

June 2020 Prayer

Hate evil, love good, establish justice.

—Amos 5:15

Nigeria—Ese Rita Oraru was kidnapped by Yunusa Dahiru in 2015 when she was just 13-years-old. He took her to the northern region of Nigeria and forced her to convert to Islam and marry him. Both of her parents traveled to this region and enlisted the help of police officers to attempt to free their daughter but were unsuccessful. Thankfully, after a “Free Ese” media campaign, her captor released her, and she was reunited with her parents, 5-months pregnant. On May 21 of this year, her captor, Mr. Dahiru, was charged and sentenced to seven years in prison for trafficking and sexual exploitation. Praise God that Ese’s persecutor is receiving a just punishment, and pray that this would deter others from exploiting young girls. Sadly, forcing marriage on minors occurs frequently in rural areas of Nigeria, so please pray for their protection. Pray also for Ese’s healing and that she would cling to Christ as her All in All. (*Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide*)

United States—On March 25, 2020, George Floyd was killed while being arrested by Minneapolis police after allegedly using a counterfeit \$20 bill. For approximately 8 minutes, a police officer knelt on the neck of George Floyd, who was face down on the pavement, pleading with officers that he could not breathe. Pray for the family and friends of George Floyd, who are not only mourning the loss of a loved one, but are doing so as a result of an unjust and inhumane act. Pray for the African American community in their understandable frustration, anger, fear, and outrage. Pray that the Holy Spirit would bring them comfort and peace. Pray for the officers who perpetrated this crime that they might fully understand the gravity of the wrong they have committed and seek the forgiveness of Christ and those they have wounded. Give thanks for the many police officers who serve their communities with integrity. Pray for the United States that we as a country will repent of all the hatred and divisiveness that have insidiously woven themselves into the fabric of our society. Pray that we will be a country that reflects not only our original values of protecting the downtrodden, but even more so God’s call to see all people as His equally beloved Creation. (*Source: CNN; New York Times; BBC; and others*)

North Korea—Despite the fact that the UN Food and Agriculture Organization reported a grain shortage of 860,000 tons, North Korean authorities still refuse to open its borders to outside aid. The price of food has gone up fourfold, and regular citizens do not have enough money to buy it. As many forage in the mountains and woods for food and others die of starvation, please pray that God would give daily bread to these impoverished and deprived people. Pray that the government would accept foreign aid and would take care of and protect the citizens. Pray that the few believers there would remain steadfast in Christ as they suffer, and that He would prove to be their Manna and the One who satisfies their souls. (*Source: Open Doors*)

Zimbabwe—This past month, 3 female opposition activists and leaders of the Movement for Democratic Change were abducted, tortured, and sexually assaulted, then left 60 miles away on the side of the road, injured and traumatized. Amnesty International and other human rights organizations have long called out the current government, led by President Emmerson Mnangagwa for their brutal crackdown against opposition party members, that has been characterized by widespread abductions, rapes, and unlawful detentions. Pray for Cecilia Chimbiri, who is also a member of Zimbabwe’s parliament, and the two other women, who were protesting the government’s handling of COVID-19 when the abductions occurred. Pray that they experience healing physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Pray that they will be able to continue their work trying to improve democracy in their country. Pray that these atrocities would be exposed and that the government would be held

accountable for their crimes. Pray for the protection and freedom of all the citizens of Zimbabwe.
(Source: *The Guardian*)

Laos—Pastor Bountheung Phetsomphone in the Khamkuet District has been targeted in the past for his evangelism by being arrested twice and evicted from his home. Recently, his daughter, Nang Tookta, has become trapped in an impossible situation that is complicated by unjust persecution toward this family. Nang had been employed at a Chinese store, but when her boss stopped paying her, she quit her job. She was later invited to the store to discuss her wages, but when she arrived, her boss forced her into the bathroom, threatened her with a knife, and tried to rape her. She defended herself by grabbing the knife and killed her attacker. She immediately reported the incident, and has been in prison since then. The Khamkuet district court refuses to consider releasing her until her family renounces their faith and pays a large sum of money. Please pray for justice and truth in this case. Pray that the pastor's ministry of evangelism and Nang's faith will have no bearing on the outcome of the trial. Pray for healing after this trauma and for God's perfect will to be done. (Source: *International Christian Concern*)

Honduras—Close to 250,000 Hondurans have become internally displaced as they have been forced to flee their homes amid horrific threats and violence from gangs and criminal organizations. The story of one family, whose mother and 16-year-old daughter were threatened with murder and abduction, and whose 14-year-old son was shot in the leg so their home could be seized by gangs, is sadly very common. Approximately one-third of all internally displaced people have had their property stolen amid rape, violence, extortion, coercion into criminal activity and other kinds of intimidation. The family whose son was shot eventually fled and their home was transformed into what is called a “crazy house,” where abducted victims are taken to be raped and tortured. As if this horrific, dangerous, and terrifying situation was not bad enough, the outbreak of the pandemic has dramatically increased the incidences of this violence and intimidation, and made Hondurans—and others throughout Central America facing similar challenges—even more vulnerable. Pray for miraculous intervention in the country that is terrorized by this criminal activity. Pray for the protection and provision of a very vulnerable population. Pray for law enforcement to effectively intervene in these situations and prosecute criminals. Pray for countries with resources to have empathy and mercy on helpless people fleeing outrageous situations, especially as wealthy nations are often the consumers of drug trafficking. (Source: *BBC*)

India—A family of five believers had been receiving threats from their village members that they would kill them for leaving Hinduism and bringing Christianity to their community. Recently, a large mob from their remote village broke into their home and beat them all with thick bamboo sticks. The parents and children ran into the woods to escape, and were then brought to a hospital. Their house was ransacked, and it is not safe to return, so please pray for a safe, new home for this family. Pray for their physical and emotional healing, especially for the three children who experienced such trauma. Pray that God would grant them blessings after being persecuted for His sake, and that He would comfort, strengthen, and protect them. (Source: *Open Doors*)

Sri Lanka—Around the globe, forced “disappearances” have long been a tool of terror, intimidation, and control of populations and opposition. With an estimated 60,000-100,000 people still forcibly missing in Sri Lanka since the 1980s, this country has the largest number of disappearances in the world. Since the resolution of armed conflict, the state itself has concealed the fate of most of the disappeared, including those who surrendered at the end of the conflict. It was only in March 2018 when the practice of “forced disappearance” was made a criminal activity. Pray for the thousands and thousands of families who have lived for decades without knowing the fate of their loved ones. Pray

that one day soon they will have answers and justice. Pray for comfort and peace, despite their loss. Pray for the government of Sri Lanka that they will act with integrity and transparency regarding these human rights abuses, and that this tactic will no longer be used in countries around the world. (*Source: Amnesty International*)

Uganda—Rehema heard about Jesus Christ on a radio program, and, when she found out about His way of salvation and forgiveness of her sins, she shouted for joy in the middle of the night. Her father heard her commotion and beat her repeatedly. He shouted to his sister that he would kill his daughter for converting to Christianity, and then began burning her. Rehema's aunt and a neighbor rescued her and brought her to a hospital to be treated for severe burns on her stomach, legs, back, and neck. She will need to spend significant time in the hospital, so please pray for her healing and safety once she leaves. Pray that this young and new Christian would have power from on high to stay strong in her faith even while being rejected by her own father. And pray that her true Father in Heaven would protect her life and give new life to her very lost earthly father. (*Source: International Christian Concern*)

International—Even as the United States has struggled for months with the pandemic outbreak and its repercussions medically, emotionally, and financially, many countries around the globe are even more vulnerable to spread and less well-equipped to deal with it. In India, where the poorest and most vulnerable live practically on top of each other in areas with poor sanitation and infrastructure, COVID-19 could prove even more devastating. Regions of Latin America, too, seem poised to be very hard hit the infection. Pray for those who already live in poverty and unsafe conditions, who would have a very difficult time surviving the infection, who do not have the resources to get medical help, and who cannot afford to have even temporary loss of income due to illness—or worse, death. Pray for the 40 million people who have lost their jobs in the United States, the worst jobless rate since the Great Depression. Pray for leaders such as President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, who has continued to downplay the risk, that they will be vigilant and act in the best interests of their populations. Pray for the families of the more than 370,000 people who have died so far from the pandemic, that they would be safe, would be comforted, and would find saving grace in Christ through this ordeal. (*Sources: Dayspring International; BBC*)