

CGST Bulletin

2012 JAN-MAR

Vision for China
Mission to the World

Feature

“Very much of the land still remains to be possessed” or “I Myself will drive them out”?



Ka-leung Wong
Professor of Biblical Studies
Librarian

After the death of Moses, God commanded Joshua to take the Israelites to cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land (Jos. 1:1-2). Joshua did as he was told and after years of fighting with the Canaanites he “took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had spoken to Moses” (Jos. 11:23), apparently completing this stage of the commission. When Joshua was old and advanced in years, God’s word came to him again and commanded him to perform the second stage. This command is found in Joshua 13:1-7, and the passage can be divided into three parts: verses 1-5, verse 6a and verses 6b-7.

In the first part, God conducted a ‘performance review’ with Joshua before He gave the new command. The appraisal was rather disheartening. After years of tough fighting, the concluding remark Joshua received from God was, “very much of the land still remains to be possessed”. Why? Why after years of toils, his hard work did not seem to have God’s recognition? Were the lands already possessed not worthy to be noticed, and God cared only about the lands not yet taken? The passage tells us that the remaining lands stretched from the regions of the Philistines on the south, going along the coast northward and ended at the mountain regions of Lebanon on the north. The description seems intended to point out, a large part of Canaan was still untaken. God wanted to point to Joshua what these untaken lands really are.

Looking at ourselves, having lived years of our lives, have we found out from God what our untaken lands are? In which areas are we still ‘incapable of’? This ‘incapability’ reminds us that the Israelites had many “unable”, Joshua had many “unable”, and we also have many “unable”; but recognition of this ‘incapability’ is only the first step. Traditionally, this passage is often quoted for the term ‘land still remains to be possessed’, what it represents to each individual personally and how it may be used to encourage or challenge believers to strive on for God, to possess the not yet possessed. However, this is not the main point of the passage.

In the second part of the passage, verse 6a, God promised what He would accomplish for Joshua and the Israelites: that He Himself would drive out all the Sidonians. Four to five verses are used to specify all the many

unclaimed lands with the aim of contrasting the short but emphasized promise of God in verse 6a. After pointing out what the Israelites were ‘lacking’, God, in a simple and direct way, proclaimed with an assured promise, that He would drive out those Canaanites whom the Israelites could not drive out. God will finish what the Israelites, or we, cannot. To acknowledge this ‘incapability’ is to confirm once again that only God Himself can turn our ‘lacking’ into our ‘possessing’. God wants us to know our own weaknesses, but He also wants us to know that only He can accomplish what He commands us to do, and only He Himself is the Accomplisher of His promises. This is the main point of the passage. God points out our ‘lacking’ not to frustrate us, or want us to get up to fight, but rather that we may again turn and look upon Him, the God who rules all things.

Finally, in the third part of the passage God gave Joshua commands regarding what he needed to do in the second stage of his life, and that was to distribute the Promised Land to Israel. Let us note: the land that God wanted Joshua to distribute included the untaken lands. The lands had not yet been taken, and yet they were to be apportioned. Why? It is because God had already promised to give these lands to the Israelites. Yes indeed, there are still large areas of untaken land, but God’s promise does not change and will not fail. His promise is fulfilled not because of man’s ability or our success. We are limited and lacking in all aspects, and we are often powerless to carry out God’s word, but these are all unimportant, because what matters is His promise. To distribute the land to the Israelites as He promised was to tell them what God had promised them and to remind them to hold on to this promise, having it to direct their lives and guide their actions. Hence, the scriptures that follow describe how the Israelites responded to God’s promise in their own ways, such as the courageous Caleb possessing Hebron, and the timid children of Joseph too fearful to take the hill country. There are many insufficiencies in the first stage of work, but God will fill our ‘lacking’ with His ‘having’. Regardless of our imperfection and our lacking, what we need to be certain of is that God is the Author and Finisher. And our response would be for our lives ahead to always live in God’s promise, making His promise our orientation in life and holding onto God’s ‘having’.

Hope for Peace: Reflections on the Tenth Anniversary of 9/11



Kin-yip Louie

Assistant Professor of
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Having lived in New York for many years, I returned to Hong Kong ten years ago (in January 2001), and started teaching at CGST. On September 11th, one of our friends who had also returned from New York called us around 11pm and told us that New York's World Trade Centre had collapsed. Stunned by the news, my wife and I turned on the television and immediately horrific scenes appeared before us. One particularly memorable detail was the sight of something falling off the building. Soon we realized that those were actually people jumping off to their death because they found the dense smoke and heat unbearable. Such is the frailty of life! Even though we knew that our friends and families were probably safe, we were still devastated. The next day, we sang the hymn *'This Is My Father's World'* in the CGST morning assembly. When we came to the lyrics "...though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet", tears rolled down my cheek and I asked God, "Why all these evils? Are You still the Ruler?"

Why did God allow 9/11? I still do not have an answer, and perhaps I never will until I see God face to face. During the past decade, 9/11 has continued to remind us of this truth: We are living in a world of where good is fighting against evil. However, we must be careful in how we interpret this fight.

First, this is not a fight between Christianity and Islam. There is a battle between the children of peace and children of violence within every religious community, and this is also a battle between forgiveness and retaliation. As President George W. Bush declared to the Americans after the event, the majority of Muslims would not agree with these acts of terrorism. The recent 'Arab Spring,' bringing several peaceful revolutions in Egypt and other Arab countries, indicated the possible decline of the influence of Al Qaeda. On the other hand, Bush (who claims to be a devout Christian) sent troops to Iraq, causing tens of thousands of civilian casualties there. Is the Iraq war really a just war? Of course, this is a complex issue. Nonetheless, why did so many American evangelical Christians endorse Bush's military action without hesitation? Perhaps the death of Osama bin Laden was a necessary evil. Nonetheless, why did so many Americans celebrate spontaneously an act of assassination? If a group of people are set on using violent retaliation, then regardless of their religions (or not having any) they will always find support for their action from their own traditions.

Second, in this war of good against evil, religion has an irreplaceable status in the public space. The interpretation of doctrines within each religious community is a key element in building an inclusive culture. There was a time when intellectuals in the West believed that the status of religion would fall as human society advanced. After 9/11, more and more people in the West or in the Middle East actively reconsider the political significance of religion and find religious meaning in politics. Academics in the Islamic world begin to reflect on the grounding and transformation of religious fundamentalism, while academics in the Western world reflect on the sources and limitations of Western secularism. From Christianity's point of view, all religious traditions (including those of Christianity) are the product of a group of sinners. These traditions have positive as well as negative impacts on the contemporary society. Therefore, Christians should not see themselves as saviors. The goal of believers participating in public square is

not to increase Christians' 'political bargaining chip,' but to promote justice and mercy in the society as a whole. On the other hand, the pursuit of religion is an essential component of our humanity and our community life. Any attempt to push out, suppress or control religion by the secular world would only cause further unrest in the society.

Finally, this war of good against evil is not the end-time war described by some variants of dispensationalism theology. 9/11 is not necessarily the prelude to Armageddon, the political nation of Israel is not identical with God's chosen people and the Arab countries are not the Anti-Christ. According to some Christians, today's Israel represents God's chosen people. Those Christians believe that the Temple has to be rebuilt in Jerusalem before Jesus returns. Therefore, the church should support Israel politically. Let us not go into the endless controversies about the proper interpretation of end-time prophecies. Even if we believe that there will be seven years of tribulations after the Rapture and the Temple will be rebuilt, we should also believe that these will be accomplished by God Himself and not through human political means. Our duty as believers is to condemn violence and promote peace. While Israel is a victim in Middle East conflicts, Palestinians also suffer huge casualties in the numerous retaliation of Israel. We ought to work for the peaceful coexistence of Israelites and Palestinians. Christians should not align our political influence with Israel's political goals.

9/11 made us see clearly the tragic aspects of life and destructive power of hatred. Much have been changed over the past ten years, but grievance and strife has continued to multiply internationally and locally in Hong Kong. Let us devote unreservedly our fragile lives to fight for love and forgiveness. [🔗](#)

In Memory of an Amazing Heavenly Soldier – Dr. Lam-Ko Kit-tak

Recently, a good old friend, Dr Lam Ko Kit-tak (Mrs. Lam) was constantly on my mind. To me, Mrs. Lam was an 'amazing soldier' of the heavenly kingdom. In what way was she amazing? Let me tell you.


I first met Mrs. Lam in 1996, right after CGST acquired the Dorset property by faith, and the monthly mortgage payment was a heavy burden. One day, a donor expressed willingness to make a matching gift of HK\$100,000 but we needed to find a matching donor within three weeks. A then-colleague, Dr. Agatha Chan, invited her great-aunt Mrs. Lam to be the matching donor. When Mrs. Lam heard about the huge financial needs involved in the campus development, she met with us, and after understanding more about our work and our needs, she decided to give us a further donation of a significant amount. For this we were not only thankful to God but also amazed by this sister's giving heart. Mrs. Lam told us that although she did not know CGST very well, she believed in the importance of theological education, and therefore not only would she support our ministries financially, she would also pray for us regularly. Since then, she truly took notice of our works and frequently invited us to lunch to learn about the School's development, as well as continually support us with love gifts. Two years later, reconstruction of the Devon Campus began and knowing the huge expense involved Mrs. Lam promised to pray for us. After a while she told us that through prayers God asked her to greatly support CGST and so she decided to donate another significant amount to the School. When we thanked her, Mrs. Lam said, "What is my gift compared with pastors like you who offer their lives to God, who give much but receive little in return!" I was deeply moved and was greatly encouraged. From then on Mrs. Lam continued to pray for our ministries and gave us equally big support for the Dorset Campus reconstruction.

Mrs. Lam shared with me her belief regarding offering. While she might not have much, she knew that she was entrusted by God with all she had as steward. Therefore, she would never hesitate to give, and had planned to

give away as much of her possession as she could for the kingdom of God during her lifetime rather than bequeathing it. Her interesting analogy went like this: Not giving much while alive but waiting till 'later' is like treating God's servants to a meal but serving them with leftovers. One day around year 2003, Mrs. Lam told me that she just sold a property, but she had decided that she would not keep any of the proceeds and instead would give it all back to God for His works. As far as I know, CGST was not the only beneficiary but other seminaries and church schools also received her support. Mrs. Lam was a very low-profile person, she never advertised her deeds or expected any acknowledgement for them.

While I called her 'amazing soldier' of the kingdom of heaven, she called herself 'an ageing soldier'. At the age of almost ninety, Mrs. Lam was still actively involved in ministries: teaching in Sunday school for seniors, giving testimonies, and taking theological courses designed for the elderly. She clearly showed that age should not prevent anyone giving from being a valiant soldier of God.

Mrs. Lam had another very special ministry, and that was encouragement to pastors. Every time we shared a meal together she would treat us to the very best. I personally enjoyed very much our time together, not only for the food but also for the encouragement I received from the fellowship. Her hospitality expressed fully her respect for pastors.

Mrs. Lam rested in the Lord on August 31, 2011, at the age of 98. Before that I had visited her at the hospital and administered the sacrament to her. I talked with her about death, encouraging her about seeing the Lord. With joy Mrs. Lam replied, "A few days ago I dreamt of going to heaven and saw Jesus there. He told me that He has a crown for me. I am delighted and ready to meet God any time." I deeply believe that Mrs. Lam has received her reward in heaven already. 



Summer Placement Reports

Field placement is one of the core elements of theological education, providing opportunities for students to integrate their academic knowledge and principles. The placement experience strengthens their theological understanding, stimulates their interests in learning and sharpening their theological reflections. Placements are divided into three main parts of pastoral, mission and counseling. Each summer CGST arranges for the first year students to spend eight weeks of local / overseas placement that closely relates to and maximizes their learning in Practical Studies.



Cross-cultural Experience at a Factory in Madagascar's Capital

Wang Jie

MDiv 2


A former colony of France, Madagascar's culture has a heavy French influence, and its official languages are French and Malagasy. Madagascar is one of the world's 24 most underdeveloped countries and the average age of its population is only seventeen. Most people do not get to go to school, the government is corrupt and the recent political change has virtually paralyzed the country.

Apart from some old Chinese immigrants originating from Guangdong area, in recent years many other Mainland Chinese have migrated to Madagascar. There are about 60,000 Chinese in the capital alone. We came across with these immigrants on different occasions and noticed that they are mainly businessmen or shop-owners. Many had the sole purpose of making profits and were bound by material pursuits, just like lost sheep. Some new Chinese immigrants are Christians but they are too busy with their work that they hardly have time to reflect on their faith and being nurtured.

There are about ten people in the Putonghua-speaking Sunday worship services at the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church and Family Service Center in the capital city. My wife Wen-huan, our daughter and I stayed with them for a month, during which time I preached and helped the missionary organize a week of tutoring classes for children and Chinese lessons for adults. A spiritual warfare was most memorable: while Bible-studying with a lady,

Wen-huan realized that the sister was possessed. My wife and I, together with the missionary, prayed in the name of Jesus and casted out the evil spirit from her. This lady later joined a church. We also served in a church for the locals and gave testimony, led family gatherings and worked in children ministry.

In missions experience we first need to observe God's works in different districts. His kingdom is like a mustard seed which was tiny at the beginning but will grow into a large tree. The lives and sharing of the missionaries helped me know more about missions; through the placement I saw how I would be suitable for cross-cultural ministry. I thank God that I worked and lived in France before and therefore I could adjust to the French-speaking culture more easily. I was also able to teach and preach in French.

Through this short mission placement God led me to experience a breakthrough. Whether in my faith in God, my ministry, interaction with people or teamwork, I could see my gifts as well as my blind spots. Regarding my upcoming study at CGST, I will no longer emphasize too much on results but rather I will cherish every opportunity to learn and be equipped, in order to be ready for God's use in the future. 

Cloud of Witnesses ~ Weaving Beautiful Dreams



Yiu-chung Wong and Wai-ye Lam

MDiv 2

We set off to Central Asia on our two-month summer placement carrying with us God's abundant promises and brothers and sisters' prayers that we would 'live among them'. The area has always been overshadowed by Islam and together with turmoil and instability, many view this place as off-limits and hard ground. In spite of this, we managed to discover her beauty and saw how God loved her deeply, sending His many loving children there to touch lives, sow seeds, water and nurture them. When we looked at fruits growing on the trees there, we could picture the future great harvest of God's Kingdom!

Our goal was to experience the life of a missionary, and God fully granted us this – we encountered different incidents every week, such as power cut and suspension of water supply. Further, we were supposed to help a missionary to manage the local business, but because of land resumption we helped closing it instead. Later we even got involved in negotiating compensation, arranging packing up and removal, and coordinating with landlord and neighbors etc. Furthermore, we faced conflicts due to political turmoils and learned skills for daily self-preservation and survival... We went through all these in a foreign land with a foreign culture, proving the power of God's word, the realness of His protection and the importance of fellow believers' support. Without God's presence, help from local Christians and missionaries, and prayer support of the Hong Kong community, it would be impossible to have peace and strength to face all kinds of fear and worries we had!

to be continued on next page...

By God's extra graciousness we were able to know and serve the local missionaries. They faithfully responded to God's call and hold onto what God has committed to them with Christ's love, patience and perseverance, faithfully loving the people there – some gave up the option of marriage, others refused to be hindered by cancer, all for the sake of weeping for the despised ones. Their examples deeply touched us and have shown us the direction in considering our mission ministry. Practically speaking, there may be many environmental constraints in starting a gospel ministry in a creative access nation but in works relating to human lives efficiency is not the only consideration. We have also learned the necessity of theological training in mission ministry. Theological training does not only help us reconstruct our understanding of God, the gospel and our faith, the training also helps us to nurture a pastor's heart, molding our life, values and thoughts with the word of God, to understand His will in creating us, thereby edifying both ourselves and others. It is particularly significant for missionaries in creative access nations to be certain of this point. I sincerely hope that, knowing our priorities, we will follow God closely and together weave this picture of missions and fulfill the vision that He has given us. [🔗](#)

Power of the Gospel

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Paris Lai

MDiv 2



"... [the gospel] is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes..." (Rom. 1:16)

The first Thursday evening of my second year study I returned to 'Peter Fellowship' and visited Rev. and Mrs. Siu, other church workers and fellowship members. Their warm smiles and greetings, coupled with their blessings and spirited testimonies, brought back many memories to me.

When I first attended the Peter Fellowship of Kei Yam Alliance Church I was attracted by the group's frankness in the Lord, willingness to share and trust in God's help in one's weakness, as well as their simple faith in the gospel and in each other. Personal testimonies during fellowship gatherings showed me the life-changing power of the gospel. Because of your fantastic lives and because of the work of the Holy Spirit, my heart was touched and the first gathering left me sleepless with excitement.

Having grown up in a traditional church, I am more reserved, rational and individual. While I knew that the gospel is the power of God and have witnessed this power from personal experiences and those of brothers and sisters, I was nonetheless surprised to see the same power working on a group of gamblers, scorned by the society and whom their families

described as 'their shame', 'unchangeable' and 'hopeless'. They were God's treasures and chosen as His vessels. Some of them, being heavily in debt, attempted suicide, and others had their families wrecked or were living in torment... Yet, in their desperation God saved them and gave them again acceptance, trust and self-love. They were willing to hold on tightly to God's words and promises, cherish them and learn anew how they might use the truth to resist Satan and all temptations, and persist in their faith with help from the community, their families and self. Today, most of them have successfully quit gambling and set a good example for brothers and sisters. Because their lives are changed their families are rebuilt, and some who were divorced have renewed their marital commitment in the Lord.

The lively gospel I see is the gospel that changes hearts, gives people hope and empowers them. This is a gospel of power.

O God, let me continue to see the power of Your gospel. [🔗](#)

Anita Chiu

MCS (Major in Marriage and Family Counseling)

What is it like to work as a counselor in a church? With nervous excitement I went to the placement church, feeling like starting my first ever job and filled with expectation. It was a medium-sized church with a congregation of about 700 mainly from the lower middle class, and the people I served ranged from the elderly to young children. My work included organizing seminars and workshops tailored to their needs, leading counseling-related small groups, and holding counseling sessions.

Having come from a middle-class church, the placement posed a challenge for me but at the same time it was a wonderful opportunity to expand my horizon. A memorable challenge was holding an 'emotional management' talk for single-mothers who were Mainlanders. They were abandoned after coming to Hong Kong. I was familiar with the topic, but not at all with the target audience. Listening to their stories made me shocked and also a little angry. I felt how their lives must be traumatized and emotions being highly fragile, and so I prepared with the greatest care, hoping that the talk might give them encouragement and support.

Another time I encountered an elderly couple. This was my first time counseling senior couples in their eighties and nineties, and with my limited knowledge in geropsychology, I had to pray constantly while practising my basic counseling theories and theological reflections: Listen attentively and respond from my heart, and 'co-human' with them. From this experience I learned that the elderly also have their emotional needs and yearn to be affectionate with their spouses.

During placement I often asked myself how is the Marriage and Family Counseling program offered by CGST different from other non-Christian counseling programs? Why did I choose to study at CGST but not at a secular university, where Bible reading is not required and I would not need to struggle with reading those books such as *On Being Human* or know who O'Donovan and Hauerwas are? All I would need to do is to practise my counseling skills and memorize the professional codes of ethics. Indeed, it is a great challenge to study those theological subjects, but it is precisely this 'hardship' that made me appreciate the preciousness and vulnerability of 'man' whom God created, helped me understand better who the real me is, and know that I should be nurtured into the me that God had intended when He created me. I am not receiving occupational training at all. I see counseling as a vocation, those receiving help are God's precious creation and therefore they must be 'handled with care' in truth. [🔗](#)

Faculty Movements

- November 15-19, December 17-25, 2011: Dr. Kevin Yao lectured in Fujian and carried out researches and visits in Beijing.
- November 28 to December 3, 2011: President Carver Yu lectured at Nanjing Union Theological Seminary.
- December 2011: Dr. Kevin Yao, Researcher of CGST Chinese Culture Research Center and Associate Professor of Theological Studies, resigned from his offices. The School is grateful for his eight years of ministry, may the Lord bless him and his family as they live and serve in the U.S.
- Dr. Luke Cheung and Dr. Kevin Cheng completed their sabbaticals and returned to the School in February.
- February to July 2012: Dr. Ka-leung Wong is on sabbatical leave, during which time Dr. Kasper Wong is Acting Librarian.
- January 2012: Dr. Phee-seng Kang has joined the Faculty as Professor of Theological Studies and Director of Center for Faith & Public Values. Dr. Kang received his MDiv at CGST and his PhD at the University of Aberdeen. Dr. Kang has for many years been professor at the Department of Religion and Philosophy, Hong Kong Baptist University, and Director of Center for

Sino-Christian Studies.

- January 2012: Ms. Wance Kwan has joined the Faculty as Assistant Professor of Practical Studies. Ms. Kwan was a member of CGST Adjunct Faculty for Practical Studies between 2008 and 2011. Ms. Kwan received her MA at New York University and obtained MCS at CGST in 2004. Ms. Kwan works in occupational therapy and has been involved in various local and overseas missions, including six years of medical-related works in Afghanistan. In recent years Ms. Kwan is actively involved in the "No-Barrier Worship" programme for the mentally-challenged.

- The Simplified Chinese version of Dr. Kevin Cheng's *"The Way of Heaven and the Passion of Humanity"* was published in September 2011 by Tuanjie Press.

Putonghua Biblical Studies Program

- The two-week Program was held between January 3 and 13. CGST President Carver Yu preached at the morning chapel service to welcome the students on the 3rd. In the first week Visiting Professor, Dr. Paul Lai lectured on 'The Pentateuch' and in the second week Dr. Kin-yip Louie, Assistant Professor of Theological Studies, lectured on 'Doctrinal Theology (2)'.

Financial Report

Dec, 2011 General Fund	US\$
Donations	164,724
Tuition & other income	239,756
	404,480
Expenditure	(447,259)
Deficit	(42,779)
Surplus from Jan to Nov, 2011	132,005
Accumulated Surplus	89,226
Jan, 2012 General Fund	US\$
Donations	141,682
Tuition & other income	322,263
	463,945
Expenditure	(429,099)
Surplus	34,846
Outstanding mortgage loan as at January, 2012 : US\$ 3,403,151	

Prayer Requests

1. We thank God for providing the School's financial needs in the past year; through churches and brothers and sisters' loving support our ministries can be carried out smoothly. Pray that God will give us faith and supply us abundantly for this year.
2. Pray for the recruitment of new students in the coming school year, that God will guide those responding to His calling, be equipped and study at CGST.
3. Praise the Lord for His guidance to establish the Center for Faith and Public Values! Pray that God will use the Center. Also pray for the newly-joined co-workers that God will give grace to their work.
4. Pray that through the 2012 Spring TEE programs and 'Word of Life' Bible Study series students may be richly blessed by His grace.

Response

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