we find ourselves.

Let us join hands and ranks and, today, make a commitment to those who fought alongside Dr. Hasel—the Raoul Dederens, the Mervyn Maxwells, the Raymond Holmes, and many others⁹—who are still in our midst. Let us, by the grace of God, assure them that their labors in our behalf will not be in vain, and that we are prepared to hold fast to what is True rather than to what is new.¹⁰

And with these commitments,

—let us go back, as students and faculty, to our classrooms

—let us go back, as pastors and laypeople, to our churches

—let us go back, as administrators and evangelists, to our offices

—let us all go out of this place, and in unity and in humility *preserve, practice, and proclaim* the everlasting gospel for which Dr. Gerhard Hasel so faithfully labored (Rev 14:6-12).

A Final Word to the Bereaved

And finally, to the bereaved family, permit me to share with you a comforting statement from the writings of one *theologian* whose works greatly shaped the thoughts of Dr. Hasel. The statement concerns the "Blessed Hope" of the resurrection. Dr. Hasel spoke on this subject of the resurrection, exactly four months ago, at the last International Convention of the Adventist Theological Society (April 14-17, 1994, Southern College, TN). You may recognize the statement I am about to read as coming from the pen of Ellen G. White:¹¹

... All that has perplexed us in the providences of God will in the world to come be made plain. The things hard to be understood will then find explanation. The mysteries of grace will unfold before us. Where our finite minds discovered only confusion and broken promises, we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony. We shall know that infinite love ordered the experiences that seemed most trying. As we realize the tender care of Him who makes all things work together for our good, we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Pain cannot exist in the atmosphere of heaven. In the home of the redeemed there will be no tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. 'The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.' Isaiah 33:24. One rich tide of happiness will flow and deepen as eternity rolls on.

We are still amidst the shadows and turmoil of earthly activities. Let us consider most earnestly the blessed hereafter. Let our faith pierce through every cloud of darkness and behold Him who died for the sins of the world. He has opened the gates of paradise to all who receive and believe on Him. To them He gives power to become the sons and daughters of God. Let the afflictions which pain us so grievously become instructive lessons, teaching us to press forward toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ. Let us be encouraged by the thought that the Lord is soon to come. Let this hope gladden our hearts. . . .

We are homeward bound. He who loved us so much as to die for us hath builded for us a city. The New Jerusalem is our place of rest. There will be no sadness in the city of God. No wail of sorrow, no dirge of crushed hopes and buried affections, will evermore be heard. Soon the garments of heaviness will be changed for the wedding garment. Soon we shall witness the coronation of our King. Those whose lives have been hidden with Christ, those who on this earth have fought the good fight of faith, will shine forth with the Redeemer's glory in the kingdom of God

It will not be long till we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. And in His presence, all the trials and sufferings of this life will be as nothingness. 'Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry' [Hebrews 10:35-37]. Look up, look up, and let your faith

continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city of God into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future glory that is for the redeemed. 'Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.' James 5:7, 8.

This is our hope; this was the hope of Dr. Gerhard F. Hasel; and to this hope I invite you, the members of the bereaved family, to ever cherish. **MARANATHA!**

¹ James I. Packer, *A Passion for Faithfulness* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1995), 33.

² *Ibid.*, 34.

³ The contention here is not that Dr. Hasel (or any other great leader, for that matter) was infallible or sinless. Such a quality can only be ascribed to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. All others—notwithstanding the excellence of their character and the distinction of their accomplishments—have been sinful human beings who have needed the redeeming grace of Christ. What is being suggested, however, is that in spite of his human limitations and frailties, Dr. Hasel represents those rare finds, aptly described by Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1903), 57: "The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though heavens fall."

⁴ Solomon once said: "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart" (Eccl 7:2). Funerals not only remind us of our own mortalities, but they also force us to reflect seriously upon life and to make a wholehearted commitment to the things that really count. The tribute that follows is intended to bring about that kind of awareness and response. Besides a few minor changes and the endnotes that have been inserted to clarify some points, this tribute is the original text of the eulogy delivered at Hasel's funeral. The object of the tribute was to challenge professing Christians to make a wholehearted commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord, to respect Holy Scriptures as His trustworthy Word, to stand for Him at whatever cost, and to hasten His second coming through a life of holiness and loving service. This is the cause for which Dr. Hasel faithfully labored.

⁵ C. Mervyn Maxwell, *Magnificent Disappointment: What Really Happened in 1844. . . and Its Meaning for Today* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1994).

⁶ In her commentary upon the events leading to the arrest and untimely death of the apostle Paul, Ellen G. White, *Acts of the Apostles* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1911), 417-418, makes an insightful statement that is pertinent to our present remarks: "A neglect to appreciate and improve the provisions of divine grace has deprived the church of many a blessing. How often would the Lord have

prolonged the work of some faithful minister, had his labors been appreciated! But if the church permits the enemy of souls to pervert the understanding, so that they misrepresent and misinterpret the words and acts of the servant of Christ; if they allow themselves to stand in his way and hinder his usefulness, the Lord sometimes removes from them the blessing which He gave."

⁷ Notice again what Ellen White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 418, has said about situations of this kind: "Satan is constantly working through his agents to dishearten and destroy those whom God has chosen to accomplish a great and good work. They may be ready to sacrifice even life itself for the advancement of the cause of Christ, yet the great deceiver will suggest to their brethren doubts concerning them which, if entertained, would undermine confidence in their integrity of character, and thus cripple their usefulness. Too often he succeeds in bringing sorrow upon them, through their own brethren, such sorrow of heart that God graciously interposes to give His persecuted servants rest. After the hands are folded upon the pulseless breast, when the voice of warning and encouragement is silent, then the obdurate may be aroused to see and prize the blessings they have cast from them. Their death may accomplish that which their life has failed to do."

⁸ Herein lies the profundity of the Ghanaian proverb, *a mighty oak has fallen*. The expression is not merely an announcement of the sudden fall of a huge oak, nor even a public declaration of why it was regarded as a stalwart tree among its peers, but more importantly, the proverb is a call upon the smaller oaks (which grew in the shadow of the huge one) not to be unduly shaken by the unexpected loss of the mighty oak. It summons the bereaved oaks to sink their roots a little deeper into the ground, and to stretch forth their branches and leaves a little higher towards the sun, if they are to obtain the resources needed for them to fill the vacuum created by the unanticipated departure of the deceased. Thus understood, this African maxim is the strongest encouragement and motivation that can be given in the face of tragedy.

⁹ In a personal letter (dated August 19, 1994) addressed to Dr. Raoul Dederen, and Dr. C. Mervyn Maxwell, and copied to Dr. Raymond Holmes (who was unable to be at the funeral), I explained to them why their names were singled out for mention at the funeral. The relevant section of the letter reads: "You may recall that during my tribute to Dr. Hasel yesterday, I made a reference to your names. I did so not only because you are fitting representatives of the 'retired' church workers who are still rendering a faithful service to God, but also because I wanted to publicly express my appreciation for what you have meant to me. You have both demonstrated that while Bible-believing scholars may genuinely hold differences of opinion on certain theological issues, it is possible for them, as they diligently seek for Divine illumination on those subjects, to display a gracious Christian spirit toward one another and to stand united on incontrovertible truth."

¹⁰ To question the "new" can expose one's self to the charge of being a prisoner of the pre-scientific past, or to the criticism of lacking the ability to take the present seriously. But there are some dangers in always preferring the "new" over the "old" and the true. Undergirding most interests in new theologies and new moralities is the theory of evolution which teaches that the latest is better than the earliest. While the "new" may not necessarily be opposed to the "true," in many minds the word "new" has become the operative word for determining what is true. We may all do well to listen to the caution by Peter Taylor Forsyth:

"I am sure no new theology can really be theology, whatever its novelty, unless it express[es] and develop[s] the old faith which made those theologies that are now old the mightiest things of the age when they were new." Quoted in Kenneth Hamilton, *What's New in Religion?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968), p. 6.

11 Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1948), 9:286-288.

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Stunned by the shocking news of a leader's death
We refused to face what seems unreal.

How could a mighty man fall in the midst of God's people,
One who carried the banner of integrity
and commitment to our High Priest's cause?

How could a warrior go at this time,
One who stood firm on the ground of biblical authority and truth,
devoting himself to making every thought captive to its revelation?

How could a man of God step over and
away from this place that benefited so much from his service—
One who without intimidation whatsoever
carried so many of us through the hermeneutical and theological
quicksand, providing us guidance and visions, boosting our commit-
ment to the Lord Jesus Christ and to His Church?

How could one who through Your providence, O God, among those
who helped me personally shape a new Christ-centered worldview
since my exodus from Islam, now be out of my reach? How?

How could a soldier, a defender of the faith
be suddenly taken from us,
One who relentlessly uplifted the present truth
to prepare a people for Jesus' glorious coming?

Overwhelmed, but not overcome,
we have decided even this day
not to let dread have its way, to creep and settle in our bones.
Rather, we cling to our hope,
a hope that goes beyond the veil of death.