

“Great blessings belong to those who suffer persecution for doing what is right. God’s kingdom belongs to them. People will insult you and hurt you. They will lie and say all kinds of evil things about you because you follow me. But when they do that, know that great blessings belong to you.” MATTHEW 5:10-11 ERV



- Persecution of Christians worldwide is one of the biggest human rights issues of our time. However, this hasn’t stopped bold believers from sharing the love of Christ in their communities. May the Lord bless and empower the courageous people answering the call to share the Gospel despite the danger.
- Right now, 360 million Christians worldwide live in places where they experience high levels of persecution and discrimination. Most persecuted Christians live in countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.
- Although the risk of persecution is high, people in more than 15 countries in these areas will study God’s Word this year, many for the first time. Bible League will reach these under-served communities using both in-person and online formats. In dangerous areas, online formats may be the most effective way for believers to fellowship safely.

PRAY FOR *the Persecuted Church*

Week 1:

Pray for Armenian Christians in Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) who face continual persecution for their faith from their Muslim neighbors. Azerbaijan, a Muslim nation, has been imposing a blockade that has already lasted more than 100 days. As a result, gas and electricity supplies have been cut off or drastically limited, and food shortages will soon be felt. At the

same time, local believers continue to depend on the Lord, and there’s even a spiritual revival in Artsakh. Local churches are actively sharing the Gospel, their only true hope. Pray for believers to remain strong in sharing the Gospel and pray for their Muslim neighbors to trust in Jesus.

Please turn over...

PRAY FOR *the Persecuted Church* (continued)

Pray for Pastor Papina in India, who recently started a new Bible study group in his village which locals are opposing. Pray that God may help him in his ministry in that area despite the persecution. Pray for new believers to grow quickly in their faith.

Week 2:

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has never enjoyed complete religious freedom since the earliest stage of its existence as a nation. All the successive cabinets have tried to oppress church planting and activity, resulting in many churches being silent or ceasing to operate. At present, the oppression is critically felt in the eastern region of the country, where violence and human rights abuses are prevailing. Ask God to intervene in a mighty way to grant the local church leaders boldness to proclaim the Gospel. Ask that He would enlighten the local political leaders to allow more freedom to churches and pray that He would bring peace to the eastern part of the country.

A group of indigenous youth attempted to join a *Project Philip* Bible study group a few weeks ago in rural southeastern Bangladesh. But now they face hindrances from their families, preventing them from attending. Please pray that they can overcome all obstacles to participate in the study. May they accept Jesus Christ as their Redeemer.

Week 3:

Last month, Bible League partnered with a ministry in the Upper Egypt region to start discipleship and Bible study groups throughout the country. A man named Pastor Jacob began *Project Philip* Bible studies with more than 40 groups he serves. However, a powerful local church accused him of distorting the Bible and

stopped all his groups from meeting because the church opposed the Arabic easy-to-read translation that he used. Pray that Pastor Jacob's ministry would continue and that God would change local church leaders' hearts to accept the easy-to-read Bible. Pray that no weapon of the enemy would defeat him. Ask God to protect him from rejection and give him strength and encouragement to continue the ministry.

Pray for Pastor Nhat to have the wisdom to discern the needs of local churches in central Vietnam. Help him to keep training leaders for persecuted churches there. May he not grow weary despite the obstacles he faces.

Christians in the indigenous Bawn community in southeastern Bangladesh are facing persecution. Pray that this problem can be resolved quickly so that all believers can worship together in peace. Many people in these rural communities are being arrested, making ministry work hazardous. Pray for protection and security for believers there.

Week 4:

Praise the Lord for Bible League-trained Christians who have shared the Gospel for the past year in an Albanian village where all the families practice the Muslim religion. A local church helped them form *Project Philip* Bible studies for youth and children. Pray that the children's families do not oppose or persecute the participants, but instead support them as they study God's Word together.

Pray for a state in northern India, where persecution is extremely high. Many pastors are in prison, and a local pastor was arrested by the police for alleged forceful conversion. Pray for their release and for God to calm the fear faced by local church members.