



# East Gates

Seeing Beyond the Impossible™

INTERNATIONAL

January - February 2025

Dear East Gates partner,

We hope your 2025 has gotten off to a good start. Sadly to say, for multiple thousands it has not. As you've seen in the news, for those living in southern California, it's been a living nightmare. Local residents admit it was the perfect storm waiting to happen as 50-100 mph Santa Ana or *devil winds* swept through the basin region that hadn't seen rain in eight months. As a result, over 12,000 structures (including cars) have perished and lives lost as critical firefighting resources were woefully lacking when most needed. Most disturbing was the fact key fire hydrants were *dry*!

The Executive Director of the Aerial Firefighters Association, Paul Petersen, who has been in the business for over 30 years said, "It takes a tragedy for people to wake up." This is human nature. He said what the firefighters are experiencing in real life is far worse than what one sees on TV and social media which is incomprehensible to imagine.

As we watched the day-to-day horrific events unfold, one of the main "take away" spiritual messages was, when a great "storm" hits, one must be prepared. In fact, this tragedy has been a very powerful and graphic lesson we've been able to share with our Chinese brothers and sisters on how we must always be ready. Case in point is the **Parable of the Ten Virgins** (Matt. 25:1-13).

A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. All ten virgins were asleep when the Bridegroom (Yeshua/Jesus) came at a time they least expected but five virgins had enough oil (Holy Spirit and devout faith) to light the way to His home. Five were foolish. They didn't make wise use of their time on earth to prepare. They had quenched the Holy Spirit. As a result, reality hit. They didn't have enough oil. In the vernacular, their "water hydrants" were empty.

We told our Chinese students, you cannot borrow another believer's Holy Spirit, faith or righteous deeds. God gives you His loving power and grace to walk in the image of God to fill your own vessels.



Firefighters battle 24/7 the flaming Southern California infernos. Credit: Ethan Swope, AP



In key areas where the fires raged, shockingly, fire hydrants had no water pressure or water.



Five virgins were prepared to meet their Bridegroom. There is no greater feeling than being ready.

## LUKE 12:35 -- BE PREPARED AND KEEP YOUR LAMPS LIT

We ask our students, are you dry or filled? As each day passes, are you allowing the Holy Spirit to fill you with His Word so you can refute every lie and attack from the enemy? Are you being nourished through God's Voice and those whom He has genuinely called to disciple you so you can stand firm through life's great trials?



*D*o not be left dry and empty.

Yeshua's disciples admonished, "You too, be ready; because the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not think he will." (Luke 12:40, Matt. 24:44)



*B*e dressed and ready for active service, and keep your lamps continuously burning. Be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that when he comes and knocks they may immediately open the door for Him." (Luke 12:35-36)

Oftentimes when we are in the more remote villages of China where women carry the brunt of the church and family responsibilities because the men are out in the fields, they ask if God really *sees* their labor of love and works. We say, "Most definitely" and share with them the story about Dorcas or Tabitha in Acts 9:36-42. Here was a dear sister in the Lord, who like them, had a reputation for habitually providing loving acts of kindness and charity. Sadly, she got sick and died but because of how priceless she was to her community of faith, the local disciples sent for the Apostle Peter who was nearby. He knelt down beside Tabitha, prayed and said, "Tabitha arise!" She came back to life! The Chinese women were encouraged.



East Gates provides Bibles and discipleship training to the elderly Christians in Liaoning province.



In many places we visit like Henan province where there is greater Christian persecution, believers are just grateful to gather for fellowship and have a Bible study together without heat or fancy accommodations.



Chinese Christians who live in impoverished villages such as these in Shandong province feel they don't have much to give to God, but we share how their open hearts for His Spirit and Word are the best gifts of all.

## THE SIGN LANGUAGE CHURCH

In China today, there are about 20 million citizens who would be considered deaf and non-verbal. That is about 2.5 times the population of New York City. God is calling many of them into His family. In Mark 7:31-37, Yeshua miraculously healed a man who was deaf and could not speak, thereby revealing His Messianic powers and fulfillment of the prophecy mentioned in Isaiah 35:5-6, a foretelling of the Messianic Age to come! Yeshua looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh, said to him, “Ephphatha!” that is, “Be opened!”



**Isaiah 35:5-6**  
“Then the eyes of those who are blind will be **opened**, and the ears of those who are deaf will be **unstopped**. Then those who limp will leap like a deer, and the tongue of those who cannot speak will shout for joy.”

Over the holiday season, Pastor “T” who founded the Sign Language Church and Olive Tree Ministry for the deaf and non-verbal, created an amazing Christmas celebration for the staff and students. They are truly one big family and community of faith.



The Sign Language Church and Olive Tree Ministry Staff meet daily for prayer and Bible Study. You can't teach what you don't know.

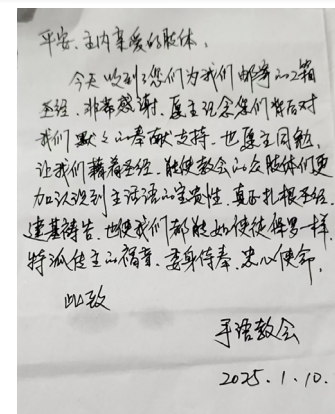
Our Chinese brothers and sisters who “sign” God’s Word versus speak it, hold onto God’s promises for the Messianic Age to come. In the meantime, through Pastor “T” and his staff we’re helping them prepare to meet their Lord and Savior who more importantly has **opened** their hearts and minds to His eternal Truth, love and grace. At Heilongjiang Seminary, located in the northernmost province of China, improvements in sign language technology are helping these believers have broader communication and opportunities to share amongst their own.

### *Letter Translation*



Delivering the Sign Language Church Bibles.

“**P**ace dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Today, we received the Bibles you mailed to us. Thank you so much. May the Lord remember your silent support for us. May the Lord encourage us to use the Bible to help the members of the church better understand the preciousness of the Lord’s words and truly root us in the Bible. We pray that this foundation will make us like the Apostle Paul, who was specially sent to preach the Lord’s gospel, dedicated to service and faithful to the mission. Sincerely ~ *the Sign Language Church*”



The Sign Language Church’s letter of gratitude.

## PREPARE THROUGH PRE-PRAYER!

*H*ow has East Gates been able to serve our Chinese brothers and sisters so faithfully for 35 years? One major reason is because we have such a loyal community of intercessors around the world who genuinely intercede and keep us in their prayers. God knows who these true, committed, mature and seasoned believers are and we know they will be ready when Yeshua returns because their oil lamps will be trimmed and ready!

On New Year's Eve, a number of local churches held their annual prayer vigil for East Gates and other influential ministries. It was so inspiring and encouraging to see how these sisters and brothers prepared a sacred space to invite God's presence, anointing and revelation to bless East Gates and other Kingdom work.



Main sanctuary displaying God's Kingdom work around the world (one of which is East Gates) and other major prayer needs.

PHILEMON 1:4-5

*I thank my God making mention of you always in my prayers, hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints...*



Prayer warriors interceding early in the morning.



Repentance Room



Communion Room



Prayers of praise and thanksgiving.

*A*s we enter 2025, our admonition to our Chinese brothers and sisters is ~ May we spend more time around God's Throne Room, listening to HIS Voice versus all the voices of this world. May we spend more time in God's revelatory Word, versus all the social media. "For when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8)." We pray so. Thank you for your invaluable contributions and life-giving prayers.

 *Christina*

*Ned and Christina Graham*