



East Gates

INTERNATIONAL

Seeing Beyond the Impossible™

November - December 2015

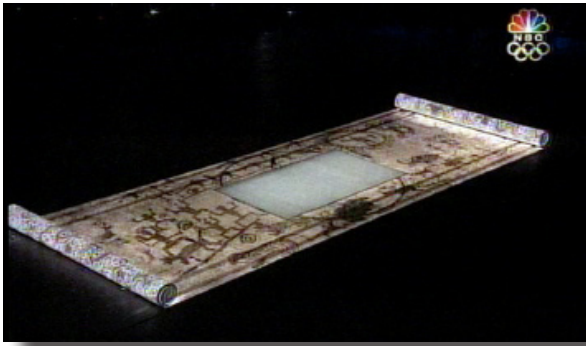
*D*ear faithful East Gates partner,

On the eve of September 13th, the new biblical year (5776,) began with Rosh Hashanah. Mindful of God's divine pattern and rhythm, one thing is for sure, we are one day closer to the return of our King and Savior -- Yeshua Ha Mashiach. Jesus, the Messiah!

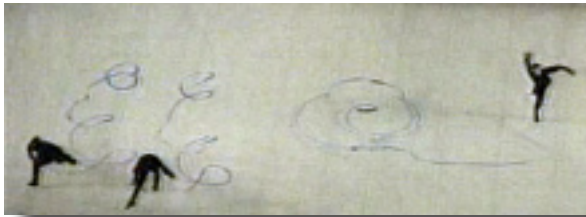
"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.." (Eccl.3:1). As we say hello to 2016, East Gates celebrates its 25th anniversary in serving the growing Church in China. In a quarter of a century, East Gates has become a familiar and respected name within China's Open and House church communities, national seminaries and innumerable meeting points. In the year to come, God's voice will continue to be our inner compass, as we move forward with our high calling to build the Body of Christ in China. You are an integral part of our Kingdom journey.

As with the closing and start of every New Year, it's always good to take pause and gain greater insights on God, the world and ourselves. At East Gates, we have been doing just that. Almost eight years ago, for the first time, China had the opportunity to host the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing. On the evening of the Opening Ceremonies, 2008 drummers were positioned in grand array on the stadium floor, moving with amazing unison as "one." We immediately imagined the time when heaven would come down to earth and all of China would be worshipping the one true God. Their long held desire for true harmony and prosperity would finally be realized. Reflecting on this vision keeps our hopes alive as we continue to serve our Chinese brothers and sisters near and far.





As the Opening Ceremonies continued, more Kingdom metaphors surfaced, as a beautiful RGB screen, larger than a football field, unrolled before our eyes. The Chinese wanted to reveal how much they prized their art of painting and calligraphy in expressing their country's illustrious 5000 history to the world. Chinese dancers, dusted in charcoal, began to use their bodies to paint a mural depicting their poetic love for unity and beauty.



Interestingly, what immediately came to mind for us, were scrolls of the Bible being opened. The graceful dancers depicted God's living Words coming to life.

We're taking time to share these insights because this \$100 million dollar, four-hour long production, seemed

to reveal a "high-tech China" that still valued and gave great tribute to its phenomenal history and roots. Despite its immersion into a digitized and frenetic world, the closing scenes revealed a China in continual hope of what the commentators called a "Glorious Era" -- an Age of Heavenly Harmony and Peace. We're equipping and teaching our Chinese brothers and sisters how to prepare for this Glorious Era now.



One of the pastors at the Chifeng church in Inner Mongolia, hands out free Bibles provided by East Gates at their *Thanksgiving and Praise* meeting.

In Chifeng, Inner Mongolia (pop.4.3 million), we assist a city church of about 1000. These pastors also minister to many of the remote meeting points surrounding this prefecture. Oftentimes, the city church will host a *Thanksgiving and Praise* meeting where village believers come from far and wide. The need for Bibles is always much greater than the supply. East Gates is the main source of free Bibles in this area. Thankfully, on this occasion, they did not go home empty handed.

East Gates has also had long term relationships with the Christian deaf and mute communities throughout China. We're presently involved with discussions on how to establish a united sign language for Biblical terms and conference on theological training for the deaf.



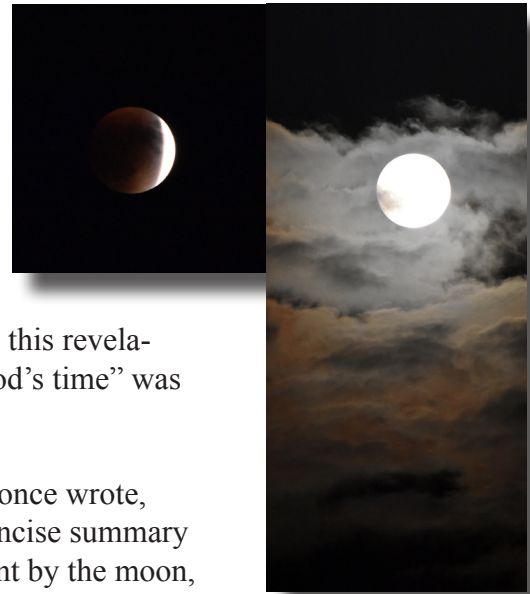
In Fujian province (SE China), East Gates trainer, Michael Tseng, teaches deaf and mute believers how to discern between God's Truth and cults and heresies.



Deaf and mute believers from Liaoning province (NE China).

Our Chinese brothers and sisters have always been inspiring examples when it comes to staying focused, disciplined and resolute in their calling to serve the One True God. Another signature virtue has been their ability to suffer in the midst of intense persecution and stay faithful. As the spiritual forces of darkness mount, we reveal to them greater biblical insights to help them develop a deeper trust in God and His Word. For example, for much of China's history, the nation's pattern and rhythm of time was based on the lunar cycle. The Jews were given this revelation by God through Moses in Exodus 12:2. King David knew "God's time" was marked by the waxing and waning of the moon (Psalm 104:19).

The renown German Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888) once wrote, "the Jewish calendar is the Jewish catechism," for it is the most concise summary of what we remember and what we stand for. Why does Israel count by the moon, with each month starting when the new moon emerges? Because the moon, unlike the sun, waxes and wanes, nearly disappears and then grows bright again. So the Jewish people go through cycles of prosperity and suffering, knowing that even in darkness there are brighter days ahead. (S'fat Emet)...Just as God showed Noah the rainbow as a sign of the covenant, God shows Moses the sliver of the new moon as a symbol of Israel's capacity for constant renewal."



Throughout China's history, there has also been the capacity for renewal and coming out of darkness, like after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).



"The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever" (1 John 2:17). (Photo: E-commerce packaging plant in China).

These days, we teach the Chinese believers to be *aware* of the signs of the times. The greatest threat to a Chinese believer's faith is not so much religious persecution (as we saw this year with the mass dismantling of church crosses in Wenzhou) or terrorism; it is living in this Age of Great Distraction and unabated consumerism. A month ago, *Alibaba*, China's largest e-commerce company sold \$14 billion of goods on its annual Single's Day (11/11/2015), more than the U.S.'s Black Friday and Cyber Monday combined. Although any retailer would desire such profits, since 2013, Alibaba has had to spend \$161 million combatting counterfeit goods from third-party vendors. As in the West, China's voracious appetite for domestic and foreign goods keeps growing, yet souls still search for meaning.

"WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE ARE UNRESTRAINED, BUT HAPPY IS HE WHO KEEPS THE LAW."
Proverbs 29:18

Our Chinese brothers and sisters see their world unraveling left and right. We share with them that the word for "Law" in Hebrew is *Torah* (הַתּוֹרָה). Torah means "direction, teaching or instruction." It comes from a root word used in archery, *yareh*, הָרַי, meaning "to shoot an arrow to hit a target." So from a Hebraic context, "When there is no vision, people cast off moral restraint. Happy is the one who keeps God's teachings."



East Gates has had a longstanding relationship with Fuqing Training Center. At their recent graduation ceremonies, we provided valuable Bible resources to each graduate so they could teach others how to "hit the target."

“SET YOUR MIND ON THE THINGS ABOVE, NOT ON THE THINGS THAT ARE ON EARTH.”

This year, our prayer for the Body of Christ in China is Colossians 3:1-4. It continues to be answered.

“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”

Recently, 900 House church leaders from all over China convened in Hong Kong to continue discussions on *Mission China 2030*. Their vision is to raise up a younger generation that will plant thousands of city churches, reach China’s 500 unreached people minority people groups and send out 20,000 missionaries throughout China and the world. May we keep this visionary initiative in our prayers.



East Gates continues full steam ahead to equip and train the next generation of Christian leaders in China.
Jiangsu Province



Our Chinese brothers and sisters know that in a time of “relative peace,” they must prepare and they are!
Zhejiang Province

At East Gates, we are supremely grateful to God for giving us the *vision* and *provision* each year to do His will in China. We know in great part, it is due to your heartfelt prayers and precious offerings.
Our Chinese brothers and sisters thank you.
Our East Gates staff and we thank you.

During this holiday season, let us remember that Yeshua (Jesus), the true Light of this world, is returning soon!

 *Christina*

Ned and Christina Graham

