"PUT IN THE SICKLE, FOR THE HARVEST HAS COME!" MARK 4:29

# Asia Harvest

AUGUST 2024 NEWSLETTER 197



## MYANMAR

*War and Revival*

ASIAHARVEST.ORG • OFFICE@ASIAHARVEST.ORG

*"From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."— Matthew 11:12*

THE REVIVALIST CHARLES FINNEY, when commenting on the Matthew 11:12 passage, accurately captured the desperate circumstance through which God had moved mightily in history. He said, *"Revival comes from heaven when heroic souls enter the conflict determined to win or die—or if need be, to win and die!"*




Such words prove true whenever believers choose an uncomfortable and inconvenient obedience over the easy life. War, struggle, and various forms of persecution are unwanted external pressures, but in Christ, they have the potential to push the believer to greater faith.

"*Hangry*" is an expression sometimes used by Westerners to describe the uncomfortable, annoyed, or even angry state of an individual who hasn't eaten in some hours.

But the fact is that most of us in the West don't even know what *true* hunger is. To go *days* without eating due to an unreliable food source or to be faced daily with violence and the threat of human trafficking is beyond the experience of most of us.

Yet, this is the state of many today in war-torn Myanmar where not only starving bodies, but starving *souls*, are desperate for a life-saving intervention.

It's during this life-and-death struggle that multitudes of idol worshippers are turning to the Lord in vast numbers—turning the tables on demonic darkness that has held so many spiritually bound for so long. It is truly the unfolding of Matthew 4:16 which says: *The people living in darkness have*

*COVER PHOTO: Former witchdoctor being baptized*

*seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.*

And while the stakes continue to remain high as the warfront and bloodshed spread, an undercurrent of Christian revival is sweeping across these bruised and battered lands.

In this issue, we invite you to learn of an experience our Asia Harvest team had on a recent visit to Myanmar.

Here is their story in their own words...




# A VIEW FROM INSIDE

From the moment our plane touched down in Myanmar, the sense of tension and turmoil quickly became apparent.

Barbed wire lined many roads, and city intersections had become military checkpoints controlled by soldiers with high-powered weapons—scenes that reinforced the reality of the conflict around us.

Because much of the fighting in Myanmar had gone unreported to the rest of the world, we were shocked to see the deep poverty, pain, and economic ruin. It was then that we understood the despair of many Burmese who felt the world had forgotten them.

Although we were in areas hundreds of miles from the front lines of military conflict, that was enough for us to get a glimpse of Myanmar's dark underbelly, blackened by kidnappings, sex trafficking, organ harvesting, drug trafficking, and enslavements of the worst kind.

Asia Harvest's PERSECUTION & RELIEF FUND has helped free ***dozens*** of trafficked victims who are now dedicated Christians. We hope to provide details of how we are helping in future newsletters.

Our ministry guides were careful to ensure our safe passage by paying "fees" to gangsters, military, police, and village leaders along with abiding by a strict "back-before-dark" curfew.

Despite overwhelming spiritual darkness we experienced in Myanmar, God was about to give us insight into His strategy of light.

Just when we thought it couldn't get any worse, our Christian hosts took us to a slum where a tin door to a run-down shack opened in front of us. When we stepped inside, it was as though we had passed through a portal and entered another dimension, a heavenly one—a world where Jesus reigns. It was a church meeting of Burmese children deep in the heart of the slums, providing a ray of hope to penetrate the darkness many were living in!

We were slightly embarrassed to be the only ones with socks and shoes among these bare-footed believers, but that didn't bother these children whose eyes remained closed with tears streaming down their faces as their attention was fully fixated on their Savior.

This experience was repeated again and again at each of the centers we visited. Healings and deliverance from demons, drugs, and crime were commonplace. Most of the gatherings consisted of believers who had come to Christ within the past few years. Ex-prostitutes sat shoulder-to-shoulder with former murderers and gang members whose tattoos told the tale of their past, but who had now found redemption and cleansing through the blood of Jesus.



*A new house church comprised of all new believers*



*One of the evangelists Asia Harvest supports preaching in an unreached village*

The best part of this story is that it is not transpiring based on the efforts of a single ministry, but rather through a sovereign move of the Spirit of God that is sweeping across this vast land—a move that is finally penetrating the poorest and hardest demographic in Myanmar: the 50 million ethnic Burmese people.

## SHINE AND THE WITCHDOCTOR

Shine (not his real name) was one young man we met who was swept up in this revival just a few years ago. His story is one that demonstrates the bold faith that is emerging throughout Myanmar today among many Burmese.

Raised a devout idol worshipper, his commitments to witchcraft were influenced by his parents from a very young age. But everything changed the moment he found Christ! At just 17 years of age and a newborn in the faith, Shine's burden for those bound by darkness caused him to conquer his fears, and he unreservedly gave his life to serve God and to do whatever Jesus asked him to do.

His journey has led him down some extremely dangerous paths, where very few believers dare to go. On one occasion, Shine was inspired by a dream to take the gospel to a famous witchdoctor in the area (who had a reputation for cursing people to death).


*Shine preaches to the witchdoctor he later baptized!*

It was no surprise that other believers were unwilling to go with him when he shared this burden with them.

But with little care for his own well-being and focused on the eternal well-being of this witchdoctor and his family, Shine daringly approached the "unapproachable."

*(Now, if at this point in the story you are expecting the witchdoctor to open his door in friendship and immediately surrender his heart to the Lord, we're sorry to disappoint you—the exact opposite happened.)*

The door was slammed angrily in Shine's face.

Undaunted by the rejection and not fearing what this dangerous man might do should he try again, Shine came back later with gifts for the witchdoctor's family. This time he was granted entrance to their home and the opportunity to share Christ with all of them.

After demonstrating the love of Christ in selfless and practical ways over a few visits, the witch doctor's entire family was converted, including the man himself!

We would expect to find daring stories like this in historical missions books that tell the tales of great believers of old. But this is a new story, and it didn't involve a well-known minister! It instead happened through the bold obedience of a simple Burmese teenager—and it is not an isolated incident. Shine continues to boldly proclaim Christ to many more people, and he has even led two more witchdoctors to the Lord in the months that followed.

Shine shared his account with us first-hand while we were among other

young ministers who validated his story. It was also during that interview that he shared with us how the week prior, he had prayed for a poor woman who had been pronounced clinically dead for 30 minutes, and the power of Christ raised her to life again!

The other evangelists in the room had not heard this before, and the Burmese believers rejoiced together when they heard the news but didn't seem overly surprised, as this miracle was consistent with how God had been moving in their midst.

SHINE IS JUST ONE OF DOZENS OF EVANGELISTS IN MYANMAR THAT ASIA HARVEST IS HELPING SUPPORT THROUGH THE **AWF (ASIAN WORKERS' FUND)**.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE SPIRITUAL WAR EFFORT IN MYANMAR AND MANY OTHER DARK PARTS OF ASIA, YOU CAN JOIN US BY HELPING SEND OUT EVANGELISTS LIKE SHINE WHO WILLINGLY LAY THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE FOR THE GOSPEL.

## IDOL TEMPLES AND DRUG FACTORIES CLOSING

True revival effects change. This is the reality for any genuine move of God that has occurred throughout history. A supernatural outpouring of the Spirit always leads to societal change in some degree.

Just a few short years ago, Myanmar was doing better economically in relation to its current state, while idol temples shadowed every street, overflowing with devotees.



*An evangelist preaches to idol builders in Myanmar*

Then suddenly the government changed hands after a military coup, and all international trade ceased. Jobs were lost, and areas became dangerous. Then again quite unexpectedly, COVID mandates eliminated the few jobs that were left, civil wars worsened, and the entire country became desperate. Black markets replaced honest trade, and the rule of thugs replaced the rule of law.

Illegal drug factories popped up overnight and provided the only jobs available in some areas. As the drugs flooded the markets, traffickers targeted every class throughout society, luring in many addicted customers across all income levels. Starving children were recruited to walk the streets, selling opiate drugs from open baskets they balanced on their heads.

***And yet in the midst of this hopelessness, God was stirring His Church.***

Not only have scores of idol temples closed for good due to lack of attendance while new churches spread like wildfire, but one of the ministry training centers we support has reported that the largest drug factory in their area is now closed!

And what became of the workers and distributors for this factory?



*Visiting a home with praying believers*



*A church meeting in one of the centers supported by Asia Harvest*

Many of them became believers, joined the church, and are being trained to go forth and spread the good news of Jesus Christ.

As a result of accounts like these, we trust that you will be encouraged by the fact that, even in the darkest hour, we have reason to hope in Christ who can do the impossible, bringing lasting societal change through His Church. We also trust that you will know better how to pray for these dear believers who still face many dangerous days ahead, and that you will consider helping to support their efforts.

***Pray that the Lord will keep them strong!***

*Asia Harvest* currently supports over 80 ministry training centers (in Myanmar and other countries) that send out hundreds of evangelists to unreached people groups. Each center on average supports ten house churches that together report thousands of conversions every year.

In the past year alone, more than 6,000 Burmese have experienced new life in Jesus Christ through the centers in just one of the ministries we support in Myanmar.

***Please join us in getting the Gospel to these people while their hearts are open and hungry for the truth!***

# YOUR FAITHFUL PRAYER & GENEROUS SUPPORT





## ASIA BIBLE FUND (ABF)

**CURRENT TOTAL: 20,093,594 BIBLES PRINTED IN 163 LANGUAGES**

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

*Each Bible costs just $3 to print and deliver. We also print millions of Gospel booklets for evangelism through this project.*



## ASIAN WORKERS' FUND (AWF)

**YOU ARE CURRENTLY HELPING SUPPORT 1,779 ASIAN EVANGELISTS AMONG 1,270 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 1,518,385 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.*



## MINISTRY TRAINING FUND (MTF)

**THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT WE HAVE HELPED TRAIN AND EQUIP 35,313 ASIAN BELIEVERS TO EFFECTIVELY SERVE GOD**

*The Ministry Training Fund helps the Asian Church disciple and train believers to be effective ministers of the Gospel among the unreached.*

*Often workers live in remote places and coming together once or twice a year is the only outside fellowship and teaching they receive. We cover travel, food and other costs associated with the meetings. To train each worker costs an average of $50.*

# TRANSFORMING LIVES AROUND THE GLOBE



## LMF LIVING MARTYRS' FUND

### BECAUSE OF YOUR PARTNERSHIP WE ARE CURRENTLY SUPPORTING 883 LIVING MARTYRS

*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.*



## TCF THE CHILDREN'S FUND

### YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT HAS REACHED 223,313 CHILDREN THROUGHOUT ASIA SO FAR

*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 help reach a child for Christ.*



## PRF 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 lepers, communities and families throughout Asia who are in desperate need.*

ECFA ACCREDITED



Asia Harvest

ASIAHARVEST.ORG • OFFICE@ASIAHARVEST.ORG

| | |
|---|---|
| NORTH AMERICA | *353 Jonestown Rd #320, Winston-Salem, NC 27104, USA* |
| AUSTRALIA | *Box 80, 377 Kent St, Seabridge House, Sydney NSW 2000*<br>*Bank details:* **CBA 06-4410-10255537** *(Asia Harvest)* |
| NEW ZEALAND | *PO Box 1757, Queenstown 9348*<br>*Bank details:* **ASB 12-3154-0092327-00** *(Asia Harvest)* |
| UNITED KINGDOM | *AsiaLink 31A Main St, Ballyclare, Co. Antrim BT39 9AA*<br>*Bank details:* **NatWest Bank 01-07-65**, *Account No.* **07018797** |
| SWITZERLAND | *Verein SALZ International*<br>*IBAN:* **CH63 0900 0000 8909 3101 4** / *BIC:* **POFICHBEXXX** |
| EUROPE | *Stiftung SALZ, Moehringer Landstr. 98, 70563 Stuttgart, Germany*<br>*IBAN:* **DE93 6426 1853 0060 0080 08** / *BIC:* **GENODES1PGW** |