

Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies

“In the Beginning ...”

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

The year 2001 has special meaning for Pentecostals. This year marks the centennial of the birth of this remarkable revival movement. It was on New Year's eve, 1900, that Agnes Ozman in Topeka, Kansas, received the Pentecostal experience. She was not the first person in modern times to experience the Pentecostal baptism, but it was in the outpouring in Topeka that a theological understanding of baptism in the Spirit was developed. So, from this point, the modern Pentecostal movement established a self-conscious theological identity, and can trace its development historically from that event.

As announced earlier, both issues of the *Journal* for this year feature studies that are intended to shed light on the early history of the Pentecostal movement in Asia. This attempt is certainly not comprehensive. Readers will likely recognize that not all regions and nations in Asia are equally represented. Some historical events of great importance to the birth and development of Pentecostalism in some countries will of necessity be omitted. Let the reader recognize that this is a modest initial attempt to collect important information to shed light on the shaping of the Pentecostal movement in this part of the world.

There are several significant enterprises that should encourage Asian Pentecostals to reflect on their own experiences. In August 2000, the second annual meeting of the Asian Pentecostal Society was held in Manila with a dozen studies presented. One of the papers is included in this issue. Also of significance is the announced publication of a greatly revised edition of the *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Zondervan, 1998). The new and greatly enlarged edition is titled *New International Dictionary of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Zondervan, 2001). Stanley Burgess is the editor of this major revision. Of special significance in the new edition is the inclusion of many non-western entries. Several important articles on Asian Pentecostalism promise to make this particularly useful for Asian believers.

Two more conferences are planned for 2001 that have a conspicuous place for Asian scholarly input. One is the Non-Western Pentecostal

Conference, scheduled for California, USA, in the month of May. Presentations will include papers from Pentecostal thinkers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In September, another conference on Asian Pentecostalism is tentatively scheduled at the University of Birmingham, UK. The University of Birmingham has gained considerable visibility through the writings and influence of Swiss Pentecostal scholar Walter J. Hollenweger, now retired, who for years taught at Birmingham. A number of Pentecostal scholars pursued graduate studies under his direction.

As Asian Pentecostal scholars occupy an increasingly prominent place at the table of international discussions, the editors of the *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* recognize the role the *Journal* is assuming in promoting serious reflection and in encouraging Asian Pentecostal scholarship. As a revival movement matures, it is increasingly important for participants to ponder issues relating to Pentecostal history, theology, and ministry. Reflection on the place of the revival in the context of Christian church history is crucial for helping emerging leaders to conserve the fruits of revival.

The editors are greatly encouraged by the increasing number of subscriptions from various institutions around the world. It is equally rewarding to receive a growing flow of studies disclosing the interaction of Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals. Such communication enriches the understanding of all of us and enlarges our horizons. The editors wish to express warm appreciation to the many friends and readers of the *Journal*.

A concluding technical note: When an issue of the *Journal* contains a combination of general articles and articles featuring a special topic (such as the present issue), the topic on the cover will appear in quotation marks (e.g., "In the Beginning..."), whereas an issue with all of the articles focused on a single special topic will be identified on the cover without quotation marks (e.g., Initial Evidence).

The Editors