

## August 2020 Prayer

*Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the LORD your God is giving you.*  
—Deuteronomy 16:20

**Sudan**—Praise God that Article 126 which allowed for apostates to be given the death penalty has been abolished. In addition, public flogging and female mutilation have been banned. This is such good news in a country that has a history of unjust laws that virtually condone maltreatment of Christians and women. Sadly, this news comes just after nine internally displaced persons were killed during a peaceful sit-in that called for more security in their camp. Please pray for their family members to be comforted during this shocking tragedy. Pray for the country of Sudan to continue making strides toward peace and justice for all. (*Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide*)

**Yemen**—Shortly after the Arab Spring, the long-standing dictator of Yemen, President Saleh, was forced to hand over rule in 2011 to his deputy after 33 years of corruption and oppression. The new President Hadi was overwhelmed with jihadists attacks, endemic corruption, food insecurity, and unemployment, which created an opportunity for Houthi rebels (a Shia muslim minority) to begin in 2014 and 2015 a rebellion, which was supported by many struggling, ordinary Yemeni, including Sunnis. Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations feared Iran's influence and support of the Houthis, and began their own campaign against the Houthis (who were for a time allied with former-President Saleh's security forces hoping to regain power). The US, UK, and France have all supplied weapons to the Saudi-led attacks, as well as logistical and intelligence support. Amid this conflict and jockeying for power, one of the worst humanitarian crises in history has evolved. The numbers are staggering: an estimated 100,000 Yemeni citizen casualties, thousands more dying from related, preventable causes like disease and malnutrition, and an estimated 85,000 children under five have died from starvation, with 2.5 million currently suffering from malnutrition and food insecurity. These are just the tip of the ice berg of suffering for this devastated country—and now COVID-19 is literally ravaging the population, with cases and deaths uncounted because of the total collapse of the medical system, but best guesses put the number of COVID-19 fatalities at around 85,000. In May of 2020, more than half of the airstrikes from the Saudi-led coalition hit civilian targets in cases where the target could have been identified—a direct violation of international codes of war. On top of all of this, many humanitarian organizations have had to pull back on their supports due to shortfalls in funding. Pray fervently for this catastrophic situation, for miraculous intervention in this life, and eternal salvation in the next. Pray for those with resources around the world to be broken and moved to pour their material wealth into these situations of suffering. Pray that the peace of Christ would reach this devastated country. Pray for the healing and comfort of those suffering physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, and for those who have lost loved ones. (*Sources: BBC; International Rescue Committee; Save the Children*)

**Turkey**— A Syrian Christian man living in Turkey responded to the crisis of the pandemic by reaching out to others in his town. Since the coronavirus began to spread, he has been driving people with Covid to the hospital as an act of loving service. Praise God that one man that he recently drove gave his life to Christ as a result of his witness. Thank the Lord for this

man's kindness during the crisis, and pray that God would continue to use him to glorify His name. Pray that he would stay safe as he puts his own life at risk. (*Source: Voice of the Martyrs*)

**Eritrea**—In April at a worship service in a home in Asmara, 15 Christians were arrested and eventually imprisoned in the infamously inhumane Mai Chehot prison. This past June, 30 individuals both Christian and non-Christian were arrested at the wedding of a Christian couple. With COVID-19 moving through the country and growing food insecurity, there are huge concerns for the general population and even more so for those crammed into horrific and unhygienic prisons. The government is also using the pandemic as an excuse to persecute dissidents and religious minorities, arresting and detaining them for supposedly breaking COVID restrictions. Along with this, it has been reported to the UN by NGO Human Rights Concern-Eritrea that the government is violently enforcing a nationwide lock down and that “Eritrea has no welfare system, and while over two million people have no food to eat, the government is forcibly collecting money from its citizens to fight the virus.” There are also reports that the government is using restrictions on fishing on the Red Sea and confiscation of food from trade caravans to intentionally starve the Afar population in Eritrea. We join with Christian Solidarity Worldwide in praying: “That those arrested at Christian gatherings will be released immediately without charge; for God to work a miracle in the hearts of the authorities, so that they will provide food and a regular supply of water for all of their citizens; and that in light of the pandemic, the government would release all prisoners of conscience, vulnerable low risk detainees, and long-term prisoners held without charge or trial.” (*Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide*)

**India**—Four Christians have been killed in the last month, causing believers to fear for their own lives. Bijay Mandavi, a 38-year-old woman, became a Christian three years ago but had been continually threatened by her extended family. They said that if she didn't give up her faith they would kill her, and tragically, they followed through with their threats. Kande Mudu, a 27-year-old Christian, was pulled out of his house by extremists and killed for his faith. Pastor Munsu Thado, age 35, had been kicked out of his village because of his Christian activity and had been living in the forest for the past few years. Recently, extremists took him from his home in the woods and killed him while his wife pleaded for his life. Sombura Madkani, a 14-year-old Christian boy, was kidnapped and murdered after fanatics threatened the Christian community with death if they didn't stop meeting together for worship. All of these believers had families that are now mourning their loss. Please pray for their comfort and protection and for the country of India to be spared more loss of precious Christian lives. (*Source: International Christian Concern*)

**United States**—We must pray for peace, justice, and reconciliation in our country regarding racial justice, and even citizens who are at odds regarding the handling of the pandemic and other polarizing issues. Pray for the protection of peaceful protesters calling for justice, pray that those who would use unrest as an opportunity to be destructive would be thwarted, and pray that the law enforcement monitoring these events would use wisdom and restraint in their interactions. In recent days, different law enforcement units who are wearing fatigues instead of police uniforms have detained individuals and forcibly removed them via unmarked vehicles. This is a troubling development and is too reminiscent of tactics used by undemocratic regimes. Pray that this practice would be quelled, that the rule of law would

prevail on all sides, that we would become a nation characterized by civil discourse and a genuine concern for our fellow man. (Source: *Washington Post*)

**Guinea**—Miraha, a Christian woman who converted from Islam, is facing extreme pressure from her in-laws since her husband's recent death. They are trying to force her to marry her brother-in-law and return to Islam, and they are attempting to have her 11- and 14-year-old daughters circumcised. Since Miraha refused this and refused to abandon her faith, they tried to hold her against her will. Praise God that she and her children escaped and found a Christian lady to stay with. Please pray that God would protect them and provide for them while they stay in hiding. Pray also that God would turn her in-laws to faith in Jesus. (Source: *Voice of the Martyrs*)

**Samoa/New Zealand**—Thirteen victims ranging in age from 12 to 53 were lured from Samoa to New Zealand by a known Samoan chief with promises of gainful employment that would allow them to send money back to their families. Instead all were forced into unpaid labor on the chief's property, were not given employment visas so they could not legally find other work, were abused, beaten, assaulted, and intimidated. They were not allowed any contact with the outside world, except when they were illegally subcontracted out for agricultural work, the chief even confiscating the pay for this. Praise God this human trafficking operation was discovered, and the chief who ran it has been charged with human trafficking and sentenced to 11 years in prison. He is also being forced to pay \$122,000 to the victims' families, though he made approximately \$200,000 from their outside labor. Nonetheless, we thank God for justice being served. Pray for the healing and restoration of the many victims of this exploitation and that God will provide real opportunities for work and fair compensation and all their material needs. Pray that others will not fall victim to this horrific crime and that those committing these crimes would be convicted of their deep sin, repent, and find salvation in Christ. (Source: *CNN*)

**China**—To slow ethnic minority growth rates, Chinese authorities are sterilizing women from the Uyghur population. Some report that the authorities are forcing intrauterine contraceptives and sterilization surgeries on them. In addition, if Uyghur women become pregnant with more than their allotted number of children and they don't comply with birth restrictions by aborting their child, they are forced into re-education camps. The United Nations is currently investigating these findings, so please pray for truth to come to light and justice to be served. Pray for these women and babies to be protected that those who have already undergone such traumatic treatment against their will would receive comfort and healing from the God of all comfort. (Source: *The Guardian*)

**Egypt**—Ahmed's long journey of both persecution and faith in Christ began when he was 16 and he found a scrap of paper on a bus that read, "The Lord Jesus has chosen you for Him." So began Ahmed's interest in Christianity, but when his family found Christian books in his room he was beaten, brought to an imam to change his mind, sent to Saudi Arabia where his father owned a factory and imprisoned in a small room for seven years before being allowed to return to Egypt, and then forced to marry a cousin. Despite this, he pursued his faith in Christ through internet resources and eventually was disowned and disinherited by his family, losing a fortune for himself. Still, he opened a restaurant to support himself only to have it burned down by neighbors when they found out he was a Christian. Pray for the ongoing,

amazing witness of this believer amid ongoing, tremendous persecution. Pray that the Father in Heaven would be family and support for him, and give Ahmed the comfort and provision he needs. Pray that his parents and other family members would repent of the cruelty they have inflicted on Ahmed and that they might find life in Christ as well. (*Source: Voice of the Martyrs*)