

# Northern Asia-Pacific Division



# NEWS & VIEWS

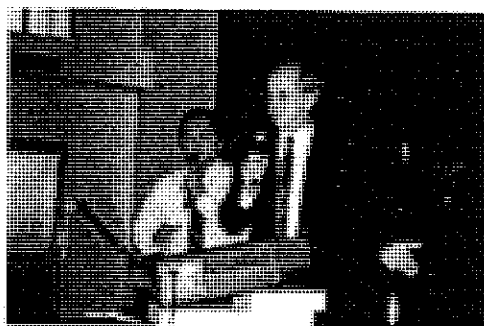
Volume 1, Number 9

## Net '98 Seminar

*Great Interest in Every Place*

"Net '98" is the satellite evangelism program which will be held from October 9 to November 14, 1998 with Dwight K. Nelson, senior pastor of Pioneer Memorial Church at Andrews University in the USA, as the speaker. It will cover the whole globe in 40 languages simultaneously.

Elder Robert Folkenberg, General Conference (GC) President, is very anxious to promote satellite evangelism. The GC expects the Japan Union, Korean Union, South China Island Union, and East Asia Association to participate in "Net '98" in a special way. For this reason Elder Brad Thorp, Director of the GC Adventist Global Communication Network (AGCN), came to the Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD) and visited each Union to hold a "Net '98" Seminar.



*The "Net '98" Seminar conducted by Brad Thorp (right) with Joseph Ma, translator, at Taipei Shun Shan Church in Taiwan*

Elder Brad Thorp began his ministry in 1972 and most of his work has been in evangelism. He worked with Elder Mark Finley at the North American Division Evangelistic Institute for 5 years holding evangelistic meetings and training pastors. He was Director of Evangelism and Church Growth in the Euro-African Division for the past 10 years. He coordinated "Net '95" in North America and then coordinated "Net '96" for Europe. In April of 1997 he was appointed as the first AGCN Director for the GC.

Date	Conference/Mission	Time	Place	Attendees
Nov. 4	Sotheast Korean Conf.	9:00-12:00	Pusan Central Church	56
Nov. 4	Southwest Korean Conf.	19:00-20:00	Kwangju Headquarters Church	70
Nov. 5	Southwest Korean Conf.	9:00-12:00	Kwangju Headquarters Church	110
Nov. 6	Middlewest Korean Conf.	10:00-12:30	Taejeon Domadong Church	36
Nov. 7	East Central Korean Conf.	19:00-20:00	KUC Headquarters Church	200
Nov. 8	East Central Korean Conf.	11:00-12:00	Seoul English Language Institute	400
Nov. 8	East & West Central K. C.	14:00-17:00	Seoul Adventist Hospital Church	117
Nov. 10	West Japan Conf.	13:30-15:30	West Japan Conf. Office	46
Nov. 12	East Japan Conf.	10:00-12:00	Tokyo Central Church	11
Nov. 13	Okinawa Mission	19:00-21:00	Okinawa Mission Office	21
Nov. 15	Taiwan Mission	11:00-12:00	Taipei Shun Shan Church	150
Nov. 15	Taiwan Mission	14:00-17:00	Taipei Shun Shan Church	81
Nov. 17	Hong Kong-Macao Conf.	9:00-12:00	H. K. Bible Auditorium Church	32
Nov. 17	South China Island Union	17:00-17:30	Hong Kong Adventist Hospital	27

Altogether he conducted the "Net '98" Seminar 14 times including a Tuesday prayer meeting, a Friday vesper and two Sabbath church services in our Division. I accompanied him to Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong. You can see the table which shows the venue, the number of attendees, etc. At every place, we could see a great interest among the participants, composed mainly of pastors with a few lay people. Their response really encouraged us.

The NSD Annual Council voted to participate in "Net '98" and appointed Elder David Parks, Ministerial Association Secretary, to be coordinator of "Net '98" for our Division. So you may contact him from now on about the program as you continue to prepare for it. Furthermore the NSD Executive Committee took an action to give a subsidy to each church which will participate in the program. This is good news for each Union and Conference/Mission and will help local churches to purchase the needed equipment.

*Tadaomi Shinmyo, Communication & PARL Director*

## Visit To China

### *NSD leaders met government officials and church leaders*

From November 4 to 15, 1997, the administrative officers and departmental directors of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division, (a total of nine members, together with Dr. Rex Edwards from the General Conference) made their first official visit to mainland China after the NSD set up its office in Korea. The major purpose of this visit was for the NSD leaders to meet with the government officials and church leaders of China in an attempt to learn more about Christianity in China and to assess the needs of our work there, while acquainting the visiting team with the people and culture of the country.

The tour of the country took in the following places in the northeastern and eastern sections of China: Beijing, Shenyang, Haicheng in the Liaoning Province, Xi'an in the Shaanxi Province, Nanjing, and Shanghai. The Adventist churches they visited include Gang Wa Shi Church in Beijing, Hai Cheng Church in the Liaoning Province, Tong Guan Church and Bei Si Church in Shenyang, San Shing Road Church in Xi'an, and Mo En Church in Shanghai. Everywhere the visiting team went they were met with overwhelming

warmth and hospitality from government officials and church leaders alike.

The two-week visit was most profitable and enlightening in providing the team with specific information regarding the condition of the Christian Church in China, the attitude of the government towards religious freedom, the standing of the SDA Church in a post-denominational era, the specific needs of the Christian Church in the last decade of this century, and the course that the government and religious leaders are charting for the church in the 21st Century.

Some of the more important pieces of information gleaned from the visit include the following:

1. Church leaders in China have led the church into an era of post denominationalism in an effort to unify and strengthen the church. Members of the various denominations meet in the same church building on Sunday. However, SDA believers are permitted to meet on the Sabbath in the same church building used by the Sunday-keepers.

2. Since the restoration of religious freedom in China at the end of the cultural revolution, the church has been experiencing phenomenal growth. Today, there are an estimated 10 million Protestant Christians in China in comparison to the 700 thousand members in the 1950's. There are 12,000 churches open for public worship, with an additional 25,000 meeting points all over China.

3. Church leaders have recognized the need to train more young people to take over the work from the older workers. Today many young people are receiving training in the 17 theological seminaries established by the Protestant Church leaders. In the East China Theological Seminary the visiting team met and talked to 9 SDA young people who are being trained to be pastors and Bible instructors.



*This is Gang Wa Shi Church for Korean and Chinese in Beijing: a church building for Sabbath and Sunday Keepers. There are about 800 Seventh-day Adventists who attend this church.*

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# Experience the Power of God's Word



*"If you don't believe Moses..."*

"Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuse you - Moses, in whom you trust. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My Words?" John 5:45-47.

Jesus was in Jerusalem and had healed a paralyzed man one Sabbath morning. The Jews were extremely upset by this occurrence and began plotting Jesus' death because they felt He had broken the Sabbath and also because He seemed to be claiming a special relationship to Jehovah God. Jesus then gave an extended defense of Himself and His ministry and ended by saying, "I won't accuse you to My Heavenly Father, but Moses accuses you, because you don't believe what he wrote."

This statement came right to the heart of the controversy between them because the Jews claimed to believe Moses above all else. Whenever they wanted to establish a point or settle an argument the authority they appealed to was Moses. On the issue of marriage and divorce, their question was, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce?" Mt. 19:7. On the question of how to treat an adulterer, their statement was, "Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned." Jn. 8:5. Their professed respect for Moses is seen in their statement to the blind man whom Jesus healed, "We are Moses' disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses." John 9:28, 29.

Yet here in John 5 Jesus said to them, "You really don't believe Moses." The problem of course, was that they were trying to use Scripture to corroborate what they wanted to believe, rather than allowing their opinions and beliefs to be shaped and molded by what the Scripture actually said. Thus Jesus said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." Mt. 22:29. Ellen White comments on this problem as follows, "Many a portion of Scripture which learned men pronounce a mystery, or pass over as unimportant, is full of comfort and instruction to him who has been taught in the school of Christ. One reason why many theologians have no clearer understanding of God's word is, they close their eyes to truths which

they do not wish to practice. An understanding of Bible truth depends not so much on the power of intellect brought to the search as on the singleness of purpose, the earnest longing after righteousness." (GC 599)

In contrast to the Jewish leaders, Jesus confidently relied on the authority of the Scriptures in a very practical way, throughout His life and ministry. When facing Satan's temptations in the wilderness, "It is written" was His defense. He said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Mt. 4:4. When asked about how to find eternal life He answered, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" Luke 10:26. Thus the ministry of Jesus is a model of how to use the Bible for your own encouragement and to lead others to a knowledge of God.

Christ accepted the Bible as the authoritative revelation of God's will for humanity and always placed the Scriptures above human traditions and opinions. He rebuked the Jewish leaders for setting aside God's commands in favor of human ideas (Mk. 7:7-9) and He told them plainly that although they claimed to have great confidence in Moses, yet none of them kept the law which he gave (John 7:19). And in an interestingly prophetic statement found in Luke 16:31 He said, "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead."

The example of Jesus, in this regard, has been a beacon for His followers in all the ages since. And, many times, sincere Christians have had to stand very firmly for Bible truth, in the face of great opposition. An example of this, worth noting carefully, is the protest of the Christian princes of Germany at the Diet (council) of Spires in 1529. Martin Luther was banned from attending this Council but his followers who were present, strongly believed his teaching that the Bible alone was a safe guide for the conscience of the Christian. The Council feared a revolt if they banned the Reformation ideas completely so they took an action that no new reforms could be introduced, the Reformation could not spread to new districts and that henceforth no Roman Catholic could embrace the teachings of Luther.

The Lutheran Princes rejected this edict by saying, "There is no sure doctrine but that which conforms to the Word of God. The Lord forbids the teaching of any other faith. The Holy Scriptures, with one text explained by other and plainer texts, are, in all things necessary for the Christian, easy to be understood, and calculated to scatter the darkness. We are therefore

resolved by divine grace to maintain the pure preaching of God's only Word, as it is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, without anything added thereto. This word is the only truth. It is the sure rule of all doctrine and life, and can never fail or deceive us." (GC 203)

This unflinching stand for the truths of the Scripture enabled the Reformation to gain new impetus and continue to spread across Europe. Ellen White notes, "The courage, faith and firmness of those men of God, gained for succeeding ages liberty of thought and of conscience. Their Protest gave to the Reformed church the name Protestant; its principles are the very essence of Protestantism." (Ibid)

The great need of our world today is for a new Reformation; a new confidence in the Scripture and a willingness to put into practice what God says. The Apostle Paul was pointing to our time when he said, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but ... they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables." II Tim. 4:3,4.

G. K. Chesterton once wrote that when people stop believing in the truth, they don't believe in nothing - they believe anything, which is close to the Apostle Paul's description of those who are "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men." Eph 4:14. Travelers in the North Atlantic have repeatedly reported a strange phenomenon. A huge iceberg is observed floating in one direction, usually to the east, while smaller pieces of ice around it are floating in the opposite direction, to the west. Why does this occur? The reason is that the big iceberg, which is 80-90% under water is being propelled east by the tide of the deep water, but the small pieces of ice are being propelled west by the wind and waves on the surface of the ocean.

**For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrew 4:12, NKJV)**

Which leads me to ask you this personal question, What propels and gives direction to your life: Are you moved by the deep truths of God's Word; and the eternal principles of His kingdom? Or are you tossed to and fro by the passing winds of current opinion and the popular ideas being promoted in the secular press and media?

Those people with genuine spiritual awareness, became convinced very early in the ministry of Jesus that He indeed was the Messiah who was predicted by the Old Testament. For example Philip said to his friend Nathanael, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote - Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." John 1:45. Perhaps the passage in the writings of Moses to which Philip referred was Deut. 18:18, "I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him."

Undoubtedly one of the most interesting Bible studies ever given was the one Jesus shared with His two discouraged followers on the road to Emmaus on the day of His resurrection. "Then He said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?' And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Lk. 24:25-27.

One of the passages which must have been included in that Bible study was Daniel 9:24-27, "Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;... And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;... Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering."

Jesus Christ precisely fulfilled the specifications of this prophecy including the length of time involved. In 457 BC King Artaxerxes of Medo-Persia issued the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and exactly 483 years later (69x7) Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be the Messiah at the time of His baptism in 27 AD. And three and one-half years later, in the middle of the seventieth week, Jesus went to Calvary's cross as the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, thus bringing to an end the Old Testament system of animal sacrifices. Gal. 4:4 acknowledges the fulfilment of this prophecy, "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."

In sum, Matthew 9:37 provides a most fitting description of the situation in China: "The harvest is so great, and the workers are few." (Living Bible). Let us pray that the Lord will send more workers into the field, for there are many souls waiting to be "harvested" in the great land of China.

*Mary Wong ; Director of Family, Women's and Children's Ministry*

# "Behold, I make all things new."

*Revelation 21:5*



**W**e stand at the beginning of a new year - 1998. We can be happy for this another expression of God's goodness to us. Our God loves the new because it gives hope, courage and desire to achieve more and better things for Him.

We are surrounded by new things. The NSD is a new division of the Church's organization. The recent year-end meetings of each the administrative units have voted new plans and budgets for the coming year. Many people at this time of year give and receive new gifts and expressions of love and care for each other. I find myself as the newly arrived treasurer of this Division.

The promise of God's Word bring newness to each believer. "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22, 23)

The message of God's Church is a new message. It is a message that each one may be a new person. Paul tells us what this is like. "Put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:24)

The marvelous part of this admonition is that God not only tells us what we should be and also makes it possible to be that person. It is a message that each one may be a new person through and by the gift of Jesus. The promise is: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." (Ezekiel 36:26)

John saw a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1). Very soon God's new people will be given this wonderful new place as their new and eternal home.

*Robert Martin Moores, Treasurer*

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1998



SEVENTH-DAY  
ADVENTIST  
CHURCH

Experience the Power of God's Word

體驗上帝聖言的能力

体験しようみ言葉の力を

말씀의 능력을 체험하라



*Northern Asia-Pacific Division  
of the General Conference*

make every man righteous: Because He is our Creator, our lives came from Him, so His death is sufficient to pay the penalty of sin for every person who will accept God's plan for salvation.

The truth is that unless we view the life and death of Jesus against the backdrop of the writings of Moses we will fail to understand the significance of what He accomplished for us during His time on earth. Gen. 2:1 (thus the heavens and the earth...were finished) and John 19:30 (Jesus said, 'It is finished') need to be viewed as one piece. On Friday afternoon of the Creation week Jesus surveyed what He had accomplished and He cried, "It is finished!" THEN HE RESTED ON THE SABBATH. On Friday afternoon of the passion week Jesus surveyed what He had accomplished and He cried, "It is finished!" THEN HE RESTED ON THE SABBATH. These two ideas, belong together and both are necessary to make the plan of salvation effective for us.

Today we will do well to heed the warning and counsel of Ellen White on this issue of having confidence in the Scriptures. She said, "I would have both my arms taken off at my shoulders before I would ever make the statement or set my judgment upon the Word of God as to what is inspired and what is not inspired." (7SDABC 919) And she urges us, "Brethren, cling to your Bible, as it reads, and stop your criticism in regard to its validity, and obey the Word, and not one of you will be lost." (1 SM 18)

Jesus came away victorious from His combat with the devil by relying on the writings of Moses who said, "So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord." Deut. 8:3. And the Apostle Paul commended the believers in Thessalonica by saying, "For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe." I Thess. 2.13.

And its still true today; human lives are being transformed by God's Word. One Sabbath morning I attended a church in downtown Manila and was pleased to learn that a baptismal service was scheduled to take place. One of the candidates was a lady doctor, a pediatrician, and she requested the privilege of giving a testimony before her baptism. She said, "I have attended one of the prominent churches in this community since I was a child and I have always

wanted to be a true follower of Jesus and live for Him. But I got quite discouraged about my Christian life," she said, "because I never could quite figure out what Jesus wanted me to do. Somehow the rituals and ceremonies of the church didn't answer the longings of my heart. But then two years ago during my pediatric training I met some Seventh-day Adventist doctors. As our friendship grew they invited me to join a small group Bible study. And," she said, "I'm still amazed at what I have learned. My study of the Bible has opened up a whole new understanding of what it means to be a Christian. Now I'm at peace because the Scriptures have transformed my life."

Samuel Coleridge said it very well, "The Bible finds the devout readers of its pages." That is a strange word to use concerning a book - it finds people. And yet it is true, isn't it. The message of the Scriptures, written so many centuries ago, becomes a very personal word from God to you when the Holy Spirit breathes on it and brings the truth home to your heart.

Sometime ago two men were sitting together in Africa, working on a new translation of the Bible into a local dialect. One was a European who was leading out in the work, and the other was an African, called in by the missionary to check the translation. The African was unfamiliar with much of the Bible, so some long discussions ensued about the exact words which were needed to make the translation clear. Suddenly the African said, "This book is not like other books. When a man reads this book, he hears someone speaking to him in his heart."

Undoubtedly that is the meaning of Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

The primary purpose of the Holy Scriptures is to point us to Jesus Christ and to lead us into a personal relationship with Him. Martin Luther once said that the Bible is the cradle in which Christ lies. The Scriptures bring Him to us and bear witness to what He has done and is doing in our behalf. May God help us today to believe what Moses and all the other Bible writers have said, so that our confidence in the Saviour may grow and our fellowship with Him may be eternal.

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*David Parks, Director of Health & Temperance, Ministerial and Global Mission*

One passage which must have been included in Christ's Bible study on the Emmaus road would be Is. 7:14, "The virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel;" Micah 5:2, "Bethlehem Ephrathah...out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel;" and perhaps Jesus might have given special emphasis to Is. 53:8,9, "He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked - but with the rich at His death."

When the evangelist Philip met the Ethiopian treasurer on the road to Gaza, he found him reading Isaiah 53 and wanting to know its meaning. Acts 8:35 says, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him."

So, for those who really wanted to understand, there was plenty of evidence in the writings of Moses and the prophets that Jesus was God's only begotten Son. As Jesus said to the Jews in John 5:39, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me."

**Your word is a lamp to my feet. And  
a light to my path. (Psalm 119:105, NKJV)**

This entire concept of the close interconnection between the Bible, the written Word of God, and Jesus, the Living Word of God, becomes an important issue for modern Christians to consider. Many professed Christians today would like to pick and choose which portions of Scripture they consider to be inspired and relevant to modern living. Even within God's remnant church some voices have been raised, questioning the historical accuracy and the scientific validity of the writings of Moses, particularly Genesis 1-10. However the question we need to grapple with here is this: If we "allegorize" the Bible, especially Genesis 1-10, in order to accept the ideas of atheistic and evolutionary scientists, what does that do to the authority of Jesus Christ in our lives?

In this discussion I would want to immediately say that Christians should not be guilty of closing their eyes to scientific evidence or ignoring the facts which scientific research has discovered. However we should also hasten to add that when it comes to the kind of issues found in Genesis 1-10, the origin of the earth, the origin of the human race, the origin of evil in our world and why the geological formations of the earth appear as they do; scientific facts can be very hard to come by.

After all, these kinds of questions cannot really be answered by scientific experiments in a laboratory.

In the end it comes down to a question of faith. Do we have confidence in the theories of men or do we have confidence in the Word of God? Harry Fuller and Oswald Tippo in their textbook, College Botany, (1961) p. 25, state the matter very candidly, "The evidence of those who would explain life's origin on the basis of the accidental combination of suitable chemical elements is no more tangible than that of those people who place their faith in Divine Creation as the explanation of the development of life. Obviously the latter have as much justification for their belief as do the former."

As previously mentioned, some Christians today attempt to reconcile these two beliefs about origins, by stating that Gen. 1-10 is simply "allegorical material" and not necessarily opposed to the theory of evolution. However this line of thinking is unacceptable for several important reasons. First of all it is entirely subjective, that is, it makes the human reader of the Bible the final authority in determining what is truth, instead of allowing the Scriptures to be the authoritative Word of God.

Furthermore such thinking discredits the authority of Jesus Christ Himself in several significant ways. It is clear in the Gospels that Jesus accepted the Genesis account of the creation of Adam and Eve (Matt. 19:4, Mark 10:6) and the historicity of the Flood (Matt. 24:38, Lk. 17:27). If His words cannot be trusted on these issues, how can we be sure they can be trusted in other matters? In addition to that the New Testament repeatedly states that Jesus Christ, God the Son, in His pre-incarnate state, was the Creator of this world. For example Col. 1:16, 17 says, "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."

The fact that Jesus Christ was the Creator of the human race is a foundational truth which is absolutely vital to the plan of salvation. In Romans 5 the Apostle Paul makes an extended comparison and contrast between Adam and Jesus. Verse 19 says, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous." Why did the disobedience of Adam make us all sinners? Because we are all his descendants, our lives came from him and we have inherited his sinful nature. Why does the obedience of Jesus (including His sacrificial death on Cavalry) have the potential to