

# Asia Harvest



Swing the Sickle for the Harvest is Ripe! (Joel 3:13)

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## The Galilee of China

Inside China's Mighty Revival

# From the Frontlines

with Paul & Joy Hattaway

*"I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come" (Ephesians 1:18-21).*

In recent months a number of friends have told us they are greatly alarmed by political and economic developments in their country that have started to change life as they have known it. There is much fear for the future as power-hungry leaders push through agendas that have the potential to further destroy the fabric of society, while at the same time crushing future generations with a colossal debt burden that they have no chance of ever paying off.

As Christians we should be concerned about any activity that goes against God's principles and Word, but we should also be careful not to get so focused on the things of this world that fear grips our hearts and we are plunged into hopelessness.

Hope is a wonderful gift from God. It helps us get through difficult times, and allows us to prioritize our lives to seek God's purposes instead of our own. The Bible says that hope makes us "very bold" (2 Cor. 3:12), but conversely, hopelessness and despair will sap our energy, cloud our judgment, and take our focus away from Jesus.

We need to make sure our hope is invested correctly. Who is your hope set upon? The Apostle Paul wrote, *"In our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us"* (2 Cor. 1:9-10).

Our hope must not be in politicians, lawmakers, or any man. It must not be in money or economic recoveries (see 1 Timothy 6:17), or any other earthly

thing. The Bible makes it clear where our hope is to be: *"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."* (Colossians 3:1-4).

If you are a child of God, therefore, we encourage you to make sure your hope is in the right place, or rather, in the right person. The Lord Jesus Christ is our hope. When our confidence and hope is in Him, our life is anchored and we will sleep well at night, regardless of the circumstances and storms all around us.

One of the greatest weapons available to us is hope. We must hope in Jesus and His promises that those who walk with Him will one day be with Him forever. We hope that God will one day right all that is wrong with this world, and we hope that our own marred state will be made whole when Jesus returns for His bride. For *"we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure"* (1 John 3:2-3).

Many times we are asked how believers in countries like China and Vietnam have been able to endure decades of harsh persecution and imprisonment. There are many lessons we can learn from them, as we have no doubt there are very difficult times ahead for real Christians regardless of what country you live in.

After spending many years around persecuted believers, we came to realize that they have learned to place their hope completely in God. The circumstances of their lives have been so difficult that they have abandoned hope in the things of this rotten and corrupt world. They have seen that the world offers nothing but pain and confusion. Too often believers in "free" countries have placed our hope in our church buildings or leaders, our schools, programs and education.

We believe God is helping Christians around the world reprioritize their lives, so that we will once again put our relationship with Jesus above everything else. Let's live as pilgrims passing through this world, and not as though it is our final destination.

Friend, if you have allowed the things of this world and the burdens of life to take you away from your first love - Jesus Christ - we encourage you to stop, spend time with Him, and once again place your hope and trust in Him, for He alone is worthy!

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*Cover picture: Four Christian women from Henan Province, China, after their baptism in 1899.*

# THE GALILEE OF CHINA

*We are glad to announce the release of our second book in the 'Fire & Blood' series on the Church in China. Volume 2 profiles Christianity in Henan Province.*

*While the book contains numerous modern-day accounts of miracles and how God has worked powerfully in Henan, for this newsletter we have decided to go back in time and profile the ministry of the Canadian missionary Jonathan Goforth, who was used mightily by God to bring revival to the province in the early 1900s. Such was the impact of his ministry, Goforth came to be known as 'China's greatest evangelist.'*

*Godly preachers like Goforth set an example for the current day revival in Henan that has resulted in the province having approximately 14 million Christians today - more than any other province in China.*

*The following article is adapted from 'Henan: The Galilee of China.' We pray it will encourage you. Information about how to order the book can be found on the insert sheet in this newsletter.*

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## **Jonathan Goforth — 'China's Greatest Evangelist'**

The aptly-named Jonathan Goforth ranks among the greatest foreign missionaries of his era. He was an instrument used mightily by God in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Goforth was born on a farm in 1859 near Thorndale in Ontario, Canada. The seventh of eleven children, he gave his life to Jesus Christ at the age of 18 and soon commenced his ministry of winning others to faith.

Goforth's interest in missions piqued after he heard an appeal by a veteran missionary. The young Canadian met Rosalind in the spring of 1885. She had been praying for a husband who was fully dedicated to God and His work. Later that year they were engaged after Jonathan asked Rosalind, "Will you join your life with mine for China? And will you give me your promise that *always* you will allow me to put my Lord and His work first, even before you?" She immediately replied, "Yes, I will *always*."

Rosalind soon got her first taste of the sacrifice she would encounter during her life as the wife of Jonathan Goforth. Her dreams of an engagement ring were dashed when he told her that the money he would have spent for a ring was instead used to purchase Christian literature.

## ***The Search for God's Power***

After arriving in China the Goforths settled in northern Henan Province, which was to be their home for decades to come. The early years of ministry in Henan proved difficult, and the powerful revival that God brought to China



*Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth*

through the Goforths in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century almost never took place. During the 1900 Boxer Rebellion, Jonathan was almost killed by bandits, who hacked him with swords to his back, neck, and head. He managed to escape with his life by the providence of God, and the shell-shocked Goforth family left China to recover from their ordeal.

Jonathan returned to China in 1901 a changed man. He had been grieved by the dead Christianity he encountered at home, and was also dissatisfied by the lukewarmness he saw among the Christians in China. Many in the churches had accepted a new liberal Christianity, which made them carnal and cold-hearted towards the things of God.

Goforth studied the Bible for an answer, declaring that, "Every passage that had any bearing upon the price of, or the road to, the accession of power became life and breath to me."

He read many books on revival, and was deeply impressed by the writings of Charles Finney. As he prayed, Goforth felt the Lord

impress on him that revival would be poured out on any servant who confessed their sins, repented, and obeyed everything the Holy Spirit told them to.

In 1906 Goforth was preaching in a remote town when he fell under heavy conviction. The Lord commanded him to go and reconcile himself with a Christian brother. Goforth tried to argue with the Lord, pointing out that the point of contention was the fault of the other man. He tried to continue preaching, but his message was awkward and without power. He stopped speaking, bowed his head, and promised the Lord he would go and see the man immediately after the meeting. The whole spiritual atmosphere of the meeting changed, and many tearful confessions of sin were made throughout the congregation. In the following months the same happened at every meeting Goforth spoke at. The Holy Spirit moved in a mighty way, and many wrongs were made right.

For the next decade Jonathan Goforth led revival meetings all over China. Often he would preach for eight hours a day, to crowds of up to 25,000 people. Thousands of sinners experienced the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and multitudes of Christians were awakened to a more vital relationship with God. The meetings were often characterized by public confession of sin and repentance.

### *When Heaven Came to Anyang*

A series of revival meetings was arranged in the Goforth's home town of Anyang. As the power of God was manifest in the



meetings, many attendees rushed back to their villages and encouraged their relatives and friends to come and experience God for themselves. On one occasion the meeting place was packed out, and the large adjoining pavilion that had been erected for the meetings could not contain the crowds.

So many people were gripped with the fear of God that they desired nothing more than to confess their sins and be cleansed by the Blood of Jesus Christ. As a result, Goforth was unable to deliver any message for the remainder of the meetings. Visitors, who travelled from outlying areas to attend the meetings, were often deeply affected by God's Spirit even before they had arrived at the church. Many people were found kneeling on the street or in their rooms, confessing their sins and desiring to enter into right relationship with Jesus Christ.

On the seventh evening one of the missionaries confessed that he had been opposing Goforth, and telling others that reports from the evangelist's meetings in other parts of China were fabricated. He asked Goforth to forgive him, then turned and asked the whole church to forgive him.

Another of the missionaries heard many school boys confessing their sins publicly, in deep anguish of spirit. The missionary mocked this in his heart, believing the boys were just mimicking the earlier confessions of the adults. He didn't believe teenage boys could possibly perform the kinds of sins and depravity that they were confessing. Gradually, however, the Holy

Spirit had mercy on the man and he too came under the transforming power of God. He admitted his pride and foolishness, and vowed to never again pretend to know more than the Holy Spirit. Goforth wrote,

*During these last days a number, who had held out up till then, felt that things were becoming too hot for them and tried to run away. But they found out what a difficult thing it is to escape from a seeking God. Some only got half way home, when the pressure became so unbearable that they had to turn around and come back. Others got all the way home, but, finding no relief, they returned.*

One wealthy man, to whom the thought of confessing his sins in public was abhorrent, came back to the church and begged for the chance to nail his sins to the foot of the cross. When he found a long line of people waiting in line for the opportunity to give their confessions, he cried out, "I can't wait. I'll burst if I'm not given a chance to confess my sin right away." Then followed the confession—coming like a torrent, bursting through the dam which had tried to hold it in check.

Before the revival there were only about 100 Christians in Anyang, out of a population at the time of 250,000. That means that just one in every 2,500 residents in Anyang knew Jesus Christ.

Today the gospel seeds that were sown a century ago have produced a bountiful harvest in Anyang. There are presently about 200,000 believers throughout

Anyang City and the surrounding county. The population is just over two million, meaning that today one in ten people in Anyang are followers of Jesus! The efforts of the Goforths and Chinese pioneers laid the groundwork for a wonderful harvest of souls for the kingdom of God in Anyang, and throughout all of Henan Province.

In 1918 Goforth led revival meetings among Chinese soldiers under the command of General Feng Yuxiang. After two weeks of powerful preaching, a Communion service was held for those who had consecrated themselves to Christ, with nearly 5,000 officers and soldiers participating (see the picture below). Goforth reported on one of the meetings:

*As General Feng prayed, the tears rolled down his face until there was a pool where he knelt on the platform. While he was praying,*

*officers all over the place were crying and sobbing and confessing their sins. It was a never-to-be-forgotten scene as the Holy Spirit came down and swept over that great gathering of officers and men, cleansing and purging, and purifying and reviving.*

### ***Yang the Champion Boxer***

The town of Guangshan was visited by Goforth in December 1915. During eight days of meetings there, 154 people were baptized and thousands more heard the gospel for the first time.

One of those who came to Christ was a man named Yang, a former champion boxer. He had been the greatest prize-fighter in the region, and nobody had ever knocked him out. Many had lost their fortunes betting against Yang, and they consequently harbored a grudge against him.



*Jonathan Goforth preaching to thousands of Chinese soldiers in 1918. Five thousand soldiers confessed faith in Christ after two weeks of meetings.*

When news got around that the great fighter Yang had become a Christian, his enemies saw it as an opportunity to get revenge on him. One day, while Yang was in the marketplace, a mob of men surrounded him and almost beat him to death. He was found by some friends and carried home. The missionaries wanted the perpetrators arrested, but Yang begged them not to get involved, and refused to bring charges against his attackers.

A few months later he had recovered from his injuries and was again seen walking around the town. His enemies were furious, and decided this time they would finish him off. Yang was so terribly beaten the second time that for months his family despaired of his life. He slowly recovered, and again insisted that no charges be brought against the thugs. Goforth recalled,

*As soon as he had recovered, he went around the country preaching the gospel. He died a few years after I met him. But it was not before he had led many of his old enemies to Christ. He left a church of 600 members in his own village, and ten other churches scattered throughout the surrounding country.*

Heaven came down to Henan during those blessed days, and thousands of people entered into relationship with Jesus Christ for the first time. Many Christians repented of their sins and found new freedom in their lives.

People who had stolen items from their neighbors returned them, and sick marriages were restored to health. Many opium addicts were wonderfully and

powerfully delivered, and never returned to the drug again. Perhaps the greatest result was the new unity and love that developed between Christian leaders.

### *Lives Well Spent for Jesus*

For almost 50 years Rosalind proved a wonderful partner to her husband. Following the call of God cost the Goforths dearly, and five of their eleven children were buried on Chinese soil. Rosalind never doubted Jonathan's love for her, but she often struggled with the level of intense commitment he had to the Lord and his work.

In the early 1930s Jonathan's eyesight started to diminish. He became totally blind and the Goforths retired to Canada in 1934, where the man dubbed 'China's greatest evangelist' went to his eternal reward two years later at the age of 76.



**We believe 'Henan: The Galilee of China' will encourage and inspire you as you learn what God is doing today in China. If you send a donation to any Asia Harvest project, please note that you would like a copy of Henan book and we will send you one. If you can not afford to send a gift, please let us know and we will send you a complimentary copy anyway.**



## Update on the China Living Martyrs' fund

More than eight years ago we established this crucial project after being asked to do so by a group of senior Chinese house church leaders. Since that time we have been amazed and thankful to see how the Holy Spirit has led many Christians to pray for and support the injured and sick believers in China who are supported by this project.

From the start we have kept the amount of support for the China Living Martyrs' fund at \$25 per month. However, after consulting with our colleagues, it has become clear that the rising cost of living in China means that **we now need to increase the support level of this project to \$35 per month**. We hope this is not an inconvenience for anyone. All other Asia Harvest projects remain at the same level as before and we do not anticipate any need to change these any time soon.

## Paypal

We have been asked by a number of people recently if Asia Harvest have a Paypal account, for those who wish to contribute to our work that way. We do, and our Paypal email address for donations is **paypal@asiaharvest.org**

## Asia Harvest Website is New & Improved

The Asia Harvest website has been refreshed, with several new features that you might find helpful and interesting, as well as many free resources. Please check out our site at: **www.asiaharvest.org**

Some of the new features include:

- We now have more than 20 video clips on our video page, including several videos of Brother Yun preaching, as well as clips profiling various unreached people groups in Asia.
- How much do you know about Asia? We have a multiple-answer quiz, which we think you will find challenging and informative.
- We now have a huge number (more than 1,500) full-color Asian people group profiles free for you to download and print. Most of these are pages taken from our books like *Operation China* and *Peoples of the Buddhist World*. Please feel free to use this resource extensively.

## CHINA BIBLE PRINTING



*Current Total: 2,577,208 Bibles printed and delivered.*

We are partnering with house churches in China in a long-term goal to print Bibles for Christians. We receive countless requests from house church leaders throughout the country, requesting God's Word for their congregations. These Bibles are distributed free of charge to all parts of China, equipping the believers and helping add fuel to the fires of revival that are burning brightly. **Each full Bible costs just \$1.80 to print and deliver.**

## ASIAN WORKERS' FUND

*Thanks to your gifts we are currently able to support 419 Asian evangelists working among 104 unreached tribes and ethnic groups.*



The **Asian Workers Fund** assists church-planting evangelists who are involved in strategic ministry in Asia. These servants of the Lord have committed their whole lives to the Gospel but are hindered by lack of finances. We only support evangelists/missionaries and not pastors, as we believe pastors should be supported by the flocks they shepherd. Please pray about whether you or your church could help support these dedicated workers, at **\$25 per month** each. A prayer card is sent to all regular donors.

## SOUTHEAST ASIA BIBLE FUND



*Current Total: 147,217 Bibles Printed in 24 languages*

The Communist nations of Laos and Vietnam are home to more than 250 different tribes, dozens of which had full Bibles or New Testaments translated into their languages prior to the arrival of Communism in 1975. Since then, these believers have been deprived of Bibles by the authorities. We are also providing God's Word to tribes in Myanmar (Burma) and other Southeast Asian nations as the need arises. **Each Bible costs \$2.70 to print and deliver.**

## CHINA LIVING MARTYRS' FUND

*Because of your partnership we are supporting 751 living martyrs.*



"A martyr is a Christian who chooses to suffer death rather than deny Christ or His work... One who sacrifices something very important to further the Kingdom of God and endures great suffering for Christian witness." (The Voice of the Martyrs)

The **China Living Martyrs Fund** assists pastors and evangelists who are unable to work because of injuries or illness caused by persecution. They and their families face extreme poverty and hardship. Through a gift of **\$35 per month** you can help support one of these living martyrs. A prayer card is sent to every regular supporter of this project.

## PROJECT SMILE



*Your generous gifts have so far helped bring a smile to the faces of 6,989 children in Vietnam.*

**Project Smile** helps children from poor families in Vietnam who were born with disabilities such as cleft palates, cleft lips and club feet, as well as others who need operations for burns, cancerous growths and other conditions. The cost of helping a child varies depending on the kind of surgery required, but each gift received of **\$60** helps a child have a better life. A laminated prayer card of a child helped through Project Smile is sent to all donors.

## ASIA DISASTER RELIEF FUND



*Transforming lives from ashes to beauty with God's love.*

Over the years Asia Harvest has provided relief assistance to the victims of natural disasters such as the earthquake in China and cyclone in Myanmar (Burma); the Tsunami, and a host of other disasters in India, Afghanistan, Vietnam, and elsewhere. In addition to providing aid through medicine, tents, blankets, food and water, rebuilding homes etc., the Christians we partner with take every opportunity to share the Gospel, and thousands of people have come to know Jesus Christ. This long-term fund helps us respond immediately whenever a disaster strikes.



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