Asia Harvest

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

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Virus Response

Helping Thousands of Families Survive the Crisis

From the Frontlines

"A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were frightened. But he said to them, 'It is I; don't be afraid.' Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading." (John 6:18-21).

There has been a lot of fear and anxiety everywhere due to the Coronavirus, but for the children of God the crisis presents a wonderful opportunity to pause and refocus firmly on our Lord Jesus. He is still completely in charge!

In John 6 we find the disciples were in the middle of the Sea of Galilee and about to drown when Jesus got into the boat, and "immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading." It didn't say they rowed there, but all of a sudden they reached their destination.

The key to getting through any storm in life is to make sure Jesus is in our boat with us! Even with Him our lives may be excruciatingly difficult and painful, but without Him in the boat with us, our lives and futile and directionless, followed by an eternity of misery. Let's take spend our time getting to know Him better.

Whatever the cause of the present pandemic or the plans of governments in the future, it is the Lord Jesus Christ who is in control! The governments are upon his shoulders, and as Nebuchadnezzar concluded long ago: ***"All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?'"*** (Daniel 4:35).

CHANGES TO THE LIVING MARTYRS' FUND

For more than 20 years the Living Martyrs' Fund has been one of our main projects, and it will continue to help thousands of needy believers throughout Asia. From this month onward, however, we will not be providing prayer cards or updates from the individual workers we support through the project.

We will continue to help many persecuted believers and their families throughout Asia; and we are adjusting the project to include hundreds of destitute Christian widows. Please note that these changes do not effect our other projects in any way. We will continue to send cards and updates for the Asian Workers' Fund.

CHINA

All of our lives have been affected in one way or another since news emerged from the Chinese city of Wuhan in January of a new type of respiratory virus that was afflicting people and spreading quickly. We are not wanting to speculate on the origins of the virus, or how the subsequent lockdowns and expansion of government power may affect life going forward. Instead, in this newsletter we want to give a pictorial summary of help that Asia Harvest supporters have provided across Asia, thanks to the generosity of many of you.

First, a brief report from a dear friend and house church leader from China:



"In recent months, house churches across the nation have seen a new openness to the gospel since the virus appeared. Even though gatherings have been banned and the Communist Party has shut down many Christian websites and social media platforms, great numbers of people have placed their trust in the Lord anyway.

Because of the crisis and subsequent long isolation period, many people in China have realized that money and possessions will not save them. Churches have been started through telephone and website evangelism, which has been very effective!

Even before the outbreak, people's foundations had become very shaky, with the Chinese economy in terrible condition, and tens of millions of unemployed people with nothing to do. Now, with real fear gripping society as the government begins to implement their "social credit" system, many people's confidence in themselves and the nation's leadership has eroded.

The arrival of the Coronavirus brought all these feelings to the surface, and it is likely that **millions of people have become Christians** throughout the country because of it. For this we praise the Lord for His great wisdom and mercy!

Now that restrictions are being lifted, zealous church planting is going on. Such has been the response that in one five-day period, **we distributed almost 40,000 Bibles to new believers**! The more difficult the environment, the more opportunities we have for ministry. Now is a very effective time to share the Word of God with non-believers in China."

INDIA

When the virus spread to India and the government announced a severe lockdown with all shops to shut and people ordered to remain home, we were greatly concerned, because the nature of society in India means that hundreds of millions of vulnerable people were at risk of starvation. Most people in India remain extremely poor, and a typical family does not have a refrigerator or food stored up. Multitudes who live hand-to-mouth as day-laborers suddenly found themselves without an income, which was a potential disaster in the making.

Thanks to the prayers and generous support of many, our partners throughout India quickly launched a plan to help as many people as possible, especially the elderly and widows. In the month of March, we were privileged to **provide food and other necessities to 4,750 appreciative families.**

Christians are very thankful to God for the assistance, while unbelievers are much more open to the gospel than at any previous time. Many people feel the government abandoned them in their time of greatest need. Hindus didn't raise a finger to help, but Christians came and displayed the love of Jesus Christ to them without seeking anything in return.



PAKISTAN



Pakistan is a predominantly Muslim country with 200 million unreached people, with a smattering of Christians in various places. They often feel cut off from other parts of the Body of Christ. A Pakistani church leader once told us that because they are surrounded by so many hostile Muslims, that know how the Israelites must have felt when they were forced to go to war with the Arameans. The Bible records: ***"The Israelites camped opposite them like two small flocks of goats, while the Arameans covered the countryside"*** (1 Kings 20:27).

In recent years, Asia Harvest has been increasingly working in Pakistan through our other projects, especially the Asian Workers' Fund. When the Coronavirus struck, corruption and prejudice meant that the small but faithful Christian communities faced missing out on governmental help, as the masses of Muslims took first place in the line for aid.

As a result, our co-workers in Pakistan quickly mobilized, and with funds provided by Asia Harvest they bought more than a ton of food and essential supplies, which have been distributed to 120 grateful Christian families, **numbering about 600 people** in total.

We are glad to have been able to help believers in Pakistan, in line with the Scripture which commands us: ***"As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers"*** (Galatians 6:10).

INDONESIA



For many weeks, the government of Indonesia ignored the Coronavirus threat, and they even continued to allow flights from China, while mocking the risk and saying their country was infection-free. Their foolishness caught up with them in a major way, resulting in a severe lockdown that has affected everyone in this wonderful nation of nearly 300 million people.

On April 4th, we shocked many Christians with a post on the Asia Harvest Facebook page that listed the names and locations of **28 Indonesian pastors who had already died** from the virus. Some believers in the West still did not take the threat of the virus seriously, and some even thought that it was impossible for the disease to infect Christians. Since then, the number of believers in Indonesia who have perished from it has increased to hundreds, if not more. One of the dead was Pastor Fu Xie (pictured above) from the city of Bogor.

Our partners in Indonesia immediately formed a plan to help the most vulnerable. With funds provided by Asia Harvest supporters, they crammed food and essential supplies into their personal vehicles and worked from morning until night each day **helping more than 700 families**, nourishing both their bodies and souls.





PHILIPPINES

Although we don't mention it much in our newsletters, for years Asia Harvest has supported many workers in unreached parts of the Philippines, where Christians risk their lives to spread the Good News in a hostile environment.

When the Philippines went into lockdown, our co-workers there immediately came up with a course of action to display the love of God through aid while presenting the the Gospel to those who have yet to believe in Jesus Christ.

Whereas in most other countries people were helped to survive by being given bags of food, in the Philippines the believers took a different approach, and set up feeding centers where people could come to eat nutritious meals prepared by Christians who love and care for them. This strategy has broken down many barriers and a new openness to Jesus has been seen.

More than 200 families have been helped through the efforts of our brothers and sisters in the southern Philippines. Thank you for helping to make it happen.





OTHER COUNTRIES

To all who have prayed and given to help our brothers and sisters in Asia during this time of worldwide upheaval, we thank and bless you in the Name of our Lord Jesus! Space doesn't permit us to share about those we have been privileged to help in **Malaysia, Vietnam and Sri Lanka**.

In total, during the month of April we were able to assist **more than 6,800 families in 8 different Asian countries.** At an average of two meals per day, by God's grace we provided enough food for over **400,000 meals last month!**

At the time of writing this newsletter, lockdowns were still in place in most of the countries we work in, and it's likely we will need to continue helping throughout May and beyond. Therefore, if the Lord touches your heart, we invite you or your church to continue helping us as we serve the needy in Asia.

All gifts to our **Persecution & Relief Fund** will go to purchase more food and other essential supplies in Asia, until we have all made it through this crisis.







A MESSAGE FROM OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN ASIA!

"From our hearts we say **thank you and God bless you** to all supporters of Asia Harvest who have prayed for us in this hour of need. You have generously helped the most vulnerable families in our midst, especially widows, children, and those who live in dire poverty.

We have already seen how the crisis has provided great opportunities, and countless families have responded to the love of Jesus after witnessing His people in action. May the Lord reap a great harvest of souls for His kingdom!

We are especially thankful because we know that at this time everyone in the world is affected by the pandemic in one way or another. We ask the Holy Spirit to give you His peace and joy at this time."

CHINA BIBLE FUND



Current Total: 12,729,038
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 1,402 Asian evangelists among 1,104 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 **507,856 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 donors of this project.

ASIAN BIBLE FUND



Current Total: 1,059,871 Bibles printed in 108 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 1,201 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.

BLESS THE CHILDREN FUND



Your generous support has so far reached 161,167 children throughout Asia.

The **Bless the Children 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.



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