

## AIAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

### DISSERTATION AND THESIS ABSTRACTS

#### THE NATURE OF THE “HOLY ONES” UNDER ATTACK AS ENVISIONED IN DANIEL 7-12

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The problem to be solved in this dissertation is whether the “holy ones” under attack as envisioned in Dan 7-12, are earthly or heavenly beings. In comparison with other beings, the “holy ones” under attack and the thousands of angels are not identical, since those angels are attendants and not the object of the judgment in Dan 7. However, the “saints of the Most High” are not attendants but are the object of such judgment, and they received the everlasting kingdom while the attendant thousands of angels did not.

The “saints” are distinct and separate individuals from the “one like a Son of man,” who, as a divine being, is worthy of worship. The “saints of the Most High” are not worthy of worship. The “one like a Son of man” is not a “mere” collective symbol of the “saints of the Most High.” Rather, as a “federal head,” he represents the “saints of the Most High” in receiving the everlasting kingdom.

Identifying *qaddiṣê* (“saints,” Dan 7:25) as a genitive of genus, specifies the “saints of the Most High” as “people” (*‘am*), “people-saints of the Most High.” The “people-saints” can be destroyed through persecution by the assailant in his earthly expansion attack. The “people who know their God,” especially the “wise,” shall undergo a persecution by “sword,” “flame,” “captivity,” and “plunder.” The end-time “people” will be oppressed at the “time of trouble,” but Michael will deliver those whose names are written in the book of “mankind” (the living).

This study concludes that the “holy ones” under attack are envisioned in Dan 7-12 as earthly human beings because: (a) the “holy ones” under attack are not identical to the heavenly beings, the thousands of angels, or the divine “one like a Son of man;” and (b) the “saints of the Most High” are specified as “people” who are destructible, and whose names are written in the book of “mankind.” The

“holy ones” are the eschatological “people” of Daniel, the “spiritual Israel” composed of Jews and Gentiles who are “in Christ.”

#### THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE ἙΤΕΡΟΔΙΔΑΣΚΑΛΙΑ OPPOSED IN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

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It is common knowledge that the main background of the Pastoral Epistles (PE) is heresy, but the historical situation that produced it has not been fully explained. Some have assumed that the heresy was Gnosticism and understood its background to be the same as that which produced the Gnostic ideas that floated during the early second century, and which the Apostolic Fathers fought. This research questions the above assumption, and explores other possible backgrounds for the heresy opposed. The research seeks to answer the question, what is the best time to frame the heretical ideas opposed in the PE?

The actual heretical ideas being opposed in the PE are not well described. And exegesis of the passages that deal with the heresy show that the primary ideas that controlled the teaching of the false teachers in the PE were Jewish mythology and genealogy, ascetic commandments relating to food and marriage, and a dualistic interpretation of realized eschatology.

A comparison between these heretical ideas and the teaching of some of the Gnostic documents from the Nag Hammadi, *The Gospel of Thomas*, *The Apocryphon of John*, and *The Epistle to Rheginus*, do not show a likelihood that they were the background for PE's opponents. A similar result is experienced when one compares the heretical ideas opposed in the Apostolic Fathers with those opposed in the PE. The opponents of the Apostolic Fathers are less likely to be of the same milieu with the opponents of the PE.

The best parallel for the heretical ideas opposed in the PE seems to be in I Cor where similar ideas and practices are opposed. These ideas seem to have a similar background, namely, the Hellenistic Jewish interpretation of the Christian message. When these ideas are studied in the light of Philonic literature, they seem to clearly depend on a background similar to that of Philo. This background could have been mediated through the ministry of Christians like Apollos, an Alexandrian Christian preacher whose ministry was centered in both Ephesus and Corinth.

The conclusion of this study affirms that the best parallel material for studying the opposition in the PE is the Pauline Epistles, and the best background for it is Hellenistic Judaism, similar to that propagated in Philo. The best time to frame these heretical ideas is therefore during the lifetime of Paul. It is therefore not necessary to date the PE later than Paul.

THE HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH SALVATION: A STUDY OF THE VIEWS OF LUTHER, CALVIN, AND WHITE

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The main question of this study is Christ's human nature: Which properties of His nature were or are "like sinful flesh," and which "sinless" or without sin, are the views of Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ellen G. White? In what way does Luther, Calvin, and White connect Christ's humanity with His work of salvation?

The three do share some similarities concerning Christ's human nature with that of humanity's fallen nature, and agree that Christ's body was corruptible or mortal. Luther and White share similar views on the emotions that Christ experienced and also similarities of Christ's unlikeness to fallen humanity.

The study shows differences concerning Christ's human nature. For Luther, Christ had three presences: the physical body, the spiritual body, and the majestic body. For Calvin, Christ could not sin. White differs from the other two, in that, Christ's will was liable to yield to temptation. He could sin.

Luther, Calvin, and White connect Christ's humanity with salvation. One of the conclusions of this study is the unique view of Luther, Calvin and White about Christ's humanity. To Luther, though Christ assumed genuine humanity, His body was spiritual and divine, which shows few similarities to fallen humanity. To Calvin, since Christ could not fall, it separated Christ's will from the will of all human beings. In White's view, Christ's humanity was genuine, and similar to fallen humanity and though He was sinless, He needed divine help not to sin.

Luther, Calvin, and White are similar in their general statements concerning Christ's human nature "in the likeness of sinful flesh." To Luther, Christ assumed "sinful nature." Calvin also writes that Christ assumed "sinful" nature. White believes that Christ "took fallen humanity," or "sinful nature."

A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE ELITE CHURCH MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN EVANGELIZING THE ELITE PEOPLE OF METRO MANILA

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Pasay Seventh-day Adventist Church (PAC) is a church whose purpose is to accomplish the Great Commission of Jesus, specifically to the people of Metro Manila, including the elite. Most of the PAC members are elite people. However,

they do not know how to evangelize their fellow elite citizens because they have never been trained to do so.

The purpose of this study is to provide a training program for the Metro Manila elite SDA church members so they may learn how to evangelize their elite society. Biblical principles and theological reasons for training are established. The three theological reasons for training are set in motion: the Great Commission of Jesus, the great mission of the church, and the great harvest of the elite. Jesus' training model of selection, instruction, commission, supervision, and multiplication is implemented.

The training program was implemented at PAC. It covered objectives, participants, curriculum, schedule, and budget. The result of the evaluation of the training program was shared and suggestions were made as to how to improve it. From the project, the derived suggestions correspond to an acronym, a word spelling "ELITE." "E" - Elite members of a local church need to be selected; "L" - Lessons need to be developed and presented; "I" - Investiture ceremonies need to be conducted; "T" - Teamwork of trainees need to be supervised; "E" - Excellent forum needs to be organized.

The conclusion is that a training program is very important for the elite SDA local church members to help them fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus, specifically to evangelize the elite people.

#### AN INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE IN-CAMPUS MNISTRIES OF MOUNTAIN VIEW COLLEGE FROM 1987-2000

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There are about 60 million college students around the world, including students in Adventist colleges. Although this is roughly only one percent of the world's population, this segment has been called the "powerful percent," because college students compose the future leaders of the world and the church.

Mountain View College (MVC) is one of the two colleges run by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Southern Philippines. Since its founding days, MVC has formulated strategies and activities for its in-campus ministry program to win non-SDA students primarily, and also to enrich the spiritual lives of its Adventist students and faculty members. The main purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the strategies and activities used in MVC's three in-campus ministry programs from 1987-2000.

To accomplish this, Biblical and theological bases were laid. The biblical components of an ideal in-campus ministry were given, along with some management factors which may have affected the effectiveness of the strategies or

activities. A survey was made of what other Adventist campus ministries are doing.

An interview with a sample population of MVC's in-campus ministry participants was done. Those interviewed gave their perception of the effectiveness of the strategies and activities. Their responses, together with the observations and evaluation of the researcher, were analyzed based on the biblical components, management factors, and on what other Adventist campuses are doing.

This research found that each of MVC's three in-campus ministries had strengths and weaknesses. A list of suggestions is given to make the strategies and activities of each ministry more effective.

#### TOWARD CONTEXTUALIZING THE BIBLICAL WORSHIP PRACTICES INTO THE MUSLIM CULTURAL CONTEXT FOR AN SDA CHURCH PLANT IN BANGLADESH

Researcher: **Dauglas Dilip Roy, D.Min., 2003**  
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Winning Muslims to the Adventist faith and keeping them in the Seventh-day Adventist church has long been the challenge of Bangladeshi Adventists.

A major barrier in converting and helping them remain faithful Adventists in a predominantly Western-Hindu worship style is a problem. This project focuses on contextualizing the biblical worship practices into the Muslim cultural context to provide a friendly church for the former Islam faithful, without extracting them from their culture.

This purpose and element of worship in both the Bible and Islam have overlaps that make merging of the two possible. In the contextualization concept, this project makes some recommendations.

The approach of teaching Muslim converts to change their culture and lifestyle in order to look "Adventist" has not worked. Practices such as calling God Allah, washing and removing one's shoes in the worship house, worshipping while sitting on the floor, fasting, singing/chanting, are a few things that are not contrary to Scripture and may be worth trying.

This study has produced a manual using different practices to help contextualize and accommodate Muslims.

### A STRATEGY FOR TRAINING SMALL GROUP LEADERS OF AREAS 3 AND 4 IN CENTRAL LUZON CONFERENCE

Researcher: **Robin A. Saban**, D.Min., 2003  
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Central Luzon Conference, being one of the largest among the conferences in the entire Seventh-day Adventist church in the Philippines, does not have a meaningful and successful small group program. Records show that small groups do not thrive very well within its territory.

A survey aimed at knowing the number one factor for the success or failure of small groups in Areas 3 and 4 in Metro Manila was conducted. A total of four hundred and ninety-one members were surveyed. This involved a cross-section of pastors, local church leaders, and members. The survey revealed that a lack of small group leadership training is the number one factor why small groups failed. This project aims to remedy the situation by formulating a strategy to train small group leaders for stronger and healthier groups. The strategy follows the process stated below.

The strategy is composed of four stages. The first stage involves promoting small group awareness among church members. This promotion aims for the eventual acceptance by the local church to organize the members into small groups. The second stage is the recruitment of potential small group leaders. This is followed by the third stage which involves pre-service training. Six weekends are allotted to cover the entire sixteen lessons. The fourth stage of the strategy includes organizing of small groups in the church. The in-service training will follow immediately after organizing. A total of eleven lessons are covered in this stage, and seven weekends are allotted for this.

### A HEALTH MINISTRY APPROACH TO CHURCH PLANTING IN REACHING THE MINANGKABAU PEOPLE IN CENTRAL SUMATRA MISSION OF INDONESIA

Researcher: **Berson Richard Simbolon**, D.Min., 2003  
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The church can evangelize the world in many ways. This project aims to develop a strategy that can be implemented by planting churches through the health ministry approach to the Minangkabau people in Central Sumatra Mission of Indonesia. In order to accomplish this purpose, the biblical-theological foundations of the health ministry approach to church planting is examined. Based on an examination of the historical/geographical, economic, cultural, and religious

dynamics, as well as the health conditions of the Minangkabau people, a workable church planting strategy through a health ministry approach is developed.

A health ministry approach to church planting proposed in this project consists of seven steps. These steps are constructed in harmony with local conditions. In order to make these steps workable, it is recommended that a health ministry committee be formed, and together with trained church planters, be committed to implementing the program. Generous support from institutions such as Central Sumatra Mission (CSM) and West Indonesia Union Mission (WIUM) are vitally needed.

Some recommendations for Central Sumatra Mission and West Indonesia Union Mission are given to make the strategy more effective.

#### FOLK RELIGION AMONG KAREN IN THAILAND

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Adviser: Lester P. Merklin, Jr., D.Min./Miss.

The Karen people are the largest ethnic minority group in Thailand. Most Karen follow their traditional religion, which involves appeasing and propitiating many different kinds of spirits.

The Seventh-day Adventist work among the Karen in Thailand started in 1967 and has been on-going for the past thirty six years, without much success. This failure can be attributed to: (1) the lack of understanding concerning their beliefs and practices, and (2) the lack of contextualization strategies to evangelize this people group. This paper fills that gap in knowledge. It also provides some suggestions for evangelism among the Karen people.

This paper examines the following aspects of traditional religion: worldview, legends, realm of the spirits, types and nature of spirits, taboos, divination, and the role and function of ritual specialists. It also examines the various rituals performed for appeasement and propitiation throughout the year. The concluding chapter deals with some strategies for evangelism among the Karen people.

#### DIVERSITY IN THE REMNANT CONCEPT IN THE HISTORY OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH (1841-1931)

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Adviser: Kyung Ho Song, Ph.D.

This study endeavors to explore if the unconventional concept that the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church is not the end-time remnant, but a part of it, has any foundation in the history of Adventism, or is it just purely a new creation.

To accomplish this goal, it investigates, traces, and describes the diversity of the remnant concept in the history of SDA theology.

Chapter 2 describes the development of the remnant concept among Sabbatarian Adventists from 1841 to 1863. The term “a remnant” was generally connoted by Sabbatarians as being a few in number, the ones who would go through sufferings, but would be saved in the end. The term “the remnant” indicates the Sabbatarian position of being the whole remnant. However, some Sabbatarians surmised that the remnant concept was applicable to others outside of their company. Others, holding the concept of a remnant of remnants, believed that a final remnant would be gathered from among their ranks.

Chapter 3 examines the development of the remnant concept in the SDA Church from 1863 to 1872. Adventists in this period generally conceived the term, “a remnant,” as an undetermined, small number of people who would at last be saved. They saw themselves as this definite small company and connected the remnant concept to the Laodicean Church. Some Adventists declared that the Laodicean message was not only for Adventists but also for other Christians.

Chapter 4 surveys the development of the remnant concept in the SDA Church from 1872 to 1931. Adventists in this period generally accepted the idea that they were “the remnant” or “the last church.” However, some Adventists held that membership in the SDA Church would not guarantee salvation. Still others believed that a sifting process would determine the final remnant.

Chapter 5 concludes that the study found no direct declarations, within the periods covered, which explicitly expressed that the SDA Church was a part of the remnant and not “the remnant.”

## TOWARDS A CONTEXTUALIZED ISLAMIC PRAYER FORM IN THE ADVENTISTS SETTING

Researcher: **Felixian Tolentino Felicitas, M.Min., 2003**

Adviser: **Kyung Ho Song, Ph.D.**

Evangelizing in the Muslim community has been a challenge for Adventist Ministry for a long time. It has been an area where ministers of the gospel would like to focus their study.

It is for this reason that this paper has been conceptualized, namely, to find ways of how Muslims can adapt to the style of worship and prayer that Adventist use. Usually, newly converted Muslims to the Adventist faith are not accustomed to the prayer form and ways of worship that Seventh-day Adventist Christians practice. At times, this gives them the feeling that they have abandoned not only their religion, but also their family and culture.

It is therefore suggested in this paper that a contextualized prayer form be used in worship by Muslim converts, with emphasis on the concept of Jesus Christ and



His work of saving us from sin. Postures and time of prayer are very biblical. These could be adopted when Muslims have been converted to Christianity. Their ways of prayer, which have been part of their culture for many years, are regarded as special to them. To avoid resistance among Muslims, they should be approached in such a way, that they can still feel comfortable in worship though they have accepted Christianity. Providing they understand the concept of Christian worship, know why, how, and whom they worship, they should feel comfortable praying as an Adventist Christian.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AS A TOOL FOR REACHING THEIR PARENTS IN MAE LA REFUGEE CAMP, THAILAND-MYANMAR BORDER, THAILAND

Researcher: **Saw Edric**, M.Min., 2003

Adviser: Yoshitaka Kobayashi, Ph.D.

The growth of the work of evangelism in the refugee Thailand-Myanmar border camp, Thailand, is very slow. The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) churches in the camp are doing their best. Due to the political situation and the temporary resident status of the refugees, the SDA Thai Mission does not accept them into permanent membership. However, the churches do get some support from the Mission, as well as some from aid agencies.

The SDA churches of Mae La camp need to reach out to their neighbors. The church has youth, lay workers, and teachers. These members can participate in soul winning work. If they are rightly trained in their given situation, the gospel will spread further than where a lay member or a pastor can take it. The members must be equipped with evangelism tools so that they will be able to participate in the service of God.

There are strategic plans in reaching people with the gospel. Reaching out to children through Vacation Bible School (VBS) draws the attention of parents to the gospel. This method will work in refugee camps. The plan of the VBS is related to the setting of the refugees in Mae La.

After receiving training for the VBS program for outreach ministry, the youth, teachers, and lay members of the Mae La refugee camp will be well equipped and can be challenged to participate in soul winning work.