

## STANDING IN THE GAP

for the Persecuted Church

April, 2017

**29. NORTH KOREA** – pray for **Jung-ah**, who became a believer while in prison for smuggling in North Korea in 2012. After her release, she went looking for Pastor Han (see previous entry), who then disciplined her for 3 months. She left her smuggling work and began to help Pastor Han share the Gospel with North Koreans.

**30. NORTH KOREA** – pray for **Deacon Jang**, another of Pastor Han's disciples, who was kidnapped in North Korea and mercilessly interrogated. He remains imprisoned in North Korea.

Continue praying for North Korea as VOM seeks to get the Gospel into North Korea through:

1. Radio and Balloons – VOM trains North Korean defectors to read Scripture, sing hymns, present Bible lessons, and preach to those inside the country. VOM continues to upgrade broadcast technology to circumvent the government's jamming efforts. VOM also launches Scripture balloons into the country using a sophisticated system of hydrogen balloons that carry tiny New Testaments into the country. They use software to predict weather patterns for ideal launch times, and GPS technology to track balloons once they land.

2. Front-line workers – VOM trains both North Korean defectors and those still inside the country. Evangelism teams host North Korean foreign workers, offering clothing and medicines, and ultimately, the hope of Christ.

3. Working with defectors – VOM's office in South Korea operates 2 training programs for North Korean defectors living in South Korea: Underground Technology and Underground University, which train believers to become missionaries to other North Koreans.

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Pray from Psalm 102

From heaven the Lord gazed upon the earth,  
To hear the groaning of the prisoner;  
To set free those who were doomed to death;  
That men may tell of the name of the Lord in Zion,  
And His praise in Jerusalem;  
When the peoples are gathered together,  
And the kingdoms, to serve the Lord.

Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus.

### SOURCES:

CHURCH IN CHAINS; CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY WORLDWIDE; CHRISTIAN TODAY; OPEN DOORS; PRISONER ALERT;  
RELEASE INTERNATIONAL; VOICE of the MARTYRS; WORLD MAGAZINE; WORLD WATCH MONITOR

- 1. NIGERIA** - pray for Christian communities in Kaduna State. Heavily armed Fulani herdsman carried out raids in February destroying homes and claiming 26 lives.
- 2. EGYPT** – pray for **Hanan Adly Girgis**, an 18-year old Christian girl who has been missing since Jan 26, 2017. The family's lawyer said that because she is a Christian, the police are not helping in the case. 'We feel we have no rights.'
- 3. KAZAKHSTAN** – pray for **Yuri Pak**, a high school dean and lay leader in his church, which held services in Russian and Kazakh. He has been arrested on a false charge of calling in a bomb threat, and even though there was little evidence to support the prosecution, Yuri has been sentenced to 2 years in jail, a verdict widely seen as a retaliation for his church involvement. Yuri is currently being held in a detention center where he cannot receive mail. His wife and 2 children long for his return. Please pray for them, that they will be reminded of God's love for them, and that they will have opportunities to witness for Christ.
- 4. CHINA** – pray for **Jong-su**, who was sold into China from North Korea as a child-bride. She became a Christian through other North Korean women like herself, who had been sold as wives. Her husband became a Christian as well, and now they work together to share the Gospel with trafficked North Korean women and their Chinese husbands.
- 5. CHINA** – pray for **Zhang Xuihong**, chairperson of the board of deacons at Living Stone Church in China's central Guizhou Province, who was sentenced earlier this month to 5 years in prison. She has been in custody since 2015, when she was charged with 'illegal business operations,' although the interrogators' questions focused mainly on the church, its pastors and members, rather than on her business activities.
- 6. SUDAN** – praise God that Czech aid worker **Peter Jasek** has been pardoned and freed by President Omar Bashier after the Czech Foreign Minister visited Sudan to seek for his release. He had previously been sentenced to 23 years on charges of spying. Continue praying for the 2 pastors who were convicted with him, but remain in prison.
- 7. NIGER** – continue praying for American missionary **Jeff Woodke**, who was kidnapped 4 months ago. So far, little is known about his condition or whereabouts.
- 8. MALAYSIA** – pray for **Pastor Raymond Koh Keng Joo**, 62, who was taken by masked men in the city of Petaling Jaya, near Kuala Lumpur on Feb 13. No one has claimed responsibility for his kidnapping. His wife, Susanna, says, "Please continue to pray for his release in a safe condition. Pray also for the safety of me and my children. Let us persevere in prayer, for the prayers of the righteous avail much. Let us continue to love God and do good to our neighbors. Raymond would be very happy today to know that not only Malaysia is praying for him, but also the whole world. Thank you again for your prayers and support. God bless."
- 9. PHILIPPINES** – pray for Christians here as they are concerned by the rise of Islamic extremism in the country. Members of a Seventh Day Adventist Church constructing their building were threatened by Islamists. Forty of them went to the church one night and threatened the people that if they didn't stop construction, they'll burn the church down and force them to leave.
- 10. EGYPT** – pray for **Nabila Hanna**, 65, a Coptic Christian mother in North Sinai, who recently saw her husband and son killed in front of her in their home. She says she then saw the killer calmly check off her loved ones names from the hit-list he carried. This is part of the Egyptian Islamic State's vow to 'eliminate' Egypt's Christians.

11. **IRAQ** – pray for **Nidal and Janan**, 2 sisters, their husbands and 6 children as they return to rebuild their homes in Telskuf. Despite having to depend on generators for electricity and trucks delivering fresh water, they are eager to stay in Telskuf and rebuild. Nidal says, “We believe in Christ, and He will help us through this period.”
12. **CHINA** – pray for **Alimujiang Yimiti**, 43, a Christian leader who has been in prison in Xinjiang Province in northwest China since 2008. He is a former Muslim from the Uighur Autonomous Region who became a Christian in 1995 and led a house church among the Uighur people. He is married to Guli Naer, and they have 2 sons, ages 9 and 16. Pray that he will be released soon, that God will keep him healthy and strong in his faith, that God will strengthen and encourage his wife and sons, and that God will bless and protect the Uighur Christians.
13. **EGYPT** – pray for the 250 Christians who have left the town of Al-Arish in North Sinai following the murder of 7 Christians there by Islamic State militants.
14. **CHINA** – pray for Christians attending house church meetings in Xinjiang Province in northwest China. Public security bureaus raided a network of house churches known as Fangcheng Fellowship in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang and arrested 80 Christians for ‘engaging in religious activities at non-religious sites.’ This crackdown comes at a time of heightened security tensions in Xinjiang because of increased activity of Islamists militant groups in the area. The tightened security affects all religious activity of Islam, Christianity, and Tibetan Buddhism in the area.
15. **GAMBIA** – praise God that the new President of Gambia, Adama Barrow, has pledged reforms, including removing laws in Gambia’s constitution that violate freedom of religion and changing the country’s official name from “Islamic Republic of Gambia” to “Republic of Gambia”. Gambia’s population is 90% Muslim with the remainder 10% either Christian or animist. These encouraging changes are a sign to Gambia’s Christian minority that the new administration will be more disposed than the outgoing president to safeguard religious freedoms for all citizens.
16. **COLOMBIA** - pray for the Christian children in Open Doors’ shelters where they are cared for, protected and educated in the faith and love of God. The shelter has been a peaceful haven for these children, far removed from the threats of the traditional indigenous authorities that persecute the indigenous Christians, as well as from guerrilla forces that exercise widespread control, even in the schools. However, the authorities have now requested that these children present themselves before the local governing bodies so that they may be returned to their communities and removed from Christian schools.
17. **LAHORE, PAKISTAN** – pray for Christians after a blast Feb 23 took the lives of 10 people. All church and NGO-run hospitals and schools have been cautioned by the government and security organizations across the country to be on high alert. As one believer related, “The reality is that the new wave of terrorism is aimed at every one of us.”
18. **INDONESIA** – pray for **Anita, 2, Trinity, 3,** and **Alvaro, 4,** three young children who survived an attack on their church, Oikumene Church in Samarinda, the provincial capital of East Kalimantan province. These children were injured, suffering severe burns, after a bomb was thrown into their church by Islamic extremists. Alvaro, the worst injured, has undergone 17 operations so far.
19. **TANZANIA** – pray for Tanzanian Christian, **Mary Meshack**, and her children as she continues to struggle after the murder of her husband, Elias, a youth leader at the Gilgal Christian Worship Center. She says, “God gives me strength and I have never gone to bed hungry. He is with my children and gives us strength to move on and do well.”
20. **FRANCE** – pray for Christian refugees in the migrants’ camp called La Liniere in Dunkirk, home to around 1,400 refugees from Iraq, Kurdistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, and even Vietnam. Christians in the camp are harassed by their Muslim neighbors, and there is sexual abuse of women and children.
21. **NORTH KOREA** – pray for **Kim Dong Chul**, 63, a missionary born in South Korea, serving a 10 year sentence in a North Korean labour camp for alleged ‘unpardonable espionage.’ He was arrested in Oct 2015. He has a wife and 2 daughters living in China; they are not permitted to visit him in the camp.
22. **NORTH KOREA** – pray for **Hyen-soo Lim**, 61, a Canadian pastor serving a life sentence in North Korea. He had travelled to North Korea on a humanitarian mission and has been in detention since his arrest in Feb 2016. Pastor Lim had stepped down from his role as head minister of the 3,000 member Light Korean Presbyterian Church in Toronto to devote himself to humanitarian work in North Korea, involving aid to nursing homes, daycare centers and orphanages. He had made more than 100 visits to North Korea prior to his arrest.
23. **ARGENTINA** – pray for **Father Eduardo Farrell**, who has been transferred from his parish due to repeated threats from drug traffickers. His church has been active in the prevention of drug addiction, and this work has led to a conflict with the ‘interests of those who only seek territorial power and profit at any cost with illegal activities.’
24. **MEXICO** – pray for **Lauro Perez Nunes**, his wife and their 4 children, ages 2-12. Lauro faced beatings, imprisonment, and eventually exile from his home village after he and his wife converted to evangelical Christianity in 2015. They now live two and a half hours away from their old community and have started a family business, a small eatery called “Mana de Cielo”, Manna from Heaven.
25. **INDIA** – pray for the **New India Church of God**, a 90-member church attached to the home of the pastor, Jacob Joseph. In January, a mob of 300 angry Hindus halted a Sunday service and forced the pastor to close the church and assaulted several church members. The local government has sided with the mob.
26. **TURKEY** – continue praying for US pastor, **Andrew Brunson**, who has been in prison since October. The Turkish authorities still have not unsealed the case documents against Brunson to enable his lawyer to defend him in a court trial. There has been concern that he is being held ‘hostage’ until the US agrees to extradite Fethullah Gulen, the US-based Islamic cleric accused of orchestrating a failed military coup to overthrow the Turkish government last July.
27. **SUDAN** – pray for **Pastor Daau**, a former lost boy of Sudan, who has launched a Christian school in South Sudan called the Good Shepherd Academy. Daau believes that many of the country’s problems stem from a lack of good leadership, and educating children from a young age provides a path to training and mentoring future leaders. He also trains pastors in refugee camps to continue serving their churches, even while they are in exile.
28. **CHINA, near the North Korean border** – pray for **Mrs. Han**, whose husband, Pastor Han Chung-Ryeol, was killed by North Korean assassins in April 2016. She continues to lead the church that her husband started in 1993 in Changbai, a Chinese border town. Their intent was to lead a small church of ethnic Korean Chinese, but soon began ministering to North Koreans knocking at their door, starving and without clothes. Pastor Han’s philosophy was clear: “He taught North Koreans that they should be the ones to receive the Gospel and go back to their country,” Mrs Han said. Mrs Han had previously been arrested and held in solitary confinement for 60 days during a legal visit into North Korea to bring rice to orphanages.