

Asia Harvest



'Put in the Sickle, for the Harvest has Come!' (Mark 4:29)

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The Northern Khampa Tibetans

An Opportunity through Disaster

From the Frontlines

with Paul & Joy Hattaway

Recently I boarded a flight out of Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal in the Himalayas, where we had been for meetings and to encourage some of the local workers. As the plane rose above the clouds I was hoping for views of Mount Everest, but the hazy, dusty conditions put paid to that. Instead, I settled into my seat at the back of the plane and flicked through a copy of *Time* magazine. One article caught my attention. It was titled, *Salvation Armies: Evangelical Christianity is Booming in Asia*.

It was both surprising and refreshing to read such a report in a secular magazine. It stated there were 101 million Christians in Asia in 1970, but this number had grown rapidly to 351 million by 2005, and was continuing to increase daily.

Indeed, God is doing a wonderful and powerful work throughout many parts of Asia, and it is a great blessing for us to be able to see and hear testimonies of communities bring transformed by the power of the Gospel. We have been privileged to serve in this part of the world and play a role as one small chain in the link of God's advancing kingdom.

Nepal is one country where the Church has experienced a dramatic surge. In the 1950s there were just 25 known Christians in the entire country, which is home to more than 100 different tribes and ethnic groups. By 1990, when I first went there, the Church in Nepal had grown to about 25,000 members. Today, many researchers believe there are around 600,000 believers scattered throughout the country. That represents a 24-fold increase just since 1990!

God has used circumstances to bring many Asian people into His kingdom. Do you know, for example, that thousands of Muslims in Indonesia have come to Christ in recent years because they have been turned off radical Islam and the growth of terrorism. Many Muslims have become disillusioned with their faith and have experienced new life in Jesus.

In Myanmar (formerly Burma), Christianity was treated with suspicion by the government leaders who suppressed it in favor of Buddhism. In September 2007, Buddhist monks led a protest in the streets of the capital city which was brutally put down by the military. Since that time, the authorities have shunned the Buddhists and have begun to show more favor to Christians. This appreciation grew as a result of the selfless and loving actions of many Christian groups during the destruction of Cyclone Nargis in 2008. One of our coworkers in that nation recently told us the churches in many parts of Myanmar are overflowing with people. Many fellowships have

experienced 400% or 500% growth in the last 18 months.

I have found that sometimes when Christians in other parts of the world hear about revival in Asia they feel somewhat disconnected, especially if they live in a country where the church is in decline, or stagnant at best. Some people who have not been to Asia presume things must be so wonderful and godly there that Asia does not need their help or concern any more. Such thinking is wrong! While it is true that God has been moving in many places of Asia, it is equally true that huge sections of humanity in Asia remain totally unreached and have never heard of Jesus in a way that would enable them to make a decision to embrace or reject Him.

If I could take you through the streets of large cities like New Delhi, Mumbai (Bombay), Hanoi, Kathmandu, Dhaka, Bangkok, Lhasa or Karachi, you would be overwhelmed by the poverty, mayhem, demonic oppression, and almost complete lack of knowledge of Jesus Christ. After more than 20 years in Asia we are still overwhelmed when we visit such places.

In rural areas, hundreds of millions of people continue to live in complete spiritual darkness. Two missionary friends recently reported how they shared the Gospel for hours with a family in rural China. Convinced they had made good progress, they asked the family if they had any questions. The mother asked one of the missionaries, “I am still confused about one thing. Which one of you is Jesus—you or this other guy?”

To put things in proper perspective, do you know that....

- While we rejoice over the 600,000 people in Nepal who are now Christians, it is a country of 30 million people, so just two percent of people in Nepal believe in Jesus Christ. Ninety-eight out of 100 people face an eternity in hell, and dozens of tribal groups in the country remain totally untouched by the Gospel.
- In China, where most experts today agree there are about 100 million Christians after 30 years of revival, this figure represents just 7% of the population. It is a big place! At least 200 ethnic minority groups in China have yet to be properly engaged by any Christian witness. Despite the advances in China, there are still untold millions of people who have never heard the Name of Jesus in their lives. The rate people are being saved in China is still lower than the birthrate, so every year there are more unsaved people in China than the year before.

In this newsletter we present a tremendous opportunity for the Gospel among one of the most needy and unreached people groups in China—the Northern Khampa Tibetans. No matter how bad things might be where you live, I guarantee they are not as bad as life among this group! For thousands of years they have been trapped in demonic darkness, captive to powerful evil forces. Let's pray for a breakthrough for the kingdom of God!

We thank Nancy Sturrock, who took most of the pictures in this newsletter.

THE NORTHERN KHAMPA TIBETANS

An Opportunity Through Disaster



C.S. Lewis once wrote, “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us on our conscience, but shouts in our pains: It is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”

In recent years we have witnessed how natural disasters have opened up whole communities in Asia to the claims of the Gospel. The tragic tsunami, for example, struck in many parts of Asia that were among the most resistant to the Gospel. Today tens of thousands of people who lost everything in the tsunami have found

something, or Someone, more important than everything they lost.

The 2008 earthquake in Sichuan, China, struck in a region where the kingdom of God had struggled to make much of an impact. As a result of Christians helping those whose lives had been devastated, today tens of thousands of people in northern Sichuan are followers of Jesus Christ.

Recently, on April 14, another large earthquake struck western China—this

time centered on the remote town of Yushu in Qinghai Province. At the time of writing, more than 2,200 people are confirmed dead, countless injured, and thousands of homes have been reduced to rubble.

Every Christian will be aware that there is a remarkable increase in the number of earthquakes and other natural disasters occurring throughout the world today, just as Jesus predicted would happen in the lead up to His return (see Matthew 24). Instead of sitting on our backsides waiting for that glorious day, however, the Lord wants us to be actively winning people to Him while there are still opportunities. He told His disciples, ***“As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work”*** (John 9:4).

The Yushu earthquake took place at the very center of a completely unreachable people group, the Northern Khampa Tibetans, who are surely one of the most difficult groups to reach anywhere in the world because of the geographical, cultural, linguistic and spiritual

barriers that have prevented them hearing the Gospel for centuries.

The 150,000 Northern Khampa Tibetans are one of four distinct Khampa language groups in China, who together total more than two million people. They are among the toughest people in the world, living at





altitudes more than 10,000 feet above sea-level. Many Northern Khampa are nomads, inhabiting a high plateau where they herd sheep, goats and yaks. Life is difficult, especially during the long, bitter winter months when the temperature plummets to minus 20 degrees and their communities are snowed-in for extended periods. This harsh life on the bitter plateau results in an average life expectancy of only about 45 years.

When one anthropologist visited this group in 1964, he reported, "The Khampas stand a good six feet in height. They wear great heavy boots and flowing khaki robes that flap like whips when they walk. They have large fierce eyes set beside bead-like noses, and long hair braided and wound around their heads."

The Khampa are easily identifiable by the red and black tassels braided into their

hair. They say they wear these to protect their scalps during knife fights.

During our visits to this region we have seen both the best and worst of the Khampa people. On one hand they are usually extremely hospitable and kind to visitors, and always seem to be laughing and smiling. At other times, however, they can be threatening and violent, invariably after consuming alcohol. Khampa men are always armed with knives, guns or swords, and they are not slow to use them if necessary.

For centuries the Khampa region was an untamed, lawless one. The Chinese were too afraid to enter the area for fear of being murdered. It was not until the 1950s and 60s that the Chinese claimed control over the area, although revolts and unease have continued to the present day.

The Khampa profess to be Buddhists, although their Buddhist belief may be described as a veneer thrown over their real religious practices, which is the worship of fearsome and vengeful demons that must be placated by constant offerings lest they bring disaster on a community, family, or individual.

The Northern Khampa rely on demons, ghosts and the spirits of disembodied deities to guide their decisions. Many monks are able to call up fearsome demons, which sometimes visualize in front of them. They also worship Yama, the god of death. They believe he is the king of the underworld and that he controls the events of their lives.

In recent years a small number of brave Christians have begun working among the Northern Khampa Christians. Progress has been slow and difficult, but it is believed a very small number of Khampa have professed faith in Jesus Christ. Those who have become Christians face being ostracized by their own families.

Please pray the recent disaster will open many Northern Khampa Tibetans to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Ask God to glorify His Name among these people, and to reveal His love and mercy to them.



How will they hear? For centuries the Northern Khampa Tibetans have lived and died without knowing what Jesus Christ died for them. Pray this generation will hear the Good News and believe in the living Son of God.

An Opportunity to Help Body and Soul



On April 14 a huge earthquake, measuring 7.1 on the Richter scale, struck the town of Yushu, home to 85,000 people and the center of the Northern Khampa Tibetan people. More than 90% of the buildings in Yushu collapsed. The above pictures show what the town looked like before the 'quake, and what it looks like now. At the time of writing, the death toll has reached 2,200 people, with many more missing and thousands of homes destroyed.

It is hard to imagine a more difficult and remote location for such a disaster to strike. Many of the villages that were devastated lie at high altitude, and temperatures are below freezing at night. Some of the Chinese soldiers sent to help have suffered from potentially-fatal altitude sickness.

Within hours of the earthquake striking, a team of Chinese Christians travelled to the disaster zone to help. Most of these believers were involved with the earthquake relief efforts in Sichuan Province in 2008. The combination of their loving help and bold witness for Jesus Christ saw thousands of people in Sichuan come to faith in the Living God.

In Yushu they initially provided blankets and warm coats to the people, and after surveying the needs they initiated a plan to initially provide at least 500 Emergency Aid Kits to the worst affected-families. The kits include:

- 1 solar panel with battery lightning system and USB charger (pictured)
- 2 'sub-zero sleeping bags
- 10 pound (5 kg) bag of rice
- 1 bottle of cooking oil and one frying pan
- 1 first-aid kit with gauze, medicine, and bandages



Each kit costs \$100 to produce and deliver into the hands of the most needy families in Yushu Prefecture. If you would like to help with this urgent need it would be greatly appreciated. You can do so by sending a donation and marking it for the **“Asia Disaster Relief fund”** on the yellow Response form in this newsletter. If you are familiar with our work you will know that **100% of gifts to the Asia Disaster Relief fund will be sent directly to the need.** Not a cent will be used for administration or any other expense. We cover all such costs ourselves as it is the least we can do during such a time of need.

Please pray for the Northern Khampa Tibetans and all people affected by this earthquake. Pray the Name of Jesus will be lifted up in this needy area, so many people will be helped not only physically but also spiritually as they experience God's salvation through Jesus Christ.

CD Resources Available from Asia Harvest



The Heavenly Man Audio CDs

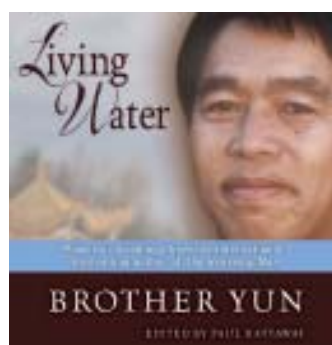
Now for the first time this bestselling biography of Brother Yun is available, professionally read onto a set

of 8 CDs. You can now listen to this God-glorifying testimony while in your car, at home, or wherever is most convenient.

Living Water Audio CDs

The powerful Bible teachings of Brother Yun are available in audio book form, read onto a set of 7

CDs. These simple yet profound insights into God's Word will challenge you and enrich your spiritual life.



Operation China CD-ROM

This classic book is available on CD ROM. It contains all of *Operation China*, which was described by OMF as "China book of the decade." The CD has an inbuilt search engine and you can access all of the stunning

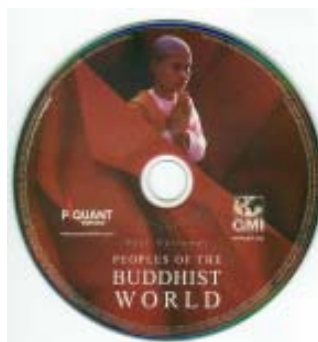


750 color pictures that helped the book make such an impact for the 490 unreached people groups of China.

Peoples of the Buddhist World CD-ROM

Peoples of the Buddhist World is the first ever attempt to profile all the Buddhist ethnic groups in the world. Beautifully illustrated with 500

superb color photographs to compliment the 238 prayer profiles, the contents of the book can be saved to your computer for easy access.



SPECIAL DEALS AVAILABLE TO OUR NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

You can order any one of the above CDs for \$20 including postage (to anywhere in the world). Order any two for \$30, three for \$40, or a set of all four CDs for \$50 (The normal retail price for all four is \$83). Please send a note stating which CDs you are ordering when you write to any of the Asia Harvest addresses listed on the back page of this newsletter. Alternatively, if you send a donation to any of our projects and would like to receive ONE of these CDs as a gift, please let us know and we will send you the one you request.

CHINA BIBLE PRINTING



Current Total: 3,003,823 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 446 Asian evangelists working among 107 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: 165,073 Bibles Printed in 30 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 and South 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 707 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 8,382 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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