

Asia Harvest

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



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Arunachal Pradesh

Little-Known Home to 67 unreached tribes

From the Front Lines

with Paul & Joy Hattaway

A few years ago, during a ministry trip to the United Kingdom, I was driving through southern Scotland when I noticed a sign to the town of Lockerbie, the place where a Pan Am jumbo jet crashed after being blown out of the sky by a Libyan terrorist bomb in 1988. Having a little time to spare, I made a detour and soon found the graveyard.

I walked around the graveyard for about half an hour, reading the tombstones and memorials to the 270 victims of Pan Am flight 103. Reading the names and seeing the pictures of the dead made this barbarous act much more real to me. I started to feel anger for the carnage and waste of life. As I drove away from Lockerbie, it started to dawn on me that for more than one thousand years Libya has been a Gospel-starved land. Could we expect anything better from a nation that lives in complete demonic darkness, without any light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Similar feelings flooded my mind when I saw, as you have, the horrendous scenes of September 11, 2001 in the United States. Five thousand people killed in an instant by Satanically-inspired Muslim terrorists.

In one of our newsletters more than three years ago (#50, September 1998), we warned readers about the Taliban in Afghanistan and what a terrible blight on the world they could potentially be. Unfortunately, the reality of this came in September.

Should Christians be angry for what occurred? Certainly! All sin and human suffering should give us a righteous anger. But when we look past that, should we really be surprised that people's hearts could become so evil when they have been blocked off from the Gospel for generation after generation, century after century? Is it all the fault of Afghanistan, or are disobedient Christians also to blame? Two thousand years after Jesus **commanded** his followers to ***"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation"*** (Mark 16:15), do we care that 26 million people in more than 40 distinct people groups in Afghanistan are still waiting to hear it?

Charles Spurgeon, the great 19th century English preacher, was once asked, "Will the heathen who have never heard the Gospel possibly be saved when they die?" He replied, "The question should be, 'If we continue to disobey God and ignore the claims of the heathen, will it be possible for **us** to be saved?'"

Sure, there have been a few courageous missionaries who have ventured into Afghanistan, risking their very lives to see the Gospel planted there. As I write this, eight of those missionaries are languishing in a prison cell for the sake of Jesus Christ. But overall the Church has disobeyed Jesus' command in Afghanistan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran... and numerous other "hard" places around the world. Not many Christians have been

willing to lay down their lives for the task. If you are a Christian, then it is your responsibility to do what God commands, to pray for the nations, and do whatever it takes to see them come to know Jesus. It's no point saying, "The Christians over there can reach Afghanistan." **There are none! Afghanistan is home to 48,000 Muslim mosques and not a single church!**

It is **ONLY** the Blood of Jesus that saves. It is **ONLY** the Life of Jesus in a person's heart that can change us and make us live pleasing to God. When a society is left alone to fester and rot without any knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus, it will become darker and darker until the natural consequence is that acts like those of September 11th will take place.

If you are a Christian, do not feel proud that you or your culture are better than a place like Afghanistan. It is only by the grace of God. Without His love and life we would also be terrorists in one form or another, "deceiving and being deceived" as the Bible says. (2 Tim.3:13)

We are all brutal savages without the light of Jesus in our hearts.

It is not "politically correct" these days to compare religions or suggest one way of living is better than another. But we would rather live by the Word of God! We believe Jesus is the **ONLY** way to heaven. Only by repenting and living for Him can a person be saved from hell. He is the **ONLY** answer for mankind. Islam can never cleanse a person's heart, Buddhism and Hinduism are not acceptable to God. Joining a particular church or denomination will not save you, ***"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*** (Acts 4:12)

We believe the Word of God teaches all people who are not born-again believers in Jesus Christ will surely go to hell when they die, and will dwell in darkness and ignorance while they are alive here. That is why we are missionaries. We are not here because we are some kind of special people (we certainly are not!), or because we love to live in Asia, or because we had nothing better to do. No! We are here because we believe people are lost outside of Jesus Christ, and we want to share the blessings that God has showered on our own lives when He saved us from the pit and placed our feet upon the Rock - Jesus Christ.

It is for this reason that we have been helping Afghan people both inside Afghanistan and among refugee camps in Pakistan for several years now. We have helped Christians feed them, house them, clothe them, and tell them of Jesus' love for each soul. Some have responded to the Gospel.

Now is **not** the time for Christians around the world to withdraw their prayers, interest and resources from missionary work! In fact, your involvement now is more needed than ever before!

In this issue we examine another place where spiritual darkness and decay reigns - the state of Arunachal Pradesh in northeast India. You have probably never heard of Arunachal Pradesh, yet it is home to more than 60 tribes who have never been reached by the Gospel. Please open your hearts as you read and allow God to speak to you how you could pray or be involved in being a blessing to this neglected part of the world.





Arunachal Pradesh - The Land of Dawn

In today's modern information age we sometimes forget there are still some remarkably isolated areas of the world left, where few white men have ever set foot. Arunachal Pradesh, a state in northeast India sandwiched between China, India, and Myanmar, is one such place.

The world has largely forgotten about Arunachal, which means "Land of the Dawn." It contains the world's largest mountain range to the north (the Himalayas); deep, impenetrable jungles and river valleys in the central parts; and more accessible and fertile areas in the south.

Despite there being less than 900,000 people in the whole state, they are divided into more

than 60 distinct tribes and language groups, making Arunachal Pradesh one of the most ethnically-diverse areas in the world.

Arunachal Pradesh is unique. In the mid-1900s a European anthropologist named von Haimendorf persuaded the government of India to leave Arunachal alone as a kind of "anthropological zoo." This man, who hated missionaries, wanted the dozens of isolated tribes of Arunachal to remain in their primitive state, untouched by all outside influence. Few roads were constructed in the state, and until recently there were few schools, hospitals, or other infrastructure.

Not only were Westerners and missionaries banned from setting foot in the state, but until recently even other Indian citizens were not permitted to enter Arunachal. Even today a lot of paperwork is required to get permission just to visit.

In the 1970s the *National Geographic* magazine did receive permission to do an article on the peoples of Arunachal Pradesh. They were amazed to find people living in societies

not far removed from cavemen. Many tribes existed by hunting with bows and arrows. They even reported finding one tribe who lived in trees, walking around naked in the jungle, eating roots and berries.

Unfortunately, the Body of Christ has also largely forgotten about this small part of the world, where tribes have survived for thousands of years without the slightest knowledge of the Gospel.

Despite the existence of so many different spoken languages, few tribes possess a written script. This has made it difficult for Bible translators to reach them with the Word of God, as first they must invent an alphabet and teach the people how to read it before they can have access to the Word of God.

Thankfully, God has not forgotten the people of Arunachal Pradesh!

In recent years the number of Christians in Arunachal has grown, largely because of the efforts of missionaries from Nagaland and other parts of India. But most of this growth has occurred among the tribes living in the



more accessible areas in the southern part of the state. The dozens of groups in the jungles and along the Tibetan border are still completely untouched by the Gospel. Few are even aware that Jesus Christ exists or that He died for their sins 2,000 years ago.

Many of our newsletters and books on people groups carry images of smiling men and women dressed in colorful clothing. This newsletter is different! Many of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh have been oppressed by Satanic forces for countless centuries, without even the slightest sign of spiritual light to release them from their bondage. If you look at the picture of the Wancho tribesman on page four you will look into the eyes of man whom Christ died for, but who is still waiting to hear the Good News for the first time.

How will it look on judgement day when the people of Arunachal Pradesh cry out to God, "But none of your people came to tell us about the sacrifice of your Son!" ?

For centuries the 67 tribes hidden away in this remote corner of the world have cried out like Jeremiah, "*The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we are not saved.*" (Jeremiah 8:20)

The time has come for Christians all around the world to rise up and pray for and reach out to these forgotten people! Near the end of this newsletter we mention practical ways you can be involved with work currently underway to take the Gospel to some of the most unreached tribes in Arunachal.

Please take a few minutes in your own personal devotions, or in your church or group, to pray for each of these tribes by name. Very little prayer has ever gone up before God's throne on behalf of these forgotten peoples. Let us begin our walk through mini-profiles of some of the most needy tribes in Arunachal Pradesh....



The APATANI
Population: 22,800

The Apatani people believe they are descended from their mythical father, Abo Tani, who came from a country to the north (Tibet) many centuries ago.

Today they hunt in hills about 5,500-feet above sea-level. The Apatani eat a lot of meat such as pork, beef, and the flesh from an animal called a *mithun* - a large cow-like beast.

Animism (the worship of spirits) is the main religious practice among the Apatani. Shamans (spirit priests) are summoned to placate a number of spirits who are thought responsible for all good and bad that happens in life.

There are a small number of Christians among the Apatani, but most of this group remain trapped in spiritual darkness.

Please pray the Apatani would soon believe and trust in Jesus Christ!



The DIGARU MISHMI
Population: 5,200

The Digaru are the largest of the three Mishmi tribes in Arunachal Pradesh. Like many of the peoples surrounding them, the Digaru Mishmi are believed to have originated in Tibet long ago, before migrating down the river systems into northeast India. Their language is part of the Tibeto-Burman linguistic family.

The Digaru believe they are descended from the tiger, so they worship and honor the spirit of the tiger as the most revered animal in the jungle.

The Digaru Mishmi believe in a wide variety of demons. They believe each spirit is responsible for exercising control over the land and water.

Few Digaru Mishmi have ever placed their trust in the true and Living God. They live enslaved by fear and poverty. ***Please pray God would soon be glorified among the unreached Digaru Mishmi.***



The WANCHO

Population: 44,600

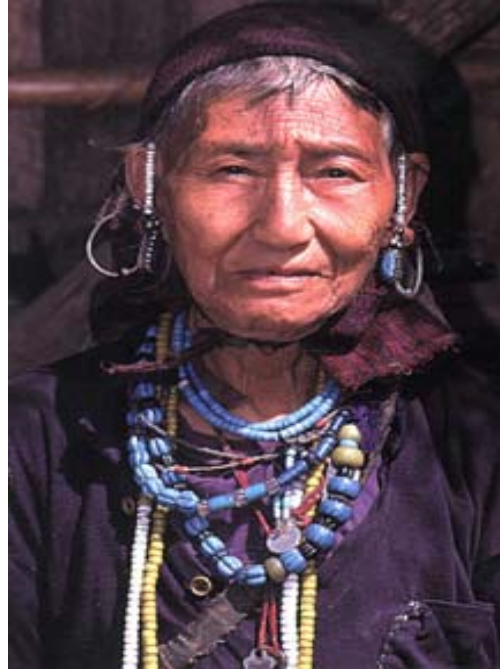
The Wancho people are believed to be related to the Konyak Naga tribe of Myanmar (Burma) and Nagaland. Whereas a great Christian revival has swept through other Naga areas over the past 50 years, the majority of Wancho in Arunachal Pradesh remain animists, worshipping demons and the elements of nature.

The Wancho migrated to Arunachal centuries ago and have been separated from the rest of the Naga world, and the Gospel, ever since.

Both men and women tattoo their bodies and faces. They are not fond of wearing clothes. Most men just wear a simple loincloth to cover their private parts.

The Wancho worship the sun, sky, and land. Each family also worships a spirit they believe resides in one of the pillars of the home. There are just a few small churches among the Wancho people. The majority of villages are completely without a Gospel witness.

Please pray Naga Christians will make a concerted effort to reach this needy tribe with the Good News of salvation in Jesus Name.



The PAILIBO ADI

Population: 1,200

The Pailibo are one of the smallest tribes of the 15 distinct Adi people groups in Arunachal. A small number of Adi also live across the border in southern Tibet. The Pailibo claim to be the descendants of Sisu ('mother earth'). Cat meat is taboo among all Pailibo, while women are also forbidden to eat goats, dogs and snakes.

During delivery, the mother is expected to cut her own umbilical cord. After birth neither the mother or baby are allowed outside the house for five days, as they believe doing so will bring bad luck on the family.

The Pailibo worship Donyi-Polo (the sun and moon god). There are no known Christians among this small tribe. *Fervently pray God would send workers to the Pailibo Adi in the near future.*



The HILL MIRI

Population: 10,050

The Hill Miri inhabit a beautiful area on the southern slopes of the Himalayas. Their diet consists of beef, pork, mutton, and the meat of bears, tigers, monkeys, rats, and birds. They also like to brew their own banana beer.

The Hill Miri worship Doje, whom they consider the Supreme spirit of all mankind. Before a man can make a marriage proposal, he must visit a shaman, or spirit-priest. The priest sacrifices a chicken and examines the lines on the inside of the dead bird's liver, as a form of divination. Only when the priest is certain the spirits will bless the arrangement can the marriage proceed.

Like many of the tribes in this remote part of the world, the Miris worship the sun and moon. Some Hill Miri children who were sent to study outside Arunachal have become Christians, but most of this tribe have never heard the Gospel.



The BUGUN

Population: 900

The Bugun, who are also known as the Khowa, or Kho, are one of the smallest distinct tribes in Arunachal Pradesh - numbering less than one thousand people.

The Bugun inhabit eight villages in the mountains on both sides of the Rupa River, in a beautiful area lined by pine and oak forests. Heavy snow falls each winter. Of the eight Bugun villages, only two are accessible by road.

The Bugun believe in a mixture of Tibetan Buddhism and spirit-worship. They sacrifice to demons and observe a complex array of superstitions, in a bid to keep harmony between themselves and the spirit world.

There is no Gospel witness at all among the Bugun. *Pray this will soon change, and the precious Bugun people will love Jesus as their Lord and Savior.*



The TAGIN
Population: 37,300

One of the largest tribes in Arunachal Pradesh, the Tagin live in a diverse region, ranging from valleys just 1,000 feet above sea level to mountains 18,000 feet-high. Despite their remote locations, the Tagin have skillfully constructed an intricate system of bamboo pipes to channel water into all of their villages.

Tagin men do not like to dress up, but prefer just to sling a blanket over their shoulder to keep warm.

Tagin men are rarely found without a pipe in their mouths, while alcoholism is rampant, even among young children. Polygamy (marrying more than one woman) is allowed. There is believed to be a small number of Tagin believers in the lower areas, but most Tagin remain completely unaware of the existence of Jesus Christ. ***Pray for a breakthrough.***



The SHERDUKPEN
Population: 3,100

The Sherdukpen are followers of Tibetan Buddhism, unlike most of the other tribes in Arunachal who believe in animism. They also practice witchcraft and appease demonic spirits. The Sherdukpen believe they are the descendants of a Tibetan prince who married a princess from the Indian state of Assam.

Living in a cold area about 5,000 feet above sea-level, the Sherdukpen practice polygamy and polyandry. *Polygamy* means a man can have multiple wives; while *polyandry* occurs when two or more brothers share the same wife.

There is not a single known Christian among the Sherdukpen. ***Pray someone will boldly take the Gospel to the Sherdukpen. Pray the Holy Spirit will deeply convict them of sin, righteousness, and judgement.***



The MIJI

Population: 6,500

Spread over about 25 villages in Arunachal, the Miji, who are also known as the Sajalong, like to live at the top of high, densely-forested mountains.

Many Miji women tattoo their faces, while on festivals and special days they dress up with a great deal of ornaments and jewelry.

The most powerful deity worshipped by the Miji is called Zang-Lang. Natural disasters, sickness and death in the village are considered the outcome of evil action by this spirit. To stop the problem the Miji make animal sacrifices to appease him. By sacrificing their valuable animals, the Miji keep themselves trapped in poverty.

The Miji are a close-knit community who resist outside change. They have no Bible and no Gospel witness among them. ***Please pray for a breakthrough in Jesus Name!***



The NISHING

Population: 85,000

The Nishing - also known as Nishi and Dafla - are one of the largest tribes in Arunachal Pradesh. They inhabit a vast area of land, which has led to the existence of numerous subgroups and clans among them.

The Nishing love to chew on mustard seeds. Monkey meat is also a favorite, while they hunt and eat all kinds of birds.

The Nishing worship the sun and moon god, known as Donyi-Polo. This tribe is rare in Arunachal Pradesh because they have some Scriptures - the Gospels of Luke and John - available in their language. Today there may be as many as 2,000 Nishing Christians.

Pray the Nishing believers will grow in grace and take the Gospel to all their tribe, as well as to the dozens of tribes surrounding them who have never heard.



The MONPA

Population: 47,000

The Monpa in Arunachal Pradesh are a collection of six different groups, each speaking their own dialect. The Monpa originally came from Tibet. In fact, a similar number (about 40,000) of Monpas still live inside China today.

The Monpas practice a mix of Tibetan Buddhism and witchcraft. Each community has a spirit priest whose job is to mediate between the people and the spirit world. The identity of the Monpas is closely tied in to their religion, so reaching them with the Gospel has so far been very difficult. They cannot see any need for a Savior, as they do not believe in sin as we know it. The Monpa believe life is an endless cycle of reincarnations, where good and bad deeds are weighed to see what state a person will come back in the next life.

One source states “only one or two Monpas have become Christians and the vast majority have not received the Gospel till now.”

The last two Asia Harvest newsletters have focused on the **Asian Workers Fund**, a project to support Asian missionaries who are reaching out to some of these neglected groups. Several Naga workers are living among the Monpa, endeavoring to present the Gospel to them by deed and word.

These workers have found the going quite tough. Satan does not let whole people groups like the Monpa go without a struggle. The team has encountered fierce demonic opposition to their efforts: sickness, freak snowstorms, persecution, dark figures and faces appearing at their windows and in their rooms at night, and many such occurrences. For those Christians attempting to reach Tibetan people groups, such experiences are quite common.

The Monpa team need your prayer support as they obediently take the Gospel to this dark people group. ***Pray specifically for Satan to be bound over the Monpa, for the team of missionaries reaching them to be united, healthy and focused, and for a door of effective ministry to open to them, resulting in key Monpa people coming to the feet of Jesus Christ.***

Please continue to support our **Asian Workers Fund** prayerfully and financially. This is such a vital project for so many of our Asian brethren who have boldly committed to go to tribes with no knowledge of the Gospel whatsoever. Your partnership is greatly needed!

ASIAN WORKERS FUND

Partnering with Pioneer Asian Evangelists

Because of your prayers and partnership we are currently able to support 62 Asian evangelists for a 12-month period.

Asian churches give their tithes and offerings, but the economy of many places like China or Nepal is so poor that here is little or nothing left for “big” expenses such as sending an evangelist or a missionary to an unreached area. In other cases the church may have enough just to send the worker to the field, but is unable to support them once they are there.

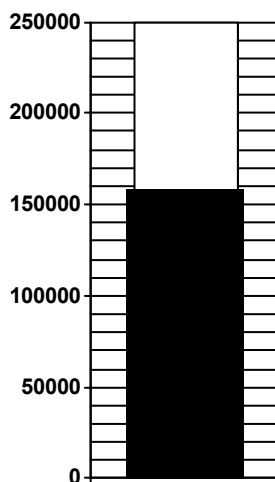
In China some house church evangelists have even sold their own blood at the hospital, receiving just a few cents as payment. They then buy a few meals with this money, giving them enough strength to continue to preach the Gospel for another week or two. Some have fainted from hunger. These servants of the Lord have given their whole lives to the Gospel.

We are in contact with the leaders of literally thousands of church planting evangelists who need support.

The **Asian Workers Fund** will assist many of those workers who are doing strategic work in Asia. Please pray about whether you, your family, home fellowship or church could help support one or more of these workers with help of **\$25 per month each. 100% of your gifts go directly to the workers in need.**

CHINA BIBLE PRINTING

Helping Equip China's Christians with God's Word

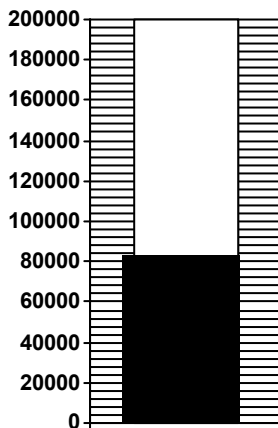


**Current Total: 156,602
Chinese Bibles Printed
Cost: US\$ 2.00 per Bible**

Although a limited number of Bibles are now permitted to be printed inside China, they are not enough to meet the need. Because of the tremendous growth rate of the church in China (some say 30,000 new believers each day), there is a serious lack of Bibles. Millions of Christians are still without God's Word. We are partnering with six large house church networks in China in a long-term goal to print Bibles for the church. These Bibles are distributed to all parts of China, equipping the believers and helping add fuel to the fires of revival that are burning throughout the world's largest nation. **100% of your gifts go directly to printing Bibles. Each Bible costs just US\$ 2.00 to print and deliver.**

OPERATION CHINA

Printing 200,000 books for the Chinese Church



**GOAL: 200,000 books for the
Chinese house churches**
CURRENT TOTAL: 81,656
COST: \$1.20 per book

We have had a great response to our project mentioned in our recent newsletter to print 200,000 Chinese-language copies of our book on China's minority groups for the house church networks of China. The books will help mobilize hundreds of Chinese believers to reach all 490 tribes and people groups in China. Costing just \$ 1.20 for a 500-page book, we have so far received enough finances to print more than 81,600 books. Thank you and please continue to pray that God would provide the full amount needed.

PROJECT SMILE

Helping Children in Vietnam

*Your generous gifts have so far
helped bring a smile to the faces
of 507 children in Vietnam.*

Thank you for your generous support to help children from poor families in northern Vietnam who were born with cleft pallets or hair-lip disabilities.

The average cost to help a child is just \$ 50. This pays for the cost of the operation, the travel expenses for the child and his/her parents to come to the city where the operation takes place, and the cost of an overnight stay in the hospital. ***A gift of \$ 50 will enable one child to have a better life, and an opportunity for his or her family to hear about Jesus Christ for the first time. A gift of \$ 250 will bless 5 children.***

If you would like to assist with this on-going need, please send a note, "Project Smile" along with your financial gift. Each gift of \$ 50 or more will receive a picture of the child that was helped, showing the child before and after their life-changing operation. We will also provide the child's name and home village, so you can continue to pray for them.

