

29. NORTH KOREA – pray for defector **Jung Gwang IL**, who escaped North Korea in 2003 after spending 3 years in a political prison. After his release from prison and escape from North Korea, Jung started the group, “No Chains”, that uses drones and other methods to get information into the country, including the ‘Stealth Gospel Project’ which took 32 North Korean songs praising the regime and turned them into Christian praise songs.

30. YEMEN – pray for **John Smith**, a pseudonym for the head of an organization in the Middle East that works closely with Yemeni Christians. Suspected al-Qaeda gunmen have recently shot 3 church leaders- all men were converts from Islam and all had openly professed their new found faith. Militants have attacked church services, killing Yemeni worshippers and destroying church buildings. “This is a persevering church,” says John Smith. His group has helped provide solar panels for electricity and rainwater catchment systems for water supply. They are also working with refugees.

Pray from Psalm 64-

Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint;
Preserve my life from dread of the enemy.
Hide me from the secret counsel of evildoers,
From the tumult of those who do iniquity...
They hold fast to themselves an evil purpose;
They talk of laying snares secretly;
They say, “Who can see them?”
They devise injustices...
But God will shoot at them with an arrow;
Suddenly they will be wounded...
Then all men will fear,
And will declare the work of God.
And will consider what He has done.
The righteous man will be glad in the Lord
And will take refuge in Him;
And all the upright in heart will glory.

Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus

SOURCES:

CHURCH IN CHAINS; CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY WORLDWIDE; CHRISTIAN TODAY; OPEN DOORS; PRISONER ALERT;
RELEASE INTERNATIONAL; VOICE of the MARTYRS; WORLD MAGAZINE; WORLD WATCH MONITOR

With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray...that utterance may be given...to make known with boldness the mystery of the Gospel. Eph 6:18,19

STANDING IN THE GAP

for the Persecuted Church

September, 2017

- 1. IRAN** - praise God that after 4 years’ imprisonment for ‘violating national security’, Iranian Christian **Maryam Zaragaran** was released from Tehran’s Evin prison August 1.
- 2. ETHIOPIA** – An Ethiopian Christian man, unnamed for security reasons, has suffered deep wounds to the back of his head when he was attacked while alone in his home by a group of local Muslims with machetes. A source told World Watch Monitor that the gang of Muslims who attacked the man were angry because he was evangelizing. The gang had first attacked the local Full Gospel Church and partly damaged its roof and before going to the man’s house.
- 3. CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC** – pray for **Bishop Juan Munoz** of Bangassou who was prevented by escalating violence from returning to his CAR diocese and is calling for improved peace keeping in the country, which has experienced increased violence since the new president was elected.
- 4. EGYPT** – pray for the **1,600 Copts** in the village of Kom El-Loufy in Minya, Upper Egypt, who are still waiting for a new church building, 5 years after their previous building was closed. Ever since the Copts started looking for a new venue, they have experienced fierce opposition from their Muslim neighbors, who say they should build their church outside the village. Also pray for **Gamal Samy**, a Coptic Christian, who is working with the local government to try to find a suitable church building amid great opposition.
- 5. PHILIPPINES** – pray for US missionary **James Walker** who has lived in Mindanao since 1998. He started an organization to provide the Muslim population with education, healthcare, and small business development. He also holds Bible Studies for those interested. Pray for his safety during the battle with ISIS.
- 6. PHILIPPINES** – pray for **Gerry Villano**, a college fellowship leader at Mindanao State University. He has mobilized his students in the college fellowship to raise money for the Red Cross in the conflict area. He said that because open evangelism is often not an option for Christians wishing to reach Muslims, actions can be powerful as well. “Even for the family of terrorists, our obligation is to help them and pray for them as we need to have them see the love of Christ.”
- 7. SUDAN** – pray for the **Baptist Church in Omdurman** whose building was demolished August 2 by the Sudanese government. This is part of the government’s list of 27 churches designated for destruction because of claimed violations of the designated purposes of the land where they were built.
- 8. GREECE** – the nation has been crippled by debt since the late 2000’s. Then millions of refugees poured into Greece. 62,000 migrants – half of which are women and children - are now stranded across the nation. Increasing numbers are committing suicide. The majority of Greeks have never heard the Gospel: less than 3% regularly attend church; evangelicals represent less than 0.5% of the population. Pray that God will send forth His Word to the nation of Greece once more.

9. **KENYA** – pray for Kenya in the aftermath of elections. Father Lagho, Vicar General of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Mombasa reports, “Al-Shabaab is opposed to the elections, which are about democratic values. For them, the elections legitimize these values, as opposed to their ideology of a Sharia or theocratic leadership.” There have been recent attacks by Al-Shabaab militants in the Kenyan coastal region of Lamu; Kenyan Christians have been targeted and attacked in churches, public places and buses.
10. **INDIA** – pray for Christians in India. In the first 6 months of 2017, Indian Christians were harassed, threatened or attacked for their faith in 410 reported incidents – almost as many as the total for the whole of 2016.
11. **NORTH KOREA** – praise God that **Hyeon-soo Lim**, the Korean Canadian church leader sentenced to life in prison with hard labor, was freed August 9 ‘on sick bail’. He was head pastor at the Light Presbyterian Church in Toronto and had visited North Korea more than 100 times to distribute humanitarian aid for nursing homes, day-care centers and orphanages.
12. **NORTH KOREA** - continue praying for 3 other Korean-Americans still detained in North Korea; **Tony Kim**, who worked with Pastor Lim in orphanages; **Kim Dong Chul**, a South Korean-born businessman and naturalised US citizen serving a sentence of 10 years hard labor for ‘espionage’; and **Kim Hak Song**.
13. **NORTH KOREA** – pray for **Kim Seung-mo**, 61, who was arrested in June on ‘spying’ charges after meeting Christian relatives in China.
14. **UNITED STATES** – pray for **David Daleiden**, a 28 year old pro-life activist who in 2014 and 2015 filmed undercover videos of Planned Parenthood workers discussing the illegal fetal tissue trade and late term abortion procedures. In 2015, the National Abortion Federation (NAF) filed suit and Judge William Orrick issued a gag order to prevent the videos’ release. Last month, a federal judge found Daleiden and 2 of his lawyers in contempt of court for unauthorized video release. Thomas More Society attorney Tom Brejcha helped craft Daleiden’s appeal to the US Supreme Court over the on-going litigation suppressing his undercover videos. “What is ultimately at stake here is whether those who ‘blow the whistle’ on illegal or inhumane misbehavior in any industry may be silenced and even punished for telling the truth to the public at large and to those charged with enforcing criminal and regulatory bans on nefarious practices,” Brejcha said. “Whether America will remain an open or closed society hangs in the balance.”
15. **CHINA** – praise God that **Zhang Xiuhong**, a deacon at a large unregistered church in Guizhou Province, has been released from prison following appeal. She had been in prison for the past 2 years. Her sentence has been reduced to a 5-year suspended sentence, during which she will not be able to travel freely and will have to report to the police station every week.
16. **IRAN** – praise God that Iranian Christian **Amin Naderi** has been released on bail- 3 weeks after being given a 15-year sentence imposed because of his Christian activities. Amin had appealed against the sentence and is described as being ‘very unwell.’
17. **ETHIOPIA** – pray for the **Full Gospel Church** in Tikil Dingaye in Amhara State. The church building was attacked June 11 when a mob destroyed the church’s meeting hall, offices, and the accommodation of a church worker. They also stole money from church members and assaulted some of them.
18. **EGYPT** - pray for the family of **Joseph Helmy**, a 22-year-old Coptic Christian who died last month on his first day of work. His family said he was murdered because of his Christian faith. He had just completed his army training and reported for duty at Al-Salaam Special Forces Unit. Six hours later he was taken to hospital, where he was pronounced dead.
19. **INDIA** – pray for **Pastor Vipur**, who grew up in a Hindu family but came to know Jesus through a dear friend who prayed for him when he was sick. God’s truth broke through his heart and he was baptized- stepping away from his Hindu background. Today Pastor Vipur serves God in his village by discipling new Christians and leading others to Jesus through a network of house churches. Hindus in the area are greatly opposed to Vipur; they have threatened his family, spread rumors about him, and one night they attacked him on the way home from a house-church meeting. They beat him so badly he nearly lost his life. Open Doors heard about his trouble and took him to a hospital, paid for his medical bills and provided vital encouragement. Vipur says, “God leads me. I feel physically weak, but He makes me strong. Besides I cannot run. Wherever I go, persecution waits for me-its part of Christian life in India.” To help Open Doors help pastors like Vipur, go to opendoorsusa.org.
20. **SWEDEN** – pray for **Aideen Strandsson**, 37, an Iranian convert to Christianity, who was baptized in Sweden in 2014. She has been refused asylum in Sweden, placing her at risk of deportation and ‘torture and rape’ in jail in her home country of Iran.
21. **ERITREA** – pray for the family of **Fikadu Debesay**, who died in prison after being arrested with her husband in May during raids on evangelical Christians in the southern town of Adi Quala. The mother of 3 died in Metkel Abiet, a desert camp in the Northern Red Sea region of Eritrea, known for its oppressive heat. The cause of death is not yet known. She was one of at least 210 Christians rounded up and detained in desert camps since May.
22. **PAKISTAN** – pray for **Asif Masih**, a completely illiterate 16 year old Christian boy who has been charged for allegedly burning pages of the Quran. He is slightly mentally challenged and was forced to confess to the alleged crime. If found guilty, he faces life imprisonment.
23. **KENYA** – pray for the families of 3 Kenyan Christians hacked to death by Al-Shabaab militants August 18 after they refused to recite the Islamic prayer of faith. **Caroline**, the wife of **Joseph Kasena**, 42, one of the murdered, is in her late 30’s and watched everything happen and is ‘severely traumatized’. Joseph was an elder at a local church. Also murdered was **Kadenge Katana**, 17, and part of a local Catholic church.
24. **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO** – pray for **Maria**, a 73-year old Congolese woman whose husband was killed when rebels attacked her village in North Kivu Province a year ago. She and the rest of her family fled 125 km to Oicha. There she found a small mud classroom in a local school, where she and her family could stay. In the absence of a formal camp for IDP’s, these schools host a thousand displaced families like Maria’s. Open Doors is helping provide food and other items. Maria says, “I thank God for this gift.”
25. **CHINA** – pray for Chinese human rights Christian lawyer **Gao Zhisheng**, who disappeared from his home in Shaanxi, where he was under house arrest. His wife, **Geng He** who is in exile in the US has not been able to reach him since August 13.
26. **EGYPT** – pray for Coptic priest, **Father Boutos Aziz** and his congregation. Egyptian police banned them from accessing their church premises and cordoned off the area, dispersing the congregation by force. Police reports cited complaints against the Copts by local Muslims, who say the Copts had no permit to practice religious rites in the building.
27. **NORTH KOREA** – pray for radio host **Kim Chung-seong** of Far East Broadcasting Company, a North Korean defector who broadcasts into North Korea from Seoul. He says in his broadcasts, “I am desperately praying that the North Korea’s Kim Jong Un and all administrators under him kneel down in front of God and repent from their sins, and leave the path of tormenting their people.”
28. **NORTH KOREA** - pray for Christians imprisoned in North Korea. Christian Solidarity Worldwide describes testimonies from defectors: “Christians are reported to have suffered brutal torture, including beatings, water torture, and being used in medical experiments.”

