

# HANZHONG 汉中

Located in the southwestern part of Shaanxi ('West of the Mountain Passes') Province in northern China, the city of Hanzhong contains almost 600,000 souls. Most foreigners know Shaanxi only for the famous and ancient city of Xian, which is located on the other side of the imposing Qinling Mountain Range. Tai-Bai Mountain is the highest peak in the range, at 3,767 meters (12,355 feet). Hanzhong City, however, is located in the southern plains, not far from the border with Sichuan Province. The history of Shaanxi mirrors that of the Chinese people themselves. Emperor Qin Shi Huang, founder of the Qin Dynasty, established his capital here more than two hundred years before Christ. The English name 'China' was later named after Qin ('Chin').

The population of Hanzhong is dominated by the Han Chinese, although there are also more than 3,500 Hui Muslims resident in the city. Three hundred Manchu also call Hanzhong home, but they have become so assimilated to Han Chinese culture and language that the only noticeable difference between them and the Han is on paper. There are considerable social advantages available for people who can prove a minority ancestry, including medical benefits and education grants. Minority couples are also usually allowed to have two children instead of the mandatory one for the Han.

<b>Population:</b>	
441,706 (1990)	
593,600 (2000)	
797,700 (2010)	
<b>Province:</b>	
Shaanxi	
<b>Major Ethnic Groups:</b>	
Han	99.0%
Hui	0.8%
Manchu	0.1%
Mongol	0.1%
<b>Christians:</b>	
5,300 (0.9%)	

Hanzhong has a high employment rate compared to most other cities in China. More than 57% of jobs in Hanzhong are in the agricultural sector. The fertile Hanzhong Basin is ideal for rice and vegetable production, as well as for wheat, cotton and corn. In many mountainous areas, the people have ingeniously constructed terraced rice fields into the side of the hills, to make maximum use of the available soil.

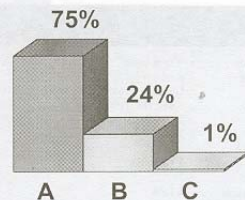


Shaanxi is also rich in natural resources. Many people are employed by mining companies. Mineral deposits that are extracted include coal, oil, natural gas, uranium, copper, manganese, gold and silver. Because of the abundance of available jobs in Hanzhong, approximately six thousand immigrants permanently move to the city every year, of whom about 4,500 come from other parts of Shaanxi Province.

The China Inland Mission pioneered most of the early missions work in Shaanxi. In 1876 they sent the first known Protestant workers into the province, F. W. Baller and George King. Baller and King had taken two months to reach Shaanxi from eastern China. After surveying the area



## Status of Evangelization (Awareness of Christ and the Gospel)



A = have never heard the Gospel or the name of Christ  
B = were evangelized but have not yet become Christians  
C = Adherents to any form of Christianity

for five months, the two missionaries left and returned to Shanghai. In 1879, King returned to set up the first mission base in the province at Hanzhong. In 1880, two single ladies joined the work. The missionaries planned to extend their work westward into Gansu Province, but the death of King's wife delayed the plans. By the end of 1881, the church membership in Hanzhong had grown to 30 Christians. A group called Evangelize China Fellowship also had a strong witness throughout many parts of Shaanxi in the late 1800's. Missionary work in Shaanxi was very difficult prior to 1949. A rugged landscape combined with a lack of roads, banditry and disease all contributed to create barriers to the advance of the Gospel. Blistering summer heat followed by harsh winters also tested early missionaries in Shaanxi.

Catholic missionary work in Shaanxi commenced as early as 1625. By 1922 they reported 48,948 converts in the province, about seven times the Protestant number at the time. Today there could be as many as 180,000 Catholic in Shaanxi. The Catholic church in Shaanxi is divided into eight dioceses, of which Hanzhong is one, although in the late 1980's it still did not have a resident bishop.

Despite the early start to missionary work in Hanzhong, the majority of Christians in the province today live north of the Qinling Mountains. The southern plains have been generally neglected, and the Gospel has not taken hold as it has in the central, eastern and northern parts of the province. Only about one percent of people in Hanzhong follow Jesus Christ.

The majority of people in Hanzhong have some awareness of the existence of Christianity, but few have ever heard the Gospel in a manner that they could make an intelligent decision to accept or reject Christ.



*Not allowed to hear the Gospel—The local authorities in many of China's cities do not feel threatened by elderly Christians, but they firmly oppose the Gospel spreading to younger generations.*

## Pray for Hanzhong

- 1 Pray the King of Kings and Lord of Lords would be exalted above the people of Hanzhong, that the Holy Spirit would draw many lost souls to faith in Christ.
- 2 Ask the Holy Spirit to empower the Christians in Hanzhong to share the Gospel with all segments of society, despite the threats and objections of the local authorities.
- 3 Pray Christianity would spread among the millions south of the Qinling Mountains in Shaanxi Province.

## Overview of Hanzhong

Pronunciation	: "Hahn-jong"
Old Spelling	: Han-chung
Location	: Shaanxi Province, northern China
Population	: 441,706 (1990 census)
Males	: 227,833 (51.58%)
Females	: 213,873 (48.42%)
Households	: 122,380
Average household	: 3.61 people
Diversed people	: 2,781
% of population	: 0.63%
Centurions (1990)	: 4 person aged 100 or more
Immigrants to City	: 5,762 per year
From same province	: 4,539 (78.8%)
From other provinces	: 1,222 (21.2%)

Employed people	: 267,714 (60.6% of total population)
Main Industries	: Agriculture 57%, Industrial 20.5%, Professional 8.3%
Educational	: University: 1.3%
Attainment	: High School: 51.6%
(highest level attended)	: Primary School: 30.6%
Population under 15	: 22.4%
Adult Literacy	: 82% (men 89%; women 75%)
Major Nationalities	: Han 437,642
	: Hui 3,572
	: Manchu 292
	: Mongol 49
	: Tujia 24
Christians	: 5,300 (0.9%)
	: Others (15 groups): 127