

# Open *Doors*

PRAYER DIARY | July/August 2021

**INDIA CAMPAIGN SPECIAL**



**“[We are] persecuted,  
but not abandoned;  
struck down, but  
not destroyed.”**

2 CORINTHIANS 4:9

Christians in India are urgently asking for our prayers as they find themselves caught between two crises: pandemic and persecution. So we have set aside July to pray with them.

There is much to pray into, but also much to be grateful for. Thank you - your prayers make such a difference and mean so much to your persecuted family.

All names have been changed for security reasons.

## STANDING FOR TRUTH

**"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."** JOHN 8:32

### Thursday 1 July

Today, Open Doors UK will launch in Parliament a new report called *Destructive Lies*, highlighting the persecution of Christians in India. Its findings are based on independent research by the London School of Economics and include policy recommendations. Pray that the launch will be well attended by MPs, and that they will be stirred to action on behalf of Christians and other religious minorities in India.

### Friday 2 July

Article 25 of the Indian Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, yet Hindu extremist groups often use anti-Christian propaganda to spread the lie that India is a Hindu state where Christians don't belong. Sadly, Christians in India with low levels of education often don't know they have the constitutional right to practise their faith. Open Doors local partners work with believers to teach them their constitutional rights and equip them to counter false accusations made against them. Pray that God will give believers courage and favour as they stand up for their rights.

### Saturday 3 July

Believers in India are often accused of following a 'foreign' religion. However, Christian tradition holds that the gospel was introduced in the country in the first century through Thomas, one of Jesus' 12 disciples. Give thanks that God's promise that 'all nations on earth will be blessed' (Genesis 22:18) includes India. Pray that India's rich Christian heritage will be recognised across the country, leading to warmer attitudes towards believers.

### Sunday 4 July

Some Indian states have anti-conversion laws, designed to prevent involuntary religious conversions. However, in practice, these

vaguely worded laws are frequently used to harass Christians taking part in normal activities that are part of their faith, like holding a prayer meeting or attending a church service. Tellingly, the laws do not apply if an Indian 're-converts' to Hinduism. Pray that these laws will be repealed, or that a deterrent will be put in place to prevent false accusations.

### Monday 5 July

Hindu extremists promote Hindutva. It's an ideology that disregards Indian Christians and Muslims (and other religious minorities) as true Indians because they have allegiances that lie outside India, and asserts the country should be purified of their presence. But Indian Christians don't see themselves as any less Indian because of their faith, and many seek to serve their communities. Ask the Lord to open the eyes of many Indians to see the valuable role Christians play in Indian society.

### Tuesday 6 July

When Ankita's son fell seriously ill, she visited many doctors, but none could help him. "I decided to bring him to the church for prayers even though we were Hindus," she shares. "He was completely healed!" Ankita and her husband are now Christians. It's one of many stories that expose the lie of Hindu extremists who claim that, since many new Christians are poor with low levels of education,

they must have been paid to convert. Praise God for all those coming to know Jesus through miraculous healings.

### Wednesday 7 July

States that have predominantly tribal populations have laws to protect their culture and traditions. But village leaders sometimes abuse these laws to persecute those who choose to change their faith. Ask God to strengthen Christians from tribal backgrounds facing rejection and discrimination for leaving their traditional faith.

### Thursday 8 July

In 2014, a leader of a large Hindu extremist group claimed that there would be no Christians left in India by 2021. Despite a rise in persecution in recent years, believers continue to courageously follow Jesus. Ravi was killed because he refused to stop telling others about Jesus. "If needed I will die for Jesus, but I will never leave Him," shares his wife, Sumi. "I will continue living here, and will continue the ministry of my husband." Praise God for the witness of believers like Ravi and Sumi, and ask the Lord to thwart the plans of extremists.





## PERSECUTION

**“And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.”**

MATTHEW 19:29

### Friday 9 July

Vinita (ABOVE) and her husband have faced constant harassment from their community since becoming Christians. One day, Vinita was praying with her pastor's family when Hindu extremists barged in. Vinita and the other believers were all seriously injured and were refused treatment at hospital because of pressure from the extremists. Thanks to you, they received treatment at a private hospital and are getting support as they file a case against their attackers (see Magazine p.6). Pray that the perpetrators will be brought to justice, and that Vinita, her pastor and their families will find strength in God's comfort.

### Saturday 10 July

After refusing to stop sharing

the gospel with others, despite threats, Gaurav was falsely accused of using fraudulent means to convert people to Christianity. He and two of his friends were imprisoned for four months. It was a further three years before their innocence was proven, during which time they were ostracised by their community and deemed criminals. Open Doors local partners came alongside them to provide practical and legal aid. Praise God that they have been cleared of charges, and pray that God will use our brothers' persevering faith to help others.

### Sunday 11 July

When Aditi (16) and her parents became Christians, their community mocked and rejected them, whilst relatives withdrew financial support. Aditi was about to abandon her studies when you stepped in to pay her school fees. Despite ongoing challenges, the family trusts in God. "It's true that we need courage to trust in God. And that courage comes through prayer," Aditi's father shares. Ask the Lord to build up Aditi through her studies, and pray

that her relatives will receive Jesus as Lord.

### Monday 12 July

Since starting a church a few years ago, which around 200 people now attend, Suraj has been closely watched by Hindu extremists. They are angry that people have left their traditional faith to go to his church. The hostility came to a head when they beat him for three hours, threatening further consequences unless he shuts the church. Pray for protection for Suraj and his family, and that God will use the witness of the church to draw the extremists to the love of Jesus.



### Tuesday 13 July

Praveen and his wife Shanti (ABOVE) became Christians after God healed Shanti when a local pastor prayed for her. But their new faith led to hostility from the wider family, who refused to give Praveen land that he had inherited. The couple set up their own shop, but it didn't make a profit – and then the pandemic hit. Today the shop is running well after you provided goods to fill their shelves. "I am so grateful for the kind help," Shanti shares. Pray that the love shown to Praveen and Shanti will powerfully impact their family and community.



### Wednesday 14 July

In the run up to local elections, Hindu extremists burned down the hut where a church led by Pastor Sameer gathered, accusing the Christians of embracing a 'foreign' religion and persuading people to vote against their Hindu political party. With your help, the church has built a new place to meet. "It greatly encouraged our faith to know that there are others standing with us," Pastor Sameer shares. "Since the church hall is bigger, even more people come to our church." Give thanks to God that He has made the church fruitful in the land of their suffering (Genesis 41:52).

### Thursday 15 July

Keep praying for Tara (15), who became a Christian after a friend invited her to church where, after receiving prayer, she was healed of an illness. Sadly, Tara was ostracised by her parents who confined her to her small room and treated her as impure, not allowing her to touch anything in the kitchen. Open Doors partners helped Tara get admission to a boarding school. However, due to Covid-19 she is back living with her family. Ask the Lord to use this time to reveal His love to Tara's family.

## “I AM STILL PERSECUTED, BUT NOW I DO NOT FEAR”

YOUR PRAYERS AND SUPPORT ARE  
SUSTAINING KIRTI\* DURING THE PANDEMIC



**When Kirti’s husband was murdered because he chose to follow Jesus, Open Doors partners supported her with food, shelter and money to pay for hospital bills. Now, thanks to your continued prayers and support, they have been able to come alongside her during the pandemic as well.**

Sadly, during lockdown, Kirti’s persecutors did not stop. Several villagers came to her farm while she was away and fed her crops to their animals; this made it hard for Kirti to make ends meet. “I was not in my village when they were grazing animals in my farm,” she says. “I felt very sad when I came back and saw my farm. I did not say anything to anyone, but I prayed to God that the Lord would change

the lives of those persecutors so that they too can be saved.”

She and other Christians in her village were also denied food aid from the government because of their faith. “Sometimes I get frustrated because I have the responsibility of my in-laws and four children. Still, I thank God that He helps us in everything,” she says.

**“God is with me and God fulfilled all my needs.”**

Thanks to you, Open Doors local partners have been able to continue supporting Kirti. “The organisation has helped me a lot,” she says. “They made a home for us, gave us clothes, utensils and rations... In time, God fulfilled our every need. I did not face any kind

PICTURED Thanks to your prayers, Kirti remains faithful to Jesus and is seeing miraculous healings in her village

of problem during lockdown. God is with me and God fulfilled all my needs.”

God is also answering Kirti’s prayers for her family and community. Her father-in-law, who used to persecute her and blamed her for her husband’s death, has recently become a Christian. Also, many people in her village have come to her for prayer for healing – and as a result, around 10 new families have started believing in Jesus! She says, “I am illiterate, but whatever I hear from the Bible, I share with others... I am still persecuted by some people from my village, but now I do not fear. God is with me.”

Kirti has written a prayer – you might like to pray with her:

*Life-giving God, I thank You and pray for all those people who supported me in my difficult times; bless all of them, meet all their needs. I pray for those people facing persecution for being Christians. Lord, give them courage. May Your church grow in every country, that many people – including those who persecute and oppose Christians – may be saved. I pray for the servants of God who share Your Word; keep them safe and fulfil all their needs. Help all of us to live life according to the Word of God. Amen.*

\*name changed for security reasons

## | YOUR SUPPORT

**“Defend my cause and redeem me; preserve my life according to your promise.”**

PSALM 119:154

### Friday 16 July

Covid-19 has exacerbated the persecution of Christians in India, and many believers have faced discrimination in the distribution of aid. But your support has ensured food relief has reached over 126,000 believers in India during the pandemic. “We were so discouraged when they ignored us while distributing relief aid to all in the village,” shares Aarti. “I thank the brothers for travelling this far and blessing us with groceries in our hour of need.” Pray that Open Doors partners will be able to meet the needs of more believers during the pandemic.

### Saturday 17 July

When 18-year-old Nikhil gave his life to Jesus, his brothers beat him and he was kicked out of the family home. Coming from a high caste, the family were embarrassed

that Nikhil chose Christianity. Thankfully, Nikhil’s pastor allowed him to stay at his church, whilst Open Doors local partners came alongside him with the provision of food aid. “My own family disowned me but now you are my family,” Nikhil shares. Pray that Nikhil will flourish in his faith and studies.

### Sunday 18 July

Do you remember the story of Vinita last week (9 July)? During the same attack, Preetha, the pastor’s wife, was attacked with a metal rod. She was left unconscious and her hand was nearly cut off. Like Vinita, Preetha was refused medical treatment at the hospital because of pressure from the extremists who attacked her. Thankfully, your support meant she received care at a private hospital. “Had Open Doors partners not helped us, I would have died,” shares Preetha, whose hand has been permanently damaged and still causes her pain. Pray for complete healing.

### Monday 19 July

Many Christians in India face social exclusion for being Christians, including Sumitra who was unable to get work in her local community. “We could barely manage to have meals twice a day,” she says. But with your prayers and support, Open Doors local partners helped to create a small cottage industry making chips, providing an income for Sumitra and other Christian families denied work because of their faith. “I thank you for bringing happiness in my life,” Sumitra shares. Pray that God will use the business to bless not just the Christian families but the whole community.

### Tuesday 20 July

Thousands of believers in India have received digital Bibles, thanks to your generosity. They enable Christians to listen to the Bible as an audio book, which is a huge help to Christians with low levels of literacy. The digital Bibles – which also feature videos and testimonies – are also ideal for believers who need to be discreet when reading the Bible. “I can easily hide it when there is a security issue,” shares Akshay. Pray that God will use these Bibles in an instrumental way to build the faith of believers in India.

### Wednesday 21 July

Mahesh is a pastor in his 50s. He and members of his church have faced a string of false accusations by Hindu extremists, even facing arrest after being accused of forcibly converting people. But now they are better equipped to deal with accusations after

receiving training from Open Doors local partners – and it wasn’t long before the church had to put this into practice. “I was well educated on how to deal with it and thus talked to the authorities boldly, quoting my rights,” Mahesh shares. Pray that Open Doors can reach more believers with this training so they will have courage and wisdom to defend their right to worship Jesus.

### Thursday 22 July

When Rupa decided to follow Jesus, her father was extremely angry and refused to finance her education. But with your help, Rupa has been able to continue her studies. “I fall short of words to thank [Open Doors],” she shares. “I desire to be involved in children and youth ministry after I complete my studies.” Ask the Lord to use the studies to equip and encourage Rupa in her ministry ambitions, and pray that her father will become a Christian.

### Friday 23 July

Pray for Open Doors local partners taking great personal risks to deliver vital Covid aid and to come alongside believers facing discrimination and attack. Your prayers are pivotal to their work. “We can go and are able to take risks, being in those difficult areas at difficult times to support those people,” shares Pastor Samuel, one of the partners. “It’s only because you are praying that we are able to do that.” Ask the Lord to protect, strengthen and encourage our partners and their families.



You've provided food aid for over 126,000 believers in India during the pandemic

# COURAGEOUS FAITH

**"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."** MATTHEW 5:16

## Saturday 24 July

Raju (BELOW) was hosting a prayer meeting when Hindu extremists severely beat him and his wife. When a leader of the group who attacked the couple later died in an accident, and another fell sick, Raju saw an opportunity to reach out with love and forgiveness. "God put compassion for them in my heart," he says. "I went to the hospital and prayed for that sick leader. He said nothing but bowed his head in prayer. He didn't become a Christian but I feel God had spoken to his heart." Pray that Raju's actions and words will continue to powerfully speak to the leader's heart.



## Sunday 25 July

Sanna and her family came to faith after her mother was healed of a terminal illness. It led to severe persecution from their local community. For two years, they were prohibited from visiting other people's homes, otherwise they'd face a fine equivalent to two months' salary. But attitudes have since begun to soften. "The villagers noted through the life of this

family that Christians are good people," an Open Doors partner explains. "This led them to remove the prior imposed penalty." However, the family still encounters opposition. Pray that acceptance of them will grow.

## Monday 26 July

Sitara (21) became a Christian when a church prayed for her sick mother. Sadly, her mother died, but Sitara experienced God's love and, despite their father's opposition, Sitara and her two younger siblings secretly attended church. When their father tragically died from a heart attack, villagers blamed the children's Christian faith. Sitara and her brother now work as daily wage labourers, but the pandemic has hit them hard. "God gives us strength and courage for each day," Sitara says. Pray that the children will truly know God as the 'father to the fatherless' (Psalm 68:5).

## Tuesday 27 July

Pastor Raman was in his church when the building was set on fire by a group of young people bribed by Hindu extremists. Burning wood fell on him as he tried to escape. Thankfully, he has recovered from his injuries. Despite this terrifying incident, Pastor Raman is committed to the ministry he feels God has called him to – planting churches in the villages around his town. "I know it can be dangerous. I also know that I might die. But I am not afraid," he says. Ask the Lord to protect Pastor Raman and multiply his ministry.

## Wednesday 28 July

Pastor Aman and his family became Christians after God healed his mother of a terminal illness. The family has since led many villagers to faith in Jesus, prompting the local authorities to ask them to leave, even threatening them. But opposition has greatly reduced since a local girl became ill and Aman's family were called to pray for her – and she was healed! "From that one incident the whole village witnessed the power in the name of Jesus," Aman says. Pray that God will continue to use this family to bless their local community.



Pastor Aman has witnessed God's healing power

## Thursday 29 July

Madan was a teenager when he got involved in a gang, taking money to beat, even kill, people. He also persecuted Christians. Whilst in jail, someone gave Madan a Bible and told him about Jesus. After leaving prison he began attending church. He is now the pastor of a church in an area strongly opposed to Christians. Despite receiving threats and beatings, Madan is unafraid. "There are always more miracles and healings when there is more persecution." Praise God that no one is beyond His reach, and pray for more stories of those

who persecute Christians giving their lives to Jesus.

## Friday 30 July

Soon after Usha – who lives in a slum and works as a daily wage labourer – gave birth to a son with physically disabled feet, she met a pastor who invited her to church. She went and her son was healed! Usha then invited others in her community to church, with many giving their lives to Jesus. Her whole family are also now Christians. Usha's courageous faith is making an enormous difference to her community – and this despite persecution (she is underpaid for work and has been overlooked in the distribution of Covid-19 aid). Pray that all new believers will share Usha's courage and faith.

## Saturday 31 July

Thank you for praying with your Indian brothers and sisters this month. Please keep praying that the Lord will build His church in India through the prayers of His people worldwide. "I was greatly encouraged when I learnt that when we go through persecution, not only does the local church pray for us, but also believers all over the world are praying for us," says Pastor Sagar. "This knowledge gives me immense strength and joy."

**You can raise more prayer for Christians in India using our new prayer resources for children, youth and small groups. Download them today at [opendoorsuk.org/standfortruthindia](https://opendoorsuk.org/standfortruthindia)**

# Give thanks for **ANSWERED PRAYER**



## **RESTORATION RISES FROM THE WRECKAGE**

Your prayers bring healing to the Port of Beirut in Lebanon

**On 4 August 2020, a huge explosion wiped out the Port of Beirut in Lebanon. The blast killed at least 200 people and injured 5,000 more. Thanks to your prayers and support, many Syrian refugees living in Lebanon who were displaced because of the explosion have been supported through Pastor Nihad's church in Beirut, which is also a Centre of Hope.**

Pastor Nihad was near the port when it happened: "I saw

smoke and started to ask myself, 'What is this?' I heard ambulances. After a minute, there was a big explosion, and I felt the air push me back into the middle of the room. The door broke and people were running in the street."

After learning what had happened, he went to the port to find out how he could help. "I saw people cleaning, so I asked them if they were hungry. I decided to buy food for them... then I went back to the port and told the people

working there that this is a simple thing we give to stand beside them."

Being a refugee from Syria, Pastor Nihad was able to come alongside the displaced families in Lebanon affected by the explosion. "Because we are displaced and have lived through the conditions of war, we know what it means for a person's home to be destroyed, and what it means for someone to stand next to you and say to you, 'I know what you are feeling'. We prayed in many homes... People used to cry and ask who sent us to them. The Lebanese churches helped us and went with us."

Pastor Nihad is grateful for your prayers. "Thanks to everyone who contributed and supported, every person who prays, and every person who

blessees, may God bless you. You are applying the Word of God when Christ said, 'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I needed clothes and you clothed me...' (Matthew 25:35-36). And when we show this to people, they begin to love Christ."

### **PRAY**

- For God's provision and healing for all those affected by the explosion
- For Pastor Nihad and his church as they share God's love with their community
- Give thanks for the generosity of those who gave to make this work possible, such as the Diocese of Down and Dromore.

\*Name changed for security reasons



**PICTURED**  
Pastor Nihad and his church draw on their own experiences as refugees to bring hope to those in need

## Hope for the Middle East

### Sunday 1 August – Syria

President Assad was re-elected in May in an election widely viewed as illegitimate. The Assad family has now been governing Syria for 50 years. Ask the Holy Spirit to soften the heart of President Assad towards God and all the Syrian people, and to establish just and righteous government for the nation.

### Monday 2 August – Syria

In March we asked you to pray for Syria's struggling economy. Give thanks that the exchange rate of Syrian pounds to US dollars has decreased significantly, bringing the price of basic goods down and enabling Syrians to buy more with their money. Pray for continued economic stability.

### Tuesday 3 August – Syria

Give thanks that Open Doors partners are able to provide online training for persecuted believers during the pandemic. Internet connections and electricity are a challenge in the country. Pray that the training sessions will run smoothly and produce much fruit in the lives of those who attend.

### Wednesday 4 August – Syria

Pray for an apologetics programme for children and teenagers called Brave Hearts. Young people are

often ridiculed or bullied because they are Christians. Pray that this training will give them courage and wisdom in defending their faith.

### Thursday 5 August – Iraq

Although Iraq has declared 'final victory' over so-called Islamic State (IS), its fighters continue to carry out bomb attacks and assassinations against the Iraqi army and Kurdish forces. Recently, three Kurdish forces soldiers were killed. Pray for the victims' families and for an end to IS's activities so that Iraqis can live in peace and security.

### Friday 6 August – Iraq

Pray for 30 Christians who remain missing after being kidnapped during the Islamic State insurgency in 2014. Pray for God's comfort and patience for their families, and pray with them in the hope that they will be reunited with their loved ones again.

### Saturday 7 August – Lebanon

Give thanks for the many young people who have worked so hard to restore the area around Beirut's port, which was destroyed in an explosion one year ago. Pray that their contribution will be recognised and they will be given more opportunities to use their gifts and skills to help rebuild their country.

### Sunday 8 August – Israel / Palestinian Territories

Pray for peace in Israel and the Palestinian territories following the recent escalation in violence. Pray for comfort for those who have lost homes and loved

ones, and for a sustainable and just peace for all.

## | Asia

### Monday 9 August – North Korea

As the pandemic continues to limit travel and meetings, Open Doors' work providing supplies for North Korean Christians through our networks in China has become more difficult. Pray for God's guidance and ask Him to open the channels for Open Doors workers to feed and equip the most persecuted Christians.

### Tuesday 10 August – Vietnam

Keep praying for A Dhon\* and Y Mae\*, who are facing opposition from their community. Recently, the local authorities called a meeting with A Dhon and the whole village to force A Dhon and his family to deny their faith. But A Dhon refused, saying "We will follow Jesus our Lord, and you cannot force us to reject our faith!" Pray for the safety of the family and ask God to continue to strengthen the family's faith in Him.

### Wednesday 11 August – China

Sister Zhang\* leads a small group of believers. Recently, while they were meeting, local authorities found a way in, shut down the meeting and took the names of everyone present. They were all summoned for questioning, but Zhang bore the brunt of the interrogations. Ask the Lord to comfort her and to provide a new venue where the group can meet safely.

### Thursday 12 August – Myanmar

Keep praying for Myanmar in the wake of February's coup. Pray for peace and reconciliation between ethnic insurgency groups and the military, and pray for courage and faith for church leaders as they lead their members in such unstable times.

### Friday 13 August – Bhutan

Covid restrictions have made it difficult for Open Doors partners to run programmes on their planned dates. Pray that the work can continue in a timely and safe way.

### Saturday 14 August – Nepal

At the time of writing, the number of Covid-19 cases is on the rise again. Please pray for the Lord's healing on the land and for protection for Open Doors local partners trying to reach those in need.

### Sunday 15 August – India

As India celebrates Independence Day, pray God's blessing on this vibrant and diverse nation. Give thanks that the church continues to grow despite severe persecution, and ask God to move the hearts of Prime Minister Modi and his government to respect the rights of Christians to worship the Lord in freedom.

### Monday 16 August – Sri Lanka

Reports of opposition against churches and believers are increasing. Ask God to protect Christians living in majority Buddhist or Hindu areas, and pray that Open Doors partners will be able to strengthen these believers to stand firm.

\*Names changed for security reasons



## A PEARL BIBLE OF GREAT PRICE

### THE CHINESE CHURCH CONTINUES TO SEE THE FRUIT OF PROJECT PEARL 40 YEARS LATER

**It has been 40 years since Project Pearl, when one million Bibles were delivered to a beach in China in just one night. The event itself was risky and miraculous – and its impact continues to resonate throughout the Chinese church today.**

Xiao Chen\* was just a teenager when he watched Project Pearl happen on 18 June 1981. "I remember a giant ship with no flags slowly approaching the harbour. Everyone at the beach seemed very anxious. Then, a small rubber boat came down from the ship... The rubber boat had a full load of boxes."



Contained in these boxes were hundreds of thousands of Bibles. A few hours later, soldiers arrived at the beach and chased the Christians away – but they had already retrieved many of the crates.

### "Project Pearl catalysed the great revival in China"

But what of the Bibles that remained floating in boxes in the sea? Brother Charlie\* came across fishermen using the torn pages of Bibles to wrap and sell their fish. "A lot of Bibles were thrown into the sea," he says. "They came to fish that night and 'fished' many boxes of Bibles. They thought the paper in the books could be used at the market."

Through the hands of fishermen, Charlie got his first Bible. He and a team of believers courageously went

on to distribute around 700 boxes of Bibles!

Sister Cindy\* also experienced the effect of the 'Pearl Bibles'. She says, "It catalysed the great revival in China... Many churches rose up, thousands and thousands of people accepted Jesus and many leaders were born because they finally had their own Bibles."

Below is a message of thanks to you from Chinese believers:

*Shalom!*

*We are several brothers and sisters in Chinese churches. We represent Chinese churches to express our*

*gratitude to you... In particular, you poured out your heart, passion, strength and financial support to Project Pearl some 40 years ago. This project has had tremendous impact on the development of Chinese churches.*

*We represent all Chinese brothers and sisters to express our deep gratitude to you! May God bless you to continue shining light for Him!*

**> Want to know more about Project Pearl? Watch more of the story in the latest edition of Prayer News at [opendoorsuk.org](http://opendoorsuk.org)**

\*Names changed for security reasons

PICTURED  
The courageous faith behind Project Pearl is still impacting the Chinese church today



## | West Africa

### **Tuesday 17 August – Cameroon**

Boko Haram extremists continue to target believers in north Cameroon. “Pray for Boko Haram,” asks one believer from the far north of Cameroon. “Pray that the Lord will change the hearts of our persecutors so that they may know Him as their only Saviour.”

### **Wednesday 18 August – Cameroon**

The ongoing insecurity keeps Christians from cultivating their own land and providing for their families. Thank God that Open Doors partners were able to deliver relief aid to over 300 displaced families and pray that this aid will encourage vulnerable believers. “Things are hard for the young widows,” says church elder, Pierre. “Pray that they will not lose faith and that they put their trust in God who will help them raise their children.”

### **Thursday 19 August – Nigeria**

The Boko Haram insurgency, once confined to the northeast, appears to be spreading. Violent attacks and abductions continue. Pray for persistence and accountability for the Nigerian government as they work to free the country of the destruction caused by Boko Haram and other extremist groups.

### **Friday 20 August – Nigeria**

Hannatu and her children were kidnapped by Boko Haram and held in the Sambisa forest for two years. Sadly two of

her children died trying to escape. Hannatu and her other daughters have since been rescued by the military. Open Doors partners are arranging for Hannatu to receive trauma care at the Open Doors trauma centre. Pray that she will be able to attend and will find healing and peace.

### **Saturday 21 August – Burkina Faso**

Extremist attacks have driven Christians from their homes and villages, with many forced into refugee camps. Pray for God’s physical and emotional provision for pastors of the churches that are hosting displaced people.

### **Sunday 22 August – Burkina Faso**

Open Doors partners report there are no open churches in parts of north-eastern Burkina Faso as Christians have largely been forced to flee violence from Islamic extremists. “Where we came from, there are no more Christians,” says one believer. “We ask you, brothers and sisters around the world, to pray and intercede that the enemy that rose against the Christians and forced them to flee and leave the churches be stopped.”

## | East Africa

### **Monday 23 August – Sudan**

Although Sudan’s transitional government has said that it is committed to ensuring religious freedom for all, Christians say they continue to experience limitations in the day-to-day expression of

their faith. Pray for wisdom for Christians as they engage the government over their rights, and pray that steps towards religious freedom will be distilled to state levels and into society in general.

### **Tuesday 24 August – Sudan**

A recent outbreak of ethnic violence in Darfur has also affected Christians and has raised questions about the ability of regional governments to protect Sudanese people from ethnic or religious persecution. Pray for the Lord’s protection over churches, especially those in rural places which continue to face a lot of pressure far away from the attention of the world.

### **Wednesday 25 August – Ethiopia**

When Haman (76) converted to Christianity, local villagers destroyed his crops, took his livestock and threatened to kill him and his family if he didn’t stop following Jesus. Pray for protection for Haman and for the church providing him and his family with food and safety, and pray that through his faithful witness, his persecutors would also come to know the love of Jesus.

## | North Africa

### **Thursday 26 August – Algeria**

In the past three years, the government has closed 13 churches. In 2020, the churches that were not closed by the government had to close due to Covid-19 measures. This has left many isolated believers without a place to gather.

Pray that these churches can re-open so that believers can meet again.

### **Friday 27 August – Algeria**

Pray for church leaders in the midst of this crisis. Ask the Lord to give them wisdom and insight into how best to serve their congregations and how to maintain deep fellowship between believers.

### **Saturday 28 August – Algeria**

Ordinance 06-03, which regulates non-Muslim worship and is known as the anti-conversion law, continues to have a huge impact on church activities and new believers. Please keep praying for its abolition.

### **Sunday 29 August – Libya**

There is no freedom of speech, no freedom of religion and no possibility of public church life in Libya. Pray for several groups of believers who have begun meeting with each other. Ask the Lord to provide ways for them to meet securely together.

### **Monday 30 August – Tunisia**

Marwen\* has faced much persecution from his family since becoming a Christian, and now needs to find a stable place to live. Ask the Lord to guide him through those supporting him practically and spiritually.

### **Tuesday 31 August – Morocco**

The country and the church have been hit extremely hard by Covid-19. Ask the Lord to provide for His people so they can not just survive, but be a light to their communities.

\*name changed for security reasons



## WORLD WATCH LIST

# #18 Myanmar

## Hope in the darkness

**Christians in Myanmar are fearful yet bravely persevering, in the wake of the military coup that has instigated a trail of brutality and threatens to undo a decade of democratic progress.**

The military took control on 1 February, alleging election fraud. Thousands took to the streets in protest. In a ruthless military clampdown, over 700 people have been killed and thousands arrested. As hostilities intensify, fears grow that the country's long-running civil war will escalate.

Between 1962 and 2011, when Myanmar was ruled by the staunchly-Buddhist military, Christians were systematically persecuted. Recent months have reawakened traumatic memories, including those of older pastors who are

paralysed by fear and unable to lead their churches. "The military coup is going to be like North Korea," says one believer. "I have big concern for our future generations."

Churches have been unable to meet because it's too dangerous. Church buildings have been shot at and ransacked. Pastors have been forced into hiding, having shown opposition to the coup.

But there is hope. Persecution survival training, funded with your support, is guiding believers in their response. In one village, 40 people have become Christians! And believers are drawing strength from praying and reading the Bible. "I have become more prayerful since the coup," shares a believer.

*Father, please strengthen and encourage our family in Myanmar in their faith and witness, and provide for their needs. Bring the coup to an end. Amen.*

LEFT Christians in Myanmar gather to pray for their country



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