

Volume 38, Number 4, 1988/1989

# JAPAN HARVEST

The Magazine for Today's Japan Missionary



FEATURE: COUNTDOWN TO 2000

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# JAPAN HARVEST

The Magazine For Today's Japan Missionary

Volume 38, Number 4, 1988/1989

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Cover: 1989 JEMA Summer Conference Speaker, Henry Harder, (middle second row) and Renewal Singers.

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Though the magazine responsibly endeavors to represent these causes, individual articles or advertising express the viewpoints of the contributors and not necessarily those of JEMA. The editor welcomes unsolicited articles. Such material will not be returned.

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# *JEMA President's Page*

This year's JEMA Plenary Session (Feb. 13 & 14) for the first time met without the president. I was just then undergoing major surgery for multiple fracture and dislocation of the bones in the ankle. You can imagine my disappointment; I hadn't missed a Plenary since 1976. During the intervening weeks I have been learning the difficult lesson of patience and endurance.

It was early Friday morning, February 3, when I fell. I was a long way from home attending the annual OSCC board retreat at Ashinoko in Hakone. It was a glorious morning. The first rays of the sun were turning Mt. Fuji into various hues of red while all around the hotel, snow that had fallen during the night transformed the area into a winter wonderland. I hurriedly reached for my cameras, first to take a few shots from the inside and then to explore the outdoors. (The photo below is the view from the hotel window).

The driveway was frozen and slippery. I, therefore, went to my car in the parking lot to get my sturdy walking shoes. A sprinkling system was keeping the approach to the hotel from freezing, at least that's what I had assumed. But wrong I was! Suddenly and without warning I fell and before I hit the cement I could hear the cracking of bones. That half hour I lay in the snow while desperately calling for help, seemed like eternity. An ambulance rushed me to the first hospital in the valley and the doctors confirmed what I already knew — except that things were worse than I had expected. I was advised to transfer to a large hospital in Tokyo. It took several hours until transportation could be arranged and I spent that time in the examination room of the hospital director, Dr. Manaka. Curtains were drawn around my bed while he examined one patient after another. When there was a pause, Dr. Manaka came over to me, a Walkman and cassettes in his hand. "Do you like classical music?" he asked. "Oh yes, very much," I replied. "Why not use my tape recorder until it's time to check out. These are tapes with my favorite music. I have more cassettes in the car. . . Do you like Händel? The HALLELUJAH Chorus?" "Very much," I answered. "I'll get it for you," he said, and with that he was gone. "The HALLELUJAH Chorus," I repeated to myself and suddenly it struck me with unforgettable force. Here I was lying in a hospital bed in a city far from home, feeling sorry for myself and worrying about tomorrow — with no song in my heart and no joy on my face — when all along God had provided the HALLELUJAH Chorus, a song of praise unto the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. It was then that victory came and it was then that the battle was won and I have been singing the HALLELUJAH Chorus ever since. (Incidentally, Mrs. Manaka had driven away with the car and I never got to hear that tape; but as you can see, that didn't matter.)

This is Passion Week and I am reminded of the gloom and despair the disciples faced all week and especially on that Friday. But Sunday was coming, that glorious Easter Sunday, the resurrection morning. The experience I have just gone through has reminded me anew of the victory and joy that is ours in our Risen Lord — no matter how difficult and trying the circumstances. HALLELUJAH!

Siegfried Buss





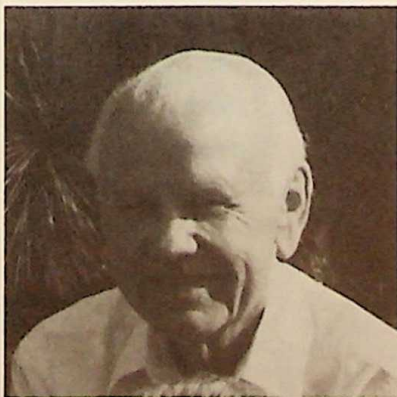
# The Eschatological Hope and The Missionary Mandate Acts 1:10-11

*This year's KARUIZAWA JEMA SUMMER CONFERENCE (August 6-9) will feature Radio Pastor Henry Harder and the Renewal Singers (see cover photo). This missionary conference with an eschatological emphasis will be a special time of blessing and challenge. Rev. Harder in the article that follows introduces the subject he will cover in more detail this summer. What a timely topic it is.*

HENRY HARDER

It was 2:33 this morning. I awoke, only to remember my assignment to write an article for JAPAN HARVEST. My mind began to focus on the urgent matter at hand. Before it was time to get up, the Lord had directed me to the above topic, to the text from Acts and to the material to include in the article. The Lord doesn't often lead me that way, but this time He did. The question "What can I write that would be meaningful to the Lord's representatives in Japan?" had weighed heavily on my mind, but that question was now answered. So much by way of testimony.

The Lord's last words to His disciples, before His departure (ascension) were, "You shall be my witnesses. . .to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). There's the missionary mandate. In view of the material in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, especially such a passage as 10:42; I believe these words of the Lord to contain a command, not just a statement of fact. In fact,



these words, "You shall be my witnesses. . .to the ends of the earth" express the theme of the book. This command is carried forward by Peter (to the Jews), and by Paul (to the Gentiles). The gospel was carried from Jerusalem to Rome.

The disciples on that Olivet slope that day heard these parting words of their Lord. Then He disappeared. He ascended. He left our dimension — our space/time continuum — and entered the dimension of eternity. Perhaps the disciples kept looking up. Perhaps He would reappear as He had done before. But He didn't.

He had called them to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth. The word "witness" is derived from the Greek word "martus" from which we get "martyr." Little did these disciples know what an appropriate word that would become for some of them, and for countless millions in the future. Not many years after this, Stephen, James, Peter, Paul and others laid down their lives because of their witness for the Savior. They were martyrs.

Now, why were the apostles and the early Christians willing to witness to their Lord regardless of the cost? What was the incentive that drove them on? Was it the desperate NEED? Was it just humanitarian? Hardly! What drove them to the ends of the earth and to the end of their lives? I believe the answer to be, at least in part, here in the opening verses of the Book of Acts.

The command had been given. The commander had disappeared. What would drive the disciples to fulfill the command? Two angelic messengers suddenly appeared to these disciples. They said, "This same Jesus . . . will come back." THERE IS THE ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPE. IT WAS THE ANTICIPATED BUT CERTAIN RETURN OF THE LORD THAT BECAME THE GREAT INCENTIVE FOR THE FULFILLING OF THE MISSIONARY MANDATE. I have not seen this point developed in any of the commentaries on the Book of Acts. I'm working through this book on our broadcast WHAT'S NEW, and I came across one brief comment regarding this point in only one of the twelve commentaries which I regularly consult as I prepare for the radio messages. Yet here it is.

These disciples needed to be convinced that the Lord would return, so God gave two witnesses. The disciples had interacted with the risen Lord, so they knew the RESURRECTION was a fact. They had just witnessed the ASCENSION. They knew that had happened. It was after all, after the fact. But the RETURN was still future. They needed to be sure of that, too, so God sent TWO witnesses. Since they came from non-temporal eternity, they had already witnessed the return of the Lord. These angelic beings weren't bound to time. They were authentic witnesses. Furthermore there were two of them. The law required that by the mouth of two witnesses the truth



was to be established and recognized. These two messengers could be believed. While the disciples had witnessed the resurrection and the ascension, these two angelic messengers had witnessed the RETURN. I believe that, without the conviction that the same Jesus would return, the missionary mandate would have floundered. If built only on Jesus' command, or on His resurrection or on His ascension, the missionary mandate would have failed. It was the CERTAINTY OF THE RETURN that drove them to the ends of the earth—to Rome, the capitol of the empire.

It has been said that the anticipation of the return of the Lord stifles missionary activity as well as social action. Did it? Does it? The mandate to witness rests not only on the RISEN Lord's command, "You shall be my witnesses", nor only on the ASCENDED Lord's living presence in Heaven, but it rests on His promised RETURN. The anticipation of His return does not paralyze or stifle witnessing or social involvement. It isn't a deterrent, it is rather the final great incentive.

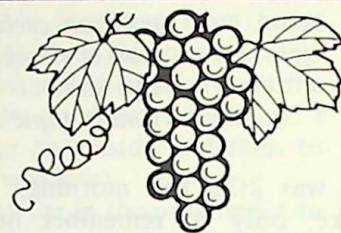
The question needs to be asked, "How is the return of the Lord an incentive to fulfill the mandate?" The answer deserves a lot more time and thought than I have given it. But let me surface several observations to stimulate your thinking. In the first place, the certainty of the return of the Lord tells us that God has a PROGRAM which He began with Christ's coming and the birthday of the church. It was begun by the Lord, it is to be carried on by the church in the power of the Holy Spirit, and it will culminate at His return. The missionary task wasn't man's idea. It wasn't Paul or Peter who planned it. God has a program. It's His. His return confirms it, and His return concludes the program of witnessing. His return tells us secondly, that there is an end. History, as we know history, will one day close, and it will close

climactically with the return of the Lord. Therefore the TIME to witness will come to an end. One day the last person will be saved. One day the day of grace will end. The return of the Lord gives us a deadline. We humans need deadlines. Time is moving to a goal. It is only the longsuffering of God that keeps the day of grace open. A third observation. The return of the Lord tells us that there is another dimension — a dimension called ETERNITY where all humans are headed. If eternity for a person depends on that person's relationship to Jesus Christ, then it would be criminal to keep the good news to oneself and not to witness. A fourth observation. It may sound selfish but I don't believe it is. The coming of the Lord will bring with it REWARDS for faithfully discharging our responsibility. These rewards, whatever they may be (crowns? etc.) are not given for our possession to be exhibited for everyone to see and admire. They are given to be placed at the feet of the King of kings, and the Lord of lords. Is it selfish to want something to place at His feet for His glory? I think not.

I believe we fall short of fulfilling our mandate if we fail to be future oriented — if the mandate rests only on the past, or on present humanitarian needs. It was after these disciples were convinced that the same Lord they had known would return, that they left the Mount of Olives with great joy (Luke tells us in 24:52), went to Jerusalem and spent days in praise prayer as they waited. And after the coming of the Holy Spirit, they went out and began their missionary task and the church exploded. I believe historians have not done justice to the rapid expansion of the early church. That chapter has not yet been accurately researched and written. Recent research reveals that the church grew far more rapidly than past research has indicated.

In order to go effectively to

the "ends of the earth" we need that absolute conviction that our Lord will return. The missionary mandate is based on our eschatological hope. Unless that incentive is included and properly emphasized, the church will fall short of fulfilling the Lord's command.



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*See p. 29 for listing.*

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# Personal Reflections Following The Consultation on World Evangelization

*A most significant gathering of mission strategists, the Global Consultation on World Evangelization (GCOWE) took place in Singapore, January 5 to 9. Doug Birdsall who just completed his term as JEMA vice president, assesses the consultation from the perspective of a Japan missionary.*

DOUGLAS BIRDSALL

Humanly speaking, it is impossible for the entire world to be evangelized by the year 2000 A.D. However, some three hundred and fourteen Christian leaders of mission boards, denominations and para-church ministries from more than sixty countries gathered in Singapore to pray and plan towards precisely that end.

The idea for the consultation was born in the heart and mind of Dr. Thomas Wang, International Director of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. Traveling the world in the last few years, he had an increasing awareness of the fact that literally scores of groups were developing plans and strategies on both a local and a global scale to reach the world for Christ by the year A.D. 2000. Thus an Ad Hoc committee was convened to bring leaders together in Singapore for an intense and stimulating 72 hour consultation, January 5-8, 1989 at the Amara Hotel.



Participants from Japan included LIFE Missionaries, Rob Gill—Executive Director of the Japan Church Growth Institute (JCGI) and Doug Birdsall—Director of Communities for Christ. Representing the church were pastors, Rev. Shin Funaki, Rev. Nakazawa, Rev. Saoshiro, and Rev. Okuyama of the Mission Training Center.

“Cooperation” and “Partnership” were dominant themes repeatedly sounded throughout the time together. For many, the most startling demonstration of the call to cooperation and partnership was the very presence of leaders of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The call for cooperation issued by Bill O’Brien, Vice President of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board as well as by the president, Keith Parks, served to dispel the stereotypical image of the self-sufficient and fiercely independent Southern Baptist missionary. Campus Crusade, also widely perceived as a monolithic ministry, won wide acclaim for the acknowledgement of their “changing face” in seeking wider cooperation with a new focus on church planting as an integral element of their impressive global plan, “New Life 2000.”

Though the meeting was convened as a “Global Consultation” it seemed at the outset that participants were being asked to refine and endorse documents that had been tediously prepared prior to the conference. Considerable confusion arose due to the

fact that most participants had not received materials prior to the conference and thus felt unprepared to process that massive amount of material that had been given to them.

Principal compilers of the document, Dr. David Barrett and Mr. Jack Reapsome, had attempted to cull through some 700 plans that groups around the world have prepared in anticipation of the year 2000. From the the 700 plans, they synthesized a “Master Plan” made up of 29 major categories. Though the conference leaders had intended the document to be a comprehensive guide which would galvanize the participants to cooperation in world evangelization, the process was too cumbersome. Unexpectedly, the very documents which were intended to have a galvanizing effect seemed rather to have an almost paralyzing impact on the momentum of the conference.

This was particularly true of the Latin American delegation who threatened to withdraw from the consultation because of the frequent reference to and inclusion of Roman Catholics. Though the Latin American delegation would acknowledge the presence of true believers within the Catholic Church, they found the notion of working with the structure of the Roman Catholic Church unacceptable because of regional concerns.

In addition to the overwhelming amount of information from the documents which the partic-



ipants were expected to digest the format of the consultation did not provide for as much interaction in working groups on various strategies and plans as many participants had anticipated.

Wisely, the leadership acknowledged some of the difficulties at the midway point and allowed for major adjustments. Tension was broken as the focus shifted away from an attempt to forge a master plan towards a freer exchange of ideas, and more dynamic interaction with creative plans, and a view towards a spirit of spontaneous sharing of resources to achieve "supra-organizational" goals.

The official focus moved from the comprehensive document to a simple four point manifesto which was unanimously endorsed by the participants. Though the "GREAT COMMISSION MANIFESTO" was far from a strategic working plan for completing the task of world evangelization, it nonetheless served to convey to the body of Christ around the world the urgency of the need to forge more effective partnerships among existing bodies, to pray more earnestly for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, and to sharpen the focus on the job that remains to be done so that every person on earth will have the opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel and to be a part of a worshipping group within his own community.

In sharpening the focus on the task that remains to be done, the world was divided into three segments: "The evangelized Christian world", "The evangelized non-Christian world" and "The unevangelized world." Many of the nations of Europe, North and South America were included in the first sector. Curiously, Japan was categorized as an "evangelized non-Christian" country. The third group largely constituted what has come to be known as the "unreached people."

Though it is debatable as to

whether or not many of the so called "Christian" nations are actually Christian, or whether countries like Japan could accurately be termed "evangelized", it is incontestable that the current distribution of resources—both human and material—is inversely proportioned to the job that remains to be done.

A staggering challenge to the church is the realization that less than one percent of the church's resources are being focused on the "unevangelized world" that consists of some 1.3 billion people.

The Southern Baptists are developing plans that will entail the redeployment of hundreds of missionaries into alternative structures utilizing nonresident missionary status to reach those in limited access areas.

The challenge to the mission community and the wider Christian community here in Japan is enormous as we consider the job that remains to be done in this purportedly "evangelized" country.

Several tough questions deserve an answer. Four questions in particular beg for a hearing in light of the Singapore consultation.

**Question 1:** Can we justify the large concentration of mission personnel in a country like Japan with established churches, seminaries, publishing houses, media ministries and indigenous para-church ministries?

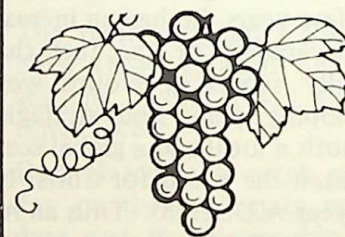
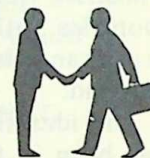
**Question 2:** If we can say "yes" to the first question, can we then say that our mission resources are being used to their optimum capacity for expanding the borders of the Kingdom? Many would say that a disproportionate number of missionaries are simply involved in "maintenance" of ministries that could better be carried on by members of the national church. How can we rationalize the fact that in the year just past less than fifty new churches were planted in a country that has nearly 10,000 full time Christian pastors and

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missionaries? Admittedly, the answers are not easy, but the question needs to be asked.

**Question 3:** If we can say that our mission personnel are being used to optimum capacity for Kingdom expansion, can we then articulate our dream, our target and our plan for seeing that dream translated into reality? Too many missionaries shoot at the broad side of the barn and then paint the bull's eye and the target around the bullet hole once they discover where they hit. In this new era, there must be great care given to research in defining the task so that the research can be applied in enabling us to more effectively set goals and then more accurately measure our progress along the line to realizing those goals.

**Question 4:** Do we have the faith to believe that the face of the church in Japan will be significantly different in the year A.D. 2000 than it is today? Recently a friend asked me what I thought might be an event that would take the church most by surprise in this new era. I responded by saying that I thought nothing would catch us more by surprise than a great revival and a national surge towards Christ. Though many pray to that end, I think most would be incredulous when it happens.

Humanly speaking, it is preposterous to imagine Japan as a country for Christ. Why after all these years of great sacrifice and diligent service with seemingly meager results would we suddenly expect a breakthrough in this rich and powerful country.

That is where the "faith factor" comes in. We don't need faith to accomplish what we can do alone, we need faith to accomplish what God alone can do.

Coming away from the Singapore consultation I had an increasing sense of the awesome task before us. With Japan's expanding influence around the globe, it should be at the top of the church's agenda to reach this country and harness its potential

and energy for the cause of Christ in the twenty-first century. It is not an impossible task. With the resources that God has entrusted to our care, there has never been a time when the task was more achievable than is true today. With the needs of the world, there has never been a time when the task was more urgent.

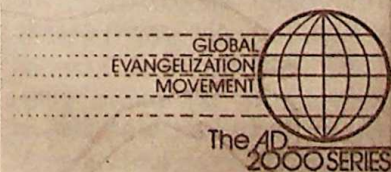
Throughout human history the great nations have always exercised great military, economic as well as spiritual impact throughout their sphere of influence. With the all too evident spiritual and moral decay in the West, and with the evident ascendancy of nations here on the Pacific Rim, history instructs us that these nations will be having a shaping influence on the world's spiritual posture in the coming century.

May it be that the year 2000 A.D. will be a time of great celebration of the thorough penetration of the Gospel to every man, woman and child throughout Japan and around the world because of the fact that in 1989 the church re-examined her responsibility to Christ and to the world, redeployed her energy, and resolved to complete the unfinished task. We can, if we will!

## SEVEN HUNDRED PLANS TO EVANGELIZE THE WORLD

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movement

by David B. Barrett  
and  
James W. Reapsome



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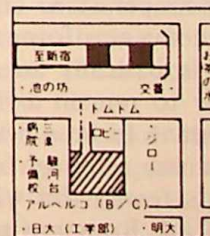
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# The Meeting of the Century?

## A Look at the "AD 2000 and Beyond" Movement

*Rob Gill, executive director of the Japan Church Growth Institute, looks at the Global Consultation on World Evangelization from the perspective of a strategist. His article also sheds light on the tensions that cooperative efforts on a global scale can create.*

ROB GILL

From January 5 to 9 of this year I had the privilege of attending the Global Consultation on World Evangelization (GCOWE) held in Singapore. As described by Doug Birdsall in a related article, there were some exceptionally high goals set for this consultation. Dr. Ralph Winter had advertised it as the epochal "meeting of the century," and most of the 314 participants from over 50 countries likewise arrived expecting something remarkable to occur.

It may require many years to evaluate fully the historical significance of this event, which concluded with many mixed feelings for most of the participants. For me it was a marvelous occasion to be challenged on my own missiological beliefs and to be stimulated to expand my vision for the whole world. The following are some of the implications I perceive for those of us ministering in Japan.

### 1. A pledge for greater cooperation

One of the buzzwords used at GCOWE was "partnership." Mission agencies which have previously been infamous for their own independence are now in the forefront of advocating greater cooperation. Their clarion call is not a new form of comity, which is basically an agreement on how to remain divided. Nor is it meant to be a new form of ecumenism, although some participants feared this with the inclusion of Roman Catholics at

the consultation. Partnership implies equal status and shared responsibilities. It involves working interdependently whenever and wherever possible.

The church in Japan is known to be one of the most divided in the world. Participation by certain persons, denominations, or groups may mean automatic exclusion by other persons or groups who perceive that they hold different theological positions. One of the greatest joys for those of us serving in the Japan Church Growth Institute (JCGI) is to see many barriers of prejudice and misinformation torn down and bonds of unity built as pastors from divergent geographical and denominational backgrounds grow together in the love of Christ.

Specifically, what are some possible areas for greater cooperation? Let me suggest but a few:

a. *Research* One of the most vital areas challenging the church is to gain a better grasp on the current situation of the church and the sociological environment surrounding the church. What are the factors for and the barriers mitigating against the growth and expansion of the church in Japan today? What are trends and factors that may affect the church during the next decade (or until 2000 A.D.)?

Contrary to common belief, there are numerous churches in Japan that are experiencing good to phenomenal growth. These churches need to be studied

more closely for insights and principles that can be modified and adapted by other churches. In the same way, closer analysis needs to be conducted on churches which are experiencing little or no growth. Often these churches have too readily used the excuse that the people living in that community are resistant to the Gospel. In fact, as was demonstrated by the 1988 JEA-sponsored church planting survey, there may be other overriding factors such as lack of demographical understanding, absence of a clearly defined and mutually believed philosophy of ministry, and inadequate selection and training of those persons involved in church planting.

Currently there are at least four or five research organizations that should begin to explore ways to cooperate more fully in order to eliminate duplication of efforts and to maximize resources. Fears of encroachment upon "my turf" need to be addressed. The task of researching comprehensively the situation in Japan is far too vast for any single organization to undertake. However, the task is achievable if these organizations, in cooperation with individuals living in each prefecture or region, would work together.

b. *Training* Few persons ever feel that they have had adequate preparation for the ministries in which they are involved. On one hand this feeling is good, for it forces us to rely not upon ourselves, but upon the Lord who



has called us and promises to empower us for these tasks. But there are some areas where we may be able to help each other.

My own mission, LIFE Ministries, has provided limited training for personnel from other missions who wish to participate in LIFE's orientation program for summer and short-term workers. Other mission agencies may wish to consider doing something similar, especially in the areas of "on-site" orientation and cultural adjustment for newly arrived career missionaries, or in church planting. Some missions may not wish nor have the resources to undertake full responsibility for these programs, but they could assign one or two persons to co-minister with personnel from other missions in order to form a team that could collectively provide inter-mission training.

The large number of persons who attended the JEMA-sponsored church planting seminar at Amagi Sanso in February clearly indicates the deep need for such assistance. However, any seminar or conference is severely restricted in what it can offer due to the limited time available. Similar restrictions apply to other tools like the church planting manual, which JCGI will publish soon. Larger, more experienced mission organizations need to be challenged to consider ways to provide short-term, on-the-job training opportunities for young church planters from other mission organizations.

## **2. A commitment to target unreached people groups**

A second issue that re-emerged from GCOWE is the need to shift personnel and resources away from already "reached" peoples in order to achieve world evangelization. At the consultation, Dr. David Barrett presented a wealth of data, some of which I feel was based upon faulty statistics and misleading terminology which, if left unchallenged could well have a detrimental effect on

"finishing the task" in Japan. At the same time I also see the need to take seriously the message which Barrett and others wished to convey. Dr. Keith Parks shared how the Southern Baptist Foreign Missions Board has made a major decision to redeploy 10% of its 5,000 missionaries to unreached people groups.

Although Japan may be the most racially harmonious group of any people in the world, there are still various people groups which never have been successfully penetrated with the Gospel. Perhaps up to 80% of the total population belong to these unreached groups. For instance, in Nagoya's Minato-ku there is only one small evangelical church for a population of nearly 150,000 people! Several attempts have been made to start other churches there, but they have all ended in failure. Why? Perhaps one of the reasons for the lack of success is that Minato-ku is home primarily to lower-middle class and lower class persons who work in the factories, warehouses, and port facilities that are located there.

However, the Soka Gakkai and other "new religions" are quite strong there, indicating that there is a general interest in things religious. The Christian church has been equally ineffective in reaching the majority of the residents of Toyota-shi, who apparently are rejecting the Gospel because it is being communicated by non-company "outsiders." Often unwittingly the church is excluding a majority of the population by choosing to communicate the Gospel in forms and methods that either have no meaning or are rejected outright by these unreached peoples.

Japan can no longer be considered a nation of only one homogeneous people. The Lord is bringing the peoples of the world to Japan. There are now sizeable numbers of people from China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Hong Kong,

India, and Korea. The vast majority of these people will never be reached by a middle class Japanese congregation. Many of them come from countries considered "closed" to Christianity, although they personally may be very open now if we seize this marvelous opportunity to evangelize them and enfold them into new churches where they can still feel culturally comfortable.

Conversely, many of these "closed" countries are closed to Westerners, but not to Japanese. One of the saddest tragedies is that we missionaries have failed to impart a missionary vision among the churches we have helped start! One of the best ways to motivate local churches to become more involved in reaching out to their friends and neighbors is to stimulate and challenge them to send out their own missionaries. Many of the mission agencies serving in Japan also work in other countries which are considered unreached. How natural it could be to recruit, train, and send Japanese missionaries to co-minister in these countries.

There are also growing numbers of Japanese who are studying and working abroad. Recently, David Martin of TEAM and Steve Young of Japan Presbyterian Mission have left Japan and are helping start Japanese churches overseas. More Japanese Christians and expatriate missionaries need to consider moving to those places in the world where there are already significant and growing numbers of unreached Japanese.

## **3. A development of multi-faceted strategies**

A third implication from GCOWE for Japan is the challenge to be more creative in developing new strategies to meet the current needs of Japan today.

One of the major strategies highlighted in Singapore was the D.A.W.N. (Disciple A Whole Nation) movement. DAWN is a



growing worldwide conviction that the best way to evangelize a nation is through saturation church planting. The entire national leadership of each country is encouraged to meet for a time of extended prayer, for analyzing the results of comprehensive research, and for faith-stretching national goal setting. Each denomination is then encouraged to set its own goals and to develop its own strategies and tactics for achieving those goals.

Dr. Jim Montgomery, president of Dawn Ministries, shared in detail about DAWN last September in Karuizawa at a JEA-sponsored consultation. JEA's Mission Strategy Commission is in the process of incorporating DAWN concepts into the Third Congress on Evangelism (now scheduled for 1991) and into the seven regional mini-congresses that will be held between now and then. English and Japanese versions of *The Principles and Practice of DAWN* may be ordered from the Japan Church Growth Institute. DAWN was also featured in the last issue of *Japan Harvest* in the article, "Can the Church Unite around a National Goal?"

Last year the Southern Baptists concluded a two-year survey of their own churches in Japan. Based upon their prior commitment to target unreached peoples, the Southern Baptists decided to redeploy 43 of their career missionaries in Japan, taking them from ministries such as hospital chaplaincies, student and hospitality centers, and education, and placing them instead in church planting ministries. Campus Crusade's "New Life 2000" plan is now taking the step of moving beyond just student evangelism work to consciously begin church planting efforts.

In another development a thriving independent charismatic church has been successfully started in the city of Tenri (home of the Tenri-kyo religion). In contrast more traditional

Christian groups have failed to gain a foothold there. Perhaps the same could happen in Nagoya's Minato-ku, if a church planting effort is started by a group that includes healing and power encounter as a part of their ministry strategy.

Church planting strategies employing teams of missionaries and national pastors in the same community are being tried by such groups as SEND, TEAM, Japan Presbyterian Mission, and LIFE Ministries. Renewed interest is being given to the importance of music and worship in assisting church planting and church growth. Business executives and sports enthusiasts are being targeted with new evangelism plans.

If the majority of unreached Japanese are to be effectively evangelized, other missionaries and church leaders need to learn from these examples. By saying this, I am not necessarily advocating the use of signs and wonders. But neither do I wish to discount

them. Nor I am in favor of totally discarding current plans and strategies. However, I do wish to suggest that we all ask our Lord Jesus Christ to help us better understand the needs of the Japanese people today and to anticipate future needs, and through the wisdom and the power of the Holy Spirit begin developing new, multi-faced strategies that are appropriate for each unique situation.

Many economists and business leaders are calling the 21st century the potential golden age for Japan. May we have the faith to believe and the boldness to act so that the next century will be recorded as the age of the rapid emergence of the church in Japan and from Japan into all the world!

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# Mission in Japan: The Most Strategic Use of The Church's Resources?



*William Tribley joined the Japan scene in the 1980's. He reflects the thinking of the "new wave" of missionaries. His critical analysis of GCOWE results in the pinpointing of shortcomings. Refreshing is the willingness to learn from GCOWE and to adapt these lessons to Japan. Your comments are welcome.*

WILLIAM TRIBLEY

At the beginning of 1989 the Global Conference on World Evangelization (GCOWE) was convened in Singapore to which many representatives from Japan were sent. This conference was convened by those who are dead-serious about the AD 2000 vision and deeply challenges current patterns of missionary endeavor. One of the most important documents that formed the background for GCOWE was *Seven Hundred Plans for World Evangelization* which bears consideration as a study of where the church of Jesus Christ stands today in terms of fulfilling the Great Commission in our generation.

**Seven Hundred Plans (SHP)** challenges the leadership of current mission boards by calling their attention to a little-noticed segment of the unfinished task. David B. Barrett and James W. Reapsome have collected volumes of data on global demographics and master plans to evangelize the world. This data is assembled to show that only a very small percentage of total church resources worldwide is being directed at missions. Of those resources only one missionary in twenty, backed by ten percent of all foreign mission funds, is being sent to reach nations like Mongolia, Somalia, Iran and others who have presently no opportunity whatsoever to hear the gospel. Most of the personnel and resources spent in missions are going to nations where there are already some Christians and some kind of a national church

structure. The authors conclude that if we are serious about reaching the world at all, let alone by the year 2000, we must get serious about how to redirect church resources and personnel to reach out to 1.1 billion people in 2,000 people groups who have not yet heard the gospel.

## Seven Hundred Plans:

### Main Points

**Historical Obedience to the Great Commission.** To put the current generation in perspective SHP measure obedience to the Great Commission in each generation by the number of plans generated per generation. Until the 1800's so few global plans were presented that it can be said that the church neglected her duty to win the world for Christ, resulting in 59 lost generations. Through the 1800's and into the 1900's plans have multiplied until today where there is an unprecedented number of worldwide plans to fulfil the great commission. The church in the first 59 generations failed to fulfil the great commission through gross neglect. Our generation, blessed with a dearth of plans and strategies to win the world for Christ, may well fail because of disorganized fragmentation and preoccupation with existing methodology and organizational structures.

**Challenge To Unite Around A Common Goal.** Church and mission agency resources are seen to be allocated in a very lopsided manner, with more than 99% of total world church income not

going in any way to mission activity. Among those working toward world evangelization there is no cooperation of any kind, and some of the organizations are pursuing plans of action that seem doomed to certain failure, wasting precious time and resources. Most mission work that is being conducted today is focussed on areas of the world that are "evangelized but not Christian". To remedy this situation, mission agencies and Christian research organizations must first unite to develop a common strategy for world evangelization. After *one global strategy* is decided upon, the task should be broken down by population segment and each agency should singlemindedly marshal resources at its disposal to get the job done, including persuading local congregations to adopt population segments and developing *unique local tactics* to implement the single overall strategy. In addition, actual resource pooling and sharing on an international scale are needed in order to channel funds and manpower where they are most needed regardless of country of origin.

The commitment of a particular organization to cooperation and information sharing is measured in SHP by how extensively computer networks are used to communicate with other groups who are carrying out the Great Commission worldwide. The book points out correctly that some non-Christian groups like the Jehovah's Witnesses are much



more advanced in this area than Christian mission organizations. Among existing networks, groups and denominations tend to be linked internally while inter-group links are almost non-existent.

**Challenge to Consider Closing/Closed Nations.** Pointing out that only 0.8% of all Christian income and 30,000 out of a total of 4.1 million full-time Christian workers are working in the "un-evangelized world" of 1.3 billion persons, SHP concludes that unless more priority is shifted to this part of the world, the Great Commission cannot be fulfilled. Since this part of the world cannot be evangelized by normal resident missionaries, alternative structures involving nonresident missionaries and unusual tactics will have to be used.

**Defining Goals.** While documenting the many plans to evangelize the world that have failed, combined with those which are faltering today, SHP uncovers a patchwork of overlapping ideas

and strategies many of which result in duplication of effort. In addition, many plans lack clearly defined goals: "How will we know how far we have come and where we need to go?" is echoed in the assessment of most global plans to reach the world. Mission agencies and global world evangelism strategists are encouraged to begin adopting a unified global strategy (with accountability) to reach the world while retaining autonomy in devising tactics and methods to actually reach specific people groups.

### Analysis

**Imprecise Terminology.** Although there is much truth to what SHP has to say, it has done a great disservice to the Christian community and to existing mission effort through imprecise use of terminology. In church growth and mission circles a nation is generally considered to be evangelized when 20% of its people are folded into a local

church. On the other hand, in SHP a "population segment" (one million people, who could be from different people groups) is said to be "evangelized" when there are at least a hundred believers meeting in 4-6 local groups, and a strategy has been defined whereby they would proceed to reach the remaining 999,900 people in their population segment with the gospel. The missionary is free to move on after this has been achieved. Thus, nations like Japan are considered evangelized when only around 0.5% of the population are practicing Christians and the national church is struggling. A "practicing Christian" is generally taken to mean someone who follows Jesus and attends church regularly. In contrast, SHP lists 1.7 billion "practicing Christians" in the world today. These statistics are based solely on published membership figures which admits a large number of outright non-Christians who have long since stopped participating in church



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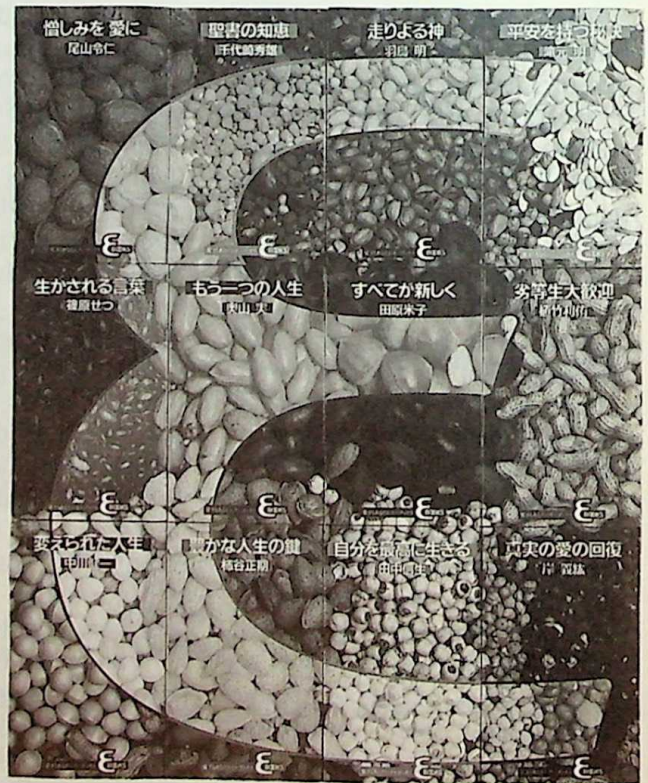
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life. Thus, Great Britain which has a Sunday morning attendance average of 5% of the population is considered a Christian nation. The spiritual need of most of Europe is glossed over because there are Christian organizations in these nations which are producing plans for world evangelization.

**Clearer Terminology.** Most of what SHP has to say is obscured by the loose redefinition of two most important terms. For evangelicals, the book reads much better if "Christian World" is replaced with "Christianized World" and "Evangelized World" is replaced with "Penetrated World" (penetrated taking on the SHP definition of "evangelized"). SHP has also replaced the 11,500 people groups of the world with 5000 population segments of 1 million people each. It proposes the penetration of these population segments without explaining how different people groups within one population segment could or should be handled. This

approach is in stark contrast to the much more logical and clearly defined approach of penetrating each people group with the gospel.

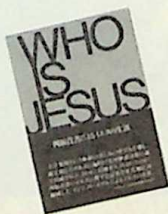
**Pioneering vs. Expansion.** SHP is a timely call to Christian mission organizations to look at what is being done in light of our definition of mission. When Paul set his sights on Rome and Spain he felt that his job in Asia was completed. He had left behind fewer than 50 churches in the vast "Province of Asia" and was moving on. Paul never said that the area was "evangelized", even though he had established a few strong churches and trained their leaders. To see that the task of evangelism was truly completed Paul commissioned people like Timothy to continue his work in each region, freeing Paul to move on. So, Paul's definition of mission could be broken up into initial penetration, or pioneering, and subsequent expansion throughout a geographic area. By this definition the role of a

pioneering missionary seems to be over long before a people group no longer needs missionary help, having 20% of its population folded into a church, while that of a "expansion" missionary lasts until a strong church and leadership structure is established and 20% of the people group has been reached. For example in Africa, where a high percentage of the population is Christian, missionaries are still urgently needed to train pastors. Although both types of mission are necessary to fulfil the Great Commission, SHP shows that we have lost the call to pioneering missions in our time. The vast majority of mission resources are spent on expansion projects rather than on pioneering projects which attempt to break into unreached population segments.

In light of this, existing mission organizations should consider how to take a portion of their current effort and redirect funds and personnel in ways that will creatively engage unreached

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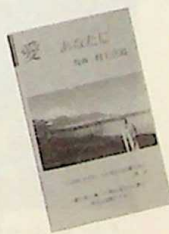
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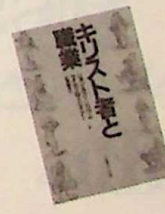
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people groups. Japan today is increasingly becoming much more cosmopolitan, with sizeable resident populations of people from countries where Christian work is expressly forbidden. Many of these countries who harbor animosity toward the U.S. and the West are sending their young people to universities in Japan and are sending others to be trained in Japanese technology. In light of this can we sit by and let such an opportunity pass to penetrate unreached people groups that are represented right here in Japan?

**Computer Networking.** It is very true that many mission agencies are sorely underutilizing the computer resources at their disposal. There is a great need for increased availability and utilization of information both within and between organizations. While strongly emphasizing this need to share information, SHP is infatuated with the technology of implementing massive instant-access computer

networks on a global scale as a prerequisite to effective world evangelization. The only reason given for using networks is that other global efforts do this already. Instant access computer networks are required in a variety of endeavors. Business executives track daily financial progress and movement of material within their company. Airline/Hotel and rental businesses use online reservation systems which allow all reservation information to be accessed by multiple users to facilitate use while preventing multiple assignment of seats, hotel rooms, etc. In scientific research, networks allow immediate access to fast-breaking data on recent advances as well as extensive catalogs of previously published material. However, in the Christian world things just don't change that fast. Accurate data on church growth, for example, is taken on yearly averages of statistics. It takes anywhere from 3 months to 2 years just to send a new missionary with addi-

tional time required for language and culture learning. Reliable statistics from evangelistic campaigns, etc., take at least a month or so to compile.

SHP has completely overlooked the fact that for this kind of information the cost of an immediate-access network in most cases is prohibitive and unjustifiable. Most current computer software that handles information (word processors and data bases) have the capacity to export information in readable form to other computers. Thus, information sharing by passing disks is all that is necessary, and this can be done between stand-alone machines not connected in any network. Indices of published works will soon be available on optical disks, and the current cost of creating a custom disk has dropped from \$10,000—\$50,000 down to \$1000 and less. In only 2 or 3 years the cost of optical disk systems will be low enough for mission organizations to use this technology.

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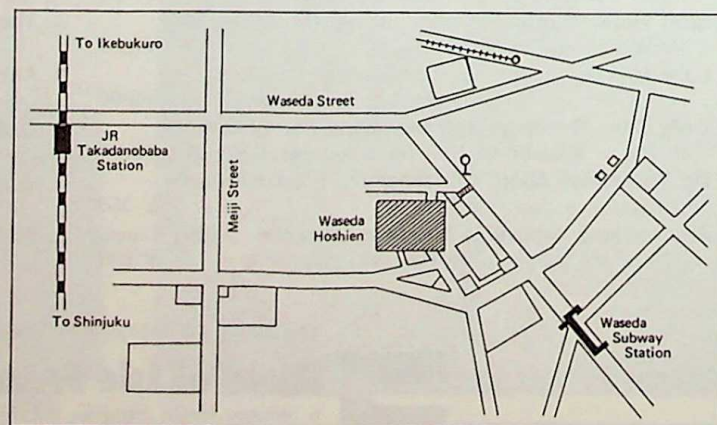
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In Japan a disk-sharing service could be set up to provide simple conversion between disks of different formats. Primarily exchange between Macintosh and MsDos machines (IBM and some Fujitsu, NEC and Casio) would be handled. To use the service a person would send a disk with the address of the person the copy is to be sent to. For a fixed fee which could be as low as 600 yen for one disk (800 yen for two) the service would copy the disk into the specified format, mail the copy to the destination and the original back to the sender.

A computer cooperation network in Japan could also be set up that would have three main functions:

1. Indexed libraries of articles organized into topics. Each article could be read as a unit. Most of these would be under 20 pages long to facilitate copying over the phone line.
2. Catalog of books and publications dealing with Missions in Japan, Missions in general, and other topics. People would obtain this material directly from the indicated source, not over the phone. This could be used together with the disk exchange to supply information available in disk form.
3. Friendly message exchange on various topics (such as Church Planting, Doing Business in Japan, Travel and Sightseeing) as well as a general message area.

Access to the network would be via telephone. It would be compatible with any computer or terminal running ordinary communications software. Membership could and probably should be restricted to missionaries or Japanese Christians who have access to information on how to sign up. This would be a small start towards greater cooperation in planning and strategizing, as well as sharing of ideas

and techniques for church planters to consider.

### Conclusion

Let's get on with the task of fulfilling the great commission in our generation! *Seven Hundred Plans*, while deficient in terminology and emphasis, offers a fresh challenge to all who are involved in cross-cultural missions, as well as to the church at large that needs to wake up to the staggering task at hand. While the book prematurely calls for an end to missions in countries that already have some Christian presence, it cannot be denied that all who are engaged in missionary activity must seriously address the call to be involved in reaching those who cannot hear the Good News. For some it may mean redirection of responsibilities, while for others it may mean significantly assisting other groups who are pursuing this goal with finances, personnel, and other resources.

How can we take seriously the call to adopt a common strategy?

Four things should be considered. First, how can we assist and encourage saturation church planting throughout Japan among all evangelical missions and Japanese denominations? Secondly, how can we concentrate existing Christian research organizations to collect and disseminate information and insight more effectively to maximize the penetration of this nation for the Lord? Thirdly, how can we nurture and encourage more open exchange of vision and ideas, as well as statistics, among Christian workers in Japan? And finally, how can we use the providential establishment of mature mission structures and national denominations in Japan to reach out to the hidden peoples on our doorstep? God will honor our efforts as we close ranks and work together to reach our generation with the Good News of Jesus Christ!

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# JAPAN: COUNTDOWN TO 2000

*JEMA's newly elected vice president led the Mission Leaders' Consultation which was held in conjunction with the 1989 JEMA Plenary Session, February 13 and 14. This article touches on some sensitive areas, among them, mutual trust, essential for a united thrust in Japan. It is encouraging to see in how many areas evangelical missionaries could cooperate. The JEMA Executive Committee welcomes your comments and suggestions.*

BARRY POTTER

A missionary family lives in a small community in Japan for four years. During that time only one person comes to Christ. Discouraged, they return home to furlough—and resignation.

Another couple arrives at their place of ministry with thoughtfully written strategies defining how they will win their community for Christ. Two years later they have seen very little spiritual fruit from their ministry, and leave disillusioned.

Yet another couple experiences deep depression as spiritual darkness seems to close in around them. At the conclusion of their term of service they return home to find other avenues of service and ministry there.

All of us have had some experience similar to the ones above, or know of someone who has. Often we sense an isolation in our work. In contrast to the throngs of people surrounding us on every side here in Japan, our churches are often small and struggling, and for every tenta-

tive step forward there seem to be several major setbacks.

However, if we step back and look at the big picture, the situation is much more encouraging. There are some 6600 places across Japan where people are faithfully meeting for worship and service. Moreover, there are an increasing number of “hot spots” across the country where congregations numbering well into the hundreds are being established. Discipleship programs are on the increase, new and exciting church planting strategies are being formulated, and to date some 291 Japanese Christians have given themselves for missionary service.

Perhaps most significantly, there are tremendous resources available within the Japanese Christian community today. Christian service organizations proliferate, and approximately 125 Protestant mission organizations are active in Japan today.

Why, then, do we often feel so alone and isolated in our work? The answer probably lies in the simple fact that most of us know very little about the extent of the resources, information and encouragement that are available to us. For example, a proven and effective church planting strategy which is working well for church planters in one part of a city, may be completely unknown to the missionary just around the corner who is struggling and in need of help and encouragement. Also, the extent to which certain resource mate-

rials and helps are available may be well known to one church planter and unknown to the next.

Perhaps even more tragic, the plans one mission organization has for initiating new church planting projects in certain areas may be completely unknown to other groups planning similar efforts there. Recently three missions discovered they were all planning to initiate or expand work in the same city, and none had initially known of the others' plans. So in addition to struggling alone, a missionary may discover, too late, that his “pioneer” effort is just around the corner from another recently established church.

The obvious answer to this situation is more effective cooperation, communication and teamwork. Indeed, the coming of the 21st century has sparked a worldwide flurry of discussion, information sharing and strategizing with the goal of reaching the world by the year 2000. Researcher David Barrett has catalogued almost 700 new plans of various sizes and dimensions for reaching the world by the end of this century. And this does seem to have resulted in increased cooperation and consultation among Christian groups. “Networking” is the buzzword of the 80's.

And yet for all that, Jim Reapsome in a recent EMQ (July 1988) asserts that “we are still pretty much like a cluster of isolated lifeboats, each one strug-





gling alone against a monstrous wave of mounting unbelief around the world. We spend more time and money than ever before sitting around conference tables and filling out questionnaires, but our *organizational isolation is astounding.*"

Jim Reapsome ought to know: he is director of the Evangelical Missions Information Service and has held membership on a number of mission boards. He finds it ironic that at the same time that mission agencies are increasingly linking computer data bases and seeking to share information more openly with one another, yet "new plans usually are conceived independently without prior consultation with other mission boards."

Perhaps the problem is that although we plan consultations and set up more data bases, we have not yet learned to really *trust* one another. This, Reapsome says, is the essential first step. In our situation in this country, it seems to boil down to this: are we so firmly committed to the task of evangelism in Japan that, rather than making our established traditions the priority, we are now ready to really work together to find the solutions and come up with better ways to get the job done?

Dr. James Montgomery presented the components of the DAWN strategy to a JEA-sponsored consultation on evangelism this past September. One of the results of the seminar has been an increasing desire to work together in goal-setting and strategy formulation for evangelism. Perhaps less clear has been just how and in what way such cooperation would be undertaken.

As the representative of evangelical missions in Japan, JEMA has desired to put a vision for increased teamwork before the missionary community, and with this in mind a strategy session for mission leaders and delegates was convened on Monday, February 13, just prior

to the commencement of the 1989 JEMA Plenary Session. At that time ideas for more effective consultation and cooperation were shared and discussed. One of the key questions raised was whether JEMA might be the avenue through which joint strategies could be formulated, information could be shared, and deeper fellowship could be encouraged.

The response from JEMA mission representatives seems to fall into three broad categories:

1. *Fellowship.* Certainly this has been a basic component of JEMA since its inception. However, it was suggested that more could be done toward encouraging this fellowship, with a view toward stimulating cooperation and openness among missions and missionaries. Regular meetings could be held in the various regions across the country (not just Tokyo). Individuals would be encouraged to share openly the direction and strategy of their ministry and outreach. Communication would be facilitated. *Trust* would be built.

2. *Information.* We are living in the "information explosion" era. Most of us already receive newsletters, printouts, fact sheets and manuals at a faster rate than we can absorb them. And yet for all that, there is still a dearth of information in the very area in which it is most needed: in the research, development and implementation of sound strategies that are practical and workable for us in our own individual church planting situations. True, we have thick policy books issued by our missions and church organizations, but in the implementation of workable models of evangelism and discipleship, very little seems available.

How can JEMA help in this regard? One suggestion was that a newsletter could be produced which would attempt to meet this need.

However, a number of mission and service organizations are al-



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ready involved in research, generating strategies and formulating plans that could be of real benefit to the wider community. Perhaps JEMA should rather be a clearing house for such information, facilitating communication between those who are asking the questions and those who may have some answers.

3. *Joint Strategies.* But is it possible to go beyond fellowship and information, and to actually join forces in developing plans to more effectively reach Japan for Christ during the remaining years of this century? Could we divide the task before us, cooperate in research, and adjust our own corporate priorities, strategies, and structures in order to facilitate the developing of joint strategies?

It seems clear that neither JEMA nor any other organization is able to formulate nationwide strategies that would be binding on member missions or church groups—nor should JEMA play such a role. It is also recognized that the majority of JEMA member missions have strong relationships to Japanese church groups, and that commitments to these groups affect the level of cooperation that is feasible or practical.

However, if we are convinced that the development of joint strategies is a goal worthy of pursuit, JEMA could attempt to facilitate this on several levels. One suggestion is that joint planning and strategy meetings for mission directors and field chairmen could be held periodically. An immediate benefit of such gatherings would be the opportunity to share information and

more effectively keep in touch with one another.

Such consultations could also be effective avenues for the exchange of strategies, programs and research between missions. As this process of information exchange was pursued, possible areas of cooperation in research, strategy development, and initiation of new work would be encouraged.

In addition, Church Information Service reports that there are still eight cities and 92 towns and villages across the country with populations of over 20,000 which have no known church. Mission and church groups which are active in or adjacent to these areas need to be encouraged to develop strategies to effectively penetrate these unreached areas. But sometimes an individual group lacks the resources or ability to do so. Here again we need to work together in developing proposals and initiating work in new areas.

Finally, the establishment of *group goals* can be very beneficial. On this level, the “joint strategy” is simply the sum total of all of the individual strategies, but set forth and promulgated in such a way that bigger pictures begin to emerge. In so doing, the sense of isolation is replaced by an increasing awareness of what God is doing throughout the country, with the result that we are all challenged and motivated to work and pray toward individual and national goals.

As an example of how this can work, mission representatives in attendance at the Plenary Session in February were asked to submit a projection of the

number of churches that they expect to establish this year. CIS had reported that during 1988, 25 new churches were started by missionaries. But when the projections for 1989 were tallied, it was found that 50 new churches were slated to be started by JEMA member missions this year.

Some of these mission groups reported that they would be starting only one or two churches. What a contrast this is to the total number, which gives us a larger and much more encouraging perspective. At the 1990 Plenary Session we plan to find out how many of these 50 churches were actually begun.

These, then, are some ways in which cooperation can be enhanced and encouraged among us. The above is by no means exhaustive, but may serve as a starting point for the ongoing dialogue that we hope will be stimulated and encouraged. We will need to continue to work at developing models, exploring possibilities—and defining the outer parameters—of the potential for more coordination and cooperation. Your comments are welcome.

One thing is certain, however. The task that lies ahead is far too extensive for our own individual limited resources. We *must* be prepared to be flexible and innovative. The founders of our mission organizations were pioneers who were willing to take the “leap of faith” and move out in new directions as God guided. It is time now for us to follow in their footsteps. As Jim Reapsome says, “‘Business as usual’ will not reach the world by the year 2000, if ever.”



JEMA SUMMER CONFERENCE

AUGUST 6-9, 1989



# "YOU AND YOUR AGING PARENTS"

*Mrs. Underland's workshop on the subject of "You and Your Aging Parents" which was held at the 1988 JEMA Karuizawa Summer Conference brought many requests for further information. This is the last installment of the article received from Mrs. Underland.*

## Part II: Meeting Their Needs... and Yours

Sometimes I am asked, "Out of your years of experience, Ann, what do you feel is the most valuable lesson you've learned about the Aged and caring?"

We have developed a philosophy that is a backbone of our organization; never do anything for an Elderly Person that they can do for themselves. Even if it takes them a little longer, even if it takes them quite a bit longer. The reason for this is their dignity and sense of independence. We had a volunteer who kept wanting to do things for people. If a person had a bit of trouble getting up from a chair, she would rush over and begin pulling on them and helping them. We had to let the volunteer go because she was ruining the dignity and sense of self-worth of our Elderly by overdoing for them. *Never do for the Elderly Person what they can do for themselves.* Secondly, if they do need help, don't condescend to help them, don't pull the knife out of their hand and say, "You're too slow at that," or come along or pull on their arm and say, "Here, I'll help you up. Come on, we have to hurry." If they really do need help, take your time. Slow your pace down and come alongside. Instead of saying "I'll help you." Offer your arm and your elbow and say, "Come, will you help me over here." Turn the tables around. Ask their advice. Get their help, even if it is a small thing. If they're in your home,

give them regular responsibilities. They might not do it as well as you like because they might not see the corners. They might take a much longer time but they need that. It is every bit as important for them to have these responsibilities, reduced to their abilities or levels, as it is for you to provide them with nutritious food, a good bed, clean linens, and all the other things that we think are so necessary. Protect the dignity of your Aged loved ones. They will bless you for it. We've all seen the three year old who finds her shoes, puts them on and tries to tie them. Mother rushes over to help and she gets very upset and says, "No, do it myself." It is the same with all of us. We have an inbred "do it myself" streak. No different whether we are three or ninety-three. That streak still stays in us. Sometimes it works for us and, of course, sometimes when it comes to spiritual things, it works against us. But it is there. And we need to be aware of that and work with it. Of course, if they're definitely having a problem and becoming upset by it, then the thing to do is to come alongside and say, "Here, let's do this together," and let them take the lead in that request offering an arm of assistance or a hand of assistance.

We touched on this in the beginning with Mrs. Cora Jones and her "needing to be needed." I firmly believe that right after the basic health and shelter needs,

every individual has a need to be needed. In our programs, we stress this by pairing off a blind person with a slightly retarded person. One is eyes to the other and the blind one can then explain things to the one who may be a little slower mentally. I've watched a very small man who had very good eyesight lead a 6ft. 3in. blind man around the rooms and out into the gardens. It just does your heart good. Each one is giving something to the other. One is giving guidance, helping them to enjoy that which they would never enjoy because of the loss of sight, the other is giving the seeing man a reason to go on. The reason to be is

ANN UNDERLAND





because he feels needed and can minister in this way to another human being. Again, our Elderly have the same needs as you and I have.

Another question that comes to me frequently is, "How can I help my Elderly loved one who has Alzheimer's Disease?"

My first question is always, "How do you know they have Alzheimer's?" Alzheimer's Disease cannot be absolutely determined until after death and an autopsy is done. The only other way to get any kind of an intelligent lead into the cause of the aberrant behavior of the Elderly person is through hospital testing, specifically a program that addresses the problem of Alzheimer's Disease and related disorders. I cannot emphasize enough the need for this diagnosis, as there are several causes for symptoms that resemble Alzheimer's Disease. One is organic brain syndrome which is a hardening of the arteries, shut-

ting off oxygen to the brain. This is irreversible but can have some medical interventions. Another is medications — cross medications or over medication can give the same symptoms as Alzheimer's Disease: confusion, disorder, lack of recognition, memory loss, lack of judgment. Another would be dietary. The wrong diet, lack of a well-balanced diet can produce these same symptoms, as can isolation. Someone who lives in front of the television all the time and has no mental stimulation or social stimulation often develops these symptoms. All of these can produce symptoms that we used to call "senility" and now label "Alzheimer's Disease." In conclusion on this point, I'd urge anyone who suspects Alzheimer's Disease to have their loved one go through a diagnostic program to eliminate the possibility that it might be organic brain syndrome, to eliminate the possibility that it might be dietary and reversible, to eliminate the pos-

sibility that it might be a medication problem or a lack of social interaction and reversible. What a tragedy to label someone as having Alzheimer's Disease and condemn them to going through the rest of their lives suffering in this way. The same symptoms with other causes can often be cured, or reversed or at least stabilized and maintained at the present level of functioning. For Alzheimer's symptoms, "Diagnosis is the key to tomorrow."

Many people ask, "Well, if I do have to put my Elderly loved one into a nursing home, how can I pay for it?"

This is a very common question and I am sorry to say not a very easy one to answer. At least, not easy as far as the answer is concerned. At the present time, only lower income people can get financial assistance in nursing homes in America and that's through Medicaid, through their State Welfare Office. Medicaid is a federal program.

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Dr. Gerig is senior pastor of the Harvester Avenue Missionary Church; professor of Bible and theology, and chairman of the division of Biblical studies at Fort Wayne Bible College in Fort Wayne, Indiana; and father of TEAM missionary, Jeanne Johnson (Mrs. Tim). Dr. Gerig will be joined by his wife, Mary.



### HIGHLIGHTS

1. *SUNDAY SERVICES* begin July 23 and go through August 27. Dr. Gerig will be preaching morning (10:30) and evening (7:00) each week except for July 30 and August 6.
2. *SUNDAY SCHOOL* begins each week at 9:15am. Classes are available for adults (Dr. Gerig), youth, and children.
3. *PRAYER MEETING* 7:00pm weekly (Dr. Gerig).
4. *YOUTH CONFERENCE* August 2-5 Steve Friesen leader and Dr. Gerig guest speaker.
5. *ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING* August 3 at 1:00pm.
6. *DEEPER LIFE CONVENTION* July 30 to August 2 Dr. Ted S. Rendall.
7. *JEMA CONFERENCE* August 6-9 Dr. Henry Harder Renewal Singers, Lausanne Echoes.

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Medicare, which insures most of the rest of our senior citizens, has now increased to pay for one hundred and fifty days of nursing home care. But in order to get even this, the Elderly person must be transferred from an acute care hospital into the nursing home to qualify for Medicare reimbursement. And, even at that, every thirty days the patient is evaluated and at any point along the way, the Medicare Team can disqualify the patient from any further service. So, there is no guarantee your loved one will have one hundred and fifty days in a nursing home underwritten by Medicare. That is strictly on a continuing evaluation basis.

In order to qualify for Medicaid, which is your welfare assistance program, the individual cannot have more than \$1500 in savings, whether it be bank account or stocks. They can have their own home which will not be sold from under them, but they cannot have more than

\$1500 in the bank or stocks or in any kind of savings. Those who feel they are right on the borderline and may need this kind of assistance in the future should probably transfer their assets to their children. But even then in some states there is a two-year wait, after those assets have been transferred, before the patient is eligible for Medicaid payment of nursing home or community based care.

### Part III: Caring Enough. . .

A lady came to me one day, a very lovely, Jewish lady who has since become a good friend. Her question was, "Can you help my Mother, my family. . . and me?" She had her mother with her. We left her mother with the rest of our members in the Fellowship Hall. The CARING Fellowship Center was and still is in the Seaview Baptist Church in Linwood, New Jersey. This daughter and I went downstairs to discuss her mother's joining us. The family had built an addi-

tion onto their beautiful lakeside home especially for her mother and had hired a full-time maid to live with her. The maid dressed Mrs. Bonner, combed her hair, cut her meat for her and fed her. And this woman was perfectly healthy! But the daughter told me she had not seen her mother smile in six months and it was ruining the whole family. We talked and she said, "You know my mother is not a Christian, she won't go to your Chapel services, but if she'll come to your CARING Fellowship Center, we'll try it."

After about 45 minutes, she and I went back upstairs, through the big double doors and into the social hall. The daughter stepped back as she opened the door, her hand went to her forehead and she exclaimed, "My God, she's smiling." And it was true. I looked over and Mrs. Bonner was *smiling for the first time in six months.*

She did agree to come to CARING. On the first day, I

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Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, The Rev. T.S. Rendall came to Canada in 1953. Since 1956 he has served in various capacities on the staff of the Prairie Bible Institute, Three Hills Alberta and was elected President in March 1986. He is also Editor of the Institute's monthly magazines, *Prairie Overcomer* and *Young Pilot*.

Dr. Rendall is the author of: *Elisha: Prophet of Abundant Life*; *Fire in the Church*; *Jeremiah: Prophet of Crisis*; *Nehemiah: Laws of Leadership*; *Discipleship in Depth*; and *Give Me that Book!*

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told her it was time for our Chapel service; that it is optional and that she needn't feel forced to attend. I then turned my back on her, walked away and prayed. Looking out of the corner of my eye, I saw her pick up her purse, walk through the doors and up to the Chapel. From then on, she went to every Chapel service. Eventually when we asked the Lord's blessing in Jesus' name at lunch, she would echo her "Amen." Our volunteers worked very delicately with her and she gave every indication of having accepted the Lord before she died a year and a half later.

What is the point of this story? The point is this. The daughter and her family were doing everything possible that they could think of for their mother. They were taking care of her every physical need. But her emotional needs and her spiritual needs were not being met and they could only be met in community with others who were undergoing

similar circumstances. Her mother was being denied, with all good intentions, human fellowship and, of course, spiritual nourishment. When she got into the CARING Program, the Lord met all of these needs in a marvelous way.

Geriatric Day Care is a real viable means of meeting the needs of your Aged loved ones.

CARING has three Geriatric Day Care Centers now and is opening a fourth shortly. One of our Centers is completely devoted to victims of Alzheimer's Disease and related disorders. I cannot strongly enough recommend Geriatric Day Care for the needs of the confused physically or mentally impaired Aged. As one frail Elderly member, Ruth Williams, said years ago, "Thanks to God and to CARING, I have a whole new life."

There are three levels of Geriatric Day Care. The first is for clients who have the highest levels of functioning; clients who may have some confusion or blindness,

deafness or post-stroke symptoms can attend Social Day Care, the CARING Fellowship Center, Linwood. Next there is the Alzheimer's Treatment Center, for those with Alzheimer's Disease and related disorders. These are more severely confused and could be disruptive in a regular Center. They need an entirely different form of care than the mildly impaired Elderly person. The Alzheimer's patient needs a quiet atmosphere, whereas the mildly impaired Elderly person needs to be stimulated, needs activities, needs to be encouraged to do more. The Alzheimer's patient is plagued with agitation, wandering and anxiety and they need a calm supportive atmosphere. Medical Day Care is for those ill and handicapped Aged with more definite physical needs. Their doctors feel that they need medical supervision, they need a nurse to administer their medications, they need physical therapy or speech therapy or occupational

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therapy. They have many different medical needs; diabetic, amputee, high blood pressure, arthritis, cancer; many different problems. These are the recurring, chronically or terminally ill Aged. Each CARING Center offers an alternative to nursing home care for these dear ones.

The Medical Day Care Center also has a full range of activities, nutritious meals, speakers, special slide presentations, outings to parks, shopping, etc. Daily Chapel services, and Bible study groups are featured at all of the Centers.

People sometimes ask me, "Ann, in your twelve years of intensive work with geriatrics, Aging people, what do you find is the most *difficult* problem?"

It never takes very long to answer that question. The most difficult problem that I, and the aging person himself face, is the well meaning loved one who says, "I can handle it myself. I don't need any help yet." Here's an illustration of the results of this kind of thinking. Dear Mrs. Bradley came into our Center one day. Mrs. Bradley was in the moderate stages of Alzheimer's Disease, extremely anxious, extremely insecure and followed her husband everywhere. First she always required being in the same room with him. Then, if he was sitting on the sofa she would have to sit on the same sofa with him. It finally got so bad that when he sat in an armchair, she would insist on sitting in the same armchair with him. But, the larger problem was he could not bring himself to have anyone share this burden with him. If someone came into the home to help, he wouldn't leave. He would listen to her demands that he stay with her. One day, he brought her into the CARING Fellowship Center. Of course, she didn't want him to leave her. He stayed and she became more and more demanding. He never left her and didn't entrust her to

us or to anyone. He felt he had to do everything for her. Of course, it couldn't work out in a Geriatric Day Care setting under these conditions. My heart just broke when two months later I found out that they had both been put into a nursing home. She had completely broken him. Not that she was a mean woman, but the disease of Alzheimer's had so wrecked her powers of judgment and so eroded her sense of self-confidence that her actions had completely destroyed her husband but *he* allowed it to happen. So, I would say to any of you who have a loved one and that loved one's care is difficult, which it always is:

1. Get into a support group where you can meet, not only with others who have the same problems as you, share ideas and coping mechanisms, but also meet professionals and get professional advice and guidance.

2. Get the rest of your family to assist. Sit down and work out a plan, put it in writing and share it. Persist in the caring of this loved one by sharing the caring.

3. Get your loved one into a program of Geriatric Day Care where they can have other meaningful relationships in their lives besides just the family. Widen their horizons. They will want to constantly narrow and confine their horizons but widen them so that they can get that spiritual, social and emotional support as well as medical support that they need to continue functioning with a quality of life that every human being requires.

This will take a tremendous load off of you, the family caregiver, emotionally, mentally and physically. What you do for yourself will determine how long he/she can remain in the community, in their own home or with you before institutionalization or death. Please *care enough to confront the issues* early on. Confront the situation that you are facing with your loved one and with your family members. Care enough to confront the

need for additional support. Care enough to confront the possibilities for the future—yours and your loved ones; the health needs, the emotional needs, the mental needs, and the spiritual needs. Care enough to confront the future with the rest of the family and *care enough to confront before the issue gets to be a problem*. Care enough to confront while your loved one is still young enough and self-sufficient enough and healthy enough not to need any support. Care enough not to wait. *Care enough to take care of yourself. Your loved one's well being depends upon yours.*

And remember — Christ cares and is with you both in this situation.

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# THE WISDOM ALLEGORY

## (Biblical Wisdom, Study 3)

BARRY ROSS

**An Introductory Note.** Two studies in this series on Biblical Wisdom have appeared in *Japan Harvest*, the latest in Volume 37, Number 4, 1987/88. I regret that such a long time has elapsed until this present study. A ten month furlough to my home country and a time of "settling" back into my work in Japan are among the factors causing the interruption. To help give continuity with the present study, some brief points from the previous two may help.

In study 1, "Biblical Wisdom and Its Source," I posed four questions: What is wisdom? What is the source of wisdom? How does one attain wisdom? and, What is the purpose of wisdom? I suggested that the Old Testament book of Proverbs might be called a "Book of Manners," and as such correlates with the New Testament writer, James, who suggests that wisdom produces "good behavior" (James 3:13).

In study 2, "Types of Biblical Proverbs," I suggested in Ancient Israel "wisdom" teachers appear to have taught the "Rules for Proper Manners" in schools for court officials, priests and temple personnel. They often taught with the proverb, a brief, intelligible saying, embodying some truth of experiential wisdom learned by previous generations. The goal of the proverb was/is to teach a person some single point on how to live life in proper order. To illustrate this point I discussed examples from the

"comparative", "contrastive," "numerical" and "legal" proverbs from ancient Israel.

We now turn to the subject of study 3. "The Wisdom Allegory." The book of Proverbs begins with the admonition to avoid the "strange woman" (2:16-22), and closes with a description of the "excellent wife" (31:10-31). From 7:4-9:18 the book contrasts "Lady Wisdom" with the "Strange Woman." This study takes a look at these three: "Strange Woman," "Lady Wisdom" and "Excellent Wife."

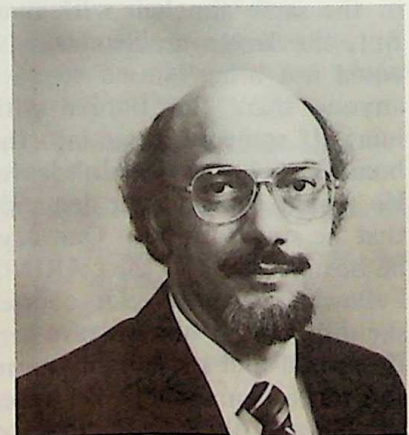
### The "strange woman."

Who is the "strange woman" of Proverbs 2:16-22? In verse 16 she is given two parallel titles: "strange woman" [Heb., *ishshah zarah*] and "foreigner" [*nokriya*]. These titles could have two possible meanings. a) She might be merely a woman from out of town, unknown to the local residents, and therefore a "strange woman." b) She might be a woman of the town, known to every one, but who does not follow the "laws" of the town. She follows only her own "laws". She has cut herself off from the relationships of her community that would normally shape and determine her behavior. In turn, her community has cut *her* off from normal societal relationships. The "strange" woman in our study is most likely of the latter type.

The two houses of "Lady Wisdom" and the "Strange Woman" (Proverbs 7:4-9:18).

This "poem" is addressed to "my son/s" (7:1; see also 1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1,11, 21; 4:1, 10; 5:1, 7; 6:1, 20), continuing the instructions of "father/mother" (see 1:8; 4:1; 6:20). "Sons" and "father," while depicting a familial relationship, also are terms for the "students/teacher" relationship.

The teacher here gives alternating pictures of the enticements of two "women." The one, "Wisdom," is allegorical; she is personified as "Sister" or "Intimate Friend" (7:4), euphemisms for one's wife (see Song of Solomon 4:8, 10, 12; 5:1, 2, where "sister" is used in parallel with "bride"). The other, "Strange Woman," is non-allegorical; she is real, a married woman of the town (see 7:19). The object of their enticement is a class of men termed "naive" (8:5, 9:16). The naive is one who "lacks understanding" (9:16), that is, one who has not yet gained experiential wisdom. He is not wise in the ways of the





world, not because he is stupid, but because he yet lacks the experience and the maturity to know what goes on "out there." By this definition he is probably still young.

The teacher speaks of two "houses," the one leading to "death," the other to "life." He speaks of two "calls," the one leading to "life," the other to "death." The "houses" are similar; both offer food. The "calls" are similar; both are heard in the same places. The "naive" hearer of the calls/viewer of the houses, because he is not yet wise, has no guidance from within himself to discern which call should be answered or which house entered. He is to listen to his teacher, however, for toward the end of the poem the teacher offers to the unwise a sure way to become wise, if his advice is not scoffingly rejected.

We can see this alternating pattern, and the main content in the teacher's instruction best in the following outline form.

7:4-5 TITLE: WISDOM/  
STRANGE WOMAN  
"Say to *Wisdom*, 'You are my sister,'  
And call understanding, "Intimate Friend."  
They will keep you from the *Strange Woman*,  
from the foreigner who flatters with her words."  
7:6-27 STRANGE WOMAN'S HOUSE, leads to  
—————→ DEATH (7:27)  
Her "couch" (v.16); "bed" (v.17) is "spread. . .with colored linens of Egypt"  
"sprinkled. . .with myrrh, aloe and cinnamon."  
Her food (v.18) (her "couch" becomes her "table") is "love" (but *sexual* only).  
8:1-36 LADY WISDOM'S CALL, leads to  
—————→ LIFE (8:35)  
Where does she call? (vv.2-3)  
—"on top of the [city] heights"  
—"beside the [city] gates"  
—"at the entrance of the doors."

To whom does she call?  
(vv.4-5)  
—"men/sons of men/naive ones/fools."  
What does she call?  
—discern "prudence/wisdom" (v.5)  
—"wisdom is better than jewels" (v.11)  
—"those who seek diligently will find me [=wisdom]" (v.17)  
—watch "daily at my gates/doorposts" (v.34)  
—wisdom brings: "life" and "favor from the Lord" (v.35).

9:1-6 LADY WISDOM'S HOUSE,, leads to  
—————→ LIFE (9:6)  
Her food (vv.2,5) (her "table" [v.2] is *not* a love couch) is  
—meat ("slaughtered her sacrifice") (v.2)  
—"wine" (vv.2,5).  
9:13-18 STRANGE WOMAN'S CALL, leads to  
—————→ DEATH (9:18)

**"It is not the will of YOUR FATHER . . .  
that one of these little ones should perish."** (Matt. 18:14)



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Where does she call? (v.14)  
 –“at the doorway of her house”  
 –“at the high places of the city.”  
 To whom does she call? (v.16)  
 –the “naive/those who lack understanding.”  
 What does she call? (v.17)  
 –“stolen water is sweet”  
 –“bread eaten in secret is pleasant.”

Both “ladies” call with essentially the same message! How, then, can the “naive” young man know which to choose correctly, wisely? By entering into a relationship with the Lord. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom/And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (9:10; also 1:7). To choose a right relationship with the Lord is the supreme act of wisdom. Then, when the “naive” lacks in wisdom of choice, of discernment, in the instruction of the New Testament wisdom teacher, James, he has but to “ask of God, who gives to all generously,”

and “does not reproach” one for the asking (James 1:5). In choosing the path of wisdom, in relying on God for discernment, rather than upon his own understanding, the “naive” will reject the strange woman’s call, no matter how enticing it may appear, and with discernment beyond his years, find the wife of God’s choosing, a wife who will, through the years, become his “intimate friend.”

**The excellent wife (Proverbs 31:10-31).**

The “poet” of this “poem” opens with the question: “An excellent wife, who can find?” His own response was, “Her value is far above jewels” (v.10). “Excellent wife/woman” in Hebrew is *eshet hayil*, literally “woman/wife of valor/noble character/excellence.” The term *hayil* is applied to women in the Old Testament three times: here, earlier in Proverbs 12:4, and in Ruth 3:11, though it is often applied to men (*ish hayil*, “man

of valor”), to depict most often an elite class of aristocratic warriors, defenders of the cities, men of wealth and status. The implication of its usage here in Proverbs 31:10 is that such a wife, indeed, is rare, cannot be found just anywhere, and certainly cannot be purchased with all the jewels a rich man may possess. No jewels can equal her value. We are told earlier in Proverbs that a wife/prudent wife (“prudent” being one of the virtues of the excellent wife), is a gift from the Lord (18:22; 19:14). The wise young man, mentioned above as having chosen a right relationship with the Lord, has the right to ask for such a gift. This poem, however, while I believe is directed primarily at the young man of the earlier chapters of Proverbs, still in his “schooling” stage, still learning from his teacher, essentially depicts a husband/wife relationship that has matured over many years. The husband sits among the elders at the gates of the city



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(v.23). This is not the position of an inexperienced, unwise/immature young man. The picture painted of the wife is not that of an inexperienced, newly wedded wife, but that of one who over the years of maturing has found a place of respect among her neighbors. True, she is somewhat idealized, pictured somewhat as a superwoman. But there is reason for this overdone-ness. The teacher is setting an *ideal* towards which this husband/wife team is to strive. And idealizations are always overdone. Why? If not, when one attains to the ideal, what more is there to strive toward? The overdone-ness is not to give a sense of failure at never arriving, but to instill a sense of success at ever moving toward the ideal.

Who is this "excellent wife"? What is she like? She is one whose daily activities interact with those persons both in her home and throughout the town: her husband (vv.11-12, 23, 28), her children (v.28), her servants

(v.15), the town poor and needy (v.20), various town merchants (v.24).

She is a home industrialist, buying "wool and flax" (v.13), spinning these raw materials into thread for cloth (v.19), from which she, in turn, makes garments for selling to the various merchants (v.24). She is an agriculturalist, buying fields and planting vineyards, perhaps in her own right, perhaps on behalf of her husband (v.16).

This excellent wife provides well for her household. So that they not go hungry, or perhaps so they not become weary of the local food choices, she brings food from far away places (vv.14-15). So they not suffer from the cold winter, she provides clothes of excellent quality (v.21), "scarlet" in color, dyed with an extract developed by the Phoenicians from the kermes insect. Imported into Israel, such garments were affordable only to one of financial means. She rises early, "while it is still

night" (v.15), to insure that sufficient food is allotted daily for the needs of the family, and to give proper assignments to her maidens (v.15). She does, indeed, sleep in the night, but should her family need her, her lighted oil lamp is not extinguished (v.18). Left burning through the night, resting in its niche in the wall near her bed, her lamp lights the way to the bedside of a sick child, or to the door in response to the knock of the unexpected, but welcome, guest.

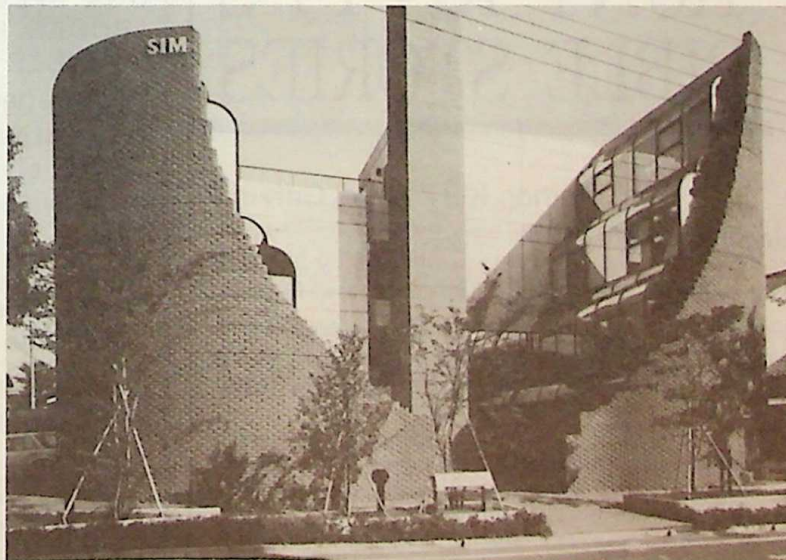
But her concern turns, not only inward, but outward. She "extends her hand" (literally, "spreads out her palm") to the "poor" and "needy" of her town (v.20). In so doing she fulfills the Lord's ancient command to Israel: "You shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother; but you shall freely *open your hand* to him. . .to your needy and poor in your land" (Deut. 15:7-11).

This excellent wife brings no shame upon herself nor her

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family in choice of personal clothing. They are of the best quality, "linen" from the flax plant, an export mainly of Egypt, and "purple," a cloth dyed with an extract from a mollusk found in the Mediterranean Sea along the coast of Phoenicia. Both, like the scarlet, being imported, are affordable only to the wealthy. But lest we believe this expensive clothing is what elicits community respect, the teacher hastens to add that "strength" of character and "dignity" of bearing "are her [true] clothing" (v.25). Additionally, quality or fashion of clothing would mean nothing if, when she opened her mouth, one did not detect "wisdom" of speech, nor feel the caress of "kindness" in her words (v.26).

And finally, she has come to know that youthful "beauty" is "deceitful" and "vain" (v.30). The beauty reflected in the mirror in the earlier days of life gives no hint that it will one day pass, replaced by wrinkles, sags

and spots. If it is on the elusive permanency of beauty that the young wife hangs her hopes for a respected place in her community, how deceived is her heart. Rather, it is the wife who, early in life, comes to "fear the Lord," that "shall be praised" (v.30). Praise is given her by the community "in the gates," a term for the local courthouse, where legal and commercial business was transacted (v.31). Because she is old, wrinkled and *ugly*? No, because she is old wrinkled and *beautiful*! The beauty of youth has been replaced by the "beauty of the Lord." No one denies the wrinkles. They are there. Rather, no one sees them, at least not for more than a moment or two, for the "fruit of her hands" (v.31) — kindness of tongue, open hand to the poor, firm management of her household, honest dealings with the merchants — has become her beauty. *She* has become the "beauty of the Lord."

But we must again ask the

question, "Who is the excellent woman/wife, the *'eshet hayil* of the Old Testament? Is she only the rich, the aristocratic? If so, you say, most of us are excluded. We pinch the yen from payday to payday. We import our clothing because it is less expensive to do so. We have no maids to organize. We don't qualify!

Let me encourage you with a brief look at another Old Testament lady. Ruth is on the opposite end of the pole. Foreign to Israel (from Moab, Ruth 1:4), a widow (Ruth 1:5; no husband to sit among the elders, owner of no fields nor vineyards), alone with her mother-in-law (who now desires to be called "Bitter," Ruth 1:20), reduced to such poverty that she must, along with other poor and needy of the town, gather the leftover stalks of grain from the fields of the rich at harvest time, Ruth seems the least likely candidate for the title, "Excellent Woman." Yet she is the only real, living woman of the Old Testament to whom

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Listen to the evaluation of Boaz, the rich Bethlehemite in whose fields Ruth gathered grain: "All my people in the city [lit., "in the gates"] know that you are a *woman of excellence* [*'eshet hayil*]" (3:11). Had he made some mistake? Surely his "people in the gates" had reported on some other woman, rich and of high status. But he has made no mistake. This evaluation must be linked with his words of a previous day: "All that you have *done for your mother-in-law*. . . has been fully reported to me" (2:11). Here is the key to Boaz' evaluation. It is totally within the context of *character*, social relationships, treatment of a bitter mother-in-law, that Boaz evaluates Ruth. And she passes the test, admirably. Ruth, among the "poor and needy" finds herself esteemed "in the gates," right along side the lady dressed in linen and purple.

And here is the key to a true understanding of the basis for the "woman of excellence" characterization of the lady of Proverbs 3:1. The common denominator is *character*, character judged by how a fellow human being is treated. For the rich and the poor alike, if kindness and wisdom are found upon the tongue, if the palms of the hands are extended face upward to those with greater need, if sleep is less important than the need of the sick child, if honesty in business pushes aside greed, then any woman who sets all of life in the context of "fearing the Lord." as she goes about her business, passing in and out of the city gate, qualifies for those coveted words spoken "in the gates." "Ah, there goes Hannah/Sarah/Mary/Elizabeth, a woman of excellence. How wise was Ezra/Joshua/John/Joel to have chosen such a wife!" And her husband, a respected, appointed city official, now "sitting among the elders" in those very gates (Prov. 31:23), overhears and his heart swells

with pride. But cultural norms prevent him from verbally agreeing *or* disagreeing. He keeps his silence and lets "her works praise her in the gates" (v.31).

But, this "elder" husband does praise her, nonetheless, in the privacy of home; in the intimacy of love and trust, he (often) says to her, "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all" (v.29). And here is another key to understanding this poem of Proverbs 31. While it *is* given to be read and applied by women/wives, it is equally, simultaneously given as instruction to men/husbands. If the whole collection of Proverbs is seen in the context of its Prologue (1:1-7), "To give prudence to the naive/ To the youth knowledge and discretion" (v.4), we view this poem as instruction to the yet unmarried youth, instruction on

how, when he has received his "gift from the Lord," that wife of God's choosing, he might be part of the maturing process that, indeed, will make her a "jewel" of value far above all jewels. How? He *praises* her. This is biblical. It is God given!

Husbands, have you longed for a wife who somehow fits the picture of the "wife of excellence"? Wives, have you longed for a husband whose "heart trusts in" you (v.11). You don't have to trade in the old one for a new one. Begin anew with the one you have. *Praise her! Praise him!* Husband, you are the jeweler. Wife, you are the jewel. Husband, shape and polish your jewel with praise. Wife, develop your jeweler's skill with praise. Try it! You just may come to like it!

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With the growth of satellite schools, the need for adequate boarding programs and facilities has become a priority at the Christian Academy. The first change in that program came about this past year when CAJ implemented the hostel model of boarding, in which boarding students live together in clusters of 10-16 students, male and female, with one houseparent couple in a family style setting. All meals except lunch on school days are prepared and eaten in the hostel facility. For many years CAJ operated dormitory style board-

ing, with boys or girls living separately in dormitory style housing with all meals served in a dining hall.

Although the new boarding program has begun in existing converted dormitory space, CAJ has begun construction of a new boarding facility specifically designed to meet the family style living goals of the new boarding program. A committee of former boarding parents, former and current boarding students, and current parents with students in boarding have worked together with an American architect and planner, Dave Fisher, and a Japanese architect, Mr. Kitazawa, to design this new building.

The new boarding home will have a capacity of 16 male and female students, from middle school age through high school. Completion of this new building being constructed on the south edge of the school's main campus is expected in early October of this year. Mr. and Mrs. Ivan and Jeannie King, veteran CBFMS boarding parents from Indonesia, will arrive in August to assume responsibility for the boarding program.

The new boarding facility is the first part of Phase One of the CAJ Campus Development Campaign, for which ¥450 million is being raised. Also included in Phase One of the campaign are a new gymnasium to be built on the site of the old dormitories, and a small addition to the present auditorium to provide backstage storage as well as

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