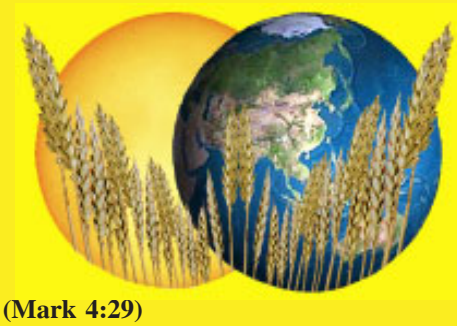
Asia Harvest



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

www.asiaharvest.org office@asiaharvest.org

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From Darkness to Light

A Tibetan Monk's Testimony

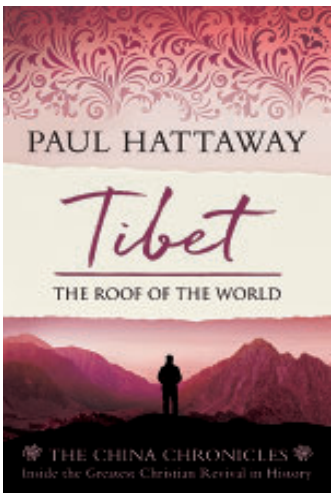
PANDEMIC UPDATE

Dear Friends,

Many people have asked us if our ministry has been affected by the pandemic and subsequent worldwide lockdowns. The main way our work has been affected is that the last several months have been the busiest we've ever had! Amazingly, during this time of financial stress and uncertainty, God's people have risen up and the level of support we receive has more than doubled the normal level!

We continue to help thousands of poor families in a dozen different countries through this difficult time, and we have been diligent to send all incoming support to the field in Asia as soon as we can. In return, many of the ministries we partner with have reported great breakthroughs in their work, as many Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and atheists who previously showed little interest in the Gospel have been touched by the love of God displayed by His people. In one part of India, our co-workers report that 70 percent of villagers who were helped with relief packages have willingly signed up to do a Bible course to learn more about Jesus!

Thank you to all who have prayed and helped our brothers and sisters in Asia. The Lord Jesus remains completely in control of this world, and is Lord over all, including diseases, lockdowns, and the plans of governments. His kingdom is advancing and cannot be stopped!



The rest of this newsletter is an excerpt from our new book, 'TIBET: The Roof of the World'. It shares the dramatic testimony of a Buddhist monk named Tenzin Lahkpa, who is still serving God today on the Tibetan Plateau. It gives insight into the spiritual darkness that envelopes the people of Tibet, and the cost that disciples must pay to follow Christ on the Roof of the World.

To order a copy of the book, please fill out and return the enclosed form or visit our website (www.asiaharvest.org) for details. An e-book (Kindle) version is also available online.

Alternatively, if you send a donation to any Asia Harvest project, please indicate that you would like a complimentary copy of the book and we will gladly send you one.

Tenzin Lahkpa — The Tibetan Monk who met Jesus

Tenzin Lahkpa was born in a village in the mountains of Amdo (now in west China). His parents proudly named him after the current Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, who hails from the same region. When he was 15, his mother took him to the local monastery to commence a lifetime of Buddhist study and service. She told her tearful son:

> *"From the moment you were born, I knew that you would be the one to honor our family and become a monk. I have dreamed about this day since you were very little. You were always so smart and kind. You were always so clever, and I knew that your purpose was to be a monk. I know that this is not easy for you to understand, but you were born to be a monk and lead our people into enlightenment."*

In the monastery, Tenzin's life was miserable. It was like a huge, dark prison cell that he felt he would never be able to escape from. In the mornings he joined the other monks begging for food on the streets, and after returning to the monastery each day they were abused verbally, physically, and sexually.

According to Tenzin, some of the older monks and lamas were rampant homosexuals and pedophiles who did not think twice about using small children to satisfy their wicked cravings. On many nights, Tenzin was unable to sleep as he heard the muffled screams of anguished young boys in other parts of the monastery. He also grew disillusioned when he discovered that many of the senior lamas, who are supposed to be celibate, had secret wives and families away from the monastery.

Tenzin longed to escape, but he knew he would never be allowed to go free. For more than 20 years he remained enslaved in monastic life, and despite moving to Lhasa and then to India—where he met the Dalai Lama several times—inner peace eluded him.

While he was in northern India, Tenzin was visited by a relative who was a former monk. He was shocked when this man explained that he had moved to America and had become a Christian. Tenzin had never heard that word before, but when he was told it describes a follower of Jesus, Tenzin recoiled in horror, for all monks had been taught never to utter that Name. It had been drilled into them that the Name of Jesus was so dangerous that it had the power to overturn the very fabric of Tibetan life, and Buddhism itself.

For the next few years Tenzin's interest in Jesus grew, but he was frustrated in his attempts to satisfy his curiosity. One day a letter arrived from his mother, asking him to return home because his father had died. Tenzin was heartbroken and made the long overland journey back to Tibet. Not having a passport, he made it only as far as the Nepal-China border where he was arrested, bound, and severely beaten by Communist officers before being imprisoned for six months.

After contracting tuberculosis, Tenzin was admitted to hospital, where a Tibetan-speaking foreign doctor treated him. The physician wore a small cross on his collar, and when Tenzin asked what it meant, he was told that it meant he was a follower of Jesus Christ.

Tenzin was excited to meet a believer in Jesus, as he had many questions he wanted to ask. The doctor gave him some Christian literature, in both Tibetan and Chinese, and asked him to study it.

One day, the doctor asked if he could pray for Tenzin's healing, for his condition had deteriorated and he needed more than medicine to survive. Tenzin agreed, and later described what happened:

"The doctor walked closer to my bed, put his right hand on my right arm, and began speaking in a language I was not familiar with. Suddenly, without warning, I felt something flow through my arm. It was like a warm, soft blanket. It moved into my shoulders and chest, and then throughout my entire body. I could not understand the doctor's words, but his prayer had something my prayers lacked. It had power."

That moment was a turning point in Tenzin Lahkpa's life. He had come face to face with the reality of God's power, and that night as he fell asleep, he had a dramatic, life-changing dream. He recalled:

"A man in a white robe came to me in my dreams. He had a glow about Him that radiated in every direction. I felt warm and safe in His presence. As He approached me, I could tell there was something wrong with His hands. In His palms were scars that had not completely healed over. I tried to look closer to see if I could catch a glimpse of His face, but I could not.

'Follow Me,' He said. He spoke perfect Tibetan and had a low, soothing voice like that of a loving father.

'Are you Jesus?' I asked.

But again, He simply said, 'Follow Me.'

'Are you the one to show me the path to truth?'

'Follow Me, Tenzin. I am the Way. I am the Truth. No one comes to the Path but through Me.'

'Okay,' I answered. 'I will follow You.'"

For weeks Tenzin remained in hospital, using every spare moment to study the Bible. The doctors and nurses were amazed at his recovery, and Tenzin knew it was due to the healing prayer by the Christian doctor.

Awed by everything he had learned, Tenzin realized that a time was coming when he would have to leave the monastery. His journey to discover the truth was taking him on a radically different path.

After returning home, Tenzin was burdened to share what he had learned with his friends at the monastery. He called a special gathering of the monks and requested a public debate with the head of the monastery, Tashi Lama.

Despite knowing that the monks would react furiously the moment he mentioned Jesus, Tenzin felt a supernatural peace within. God was with him and had promised never to leave or forsake him. Even if he was killed, he knew he would be with his Lord and Master in paradise. There was no reason to fear.



Hundreds of monks crammed into the monastery courtyard to witness the debate. Rumors swirled about the reason for the special meeting, with some assuming that Tenzin planned to challenge the lama's leadership in a bid to replace him.

After struggling to find the right words, Tenzin Lahkpa took a deep breath and boldly declared:

"What if I told you that I prayed to a God who said that He could guide me through the spirit world, and I did not have to earn merits to hear from Him because He gave it all to me by grace? I could not earn it on my own.

When I was lying in the hospital bed, I was told about a God who gave His life for me so that I would not have to suffer any longer. He did not do it because I had earned enough merit. He did it because He loved me. His love leads to the path that ends suffering, and His Name is Jesus."

Instantly, an enraged Tashi Lama screamed, **"Grab him now!" and dozens of monks rushed at Tenzin, hissing, "He's a Christian! Kill him!"**

The new believer was choked and savagely beaten to a pulp, and his battered and unconscious body was left to die. Even his own brother, who was also a monk, was forced to beat him. Tenzin's mother also suffered for her son's actions, and her house was burned to the ground.

The severely injured disciple of Christ recalled his thoughts as he was being beaten:

"I knew that I must die to myself so that I could live in Christ. And if I could live in Christ, then, although they would kill my body, I would live again with Him. In that moment, I no longer feared death.

Although I was on the ground being kicked and punched by everyone, I was not their prisoner. I was being beaten as a free man. I had more hope in that moment than all the other men there. I was no longer a prisoner of Buddha. They were. I was being beaten for leaving Buddha, and they were beating me because they were too afraid to leave."

Hours later, after darkness had fallen, the blood-splattered Tenzin regained consciousness, and he heard a soothing voice say, "Follow Me, My child." A supernatural peace flooded his soul, and moments later a hand was clamped firmly over his mouth. His brother had returned to help him escape in the night.

Tenzin was put on a bus to a faraway city, where he took months to recover from his injuries. He was warned never to return to his home or he would be killed.

For most of Tenzin's life his identity had been chosen for him. His head was shaved and his clothes were the same as all the other monks, to strip him of individualism and identity. He struggled to think for himself or act independently of the monastery.

He was now free, but it would take a long time to adjust. Despite having no money, bank account, or any connections in this world, he walked away from his former dark way of life and toward Jesus Christ, the Light of the world.

In his new location, Tenzin was eventually contacted by some Christians, who warmly embraced him and explained that he had a unique and precious God-given identity which made him different from everyone else in the world.

Meanwhile, the monks back at the monastery remained furious with Tenzin. In their minds he had dishonored his nation, family, and culture. They tracked him down and tried to force him to recant and return to the monastery. When their pleas fell on deaf ears, they decided it was better for him to be dead than to walk away, and several attempts were made on his life.

Later, Tenzin began working with a medical charity in west China, giving him the opportunity to witness to many sick Tibetans who visited the clinic for treatment. One visitor was a Tibetan lady named Mapu. Tenzin shared the Gospel with her and she believed, becoming the first Tibetan he baptized. Mapu loved him, and they were united in marriage. For 20 years he had scarcely seen a woman and had been completely cut off from all contact with the opposite sex, so marriage was another shocking change to his life.



Tenzin and Mapu now have two sons, and he often says the most wonderful gifts God has given him, apart from salvation, are his wife and children.

Not one to lack courage, in 2017 Tenzin heard that a bacterial infection had broken out in his home area. Many people, including his beloved mother, had died as the epidemic swept through. Despite the threat to murder him if he ever showed his face there again, Tenzin was compelled by the love of God to return to the very monastery where he had almost been beaten to death years earlier. He reasoned:

"I knew that most of them wanted to kill me because they felt I had betrayed them. However, I could not sleep knowing that God had given us the means to save them. I knew that because Jesus loved them, I needed to love them too—even if they hated me. I wanted to be there to serve them and to show them the love of Jesus, and I would do so—even if they killed me."

Tenzin led a medical team to his hometown, providing treatment to more than 1,000 people. The locals were hesitant to receive help from him, but so great was their distress that they put aside their prejudices and accepted the assistance.

One day, Tenzin was sitting in the clinic when Tashi Lama walked in. Tenzin immediately grabbed a chair for him to sit on and bowed to honor his former persecutor. Tashi Lama's eyes grew large when he realized he was being served by the man he had tried to murder.

The next day, all the leading monks gathered as Tenzin presented a plan to build the first health clinic in the town.

Tenzin Lahkpa—who was dedicated to Buddha at a young age and who served many years as a monk—is now a jewel in the crown of Jesus Christ, and a living example of God's ability to transform lives radically from the inside out.

Many years earlier, Tenzin's mother predicted that he would lead their people into enlightenment. He is doing just that. He continues to serve the Living God, and he leads a small Tibetan fellowship.

With living examples like Tenzin Lahkpa displaying the liberating power of Jesus Christ, it's no wonder the lamas of Tibet and the demonic world fear His matchless Name, and why they shudder at the thought that the 'Jesus virus' might one day spread throughout the Tibetan world.

Note: Quotes in this article are from Tenzin Lahkpa with Eugene Bach, ***Leaving Buddha: A Tibetan Monk's Encounter with the Living God*** (Whittaker House, 2019).



For many years Asia Harvest has helped spread the Gospel throughout the Tibetan Plateau. Literature, audio and video resources that communicate the Gospel in Tibetan have been distributed. We currently support many ethnic-Tibetan evangelists who work inside Tibetan areas of China, and in the border areas of Nepal, Bhutan and India.

Evangelists can be supported for $25 per month each. If you would like to help one or more of these workers, we invite you to do so through our Asian Workers' Fund. Please add a note "Tibetan worker" when you send your gift. A prayer card and occasional updates will be sent to every regular supporter of this project.

CHINA BIBLE FUND



***Current Total:* 13,032,512**
Chinese Bibles printed and distributed.

We are partnering with house churches in China in a long-term project to provide Bibles for Christians. We receive countless requests for God's Word from church leaders throughout the country. These Bibles are distributed free of charge, equipping the Body of Christ and helping add fuel to the revival in China.

Each full Chinese Bible costs just $1.80 to print and deliver.

ASIAN WORKERS' FUND



We currently support* 1,413 *Asian evangelists among* 1,043 *unreached people groups.

The **Asian Workers' Fund** supports indigenous church-planting evangelists among unreached Asian tribes and ethnic groups. These disciples have committed their whole lives to the Gospel but are hindered by lack of finances. To date, the evangelists we help have reportedly led **517,122 people to faith in Jesus Christ.** You can help support these dedicated workers for **$25 per month** each**.** A prayer card and occasional updates are sent to all regular supporters of this project.

ASIAN BIBLE FUND



Current Total:* 1,125,388 *Bibles printed in* 119 *languages.

The **Asian Bible Fund** provides the Scriptures in numerous languages in Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and anywhere in Asia that God's people need His Word.

Each Bible costs an average of $2.70 to print and deliver. We also print millions of Gospel booklets for evangelism through this project.

LIVING MARTYRS' FUND

Because of your partnership we are supporting 1,531 living martyrs.



A martyr has been defined as "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 **Living Martyrs' Fund** supports Christian widows and church leaders and their families throughout Asia 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 **$25 per month** you can help support one of these living martyrs.

THE CHILDREN'S FUND



Your generous support has so far reached 169,198 children throughout Asia.

The Children's Fund introduces children to Jesus in India, China, Vietnam, Indonesia, and a host of other Asian countries. Activities include printing and distributing Gospel literature designed for children, funding Sunday school training classes, providing free surgeries for those with special needs, and generally lifting children out of spiritual and physical poverty. It costs an average of just **$10 to reach a child for Christ**.

PERSECUTION & RELIEF FUND



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

Over the years Asia Harvest has provided assistance to the victims of natural disasters that have struck Asia. 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 many people have come to know Jesus Christ. This project also provides physical and spiritual relief to Christian communities and families throughout Asia who have been affected by persecution.



Asia Harvest Addresses

www.asiaharvest.org / office@asiaharvest.org

NORTH AMERICA:	**353 Jonestown Road #320, Winston-Salem, NC 27104, USA**
AUSTRALIA:	**36 Nelson Street, Stepney, South Australia 5069** ***Bank details:*** **CBA 06-4410-10255537** (Asia Harvest)
NEW ZEALAND:	**PO Box 1757, Queenstown 9348** ***Bank details:*** **ASB 12-3154-0092327-00** (Asia Harvest)
EUROPE:	**Stiftung SALZ, Moehringer Landstr. 98, 70563 Stuttgart, Germany** ***IBAN:*** **DE93 6426 1853 0060 0080 08 / BIC: GENODES1PGW**
MALAYSIA:	**Strategic Missions Program, PO Box 8036, Pejabat Pos Kelana Jaya, 46780 Petaling Jaya, Selangor** ***Bank details:*** **CIMB 8008242805** (Strategic Missions Program)
UNITED KINGDOM:	**AsiaLink, 31A Main Street, Ballyclare, Co. Antrim BT39 9AA** ***Bank details:*** **NatWest Bank 01-07-65, Account No. 07018797**