

Unreached Peoples: China's Minority Groups

#8 the Qiang

by Paul Hattaway

The Qiang people, specifically the Chong subgroup, have a rich spiritual history that shows striking similarities to the Old Testament, and are in need of the gospel message.

Scripture: Genesis 12:1-3, Leviticus 17:11, Matthew 9:37-38, John 3:16, Romans 3:23-24

Topics: "Cultural Evangelism", "Redemptive History"

Description

This sermon delves into the fascinating cultural and spiritual connections between the Chong people in Sichuan and biblical narratives, highlighting their resemblance to ancient Jewish practices and beliefs. It explores how missionary Thomas Torrance discovered parallels between Chong traditions and Old Testament laws, emphasizing their belief in one true God and sacrificial system. Despite the corruption of idolatrous influences, remnants of true elements in their religion point to a longing for redemption and a divine sin-bearer, echoing the message of Jesus Christ as the ultimate sacrifice for sins.

Transcript

In the Chinese province of Sichuan, Tibetans have managed to keep their traditional culture very much alive. Prayer flags decorate rural mountain homes. In a nearby stream, water power is harnessed to turn a prayer wheel, housed in its own wooden shrine.

Tibetans in unique rural costume can be spotted in the Sichuan marketplace. Here they mingle with other Chinese groups, including these women from the unreached Chong people group. A number of Chong have come to the market today to sell apples, one of the chief products cultivated by their rural villages.

In the 1920s, a missionary named Thomas Torrance began to document an amazing ancient spiritual history among the Chong. He found that not only do the Chong people strikingly resemble native Jews in Israel, it seems that some also closely follow the Old Testament laws recorded in Leviticus. Reverend Torrance spent years questioning elderly priests and inquiring about all of their cultural practices.

First, he found similar construction patterns. The style of Chong villages closely resembles that of ancient Palestine. The tall fortress towers Torrance found at the corners of Chong villages are built to the exact specifications of biblical towers in Israel.

The Chong elders claim a descendance from Abraham himself, recounting history and religious practices seemingly straight from the Old Testament. The serpent-wrapped rod that this Chong man is holding commemorates for the Chong a moment when God made for them a bronze serpent in the wilderness, an account of startling parallel to that of the Book of Exodus. Torrance soon became convinced that though now corrupted by idolatrous practices, the true religious system of the Chong is based on a belief in one true God who is completely holy.

They call him Abba Chi, or Father Spirit. The most holy sacrifice they offer to this God is the pure and unblemished white lamb, upon whom they ceremonially confer the guilt of their sins for atonement. Torrance also found that the Chong believe that one day there will come a divine, heaven-sent sin-bearer who will be the true sacrifice.

In the 1930s, Torrance found the Chong eager for the gospel message. Many became Christians at that time, recognizing in Jesus Christ true forgiveness for their sins. Today, the Chong religion has become even more corrupted by the idolatrous religions that have grown up around them.

But some true elements still exist. The Chong are still shepherds, and other sources confirm the importance of the white sheep in the Chong religion. Currently, there are a few Christian workers who have devoted their lives to reaching the Chong people.

Pray for the strategic efforts of these servants of God who face the potential of an exciting harvest in Sichuan province.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/4iDMPL6wW8o.mp4>

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