

PRAYER ALERT...

'If my people....will humble themselves and pray' 2 Chr 7:14

Informing and equipping Christians - Online and to Inbox

www.prayer-alert.net

editor@prayer-alert.net

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PRAISE REPORTS

■ Surprise! Arabs and Jews unite to proclaim Messiah's return

A new generation of Arab and Jewish followers of Jesus met together last week to strategise on how to 'turn Israel upside down.' Two hundred and sixty Messianic Jewish and Arab pastors, youth leaders, evangelists, Bible-school teachers and ministry leaders gathered for a three-day council to discuss, study, pray and work together to effectively bring the Word of God in power to Arabs and Jews throughout the whole Land of Israel. These seasoned men and women of faith embody decades of labour proclaiming the Gospel to local Arabs and Jews. Most have given up everything to preach Messiah to their unbelieving Muslim and Jewish families and friends. Despised because of their faith, they have lost jobs, suffered rejection and endured multiple other hardships, yet their passion to bring the Good News to their people remains unquenched. 'We will keep preaching and teaching the Word of God until it changes the people of Israel,' declared one leading pastor.

Praise: God for the gathering of believers wishing to bring the Word of God to others. (Mk,13:10)

More: http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art.html?ID=15044

■ Law Society withdraws controversial Sharia guidance

In a significant policy shift, the Law Society has issued an apology and withdrawn controversial guidance for solicitors on how to draft 'Sharia-compliant wills' that would deny women an equal share of inheritance and exclude non-Muslims entirely. The advice, released in March this year, was intended to 'assist solicitors who have been instructed to prepare a valid will which follows Sharia succession rules'. But today Andrew Caplen, the President of the Law Society, has apologised and announced the withdrawal of the guidelines: 'Our practice note was intended to support members to better serve their clients as far as is allowed by the law of England and Wales,' he said. 'We reviewed the note in the light of criticism. We have withdrawn the note and we are sorry.' The guidelines attracted severe criticism when they were published.

Praise: God for this change of policy. (Pr.1:5)

More: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/islam/law-society-withdraws-controversial-sharia-guidance>

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Collapse of the two-parent family

The shifting patterns of family life in the UK are exposed in the latest findings from a study of the lives of 13,000 children born at the beginning of the new century. More than one in three children have already lived through domestic upheaval

such as seeing their parents break up by the age of eleven and only half still have married parents by the time they finish primary school. But while the study provides further evidence of a powerful link between family break-up and issues such as behavioural problems or poverty, it also reveals how the children themselves are still 'strikingly happy'. It gives a vivid picture of modern British childhood with details on everything from what time children go to bed and whether their parents still use a 'naughty' chair to their intelligence test scores or their illicit use of social networking sites such as Facebook.

Pray: against the continued breakdown of family life and the damage it does particularly to children. (Dan.5:16a)

More: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/11258486/Collapse-of-the-two-parent-family.html?utm_source=Christian+Concern+List&utm_campaign=d1aecbc920-CWN-2014-11-28&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9e164371ca-d1aecbc920-127118413

▣ Sales of ouija boards up 300%

Ouija boards are selling fast. Google reports that sales of the board are up 300 per cent, and it is threatening to become a Christmas 'must buy'. The culprit is a new Hollywood horror film titled Ouija. Low-budget, lowbrow, the critics hammered it, but cinema-going teens, looking for something scary in the Halloween season, loved it. Cue big box office takings and huge demand for Ouija boards, many manufactured by the American toys giant Hasbro, who helped finance the making of the film. But to some people, including churchmen, it is a danger to be avoided, a trigger for psychological harm - or something worse. 'It's like opening a shutter in one's soul and letting in the supernatural,' says Peter Irwin-Clark, a Church of England vicar who has witnessed the dark side of Ouija. 'There are spiritual realities out there and they can be very negative.'

Pray: that ouija boards will quickly pass out of 'fashion' and that Christian prayer can neutralise or reduce the harm. (Lev.19:31)

More: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2855439/Sales-Ouija-boards-300-threatening-Christmas-buy-despite-Church-England-warning.html>

▣ Police took dying girl aged three to hospital after ambulance delay

A three-year-old girl who died after a house fire had to be taken to hospital in a police car because there were no ambulances available. Neighbours spent more than 20 minutes attempting to revive Angel Smith while they waited for an ambulance. She was eventually taken to hospital in Carmarthen by police officers. The delays suffered by Angel in receiving treatment from qualified paramedics emerged following mounting concern over the use of police vehicles to transport sick patients to hospital when ambulances are unavailable. The family's local MP, Simon Hart, described the tragedy as 'totally unacceptable'. He said he had also discovered that three of the six ambulances in south-west Wales were off duty at the same time on the day of the fire. A Dyfed-Powys representative said, 'as a police force we request an ambulance almost on a daily basis and often you hear 'there's no ambulance'. The ambulance service has had far too many cuts and this I'm afraid is the result'.

Pray: for appropriate funding so that the ambulance service can meet requirements and avoid similar tragedies in the future. (Lk.12:35)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/11262417/Police-took-dying-girl-aged-three-to-hospital-after-ambulance-delay.html>

▣ 'Up to 13,000' slaves in Britain

A new report, the first scientific estimate of the scale of modern slavery in the UK, has shown that the number is four times what was previously thought. Victim levels are estimated to be between 10,000 and 13,000 including women forced into prostitution, domestic staff and workers in fields, factories and fishing boats. Home Secretary Theresa May said the scale of abuse was 'shocking'. She added: 'The first step to eradicating the scourge of modern slavery is acknowledging and confronting its existence. The estimated scale of the problem in modern Britain is shocking and these new figures starkly reinforce the case for urgent action. That is why I have introduced a Modern Slavery Bill, the first of its kind in Europe. But I have always been clear that legislation is only part of the answer. Everyone must play their part if we are to consign slavery to history where it belongs.'

Pray: for a swift and purposeful response to this report by all agencies and the public in order to eradicate any form of slavery in our country. (Gal.5:1)

More: <http://www.premierchristianradio.com/News/UK/Up-to-13-000-slaves-in-Britain>

▣ Peer: Law should 'reasonably accommodate' religious belief

The former Bishop of Oxford has suggested there should be 'reasonable accommodation' for religious belief in law, during a House of Lords debate. Lord Harries initiated the debate on the role of belief in public life, in which he referred to recent cases in Europe where human rights appear to have clashed with fundamental religious views. He said: 'My own view is that human rights should prevail in areas of dispute but that the law should be formulated and enforced with what the Equality and Human Rights Commission once termed 'reasonable accommodation'. 'That seems to be in the spirit of the culture of the United Kingdom'. He maintained that there are certain 'fundamentals' on which there can be 'no compromise', but on some issues 'there ought to be some scope for latitude'. Speaking earlier this year, Lady Hale said, 'it is not difficult to see why the Christians feel that their religious beliefs are not being sufficiently respected'.

Pray: that Lord Harries proposals will find wider support in order to modify recent laws to accommodate religious belief. (Pr.2:2)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/peer-law-should-reasonably-accommodate-religious-belief/>

▣ Family breakdown 'damages exam results'

A survey was carried out by the family lawyers' association, Resolution. Its chair, Jo Edwards commented on the scale of the problem, saying: 'Each year around 100,000 children under 16 see their parents divorce. Almost half of all break-ups (48%) occur when there is at least one child in the relationship, and with 230,000 people in England and Wales going through a divorce each year (and many more separating), this is an issue that affects hundreds of thousands of families in Britain every year.' She went on to say that it was clear that 'children are suffering as a result of parental separation and

that in some cases it's exacerbated when parents place additional stresses on their children during their break-up.' According to the survey, 32% said that one parent 'tried to turn them against the other' whilst more than a quarter (27%) said their parents 'tried to involve them in their dispute'.

Pray: for all the children who are caught up in the stress of relationship breakdowns. (Phil.2:5)

More: http://christianconcern.com/our-concerns/education/family-breakdown-damages-exam-results?utm_source=Christian+Concern+List&utm_campaign=d1aebc920-CWN-2014-11-28&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9e164371ca-d1aebc920-127118413

EUROPE

Germany: Petition against gay 'Education Policy' rejected

In the middle of October the petition 'No Education Policy under Rainbow (Gay) Ideology' signed by 192,000 supporters was rejected by the petition commission for no good reason and the state parliament (in Stuttgart) confirmed this rejection in the middle of November with its 'green-red' majority. However protest action is now gaining further momentum and has entered a new phase. 3000 citizens in Stuttgart took a stand for the protection and strengthening of the family at one of the 'Demo for everybody' demonstrations which are now taking place regularly. Last month significant articles appeared in the media exposing the background to this 'Pornographisation' of the school system. The link between today's sexual education and the thinking of paedophiles was disclosed to a shocked public. Radical unchristian teaching, to be incorporated into the new Education Policy is now increasingly coming under criticism. Give thanks for growing resistance. (1 Pe.5:8-9)

Pray: for staying power and protection for all those who have so far openly spoken out against this new gender ideology. (2 Sa.22:2-4)

More: http://www.waechterruf.de/uploads/media/2014-12_call-of-the-watchmen.pdf

Germany: Why young Germans are answering call to holy war

Hundreds of young German Islamists have travelled to Syria to fight with the terrorist group Islamic State. Der Spiegel explored the extremist scene in Germany and the fascination with jihad in order to find answers about what drives people to join the murderous cult. Whenever Ismail Cetinkaya runs into one of those young men who want to leave Hamburg to fight in Syria, he asks: 'Have you ever slept without heat in the winter? Do you know what it's like to live without electricity and running water? Do you think a Kalashnikov works like the controller for your PlayStation 4?' He also asks whether the young man is leaving his mother behind. And then he quotes the words of the Prophet Mohammed, and says: 'Paradise lies at the feet of your mother.' The implication being that those who leave their weeping mothers behind won't enter paradise.

Pray: that ways will be found to halt the growth of radical Islamist groups. (Nu.10:9)

More: <http://europenews.dk/en/node/87389>

WORLDWIDE

Australia: New bill to legalise same sex marriage

Last Wednesday Senator David Leyonhjelm from the Liberal Democratic Party introduced a bill into the Senate to remove the concept that marriage is between a man and a woman. The bill would allow any Australian to marry regardless of 'sex, sexual orientation and gender identity'. His extreme libertarian ideology assumes all men are islands and that there is no such thing as society. Fortunately there are many members of Australia's federal parliament who are for marriage as it is. This means Senator Leyonhjelm's bill faces an uncertain future. So why is it being brought up? Mr Abbott promised pre-election to empower his party to decide whether the coalition has a conscience vote on same-sex marriage, and Senator Leyonhjelm believes there is enough support for that to occur.

Pray: for the Australian Christian Lobby's voice to be heard in future debates on this issue. (Lev.18:22)

More: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-11-26/new-same-sex-marriage-legislation-proposed-for-parliament/5918044>

Israel: Tension is rising

Attacks in Jerusalem are continuing to increase. Examples are a firebomb at Jerusalem's 'co-existence' school, the foiling of a Hamas cell's planned attack in the West Bank, and cars and vans are being used more and more as weapons to ram into pedestrians by militant Palestinian organizations. The open-ended cease-fire between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip was partially undermined by a Salafist terror group that fired their own rockets into Israel. The Gaza war has not solved any problems. Hamas is still shooting test rockets into the sea and want to repair the damaged tunnels. Behind the scenes the Palestinians plan to bring a resolution to the UN Security Council that requires Israel to withdraw from the 'occupied territories' by November 2016. The pressure on nations to take a stand on one side or the other grows. In October British Parliamentarians voted to support the recognition of a Palestinian State. See: <http://cmewonline.com/2014/10/17/the-british-vote-for-palestinian-statehood-a-death-sentence-on-the-palestinian-dream/>

Pray: for the work of the 'European Coalition for Israel' – that God's heart for Israel can be conveyed with much wisdom and that politicians will be ready to listen in the EU and UN. (1 Ki.8:16)

More: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/11/arab-league-push-un-palestinian-state-2014112915140279594.html>

Kenya: al-Shabab – growing concerns

At midnight on Monday al-Shabab Somali militants killed 36 non-Muslims after separating them from Muslim workers. The victims were captured while sleeping in their tents at a quarry in Kormey. al-Shabab carried out the attack because of the presence of Kenyan forces in Somalia. There is growing concern in Kenya about security in regions bordering Somalia after a spate of similar attacks. Borders with Somalia and Ethiopia are dominated by largely Muslim Somalis. Many of those killed came from the south of Kenya where Christians predominate. These attacks affect the economy and social make-up of the

region as most of its workers - skilled and unskilled - are non-Muslim Kenyans. Many Christians, including nurses and teachers, fled the area after a bus attack last week. A presidential adviser has warned that al-Shabab is trying to fan a religious war. Christian leaders have publicly accused Muslim leaders of not doing enough to tame radicalism within their ranks.

Pray: for the Kenyan government as it attempts to secure the nation against the insurgency. (Ps.91:14-16)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-30288137>

■ Bangladesh: Christian school attacked

Hundreds of extremist Islamists attacked a Christian school in Bangladesh in response to locals who were outraged by rumours stating the school was forcing Muslim children to convert to Christianity. The school welcomes children of all faiths. A spokesperson from Love Bangladesh Mission said the mob of about 200 people didn't injure the children but 12 of its 14 members of staff were badly beaten. Millions of Bangladeshi students attend madrasas that were established in the 1970s, soon after Bangladesh became independent from Pakistan. There are two kinds- private Quomi madrasas and state-sponsored Alia madrasas. Some madrasas are hidden in secrecy and viewed with suspicion for their links with militant Islam. The furious mob's 'most wanted' was Michael Robin Mondol, who is in charge of both the school and church. They were calling his name loudly, but the staff managed to hide him.

Pray: against rumours that generate hatred against Christian activity in Bangladesh. (Ps.17:8)

More: <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2014/s14120002.htm>

■ Burma: Refugees learn to 'love your neighbour'

In 2011 the Burma Army broke a 17-year ceasefire in Kachin State, displacing over 120,000 innocent civilians. Many fled to refugee camps where food and healthcare is limited and the risk of trafficking is high. In these places of despair, Partners Relief and Development has been working with local organisations to train and equip volunteers to lend a helping hand. The volunteers are themselves refugees helping their fellow refugees. Partners says these volunteers live by one rule, 'Love your neighbour'. Already 150+ volunteers have been trained. Altogether they are caring for nearly 8,000 internally displaced person's. Those who need food receive it. Those who are sick are cared for. Community is brought into a thrown-together refugee camp in the midst of tensions as a coalition of 15 civil society organizations call for the army to withdraw. See also: <http://www.kachinnews.com/news/2705-kachin-civil-society-groups-call-for-army-to-withdraw.html>

Pray: for God to bless all the work done in His name in Burma and for a lasting ceasefire. (Lev.19:18)

More: <https://www.mnnonline.org/news/refugees-learn-love-neighbor/>

■ USA: IS targeting military personnel

In an unprecedented joint intelligence bulletin, the FBI and Department of Homeland Security say they have intelligence that IS is trying to recruit people in the United States to target members of the military. They are using social media to track military personnel down. The FBI warned members of the US military to protect themselves by erasing all information on social media accounts that could help 'violent extremists' learn their identities. It's the strongest warning to date about possible attacks by IS. Brad Garrett, a former FBI agent, said, 'We understand that you are young, you communicate through social media, but we are telling you that's how IS finds people they potentially target.'

Pray: for American technology to outwit and capture potential terrorist infiltration and hacking. (2Cor.2:11)

More: <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2014/December/ISIS-Using-Social-Media-to-Track-Down-Military-Personell/>

■ South Africa: Government claims ignorant of IS recruiting

The African Christian Democratic Party says it is shocked by South African State Security claims that they were not aware that IS was recruiting South Africans to fight in Iraq and Syria. Iraq's Ambassador to South Africa, Dr Hashaim al-Alawi confirmed that IS is recruiting in South Africa and said he shared the information with the Department of International Relations and Cooperation. So far, he said three South Africans fighting for IS have died and their deaths were subsequently claimed to have been in car accidents. According to media reports, al-Alawi said recruitment and fund-raising for IS was being carried out by groups in South Africa positioning themselves as offering humanitarian assistance.

Pray: according to the national anthem in the Sesotho language. 'God we ask You to protect our nation, intervene and end all conflicts. Protect us, protect our nation, South Africa.' (Pr.14:3)

More: <http://gatewaynews.co.za/acdp-shocked-at-government-claims-of-ignorance-about-isis-recruiting-in-sa/>

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE WORLD PRAYER CENTRE, BIRMINGHAM, UK

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