

Mimi Scharffernberg, "Why Seventh-Day Adventists Came to Korea," Korea Mission Field 5 (Sept. 1909): 157-158.

When the Korean immigrants went to Hawaii via Kobe, Japan, two Koreans joined the Seventh Day Adventist Church through its Japanese evangelist Kuniya. They were baptized in June 1904. Son Hŭng-Jo, one of them, returned to Korea and worked as evangelist in Chinnamp'o and Yonggang. Soon Mr. Kuniya came to Korea to help the Koreans. In 1905 the first American missionary W. S. Smith came to Korea.

In June of 1904, a Korean, passing through Japan on his way to Hawaii, was attracted to one of our Missions by a sign over the door. He was invited inside and became interested in studying the truths of the Bible. Soon this man brought another Korean who became very much interested and later returned to Korea. Having studied, while in Japan, with regard to the Sabbath, the soon coming of the Saviour, and kindred subjects. He began to make the truth known to his countrymen.

It was not long until quite a company were keeping the Sabbath and believed in the soon coming of Christ. They wrote many letters to Japan begging that some one should come and teach them further.

In response to their letters one of our Japanese brethren, though understanding scarcely a word of Korean, made a visit to this field. The Koreans who sent for help knew only a few words of Japanese so their only way of communication was by writing in Chinese characters. Being so handicapped in the language one can readily see that mistakes and misunderstandings could easily be made. But the interest still spread and appeals were sent to America for some one to be stationed in Korea. <157/158>

It was in the fall of 1905 that our first workers came from America. Although our numbers here kept increasing, it soon became evident that about all they understood of our faith was that we believed the seventh day of the week was the Sabbath and that Jesus was soon coming. It was necessary, of course, to begin at the beginning and teach them the principles of our faith. But in order to do this we had to wait until we had a knowledge of the language. It has taken some time for us to instruct those who came to us and find out how many were really converted and could be taken into church fellowship.

Anyone not knowing the unfavorable circumstances under which our work began, and seeing the numbers professing to belong to us, might have easily received a wrong impression of our work.

We are not here to pull down the work of other denominations. Our requirements for admittance into church fellowship are, perhaps, more than others require. Among some of the things required are the following:--An understanding of the principles of the Gospel; A change of life spoken of by John the Baptist as "fruits meet for repentance"; An observance of the Sabbath as taught by the Decalogue; and the giving up of tobacco, liquor, and harmful indulgences.

We enjoy working for and with this people and are here for two reasons:--First, in fulfillment of the great commission—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," and Second—because of the many earnest appeals from the Koreans to come and teach them the way of life.