

28. INDIA – A ceasefire between India and Pakistan continues to hold, after last month's terror attack in India's Kashmir region. Pray for peace in the region and for believers there to hold out the Gospel of hope to their warring neighbors.

29. HAITI – pray for Christians in Haiti as the gang situation continues to cause problems. **Markeson Saint Fleur** is an attorney with *For Love of Haiti*. He says that if gang activity worsens in Cap-Haitien, where this ministry is based, the group will be forced to vacate. Pray for safety and protection of families displaced by gang activity. Pray that the ministry will not be forced out and that they can continue to share the gospel.

30. LEBANON – pray for *Heart for Lebanon's* **Camille Melki** who reports that at least 1.2 million people have been displaced by the latest war between Hezbollah and Israel. *Heart for Lebanon* is helping vulnerable families. Pray for the team as they continue to serve the people of Lebanon.

And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
Amen

Show Thyself strong, O God, Who has acted on our behalf... He has scattered the people who delight in war. Psalm 68

STANDING IN THE GAP

for the Persecuted Church

June 2025

- 1. MYANMAR** – pray for Christians in Myanmar after a massive earthquake struck in late March. *Open Doors'* local partners and volunteers have visited affected regions to provide aid and comfort to those suffering. They report that the air is still filled with the stench of decaying bodies buried underneath the debris.
- 2. MYANMAR cont** – pray for **Pastor Nay**. He says that he knows that it is only by God's grace that he and his family are alive, and that this miracle has given his church community the chance to live out the Great Commission. "If the Lord's hand had not held on to the foundation and poles of our house, it would have been destroyed. We praise God that He has given us the opportunity to serve others."
- 3. MYANMAR cont** – pray for **Pastor Aung**, another church leader who ministers in an area affected by the devastation. He says the people are fearful and need trauma counseling. Pray that relief aid reaches the needy soon. Pray God's blessings on the churches and organizations and countries that are providing aid to the earthquake victims.
- 4. BANGLADESH** – After the ouster of Prime Minister Hasina in August 2024, Christians have been repeatedly targeted by extremist groups. Believers' houses were burned down, Christian-owned businesses were vandalized and forcibly shut down. Believers were threatened, questioned and even forced to renounce their faith. The most severely affected Christians are those who converted from Islam or tribal beliefs in rural areas of Northern and Western Bangladesh.
- 5. BANGLADESH cont** – pray for **Jamal** who asks for prayer that God will give him strength to endure the persecution. There are reports of 36 verified cases of direct attacks on believers and their properties; more than 100 families have been pressured to renounce their faith. Jamal shares he recently heard that Islamic leaders have plans to attack his house and business and force him out of the area.
- 6. BANGLADESH cont** – pray also for **Akram, Bijoy, and Omar** who ask for prayer that they and their families can overcome these threats and fears. They also ask that they can share the Word of God fearlessly.
- 7. CHINA** – pray for **Yang Rongli** of Golden Lampstand Church in Linfen, Shanxi province. She is still awaiting trial after nearly 4 years in detention. There is great concern for the welfare of the 69-year-old diabetic. The trial of her husband, **Pastor Wang Xiaoguang** and 10 other co-workers who have been detained with Pastor Wang, concluded April 18, but no verdict has been announced. Pray for strength and wisdom for Yang, and for protection for her health. Pray that her trial will take place soon. Pray for hope and peace for Pastor Wang and the 10 colleagues as they await the verdict of their trial.
- 8. BANGLADESH** – pray for **Rajon**, an *Open Doors'* partner. He explains that false teachings and misinformation about Christianity perpetuated by Muslims contribute to a culture of hatred and discrimination against non-Muslims. "Some Muslims intentionally spread falsehoods about Christians," he says, "leading to a distorted perception of the religion and fostering animosity towards its followers."

SOURCES:

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

9. **INDIA** – Mehendra Hembram, a Hindu militant jailed for the killing of Australian missionary **Graham Staines** and his 2 young sons in 1999, has been released from prison. Now aged 50, he was greeted by supporters who garlanded him and chanted the Hindu slogan, ‘Hail, lord Rama.’ Pray that Hembram will show genuine repentance, and work for peace and harmony in India following his release. Pray that **Gladys Staines** and her daughter, **Esther**, will know God’s presence and peace at this time.
10. **TURKEY** – pray for Christians in Turkey facing various pressures including legal obstacles. Pray for hope and courage for members of the **Armenian Apostolic Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and the Association of Protestant Churches**.
11. **TURKEY** – pray for *Church in Chains* partner **SAT-7** which broadcasts Christian programming through its dedicated **SAT-7TURK** channel. Pray that the SAT team will know wisdom from God to respond to the people who reach out to them with love, truth and clarity.
12. **TURKEY**- praise God for *Church in Chains* partner **Middle East Concern** which works with churches to monitor persecution, assist victims of persecution and challenge unjust laws. Pray for provisions for them and protection for their work.
13. **ERITREA** – The UN Human Rights Commission recently described the situation in Eritrea as follows: ‘Eritrea continues to face a grave and long-standing human rights crises characterized by the repression of fundamental rights, impunity and complete lack of access to justice for victims.’ Pray against this unjust situation. Pray against President Isaias Afewerki, who has been in power for 34 years without ever implementing the country’s constitution.
14. **ERITREA** cont- continue praying for the **27 secondary students** who were arrested in December while attending a prayer and worship meeting in a private house. They are being held in Mai Serwa prison. Pray for their release.
15. **ERITREA** cont – continue praying for the 50 members of the **Mahalian Praise Group** also being held in Mai Serwa prison since their arrest in April 2023. Pray that they will be treated well and receive enough food and medicine and be released soon.
16. **CHINA** – continue praying for imprisoned Christians in China:
 - pray for **Pastor Zhang Shaojie** who is serving a 12-year sentence since 2013. He is due for release in November. Pray that God uses him to bring other prisoners to faith.
17. - pray for **Pastors Xing Wenxiang and Bao Guohua** who have been in prison since 2013. Ask the Lord to protect their mental, spiritual, and physical health.
18. - pray for **Elder Zhang Chunlei**, who is serving a 5-year sentence since 2021. Pray for better health for Elder Zhang, who suffers from liver cirrhosis. Pray also for encouragement for him and his wife, **Yang Aiqing**.
19. **IRAN** – continue praying for Christian convert **Laleh Saati**, who is serving a two-year sentence since Feb 2024. She has recently been denied access to medical care following a fall in the prison yard. Pray that she will be able to receive the treatment that she needs.
20. **ERITREA** – continue praying for these Christian leaders who are still in prison –
 - **Meron Gebreselasie**, a pastor and anesthetist in prison since 2004. Pray that the Holy Spirit will fill him with hope, joy and peace.
 - **Rev Futsum Gebrenegus**, an Eritrean Orthodox priest and psychiatrist in prison since 2004. Pray that he will be treated well and released soon.
 - **Mussie Ezaz**, and evangelist and youth leader in Asmara arrested in 2008. Pray that the Lord will provide for his needs as well as the needs of his wife, **Frewrini**, and their 3 sons, **Yoel, Hananiel, and Basaliel**.
21. **NORTH AFRICA** - - pray for **Yasmina** who became a believer after losing both of her parents. But her newfound faith came with a terrible cost. Her brothers became angry when she started attending church. She married **Seleh**, a fellow believer and they hoped to build a Christian family together. But after Seleh was arrested and sentenced for simply attending church, they were forced to flee their country. They long to return home to freely practice their Christian faith.
22. **CHINA** – *China Partnership* asks for prayer for the city of **Wuhan**, which is still recovering from Covid lockdowns and effects of the pandemic. One pastor shares, “Wuhan used to be a key city for student ministry. Now we face numerous restrictions, and large-scale events are impossible.” Another pastor shares, “We have even had experiences where elementary school students reported us to the police while we were sharing the gospel.” Pray for evangelism efforts in Wuhan among students, for churches to have wisdom and hope as they witness the gospel.
23. **CHINA** – Ten young children, ages 5-6, were detained last month by police while they were attending Sunday School class being held in a private home in Fuyang City and returned to their parents after a short time. Five adults who were teaching the children were also held, two of whom were later placed in detention. Pray for **Chen Fangfang and Wang Danden**. It was reported that Chen was mistreated at the police station, being verbally and physically abused including insulting, humiliating and spitting on her face and dousing her with water. Pray for the young children who are experiencing significant psychological distress. Pray for the **Maizhong Reformed Church** in Fuyang, which has endured many such raids by police because it is unregistered.
24. **IRAN** – pray for **Lida Alexani**, 56-year-old wife of imprisoned house church leader, **Joseph Shahbazian**. She has been in solitary confinement in Evin prison since her arrest by Minister of Intelligence officers on April 12. Lida was arrested during a raid on her home in Tehran during which officers carried out a search and confiscated personal items. They then transferred her to prison, but the charges against her have not been made public. Pray for strength, hope and comfort for Lida and Joseph in prison, and that they will be released soon.

UPDATE- Lida was released on bail equivalent to 45,000 Euros. Pray for provision for the family which has had to pay such a large bail sum for Lida. Pray that they will also be able to afford to pay for the release of her husband, Joseph.
25. **MYANMAR** – pray for **Pastor Yang**, as he travels to different places to train and support Christians who are suffering after the military coup. Christians are also persecuted by radical groups. Pray for peace in Myanmar and that the attacks and killings will cease.
26. **IRAN** – pray for **Hakop Gochumiyan**, a Christian from Armenia who is serving a ten-year prison sentence. He wrote a letter recounting human rights violations against him while in custody and reports that Ministry of Intelligence investigators threatened to kill him. He was arrested in August 2023 with his wife **Elisa Shahverdian**. She was released on bail in Oct 2023 and returned to Armenia. Pray for mental and physical health and strength for Hakop in Evin prison. Pray for hope and provision for Elisa and their 2 children back in Armenia.
27. **IRAN** – continue praying for **Abbas Soori, Narges Nasri, and Mehran Shamloul** who have been told to report to Evin Prison to begin their long prison sentences. It is believed that they may have left the country. Pray for protection and provision for them and their families.

