

In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Hebrews 5:7

29. EGYPT - pray for **Asim** and **Zarah** both Christians from Muslim backgrounds. They live in the same apartment building as Asim's family so they must be careful to conceal their Christian faith. Since they cannot have a Bible of their own, the newlyweds listen to sermons together on Friday mornings and attend church during the week.

30. CHINA – continue to pray for **Pastor Yang Hua**, 41, who was imprisoned in Jan 2017 for two and a half years. He was Pastor of the Living Stone Church which grew to 700 members and came under pressure from authorities. He has been tortured in prison and has health problems.

“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to recompense to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, The beginning and the end.” Revelation 22:12,13

“Yes I am coming quickly.”
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.
The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints.
Amen. Revelation 22: 20,21

STANDING IN THE GAP

for the Persecuted Church

April, 2018

- 1. KENYA** – pray for **Christian teachers** in Wajir region. Although predominantly Muslim, the majority of teachers in both public and private schools are Christians. After the coldblooded murder of 3 Christian teachers in north-eastern Kenya by suspected Al-Shabaab gunmen, fear is growing that the Islamist militant group is targeting education. The 3 teachers shot dead were Kevin Shari, Seth Odada, and his fiancé, Caroline.
- 2. LIBYA** – pray for Libyan Christians from Muslim backgrounds. They face extremely violent and intense persecution, constantly pressured by their families and the wider community to renounce their faith. Believers who avoid violent persecution are still harassed and subjected to threats from radical Islamists. Christ-followers who publically express their faith or try to share the Gospel face the risk of arrest and violence as well. Because no single central government exists to impose the law and order in the country, most crimes against Christians go unpunished.
- 3. PAKISTAN** – At least 800 families fled a Christian neighborhood in Lahore after an 18-year-old Christian, **Patmos Masih**, was accused of blasphemy. A mob of 3,000 Muslims gathered Feb 19 and threatened to burn down local Christians' homes. Police took Patros into custody. Patros' father says, “My son is illiterate and works as a sweeper at a private bank. He has never been involved in any religious dispute with any Muslim in the village. I am unable to understand why he has been trapped in this case.”
- 4. BANGLADESH** – pray for the **Lay Leadership Training Program**. It equips leaders with the necessary Biblical knowledge and skills for leading the flock.
- 5. DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO** – The town of Beni has faced repeated incidents of violence in recent months from Muslim rebels, including an attack on a hospital. Pray for peace to return to this town and for those who have suffered physical or emotional trauma.
- 6. NIGERIA** – pray for the **110 schoolgirls** kidnapped by Boko Haram in February from the Government Girls Science and Tech College in Dapchi, Yobe State. Although most of the girls have been returned, some have not. Pray for **Leah**, who was not returned because she refused to deny Christ and become a Muslim.
- 7. IRAN** – pray for **Naser Navard Gol-Tapeh**, an Iranian convert to Christianity who recently lost his appeal against a 10-year sentence for ‘missionary activities’ and was moved to the infamous Evin Prison in Tehran 2 weeks ago.
- 8. INDIA** – pray for six Christians badly injured, and one of their homes torched, in an attack by Hindu extremists in the eastern Indian State of Odisha, following the death and burial of a Christian baby.
- 9. ALGERIA** – pray for **Youssef Ourahmane**, founder and leader of the **House of Hope Church** in Algeria's north-western town of Ain Turk. The 20-year-old church was closed 4 months ago by authorities claiming it had been used to ‘illegally print Gospels and publications intended for evangelism.’ The police notification also stated that the church didn't have state approval. Ourahmane says these are false accusations and that “God has done amazing work through this ministry. The devil has not been happy and all these years he tried by all means to stop us. But we believe that God is in control.” He has called on fellow Christians around the world to pray for his church.

SOURCES:

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

- 10. INDIA** – pray for **Pastor Challamuthu Stephen**. A group of 10 Hindu extremists forced their way into his church's Sunday service on Feb 4. "They shouted slogans demanding us to stop running the church," Pastor Stephen told World Watch Monitor. "They damaged the roof of the church and issued threats that if we continue gathering as a church, they will kill us."
- 11. INDONESIA** – pray for 2 Indonesian Christian women who were whipped in public in Banda Aceh, the capital of the Sumatran province of Aceh. **Dahlan Sili Tongga**, 61, and **Tjia Nyuk Hwa**, 45, were being punished for breaking Sharia law by playing a game at a children's entertainment center, which authorities judged as gambling. The women were whipped 6-7 times on Feb 27.
- 12. CAMEROON** – pray for Christians in Cameroon as Boko Haram insurgents continue to carry out attacks outside the borders of Nigeria, where the group began. During the last attack Feb 23, militias set fire to more than 100 huts, a Catholic church and school, and killed one person.
- 13. NORTH KOREA** – pray for South Korean Baptist missionary **Kim Jong Uk**, 52, who was arrested in North Korea in Oct 2013 after entering the country with Bibles and other religious material. The North Korea's Supreme Court found him guilty of spying for South Korea and attempting to set up an underground church. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in labour camp. Pray that God will encourage Kim in labour camp, that he will be released, and that he will witness to guards and other prisoners.
- 14. NORTH KOREA** – (see previous entry) pray that God will protect Kim Jong Uk's **North Korean contacts** and the **refugee work** in Dandong, the Chinese port city near the North Korean border where he worked for 7 years providing food, shelter, and other aid to North Korean refugees as well as teaching them the Bible.
- 15. EGYPT** – pray for **Walid**. He lives with his church's choir director in Cairo while he searches for work. He is hiding from his family who beat him after he became a Christian. "God helped me survive," he said.
- 16. TURKEY** – Today is the date set for imprisoned US **Pastor Andrew Brunson** to stand trial before a Turkish criminal court on charges of espionage and terrorism that could jail him for up to 35 years. From his prison cell in Izmir, Brunson recently wrote, "Let it be clear. I am in prison not for anything I have done wrong, but because of who I am – a Christian pastor. I desperately miss my wife and children. Yet I believe this to be true: it is an honor to suffer for Jesus Christ, as many have before me. My deepest thanks for all those around the world who are standing with and praying for me." Pray for his trial and for his release.
- 17. EGYPT** – pray for **Duhra**, whose husband when he discovered she had become a Christian, beat her, divorced her and threw her out on the street while keeping their son. Although she is no longer subject to daily beatings, she lives with the continual pain of missing her son. She filed a legal complaint, but the court ruled that because she is a Christian, she has no parental rights to her son. Her church family has provided housing as well as emotional support.
- 18. PAKISTAN** – pray for **George Masih**, 70, a church elder in the Pakistan Gospel Assemblies Church in Yousufwala village on the outskirts of the Punjab city of Sahiwal. He, along with 4 members of his family, were attacked and injured as they helped to build a boundary wall around their church on March 4. The 20 attackers were armed with clubs and axes. The conflict arose from disputes over the land permits for the church building.
- 19. CHINA** – pray for **Chinese Christian millennials** living out the challenges and opportunities of Christian life in the communist country. These believers all attend Early Rain Reformed Church and represent the next generation of leaders in the Chinese urban church. Pray for-
- 20. - Jonny Fan** and his wife **Xiang Meng**, who work in pro-life ministry. For the past 5 years, Fan has led one of the country's first grassroots pro-life ministries at Early Rain and plans to go full time into developing resources for churches to start their own pro-life ministries and create safe-houses for mothers. Pray he will be able to raise the necessary \$20,000 to start this ministry.
- 21. – Zheng Xianghuang**, a sixth-generation Christian. He is currently attending the presbytery's unregistered seminary and mentoring the first class of college students at its unregistered liberal arts college. His We-Chat account was disabled by the authorities after officials visited his apartment about posts.
- 22. – Grace Guo** who teaches Chinese at a tutoring center. Most of her students are Christian foreigners pursuing ministry in China.
- 23. – Li Xiaolan**, a saleswoman who says, "Evangelism is easy. All you need to do is give someone a business card and tell them, 'You can call me anytime besides Sunday because I will be in church then.' Then they start to ask questions." Every Christmas she gives small Christian gifts to everyone in her company from the CEO to the janitor. The gifts lead to conversations about faith.
- 24. INDIA** - pray for **Chandan Devi**. Her husband and pastor, Aadarsh, was murdered by a group of 30 men who forced their way into their home. They beat Chandan then drug Aadarsh into the bush and killed him. The 30 men are Naxalites, a Maoist group that fights for the rights of tribal groups and views Christians as traitors to their cause. Aadarsh became pastor after becoming a Christian and led 25-30 people of a certain tribe to Christ. Chandan says, "He encouraged the youth to not join the Maoists but instead to finish their studies." She also says, "I'd rather die than forsake Jesus." Pray that God will provide for her and her 4 children: **Rebecca, 21, Raju, 17, David, 14, and Solomon, 13.**
- 25. CHINA** – praise God that **Joshua Wong, 21, Nathan Law, 24, and Alex Chow, 27**, leaders of the 2014 pro-democracy 'Umbrella' protests, have been freed by Hong Kong's top court after being convicted and jailed for unlawful assembly. US lawmakers have nominated them for the Nobel Peace Prize, despite protests from China and Hong Kong.
- 26. CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC** – pray for the family of **Gabriel Ole**, 66, an elder at a Baptist church in Bangui, the capital of CAR. He was one of 6 UNICEF workers killed during a recent ambush by armed men. Some of the victims were shot dead; others had their throats slit. Ole is survived by a wife and 7 children.
- 27. IRAQ** – pray for Christians in Iraq following the murder of an Assyrian Christian family. Murdered in their home in Baghdad were Dr. Hisham al-Maskuni, 61, a radiologist at a nun's hospital, his wife, Dr Shaza Dinno, a gynecologist at the same hospital, and her elderly mother, Dawood Abada. Father Biyos Qasha of Baghdad's Maryos Church said he saw signs of a plan "to force the Christian population from their homes and out of the country."
- 28. NIGERIA** – pray for **Esther** who became a Boko Haram captive after the rebels killed her father and carried her and several other young women to their hideout in the Sambisa Forest. Life in the hands of Boko Haram was the worst nightmare Esther could ever imagine. "I cannot count how many men raped me. Every time they came back from their attacks, they would rape us...defile us." Eventually Esther became pregnant. Who the father is, she does not know. Then she was rescued by the Nigerian military. She gave birth to a daughter and named her Rebecca. But the next unexpected wave of persecution soon overshadowed her newfound freedom. Her grandparents mocked her and called her daughter 'Boko'. She has attended Open Doors trauma care seminar and continues to receive trauma counselling. She says, "I forgive my enemies and now trust God to take vengeance in His time."

