

PRAYER ALERT...

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

Informing and equipping Christians - Online and to Inbox

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Issue 45-2016

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Friday 11 November 2016

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PRAISE REPORTS

■ Million-dollar Bible is completed

Making a modern Bible is difficult. Adam Greene, creator of Bibliotheca, learned the intricacies of the process through two years of production delays. His project to create a four-volume, single-column Bible cost \$1.4 million. But to transform the Bible from its familiar reference-packed pages to a format more like a novel was far more complicated than removing chapter and verse numbers and footnotes. He sorted design elements and materials, and had to present a text that had remained the same for generations into a new format. With the help of copy editors, Bible scholars, and proofreaders, Greene used a revised American Standard Version, changing archaic words and updating verses whose translations have improved. Then came the typesetting and spacing. Adam said, 'What I did not expect was that, through this process, my admiration and reverence for the text deepened tenfold. This literature is so complex and interwoven. The deeper I dig, the more I discover.'

Praise: God for all who work in Bible translation, making His word relevant to cultures, communities and people groups while remaining true to His doctrines of spiritual instruction and encouragement. (Dt.32:2)

More: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2016/november-web-only/kickstarter-bibliotheca-million-dollar-bible-is-finally-fin.html>

■ Hope for USA's soul

Many people have become discouraged for America's future during this election season. Many have struggled to be optimistic amidst the divisiveness seeming to plague the country. Pastor Rick Warren sees solid reason for hope, and specifically lists five reasons he believes are grounds to hope for a 'spiritual rebirth for America'. First, faith often grows the most in dark times: people realise they need God when times are hard. Second, the 'millennial' generation is spiritually hungry and seeking real purpose and community. Third, there are millions of God-fearing people living in America, living devoutly for God every day without fanfare - not out of guilt or fear or duty, but in gratitude and love to God for their transformed lives. Fourth, contrary to popular opinion, more people are turning to faith rather than to secularism. Lastly, God's promise to hear prayer still applies.

Praise: God for Rick and others, speaking out positively and praying. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

More: <http://www.christianheadlines.com/blog/rick-warren-why-i-have-hope-for-america-s-soul.html>

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

▣ Down's syndrome screening

The government has approved a new test (NIPT) to make it easier to detect babies with Down's syndrome in pregnant women. The NHS intend to make NIPT available next year. This has led to a campaign 'Don't screen us out'. 90% of Down's babies are aborted. NIPT will increase the number of children with Down's screened out and terminated. A British Medical Journal report said annual screening of 698,500 offering NIPT will result in 195 more Down's babies being detected. Recently 279 medical professionals accused the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of advocating that pregnant women with a prenatal diagnosis of Down's syndrome should have an abortion. The move to introduce NIPT is also backed by powerful commercial interests, notably two of the companies which supply the tests. The real victims are babies with a common genetic abnormality whose eradication will lift a perceived burden from some and make others very rich indeed.

Pray: for the NHS and involved parties to value the most vulnerable members of society, especially when it costs something emotionally and financially to do so. (Ps.12:5b)

More: <http://www.cmfblog.org.uk/2016/11/01/there-are-powerful-financial-vested-interests-rolling-out-nipt-for-downs-syndrome/>

▣ Trump and relations with UK

The election of Donald Trump is an unpredictable factor, with possible knock-on effects for Britain. His victory speech pledged to 'get along with all other nations willing to get along with us' and to deal fairly with everyone seeking common ground, not hostility; partnership, not conflict. Theresa May said she was 'looking forward to working' with him, in a strong 'trade, security and defence' partnership. Previously, Mrs May called his campaigning comments on Muslims divisive, unhelpful and wrong, while Boris Johnson said he wouldn't visit New York due to the real risk of meeting Trump. However, he now says he is 'looking forward to working with Mr Trump on global stability and prosperity'. President Obama had warned that the UK would go to the 'back of the queue' for US trade deals if it voted for Brexit. The Trump camp is more positive and 'absolutely wants' to strike a trade deal with the UK, whether in or out of Europe. See also Christian Voice comments at: <http://www.christianvoice.org.uk/index.php/president-trump-america-does-a-brexit/>

Pray: for Donald Trump's function in office to bear no resemblance to his candidate comments. (Pr.28:15,16)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-37920142>

▣ What are they teaching the children?

Sexually transmitted diseases among teenagers; teen pregnancy and abortion; porn addiction; mental illness; inability to form and sustain relationships - the list goes on. Over recent years the UK has seen cultural, social and political change as the result of changing attitudes towards sexuality and gender and the combined, but often conflicting, pressures of secularism and multiculturalism. Education has reflected this shift, teaching that many once-traditional values are increasingly being banned by law. The policy of giving ever more information without any moral frame has been a spectacular failure and, with the disintegration of what are now branded repressive values, we face a growing crisis that affects the physical, mental and emotional welfare of our young. Today and on Saturday there is a major conference at the Emmanuel Centre in London, aimed at discussing and tackling these problems. Pray for the delegates to digest and act on all that is learnt and considered at the conference.

Pray: for Government and educators to re-assess working practices around sexuality and gender. (1Cor.6:18)

More: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-new-normal-tickets-28836852803>

▣ Archbishop prays for reconciliation

The Archbishop of Canterbury called for reconciliation in the USA, after the most bitter election campaign in modern history. Justin Welby pledged to 'pray for all the people of the United States' in the wake of Donald Trump's victory. He said, 'As President-elect Trump prepares to take office, my continuing prayers are that the USA may find reconciliation after a bitter campaign, and that he may be given wisdom, insight and grace as he faces the tasks before him.' His statement was muted and contained no message of congratulations. Evangelical Christian blogger Ian Paul said, 'The election of Trump is a stand against the relentless march of globalisation, just as was the vote for Brexit for many people.' Chine McDonald, director of communications at the UK Evangelical Alliance, tweeted, 'Sad day to be a woman. Sad day to be black. Sad day to be an evangelical. Feeling numb. #USElection2016.'

Pray: for Jesus to calm the storm. (Luke 8:24,25a)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/world.leaders.congratulate.donald.trump.archbishop.of.canterbury.prays.for.reconciliation/100210.htm>

▣ Scandalous treatment of disabled and unemployed

A recent UN report states that the UK's treatment of disabled people 'violates basic human rights'. Meanwhile more measures are being introduced to worsen the plight of the worst-off families, with grave consequences. These include a further-reduced cap on benefits for households in which no adult works full-time, and less cash for many too sick or disabled to work. The bedroom tax is to be inflicted on pensioners, and it may be made harder to get unlawful benefit decisions overturned. An earlier UN report pointed out further violations affecting those already disadvantaged. The findings from the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities highlight the urgent need for change. There is reliable evidence of 'grave or systematic violations of the rights of persons with disabilities'. The core elements of the rights to independent living, being included in the community, adequate standards of living, social protection and rights to employment have been affected.

Pray: for the Government to agree to improve the quality of care given, and for respectful consideration to be given to the individual needs of vulnerable and disabled people. (Pr.8:6,7a)

More: <http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/node/23556>

■ Tram derailment: churches join PM in prayers

Churches joined the Prime Minister in assuring affected families of their prayers after five people died and 50+ were hospitalised when a tram tipped over in Croydon. Emergency services spent hours freeing trapped people. Theresa May said, 'My thoughts and prayers are with all who have been affected. The Government is closely in touch with the emergency services to ensure that all that is necessary is being done.' Tom Thompson, senior pastor at Croydon Vineyard church, said, 'As the people of God, we want to stand up and say that we recognise this as a moment that requires our solidarity with our community'. The assistant priest at a local Catholic Church said, 'People need a sympathetic ear, empathy, someone who perhaps can bring a different perspective to things; we are ready for people all the time, whether it's major or minor incidents in their lives.'

Pray: for all who have been affected to receive the help and treatment they need. (Ps.121:1)

More: <http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Five-dead-in-tram-derailment-Churches-join-PM-in-pledging-prayers>

■ London man convicted of terror offences

Jabed Hussain, from Acton, pleaded guilty at the Old Bailey on Thursday to two counts of preparing terrorist acts after being caught at the Turkish border. The 22-year-old first attempted to reach the IS strongholds in August 2015, but was detained by Turkish authorities at the border and returned to the UK. Continue to pray for UK Police's Counter-Terrorism Command as more potential jihadists attempt to join IS in its territories, or return to the UK after being trained abroad. Last month it was reported that IS has been recruiting violent criminals and gang members across Europe in a dangerous new 'crime-terror nexus'. Pray for Interpol and other agencies to thwart and close down terrorist cells wherever they attempt to spring up.

Pray: for vulnerable individuals to resist the lure of terrorist networks as a way of life. (Ps.23:3b)

More: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/london-jabed-hussain-convicted-terror-join-isis-islamic-state-syria-caught-turkey-border-passport-a7409286.html>

EUROPE

■ Switzerland - a hub for the Saudis

One of the first Saudi mosques in Europe is near Geneva. The Saudi Arabian-controlled Islamic World League (IWL) is rich in money and influence in Switzerland, spreading an interpretation of Islam which is a breeding ground for radicalism. IWL supports Muslims across the world, especially in the West where the number of Muslims is growing steadily. There are two centres in Switzerland linked to IWL, and thirty mosques loosely connected. They believe that Wahhabism is the only true Islam. Wahhabism is the reactionary branch of Islam and said to be 'the main source of global terrorism'. According to scholars, 'Wahhabism is a doctrine that does not take account of today's achievements such as human rights or individual rights'.

Pray: for government, preachers and teachers to remove radical views aired in meetings. (Pr.29:11)

More: http://www.swissinfo.ch/ger/islamische-weltliga_-die-schweiz-ist-eine-drehscheibe-fuer-die-saudis-/42575350?ns_mchannel=rss&srg_evsource=gn

■ Russian ships 'chase away' a Dutch submarine

Russia's defence ministry says two of its navy destroyers forced away a Dutch submarine to stop it spying on an aircraft carrier in the Mediterranean. The sub was 20km (12 miles) from the Admiral Kuznetsov at the time of the incident. Russia had sent a flotilla to the Mediterranean ahead of an expected resumption of air strikes in Syria. NATO said it was monitoring the ships in a 'measured and responsible way': a spokesman for the Western military alliance did not go into details, but said it had been observing the fleet for some weeks. The Russian flotilla's voyage through the English Channel and into the Mediterranean has rung alarm bells among NATO allies. Dutch military tweeted that they would give no comment on submarine operations. Dutch marine expert Jaime Karreman said that if true the incident was unprecedented. 'It's pretty shocking that a submarine on a secret mission is discovered', he told Dutch TV.

Pray: for peace in the area and for marine manoeuvres to be stable and non-threatening. (Pr.24:5a)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-37928222>

WORLDWIDE

■ USA: election earthquake

Thousands of demonstrators, many shouting 'Not my president', took to the streets of several US cities protesting against Donald Trump's election. They burned orange-haired effigies of the businessman. Pray for a smooth presidential handover and for unity and helpful attitudes to replace divided, aggressive attitudes. Brian Johnson, worship leader at Bethel Church and writer of 'One Thing Remains', tweeted, 'We pray that our president-elect feels the weight of responsibility and responds with respect, dignity, honour, and wisdom'. The financial world knows very little about Trump's policies and could reflect that with instability. Pray for global steadiness and wisdom for those dealing with uncertainties. There was a specific Jewish component to this election; some voters are reassessing their view of what it is to be Jewish in the USA as anti-Semitism was unleashed by Trump followers. Across the nations people are also concerned about Trump's comments denigrating NATO and his calls for nuclear proliferation. See also

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/evangelical.leaders.urge.unity.amid.deep.divisions.of.us.election/100181.htm>

Pray: for God to surround Donald Trump with experienced people, chosen for this political season (Ps.75:2,3)

More: <http://www.jta.org/2016/11/07/news-opinion/politics/anti-semitism-unleashed-by-trump-followers-chills-jewish-voters>

■ Syria: Aleppo

Christians in Aleppo struggle to survive. One said, 'We pray, please God give us strength to remain strong. We are praying for Him to give us the tolerance to accept our situation and to live our faith whilst suffering in this time.' The poor and the poorest are those who remain. One US dollar used to be 50 Syrian pounds, but now it is 500 or 600. Meat, cheese, fruit and vegetables are available but they are too expensive for many. In the Christian quarter there are 3,221 Christians over the age of 80 who have no one to turn to; their families left the country to escape the war. Sadly, the elderly are neglected even by the churches. As the media focus on the besieged rebel-held eastern enclave of Aleppo, Christians in the government-controlled areas are fighting a daily struggle to survive. Medicines are expensive, and most patients cannot afford them.

Pray: for God to care for the war widows and their children trapped in Aleppo. (Ps.5:3)

More: <https://barnabafund.org/appeals/God-has-sent-his-angels-the-despair-and-hope-of-Aleppos-elderly-Can-you-help>

■ Lebanon: presidential election

On 31 October a two-year presidential political stand-off in Lebanon ended when parliament elected Michel Aoun as president, ending a presidential vacuum. Though people's opinions about Aoun are mixed, the Lebanese people came together as one to celebrate their new president. But there has been bickering behind the scenes. Lebanese Forces chief Samir Geagea said on Wednesday that the Christian political parties will not hamper the formation of the new government, and that civil war will not erupt if they are not given the finance portfolio. The finance ministry portfolio is paramount in the government. There is a team in the Lebanese Forces that has been preparing for it more than any other portfolio. There has been backbiting over the finance portfolio and distribution of ministries. Pray for the formation of the new cabinet; may they work as one coherent team to take the country from failure to a successful efficient state.

Pray: that the sense of unity amongst the people, which has not been there for a very long time, will continue. Pray that God will guide President Aoun and his ministers in all issues related to the country. (Pr.28:2)

More: <http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/219956-geagea-we-won-t-hamper-government-line-up-if-we-don-t-get-finance-portfolio>

■ Kenya: justice for Willie, Joseph and Josephat

In July an International Justice Mission (IJM) investigator and human rights lawyer, Willie Kimani, and two friends, Joseph Muiruri and Josephat Mwenda, were abducted and murdered; this sparked a global outcry for #JusticeinKenya and an end to police abuse of power. Five alleged perpetrators are in custody, and the first phase of the trial should begin this week after many delays. Over the next few weeks IJM invites us to join them in keeping its Kenya team and families of the victims uplifted in prayer. IJM will post updates online to help us with informed intercession during of the trial. To access updates, click the 'More' button. Meanwhile please pray that the court will proceed despite the continued absence of defence counsel, that the judge will not allow another adjournment, and for the witnesses and families of victims to have patience and perseverance through this difficult period.

Pray: for this case to be a turning point for ending police impunity and extrajudicial killings in Kenya. (Ps.16:1)

More: <http://freedomcommons.ijm.org/news/live-blog-seeking-justice-in-kenya>

■ Morocco: injustice

The death of Mouhcine Fikri, a Moroccan fish vendor who was crushed alive in a garbage compactor while trying to prevent the destruction of a swordfish that had been taken from him, has sparked outrage and demonstrations after a video of the incident was widely circulated. An eyewitness said a policeman told the driver of the truck to crush Fikri in the compactor. Authorities called Fikri's death an involuntary homicide. Fikri's father urged protesters not to use his son's case to cause sedition. Elsewhere, Saeed Zao, a Christian, survived an assassination attempt on 4 November. He is well-known because of his promotion of the rights of Christians, and has featured in many media interviews about comparative religion and religious freedom. He reported the incident to the police, but they have refused to register a report, calling him a 'trouble-maker'. See also <http://meconcern.org/2016/11/07/morocco-christian-survives-assassination-attempt/>

Pray: for religious freedom in Morocco, and justice and honesty in the legal system. (Ps.13:1)

More: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/11/morocco-fish-vendor-death-protests.html#ixzz4PPRgxq3K>

■ Indonesia: Christian governor accused of blasphemy

Indonesian police have questioned Jakarta's Christian governor Basuki Purnama, better known as Ahok, over allegations that he insulted Islam, which led to a mass protest. This became violent and caused a number of police injuries and the death of an elderly man. Ahok now stands accused of insulting the Qu'ran while campaigning in governorship elections in September. At that time political attacks on him cited a Qu'ranic verse, which supposedly bars Muslims from choosing non-Muslim leaders. On Friday, protesters hurled missiles at police, who responded with tear gas and water cannon. Mr Purnama is the first non-Muslim Jakarta governor for 50 years and the first Chinese Indonesian to hold the post, making him a double minority in Muslim-majority Indonesia. He is widely popular in Jakarta for his fight against government corruption and his ability to raise the standard of living.

Pray: that the government will not allow the situation to get out of control. Ask God to protect Governor Ahok and his family. Pray for President Widodo, facing threats against his government. (Ex.8:22)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-37893260>

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE WORLD PRAYER CENTRE, BIRMINGHAM, UK

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Prayer Alert is produced in association with The World Prayer Centre: Cornerstone House, 5 Ethel Street, Birmingham, B2 4BG