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

Asia Harvest

JUNE 2023 NEWSLETTER #188



SHAANXI

A New Book by Paul Hattaway

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From the Frontlines

WE CLEARLY LIVE IN A DAY WHEN DARKNESS IS ON THE RISE, and what is vile is honored by an increasingly satanic society.

The Word of God is under attack to a degree rarely seen, where even the most basic statements made by the Creator are being brazenly challenged and mocked.

For example, the Bible simply states: "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27), but the devil and his children cannot accept anything from God, so they are twisting this basic truth by trying to add a third gender to the mix!

"The words of the Lord are flawless, like silver purified in a crucible, like gold refined seven times.

You, Lord, will keep the needy safe and will protect us forever from the wicked, who freely strut about when what is vile is honored by the human race."

(Psalm 12:6-8)

In the last several years, we have been encouraged by feedback from around the world from people who have read *The China Chronicles* books. This series looks at how the Lord Jesus Christ has established His kingdom in China, bringing revival and true Christianity to tens of millions of families that for countless generations had been trapped in spiritual darkness.

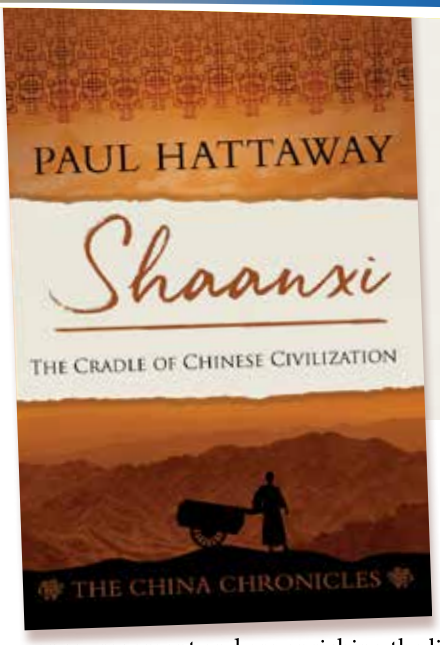
If you feel discouraged by the trajectory of society today, then please remember that the plans of the Lord are never thwarted, and His timetable is completely on schedule!

As the first part of the above passage says, "The words of the Lord are flawless, like silver purified in a crucible, like gold refined seven times."

Every day brings encouraging reports across our desk of how the Living God is transforming lives and entire communities across Asia. Although in much of the West it seems people have rejected the Lord and spat His offer of salvation back in His face, in Asia it remains truly Good News to many people — a precious pearl that downtrodden and weary people are willing to give everything to obtain.

We appreciate your partnership in helping us reach many people who have never heard the Gospel before.

FRONT COVER: *A pavilion in the rugged Hua Mountains of Shaanxi Province*
BACK COVER: *House church Christians worshipping God in Shaanxi*



The China Chronicles Book 7

SHAANXI

THE CRADLE OF CHINESE CIVILIZATION

by Paul Hattaway

In this newsletter we are pleased to announce the seventh book in our series on the mighty revival that has swept China during the past 50 years.

The China Chronicles are proving to be a great encouragement and are enriching the lives of those who read them.

Shaanxi (meaning "west of the mountain passes") is a province in north China that served as the cradle of Chinese civilization for thousands of years. The city of Xi'an was the capital of China for two millennia before the honor was transferred to Beijing.

From Shaanxi came what the Chinese call *'Four Great Inventions'* that changed the world—the compass, paper, printing, and gunpowder.

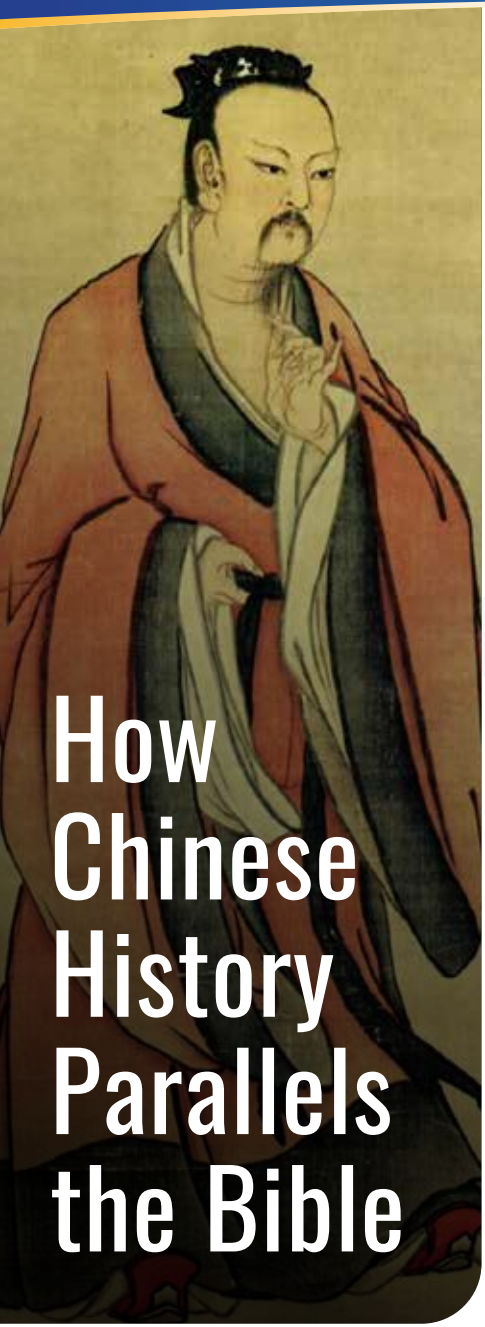
It is also home to the first recorded Christians in China, while the first known church building, constructed in 638, remarkably is still standing today.



The remainder of this newsletter has excerpts from 'SHAANXI: The Cradle of Chinese Civilization,' *as we take a look at this fascinating part of China that has impacted world history in ways that most people don't realize.*

To order a copy of the book, please fill out and return the enclosed form or visit AsiaHarvest.org for details. A kindle/e-book 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.



How Chinese History Parallels the Bible

SADLY, *HISTORY* WAS THE LEAST FAVORITE SUBJECT for many people at school, because of the dry and boring way it was often presented.

In *SHAANXI: The Cradle of Chinese Civilization*, the fascinating history of China is laid out in a relevant way that may amaze and surprise you, as you see how God's plan for the Chinese people has unfolded over the last several thousand years.

For example, did you know that ....

At the very beginning of recorded Chinese history, Shaanxi was the home of the 'Yellow Emperor,' Huang Di, who is believed to have ruled from about 2698 to 2598 BC.

According to some Bible scholars, these dates would place Huang Di's reign in the century following the dispersion of the human race after Noah's flood, and within decades of the Tower of Babel, when the Bible states: "From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth" (Gen. 11:9).

Although it's impossible to prove dates from so long ago, it is startling that the Chinese chronologies so closely parellel the earliest biblical records. While Western evolutionists claim people have been present for tens or hundreds of thousands of years, Chinese history stretches back no further than the accounts of Genesis.

If the first inhabitants of China arrived soon after the biblical flood recorded in Genesis, they would have possessed accounts of the event that wiped out almost the entire human race.

Incredibly, at least a dozen ethnic groups in China have retained oral accounts of a global flood. The earliest written Chinese records also tell of a cataclysmic flood.

In the Shu Jing ('Classic of History'), Emperor Yao (c. 2356-2255 BC) described the epic event in these words:

"Like endless boiling water, the flood is pouring forth destruction. Boundless and overwhelming, it overtops hills and mountains. Rising and ever rising, it threatens the very heavens. How the people must be groaning and suffering!"

EMPEROR SHUN AND THE 'HEAVENLY EMPEROR'

Emperor Shun lived from approximately 2317 to 2208 BC, making him a contemporary of Abraham according to some Bible timelines. Remarkably, the two patriarchs—despite living several thousand miles apart—shared many of the same characteristics in the way they sought to honor the true God of Heaven.

In a crucial decision that was to have major ramifications in China for countless generations, after ascending the throne Emperor Shun offered sacrifices to the Heavenly Emperor, Shangdi—which is the name still used for God in the Chinese Bible today.

The attributes of Shangdi include that He is the Creator of the universe, is all-knowing and all-powerful, cannot be represented by any image, and He controls all the affairs of mankind. Some have suggested the ancient Chinese must have heard of the sacrificial rites revealed by God to the Israelites, but Emperor Shun lived centuries before the Law of Moses was given.



This circular 26-foot high altar, discovered in the suburbs of Xi'an in 1999, is where Chinese emperors are believed to have offered annual sacrifices to the God of Heaven.

The earliest Chinese rulers offered their sacrifices to Shangdi atop a circular mound, during a ceremony consisting of nine stages. During the annual Border Sacrifice, musicians played tunes and ancient lyrics were sung which told of events in history dating back to God's creation. Just when these songs were composed, and how the ancient Chinese knew the information contained in them has baffled historians.

One song, the Zhonghe Zhiqu ('Song of Central Peace') said:

> "In the beginning, there was great chaos, without form and dark. The five planets had not begun to revolve, nor the two lights to shine. In the midst of it there existed neither matter nor sound. You, O Spiritual Sovereign, came forth in Your sovereignty, and first did separate the impure from the pure. You made heaven; you made earth; You made man. All things became alive with reproducing power."

A second song, Yuanhe Zhiqu ('Song of Beginning Peace'), began:

> "Lord, when You separated the heavens and the earth, Your creative work had begun. You did produce, O Spirit, the seven elements. Their beautiful and brilliant lights lit up the sky and the earth. All things were good. I, Your servant, thank You fearfully, and while I worship, present this memorial to You, calling you Sovereign."

While this worship was conducted, the emperor of China prostrated himself on the ground in sub-zero temperatures before Shangdi. In a third song, the emperor proclaimed God's love and the greatness of His Name:

> "You have promised to hear us, for You are our Father. I, Your child, dull and unenlightened, am unable to show forth my dutiful feelings. I thank You that You have accepted our pronouncement. Honorable is your great Name…. As swallows rejoice in the spring, we praise Your abundant love."

By offering an annual sacrifice, the emperor of China sought God's favor on the nation, and His blessing on their crops. Many centuries later, after China's capital was moved to Beijing, the emperors of the Ming Dynasty rekindled the annual sacrifice at the Temple of Heaven, observing rituals based on ancient records that stemmed from the time of Emperor Shun and his successors.

The annual sacrifices to the Creator continued for over one thousand years in China, until idolatry entered through the wicked Emperor Yu Di (reigned 1147-1112 BC), which started the Chinese race on a long slide into spiritual pollution and darkness.

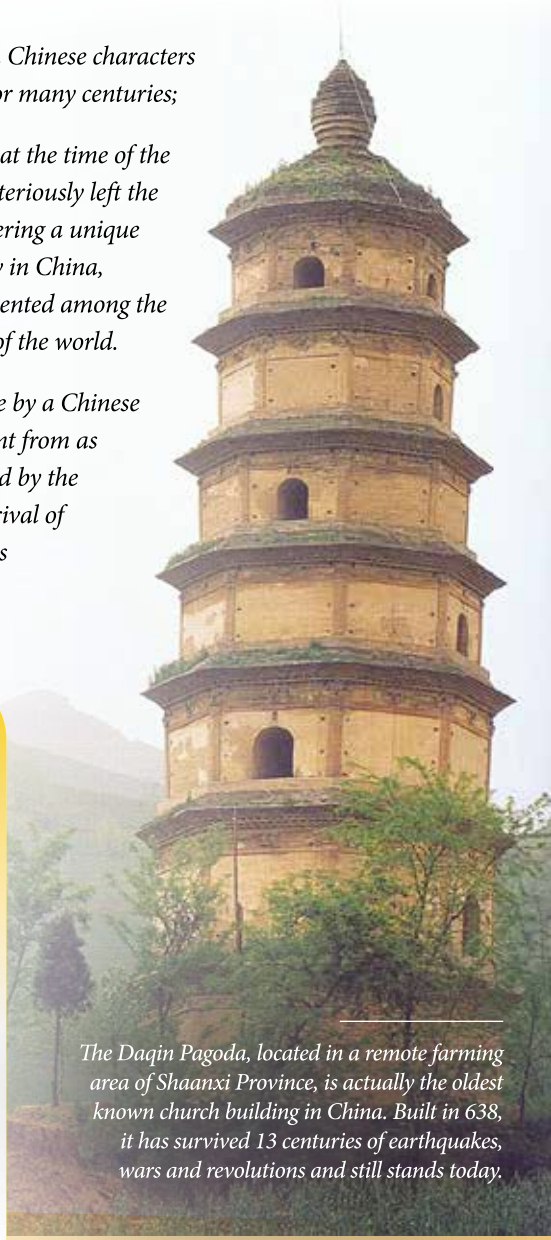
IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER WE WILL CONTINUE OUR LOOK AT THE FASCINATING HISTORY OF SHAANXI PROVINCE...

We will share how the origins of some written Chinese characters reveal biblical truths that have been hidden for many centuries;

We tell how the leading astronomer in China at the time of the birth of Christ, a man named Liu Xiang, mysteriously left the imperial court for over two years after discovering a unique 'King star'. From the earliest Christian history in China, stories circulated that the Chinese were represented among the Magi who went to pay homage to the Savior of the world.

We will examine claims and physical evidence by a Chinese professor that Christians in China were present from as early as AD 86, only for his claims to be erased by the Communist Party, as an early date for the arrival of Christianity in China undermines their efforts to eradicate the faith and to label it as a tool of Western imperialism.

Over the years Asia Harvest has successfully printed and delivered MORE THAN 420,000 BIBLES to house church Christians in Shaanxi through our Asia Bible Fund, in addition to supporting many evangelists and providing aid to hundreds of persecuted church leaders and their families.



The Daqin Pagoda, located in a remote farming area of Shaanxi Province, is actually the oldest known church building in China. Built in 638, it has survived 13 centuries of earthquakes, wars and revolutions and still stands today.

WHERE NEEDED MOST (WNM)

AS YOU CONSIDER THE BEST WAY TO GIVE TO THE WORK OF ASIA HARVEST, PLEASE CONSIDER A GIFT TO THIS CRUCIAL FUND

Donations allocated this way enable us to cover all expenses and overhead costs, and to allocate funds to the projects in greatest need at any given time, so that we can plan ahead with confidence, and have resources available whenever a sudden need emerges.



THE CHILDREN'S FUND (TCF)

YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT HAS REACHED 209,646 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.





ASIA BIBLE FUND (ABF)

CURRENT TOTAL: 19,258,016 BIBLES PRINTED IN 159 LANGUAGES

The Asia Bible Fund provides the Scriptures in numerous languages of China, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and anywhere in Asia where God's people need His Word. These Bibles are distributed free of charge, equipping the Body of Christ and helping fuel the flames of revival.

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

LMF LIVING MARTYRS' FUND



BECAUSE OF YOUR PARTNERSHIP WE ARE CURRENTLY SUPPORTING 804 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.

AWF ASIAN WORKERS' FUND



WE CURRENTLY SUPPORT 1,610 ASIAN EVANGELISTS AMONG 1,214 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 1,131,164 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.

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.

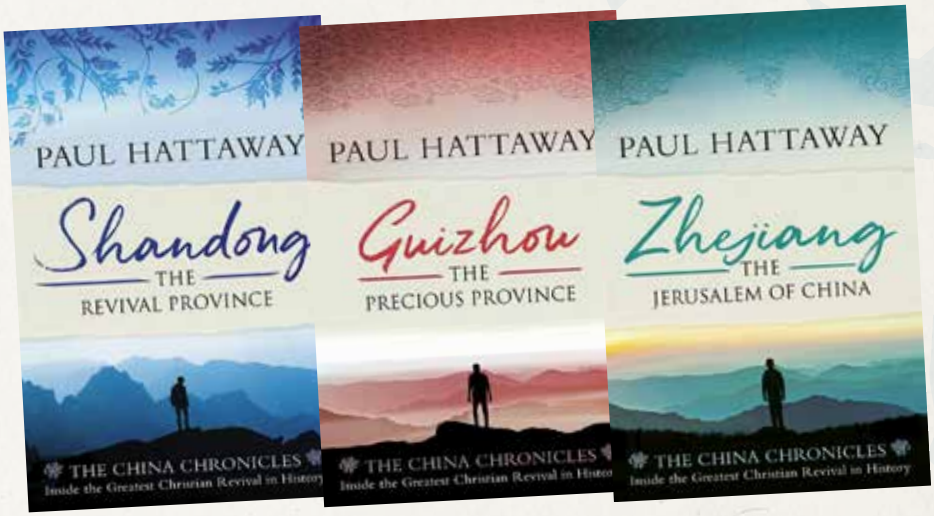
This project also provides physical and spiritual relief to Christian lepers, communities and families throughout Asia who are in desperate need.

What People are Saying about The China Chronicles...

"These are not only really excellent books, but are rare and precious. The author goes inside the greatest revival in Christian history. Each book leaves me looking forward to the next one with greater anticipation." *Jeff Schuster*

"These ground-breaking books are modern day Acts of the Apostles. Paul intersperses history with amazing miracles and events that make the reader want to read them again in case they read it wrong!" *Robert Johnson*

"Strength for the soul, Cheer for the heart, Victory in Jesus!" *Judith Hannah*



"*The China Chronicles* are a province-by-province, decade-by-decade account of God's astonishing work in China, 'the greatest Christian revival in history.' I find each book in this series more intriguing than the last."

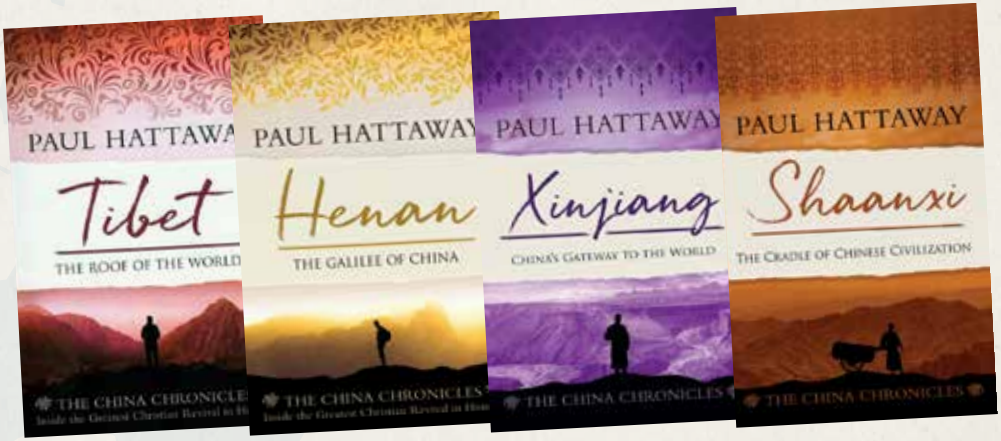
Missions Catalyst Magazine

"I find *The China Chronicles* to be not only most informative but also fascinating and deeply moving. Hattaway's scholarship is impeccable but unobtrusive, for you are caught up in the thrilling narrative of God's work among the people of China over the centuries....

With each installment in the series, the author solidifies his position as one of the outstanding scholars of Christianity in China. Though not an academic, he is producing books of high academic value. Perhaps just as importantly, he writes with clarity, vividness, balance, accuracy, and passion....

Be careful before starting to read any of these works: You may not be able to put the book down! The energetic, vivid, and fast-moving narratives carry you along, and the telling of God's mighty acts among the Chinese never fails to grip the reader with its drama, pathos, and sheer magnitude, reflecting both the long history and great diversity of this nation and its peoples."

G. Wright Doyle — *Director of the Global China Center and Editor of the Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Christianity*



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