

MSI Canada Newsletter

June 2002



From the Editor

I had a car accident in mid-May during rush hour on a busy highway. My car was damaged beyond repair, yet quite miraculously; I walked out of the car relatively unhurt. Praise the Lord for His protection! I then heard from members of the May team that they had witnessed several serious motor vehicle accidents while in Gulin. Those who have been there will know that the roads around the county are not the safest, and the vehicles are not always in mint condition. That all the teams so far have traveled safely is truly God's mercy and protection.

In this issue, we are privileged to hear, albeit indirectly, from 2 of the 3 founders of MSI, **Dr. James Taylor III** and **Dr. Reginald Tsang**. Dr. Taylor exhorts all of us to learn from Bezalel to be Christian professionals who honor God through our work. Dr. Tsang shares his insight about mobilization of long term workers during a meeting in Denver. **Dr. David Wong** attended that meeting, and is kind enough to report on his own reflection after hearing Dr. Tsang. Finally, **Dr. Stephen Hoh** takes us through the last 4 years and shows us the amazing changes the Gulin People's Hospital has gone through.

~Wendy Cheung

Prayer Items

1. Pray for the health of Dr. James Taylor. His workload is very heavy.
2. Praise the Lord for the safety of the May team, and the excellent foundation they laid down for future cooperation.
3. Pray for the November team that is still in the formation stage. There are quite a few interested, including an ophthalmologist, optometrist, pediatrician, nurse and English teacher.
4. Pray for **Kathy Wong** who will be teaching English in the Chinese Traditional Medicine University in Chengdu next month. Pray also for **Kenny Chong** who will be teaching English in the youth center in Zhaojue for the month of July. These are their first trips.
5. Pray for **Dr. Matthew Koh** who is taking 2 years of study leave. He will be studying at Regent College in Vancouver, BC. Pray for Matthew's and his family's transition.

Important email changes- please update your address book!

Mrs. Gloria Tsang's email address has been changed to Gswtsang@aol.com

Dr. Richard Wong's email address has been changed to richardwbaloo@hotmail.com

Bezalel- a challenge to Christian professionals

By Wendy Cheung



Dr. Taylor (back row 3rd from right) & the Nov 2001 team

On February 23, 2002, in Dr. Stephen Hoh's Lion's Bay home, a few brothers and I had the pleasure and privilege of hearing Dr. James Taylor teach on Bezalel. I have to admit that I was not familiar with this Old Testament character before that day, but Dr. Taylor's sharing had greatly challenged me, especially when I considered my vocation. The text Dr. Taylor used was Exodus 35: 30-36:1. A parallel text was Exodus 31: 1-11.

The name Bezalel means 'in the shadow of God' or 'in the protection of God'. He is the grandson of Hur, one of the men who held up Moses' arms in the battle against the Amalekites (Exodus 17:8-13). From this we can deduce that Bezalel was not very old when he was called, as his grandfather was still alive then. Bezalel is from the tribe of Judah. Using our language, this means Bezalel is not in full time ministry, as those in the tribe of Levi are. He is a 'lay believer', a 'marketplace Christian'. Bezalel is a master craftsman and designer. His task is to help in the construction of the sanctuary. In other words, his calling was to use his skills to build a place of worship for others.

Dr. Taylor expounded on several facets of Bezalel's vocation:

- 1) God called Bezalel by name
- 2) God filled him with the Holy Spirit (Exodus 31:2)
- 3) God endowed Bezalel with wisdom, ability and knowledge. The Chinese translation says it best, said Dr. Taylor. Bezalel can think (□□), can make (□□) and can teach (□□).
- 4) God gave Bezalel a colleague, Oholiab, to help him. Bezalel is not a loner. He is a team player, to use modern day language.
- 5) Bezalel and Oholiab were accountable in their work. The amount of material used was meticulously listed in Exodus 38:21-31. When there was more than enough material for the work, they told Moses to ask the people to restrain from bringing more. Hoarding material was never on their agenda. They have honesty and integrity.
- 6) God puts a limit to Bezalel's creativity, and Bezalel was faithful in following God's plan. The work was done 'just as the Lord has commanded'.

Bezalel is a challenge to us. We might not be called to build a sanctuary literally, but we are called to help one another in worshiping the Lord, in the areas of evangelism, music ministry, missionary work, Bible teaching, encouragement etc. Many of us have spent many years and much effort in obtaining our professional qualification. God has allowed us to develop our professional skills. Like Bezalel, we need to think hard of ways to apply our professional skills to help others worship the Lord; and we need to put those ideas into practice. We need to network with like-minded Christian professionals to work together as a team.

We need to learn from Bezalel and Oholiab in their honesty and integrity at work, especially in the area of finances. In whatever work we do, whether it is setting up a Bible study group at work, leading choir at church, or medical work in China, we need to do it 'just as the Lord has commanded', seeking His guidance and will as we plan and strategize.

As Christian professionals in North America, we have been given much. Much will be demanded from us as well. Let us all strive to learn from Bezalel in using our professional skills to serve the Lord, here in North America, in China and other parts of the world.

Dr. James Taylor III is the founder and Executive Director of MSI Professional Services. He lives in Hong Kong where MSI Headquarter is based.

Dr. Wendy Cheung is a general pediatrician practicing in Hamilton, Ontario. She has been on 3 trips to Gulin with MSI.

Reflections on Denver Long-Term Mobilization Meeting

By David Wong

On May 9, I flew to Denver, the mile high city to begin a three-day meeting. It was attended by MSI leaders and staff from the US and Hong Kong headquarters. In all I met over 20 MSI regional and city coordinators and staff members that I have heard of but never met before like Cindy Lau from HK and Stan Zimmer from the Boston area. By the end of the three days, I really felt the tremendous fellowship in the MSI family and was inspired by the vision of the leaders.



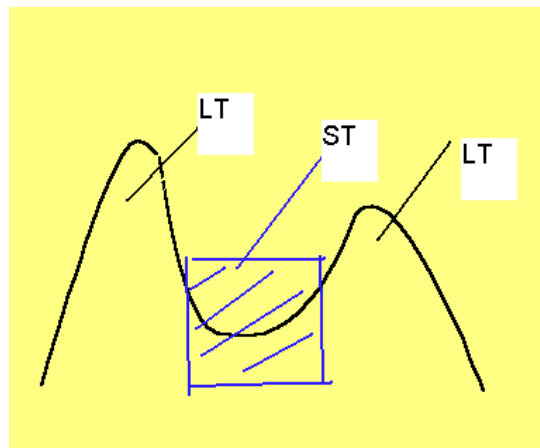
DDr. David Wong (back row far right) and the Anesthetists & OR nurses in Gulin Hospital

One important theme being discussed and championed was “Long-termer (LT) mobilization: the new MSI paradigm”. Reggie Tsang, a co-founder of MSI back in 1994 reflected that since its inception, MSI has sent close to 2000 short-termers (ST) to Sichuan and Yunnan. The starting point was the medical program but now has been extended to include English teaching, community health, youth center, livestock and business. Today, there are approximately 50 MSI long-termers in China, about 1/3 are in the medical program. As effective as the STers have been in teaching, clinical work and building friendship; yet without the existence of LTers and local churches, it is hard to follow up on meaningful contacts with an interest in spiritual matters. Furthermore, few STers are willing to commit to LT services in China. Reggie went on to share his insight and foresight on how we can be more effective in mobilizing LTers.

He illustrated the relationship of age/stage of their career and the number of ST and LT workers in a “3 Hump Model”.

- 1) First hump are in their 20’s and early 30’s. They just finished school or training, have the heart, enthusiasm and desire to serve Him full time. They often do not yet have the responsibility of parenthood and are not yet attached to the niceties of life. However, for the medical types, they may have a major unpaid loan and they may lack mentorship and models to emulate.

- 2) Second hump are in their 50 – 60’s. Winding down a successful career and kids are grown. The pluses are that they are financially secured and ready to leave their career and children. On the minus side, they may not be physically mobile and health issues are emerging.
- 3) In the middle “saddle” are professionals in the prime of their career, married with young children and are leaders/elders of their churches. They have a great deal of professional expertise and skill to share with the Chinese and are sought after. At the same time, such groups are the most difficult to mobilize for LT services. Reasons include a) unwillingness to give up prestigious career, b) reluctance to forgo niceties of life (eg. house, lifestyle) and c) fear of inferior education and physical safety of children.



Jesus said in Matthew 16:24 “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” Making the choice to go LT would require significant sacrifices and we would have to give up something good in order to strive for something better; to deny temporary pleasures to gain eternal values.

Reggie went on to speak about mentoring the next generation. We can talk to medical students or young professionals about considering LT service. Give them books on role models like Hudson Taylor, David Livingstone and Paul Brand. Share their concerns, understand their goals, pray for them and guide them along. Connect them up with current or past missionaries who can share with them realistically the joy and difficulties of LT services overseas; what children’s education and health care are like, how to deal with family objections etc. Statistics have shown that it takes on the average 7 years for a person considering LT mission to start out as one.

Will you prayerfully consider serving the Lord long term or being a mentor to help young persons to go into the mission field?

Dr. David Wong is an anesthesiologist practicing in Toronto, Ontario. He has been on 3 MSI trips to China.

Dr. Reginald Tsang is one of the founders of MSI. He currently is the International Executive Director of Mobilization of MSI Professional Services.

Four Years

Dr. Stephen Hoh

In May 1998, MSI Canada sent its first medical team to Gulin. At that time we did not know what to expect. The place was restricted to outsiders. We had to obtain a special permit from the Public Safety Bureau before we could go in. On the flight from Hong Kong to Chengdu, as I looked out from my window, I was struck by the vastness of the land. There were just a handful of us. "What can we do for such a large country as China?" I asked myself. At that moment God reminded me that He is God El-Shaddai, as He appeared to Abraham, Jacob and Moses. He is able to do mighty things through weak vessels.



Four years and five trips later, we went back to a very different Gulin. The place is now open to visitors. We can go out and tour the town any time without any restrictions. We can interact freely with medical students and young doctors. Other changes are evident:

- The Hospital is much cleaner. Now it actually looks very presentable. Nobody smokes or spits, at least in our presence. People who have been away for four years may not recognize that it is the same hospital!
- The atmosphere in the Hospital is refreshing. The morale among the nursing staff is considerably higher. Four years ago nobody smiled. Now, people are relaxed and friendly.
- The annual income of the Hospital has increased from 3.65 million RMB to over 10 million, almost triple in four years!
- The teaching of medical students and young doctors has improved by several hundred percent. Senior surgeons actually take time to teach! This was unheard of when we first went there.
- The Hospital now has an ICU, CT scan, Cardiac Doppler, Operating microscope for eye surgery and has the capability to do endoscopic cholecystectomy. All these have come into being since our first visit.

I do not pretend that MSI can or should claim credit for all these changes, but what a privilege it is to witness the transformation as we labor side by side with the local hospital leadership!

The most encouraging part to me is that they are able to capture what MSI is all about. During this last trip in May, the Gulin TV station made a special program on MSI, titled 'On the Road With Love'. The department heads and head nurses singled out love, dedication and serving attitude as attributes of the MSI team members. Strong bonds have been established between MSI and the local officials. People cherish our four years of friendship. Medical students, staff and patients alike do not want to see us leave. Tears were shed when it was time for us to depart.

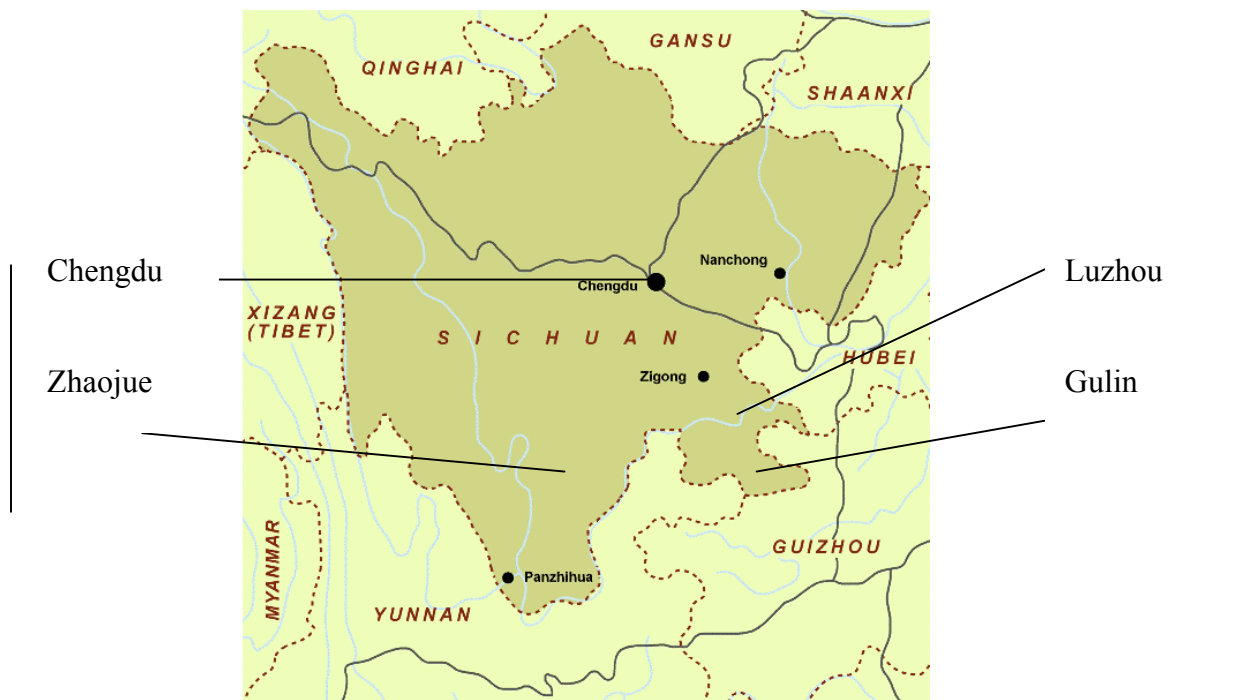
All these were brought about not by passing out tracts or Bibles, but by just living out our Christian lives. Many lives have been touched by the love of God through Christians. I deeply appreciate the wisdom of Dr. Taylor and other MSI leaders to emphasize patience. 'MSI keeps a low profile but has long term commitments', they tell us. Now, after four years, we are able to see that the true light is shining and spreading in Gulin!



Personally, I am grateful for the opportunity of serving together with so many outstanding Christians who have gone into China under MSI. What a blessing! What a privilege!

Dr. Stephen Hoh is the Senior Consultant of MSI Canada. He has been to Gulin 5 times and to other parts of China on many occasions.

Facts on Gulin



Gulin County has a population of approximately 700,000. It is comprised of 3 towns and 69 villages. The county is located in a very mountainous area where flat land and valley are scarce. Its economy is mostly agricultural, focusing on rice, maize, wheat and tealeaf. It is also famous for producing liquor. The county is a designated poverty area where the central government is making an effort to improve.

