

Institute for Christian Teaching
Education Department of Seventh-day Adventists

**The Schools of the Prophets:
A Model for Alternative Adventist Education in Korea**

By
Young Pyo Hong
Seoul Sahmyook Junior Middle School
Kyungkido, Korea

**443-00 Institute for Christian Teaching
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904 USA**

Prepared for the
27th International Faith and Learning Seminar
held at
Mission College, Muak Lek, Thailand
December 3-15, 2000

The Schools of the Prophets: A Model for Alternative Adventist Education in Korea

Introduction

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is composed of God's eschatological remnant people. God loves this people and leads them. And especially wants his people to recover their heavenly character through education. E. G. White defines the true purpose of education as follows:

"The true object of education is to restore the image of God in the soul. In the beginning God created man in His own likeness. He endowed him with noble qualities. His mind was well balanced, and all the powers of his being were harmonious. But the fall and its effects have perverted these gifts. Sin has marred and well nigh obliterated the image of God in man. It was to restore this that the plan of salvation was devised, and a life of probation was granted to man."¹

In response to this objective, our church has built institutions the people can be educated. Let us consider the current situation of our educational system. Every country claims that education should not be as it today, and we hear a call to "return to the original purpose of education".

The Education Department director of Japanese Union Conference said that the original purpose of Adventist education was not only to teach manual skills and knowledge, but also to help the student foster a relationship with heaven. He further stated that trust and prayer necessary between teacher and students to develop heavenly characters. He said that this is the purpose of Adventist education.

Where can we find a good model for us to follow? I believe that we can find the answer in Samuel's school of prophets. In this paper I will investigate a modern model of a schools of the prophets, based on Samuel's school in the Old Testament as well as E. G. white's writings and other sources.

The Schools of the Prophets in the Old Testaments

Established by Samuel

By whom were the schools of the prophets establish? The Schools of the Prophets

¹ Ellen G. White, The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets. (Pacific Press Publishing Association: California, 1958). P 594

are the first mentioned in 1Sam 10:5. Some theologians believe that the schools of the prophets existed before period of Samuel². However, most scholars have found that Samuel established these schools. Canon H. Spence and Joseph S. Exell affirm that [a]t Gibeah Samuel had established one of his "schools of the prophets," by means of which he did so much to elevate the whole mental and moral state of the Israelites."³

Also Ellen G. White writes, "these schools proved to be one of the means most effective in promoting that righteousness which 'exalted a nation.'(Proverbs14:34). In no small degree they aided in laying the foundation of that marvelous prosperity which distinguished the reigns of David and Solomon."⁴

Places where the Schools of the Prophets are

In Samuel's day there were two of these schools (the company of prophets), one at Ramah, the home of Samuel (1Sam.7: 17), and the other was at Kirjath-jealim, where the ark then was at that time⁵. Later in the time of Elijah and Elisha there were three schools: one each at Gidal, Bethel, and Jericho (2Kings 4:38; 2:3,5,7,15; 4:1; 9:1). According to 2Kings 4:38,42,43, about a hundred sons of the prophets sat before Elisha at Gilgal, and took their meals together. The number at Jericho might have been as great; for fifty men of the sons of the prophets went with Elijah and Elisha to the Jordan.⁶

Characteristics of the Schools of the Prophets

The ancient schools of prophets had several characteristics. First, the name, "schools of prophets" expresses the fact that these schools were composed of prophets; only we must not think of them as merely educational institutions, in which the pupils of the prophets received instruction in prophesying or in theological studies. We are not in possession indeed of any minute information concerning their constitution. Prophesying could neither be taught nor communicated by instruction but was a gift of a God that He communicated according to His free will to whomsoever He would. But

² C. F. Keil & F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, (WM . B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Michigan, 1960).

³ H. D. M. Spence & Joseph S. Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary vol.4*(WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Michigan, 1958). P.175

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Pacific Press Publishing Association: California). P 47

⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets*. (Pacific Press Publishing Association: California, 1958). P 593

⁶ C. F. Keil & F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, (WM . B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Michigan, 1960). p.199

the communication of this divine gift was by no means an arbitrary thing, but presupposed such a mental and spiritual disposition on the part of the recipient as fitted him to receive it. The exercise of the gift required a thorough acquaintance with the law and earlier revelations of God, which the schools of the prophets were well adapted to promote.⁷

Second, the pupils of the prophets lived together in a common house(2Kings 4:38). We may also certainly assume the same with reference to the unions of prophets in the time of Samuel. Oehler argues in support of this. He asserts that the historical connection, which can be traced in the influence of prophecy from the time of Samuel forwards, may be most early explained from the uninterrupted continuance of the schools; and also that large number of the prophets, who must have been there according to 1Kings 18:13 when Elijah first appeared, points to the existence of such unions as these.⁸

Establishment Background

The time of Samuel formed a turning point in the development of the Old Testament kingdom of God. Shortly after the call of Samuel, the judgment fell upon the sanctuary which had been profaned by the shameful conduct of the priests, the tabernacle lost the ark of the covenant, and ceased in consequence to be the scene of the gracious presence of God in Israel. Thus the task fell upon Samuel, as prophets of the Lord, to found a new house to enhance religious life. He did this by collecting together into closer communities those who had been awakened by his word, not only to strengthen faith under his direction, but also by joining with him in the spread of the fear of God and obedience to His law. In the time of Samuel, it was the fall of the legal sanctuary and priesthood which created the necessity for the founding of schools of the prophets. So it was in the times of Elijah and Elisha, and in the kingdom of ten tribes. It was the utter absence of any sanctuary of Jehovah which led these prophets to found societies of prophets. This furnished the worshipers of Jehovah, who would not bend their knees to baal, with places and means of edification, as a substitute for what the righteous in the kingdom of Judah possessed in the temple and the Levitical priesthood.⁹

The Purpose of Establishment

C. F. Keil, theologian, identifies that the purpose of establishing the school of the

⁷ Ibid. p.203

⁸ Ibid. p.200

⁹ Ibid. p.204

prophets is as follows:

“The prophets did not wish to withdraw from the tumult of the world into solitude, for the purpose of carrying on a contemplative life of holiness in this retirement from the earthly life and its affairs; but their unions were associations formed for purpose of mental and spiritual training, that they might exert a more powerful influence upon their contemporaries.

These schools were called into existence by chosen instruments of the Lord, such as Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha whom the Lord had called to be His prophets, endowed with a peculiar measure of his Spirit for this particular calling, that they might check the decline of religious life in a nation, and bring back the rebellious to the law and the testimony.¹⁰

Spence also wrote the purpose of the schools of the prophets "They were a union or free association of men "endowed with the Spirit of God for the purpose of carrying on their work, the feeble powers of junior members being directed and strengthened by those of a higher class"¹¹

The Subjects in the Schools of the Prophets.

In the schools of prophets they taught subjects as follows; study of history, rhetoric, poetry, natural science, and moral philosophy. H. D. M. Spence wrote, "they had been under his instruction in the knowledge of God and his law, and as subservient to this, in reading and writing, poetry, music, and singing. "Education is not a panacea for all human ills, but it is an indispensable condition both of individual and of national progress."¹²

Also E. G. White said that the chief subjects of study in these schools were the law of God, with the instructions given to Moses, sacred history, sacred music, and poetry.¹³

Saebyuk Narae¹⁴(Alternative school) as a School of the Prophet

¹⁰ Ibid. 202

¹¹ H. D. M. Spence & Joseph S. Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary* vol.4(WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Michgan, 1958). P.372

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ellen G. White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets*. (Pacific Press Publishing Association: California, 1958). P 593

¹⁴ Saebyuk Narae is alternative school in Korea. This school was established by

So far we briefly studied the schools of prophets in the Old Testament, Ellen G. White, and other sources. How, then, do we apply the instruction in the schools of the prophets to our current time? Today many Adventists are worried about the quality of our educational programs. E. G. White says that “the manner of instruction was far different from that in the theological schools of the present day, from which many students radiate with less real knowledge of God and religious truth than when they entered. In those schools of the olden time it was the grand object of all study to learn the will of God and mans duty toward Him.”¹⁵

Let me introduce to you a modern-day example of the schools of the prophets, the Adventist junior middle/high schools(or alternative school) in Korea. There are many alternative schools(Adventist schools)in Korea. One of these is Saebyuk Narae, means awaken the dawn. The philosophy of this school is based on the dream teenage missionaries in Saebyuk Narae.

First, the students grow up to solid Christian who never compromise with society, by personal meeting with God in missionary place when they are teenager. Second, the experience of missionary work during the teenager years helps students to build their own future in God, so that they dream professional Christian. Third, by preaching Gospels to over four billion global village people who never know Jesus, positive basic to participate in evangelical work gets ready. To realized the above-mentioned goals of education, is the dream of teenager missionaries in Saebyuk Narae.

Saebyuk Narae is producing missionaries by using the following systematic missionary Training methods.

Educate faith to focus on thoroughgoing bible.

In Saebyuk Narae the whole school focuses on missionary study, that is, love God and love your neighbors. We have a goal to produce strong, 21st spiritual leader who are for their neighbors' lives, and can stand strong in their faith through contemplate bible study.

a) Prayer training though daybreak

Like the prophet Daniel and Nehemiah, we will make strong prayer soldiers who cherish their own people and tear for them. The students' dreams, visions, and ideals start with early morning prayer.

the Seventh-day Adventist local church.

¹⁵ Ellen G. White, The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets. (Pacific Press Publishing Association: California, 1958). P 593

b) Training by the Bible and E. G. White's writers (The Spirit of prophecy)

We bring up strong missionaries who teach, spread, and share the bible. Through remarkable personal mission training, which teaches Gospel logically and boldly, the students are taught to preach from the pulpit.

c) Send short and long term missionary

Only students who go out as missionaries can graduate from this school. Beginning with the freshman year, students keep records of the mission experiences when working in the field.

Creative and Quality Education

Through selecting qualified student, and making small study groups, we practice various personality training programs and art education instruction daily life and studies between teachers and students.

We eliminate examination and school records causing formal education processing and competition. To show the potential abilities of each student, we help the students study independently, using proper study methods.

a) Education without grades

For six years, we educate the students to develop the power of self-control. The homeroom teacher has charge of only one class for six years, until the students graduate.

b) Education according to ability

Educations to abilities of students, all subjects are programmed. They can get the chances to choose their own favorites. Because we are educating the students according to their abilities, they are able to choose their favorite classes.

c) Creative Education

We use the debating method, newspapers (NIE), TV, computers and roll playing to improve the student's creativity.

d) Uniting Education

When we teach, we mix two at least more subjects, for example Science and the Chinese classics, History and the English, Music and Expression.

e) Education through the experience

We teach not only through textbooks, but also through the use of educational field trips, travels, field exercises, and research of other countries. We help the students experience many things.

f) No examination system

In this school, there are not any examinations. We seek to teach them to think of their neighbor, rather than focusing on competition. The students are appraised scholastically through the life of school.

g) Various Educations

We invite professional lectures to teach various fields as possible. (For example: education of labor, skill of making clothes, cooking method, electric or building construction etc).

h) Small class

We restrict the class size to ensure that the teachers can guide the students personally, and thereby fulfill their responsibilities. In contrast, most classroom in our country currently have 40-50 students with one teacher.

i) Humanity training program and Arts education

After the students enter the school, we spent two months training the students' attitude. First of all, we think the students are humans and that they can be the real Jesus believers in Jesus.

Environmental education through the community life of whole students

Both teachers and students live in a dormitory together. They feel the importance of living in the beauty and harmony of the nature that is given to us by God, and they learn to protect the earth from ecological dangers. In addition, we have established an organic agricultural farm to help preserve nature and we supply organic agricultural products to the community.

a) Educational community life thru the dormitory for all teachers and students

They learn how to live with each other as they eat and sleep together. One of the educational goals is to teach them how to live with their neighbors rather than focusing on the individual.

b) Operation of the organic farm for environmental preservation

The students learn the secret of life as they work in the natural field, and they learn about all aspects of life in the school. They will learn practical education about the fields of politics, culture, economy and society, to adjust the principles of life. They learn to relationship between man and nature through the work of organic farming, construction, carpentry and healthy labor.

c) Educating with the community people

Our school is open to the community people and they may participate in the school activities such as cultural festival, sports event, hearth seminar and special seminars. We provide a variety of cultural activities, such as the English education program for children and young people. Sometime we invite a person who has a unique cultural technique (art) to school, and we let the students show our love to the community by sharing our culture and assets.

d) Professional faculty (Professors, teachers, inviting lecturers)

The time of middle and high school is a very important time, as the students determine their future life. This means that the role of teachers is more important, so our school secures qualified and competent instructors for them.

Teach foreign languages and computer

Students learn English step by step with foreign teachers and practice it through mission activities. Based on the students' levels, we teach them how to use a computer which is very important in the 21st century. They learn to use the Internet so that they can be prepared to work in the international field. We help them to make use of their language skills and computer operating skills as God's instruments.

a) Operating English institute with ten American Missionaries

The students may learn English and experience other countries' cultures as they study English with foreign missionaries.

All of them may learn from the basic English, to English sermon, and may apply this knowledge in their mission field.

b) Educating the Chinese for Northern Mission

We teach the Chinese for northern mission. The students may speak the basic

Chinese and learn and understand the Chinese culture.

c) Learning Computer Operating

In Saebuyuk narae, the students will learn the basics of software program and hardware parts and you can utilize it by yourself.

d) Educating by the Internet

Information age means not only facing a lot of information but also applying it. Students learn how to collect information and to apply it and they may have the chance to make friends in any part of the world.

To supply the missionaries for the 21st century.

We provide a wide variety of physical activities, and we built up the morale and self confidence of the students by teaching the catch-phrased "I can do everything." These activities will be helpful for the students as they grow in the future.

a) Various spiritual skills

The students choose their favorite skills out of exciting physical activities, such as swimming, skiing, water skiing, Teakwondo, super-light airplane flying, mountain rescue activity, wind surfing and so on and they can have an experience to raise their confidence through those kinds of activities.

b) Acquisition of certificates

The school tries to give opportunities to the students to share other people' difficulties, acquiring various certificates which are secured for professional job, such as human-life rescue, skiing, piano tuning, mountain rescue, HAM radio and so on. These certificates are helpful for the students to overcome the difficulties as they work as missionaries in the future.

c) Practical life education

The students are trained in various skill so that they can have an independent life in any circumstances. They learn about architecture, health food-cooking, new start health consultancy, automobile maintenance, dressmaking, hair designing, traditional fine arts and so on. These training are necessary for the students to prepare the future mission activities. Also, our school will be a center of education for the community.

d) Activation of voluntary club activities

This school encourages their activities of voluntary clubs and gives the student council the opportunity to lead art in school activities. The students get together and discuss their plans. If they decide to do something, the teacher will help and support their decision. The teacher can be one of the instructors in the students' club which is organized by the students themselves.

Curriculum in this school

The curriculum of this school consists of four parts: spiritual, mental, arts, and skill. It is developed into five progressive levels. This curriculum is designed as follows figures;

1. The curriculum of spiritual part and step(See figure 1)
2. The curriculum of intellectual part and step(See figure 2)
3. The curriculum of mental part and step(See figure 3)
4. The curriculum of skillful part and step(See figure 4)

Conclusion

As Adventist, we have to prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ because the end is very near. Therefore, we must obey the Words of God and His commands, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."(Matt. 28:18) And Jesus Christ promise us "surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt. 28:20). So we need a school which to teach the Adventist's students to be prepared for Jesus' coming. Our alternative junior middle/high school has been established for this purpose. And the model of this school is the schools of prophets in Old Testament

Bibliography

1. Keil C. F. & Delitzsch F. Biblical Commentary on The Books of Samuel. WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company Mishigan, 1960.
2. Spence H. D. M. & Exell Joseph S. The Pulpit Commentary 1Samuel.(Funk & Wagnalls Company; New York and Toronto)
3. Baxendale Walter, The Teacher's Homiletic Commentary Vol. 7.(Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, Michigan)
4. New Bible Dictionary. (Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship Leicester, England, 1982)
5. White Ellen G. The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets. (Pacific Press Publishing Association: California, 1958)
6. White Ellen G. Education (Pacific Press Publishing Association: California).

1. The curriculums of Spiritual part and each steps

	SUBJECTS	UNITS	FIRST STEP	SECOND STEP	THIRD STEP	FORTH STEP	FIFTH STEP
Spiritual Part (Evangelism Training Program)	Bible	2	Christology / Outline	Doctrine	Daniel/Revelation	Discipleship	Missionary (One Year)
	English Bible	1	Reading	Comprehension	X	X	
	Mission Activities	2	English song	Child story	Bible teaching	Preaching method	
	Health Training	2	Body structure	Disease	Treatment	Exercise	
	Skill Training	2	Farming/Cooking	Hairdressing/Car service	Electrics/Cutting out and sewing	Construction	
	E. G. White Writings	P	Reading Ed/MYP	reading SCH/DA	Reading PP/COL	Reading GC/1,2,3SM	
	Seminar	P	Mission spirit	Health	Natural treatment	Exercise	

Figure 1

2. The curriculum of intellectual part and each step

	SUBJECTS	UNITS	FIRST STEP	SECOND STEP	THIRD STEP	FORTH STEP	FIFTH STEP
Mental Part	The national tongue	3	Expression	Reading book and discussion	Writing letters	Essay	Missionary (One year)
	English	3	Reading and writing	Basic structure	Healing and speaking	English poem	
	Linguistics (English)	(5)	Level 1,2	Level 3	Level 4,5	Level 6	
	Hearing training	(4)	AFKN(Replay)	AFKN(Replay)	AFKN(Replay)	AFKN(Replay)	
	T.I. course	P	Total immersion	Total immersion	Total immersion	Total immersion	
	TOEFL	1	X	Etymology	English words	Reading and interpretation	
	Chines language	2	Pronounce/Song/Conversation	Letter/Structure/Exercise	Discussion/Subject presentation	Reading and interpretation	
	Mathematics	3	Systems	outline sketch.			
	National history	2	History outline	Korea history	History outline	Korea history	
	World history	1	X	The story of World history	X	World history	
	Vocabulary	1	Word compare	Prefix	Suffix	Special word	
	Science	(2)	Special lecture(Through TV)				
Common socialness	(2)	Special lecture(Through TV)					

Figure 2

3. The curriculum of mental part and each parts

	SUBJECTS	UNITS	FIRST STEP	SECOND STEP	THIRD STEP	FORTH STEP	FIFTH STEP
Arts Part	Music	2	Chorus	Chorus	Orchestra	Orchestra	Missionary (One year)
	Instrumental music	2	Personal lesson	Personal lesson	Personal lesson	Personal lesson	
	Chines Letters	1	1000 letters	DongmongSeonSep	Nona	Mokminsimseo	
	Calligraphy	1	Korea letter 1	Korea letter 2	Chines letter 1	Chines letter 2	
	Painting	(2)	Choose	Choose	Choose	Choose	
	Life etiquette	P					

Figure 3

4. The curriculum of skillful part and each steps

	SUBJECTS	UNITS	FIRST STEP	SECOND STEP	THIRD STEP	FORTH STEP	FIFTH STEP	
Skill Part	Physical exercise	2	Basic physical training	Common physical training	Theory of physical training	Life of physical training	Missionary (One year)	
	Computer	2	Enter	MSoffice	Internet using method	Microsoft Access		
	Farming	1	Mineral farming					
	Piano string	1	X	X	Theory and exercise	Getting license		
	Excellent performance acting	P	Basic swimming/Skying	Water skying/Rafting	Wind surfing	Skin Diving		
	Rescue of life	P						

Figure 4