

**HONGKONG ADVENTIST HOSPITAL :
DON'T GET SICK, FOR GOD'S SAKE !**

If man had not required a mental crutch in order to deal with matters, which are outside the scope of his abilities to reason, then religion would have been unlikely, ever, to have got a toehold in any society on earth.

As it is, over the past 7,000 years or so, organised religion has not only obtained a toehold in all societies, but has, in addition, put in its entire leg -- all the way up to the crotch.

The latest bit of relatively new religion comes to TARGET from the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), from the Hongkong Adventist Hospital, in fact.

This hospital, as the name implies, is run by Adventists, a religious organisation that maintains that there is to be a Second Coming of Christ.

So sure are the Adventists in the Second Coming of the Son of God upon this earth that, in 1843 and, again, in 1844, the American preacher, Mr William Miller, futilely awaited the Second Coming, along with some of his devotees.

When the Son of God did not materialise in either year, Mr William Miller and his followers felt more than a little dejected since it tended to prove that they did not, after all, have a direct pipeline to Him.

The followers of Mr Miller, as one could imagine, having been all hopped up at the thought that Christ was going to come into their singular Church, forsaking all other Churches, and perhaps breaking bread with them, were extremely disappointed at the non-show.

Many of the former followers of Mr Miller went back to being what they had, formerly, professed to be, in terms of Christianity, that is, but those who remained loyal Adventists split up into 4 main bodies.

The Seventh-Day Adventists is the largest group of Adventists in existence today and, probably, numbers some 10 million devotees, around the world.

So, by simple mathematics, Seventh-Day Adventists represent about one seventeenth of one percent of the entire world's population of about 6 billion souls.

The Seventh-Day Adventists maintain that there shall be a Second Coming of Christ, and that Saturday is the Sabbath.

They, also, maintain that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

As such, they put a great deal of stress on health; and, the avoidance of eating meat and using narcotics and stimulants.

Since the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, clearly, it follows that good Adventists should keep their bodies clean, and, when it breaks down, then facilities should be provided to repair all defective body '*machinery*'.

Also, as has been pointed out to TARGET, Christ taught the concept of the Healing Ministry – and the Adventists are supposed to carry forth the ideas and precepts of the Son of God.

With regard to the latter-mentioned, Hongkong Adventist Hospital, located at Number 40, Stubbs Road, it has been offering medical services to residents of these 416 square miles since 1971.

Recent improvements to the circular-shaped hospital allow the top-floor patients' rooms to compete with any 5-star hotel in the HKSAR.

However, whereas The Peninsula Hotel, The Mandarin Hotel, and The Shangri-la Hotel, the most prestigious hotels in the HKSAR, can boast of the finest and the best that money can buy, not one of these 5-star hotels can match the tariffs of the Hongkong Adventist Hospital.

For ladies, in the last stages of childbirth, the Hongkong Adventist Hospital offers an Obstetric Package as follows:

Three Day Normal Vaginal Delivery Package		
Private Room (One Bed) \$HK25,330	Semi-Private (Two Beds) \$HK15,630	Ward Room (Four Beds) \$HK11,900
Five Day Elective (Pre-Booked) Caesarean Package		
Private Room (One Bed) \$HK34,330	Semi-Private (Two Beds) \$HK21,580	Ward Room (Four Beds) \$HK15,500
Five Day Emergency Caesarean Section Package		
Private Room (One Bed) \$HK45,330	Semi-Private (Two Beds) \$HK34,200	Ward Room (Four Beds) \$HK23,500

The above costs do not include doctors' fees, which are separately charged.

Other than expectant mothers, Hongkong Adventist Hospital has full facilities and can, just about, accommodate any person who is ill and requires to be admitted to the hospital.

Before being admitted to this hospital, however, one may be advised to scan the prices of staying in the hospital for a couple of days.

	Daily Room Rates Effective July 1, 1999	
	Surgical Units	Other Units
Private (One Bed)	\$HK2,700	\$HK2,590
Semi-Private (Two Beds)	\$HK1,550	\$HK1,480
Standard (Three Beds to Five Beds)	\$HK550	\$HK520
Intensive Care Unit I	---	\$HK5,596
Intensive Care Unit II	---	\$HK5,030
Baby Care	---	\$HK580

The above costs include basic nursing care only, the Adventist Hospital is quick to point out, and does not include meals, dietary consultations, physicians' fees, operating theatre costs and drugs.

As for the daily visit rates for an in-house, Hongkong Adventist Hospital General Practitioner, the hospital charges according to the room rate:

Very Important Person/Private Room	\$HK2,000
Semi-Private	\$HK1,200
Standard	(according to room rate)
Intensive Care Unit	\$HK2,707

Clearly, it pays not to be a VIP, unless one is religiously inclined and wants to make a sizeable donation to one's favourite Church.

For people, who decide to use this religious hospital instead of one of the other non-religious establishments, an advance payment is required.

It seems that the Adventists, like ordinary people, have had trouble in the past in collecting payment for services rendered.

At least, that is the only logic that TARGET can ascribe to the following:

ADVANCE PAYMENT		
General	With a Hongkong Identity Card	Without a Hongkong Identity Card
Very Important Person/Private	\$HK30,000	\$HK50,000
Semi-Private	\$HK20,000	\$HK40,000
Standard	\$HK10,000	\$HK30,000
Intensive Care	\$HK50,000	\$HK80,000

For Open Heart Surgery and Angioplasty, the Advance Payments, required by Hongkong Adventist Hospital, are just a tad higher, and it appears to be immaterial whether or not one is in possession of a valid Hongkong Identity Card:

Very Important Person/Private	\$HK100,000
Semi-Private	\$HK90,000
Standard	\$HK80,000

TARGET compared Hongkong Adventist Hospital rates with a similar quality hospital, but one which is not so religiously inclined: The Matilda Hospital on The Peak, located at Number 41, Mount Kellett Road.

What TARGET discovered was that the rates at the 2 hospitals were, just about, the same, with very little differences if one took into consideration that the charges at The Matilda Hospital included meals.

The Matilda Hospital makes mention of the fabulous views of Victoria Harbour when one is ill and rents a Private Room A with a Balcony, complete with a telephone, refrigerator, satellite television and ensuite bathroom.

One might be tempted to remark that to get ill could be a bit of a pleasure if one were camped in The Matilda Hospital.

One thing that is very different in The Matilda Hospital from Hongkong Adventist Hospital is that The Matilda Hospital makes no distinction between an incoming patient in possession of a valid Hongkong Identity Card and one without this legal accoutrement.

Also, the deposit on admission to The Matilda Hospital is a standard \$HK20,000.

There is, of course, no suggestion on TARGET's part that the 2 hospitals worked together on standardising room rates because, after all, Adventists, and especially Seventh-Day Adventists, are not known to be monetarily inclined, are they?

All this puts a slightly different complexion and meaning on the word, '*religion*', doesn't it?

Should a hospital, devoted to the Healing Ministry of Christ, be more intent on showing a profit than in performing a service for mankind?

Should a religious hospital (such as Hongkong Adventist Hospital), a hospital with a strict mandate to heal those in need, one domiciled in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, determine that it must follow the *modus operandi* of health-care institutions, which are more inclined to look at the Bottom Line than consideration of their reason for being?

Would Christ have driven out the moneylenders in this temple of learning, too?

