January - February 2001 **The Sabbath Sentinel**

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| **Victorious Sabbath Keepers in China**by Paul Wong | http://biblesabbath.org/images/PaulWong.jpg |

*"And another sign appeared in heaven: behold a fiery great dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads....And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."* (Rev. 12:17). *"Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."* (Rev. 14:12). *"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."* (Rev. 12:11).

Most biblical scholars agree Revelation is one of the most difficult books to interpret, but if we just use the explanation to the symbols given in the book then its meaning becomes apparent. The dragon can refer to no other than the Devil or Satan. (Rev. 12:9). Red is the color of blood.

The former Soviet Union's flag was red because it symbolizes the blood that was shed during the October revolution in 1917. The Chinese Communists had also used the red flag in its revolutionary war against the Nationalists.

The flag of the People's Republic of China is still red. Historically, the dragon had been the emblem of imperial China for several dynasties. The "fiery great dragon" symbolizes the Chinese Communist Government.

The woman is used in Scriptures to signify the church, so the woman's offspring refers to the Remnant Church. (Ephesians 5:23-25) *"The dragon was enraged with the woman"* may mean the Chinese Communist government was angry with the Church. *"And he went to make war with the rest of her offspring"* may be interpreted as the Chinese Communist government waging a spiritual war with the Remnant Church.

There are two characteristics of the Remnant Church. First, they keep the Commandments of God--the Ten Commandments including the Sabbath commandment. Second, they have the testimony of Jesus Christ--the spirit of prophecy (Rev. 19:10).

There are three ways to overcome the red dragon--the blood of the Lamb, the word of testimony; self denial and sacrifices to God.

**Local Churches under the Control of the Three Self Patriotic Movement**

According to present day knowledge the only two commandment-keeping denominations that come into contact with the Chinese Communist government are the True Jesus Church and the Seventh Day Adventist Church. In the cities and towns where the Three Self Patriotic Movement permit Christian worship services generally six denominations use one common church building. They are divided into two groups. The Sunday group consists of the Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians and the Local Church. The Sabbath group consists of the True Jesus Church and the Seventh Day Adventists.

One Church would use it in the morning and the other in the afternoon. To maintain peace and harmony amongst the denominations the *Three Self Patriotic Movement* made some rules that must be observed. No denomination can make any verbal attacks against another. Proselytizing is viewed with disfavor and cross church membership is disallowed. No church names can be displayed. Whilst these rules are intended to foster good relationship amongst the denominational churches it is a hidden device to prevent the truths from spreading. God has a way of working things out to propagate the truth.

**Healing enabled a young man to change worshiping on Sunday to the Sabbath.**

When I attended Sabbath Service at the True Jesus Church in Fuzhou our brothers and sisters introduced me to a young man who had previously been a member of a Sunday-keeping church. He had a strange mental sickness that seemed to be incurable. The whole church prayed for him but to no avail. They asked permission from the Three Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) Council and brought him to other Sunday-keeping churches for prayer. Still there was no cure for his sickness. They decided to bring this young man to attend the Sabbath service of the True Jesus Church.

The TJC straightaway recognized the young man's mental sickness was demon possession. The minister urged the whole congregation to fast and pray. They cast out the demon in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and within the same hour the young man was totally restored to his normal self. According to TSPM's rules the young man should return to the Sunday-keeping Church after the healing, but he voluntarily made an application to stay with the TJC. Here is an exceptional case in Fuzhou where the TSPM allowed one Christian to change church denominational membership.

**Suppression of Prayer in the Spirit**

On the Sabbath morning the brethren in Fuzhou brought me to see the building that belonged to the True Jesus Church where hundreds of believers used to attend the Sabbath Services. It was disheartening to see it being used as a warehouse by the Communist government. In the afternoon I attended the Sabbath Service in a building that was owned by the Presbyterian Church. The building can accommodate about 300 people but the TJC has about 500 members in that city. Since the TSPM allowed each denomination to hold only one service they increased the number of seats by placing the church pews very close to one another thus making it impossible to kneel down for prayer.

Another negative thing, that I found in the Sabbath Service in the Fuzhou church--different from the True Jesus Churches that I knew all my life--was the way they pray. It was quiet and I did not hear anyone praying audibly in the Spirit. After the service I asked the brethren why no one prayed or sang in the Spirit (1 Cor. 14:14-15). They told me they wanted to respect the other Christians who were using the same building. They pray in the Spirit at home. The fact is that the Three Self Patriotic Movement Council told them not to pray audibly. Due to suppression in making joyful shout to the LORD the Holy Spirit is quenched.

**Suppression of the Sabbath Truth in the Theological Seminary**

At the end of the Sabbath, the TJC in Fuzhou invited me to a dinner at an association building. We had a private room to ourselves. There were about twenty people present. After the dinner there was an informal discussion. Amongst those present were two full time preachers and three preachers under training at the Fujian Theological Seminary established by the Three Self Patriotic Movement and the China Christian Council.

In the TSPM approved churches only licensed preachers are allowed to preach. In order to receive the preaching license the theological student must pass an examination that always include questions on the Sabbath. One of the examination questions is this: "Should New Testament Christians worship on the Jewish Sabbath on Saturday or the Lord's Day on Sunday?" All Sabbath-keepers know the correct answer but since the professors at the Seminary are all Sunday-keepers their correct answer is "the Lord's Day on Sunday."

The theological students asked me what they should do about answering the Sabbath question. I told them to give the correct answer according to the Bible that is "the Sabbath on Saturday" and not to worry about how the professors would mark their papers. They told me that was exactly what they did. Praise and thank God our Sabbath-keeping theological students would rather give the correct answer and fail than give the wrong answer and pass. God would honor their integrity and truthfulness. They actually scored very high in the other questions thereby compensated for the loss of marks on the Sabbath question.

**The Great Debate on the Seventh Day Sabbath brought Angels to the Church**

I was brought to the True Jesus Church in Fuqing that had a tremendous revival in the Mid Eighties. At that time the Fujian Theological Seminary organized a debate on the Seventh Day Sabbath issue. The Sunday-keepers had three speakers and the Sabbath-keepers also had three speakers. There were two speakers from the True Jesus Church and one from the Seventh Day Adventist Church. The debate started on a Monday and ended on a Friday. It was fiercely contested and both sides claimed the victory. God had a very clear and decisive way of showing which side really won.

On the first Sabbath after the debate one of the debate speakers from the TJC was preaching that day. As he was preaching about the Sabbath a church sister that was sitting in the front pew saw an angel standing beside him. She made the remark that she saw an angel; after that several other people also saw the angel.

All of them gave a similar description of the angel. He was fair-skinned, tall, broad-shouldered, had golden hair and was handsome-looking. He was wearing a shiny, white garment. The next Sabbath more angels appeared and news traveled fast. More church members attended the Sabbath service and the hall was packed to capacity. The angels appeared during the Sabbath Services many more times after that. Over a period of eight months there were twenty-three appearances of angels during the Sabbath services. During that period the TJC in Fuqing enjoyed the greatest revival that they had ever known.

Many Sunday-keepers also came and attended the Sabbath Services hoping to see the angels--and they were not disappointed. The Sunday churches were so scared of losing their members to the TJC that they issued a public statement emphasizing the appearance of the angels was not because of the Sabbath but because of the church building that originally belonged to them. Not many people were convinced of their rationale.

Due to the strict rules of the Three Self Patriotic Movement concerning membership crossover, Sunday-keepers were not allowed to join Sabbath-keeping Churches. Nevertheless, because of the appearances of the angels during their Sabbath Services the True Jesus Church in Fuqing increased its membership tremendously. Praise God!

**The Gates of Hades shall not prevail against the Church of Jesus Christ**

One of the most impressive men of God I ever met during my trip to China was Elder Wang of the True Jesus Church in Sanshan. I spent one whole day talking with him. Our conversation began at breakfast and did not end until late at night. I learned how he overcame his great tribulation and persecution and became victorious in his struggles against "the red dragon." Elder Wang recalled how, as a young pastor of another denominational church, he became completely paralyzed. One of the ministers from the TJC confronted him and said, "In the Name of Jesus you are released from bondage," and immediately he got down from his stretcher and walked into the church unassisted. He studied the teachings of the TJC for one week and after his rebaptism into the Lord Jesus Christ he walked a distance of ten kilometers to his home.

After resignation from his previous pastoral position he started a church in his home. Elder Wang remembered that year was 1933, and he said to me, "Since the Sansan year the Sanshan Church have been holding services every evening without ceasing." The pun is intentional. Sansan in Chinese means "33" and Sanshan means three mountains. Elder Wang stood firm on his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and because of it he was put in prison by the Communist government for seventeen years. He told me that if ever the Lord Jesus Christ wanted him to do it all over again he was ready to stand firm on his faith again and go through the same trials, tribulations and imprisonment for another seventeen years.

What a victorious servant of God! During the time of his imprisonment the Church in Sanshan went underground and held services in members' homes. They operated as house churches. Today the Church in Sanshan has more than fifteen thousand members residing in the county. They meet in about seventy sites in various areas.

The Sanshan Church is a great example of the overcoming and victorious Church. They put "the red dragon" to shame. I remembered what our Lord Jesus Christ said,*". . . on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."* (Matthew16:18).

**He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world**

During the Cultural Revolution several Christian ministers were sent to prison by the Communist government. Before they went to prison the Christians had to go through the process of brainwashing. Here is the typical case of a minister who was arrested for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

They took him for questioning and given a chance to denounce his faith. He kept his faith so the Communists placed him in a small metal cell that had a small louvered window for ventilation. Inside the cell there was a bed, a water faucet and a toilet. During the summer the sun heated the cell and it became very hot inside.

There was a speaker attached to the ceiling of the cell. A repetitive one sentence recorded message was heard continuously for 24 hours that said: "There is no God. There is no God. There is no God. . . ." After one week they released the minister and placed him in a comfortable chair inside a cool room and gave him a cool drink. Then they asked him this question "Is there a God?" Normally the person would subconsciously repeat what he had heard thousands of times inside the cell and say, "There is no God. There is no God." This minister answered, "Yes there is a God." Since this minister did not deny God the Communists placed him back in his cell. He had to endure listening to the same repetitive recorded message again, "There is no God."

He had already heard it thousands of times before. This process of brainwashing was repeated on the minister several times, but he kept his faith and did not denounce God, not even once. He was beyond brainwashing. That when the Communists gave up on this minister, took him out of the cell and put him in the prison.

After several years when this minister was released from prison, his fellow Christians wanted to know what his secret was for standing firm and keeping the faith in spite of such an intense and demonic process of brainwashing. This is his answer: *"You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."* (1 John 4:4).

**God's message of encouragement and warning to the Christians in the Free World**

While I was in Fuzhou I stayed at the multistory hotel for overseas Chinese. This hotel has the best rate because it is supported and subsidized by the government. My room was on the seventh floor. On the evening before I left the city I had two unexpected visitors.

At about 11:00 P.M.. when I was about to sleep there was a knock on the door. A young man and a young woman stood outside. They called out my name and I was scared because I did not recognize them. They introduced themselves as members of the True Jesus Church. I invited them inside my hotel room.

The man was a minister and the woman a minister in training at the Fujian Theological Seminary. They were engaged to one another. They came from another city and had seen me the day before but did not talk to me. Under the rules of the TSPM they could not travel from one city to another without getting permission. If they were caught in my hotel room they would be in serious trouble for contacting a foreigner without permission and I could be told to leave the country immediately. I was leaving anyway.

They had prayed to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit told them to come and see me. They had a lot of things to discuss with me. I told them they could stay as long as they wanted. They told me they had to leave before 4:00 A.M. in the morning so that they could be home early and no one else would know that they had traveled to another city.

They stayed with me until 4:00 A.M. We prayed, read the Bible and talked about the God's work in China and in the Free World. I want to praise and thank God that I had learned a lot in China. Before I went to China I had been praying for our Chinese brethren because I thought they were weak.

After going to China my whole outlook changed. We are weak and they are strong in the faith. The brother and sister's main purpose in contacting me was to pass on the revelation message that God had given them. This is the message.

***"The believers in the Free World are weak and God wants to strengthen them and test their faith by allowing them to go through the Great Tribulation. They can learn from the trials and sufferings of the Chinese Christians and will know what to do when the time comes. They will become strong. The Lord Jesus Christ is coming soon. Be prepared for His Coming!"***

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