

## Prayer May 2010

“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. [John 15:9](#)

### **CHINA—Police Break Up Outdoor Worship in Beijing**

*China Aid Association / Los Angeles Times*

#### [Hebrews 5:7](#)

*Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear;*

Police detained and fingerprinted more than 100 members of an unregistered Beijing church on April 10 after the church gathered for worship at an outdoor location near the city’s university neighborhood. The Shouwang Church, which has a congregation of about 1,000, was forced to meet outdoors after being repeatedly denied access to rented space. The church has faced difficulties with three separate spaces it has tried to use for worship since 2009. During that time, local authorities pressured the management of two hotels and one building developer to deny the Shouwang Church worship space, leaving them nowhere to meet. In March, the church made the difficult decision to meet outdoors. They understood that because of the public nature of their protest, they would likely suffer as a congregation and as individuals. Please pray for the Shouwang Church as they stand before man and God with clear consciences. “Pray for us in a loud voice, and raise up hands and pray vigilantly!”

### **ISRAEL—Pressure Increasing on Messianic Jews**

*VOM Sources*

#### [Hosea 3:5](#)

Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days.

VOM sources say Messianic Jews in Israel are facing increased pressure from groups opposed to freedom of religion. One of these groups, Yad L’Achim, staged a demonstration against a Messianic congregation of 150 in Ashdod. “The speech against the believers was slanderous and vicious,” said a VOM source. An Israeli television station that recently profiled Yad L’Achim described the organization as a militia that goes outside the law to carry out its agenda. Many Messianic Jews have had residency visas and even their citizenship revoked once their faith in Jesus was discovered. Others face constant harassment at their homes and businesses. “It is very important for you who pray for the Messianic body in Israel to ... understand the depth of the paranoia and the hatred for the name of the true Messiah of Israel,” the VOM source said. Pray that Jesus will reveal himself to all those in Israel.

### **INDIA—Eighteen Indian Christians Arrested**

*VOM Canada*

#### [Psalm 109:20–21](#)

*Let this be the LORD’s reward to my accusers,  
And to those who speak evil against my person.*

But You, O GOD the Lord,  
Deal with me for Your name’s sake;  
Because Your mercy *is* good, deliver me.

Eighteen Christians in Odisha state (formerly called Orissa), including two pastors, were arrested on March 28 for converting to Christianity without an official permit. The two pastors and 16 newly converted Christians were arrested after a police complaint was filed against them in Mayurbhanj district. The Christians were brought before the sub-divisional judicial magistrate at Baripada and charged under the “Orissa Freedom of Religion Act,” which bans any conversion lacking a permit issued by authorities. All of the Christians were released on bail within three days. Pray that all charges against them will be dropped. Ask the Lord to minister to the new converts and deepen their faith through this persecution.

**SAUDI ARABIA—Eritrean Believer Faces Possible Death Sentence—*Release Eritrea***

[Psalm 5:11](#)

But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You;  
Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them;  
Let those also who love Your name  
Be joyful in You.

An Eritrean Christian faces a possible death sentence after being accused of preaching to Muslims outside a mosque in Saudi Arabia. Mussie Eyob, who converted to Christianity two years ago, was arrested at a mosque in the Haya Roda area on Feb. 12 and is being held at a high-security prison in Jeddah. Officials initially thought Mussie was mentally ill, but a medical examination found him to be in good mental health. Mussie’s family visited him on March 20 and found that although he had lost weight, he was being treated well and was in good spirits. Mussie began preaching at the Eritrean Embassy on Feb. 9 before moving on to the local mosque days later. Pray that God will soften the hearts of Saudi officials toward Mussie and that he will not be sentenced to death. Praise God for Mussie’s boldness.

**EGYPT—Christian Convert Escapes Egypt—*VOM Canada***

[2 Corinthians 1:8–9](#)

For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead.

An Egyptian man who has been in hiding for two-and-a-half years fled the country recently with his daughter. Maher El-Gohary, 58, had been in hiding since August 2008, when he filed a suit requesting to change the religious status on his ID card from Muslim to Christian. He and his daughter, Dina Mo’otahsem, 17, flew from Cairo to Syria in February. Maher had hoped to obtain a visa to the United States, where his wife lives, but he tried for one week and was unsuccessful. He then sought assistance at a U.N. office in Syria and was granted an appointment for late April. Although Maher and Dina are safer in Syria than they were in Egypt, they still spend much of their time in their apartment because converts from Islam to Christianity are persecuted in Syria. Maher has no income, so he and his daughter have difficulty obtaining basic necessities. During this time of struggle, Maher continues to acknowledge God’s enduring care. “Without God’s love, we would have been dead by now,” he said. Thank the Lord for the ways in which he has provided for Maher and Dina. Pray that they will continue to rely on his strength and not on their own.

**BELARUS—Pastor Charged After Church Raid—*Forum 18 News***

[1 Peter 5:10](#)

But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*.

On Feb. 13, police raided a Baptist church in Gomel, Belarus, and charged the pastor with “holding an unauthorized religious service.” The pastor, Nikolai Varushin, faces a fine of up to \$345 if found guilty. The police major in charge of the raid said police had received repeated complaints about the church from nearby residents. Police officers filmed the worship service and confiscated CDs, audio cassettes of sermons and religious literature. In January 2008, Pastor Varushin was fined for leading an unregistered religious organization. Pray that the congregation will remain steadfast in faith as they undergo this trial.

**NORTH KOREA—Gospel Balloon Launches Threatened—***VOM Sources, AFP*

[John 17:18](#)

As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

In February, North Korea warned the South Korean government to stop allowing the launch of balloons that drop “propaganda” leaflets into its country. North Korea even threatened to open fire on locations in South Korea from which the balloons are launched. Some activists use balloon launches to drop political leaflets in North Korea, but VOM uses similar methods to send the gospel into North Korea. Because of North Korea’s threats, some South Koreans are now refusing to allow VOM partners to launch balloons from their neighborhoods. “We’ve decided to prevent the leaflet launch as it would make our hard life harder,” one of the district chiefs told AFP news agency. The balloon team asks for prayer that they will reflect Christ well as they continue to seek ways to send Christ’s message of hope into North Korea

**PAKISTAN—Cause of Christian Prisoner’s Death Questioned—***VOM Canada, VOM Sources*

[Isaiah 61:1](#)

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me,  
Because the LORD has anointed Me  
To preach good tidings to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives,  
And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound;

A Christian serving a life sentence on blasphemy charges has died under suspicious circumstances in Lahore. Qamar David, who was imprisoned in June 2006 after a business rival accused him of insulting the Prophet Muhammad, died on March 14, 2011. Initial autopsy reports seemed to confirm prison authorities’ claims that he died of a heart attack, but Qamar’s family believes he was killed. He was reportedly threatened and beaten regularly by prison guards and inmates during his almost five years in prison. Qamar’s son told VOM contacts that the family was too scared to attend the hearing at which the medical reports were announced.

Also in Lahore, 40-year-old Shaheen Bibi, a Christian mother of seven, was recently freed from her Muslim captors after being kidnapped last August. Shaheen had been drugged, raped, sold into marriage, and threatened with death if she did not convert to Islam. On March 6, a team managed to rescue Shaheen from her captors. She reported that at least 10 other women were in captivity with her. Thank God for her release. Pray that God will equip Pakistani Christians to be bold and gracious witnesses in an environment of severe opposition. Also pray for the repeal of Pakistan’s blasphemy law, which is often used against Christians.

**SUDAN—Violence Precedes South Sudan’s Secession—***Assist News Service*

[Isaiah 66:12](#)

“Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river,  
And the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream.  
Then you shall feed;  
On *her* sides shall you be carried,  
And be dandled on *her* knees.

Violence has increased in south Sudan since the Jan. 9, 2011, Referendum on Southern Self-Determination. In February, the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) clashed with forces of northern opposition figure Gen. Akhor, leaving 200 dead. Another 50 were killed in fighting between the SPLA and forces of Gabriel Tanginya, who is backed by Islamic Khartoum. In the north-south border region of Abyei, 100 Misseriya Arab militiamen and other Khartoum-backed forces massacred police and civilians. On March 2, 1,000 members of the militia attacked another Abyei village, killing 33. The violence has caused the displacement of 45,000 southern Sudanese — mostly women and children. Both the north and south are preparing for conflict. Please pray for the war-ravaged, predominantly Christian people of south Sudan.

“But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” [Joshua 24:15](#)