



Pastor Hong Zijie and his wife, c. 1915, probably taken in Shantao.

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Hong, Zijie or Ang, Tau Kiet (1864–1936)

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Hong, Zijie (), also known as Ang Tau Kiet, was the second indigenous Chinese Seventh-day Adventist minister ordained in China. He pioneered Adventism in the southeastern China region of Guangdong and Fujian. Hong, Jizie is the pinyin of his Chinese name, while Ang, Tau Kiet is the romanization of his Chinese name in his native dialect of Chaozhou (). Therefore, early Adventist publications often referred to him as Ang, Tau Kiet.

Hong was born in 1864 in the village of Peh-tah (Baita). Before his conversion to Christianity, he was a county official near Shantao (Swatow) in the province of Guangdong. Early in life, he joined the Baptist Church and

became an ordained elder in charge of an independent Baptist congregation in the town of Chiao-on in eastern Guangdong.¹

Through his contact with Guo Ziying, Hong became interested in the Adventist message. According to Hong's family,² Guo learned about the Sabbath from Timothy Zheng, another Adventist from Singapore, and Guo himself decided to travel to Guangzhou to consult with J. N. Anderson to find out about the Sabbath doctrine. When his boat stopped at Shantao, Guo went ashore to have a look around. Hong and Guo met and started discussing the Sabbath. Hong was not interested initially, as he always had thought that Sunday was the Sabbath and believed that he could prove it from the Bible. To his surprise, he could not find any biblical reference to Sunday being the Sabbath nor could his mentor in the Baptist Church. After some research, Hong decided to accept that Saturday is indeed the Sabbath mentioned in the Bible. Resigning from his county post, he decided to begin observing the Sabbath. It was not an easy decision to give up a good income. Only three of his six children followed him from their Baptist faith to the Adventist one. When he announced his decision to his Baptist congregation, many of them also decided to join Hong in accepting the Sabbath belief. Interestingly, the day on which they made that decision fell on the Chinese New Year Day which happened to be a Saturday in that year.³ Their church building became the first property owned by the Shantao Mission of Seventh-day Adventists.⁴

In addition to giving up his lucrative county position, he also sold many of his properties, distributing part of the proceeds to the poor and using the remainder to build a school. As an enthusiastic leader, he began to spread the Adventist message in that part of the Guangdong province. Friendly, sincere, and generous, he was able to win many to Christ. He opened new mission stations, distributed printed literature, and even employed others to preach the gospel at his own expense before the Seventh-day Adventist mission provided financial aid for his work. For about 25 years, he opened schools and established churches in seven of the 12 districts in the Shantao Mission. Hong and Gou labored together to start a new mission station at Kityang.⁵ In 1915 Hong was ordained into the Seventh-day Adventist ministry, becoming the second Chinese national to be ordained after Gou.⁶ In addition to being an evangelist, Hong also served as the treasurer in the Swatow Mission of Seventh-day Adventists for a number of years.⁷

Reportedly, Harry Miller, the famed China Doctor, once asked Hong how he (Miller) could become a more effective witness to the Chinese people. Hong replied, "You have to wear a Chinese mandarin robe, wear cloth shoes, eat rice and soybeans; then your eyes will be transformed into the small Chinese eyes." Hong then gave Miller a small Chinese black hat with a "pig-tail" hair attachment. Miller played along with the suggestion and decided to give his fellow expatriates a surprise by putting on the hat. But it was a very windy day. When someone opened the door, the wind blew the hat and the black "pig-tail" away, and Miller regained his Western appearance. Everyone in the mission office had a good laugh.⁸

In 1928, Hong's health began to fail and eventually he became paralyzed on his right side. Hong Jizie died in 1936 and was buried in his native village of Peh-Tah.⁹

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, second rev. ed. (1996), s.v. "Ang, Tau Kiet."
2. "Ang Tau Kiet," in *Chinese SDA History*, ed. Samuel Young (Hong Kong: Chinese Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, 2002), 513; oral testimonies from Chen Hong Zhengqing () and Ni Chen Lelian (), Hong Jizie's daughter and granddaughter respectively.
3. Bruce Lo, "Ang Tau Kiet" in *Adventism in China*, accessed June 15, 2016, www.adventisminchina.org/individual-name/nationals/angtaukiet.
4. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, second rev. ed. (1996), s.v. "Ang, Tau Kiet."
5. K. T. Khng, "The Spirit of the Pioneers," *The China Division Reporter*, March 1, 1931.
6. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, second rev. ed. (1996), s.v. "Ang, Tau Kiet."
7. "Ang Tau Kiet," in *Chinese SDA History*, 513.
8. Ibid.
9. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, second rev. ed. (1996), s.v. "Ang, Tau Kiet."

