

## March 2018 Prayer Items

*May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children. May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us— yes, establish the work of our hands.*

—Psalm 90: 16-17

**International**—José and his family in Mexico were driven from their home, their possessions confiscated, and José denied his education because of his parents' refusal to deny their Protestant faith. Quite apart from the immediate trauma of ostracization and persecution, the loss of education for José will have lifelong consequences. The denial of education on the basis of religious faith is an under-reported yet widespread epidemic. In Nigeria, Christian children are forced to adopt Muslim names for admittance to school, Royhinga children have literally had their school bulldozed, and Ba'hai university students have been kicked out when their faith is discovered. Pray for children like José, who already suffer all kinds of persecution, but now are being denied schooling because of their beliefs. No child should be denied this basic human right because of their faith. Pray that they would be comforted in this loss, and pray that God would provide means of education for all these kids in ways only He could. Pray for the work of Christian Solidarity Worldwide and their Faith and a Future initiative, that is shining light on this overlooked human rights issue. Pray also that the international governments they are appealing to will respond with compassion and integrity. (*Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide*)

**Myanmar**—More than 700,000 Royhinga Muslims have had to flee their homes and villages because of the systematic persecution by the government, including torture, rape, and murder. Recent satellite images reveal that the government has bulldozed numerous villages, fulling destroying all their property, as well as destroying evidence of the abuses that have been committed. This is especially troubling, as well-corroborated reports that there are 5 mass graves in the Gu Dar Pyin area. Pray for peace, justice, and restoration in this horrific situation. Pray that the government of Myanmar, which after years of oppression finally allowed democratic elections that ushered in the presidency of Aung San Suu Kyi—the opposition leader who suffered decades of house arrest. And yet, despite this firsthand knowledge of persecution, Suu Kyi has basically stood by and allowed these atrocities to happen. Pray that her own conscience would be pricked as she has all but sanctioned these governmental actions. Pray that somehow the light, grace, comfort, and truth of Christ might reach many in these dark circumstances. (*Source: World Magazine*)

**Cuba**—Pray for the imprisoned Christian Misael Diaz Paseiro, whose home was ransacked in October when the Cuban secret police unlawfully invaded it, scoured it for Christian materials, told Misael that his God is not real—that Fidel Castro is god—and then took Misael into custody. Pray that the Cuban government will be influenced by many people around the world calling their embassies urging they release Misael immediately and unconditionally. Pray for the government of Cuba, that it might pursue integrity, restore basic human rights and freedoms,

and allow their citizens to practice their faith without fear or persecution. (*International Christian Concern*)

**Malaysia**—February 13, 2018, marked the one-year anniversary of the abduction of Pastor Raymond Koh, who was taken by masked men in broad daylight in Petaling Jaya. Interestingly, security footage of the incident has gone missing and remains so, even as no perpetrators have been brought to justice and Pastor Koh's whereabouts remain unknown. It is believed his disappearance is related to his preaching of the gospel to Muslims—which is strictly forbidden in Malaysia—and that a human trafficking cartel may have been involved in the kidnapping. Pray for the safety and protection of Pastor Koh, that he might have a special sense of the peace and presence of Christ in whatever his circumstances. Pray for his safe return and that his kidnappers would be brought to justice. Pray for his wife, Susanna Liew, who released a statement on the anniversary of her husband's abduction pleading for his return to their family. Pray that she and the whole family would experience the comfort of the Holy Spirit during this terrible time and that their faith would be upheld and strengthened despite these trials. Pray that the government of Malaysia would seek justice in this situation, and that it would also be moved to allow greater freedom of religion within its borders. (*Source: Christian Daily*)

**Bhutan**—Twenty-two-year-old “Dechen” received Christ in October 2016 after a friend shared the gospel with her. For more than a year, she hid her new faith from her Muslim family member. Yet over time, observing changes in “Dechen's” life, led her family to discover her Christian faith. Upon this discovery, her family gave her the ultimatum that she leave Christ or leave her family. She boldly said she would leave neither, and was promptly disowned by her family. Thrown out, she has been staying with Christian friends and has not been able to visit her family home in over a year. Pray for “Dechen” that she would grow in her faith, that God would comfort her and be family to her even as she has been rejected by her earthly family. Pray that the Father would sustain her and provide for her, as she is looking for employment now that she must support herself. Pray for her family that they might not only have a change of heart regarding “Dechen,” but that all their hearts would be softened and changed towards Christ. (*Source: Open Doors*)

**Cameroon**- Abdul came to Christ in 2000. Sadly, his Muslim family has been trying to kill him ever since. His wife even approached local leaders to request that they have him beheaded. She has since left him and speaks negatively about him to their seven children. Please pray for this sad situation as you also praise God that Abdul is saved and born again. Praise God that He has protected Abdul throughout the various attacks on his life. Pray that he would continue to be safe and that he would win over his wife and children for Jesus Christ. (*Source: International Christian Concern*)

**Iran**-- Praise God for the work He is doing despite, and probably because of, persecution. As life became more difficult for Christians in Iran, many believers fled the country, leaving a vacuum in the church that became increasingly filled with Muslim-background seekers. The church was forced to go underground, and it transformed from lukewarm to vibrant and growing.

The persecution has caused the believers to call out to God fervently in prayer. In Iran, no one is given a choice of religion; all are automatically considered Muslim. Along with this forced religion often come thoughts of condemnation and religious oppression that have caused many to feel hopelessness and depression. Please pray for suffering Iranians to come to Christ for hope and salvation. *(Source: International Christian Concern)*

**China-** Living Stone Church has experienced increasing persecution in recent years. Authorities began following church members and then started threatening that they would be arrested if they attended services. Seven hundred officials surrounded the church building to not allow people in to worship. Landlords were forced to evict those that had apartments. Pastor Yang is now in prison and is not allowed to have a Bible. He sees his wife once a month, and she says he is in such very poor health that he can hardly walk. Please pray for the church to find ways to continue to meet together for worship and for the pastor to be protected while suffering in prison. Pray for courage and perseverance for the whole congregation and that their witness will lead many to Christ. *(Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide)*

**Pakistan-** Pakistan's export privileges to Europe may now be dependent on their releasing Asia Bibi, as EU's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief Jan Figel declared. Asia Bibi has been in prison since 2010, awaiting a death sentence for blasphemy. Please pray that this new condition set up by the EU would be effective in procuring her release. *(Source: World Watch Monitor)*

**Kenya-** In Jamhuri high school in Nairobi, tensions between Muslim and Christian students had been increasing. The boarding school designated separate bathrooms and library sections for the students of different religious backgrounds to give them space. On January 26, some of the Muslim students gathered around Christian students and tried to force them to recite the Islamic creed and convert to Islam. Their taunting turned violent as they pulled out machetes and knives to attack the Christian students. Thirty-five students and the principal were injured and hospitalized, and the school has been temporarily closed. Please pray for reconciliation in this community. Pray that the Christians would be an example of grace and love to those that attacked them. In addition, pray for the Christian students and community to be protected. *(Source: Voice of the Martyrs)*