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

Asia Harvest

SEPTEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER 198



THE 'OPERATION' SERIES

A Message & Prayer Request from Paul Hattaway

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"Indeed, of Zion it will be said, 'This one and that one were born in her, and the Most High himself will establish her.' The Lord will write in the register of the peoples: 'This one was born in Zion.'"— Psalm 87:5-6

THE 'OPERATION' SERIES

THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S CALL ON MY LIFE

— Paul Hattaway

IT HAS ALWAYS SADDENED ME that many church-goers around the world seem to lead directionless lives, when there are so many opportunities to be involved in God's glorious, expanding kingdom. Many Christians have not even had their eyes opened to one of the great themes that weaves its way throughout the entire Bible: the theme of **God's plan to redeem souls from every ethnic group** *(translated "nation" in most English Bibles)*. Much of Scripture does not make sense unless we understand that God is working to fulfill His purposes among all the people groups of the world.

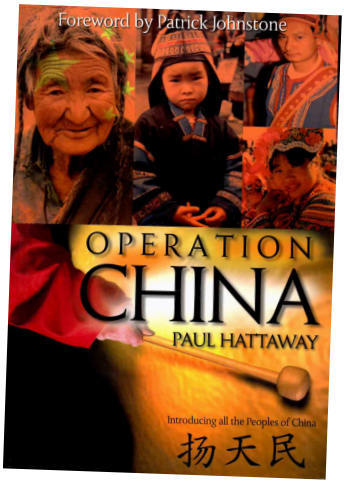
Indeed, the above Scripture speaks of "the register of the peoples" in heaven. I have always been encouraged by the fact that any work that reveals people groups to the Body of Christ here on earth is but a pale reflection of God's full list!

God's plan of redemption for all peoples runs through the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It started with His promise to Abraham: *"I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you"* (Genesis 12:3). His wonderful plan culminates with the Lamb of God receiving His reward in heaven: *"You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals,*

because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God people from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:7-9).

Those who have followed the work of *Asia Harvest* over the years will know that in the 1990s, as the ministry grew and branched out into the various projects we continue to implement today, I was privileged to write a series of books, including *Operation China* and *Peoples of the Buddhist World*, which profiled hundreds of new ethnic groups in Asia.

From the start, I was determined to portray these tribes and people groups in all their God-given splendor. They are His creation, with unique customs and languages designed to glorify God. I thought there could be nothing more ludicrous than to present such fascinating and vibrant people groups in a drab, colorless format. That would be like writing a book on the beauty of butterflies or the world's most exotic birds, and illustrating it in black and white!



Although the paper book versions of *Operation China* and *Peoples of the Buddhist World* have been out of print for years, the full-color PDF files, complete with photos and maps, can be downloaded from the *asiaharvest.org* bookstore and saved to your computer for lifelong use.

As there is a saying "a picture paints a thousand words," I have always insisted that these people group books be attractive, full-color productions that would not only provide information, but would instill in readers a heart for Asia's unreached peoples and motivate them to pray for their salvation.

As an example of how a good picture can tell a story, please note some background information of the photos on the front and back covers of this newsletter:

FRONT COVER: For centuries, girls from several Chin tribes in western Myanmar had their faces tattooed at puberty in a bid to make them appear "ugly" so they would not be carried off by men from other tribes. Face tattoos were outlawed in the 1960s, so this dear lady is one of the last living examples from that bygone era.

BACK COVER: Millions of young Burmese boys like this teenager are sent to serve as novice monks in Buddhist monasteries.

Special thanks to the photographer David Lazar, who granted permission for us to share these images.

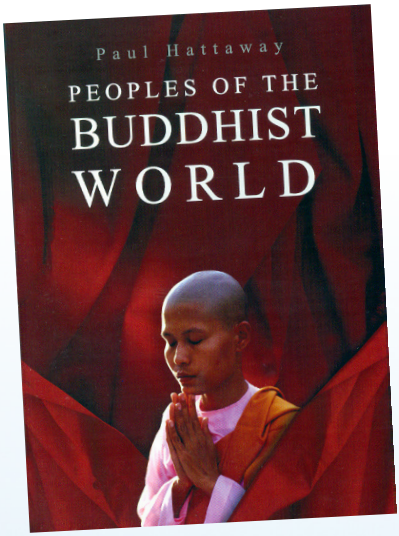
THE 'OPERATION' SERIES

One of the greatest blessings of my life has been to see how dozens of previously unreached people groups have heard the Gospel from various ministries and now have thriving churches in their midst. Although our research was only a small part in the process, I think that bringing them to the attention of the Body of Christ was a key link in the chain of events that resulted in many of those groups coming to the Lord Jesus Christ.

After researching and writing many hundreds of profiles of Asia's unreached people groups, years ago I sensed it was time to put that side of my call aside for a while and focus on helping the Asian Church reach those groups with the Gospel. That is how many of the projects Asia Harvest has undertaken came about. Every ministry decision we make first considers the strategic importance of how Bibles, evangelists, children's work, relief, etc. will impact unreached peoples for the Lord.

A Chinese house church leader once honored me with the Chinese name 扬天民 (Yang Tian Min), which means "Advocate of Heavenly Peoples." I feel it's time for me to take up that mantle again and refocus my efforts on this part of my calling.

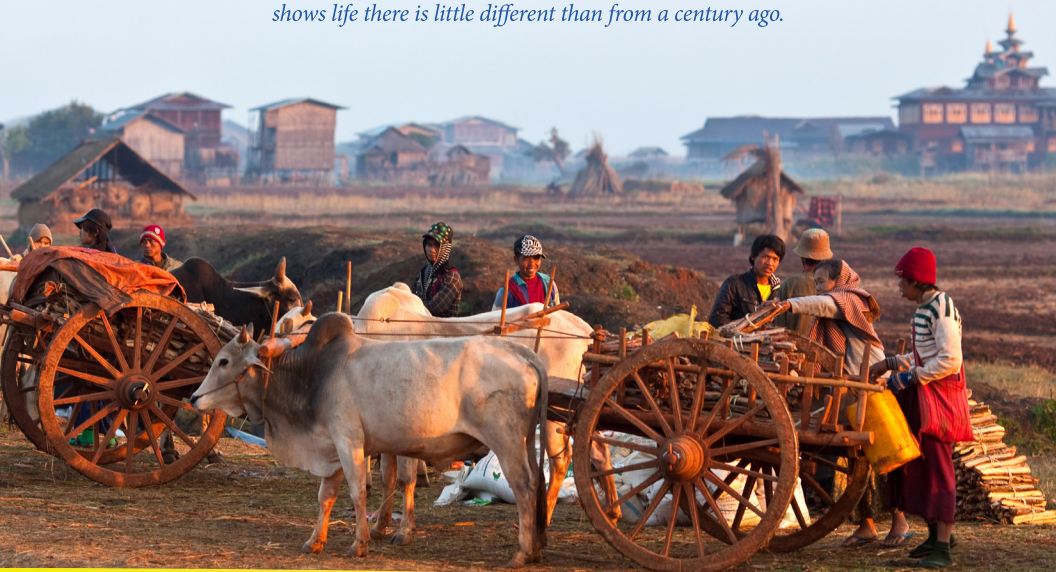
Even though I have never stopped researching and working daily toward the goal of seeing all of Asia's peoples glorify



the Lord Jesus, in recent years I have focused on writing different kinds of books and sharing testimonies about what God is doing in China and other parts of Asia. I am thankful that God has used these books to encourage the faith of many believers around the world.

Now, as the years go by and I am beginning to operate at a slower pace, I believe the Spirit of God is prompting me to again take up the challenge of writing a few thousand new profiles of people groups in Asia! We are calling this project the *Operation* series, as it is a continuation of the books that began with the publication of *Operation China* in the year 2000.

Most of Myanmar's 233 ethnic groups are located in poor, rural communities that have changed little in many generations. This photo of people from the Intha tribe in Shan State shows life there is little different than from a century ago.



OPERATION MYANMAR

There is a tendency in the world today to think that all knowledge has already been revealed and there is nothing new to be discovered.

People who think like that have obviously never been off the beaten track in Asia!

The first part of our new *Operation* series is *Operation Myanmar (Burma)*. The research has already been completed, and in the coming months we will be releasing individual prayer profiles of people groups in this deeply troubled, war-torn country.

It is a perfect time to pray for Myanmar, for it is a failed state that is falling apart. Multiple civil wars are raging across the country, and millions of precious people are experiencing horrific suffering as a result.

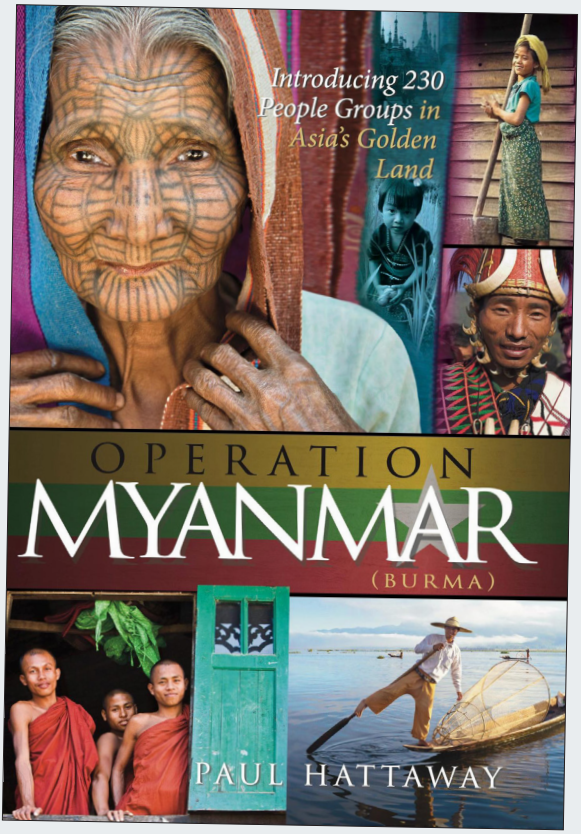
Our plan is to release three one-page profiles of groups in Myanmar every week until we have covered the entire country. This will take a while, as we expect to profile over 230 distinct groups in Myanmar.

Approximately 100 of these will be groups that the world has never heard of. It also will be the first time the Body of Christ has heard of their existence, including believers in Myanmar, where no proper census of ethnic groups has been conducted since the British colonial period in 1931!

Each profile will be presented in full color and will be accompanied by a quality photo of the group, and a map showing where that group lives. Each profile will be in a simple format to help people pray for God's salvation and purposes to be accomplished among them.

PLEASE NOTE...

* These profiles are completely free BUT **will only be available on our website** *asiaharvest.org*. You can sign up for notifications to be delivered to your email inbox whenever we post a new prayer profile. (These will not be available in paper form, for it is impractical for us to send out three paper copies per week to people around the world.)



* You can subscribe to receive these prayer profiles by filling out the subscription form on our website, or by letting us know your email address so we can add it to our list. **If you are already subscribed to our email newsletters you will automatically receive these *Operation* profiles.** If you would rather not receive them, you can "unsubscribe" from this list at any time.

* As we near the end of the *Myanmar* series, we plan to make available the complete *Operation Myanmar* book in paper or e-book form, which will contain all the profiles. **Please don't ask about these for a while though, as it will take at least 18 months before they are ready.**

Meanwhile, we will send the individual profiles to you as they become available.

FUTURE SERIES

God willing, we hope *Operation Myanmar* will be just the first in a series of new profiles and books. Other possible books in the series include:

* A five-part *Operation India* series, dividing that extraordinarily diverse unreached country into five regions (*North India, Central India*, etc.). We hope to begin sharing the India profiles soon after the completion of the Myanmar series.
- *Operation Laos*
- *Operation Vietnam*
- *Operation Nepal*
- and possibly *Operation Bhutan*, *Thailand*, *Bangladesh*, and the *Philippines*.

It would be a great benefit if you or your fellowship group would consider taking time each week to pray for the peoples of Asia. We believe that doing so will not only bless the work of the Kingdom of God in Asia, but it will also build your faith as you take your mind off local issues and life's problems and invest time praying for the nations of Asia.

Finally, for the many people who are enjoying *The China Chronicles*, please don't worry! By God's grace the series will continue until it is completed, and a record of the wonderful things God has done in all of China's provinces has been told.

Work is already well underway on the next few books in the series.

We are excited about *The China Chronicles* and encouraged by all the positive feedback we receive from you each time a new book is released.

Please Pray . . .

- Please ask the Lord to grant me **good health** and a **sharp focus** to fulfill His call on my life.
- Petition God to **open doors** that no man can shut, so that these new profiles will glorify the Lord Jesus and result in more ethnic groups worshipping Jesus.
- Pray for **spiritual protection** over me, my family, and all who are involved with Asia Harvest. (There are groups that have been captives of satan for countless generations, and he does not surrender any of them without a fierce battle.)
- Ask the Holy Spirit to **raise up intercessors** around the world to fervently pray for each group.

As the Moravians used to shout as they boarded ships to take them to the mission field:

"May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of His suffering!"

The Lord Jesus declared: **"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations** [ethnic groups], **and then the end shall come"** (Matthew 24:14).

Thank you for your encouragement and prayer support.

Until all peoples have heard the good news of Jesus,

Paul





ASIA BIBLE FUND (ABF)

CURRENT TOTAL: 20,187,673 BIBLES PRINTED IN 163 LANGUAGES

The Asia Bible Fund provides the Scriptures in numerous languages in China, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and anywhere 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)

WE CURRENTLY SUPPORT 1,763 ASIAN EVANGELISTS AMONG 1,272 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 1,532,690 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.



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 224,632 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.

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