

AIAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DISSERTATION AND THESIS ABSTRACTS

THE REST THAT REMAINS: A HISTORICAL, BIBLICAL, AND
THEOLOGICAL STUDY OF GOD'S REST, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO HEBREWS 4:1-11

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Advisor: **Humberto Trejyer, Ph.D.**

This dissertation explores the theology of God's rest, its meanings, scope, and implications. According to Genesis, at the conclusion of the work of creation God rested in the satisfaction of a completed and perfect work. At that time He blessed and sanctified the seventh day, establishing it as weekly reminder of His work as Creator and Sustainer of everything. The introduction of sin into the world seriously affected humankind's experience of sacred rest. However, God made possible the restoration of His rest to man through the plan of redemption. The author of Hebrews insists on warning believers about the sad consequence of rejecting God's invitation to spiritual rest. In full assurance and without ambiguity, he affirms that there is a rest that remains for God's people.

The problem addressed in this research was to clarify the relationship between two biblical dimensions of God's rest, its quantitative dimension as expressed in the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, and its qualitative dimension found in several other passages, particularly in Heb 4:1-11. A useful background to the exploration of the problem was provided by a cluster of related questions designed to explore the relationship between these two dimensions.

The second and third chapters investigate the views of selected Church Fathers, the most outstanding Reformers, and modern theologians. The fourth chapter is an etymological and theological examination of the meaning of the Hebrew and Greek terms usually translated "rest." The fifth chapter consists of an exegetical study on Heb 4:1-11, with special reference to the usage of the terms *katapausis* and *sabbatismos* and their implications.

This research has made clear that God's rest, as explained by the author of Hebrews, goes far beyond any weekly Sabbath rest. It offers a foretaste of the eternal

bliss which is made accessible to man through the free bestowing of Christ's righteousness on the believer, and which is only partially understood and enjoyed on earth in anticipation of its fullness in the world to come. The present and the future experience of rest are combined and blended together in Hebrews. Only those who enter by grace and faith into God's rest can truly keep the Sabbath. Spiritual rest and forgiveness belong together—one cannot be experienced without the other.

A STRATEGY FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY IN A PHILIPPINE LOCAL CHURCH THROUGH AIIAS KOREAN STUDENTS

Researcher: **Seong Ok Lee, D.Min., 1998**

Advisor: **Carlos G. Martin, Ph.D.**

There are many Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Filipino churches around AIIAS, but some may not receive proper pastoral care because of a lack of Filipino pastors. However, many Korean students are studying at AIIAS and, from 1992, Korean students have served in a pastoral capacity for some Filipino churches around AIIAS. This study suggests a strategy for pastoral ministry in Philippine local SDA churches through AIIAS Korean students.

The author selects four examples of pastoral ministry in the Bible: Moses, Samuel, Jesus, and Paul, who ministered as leaders, organizers, teachers, counselors, preachers, evangelists, and trainers. He then studies pastoral ministry through the perspectives of theology and Seventh-day Adventism.

This study affirms that Korean students should know the geographical history, religious background, and social structure of Cavite province and of the SDA churches around AIIAS. It seeks to give Korean students a better understanding of Filipino culture and needs, and to provide them with a helpful resource for ministry in Filipino churches.

Finally, the author suggests a strategy for pastoral ministry in the Biga Company through the service of Korean students. First, he analyzes Biga Company. Then he suggests the recruitment of Korean students for Biga Company and the preliminary training which they should receive. He describes strategies for practical pastoral ministry for the Biga Company. These strategies may improve the training of church members by Korean student pastors, as well as enhance worship services, evangelism, visitation, counseling, and the promotion of church building.

This study may be useful to those who want to serve in pastoral ministry in Filipino churches. Proper implementation of the strategies suggested may help to increase the growth of Filipino churches and bring blessings to Korean students who serve in them.

TED PETERS'S PROLEPTIC THEORY OF THE CREATION OF HUMANKIND IN GOD'S IMAGE: A CRITICAL EVALUATION

Researcher: **Lameck Miyayo, Ph.D., 1999**
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The purpose of this study is to describe, analyze, and evaluate Ted Peters's proleptic theory of the creation of humankind in God's image. To achieve this purpose, after the introduction, the study first reviews in chapter 2 Peters's theological biography, the context of his theology, and his theological system and method. Peters differs from the more traditional Christian understanding of the creation of humankind in God's image in that he denies the historicity of the original perfect creation of Adam and Eve in God's image and of the Fall. To him, this image is to be achieved eventually, after the eschatological resurrection.

Peters's application of the concept of prolepsis to the creation of humankind in God's image is presented in chapter 3. According to this concept, the creation of humankind is a process of becoming fully human, in anticipation of the future fulfillment. It is a response to the call forward to the image of God.

The evaluation of Peters's proleptic theory of the creation of humankind in God's image is done in chapter 4 by examining how Peters applies the historical-hypothetical method, especially with respect to the biblical account of the creation and fall of Adam and Eve, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the eventual transformation of human beings at the final resurrection. While Peters denies the historicity of the perfect creation and the subsequent fall of Adam and Eve for lack of historical evidence, he accepts the resurrection of Jesus Christ by faith in the future evidence of the new creation. In view of the fact that Peters is not fully consistent in how he uses his historical-hypothetical method, the final chapter concludes that Peters's proleptic theory is not a valid explication of the biblical account of the creation of humankind in God's image.

THE ROLES OF PASTORS AS SUGGESTED BY ELLEN G. WHITE AND PRACTICES OF PASTORS IN EAST INDONESIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Most of the local church pastors are confused about what role they should perform in the church. Some believe that pastors should be mainly evangelists, or shepherds, or teachers, or preachers, or leaders, or administrators, or even leaders of church services.

This study relates to the need for pastors in the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church in East Indonesia, particularly in the North Minahasa Mission (NMM) and the South Minahasa Conference (SMC), to reconsider what their role is in the church. The purpose of the study is to investigate the role of the pastor as suggested by Ellen G. White and compare it with the practices of pastors in the NMM and SMC.

Ellen White emphasized that the roles of the pastor as evangelist, as shepherd, as preacher, as teacher, as leader, as church services leader, and as administrator are all important. Pastors need to perform all of these roles in order to establish ministry which is balanced between nurture and witness.

The pastors in NMM and SMC spend most of their time in shepherding through visitation and in evangelism by giving Bible studies. Pastors in East Indonesia give less attention to training the members.

The future trends of ministry in East Indonesia are projected based on the present practices of the pastors. The recommendations in this study are given to the pastors, leaders, and educational institutions to help facilitate necessary improvements.

Pastors in East Indonesia, and particularly in the NMM and SMC, need to perform their pastoral roles in such a way that there will be balance between nurture and witnessing. The above pastoral roles suggested by Ellen White are not naturally exclusive but complementary.

THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE PRINCE OF PERSIA IN DANIEL 10

Researcher: **Larry Roy Pitoy, M.A., 1999**

Advisor: **Zdravko Stefanovic, Ph.D.**

This thesis attempts to identify the “prince of Persia” in Dan 10, specifically in vv. 13 and 20. The identification of the “prince of Persia” has long been in dispute among scholars. There are two schools of interpretation regarding the “prince of Persia.” The first identifies him as an extra-terrestrial being, while the second views him as human. Both schools rely heavily on their understanding of the Hebrew word *śār*, “prince”.

Following a general introduction of the thesis and a review of literature in chapter 1, chapter 2 contains a study of Hebrew words for “prince” and “Persia,” *śār* and *pāras* respectively. Both etymology and semantics are applied to these two words. The word *śār*, commonly translated as “prince” in English, has a wide range of meanings. Originally *śār* meant “king,” or someone in rulership. Virtually, *śār* is applied to human beings in the OT, but in a special way in the book of Daniel, *śār* plays a significant role. It represents in a contrasting way both good and evil heavenly beings.

Chapter 3 presents an exegesis of Dan 10:13,20. Three main aspects are discussed: the historical-geographical setting, the literary study, and the theological implications, which all provide valuable insights into the identification of the “prince of Persia.”

Chapter 4 contains the summary and conclusions of the study. Based on the findings of the study, this thesis proposes a dual identification of the “prince of Persia.” The contemporary kings of Persia, namely, Cyrus II and Cambyses II, are the human “princes of Persia,” while Satan, the fallen angel hostile to God’s prince, Michael, is the cosmic “Prince of Persia.”

TOWARDS A STRATEGY FOR PLANTING MEGACHURCHES AMONG SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS: A KOREAN PERSPECTIVE

Researcher: **Byung-Sun So, M.A., 1998**
Advisor: Carlos G. Martin, Ph.D.

In spite of the flourishing and rapid growth of megachurches, Seventh-day Adventists in general do not seem to favor the megachurch style. The major question raised by this study is, Why do Adventists hesitate to plant megachurches, although some megachurches are growing fast, not only quantitatively but also qualitatively? To support the planting of megachurches as a possible strategy among Seventh-day Adventists, this study attempts to define what a megachurch is: its theological and biblical foundation, its justification from the perspective of Ellen G. White, and its strategic implementation.

Large assemblies of God’s people are evaluated from both Testaments. Israelite tribes in the OT and the Jerusalem Church before the Christian Diaspora in the NT are taken to represent megachurches. These large assemblies of God’s people consisted of subdivided units that nurtured and fulfilled the daily spiritual needs of members just like the small group ministries in current megachurches.

To determine White’s perspectives on megachurches, this study explores two major aspects: first, the situation of the church and its institutions in Battle Creek, Michigan; second, Ellen White’s perspectives on large churches in relation to the three functions of the church—celebration, congregation, and cell. The study suggests the possibility that the negative situation of the Battle Creek Church and its institutions strongly affected White’s negative perspectives on large churches.

White never gave any negative statement related to the function of celebration in large churches. Her opposition to large churches generally came from the non-existence of the functions of cell and congregation. Furthermore, White did not mention any specific large church’s name, other than that of the Battle Creek Church, to express any negative idea concerning large churches.

Megachurches have more advantages than disadvantages. It is through small group ministry that current megachurches are overcoming their fundamental

disadvantages—lack of fellowship among members and failure to nurture members. Today, megachurches are overcoming these barriers successfully and are developing their potential and advantages. Hence, megachurches are growing at a faster rate than smaller churches.

In view, therefore, of the theological and biblical bases for megachurches, the justification gleaned from Ellen White's perspectives, and the strategic implementation presented, the author suggests that planting megachurches among Seventh-day Adventists can be an effective strategy towards discipling.

DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN: A HISTORICAL-BIBLICAL EVALUATION OF THE THEORIES OF ORIGINAL SIN AS SUGGESTED BETWEEN THE SIXTEENTH AND THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

Researcher: **Kyung Ho Song**, Ph.D., 1998

Advisor: Humberto R. Treiyer, Ph.D.

This study seeks to give a satisfactory, though not necessarily final, answer to the question, Does the human race share in the guilt of Adam's first sin, or only in the results of his sin? To reach this goal, it first explores the historical developments of the doctrine of original sin, especially between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries. Then it provides an evaluation of the theories of original sin presented during those centuries by means of the testimony of the Scriptures.

After an introduction to the dissertation and a review of the relevant literature, chapter 2 surveys the development of the doctrine of original sin between the second and the fifteenth centuries as a background for the study.

Chapters 3 and 4 explore the theories of original sin formulated between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries. During those centuries, the Augustinian-Calvinistic view of original sin was dominant in both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. The Protestant Calvinistic view of original sin found expression in three main theories—the realistic theory, the federal theory, and the mediate imputation theory. This prominent Calvinistic view of original sin was challenged by Zwingli, the Anabaptists (sixteenth century), Arminianism (seventeenth century), and the New England Theology (eighteenth century).

Chapter 5 evaluates the theories of original sin elaborated during the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries based on the testimony of the Scriptures. No clear evidence is found in the Bible that Adam's guilt is transmitted or imputed to his posterity. Therefore, the Augustinian-Calvinistic theories of original sin, which claim that every human being is born guilty, do not seem to find any clear support in the Bible.

Chapter 6 summarizes the results of the research and offers the final conclusions.

TOWARDS EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL RETENTION OF NEW CHURCH MEMBERS IN TANZANIA**Researcher: Ibihya Paul K. Tulla, M.A., 1999****Advisor: G. T. Ng, Ph.D.**

Tanzania Union Mission is using different methods to draw many new members into the church fellowship. Despite their best efforts to increase membership and retain new church members, almost 30 percent of the members have been leaving the church annually. The results of these efforts have proved them unsuccessful, despite the expectation of winning and holding new members. This is because zeal without understanding how to retain converts has brought about the problem of apostasy. This problem inspired the researcher to study and work to find out reasons why some new members become discouraged and finally leave the church fellowship. The researcher's interest has gone beyond the problem of why members leave, to the point of suggesting possible preventive methods for this wide-spread apostasy.

The study is descriptive and empirical. To achieve the goal of retaining new members in Tanzania, each local congregation should consolidate methods of preparing baptismal candidates, caring for them after baptism, and reclaiming those who apostatize. This is not an option but a must, because evidences of God's purpose for saving souls and the instructions for the church's evangelistic task in the world are presented in the Bible.

Methodologically, relevant strategies should be developed for effective evangelism. The work of retaining newly baptized members, as well as reclaiming efforts, should be given first priority in every local church.