



Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses... (Heb 12:1)

It is with great sadness that today I have to report the death the other week of Pastor Natsagdorj - a [Seedtime](#) trustee and [Radstock's](#) point man for Mongolia. He died in hospital in Ulaanbaatar, having sustained critical injuries in a car accident in the north of the country. The apparent cause was brake failure as they were going down a mountain. Several members of the church were also seriously hurt in the accident, but no further fatalities are expected. His funeral took place early yesterday in Ulaanbaatar, and he was then airlifted to South Gobi where he will be laid to rest. I was not able to attend, as I am in Russia at the moment. He will be greatly missed.

As well as being a **Seedtime** trustee, Natsagdorj took a detailed interest in the work, chairing our local **Business Loan Team** in South Gobi, and sharing the oversight of **PeaceBridge**. He was passionate about seeing his churches rooted strongly in the Lord and in their local communities. And he was equally passionate about micro-enterprise development as a means of helping those same churches to become locally self-sustaining and propagating.

Natsagdorj was a father in the widest sense of the word, a quality that is sorely needed in the church in Mongolia today. He was 'on the bridge' of a movement that saw around 30 churches planted in the Gobi Desert in around five years. Many of the little churches across the Gobi trace their roots to his faithful work growing leaders and pushing them out beyond their 'comfort zones.' It was Natsagdorj who sent a granny and a teenager in opposite directions to start churches in their localities. Many are in the kingdom today as a result of his work. In the six years I have known him, I have every reason to be thankful to God for his friendship, counsel, and sense of fun in difficult times as well as not-so-difficult.

It is hard to write this without the emotions welling up, because Natsagdorj was fully present in everything and with everyone he turned his attention to. Just last month his 6-year old grandson was heard to say much he enjoyed going out on 'grandad's missions.' We were on a mission at the time, and it was on one such trip that the accident occurred that was to lead to his death. As an aside, it is important to understand that just living and working in these parts changes the entire calculus of risk to life and limb. Natsagdorj was in the line of duty right to the end. It can rightly be said that he was Mongolia's pastor. May there be many who put their footprints in his.

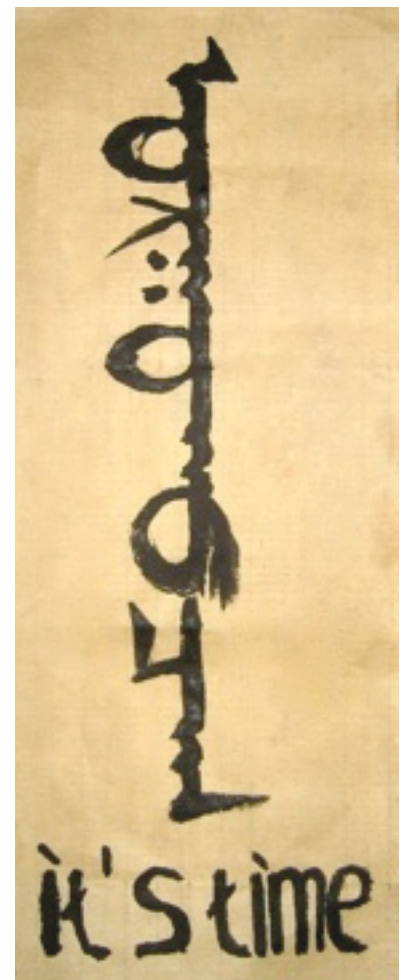
True to his passion for leadership development, Natsagdorj also served on the local board of Theological Education by Extension, an organisation that helps church leaders to do distance learning in developing countries like Mongolia. In ministry, Natsagdorj was both a charger and a steady hand, a rare and creative combination. It's fair to say that he was a statesman of the church here. Among his other great assets was an extraordinary mental map of the Gobi, which helped us many times as we navigated terrain without signposts, compass or roads as we know them, across hundreds of miles of travel.

We know that there is increasing shamanic activity in Mongolia at the moment, a lot of it directed against Christians. However, I won't speculate on this as a possible cause of Natsagdorj's death. And I do know that the Lord remains on His throne and is in control. What a strength that is! Even this dreadful pass is not beyond His redemptive power. And Natsagdorj joins that *'great cloud of witnesses'* that spur us on in the race that the Lord has set before us. Natsagdorj's work continues, as he points us to greater things than these present troubles. He knew the end of his earthly life was near. A few weeks ago, he wrote a testament, discovered after he died, which began with the words, *'Soon I am going to be with my Father...'* It continued with directions for his funeral, his family, and parting counsel for the church in Mongolia. Some of you have met Natsagdorj; most have not. But hopefully in reading this, you will have come to know him a little, even been spurred on in your own service for the Lord.

He leaves Davaa, his wife, as well as his children and grandchildren. Pray for them, for the churches and the church-based businesses in this time of significant challenge, that his example will not be forgotten, and for wisdom for us all in the practical things that follow the passing of such a man as this. Thank you so much,

Paul

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