

# 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](http://www.prayer-alert.net)

[editor@prayer-alert.net](mailto:editor@prayer-alert.net)

Issue 44-2017

Website

Contact Us

Donations

Friday 03 November 2017

## ■ Praise Reports

- ✦ [80-year-old meets Jesus](#)
- ✦ [I kill in the name of religion, you love in the name of Jesus](#)

## ■ British Isles & Ireland

- ✦ [Friday Focus: joyful invitation](#)
- ✦ [Sex scandals in parliament and Oxfam](#)
- ✦ [Luther-style protest over gay relationships](#)
- ✦ [Northern Ireland budget bill](#)
- ✦ [Message from Open Doors UK](#)
- ✦ [The Church and mental health](#)
- ✦ [IS fighters return from the battlefield](#)

## ■ Europe

- ✦ [Spain: depths of division](#)
- ✦ [Central and Eastern Europe: institutionalised infants](#)

## ■ Worldwide

- ✦ [Balfour Declaration centenary](#)
- ✦ [Iran: weapons-grade uranium warning](#)
- ✦ [Jordan: slavery](#)
- ✦ [Global: 42,000,000 abortions a year](#)
- ✦ [India: increased persecution in Jharkhand state](#)
- ✦ [Mali: Christian persecutions](#)
- ✦ [Syria: the refugee 'highway'](#)

## PRAISE REPORTS

### ■ 80-year-old meets Jesus

Jason and Nisae Williamson are planting a church among the Iski people group in Papua New Guinea. Anka, an elderly man, was sent to their village so that he could hear the good news, as the believers in his family were concerned about his age and declining health. Anka is at least 80 with a palpable fear of death. Local religious leaders said he had to earn his way to heaven, and he needed to worship and appease the spirits. The Williamsons prayed that Anka would receive Jesus before he died. After four months of morning Bible study, Anka was overflowing with joy: 'Now I know that Jesus paid for my sins and I'm a child of God. I do not fear death any more, I will die and be with God!' He had been born again and was filled with the Spirit.

**Praise:** God for mission workers who bring Christianity and culture changes to remote areas, pray for continued growth of the young Iski Church. (Daniel 2:20)

**More:** <http://blog.godreports.com/2017/10/oldest-man-in-village-had-overwhelming-fear-of-death-until-he-met-jesus/>

### ■ I kill in the name of religion, you love in the name of Jesus

Paul, a convert from Islam, now works distributing food to newly-arriving Syrian refugee families. Recently, he gave out the last food package he had for the entire month. The lady next in line started crying when she realised there was none left for her family. She told Paul that she and her children were desperate. Paul said they were out of food packages, but offered to pray for her. He also told her how he came to Jesus. As they finished praying, Paul's phone rang with the unexpected news that another 35 food portions were available. The mother, full of wonder and gratefulness, praised God for how Jesus had answered their prayer. A few weeks later, her husband (who had been fighting with IS) came to meet Paul. He said, 'I heard what you had done for my family. I thought about how I was in Syria killing people in the name of religion, but you love in the name of Jesus. I left the other fighters to come and meet the man who loved my family, and to learn about Jesus from you.'

**Praise:** God for His power and compassion, and ask Him to continue to 'call out a people for His name' - particularly those fleeing the battlefields. (2 Samuel 22:4)

**More:** <http://thesyriancircle.com/2014/12/i-kill-people-in-the-name-of-religion-you-love-people-in-the-name-of-jesus/>

## BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

### ■ Friday Focus: joyful invitation

When Jesus sends out the 72 he tells them the truth that as they go to invite people to hear about the kingdom of God, they will be either welcomed or rejected: if the latter, they are to wipe the dust from their feet. Do we miss the joy of inviting people to take a closer look at Jesus because we fear rejection? (Michael Harvey, National Weekend of Invitation)

**Pray:** Dear Heavenly Father, we pray that You will give us the courage to face those who might reject an invitation to get to know You. May we also, like the 72, experience the joy of serving You in mission. We pray that You might bring

to mind right now someone You would like us to invite, in Jesus's name. Amen. (Luke 10:11,17)

**More:** [http://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/283989/Friday\\_Focus.aspx](http://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/283989/Friday_Focus.aspx)

#### ■ Sex scandals in parliament and Oxfam

Following the sex scandal surrounding Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein, several senior government ministers have now been accused of inappropriate sexual behaviour in a dossier circulating Westminster. Then on 2 November the media reported that defence secretary Sir Michael Fallon had resigned over accusations of inappropriate behaviour. A spokesman for the Prime Minister said that any unwanted sexual behaviour is 'completely unacceptable in any walk of life'. Meanwhile, it was revealed that Oxfam had dismissed 22 employees over sexual abuse allegations in the past year. Concern is rising about Oxfam's management of overseas networks. Pray that all that is hidden in commerce, industry and the armed forces is revealed, and that all women are dealt with as professionals and as equals. See:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/31/oxfam-says-it-has-sacked-22-staff-in-a-year-over-sexual-abuse-allegations>

**Pray:** for the current exposures of scandal and disgrace to bring about a righteous change in attitude as to what is or is not acceptable inside and outside of the workplace. (Ps.12:7,8)

**More:** <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/11/01/michael-fallon-resigns-defence-secretary-admitting-past-conduct/>

#### ■ Luther-style protest over gay relationships

A campaign targeting cathedrals around the UK is spreading off the back of the 31 October 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation when an Augustinian monk criticised some practices of the church. The Ninety-five Theses (propositions) were pinned to a noticeboard and later posted on the door of a German cathedral. A list of 'declarations', reminiscent of the reformation protest, is being pinned to cathedral doors by priests objecting to what they see as the CofE's liberal approach to same-sex relationships. St Paul's Cathedral and Southwark Cathedral were the first to have the 'Southwark Declaration' promoting conservative Anglican theology attached to their doors. Next, Hereford and Rochester Cathedrals were targeted in what is becoming a nationwide campaign. The campaigners are focusing on cathedrals which they perceive to have a liberal slant. The document, signed by over sixty priests, hopes to pressure bishops into maintaining a conservative approach to same-sex relationships.

**Pray:** for the unity of a Bible-believing Anglican church, upholding traditional theology. (Psalm 50:5)

**More:** <https://www.christiantoday.com/article/more.uk.cathedrals.targeted.for.luther.style.protest.warning.church.in.crisis.over.gay.relationships/117575.htm>

#### ■ Northern Ireland budget bill

Plans are being put in place to impose a budget for regional government departments in Northern Ireland, the secretary of state has revealed. But James Brokenshire stressed this did not mean a return to direct rule from London over the province. The Northern Ireland secretary vowed on 1 November that he would shelve his budget preparations if the two main parties in the Stormont assembly, (Sinn Féin and the Democratic Unionists) quickly secured a deal to restore power-sharing to Belfast. However, Sinn Féin said that imposing a budget from Westminster was tantamount to direct rule and would derail the negotiations between the two parties. In return, Brokenshire emphasised that if he failed to act in the next few weeks, the regional government ministries in Belfast would simply run out of money. So he is planning to enable a budget bill to be introduced at Westminster when appropriate, to protect the delivery of Northern Ireland's public services.

**Pray:** for God-inspired continuation of political negotiations between the Government and all parties to enable the budget to be passed by the end of November. (Proverbs 8:16)

**More:** <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/nov/01/minister-james-brokenshire-prepares-plans-to-impose-budget-on-northern-ireland>

#### ■ Message from Open Doors UK

Open Doors write, 'We have some breaking news to share with you! We've just heard that the Prime Minister Theresa May has agreed to meet us and some of our partners from Iraq on 13 December, and receive the Hope for the Middle East petition! Her influence could make a real difference to the lives of our persecuted brothers and sisters in Iraq and Syria.' Open Doors are inviting people to join those who have already signed the Hope for the Middle East petition before it is presented to the United Nations on 11 December and to the Prime Minister two days later. The petition presents the voice of Christians in Iraq and Syria asking for the right to equal citizenship, dignified living conditions, and a prominent role in reconciling and rebuilding society. The impact of this campaign is already being felt, as people from Iraq have been moving back to their towns and villages.

**Pray:** for more people to sign the petition, and for the UN and the UK to be inspired by God in their attitudes and actions towards Iraq. (Exodus 22:27b)

**More:** <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/act/hope-for-the-middle-east/>

#### ■ The Church and mental health

Poor mental health costs £99bn and causes 300,000 people to leave work each year. NHS antidepressant drug prescriptions more than doubled in ten years, and mental health provision is in crisis. Christians struggle to know how to engage with this growing problem. Our silence has compounded the sense of isolation by those with poor mental health; alternatively, our easy answers or immediate spiritualising of the issues leaves people feeling misunderstood or stigmatised. Experts agree that relationships and community are important for our mental health. Therefore churches can play a significant role as they seek to be communities of authentic relationships where people don't have to hide their struggles but appropriate boundaries are also respected. Nonetheless we struggle to find a framework out of which to form our response.

**Pray:** for God to inspire new approaches by believers that will bring the fellowship of the Church and the power of the Holy Spirit to those facing mental health challenges. (Psalm 103:4)

**More:** <http://www.eauk.org/culture/friday-night-theology/mental-health-does-the-church-have-anything-to-say.cfm>

#### ■ IS fighters return from the battlefield

As IS control erodes in Iraq and Syria, about half the foreign fighters from the UK, Sweden, and Denmark have returned. IS kept detailed records of fighters, and captured computers and cell phones have helped those fighting IS to create a

membership profile. Nearly 20,000 names have been shared with Interpol. It is highly likely that, as the territorial caliphate shrinks, its leadership will look to supporters overseas, including returnees, to keep the brand alive. Rory Stewart, a government minister, caused a stir when he said, 'They are a serious danger to us, and unfortunately the only way of dealing with them will be, in almost every case, to kill them.' Meanwhile, Max Hill QC, who advises the government on such matters, says that former IS fighters should be reintegrated into society. See: <http://uk.businessinsider.com/how-many-foreign-isis-fighters-have-returned-home-from-the-battlefield-2017-10?r=US&IR=T>

**Pray:** for God to help Interpol and governments to identify dangerous and brainwashed individuals and for appropriate, successful monitoring and rehabilitation of returnees. (Proverbs 29:11)

**More:** <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2017/10/30/isis-fighters-returning-to-britain-should-face-a-war-crimes-tribunal/>

## EUROPE

### Spain: depths of division

Half the electorate in the wealthy north-east region of Catalonia oppose secession from Spain, but recent events have brought the long-running debate to a head. A poll showed unionist parties winning 43.4% support and pro-independence 42.5%. Madrid called the situation 'the country's worst political crisis in four decades'. The chaos has caused an exodus of businesses, about 1/5th of Spain's economy. Tourism has dropped and markets go up and down, reflecting fast-moving developments. After the Catalan leader Carles Puigdemont held an independence referendum despite Madrid's opposition, the constitutional court declared the vote illegal. Spain's central government has now taken direct control of Catalonia. Many believe that it might look over, but the Spanish region's independence bid has long-lasting repercussions. See <http://www.euronews.com/2017/11/01/catalonia-crisis-goes-to-court>.

**Pray:** for Mr Puigdemont and his party's democratic resistance to direct rule to remain peaceful and for trust and understanding to replace all pride or revenge. (Isaiah 5:21)

**More:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-41825030>

### Central and Eastern Europe: institutionalised Infants

A started life in a Bucharest institution. Staff fed him. He was seldom held. At ten months he weighed under a stone, couldn't sit, could barely hold up his head. He's now 16, tall, well-spoken, likes comics, drawing and animals. He hopes to attend the Academy of Economic Studies. What caused the turnaround? At 10 months he was fostered by a loving family. Recently images of severely neglected children in institutions in Belarus, Hungary and Ukraine shocked the world. In Ukraine alone, tens of thousands of children are in institutions. Many are invisible, often not counted or monitored; they're vulnerable to neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation. The time has come to give millions of children enduring institutional 'care' a future and a hope. Central and Eastern Europe has over five times the global average of children in institutions. In some countries disabled children account for 70% of the total.

**Pray:** for God to raise up more campaigners to address and bring about change to misconceptions, stigma and discrimination of the vulnerable, especially disabled babies. (Psalm 41:2)

**More:** <http://www.euronews.com/2017/11/01/view-a-loving-home-not-institutional-care-for-every-child>

## WORLDWIDE

### Balfour Declaration centenary

Prime Minister Theresa May hosted her Israeli counterpart, Benjamin Netanyahu, to mark the centenary of the Balfour Declaration. It was a British pledge that paved the way for Israel's creation by supporting a Jewish national home in Palestine. Israel and Jewish communities view the pledge as momentous, while Palestinians regard it as an historical injustice. The UK has rejected calls to apologise for their actions and support of Israel as a nation and has said it is proud of its role. The Israeli prime minister had dinner with Mrs May and the shadow foreign secretary Emily Thornberry. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, a long-time critic of Israeli policy towards the Palestinians, declined an invitation to attend. The Balfour Declaration was meant to bring peace between two peoples, but 100 years later there is still no peace.

**Pray:** for peace for Jerusalem and the region's redemption. (Joel 3:17)

**More:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-41819451>

### Iran: weapons-grade uranium warning

Ali Akbar Salehi, Iran's nuclear programme chief, said on 29 October that Iran can begin producing weapons-grade nuclear material quickly if the nuclear deal with foreign powers fails, and insisted that international inspectors would not be given access to Iranian military sites. In early October President Trump told the world, 'Iran is not in compliance with the deal, and it needs to be renegotiated even though our allies, and even our enemies, do not agree.' Mr Trump said that the agreement had not curbed Iran's missile programme and destabilising activities in the Middle East. Mr Salehi said that, although Tehran prefers to keep the agreement intact, they could quickly ramp up uranium enrichment to produce 20% enriched uranium in four days. He made these comments after meeting the director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Yukiya Amano. Mr Amano also met President Rouhani and foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. See <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesconca/2017/10/17/the-iran-nuclear-deal-without-the-united-states/#213a8f823c94>

**Pray:** for God to prevent Iran's hardliners from snatching more power from moderate President Rouhani. (Habakkuk 2:4a)

**More:** <https://www.timesofisrael.com/irans-nuclear-chief-says-weapons-grade-uranium-only-4-days-away/>

### Jordan: slavery

Jordan is a destination for women and men from south and southeast Asia for the purpose of forced labour. There have also been reports of women from Morocco and Tunisia being subjected to forced prostitution after coming to work in restaurants and night clubs. Women from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines migrate willingly to work as domestic servants, but some are subjected to conditions of forced labour, including restrictions on movement, withholding of

wages, threats, and physical or sexual abuse. \$90 is the average cost of a human slave. Pray for Malays and others from different nationalities who get trapped into forced labour. Pray for God to open the eyes of the world to this enormous issue that is happening in Jordan and the surrounding countries.

**Pray:** for justice to come to Jordan. (Isaiah 61:1)

**More:** [https://www.cryoutnow.org/uploads/7/3/5/6/73561751/30-day\\_prayer\\_guide\\_for\\_jordan.pdf](https://www.cryoutnow.org/uploads/7/3/5/6/73561751/30-day_prayer_guide_for_jordan.pdf)

#### ■ **Global: 42,000,000 abortions a year**

42 million people is more than the entire population of Iraq. Abortion is not just confined to one region or people group. It is a global tragedy, with roughly 83% of all abortions taking place in developing countries and 17% in the developed world. It is being called the silent Holocaust. This year's '40 Days for Life' campaign finishes on Sunday 5 November.

**Pray:** for continued healing and restoration for all the mothers who have said 'yes' to life during this 40 Days for Life campaign. (Proverbs 31:8)

**More:** <https://40daysforlife.com/history/>

#### ■ **India: increased persecution in Jharkhand state**

Six house church leaders were released on 16-17 October, after being detained for a month on false charges that they had forced Hindus to convert to Christianity. The five men and one woman rejoiced that during their time in jail they were able to share the gospel with fellow prisoners. The arrests occurred soon after state officials in Jharkhand passed the strictest anti-conversion law in India. Local Christians fear increased persecution as a result of the new law. Pray that the six church leaders will continue their work and use their testimony to share the gospel with boldness.

**Pray:** for God to protect the Christians in Jharkhand state. May He mature those who have heard of Christ in prison. Pray also that the Good News continues to spread. (Psalm 79:9,10a)

**More:** <http://www.icommittoprayer.com/request/1625/christian-leaders/>

#### ■ **Mali: Christian persecutions**

A church leader in Mali reports, 'Our churches and chapels are now being targeted by extremists, who've told Christians not to gather to pray'. In September and October, extremists ransacked and burned several churches in Mopti region. One congregation who were driven out of the building were told they would be killed if they were seen praying. In 2012, Tuareg separatists and Islamist groups linked to Al Qaeda seized control of northern Mali and declared the region an Islamic state. The new regime imposed sharia law in Timbuktu, including punishments such as amputations for theft. France deployed soldiers to assist the government against advancing Islamists, and a UN force of 13,000 military personnel is now stationed there. Violence continues despite a peace deal with rebel groups. In the first half of 2017 over 42,000 civilians joined those already internally displaced in Mali.

**Pray:** for the government and the UN to take decisive steps to protect the Christians and other non-Muslim people. (Psalm 28:7a)

**More:** <http://mailchi.mp/barnabasfund/prayer-focus-update-may-804353?e=026ee53901>

#### ■ **Syria: the refugee 'highway'**

For three weeks in November, a team will be traveling along the refugee trail through Europe. They will be posting first-hand stories and sharing from their experiences as they travel from Greece to Northern Europe. They hope that their account of travelling alongside the refugees will inform us all how to pray more specifically and continue to advocate for the Syrians and other peoples from the Levant region. People can follow along, through the stories they will post online and pray with up-to-date insights by clicking on the 'More' link. Syria remains a nation in devastation as war and violence continues.

**Pray:** Pray for an end to the war, and for the rebuilding of this nation. Pray that those within the nation and those living as refugees will find the Prince of Peace and the truth of salvation. May the harvest from the Syrian people be immeasurable. (Matthew 9:37, 38)

**More:** <http://thesyriancircle.com/2016/02/sharing-from-the-refugee-highway/>

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE WORLD PRAYER CENTRE, BIRMINGHAM, UK

Prayer Alert is distributed free of charge – Donations towards running costs are gratefully received.  
To donate, please visit [www.prayer-alert.net](http://www.prayer-alert.net)

Please feel free to distribute Prayer Alert to anyone you feel will benefit from its ministry. All we ask is that you do not edit or change it in any way or charge for its use without contacting us for written permission.

The views expressed in Prayer Alert and on our website are those of the authors, organisations and websites named, and are not necessarily those of the Prayer Alert Editorial Team, the Prayer Alert Steering Group or the World Prayer Centre or any of its employees or trustees. While we try to ensure that the information we provide is correct, mistakes do occur and we cannot guarantee the accuracy of our material. If you do notice any mistakes then please let us know.

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