

**15 Days  
of Prayer** for **Tibetans** *during the Tibetan New Year*  
*Feb. 28 to Mar. 14, 2025*





## Why have we chosen to pray during the Tibetan New Year?

The New Year is the biggest festival in the Tibetan world, similar to Christmas in the West. There are a lot of religious activities held during this period, so it is really a good time for us to pray for them.

## Why 15 days?

The Tibetan people normally celebrate the New Year for 15 days.

## What should you do?

Each day, we will introduce you to different cultural things about the Tibetan New Year and Tibetans. We hope this will provide you with great stimulus for prayer.

- Firstly, read the article.
- Then, go through the prayer items.
- Finally, ask the Holy Spirit for special revelation about how to pray.

# Thank you for walking with us!



## Day 1 Happy New Year Family Time



Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat-- for he grants sleep to those he loves.

(Psalm 127:1-2)



# Tibetans

attach huge importance to their family. This is reflected even more during New Year days.

To Losang's family, Losar is a huge annual family gathering. Everyone comes back in time to spend their new year together, even if they are studying far away, or working out of town.

The Festive Dinner is the highlight of the New Year Festival. On New Year's Eve in the Tibetan calendar, Losang's family joins together to eat "Ku-ta". "Ku-ta" is made of nine ingredients including, carrots, ginseng fruit, pea, flour, white cabbage.

Eating Ku-ta symbolizes getting rid of the old and welcoming the new, and also expelling the bad luck of the previous year, and all demons. On other days, cooking Ku-ta is his wife's job but for the New Year Ku-ta, Losang and his wife prepare it together. He does so because the way of doing this New Year's Ku-ta is different from normal days. They make some shapes such as moon and sun using flour, and other Noodles in ordinary shapes, just a bit larger. These noodles encircle an array of symbols which will represent the fortunes and conduct of the respective persons joining the meal. Ku-ta will be randomly distributed in each bowl.

This year, Losang's elder son got the noodle with the shape of the sun and the moon, symbolising his health and fortune for the coming year. His wife got the one with a little square cushion, representative of the coming days being easy for her. His first daughter got a white lamb's fleece, symbolising her generosity and gentleness. As for his younger daughter, she got ceramics which symbolises her laziness. It is a custom. It is a game. Family members praise and tease each other. On New Year's Eve night, the family becomes lively.

As for the following days, Losang and his family join different celebrations in the village, and visit their relatives. After all, Tibetan New Year is a season in which people celebrate and enjoy their family time together.



## *Pray that:*

- *The Tibetans will enjoy their family life.*
- *God will use the Tibetans' family time as a time to share His love and mercy.*
- *Christians will bring His Good News to every family.*



## Day 2 The Way to Give Gifts



When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you.

(Luke 10:5-6)



# Gongbo

urged the children, 'Hurry up and get dressed. We are going to Uncle Wangjia's house today.' When the children heard that they were going to visit Uncle Wangjia, they immediately sprang into action.

Gongbo's wife once again sorted out biscuits, sweets, homemade highland barley wine and steamed buns. She surveyed it carefully and made sure there was nothing amiss. Although their family is close friends with Wangjia's family, it would be rude to visit others in the New Year if they were not adequately prepared.

Wangjia's house is not far from Gongbo's house, and it takes only ten minutes to walk. The two children already knew the way and walked joyfully in front. Gongbo and his wife followed slowly with bags of gifts.

Finally they arrived at Wangjia's house, and Gongbo and his wife immediately handed over the gifts. Everyone drank highland barley wine which had been brought by Gongbo, and gave New Year greetings to each other, wishing everyone a harmonious family, good luck and a happy life.



## Prayer:

- *May God bless every Tibetan family and make them happy when visiting relatives and friends.*
- *Ask the Lord to teach the workers how to use gifts as a medium to build deeper friendships and develop life-changing relationships.*
- *May God bless the workers' visits during the New Year, so that every visit can become a blessing and send God's love and peace to every family.*



Visiting relatives and friends is very important in the New Year. Although everyone lives in the same village and often has the opportunity to meet, it is the best way to express friendship and blessings for a family to bring gifts to their friends' homes during the New Year. Between friends, you come and go, bless each other, eat, drink and laugh, which is really the warmest and happiest time in the New Year.

Gifts are an indispensable part of visiting. Even on ordinary days, when Tibetans visit people, they bring gifts, and even more so at New Year. No one would visit others empty-handed. To do so is very rude and humiliating, and would attract criticism.

As for the way of giving gifts in the New Year, there are rules. Some places like to send wine, some places like to send meat, and some places like to send fruits. There are different rules in different villages. But what is certain is that the closer the relationship, the more expensive the gift will be.

## Day 3 The Origin of the Twelve Year Cycle



(God our Savior)  
who wants all men  
to be saved and to  
come to a know-  
ledge of the truth.  
(1 Tim.2:4 )



**There** is a folk story about the origin origin of the twelve year cycle of Tibetan calendar.

Long, long ago, there was no system of calculating the years and the year signs. The system came about through the chief god, Indra, deciding he would establish this for all the people. One day, Indra gave a command to the animals. "Tomorrow morning, just as the sun is about to rise, you animals must cross a river. The first animal to cross the river will be considered the king of the years. Then, in the order in which the other animals cross the river, this will decide the year signs. However many animals can enter this system of the year signs will determine the life span of humans. So remember what I've said!" Indra commanded.

On the evening of the day that Indra gave his command, the animals engaged in much talk and discussion about how they should cross the river and who should cross the river first tomorrow. After much discussion, the animals all finally decided that the ox should go first, then the tiger, then after that the other animals should cross just as they wanted to. Amongst all the animals, the rat was very small and weak. Far from being able to be the first one to be included in the year signs, it would be very difficult for it to even cross the river. However, the rat was smart animal. So that evening, when the ox was asleep, the rat secretly entered the ox's ear and stayed there the night.

The next day, as soon as the sun had risen, the ox led the way across the river. When the ox had crossed over to the other side, the rat immediately jumped out of the ox's ear in front of the ox and yelled out as it was running along. "Great Indra, I, the rat am the first to arrive!"

Indra then made the rat the king of the year cycle and first in the order of the year signs. Then the others were decided in accordance with the order in which they had crossed the river; the ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, bird, dog and pig. After the pig had crossed the river, it did not stop wagging its tail to the left and right. So the other animals, who where yet to cross the river, said, "Look, the pig seems to be telling us not to come. The number of animals needed for the year signs is probably already full." And as those animals did not cross the river, the pig became the last animal of the twelve year signs.

According to legend, if the pig had not wagged its tail, there would have been more year signs than this and furthermore, the life span of humans would have been longer.



### *Pray that:*

- *The Tibetans will know our Father God is the highest god, and the marker of human history.*
- *The Tibetans will come to worship our Father God.*
- *The Tibetans will find hope and a future in Him.*



## Day 4 The Year of the Wood Snake



In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. (John 3:3,5-6)

# Tibetans

believe in animals symbolic of Terrestrial Branches. There are 12 animal symbols in the Tibetan calendar: Mouse, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Bird, Dog and Pig. Although it is similar to the Han Chinese calendar year, there is a slight difference between them. The Tibetan calendar has its particular characteristics. Tibetan animal symbols are combined with yin-yang philosophy and 5-phases of Chinese philosophy.

It is currently the Year of the Wood Snake according to the Tibetan traditional calendar.

The snake is not a favourable symbol in Christianity as in Genesis it brought a negative change to the history of mankind.

When it comes to the most famous snake in the Tibetan history and culture, it must be the one in the diagram of the Tibetan Wheel of Life. It is also known as the Wheel of Life and Death. Tibetans truly believe in rebirth. They think all living beings will reborn as different forms in the next life according to their deeds in this present life. The diagram of the Wheel of Life mainly shows the reincarnation of all in the six realms of existence.

The Snake and two other animals—the Pigeon (or the Rooster) and the Pig, appear in the inner circle of the Wheel, which tells the three fundamental anxieties of all mankind, also known as Three Poisons. In the Diagram,

the three animals are biting the tails of one another, which tells that the three Poisons do not exist individually, but interdependently.

The Pigeon (or the Rooster) represents a person's greedy desires (attachment), the Pig represents a person's lack of knowledge (ignorance), while the Snake represents people's wrath (anger). The hatred of the heart is a negative emotion due to the dislike of someone or something. Typically the Snake looks grim, and often stretches out its poisonous tongue to attack others, so Tibetans use Snake to represent a person's jealousy, arrogance and resentment.

## Pray that:

- *The Tibetans will know our Father God is the true Creator of the Universe.*
- *The Tibetans will receive the true blessings that come through Christ.*
- *The Tibetans will know they are all destined to be children of God, no matter which year they were born in.*





## Day 5 Beautiful Tibetan New Year Flowers



You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

(Psalms 51:16-17)

# The

Tibetans prepare for the New Year one month in advance. Lots of hawkers sell a wide range of new year festive supplies everywhere in the great streets and small alleys in the city.

Not so far away in the market, there is a stall selling colourful ears of highland barley. The shop owner Sonam smiles and counts highland barley of different colors for his customers. He then ties them up with a yellow thread. Customers happily get their bundles of ears of highland barley, with grins on their faces. Sonam sells Tibetan new year flowers to them. Tibetan new year flowers are not real flowers, but a flower of dyed highland barley ears.

Sonam has been learning the traditional art of making New Year flowers, from a young age. Sonam prepares 'New Year Flowers' for months in advance for the New Year. In late Summer, the harvested highland barley is sun dried, and stored in a storeroom before being dyed for the new year. Besides ears of highland barley, dyes are the most important ingredient for making Tibetan New Year flowers. Most of the dyes are imported from Nepal.

## *Pray that:*

- *The Tibetans will understand that accepting Jesus Christ as their personal Savior is the happiest thing they can do in life.*
- *The Tibetans will find the home for their souls, as only Jesus can quench their inner thirst.*
- *Workers can faithfully spread the Gospel, giving fortune and happiness to the Tibetans.*

Lhatso bought some Tibetan new year flowers from Sonam today. She had planned to decorate her Chemar, which is an auspicious display in the new year, being put in some eye-catching area in the household. In one end of the wooden bucket, butter milk and roasted highland barley is put in, and the other end mini wheat grains are put in. Lhatso had to reverently put them the shape of pyramids. Lhatso then arranged the New Year flowers and some butter milk flowers on top of the pyramids. Finally, a reflective white scarf is placed on top of the wooden bucket. This is how the New Year Chemar is decorated each year. The Chemar is a symbol of an abundant harvest during the previous year and acts as a blessing for an abundant harvest of all produce in the year ahead. Staring at the colourful Chemar, Lhatso prayed that in the New Year, the whole family would be healthy, wealthy and lucky.

As Sonam sells New Year flowers, he gives his customers a blessing for fortune and happiness in the year ahead.





## Day 6 New Year's Grand Costume



“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

(Matthew 6:28)

"**Mum**, where did you put my favourite suit that grandpa gave me last year? Why can't I find it? I have to wear it on the first day of the New Year!" Drolga asked anxiously, walking over to her mother in an angry voice. "I know that's your favourite dress. I've kept it safe for you." She then opened the big wardrobe box and handed over to Drolga the shirt, skirt and Tibetan robe that Drolga regarded as treasures. Drolga immediately embraced them in her arms. The robes, made of lamb's wool, were heavy and warm. The shirt smelled good, with the fragrance of laundry detergent.

Tibetans do not have the custom of buying new clothes before the New Year, nor do they have to wear new clothes during the New Year, but they do have the habit of changing into clean clothes on the first day of the New Year. After all, this is a grand festival, clean and decent clothes, will make themselves and the people around them feel happy and blessed.

The basic features of Tibetan clothing are a fat waist, long sleeves and large lapels.

The Tibetan robe has a fat structure and can be used as a quilt when sleeping with the clothes on at night. Robe sleeves wide, arms stretch freely, sunny during the day, when the temperature rises, you can take off one side of the robe sleeves, regulating body temperature. In the long run, it became a habit to take off the right hand sleeve of the attire, and became the Tibetan people's heroic character and style.

Tibetan shirts are made of various colours of silk and satin and cloth. Men's shirts have high collars and are mainly white or yellowish in colour. Women's shirts have both high collars and lapels in a variety of colours. The sleeves of the shirts are particularly long, sometimes up to 40 cm long, and are usually rolled up.

In addition to clothing, Tibetans also attach great importance to jewellery, hair, neck, ears, wrists, chest, waist, etc. are decorated with different gold and silver jewellery. These ornaments are often treasures passed down from generation to generation and are worth a lot of money. As for the shape and pattern, it has a strong religious meaning, which is to send their prayers to the gods.



## **Prayer:**

- *God is the Provider and Giver of the Tibetans, so they need not worry about what to eat, what to drink and what to wear. May the Tibetans rely on Him alone and seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness.*
- *Pray that Tibetans will open hearts and minds to believe and be drawn to eternal life with Christ.*
- *Any barriers that would keep Tibetan from following Jesus, such as family, fear of persecution and isolation, false religions, etc., will be broken down by the power of the Holy Spirit.*



## Day 7 Trouble Getting New Tibetan Monks



"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

(Luke 4:18-19)

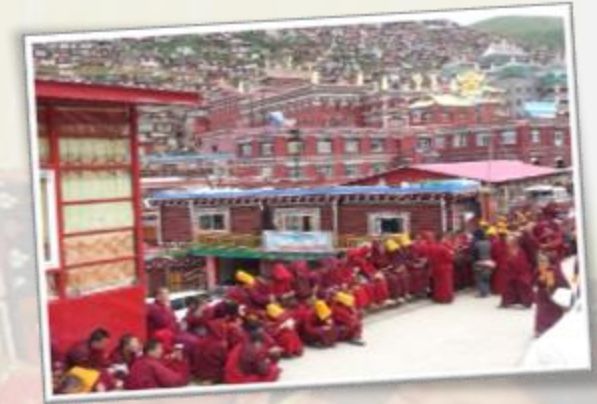
## Pray that:

- *The influence of monks and lamas on society will continue to decrease.*
- *The monks and lamas can explore and learn more new knowledge including that of the Christian faith and Jesus.*
- *Jesus' power will be revealed as being much greater than that of the various Buddhist deities and masters that the monks and lamas are committed to.*

**A few** years back, I was in a Tibetan town where there were many Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. I mostly was spending time with local Tibetan friends. One old lady who is a mother of one of my Tibetan friends said, "I wouldn't send my male grandchild to be a monk in the monastery." I was a bit shocked because I presumed that old Tibetan ladies especially would be very devoted to Buddhism and easily would send their children to the monastery. It seems that Tibetan society is changing now.

The Chinese government bans monastic education before the age of 18. The government justifies this policy by arguing that monasteries only teach religion and the Tibetan language and students need a complete education with sciences, the Chinese language and math. Senior monks have said that after attending regular schools for nine years many young Tibetans don't want to become monks.

Normally a Tibetan monk's daily life starts in the early morning and ends late at night. The whole day is occupied with communal or individual religious services and the management of the monastery. Older monks, learned lamas, hold greater responsibilities such as maintaining discipline and leading the group prayers. Younger monks help by running the kitchen, shopping and serving food and tea.



Religious study and services are the main theme of the monastic life. The newly ordained monks start with basic Tibetan language, grammar, literature, sutra chanting and prayers. Only a few talented monks can enter a scholarly religious life and advance to a high religious qualification.

Many others work at more secular jobs doing the work of craftsmen, builders, artists and cooks. Normally monks do 5-10 years of study although it depends on the individual's situation. After that they do what they are assigned, such as management of the monastery, business etc...

Nuns live a life similar to that of monks, in a more invisible manner. Their religious practice mainly focuses on meditation and prayer rather than advanced philosophical studies in less structured nunneries.

The above description is a general picture of life in a Tibetan Buddhist monastery. However, there are many exceptions or distinct practices in different areas and monasteries. For instance, some monks can have 6 months' holiday or leave whereas some monasteries are very strict about that.



## Day 8 A 'god-man' who Controls the Weather



Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone.

(Job 38:4-6)

# Although

Buddhism has been embraced in Tibet for more than 1,400 years, the shamanic beliefs (known as "Bon" in Tibet) that have been practiced since ancient times are still deeply rooted in Tibetan thought. In addition, when Buddhism first came to Tibet, in order to please the Tibetan people, many Bon religious rituals were also integrated into Buddhism, so the worship of spirits, mystical rituals, witchcraft divination, etc., has never left the Tibetan culture.

The religious people who practice these Bon beliefs are shamans. The Tibetan word for a shaman means god-man, which shows his high status. Among the Bon gods, not only are there a large number of female gods, but these also have a high status, so among the Bon shamans, there are also a lot of women.

The functions of shamans are all-encompassing: divination and calculation, removing disasters and driving away diseases, chanting sutras for new homes and old houses, praying for people who go out, summoning spirits and exorcizing ghosts, praying for spring ploughing, and also praying for longevity, rain, and health.

Among the many shamans, the 'hail lamas', who are still widely popular in the farming areas, can use spells or magic to call for wind and rain, and especially in the winter can use these spells to protect crops from hail. The hail disaster was caused by the mountain gods. Why did the mountain gods make hailstones? The mountain god wants to snatch grain from the farmers. The

mountain god has a group of wild beasts that carry hail under him, and when he sees that a place is not guarded, he goes there to hail. The dark clouds that appear on the mountains are the dust raised by the beasts as they run.

'Hail lamas' know how to observe the heavens, and this knowledge has been passed down from generation to generation. As soon as they detect the possibility of hail, they immediately inform the villagers to get ready. At the same time, the anti-hail lamas chant incantations and cast spells to divert the hail to other places. In order to drive away the beasts that carry the hailstones, they will even blow trumpets, and they will fire their guns to declare war on the beasts.



## Prayer:

- *Pray that God will transform the deep-rooted shamanic belief of the Tibetan people, so that the Tibetans will realize that He is the only true God in heaven and earth.*
- *Pray that God will bind all the forces of darkness from Satan and break down all the strongholds that hinder Tibetans from believing in the Gospel, so that the true light of Christ will shine in the land of Tibetans.*
- *Pray for God's protection and peace to comfort the hearts of Tibetans.*





## Day 9 The Mystics of 'Om Mani Padme Hum'



If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

(2 Corinthians 5:13-14)

**The** mantra 'Om Mani Padme Hum' is the most ubiquitous and popular form of religious practice in Tibetan areas. This Sanskrit mantra, composed of six syllables, Om Mani Padme Hum, is a spell in Tibetan Buddhism.

The six-syllabled Sanskrit mantra is seen as a condensed form of all the ancient Buddhist scriptures. The mantra is so popular in the Tibetan community that both the priests and the laymen, whether they work, they walk or rest, or even before sleep, chant the mantra. The act of sincerely chanting the mantra is a good work with boundless benefits. According to the Buddhist teachings, those deceased, having chanted the mantra a hundred million times in this world, will go direct to paradise, free from torture in hell.

In Tibetan areas the legends of Om Mani Padme Hum are widespread. It was said that the 5th Dalai Lama found the Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva appearing for months around the historic pilgrim path of the Potala Palace. Overjoyed, Dalai Lama went out to see what had happened outside. However, all he saw was an old lady turning prayer wheels and chanting Om Mani Padme Hum with great respect in the moonlight. The Dalai Lama carefully listened to her murmured chantings and said, "Old lady, you have mispronounced some sounds!" Then he taught her how to make the right sounds.



## *Pray that:*

- *God will bestow His blessings on the Tibetans, and deliver them from the bondage of salvation by merit-making.*
- *God will give the Tibetans eternal hope, and enlighten them about the true meaning of eternity.*
- *The Tibetans will worship God in spirit and in truth.*

The next night, the Dalai Lama looked out of the Palace, searching for the Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. All he saw was the same old lady chanting, but the Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva never appeared. He immediately ran to the old lady and figured out how she chanted that night. The old lady said, "Previously while I was chanting, I was meeting the Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva in my heart, but tonight all I had in mind was the pronunciation Buddha you had taught me, for fear that I mispronounced the chanting and would be cast into hell!"

It suddenly dawned on the Dalai Lama what was happening; pressing his palms together and bowing deeply, he said, "Old lady, please forget what I said about pronunciation, chant the old way you are used to. It is of boundless benefit to your chanting!"

Instantly, that night, Dalai Lama saw the Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva passing by.....



## Day 10 Intense Pressure



For my yoke is easy  
and my burden is  
light.

(Matthew 11:30)

# Although

Wongmo became a Christian more than a decade ago, her family members still do not accept her conversion to Jesus Christ. They regard Wongmo as an apostate and thus, in their everyday life, they rarely talk about her with their relatives, the Tibetan people are strongly influenced by Tibetan Buddhism. What is the point of mentioning a person who has left their faith?

Wongmo has very few friends in her village. The family gatherings at the Tibetan New Year give her unspeakable pressure. The festivities are more than simply a family reunion. They involve a lot of religious customs. There seems to be even more tension between Wongmo and her family at New Year.

On the New Year's Day, every family member has to take the highland barley from a "Drosu Chemar", a wooden boat-shaped New Year decoration which is believed to be able to bring good luck, and throw the highland barley in the air. At the same time, he or she should recite the religious scriptures so as to pray for blessings in the coming year. Wongmo still remembers how nervous she was when she was waiting in the line to perform the ceremony the first few years after she had just converted to Jesus Christ. She hoped to witness for Jesus Christ but at the same time she was so afraid of making her family angry that she chose to give in eventually. In recent years, she has learnt to "strike a balance". When she throws the highland barley in the air, she prays God's guidance and joy for her family.

Another headache is whether Wongmo should eat the food her family receives from the monasteries. Luckily, the elders in her family have not forced her to eat the food in recent years. Thus, Wongmo can avoid eating the food sacrificed to idols.



Wongmo has not attended other festive activities, such as going to monasteries and watching Tibetan folk operas. Though her family members still complain about this, to Wongmo, this is just a trivial matter. She has been used to these kinds of grumbles, which happen from time to time.

What hurts Wongmo most was a remark her elder sister once made. Her sister said to her daughter one day, 'Aunt Wongmo is no longer a Tibetan!' Without the acceptance from her family, care from friends and recognition of her individual identity, Wongmo feels heartbroken but she still strongly believes that her loving God will keep her and help her witness for Jesus Christ with her special identity as a Tibetan Christian.

## *Pray that:*

- The believers are brave enough to say 'NO' to certain kinds of religious activities. Also, ask for fewer tests that they need to face.*
- God will teach the believers how to be Tibetan Christians.*
- Believers will understand Biblical truth and be deeply rooted in God's Word. Pray that they especially will understand that salvation is by grace, not by works or earning merit.*



## Day 11 Stronghold of Buddhist Tradition



Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

(John 8:34-36)

**Buddhism** is the world's fourth largest religion, with over 520 million followers. It encompasses a variety of traditions, beliefs and spiritual practices largely based on teachings attributed to the Buddha.

The historical Buddha (named Siddhartha at birth and commonly known as Shakyamuni Buddha) lived in northern India approximately five centuries before Christ. He was a prince who renounced a privileged royal life in order to search for ultimate peace and the highest good. He realized the highest level of enlightenment at the age of thirty-five. Through arduous practices, concentrated meditation, and deep reflection he became a fully awakened being – a Buddha.

The term “Buddha” means an “awakened” or “enlightened” one who has discovered true wisdom and attained nirvana (the cessation of desire) in this world. It is a descriptive title given to all fully enlightened beings, rather than being the exclusive name of a single individual. There have been buddhas in the past, and other buddhas are expected in the future.

**Religion** and spirituality are extremely important to the Tibetans and has a strong influence over all aspects of lives; it is ingrained deeply into their cultural heritage.

Most Tibetans are fervent Buddhists. Tibetan Buddhism is strong in both monastic communities and among lay people. The lay version has a strong emphasis on outward religious activities rather than the inner spiritual life. They mostly emphasize protecting the family from disaster and seeking blessing through religious rituals.

Religious activity is the most vital part of life for Tibetans. Even though some of the Tibetans are poor, they still spend a lot of money on religious activities. They make the Buddha place as the most splendid area of their house. They save the money they earn daily, in order to donate to the temples, living Buddhas and monks.

### *Pray that:*

- *The Lord will bring release to the Tibetans – from their bondage to Buddhism and its ‘works’ theology.*
- *The Tibetans will realise they don’t need to make any merit to earn the eternal life, but will find it through the grace of the Lord.*
- *The Tibetans will direct their religious devotion towards serving the true Lord.*





## Day 12 Pilgrimage of Wood and Paper



Show me your ways,  
Lord, teach me your  
paths. Guide me in your  
truth and teach me, for  
you are God my Savior,  
and my hope is in you all  
day long.

(Psalm 25:4-5)

**"Behold**, what beautiful scriptures are printed here! All are traditional long, loose-leaf bindings, printed from woodcuts." Lhaba Tsering proudly introduces one of his sutras to visitors. Visitors looked at the book in amazement. Someone asked, "Do all Tibetans read this traditional form of sutra?" Lhaba Tsering shook his head and sighed; "It's too expensive to print the sutras by hand. Those who have money buy here. If you don't have the money, you buy the ones printed by factories."

Lhaba Tsering is the carver of this printing house. "All of our carvers are trained on a master-apprenticeship basis, and we not only need to be skilled in the technique but also have a good foundation in Tibetan grammar and painting. The engraving of the scripture plate is actually an art of wood carving."

"Do you know what is the most important place in this printing house? Haha, certainly not the kitchen. This is the library of scripture plates, and we use those plates to print sutras. With one glance, you can see rows of long plates which are neatly placed

on wooden shelves. They look sacred and solemn and also exude a unique smell of ghee, forming a unique bookish atmosphere.

In addition to printing technology, the way of making Tibetan paper that is used to print sutras is almost 1,300 years old.

Tibetan paper is made from the root of *Stellera chamaejasme* and produced by traditional methods. The Tibetan paper is soft, and the ink does not penetrate easily. It is both intricate and shiny, but more importantly, it can repel insect and rat bites, which allows the scriptures printed on Tibetan paper to survive thousands of years and still be well preserved.

At present, the Dege Printing House is the largest scale Tibetan Buddhist printing house with the largest number of books and the most complete equipment. There are more than 3,000 plates in the printing house, most of which are more than 100 years old, and the oldest ones are 500 years old.

## *Prayer:*

- Pray that Tibetans will have access to the Bible and Christianity through the Internet, social media platforms, and Christian mobile apps.*
- Pray for those Tibetans who are seeking the Truth, that the Lord will open their minds to help them understand the Bible. Open their eyes to see the wonderful truths and give them understanding so that they can better know the Lord.*
- Pray that Christian workers can grasp the doctrinal differences between Tibetan Buddhism and Christianity and can more effectively share the gospel with Tibetans.*





## Day 13 Go to a play today



Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood. and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. (Rev1:4b-6)

**Tsomo** has been looking forward to seeing the Tibetan play this morning. It is a rare occasion and since it is quite costly to put on, the village heads will only hold such a festival once every few years as a grand celebration.

Tsomo has heard that this year's play is King Gesar. King Gesar is a son of the gods. He saw people had endured much torment and abuse at the hands of the predominating wicked monsters and evil spirits rampaging about Tibetan areas, and so he was incarnated willingly into this world and reigned over the Tibetans. In the Tibetans' hearts, King Gesar is both wise and brave, a hero helping needy people in distress, and a savior who is both fully divine and human.

Tsomo and other members of her family have each brought a stool to the open area for the performance. Seeing that the seating areas are already occupied by villagers who have come earlier, they search out another good place to settle down. Blessing each other joyfully with best wishes for a happy and auspicious New Year, all the villagers sitting around are assured that this year will be better than the previous year because King Gesar will bless them.

The show starts. All the villagers are moved by the plot - when they see people in a sorry plight in the land of desolation, they sigh and curse the

wicked monsters and malevolent evil spirits. When King Gesar appears, they clap and are enchanted, thanking the gods for their blessings. The heroic images of King Gesar and his generals have inspired Tibetan youths to promise that they will be upright people without deceit, sacrifice themselves for others and seek to benefit their fellow villagers.



The first part of the play finishes in the morning and Tsomo excitedly goes home for lunch. At lunch, she asks her daddy about the parts of the play he does not understand. The whole family participates in the discussion, with everyone happily getting involved. Tsomo suddenly says to the rest of the family, "Let's set out earlier this afternoon and try to grab a better spot to watch the play. I would like to see my King Gesar more clearly!"

## *Prayer:*

- *May God give wisdom to His Gospel messengers, that they would make good use of the story of King Gesar to tell the Gospel, so that Tibetans can better understand the story of Jesus the incarnate one who saves all the peoples of the world.*
- *May God reveal Himself to the Tibetans, letting them know that Jesus is the one and only powerful divine protector.*
- *May God give righteousness and peace to satisfy the Tibetan people's longing for peace and a happy life.*



## Day 14 Elephants Play Tug of War, for real?



They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read ..... instructing the people said to them all, “This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep.” For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law. Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength. (Nehemiah 8:8-10)

# After

more than a week of intensive physical training, Baden, nicknamed strong yak by his fellow villagers, is raring to go. He feels sure of winning the coming tug of war.

The Tibetan tug of war is called elephant tug of war, because in the contests, the movements are like elephants in motion. It is said that the contest originated thousands of years ago in Tibet and is the most popular ethnic contestant game. The tug of war is the highlight of the New Year celebrations in Baden's village, so villagers are excited to speculate on who this year's elephant will be.

Baden has started warming up himself, rotating his neck, shoulders and waist. At the same time, he looks across at the other contestants, weighing up the competition, especially his Uncle who is the biggest threat to his victory. Maybe having inherited the same family genes, his Uncle seems quite huge as well.

As expected, both Baden and his Uncle go through to the final. All the villagers are in audience, cheering excitedly for the contestant of their choice. Only Baden's family members feel torn between the two, hesitating about whom they should support. The adjudicator takes out the competition rope - a 4-meter length of bright red cloth. Baden and his uncle, standing back to back, both have one

end of the cloth tied round their neck, going over their chest and then out from between their legs, as they stand with legs apart as if iding a horse. Then they both squat down with their palms on marks on the ground. The adjudicator tightens the competition rope, adjusting another piece of red cloth which is tied to onto it and hangs down vertically, marking the exact middle point.

Hearing the adjudicator say 'Start', Baden and his Uncle both start to crawl hard in opposite directions, just as if they were two competing elephants. Pulling the competition rope with their whole body strength mustered, they both strain with their legs, arms, waists and shoulders; thus, it is a tie for two minutes as neither concedes defeat, until at last, pulling his Uncle across the red line, it is the young, strong yak Baden that becomes the champion.

Baden has won the admiration and attention of all the villagers, together with the prize money of 1000 Yuan. Nevertheless, he hesitates and is not sure if he feels like a yak or an elephant any longer.

## *Pray that:*

- *May the Tibetans enjoy the New Year, gathering together happily.*
- *May God bless each Tibetan village, unleash His great power of resurrection, transforming the villages and villagers' lives.*
- *May God reveal Himself to the Tibetans so that they will know He is the Creator. God gives each person the right to become a child of God, an honorable, special and eternal status.*





## Day 15 Praying for the Faithful Workers



Restore our fortunes, LORD,  
like streams in the Negev.  
Those who sow with tears  
will reap with songs of joy.  
Those who go out weeping,  
carrying seed to sow, will  
return with songs of joy,  
carrying sheaves with them.

(Psalm 126:4-6)



## Prayer for Favour

*When the Lord takes pleasure in anyone's way, he causes their enemies to make peace with them. — Proverbs 16:7*

One thing that the workers need is the favor of God to access places that they otherwise would not on their own. Pray that God will give them the favor to travel freely, meet those in authority who can help them, and succeed in their mission trips.

Whether in China or Nepal, many areas where Tibetans live are off limits to foreigners. We do expect to see a breakthrough, where workers can successfully live in these areas through different creative ways. Not only that, but the workers will be welcomed by the local governments and the Tibetans in these areas, so that they can build more effective networks and lay a solid foundation for their ministry.

*Pray*

- *That the Lord will surround the workers with His favor as with a shield (Psalm 5:12).*
- *For an easy access to the places where the workers need to be, and open doors for them.*
- *For favors with the local governments and people that more doors will be opened.*

## Prayer for Patience

*And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. —Hebrews 6:15*

It is important to be patient when you are ministering to others because not all people learn at the same rate or do things at the same pace. When workers are patient in the mission field, they will see what God promised them when they started their journey.

In the face of prolonged stress and lack of tangible ministry results, many workers will easily lose faith and patience. Some may begin to question their calling, their value and the significance of their ministry. This greatly affects the mental and physical health of the workers and they may even leave the mission field with disappointment and frustration.

*Pray*

- *That God will grant the workers patience as they walk others through the journey of growing in their relationship with Christ.*
- *That God will show the workers that He is at work in the places He has sent them.*
- *That God will give the workers patience and perseverance to endure any challenges they face with joy.*





## Pray for Boldness

*Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel. ... — Ephesians 6:19*

Workers are regular people who fear pain and rejection as much as anyone else. When faced with opposition, they need God's strength to help them stand firm. Pray for the workers to have courage as they navigate the environment they find themselves in as they minister.

Tibetans have been living in the bondage of Satan and Tibetan Buddhism for a long time. Tibetan ministry is definitely a spiritual battle; workers should stand boldly in the breach, join with God, and declare war on the evil one. At the same time, the workers should be courageous enough to listen to God and not to man, even in inappropriate circumstances, to speak the truth to the Tibetans and to witness to Christ.

### Pray

- *That the Holy Spirit will provide the workers with words that communicate effectively in other cultures and languages.*
- *That they will have boldness to overcome the fear of embarrassment or failure.*
- *Against evil forces that would seek to hinder the spread of the gospel.*



## Pray for Effective Ministry

*"Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing." — John 15:5*

It's important to rely on God for all aspects of ministry — especially during times of great difficulty, so that efforts will produce fruit and ultimately a harvest will be gathered.

The current political and religious environment in China is not very conducive to missionary work, and ministry opportunities are much less available than before. We pray that these limited opportunities, such as friendship evangelism, business, education, community work, evangelistic resources development, etc., will become more effective and impactful.

### Pray

- *That God will provide strength and perseverance when their ministry seems to be fruitless.*
- *That seeds will be planted and that the workers would be able to see the fruits of their labor.*
- *That an abundant harvest will be produced as more people learn about the love of Christ.*