









Greetings!

We are pleased to bring you IPC Connections for August 2020.

We are sure that you will enjoy this month's editorial article which is on the subject of The 'Blessing'. It was written by Dr Jason Hubbard, our Executive Coordinator. Many of us have found comfort and encouragement as we have watched the various 'The Blessing' collaboration videos from across the nations – based on the Priestly Blessing in Numbers 6:22-27. In this uplifting and encouraging article, Jason reminds us of the six promises of blessing and what they mean to us, today. Download the full article from our website.

As well as bringing you an update on the developing Covid-19 pandemic, with prayer points and links to various resources, we are also highlighting the shocking situation in Nigeria where the attacks on the Christian communities have escalated these last several months. Let's be in prayer for the whole situation, and do all we can to not let it slip below the international community's radar.

A friend and partner of IPC, Gordon Hickson, from the 'Mahabba' network has written a wonderful and encouraging poem entitled 'THE "HEAVENLY VIRUS": GOD'S RESPONSE TO COVID 19! which we would like to share with you. It ends with this verse...

SO COME ON ALL YOU LEADERS, LET'S ARISE AND LET US SHINE
LET'S MAKE GOD'S LOVE GO VIRAL! COME ON! NOW IT'S OUR TIME!
LET'S RISE UP WITH HIS WEAPONS OF UNITY AND PRAYER
LET'S DEMONSTRATE WITH GRACE TO ALL - THAT WE CARE AND YES, WE DARE!

The full poem is available **HERE**.

International Prayer Connections is produced and distributed freely each month to inform God's praying people around the world. We are grateful to those who have given generously to enable this to happen and continue to need such support for this and our other transformational prayer initiatives. If you would like to make a gift towards our costs by giving through our funding arm, the Transformation Prayer Foundation, we would appreciate it. Please click here.

Thank you for continuing to partner with us in mobilising and informing united prayer across nations, denominations, movements, and generations for the fulfilment of the Great Commission.

May we express grateful thanks to Andy Page and the IPC Editorial Team who put this email together each month.

Wishing you His continued blessings,

Jason Hubbard - Executive Coordinator John D Robb - Chairman International Prayer Connect

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01 Editorial: 'The Blessing' - Dr Jason Hubbard



The Blessing

"The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. "So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them" (Numbers 6:22-27).

These words have been heard by millions of people in the last months as they listened to the popular song "The Blessing." The song, originally performed by Elevation Worship (the worship ministry of a church in the United States), viewed now over 22 million times on youtube has rapidly become an international hymn adopted by Christians around the world. From the <u>Arab world</u>, to <u>Europe</u>, to <u>Brazil</u>, to <u>Australia</u>, to <u>Indonesia</u>, to <u>Singapore</u>, to <u>South Africa</u>, to <u>India</u>, to <u>China</u>, this song has literally swept through the nations! It is exciting to see the global church singing her prayers and praying her songs! I think my favorite one is the <u>kids</u> from different nations singing the blessing!

The specific words of Aaron's High Priestly Blessing came from the Lord Himself and were to be spoken over His people Israel, by which He would place His name upon them. The effect of His blessing would display His character, His nature, His very being in and through His people. He would bless them to 'be' a blessing to the nations because that is his nature! Our God is a 'Blessing' orientated God! He set his affection upon them, loved them as his own, even calling Israel his 'own son,' redeeming them out of the land of slavery. God was saying to the Hebrews, "I will bless you and keep you, smile on you, be gracious to you, and give you peace!' His promise was to love, to protect, to bless and to be with them!

God is intensely concerned to bless his people. Blessing is God's idea, it is not something we have to beg for, it is something that he desires to give.

In this prayer we see 6 promises of God's blessing. The verbs are in the singular although he is speaking to the whole community of Israel. His blessing is his 'name.' As he said to Moses,

"So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them."

God reveals his name Yahweh 3 times in the prayer, revealing his Trinitarian nature, the three-in-one God.

His name Yahweh is his covenant name, literally 'I am who I am.' He is the self-sufficient, self-sustaining, all knowing, unstoppable God who always keeps his promises! He promises, 'I will be your God, you will be my people.' In the relational sense, he means, 'I am the one who is there with you and for you. All that I am I place at your disposal.' In his wisdom God knows what's best for us, in his love he wants what's best for us, and in his power he delivers what is best for us!

Six promises of Blessing

1. The Lord **BLESS** you.

Blessing is the act of declaring God's favor and goodness upon others. It is asking the Lord to wrap up His people in His protective and loving care. After God created Adam and Eve, he 'blessed' them to be fruitful and to multiply! He choose Abram and said to him,

"And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3).

Blessed to be a blessing to the nations. The word 'blessing' and 'to bless' is used 330x throughout the Old Testament. Jesus opens up his teaching on the sermon on the mount with 8 blessings. When Jesus was about to depart from His disciples 10 days before Pentecost, the Scriptures records that He lifted His hands and blessed them (Luke 24:50). This is significant because the High Priestly Blessing is also called "The Lifting of the Hands." Jesus was blessing His disciples with the same blessing that His Father had commanded Aaron, through Moses, to speak over the house of Israel and thus place His name on them.

Paul speaks to the church at Ephesus, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has <u>blessed us</u> in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places," (Eph. 1:3). Peter shares, "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence" (2 Peter 1:3). The greatest blessing of all is the blessing of salvation through Jesus Christ. Scripture shows that blessing is anything God gives that makes us fully satisfied in him. Anything that draws us closer to Jesus. Anything that helps us relinquish the temporal and hold on more tightly to the eternal.

2. KEEP you.

As Israel journeyed through the wilderness, God was faithful to keep them under the shadow of his wings, providing their needs, guiding them with his presence and delivering them from harm. The Lord promises to keep us, to protect us against all harm this world could offer. In the midst of dangerous places and things, he is our refuge, a bulwark and mountain fortress. He is never failing. Even in the midst of our trials and suffering, he will keep us! This gives us courage to follow Jesus wherever he would lead us! As Scripture says,

"No in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us!' (Rom. 8:37).

Not just a conqueror, but more than a conqueror. The Greek phrase means to be super abundant in conquering through Christ, to triumph, or prevail completely! To be more than a conqueror means that before you ever get a problem, you already know that whatever problem comes your way, you can overcome it through Christ. You live with confidence that God loves you no matter what and He will never leave you nor forsake you. He protects us in Him!

3. The Lord will make his face to SMILE upon you.

A smile sends a message. It's like new parents when they look into the crib and see their little one, a smile always ensues! There is something in that smile on the face of a parent that communicates connection, pleasure and delight. God says, "my face shines upon you with a smile, a look of love. I see you. I am interested in you, I take great delight in you. I notice you, you are not forgotten!" You are his treasured possession, the very delight of his heart.

He has his eyes on his prize! He sings over you with rejoicing. As the psalmist says,

"You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (Psalm 16:11).

It's his perfect love that cast out all fear! May Yahweh smile on you, and may he grant you well-being!

4. I will be GRACIOUS to you.

God deals with the reality of sin. Everyone of the 2 million Hebrews in the desert were sinners condemned to death and hell without God. Because of sin, God had to distance himself from his people. To deal with this problem he provided for them the sacrificial system to atone for their sins. In essence God says, 'when the blood is shed, then you can come into my presence, then and only then can your sin be dealt with.' This pointed to the ultimate fulfilment in the New Covenant and the blood of Jesus Christ, our Passover Lamb!

Grace is God's love in action. Grace is when God freely gives us what we need even though we don't deserve it and we can never repay him. Grace is when God solves our greatest problem even before we knew it was a problem. Grace is **G**od's **R**iches **A**t **C**hrist's **E**xpense. It is the face of God when he looks at our faults, failures and fears.. Jesus knows us the best, and loves us the MOST.

"The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God <u>merciful and gracious</u>, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin..." (Exo. 34:4-6).

5. I will turn my face TOWARDS you.

His first promise was to <u>look upon</u> us with a smile, and now he promises to turn his face <u>towards</u> us. He promises not turn his back on us even in the midst of our sin and weakness and come towards us with his Presence! This promise deals with his desire to come near us, to step in and walk with us day by day, moment by moment. Jesus promises to be our Emmanuel, God-With-Us forever! He promised that as we go to make disciples of all nations, that he would be with us even to the end of the age! At Pentecost, God came by his Spirit, not just to come 'to us' but literally to dwell 'in us.' He promises to never leave us or forsake us!

6. I will give you PEACE.

This word peace is not so much the absence of war, or of conflict, but speaks of well-being. Of all the innumerable blessings of the Christian life, peace is one of the most precious. Our God is the God of peace, Jesus is called the 'prince of peace,' we preach a gospel of peace, and the Spirit of God releases peace to us.

Peace here speaks of well-being in all aspects of our life. It is all inclusive, complete, and comprehensive. Peace means life as good as it gets! He gives us abundant life, life to the full, more than enough, and in great supply. It is his life by his Spirit in us and through us that brings peace that transcends all understanding, above the ceiling and beyond imagination.

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful." (Col. 3:15).

He promises to Bless us, to Keep Us, to Smile upon us, to be Gracious to us, to Turn towards us, and to give us Peace. Wow!

"May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations" (Psalm 67:1-2).

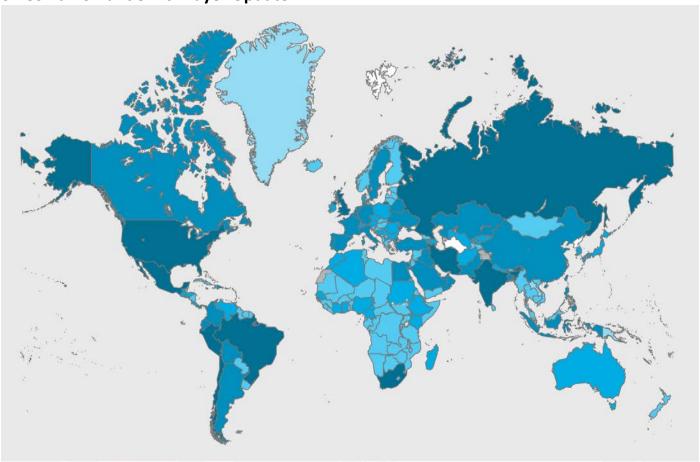
As an IPC family let's continue to receive his blessing in our lives and pray and sing God's blessing over others! We are blessed to be a blessing! He wants to bless us so much that every person that gets in proximity to us will get blessed. Amen!

Much love,

Dr. Jason Hubbard - Executive Coordinator, IPC

Prayers for the World

02 Covid-19 Pandemic Prayer Update



A prayer report looking at Covid-19 Hot Spots, Flattening the Curve, and Hopes for a Vaccine with links to resources

As of 30th July, the total global figure for people infected by Covid-19 stands at 16.8 million according to the World Health Organisation. In addition, the current death continues to rise above 660,000.

Covid-19 hot spots

The US remains the worst affected country globally in terms of total numbers of cases and deaths with nearly 4.6 million cases and over 150,000 deaths. A record 78,000 cases were reported in just one day on 24th July with 21 states labelled as <u>'red zones'</u> categorised as by their case rate of more than 100 per 100,000 people in the past week.

Brazil has <u>opened its air borders</u> to tourists despite no sign of new cases decreasing and registering <u>new record case</u> and <u>death numbers</u> in recent days. One particular high-profile case in the country was that of the <u>Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro</u>, a long-term sceptic of the severity of the virus. He has since recovered from illness-

South America as a whole now has more confirmed cases than the US and Canada put together. With poor levels of testing taking place, these case numbers are likely far from the truth. A <u>study in Lima, Peru</u> estimated that a quarter of people in the city may be infected, leading to the suggestion that a similar trend may be taking place in other South American cities. Brazil and Peru, along with Colombia, Argentina, and Mexico, are among the top ten countries in the world for new cases each day.

India has become the third most infected country with 1.6 million confirmed cases. However, the true number is <u>likely much higher</u> since testing is not easily available for all; especially for those living in slums where the likelihood of transmission is increased due to close-quarters living conditions and shared sanitation facilities.

Large areas of Europe have managed to dramatically reduce the prevalence of coronavirus, although they have not managed to completely eradicate it. Russia still has the most new cases and deaths daily by far, followed by Spain and France where there have been recent regional outbreaks. Romania and Ukraine have seen continued increases in case numbers after failing to significantly minimise the virus after its first peak.

It is not well known how severe the situation is in Africa since there is a <u>major lack in testing</u>. The International Rescue Committee have said that they fear the continent is "fighting the epidemic in the dark" with limited data to work from hampering their response to the pandemic. Other countries around the world struggling to contain the virus include Indonesia, South Africa, and Israel, where the numbers of new cases and deaths are rising.

Has the curve flattened?

In some countries around the world where good social distancing has been practised, masks worn where necessary, efficient testing and quarantining has taken place, and test-and-trace systems have been implemented, the rate of infection has been shown to fall and in some places be reduced to 0. This has been fully enacted by small countries and island nations and has seen positive results from larger countries such as New Zealand, <u>Vietnam</u>, <u>Taiwan</u>, and <u>Iceland</u> where the virus was once prominent.

In other countries, there has been impatience during lockdown, not waiting long enough for case rates to fall before reopening. This prevents a reduced rate of transmission, which doesn't work towards the eradication of the virus. Through further restlessness and more easing of lockdown restrictions, the rate of transmission has increased again producing a so-called <u>'second spike'</u> as shown by the recent dramatic increase in cases in the US or Israel.

The efforts that have been put in place by countries all over the world have reduced the impacts of the virus, though. Without the measures such as social distancing designed to reduce transmission, the new numbers of cases would likely not have dropped, and the death toll would have been much higher by now.

Vaccine update

Over <u>165 vaccines</u> are currently being developed by teams all over the world in the race to find a solution to the pandemic. 27 of these are currently in human trials to prove that they work as intended and are safe for wide-spread use.

A vaccine produced by the University of Oxford has been shown to <u>trigger an immune response</u> creating neutralising antibodies and T-cells in the recipient after a single dose in 90% of participants, although not without possible side-effects such as fever and headaches. Larger trials will take place across several countries to ensure the vaccine is safe and then <u>"challenge trials"</u> will be performed where willing participants are deliberately infected with coronavirus to observe the vaccine's response.

Let us continue to declare that the novel coronavirus is defeated by the blood of Jesus.

We pray for divine intervention and for God's name to be glorified even as each nation and government tries its best to flatten the curve and finally arrest this epidemic.

We release wisdom, skill, and integrity upon our leaders.

We pray for protection, wisdom and strength, for those working to bring treatment and comfort to the sick and their families.

We pray special grace and help for the vulnerable population and nations. We pray for refugees and displaced peoples. We pray against domestic violence and other crimes that have become rampant during lockdowns. We pray for a safe, effective, and affordable vaccine to be released soonest but without including aborted baby cells in its creation, neglecting proper testing protocols, and without including any digital ID tracing ("health passport") which could bring about totalitarian control.

We continue to release faith, hope, and love over the peoples of the world. May the Church seize this opportune time to manifest Jesus our Lord and Savior to those who are seeking answers and peace.

Pray: Lord God, the One who has Almighty power, we agree according to your promise in Matthew 18:18-20 that this virus will be stopped in its tracks. That the medical researchers will get a download from Heaven on how to quickly develop a vaccine to counteract COVID-19 and a cure for those who have become infected.

We also agree in prayer, asking that the Body of Christ worldwide will rise up in love and boldness, trusting in your blood to cover and protect us and throwing off fear, so that we can be available to serve, bless, and bear witness to those around us who are terrified and depressed at being infected.

Let us seize this unprecedented opportunity to make you known to those without hope in Christ! Thank you for your promise that surely, you will be with us "always, even to the very end of the age" so that we can carry on with the mission you have given us for our world (Matthew 28:20).

Join in Online Prayers:

<u>World Prayer Centre, Birmingham, UK – Virtual House</u> of Prayer

iHop Kansas Prayer Room

247 Prayer Coronavirus Prayer Room

Additional Prayer Resources for Coronavirus

God and the Pandemic – Tom Wright

A coronavirus prayer from Pete Greig

19 Things to Do in response to Coronavirus

Prophecy Today UK's Responses to Coronavirus

PrayerCast Video and Prayer Briefing

CSM Nigeria Article

Lausanne Resources

Operation World EBook on the impact on Mission

WW11 Veteran Gets 180k Praying

On a lighter note... 50 countries affected by Covid 19 sing Amazing Grace in this video

Reporting from John Hopkins University:

https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/data/mortality

Further data on Europe and the world:

https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/geographical-distribution-2019-ncov-cases

03 Nigeria: 'Incessant killing more dangerous than Coronavirus'

Report on Nigeria to UK Parliament

"The incessant killing is more dangerous than Coronavirus" ...The words of a community leader in central Nigeria – after coronavirus had reached his country – after an April attack in which nine people died, including a pregnant woman and her three-year old.

His reaction is one of several testimonies – frequently harrowing to read, let alone to have experienced – that feature in an Inquiry into the scale of death and destruction caused by conflict occurring along the Christian-Muslim fault-line running across the 'Middle Belt' of Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation.

The Inquiry is published today, 15 June, by the All-Party

Parliamentary Group (APPG) for International Freedom of Religion or Belief of the UK Parliament; it has been taking evidence since autumn 2018.

Niger

Zamfara

Kaduna

Niger

Kaduna

Niger

Kaduna

Abuja

Nasarawa

Taraba

Sharia governed

Middle Belt

Boko Haram

(However, since the Coronavirus pandemic, violence appears to have grown even as international media have been otherwise occupied).

"APPG members have been alarmed by the dramatic and escalating violence in Nigeria characterised as the farmer-herder conflict. This violence has manifested along ideological lines, as the herders are predominantly ethnic Fulani Muslims and the farmers are predominantly Christians. There has been significant debate about what factors are driving and exacerbating this crisis. Therefore, the APPG launched a parliamentary inquiry to help develop a nuanced understanding of the drivers of violence".

The resulting report 'Nigeria: Unfolding Genocide?' points out that the violence has claimed the lives of thousands of people and displaced hundreds of thousands more. It has caused untold human and economic devastation and heightened existing ethno-religious tensions. "The [age old farmer-herder] conflict has evolved from spontaneous reactions to provocations and now to deadlier planned attacks" it quotes the International Crisis Group as saying.

Despite the scale of the violence, the conflict is much less well known internationally than the 10- year long Boko Haram insurgency which has claimed over 30,000 lives (112 Chibok girls are still 'missing' after 6 years) and now its offshoot Islamic State West African Province's (ISWAP) atrocities. These also feature in the APPG report and appear to have escalated in recent weeks and months. (In the latest Boko Haram-linked incidents this past week, over a hundred have died and hundreds more been injured; a UN humanitarian hub and a police station were reported burned down).

However, this APPG report echoes the Global Terrorist Index (GTI) 2019 by the Institute for Economics and Peace, which indicates that the primary driver of the increase in violence in sub-Saharan Africa is a rise in activity in Nigeria attributed, not to Boko Haram, ISWAP or Ansar ul Islam, but to Fulani militant extremists. In 2018, it appears Fulani extremists were responsible for the majority of terror-related deaths in Nigeria.

Its geographical footprint is also larger, with conflict manifesting in more States.[1] According to global NGO, Search for Common Ground (SfCG), "between 1 January 2019 and 1 January 2020, inter-communal violence represented the most severe threat to civilian lives in Nigeria."[2]

In his report for the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office a year ago, the Bishop of Truro concluded "the religious dimension is a significantly exacerbating factor" in clashes between farmers and herders and "targeted violence against Christian communities in the context of worship suggests that religion plays a key part."[3]

The Nigerian Government's attempts to resolve the ethno-religious conflict have been ineffective; there seems to be no end in sight. The long-term consequences of failure to reduce the violence are severe, says the Inquiry: "There is the enormous cost in terms of human lives but there is also the potential for economic collapse, famine, further mass displacement of civilians and even more conflict, as the two major religious groups in the country become increasingly polarised".

More info: http://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2020/06/incessant-killing-is-more-dangerous-than-coronavirus-report-on-nigeria-to-uk-parliament/

Pray: that the perpetrators of these atrocities will be brought to justice.

Pray: for the victims and families of these terrorist attacks.

Pray: for a breakthrough in the efforts of the Nigerian government to broker lasting peace in the region.

Pray: that the world community will come together to bring about pressure on the Nigerian politicians to deal with the situation at all levels.

Pray: against the powers of darkness that they will be overcome IJN.

04 Nigeria: PLEA FOR INTERCESSION – Pastor Austen Ukachi

Nigeria is presently passing through one of her most difficult times in history. The church is facing an existential threat from Islamists with a clear agenda to overrun the entire nation.

Unfortunately, there is a conspiracy of silence by the international media concerning the atrocities taking place in Nigeria (similar to what happened in 1994 before the genocide in Rwanda). In an opinion piece on



The Wall Street Journal of 20th December, 2019, Bernard-Henri Lévy wrote: "A slow-motion war is under way in Africa's most populous country. It's a massacre of Christians, massive in scale and horrific in brutality. And the world has hardly noticed."

In recent years, Nigeria has been consistently ranked among the top five nations on the Global Terrorism Index. Of the four deadliest terrorist groups in the world, three operate in Nigeria: Islamic State of West Africa Province, ISWAP, an offshoot of ISIS; Boko Haram; and Fulani Herdsmen (militants). In Nigeria, the three groups are united in their goal to exterminate Christians especially in Northern Nigeria and ultimately make Nigeria an Islamic nation. They seem to have the will and wherewithal to accomplish their goal unless the Lord stops them.

In the past, they were restrained by government's honest prosecution of the war against terrorism. But in the last five years, a new government, led by people who have been accused of being sympathetic to the Islamic agenda, has been unsuccessful in stemming the rampage of the terrorist groups. Curiously, almost the entire military and security agencies of Nigeria are under the control of devout Muslims (mostly Fulanis), some of whom have been accused of aiding and abetting the terrorists. A respected former president of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, has openly accused the government of having a "fulanisation and islamisation agenda."

The well-known historian and theologian, Professor Philip Jenkins, in his book entitled, The Next Christendom, aptly stated that: "At least, 45% of Nigerians are currently Christians, some 72 million people. But how will the number change in future decades? No church or religion has a guaranteed market share in any country. It is quite possible to imagine a scenario in which the proportion of the Nigerian Christians could fall as low as 10% in the event of persecution or a successful jihad by the nation's Muslims. The figure could rise higher if a sweeping Christian revival were to occur." The activities of the terrorists and the policies of the government are tending towards the former. The only acceptable option for the church in Nigeria is revival, that is why we must pray.

See Obianuju Ekeocha's emotive <u>video</u> pleading for prayer and action on this serious situation in Northern Nigeria. It contains graphic images of the Kukum Daji massacre aftermath that took place in July 2020:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YC-u-0kvV8&feature=youtu.be



The following prayer points are only a guide. May the Lord bring us to the depth of prayers that would stem this rising tide of violence in Nigeria.

- **1. TERRORIST GROUPS.** ISWAP, Boko Haram, and Fulani Herdsmen are ranked 2nd, 3rd and 4th on the Global Terrorism Index. The Nigerian government does not still consider militant Fulani Herdsmen a terrorist group. This has enabled them to continue with their mayhem against Christian communities while the security officers look the other way. The activities of the herdsmen now extend to virtually every part of the country. There are speculations that it is a modern form of jihad. Pray that God would stir up a national and international outcry and action against these groups.
- **2. PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS IN THE NORTH.** Pray that God would strengthen the Christians in the north. Many pastors and their members have been murdered by Islamic fundamentalists. Sometimes, these executions are carried out in the community square before children and other onlookers to inflict further pain on those who survive. Many of these Believers have been traumatised and scared for life. Pray for God to heal their emotions and strengthen their faith.
- **3. ECONOMIC JIHAD.** There is an 'economic jihad' that is being waged against non-Muslims, especially Christians. Christians are losing their jobs and are being replaced by Muslims; Christian farm lands are either expropriated by state governments in the North or forcefully taken over by Fulani herders. Pray for God to comfort and provide for His people in their sufferings.

Download the full Nigeria Prayer Guide with 16 different prayer pointers from the IPC Website

Pastor Austen Ukachi – IPC West Africa Director

05 Hong Kong 'seeking arrest' of fleeing activists

Police in Hong Kong are seeking the arrest of six prodemocracy activists living in exile in Western countries, including the UK, media reports say. The group reportedly includes former UK consulate worker Simon Cheng, well-known activist Nathan Law and US citizen Samuel Chu. They are wanted on suspicion of violating a new security law imposed in Hong Kong by Beijing, Chinese state TV reported, calling them "troublemakers". Hong Kong police declined to comment.





The development comes after legislative elections scheduled for September were delayed for a year by Hong Kong's government on Friday. It said the move was necessary because of a spike in Covid-19 infections, but the opposition accused it of using the pandemic as a pretext. The White House said the move undermined democracy.

Pro-democracy politicians had hoped to capitalise on anger in the Chinese territory about the new security law to win a majority in the Legislative Council (LegCo). Many in Hong Kong, a former British colony handed back to China in 1997, fear that unique freedoms meant to be guaranteed until 2047 are under serious threat.

The UK and Australia are among countries that have suspended their extradition treaties with Hong Kong in recent weeks. Germany did so on Friday - one of those reported to be on the new "wanted list" has received asylum there.

Who are the 'wanted'?

Chinese state TV network CCTV said six people were wanted on suspicion of inciting secession or colluding with foreign forces - both crimes can be punished with up to life in prison under the new security law.

The six, according to CCTV and Hong Kong media, are:

Simon Cheng, a former employee of the UK's Hong Kong consulate who was recently granted political asylum in Britain. Nathan Law, 27, a high-profile activist who has fled to the UK.

The Hong Kong residents ready to leave for the UK...

Samuel Chu, a US citizen. He is the son of Reverend Chu Yiu Ming, a Baptist minister who was one of the founders of the 2014 "Umbrella Movement". Mr Chu runs the Washington DC-based Hong Kong Democracy Council and said he last visited Hong Kong in November 2019. "I might be the first non-Chinese citizen to be targeted, but I will not be the last. If I am targeted, any American and any citizen of any nation who speaks out for Hong Kong can, and will be, too," he said.

The national security law carries extraterritorial provisions that say anyone, including non-Hong Kong residents, can be charged under it. China says the law is necessary to restore stability and order in the global financial hub.

Ray Wong, a pro-independence activist who fled to Germany in 2017 and is now in Britain, told the BBC that the list of "wanted" exiles had been drawn up to "intimidate" pro-democracy activists who are trying to drum up international support for their cause.

Lau Hong (also known as Honcques Lau), an 18-year-old now in the UK, first came to prominence in November 2017 when he brandished a pro-independence banner next to Hong Kong's leader Carrie Lam. "Come arrest me in the UK," he was quoted as telling a journalist on Friday.

Wayne Chan, another pro-independence activist, is in an undisclosed country. "For me, the situation faced by Hong Kongers is even more dangerous than what I face. I can't think too much about my personal safety," he told Reuters news agency.

More info: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-53616583

Pray: that the new security law will be overturned

Pray: for these 6 people and many more who have campaigned for their democratic rights and freedom of speech – that they will not be unjustly treated or imprisoned.

Pray: that the elections will not be unduly delayed, and that the rights and freedoms of the people of Hong Kong will be restored.

06 Turkey: Prayer Request

Gulgoze (Turkey) - Inside the sixth century church in southeastern Turkey, dozens of Assyrian Christian women, men and children in their Sunday best attend a service, one of only a few held in their ancient homeland. They are among the nearly 4,000 Assyrians left in the region after violence and poverty forced the community to leave Turkey in the 20th century. They are now scattered across Europe, with over 100,000 living in Germany, nearly 100,000 in Sweden and tens of thousands in Belgium, France and the Netherlands.



Assyrian Christians, also known as Syriacs, are part of the

eastern Christian tradition and pray in Aramaic, which Jesus is believed to have spoken. Yuhanun Akay, 40, lives in the historic region of Tur Abdin (meaning "Mountain of the servants of God" in Syriac), in the centuries-old village of Gulgoze in Mardin.

The village, known as Ain Wardo, meaning "eye of the rose" in Syriac, was once home to hundreds of Assyrian families, where they farmed, prayed and educated their children. Now only three families remain including Akay, a farmer and father-of-eight.

"In the past there were 200 Syriac Christian families, and seven priests in the village. We had three churches, so each neighbourhood had a church," he told AFP.

"Every Sunday there would be a service in all three churches and they would be full."

There are 2,500 churches and 300 monasteries in Tur Abdin, according to Evgil Turker, head of the Federation of Syriac Associations.

Community leaders including Turker are worried over the future of the community in Turkey despite a slight recent increase in population figures. There are around 20,000 Assyrians in Istanbul. Like other communities, Turker said Assyrians were affected by the same economic issues and "political pressures" under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government.

Some left in search of a better life.

There were fears earlier this year that Assyrians were being targeted after a couple belonging to the Chaldean Catholic minority went missing in January in Sirnak, near the Iraqi border. While Hurmuz Diril, 71, remains missing, his wife Simoni, 65, was found dead in March.

The arrest of Syriac Orthodox priest Sefer Bilecen on terrorism charges also caused concern, but Turker said he did not believe there was state-led targeting of Assyrians.

Pray for Assyrian Christians in Turkey:

Pray that the political and any other form of pressures from the government against Assyrian Christians in Turkey would stop immediately

Pray that the Turkish government would assure the livelihood of Assyrian Christians to stay in their places and to keep their traditions

Pray that God would bring a revival among these Assyrian Christians and other traditional orthodox churches in Turkey and throughout the Middle East

Gulgoze (Turkey) (AFP)

More info: http://silkwavemission.com

07 Lebanon: US extends national emergency

US extends national emergency for Lebanon citing Hezbollah 'threat'

The order, renewed by every president since 2007, alleges that Hezbollah remains an 'extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy' of the US

US President Donald Trump has renewed a 13-year national emergency order over the political situation in Lebanon, citing Iran's "ongoing" weapons transfers to Hezbollah.



The order ensures the legal grounds for the US president to levy sanctions and "to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States" due to Hezbollah's presence in Lebanon, a statement released by the White House on Wednesday said.

The administration said "certain persons" - alluding to members of Hezbollah and its allies - were seeking to undermine the Lebanese government.

Lebanon has been dealing with several crises during the past year, from the coronavirus pandemic to a plummeting economy and recent skirmishes with the Israeli army on its southern border.

Hezbollah, an Iran-backed group, is a major political party in Lebanon and consolidated its influence in the state's affairs in 2018 after winning, along with its allies, a small majority in national elections. The US designated Hezbollah a "foreign terrorist group" in 1997.

Despite Hezbollah's growing influence within the Lebanese government, the White House's order alleged "certain persons" were deliberately working to "break down" the rule of law in Lebanon "through politically motivated violence and intimidation".

"Certain ongoing activities, such as Iran's continuing arms transfers to Hizballah - which include increasingly sophisticated weapons systems - serve to undermine Lebanese sovereignty, contribute to political and economic instability in the region, and continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to [US] national security and foreign policy," the White House said.

Washington is particularly concerned by those allegedly seeking to "reassert Syrian control or contribute to Syrian interference in Lebanon", the order said.

The annual move, entitled "Continuation of National Emergency with Respect to Lebanon", has been renewed every year since it was declared by former President George W Bush in 2007.

Bush's order said the United States would freeze the property and assets of anyone trying to undermine Lebanon's democratically elected government. The order, renewed by every presidential administration since, was seen as a sharp warning to Hezbollah and its allies in Syria.

Wednesday's order reiterates the same concerns the Bush administration issued 13 years ago, with an increased concern over Iran, given its recent tensions with Washington.

The US currently has 35 ongoing "national emergencies", seven of which have been declared by Trump. The orders range from sanctions against foreign entities and governments, to the White House's emergency declaration at the US southern border. At least nine of the orders name specific countries or groups in the Middle East and North Africa.

Hezbollah says all-out war with Israel is unlikely in coming months despite rising tensions https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/hezbollah-dismisses-prospect-all-out-conflict-israel-despite-increasing-tensions

More at: https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/us-extends-national-emergency-for-lebanon-citing-hezbollah-threat

We are asked to pray for the Prime Minister and all Ministers in Lebanese Government at this critical time and for the nation. Here are some guidelines provided by our colleagues at Prayer Strategy as to what we can pray for:

- 1. Pray for their salvation.
- 2. Pray for them for pure lives and good wisdom.
- 3. Pray that God reveals His truth and opens their eyes to run this nation with integrity and respect.
- 4. Pray to Break the strongholds of the Evil One in politics and in individual's lives.
- 5. Pray that leaders will realise that they were appointed by God and that He gave them authority so that they will act responsibly and that they will have to give account to God of everything that they do.

Many of the ministers are listed here, with brief profiles: https://gulfnews.com/world/mena/who-are-the-ministers-in-lebanons-new-government-1.69174412

Prayer News & Events

08 GO2020: 90 Days of Hope

Let's continue to be <u>praying</u> for and participating with the <u>GO2020</u> initiative which seeks to reach 1 billion worldwide for Christ! The global pandemic lockdown changed the shape of the initiative, but remarkable things have still happened.

We would encourage our readers to download the first <u>GO2020 report</u> that includes a number of encouraging stories from the GO2020 outreaches that took place around the world in May. Also, see Jason Hubbard's report of the hugely encouraging number of activities that took place between <u>Passover and Pentecost</u> this year.

Watch the GO 2020 Video | Download the Brochure | Download the August Prayer Guide



The vision and mission of GO2020 continues with the <u>90 Days of HOPE</u> which runs through to August 2020. It encourages us to continue to put our prayers into action with evangelism and sharing our faith. <u>Download the Flyer Here</u>

The GO DECADE is a collaborative and co-owned effort with the goal to reach every person with the Gospel of Jesus Christ until 2030 and see by God's grace a significant growth of born again believers worldwide. Let's join hands to mobilize every believer to be a



witness and working together as ministries, denominations, networks and churches to share the Gospel in the next

10 years in a massive way and work towards the completion of the great commission to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19).

09 The Power of United Prayer for Unreached Peoples

Have you heard the Clarion call? Or the Buzz words in this season? Collaboration, Catalysing, Community, Connections, Pivot, Urgency, Global Harvest and Global Repentance....

Today is the moment for united prayer for those, who despite 2000 years of believers witnessing to and following Jesus Christ, still have not had access to hear the Good News amongst their peoples.



The cry goes up from those who are living in darkness and Jesus commands us to GO and make Disciples of all peoples.

The Ethne Prayer team hosts **MONTHLY REGIONAL ONLINE PRAYER CALLS** for those who are currently unreached from the Gospel of Jesus.

You are welcome to take this opportunity to join one of our REGIONAL team calls. Perhaps God has been prompting you to make an hour's commitment each month to pray with others in your part of the world for those who are far from Jesus?

Here are the details:

South Asia: First Wednesday 6pm IST write to onassis777@gmail.com for more information **AFRICA:** Last Thursday 9pm Kenya time ethneafrica@gmail.com (calls in French and English) **MANI:** Last Wednesday 2pm Nigeria last Wednesday of each month at 2pm Nigerian time. Write to lgbokwe.emmanuel2013@gmail.com for more information

Europe: Mondays weekly, 3-4pm UTC write to Debra at prayer@2414now.net for more information **Latin America** Last Wednesday of the month 10:00- 11:30 EST ethneespanol@gmail.com (this call is in Spanish) **North America**: Third Tuesday 7 pm – 8 pm Central (UTC -5) on Zoom prayer@ethne.net for more details.

The **Global Prayer Call for Unreached** groups is every second Thursday at 3pm UK time (9am Central) https://zoom.us/j/7867380647 this call is hosted by the Ethne team with an invited guest speaker who is an expert on the unreached groups in focus.

Please write to prayer@ethne.net for further information.

Jenny Oliphant

Coordinator of the Ethne Prayer Team and member of the International Prayer Council.

10 Australia: Prayer Day for end to Pandemic – 2 August 2020

National Day of Worship, Prayer and Fasting for an end to the Pandemic

Sunday 2 August 2020

"Jesus answered, the Scriptures says: Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him!" Matthew 4:8



"When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:13,14

- 1. Worship the Lord & pray for our nation that we will come back to the Lord in a true spirit of repentance.
- 2. Pray for Australia & particularly Victoria for an end to the Pandemic!
- 3. Pray for America, Brazil, India and the rest of the world with over 16 Million COVID-19 cases recorded.

This National Day of Worship, Prayer & Fasting has been called by the National Day of Prayer & Fasting team in consultation with Australian Prayer Leaders to support the Day of Prayer called by Bishop Philip Huggins & the National Council of Churches in Australia regarding the Pandemic for Sunday 2 August 2020. Draft 1-26/07/20

www.nationaldayofprayer.org.au/events/pandemic-prayer

Warwick Marsh

National Day of Prayer & Fasting www.nationaldayofprayer.org.au **PO Box 378 Unanderra NSW 2526**

11 Pray on MLK 08-08-2020

One Day to pray for One Dream for the glory of One King (Jesus!)

Pray on MLK is a two hour, nationwide prayer and worship event on Saturday, August 8, located along

every Martin Luther King Jr. street or memorial in the United States (and around the world).

Pray on MLK The call for the Church to unite as One Voice on 08 - 08 - 2020 One Day. One Dream. One King.

We believe that the Church has the solution to the racial tension in the U.S. and across the globe. To put feet to our faith, we are forming multi-cultural human prayer chains across the world.

Imagine a day where over a thousand separate groups across the world unite with one voice, one prayer request, before one King.

We believe the reverberations of this unified moment of supplication and worship will be felt for years to come.

Watch the video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kA0Xyn7yWo

As people of faith take their place on the walls of history, we hear the chains of injustice breaking. It's time to turn our tears into triumph, our weeping into worship, and leap forward into a new era of righteousness in the united pursuit of God's dream for all people.

Would you partner with us to help lead one of these gatherings in your city? For more information and/or to register as a local director, go to www.prayonmlk.org

Pastor Jonathan Tremaine Thomas, Founder & CEO Civil Righteousness, Inc. www.civilrighteousness.org

www.prayonmlk.org

12 The Return / 10 Days: 18-28 September 2020

'10 Days' Joins 'The Return' in Calling Christians to Worldwide Prayer, Fasting, Repentance

Thousands To Converge on Washington Mall for 'The Return' on Sept. 26, Flanked by Prayer Inspired by Ancient '10 Days of Awe'' Sep 18-28, 2020

NEW YORK—As political discord and a pandemic threaten societies around the world, prayer movements are gaining momentum and some have united to shape a global Christian revival with Washington, D.C., at its epicenter.



Thousands of Christians and more than 100 denominations of churches have committed themselves in prayer and collaboration leading up to "The Return: National and Global Day of Prayer and Repentance."

"The Return" (<u>TheReturn.org</u>) is set for 40 days before the presidential election, and on the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower, in the days of America's founding and dedication to God. Surrounding the "The Day of Return" on Sept. 26 at the Washington Mall will be 10 days, known from ancient times as the Days of Awe, to be set as a special time of prayer and repentance on Sept. 18-28.

"10 Days" (10days.net), a movement of prayer, fasting, and repentance in unity based on the 10 Days of Awe, has been invited to collaborate with "The Return" as movement leaders call Americans to turn from sin and humble themselves before God.

"We are in the midst of a multi-faceted crisis right now, a crisis that no human being knows how to solve," said "10 Days" leader Jonathan Friz. "An insoluble problem should lead us to self-reflection. What if instead of blaming one another, we took time to consider how our own actions and self-will have contributed to the current state of political division, racial strife, pestilence? What if instead of placing ourselves on a pedestal as judge, we would humble ourselves before the only Judge, and seek His mercy in a time of national and global calamity?"

Echoing Jesus's prayer at the Last Supper that His followers would be unified, "The Return" and "10 Days" are pooling efforts to inspire Christians everywhere to call on the name of the Lord as the only source of hope for their countries.

Ramping up to the September climax, "10 Days" is leading a three-pronged prayer strategy for "The Return" that includes personal intercession for movement leaders, weekly Zoom prayer calls, and a "Consecration Challenge" aimed at mobilizing 120,000 believers in dedicated prayer and fasting.

Grant Berry and Jonathan Friz are working with "The Return" by leading the weekly global prayer intercession. Coordinated events within "The Return" movement will also take place throughout America's cities, towns, houses of worship and homes, as well as in multiple countries around the world, as many believe the nation has been given a critical window of opportunity to repent and return to God.

Visit "The Return" at www.TheReturn.org to register and learn more. Follow "The Return" on social media at Facebook: @ReturnEvent2020; Twitter: @2020_Return; and Instagram: @The_Return2020.

Two brief videos about The Return's reaching out to make it an international effort:

https://youtu.be/vYZ-YtAHlo8

https://youtu.be/u4bXDhLefQc

Please contact Jonathan Friz at 10daysofprayer@gmail.com for more information on how your nation can participate.



2020 a year of evangelism across the UK

https://advance2020.org/

90 Days of HOPE - to 31 August 2020

www.go2020.world

Global Day of HOPE - 29 August 2020

www.globalvoiceofprayer.com

Intercessors at the Summit...Soaring Like Eagles.
July 31 - Aug 1. (Start at 9am Jamaica time)

www.nipnoj.org

Prayer Day for end to Pandemic – 2 August 2020

www.nationaldayofprayer.org.au/events/pandemic-prayer

Pray on MLK - 08-08-2020 www.prayonmlk.org

The Return / 10 Days: 18-28 September 2020 www.thereturn.org | www.10days.net

National Prayer Assembly (USA), Washington, D.C., October 14-15

www.nationalprayerassembly.com

Contend! - 21 Days of Prayer for Global Mission 4-25 Nov 2020

www.globalmmi.net

Movement for African National Initiatives – Abidjan, Ivory Coast, 8-12 March 2021

https://maniafrica.com/category/prayers/

UPRising Events Calendar

UPRISING Chile – November 2020 (Date TBA)

GLOBAL UPRISING Manila, Philippines, Nov 2021 www.unitedprayerrising.com

UPRISING MINDANAO (Mindanao, Philippines)-- dates TBA

- UPRISING BUKIDNON (Northern Mindanao)
- UPRISING CARAGA (Butuan, Bislig, and Surigao)
- UPRISING DIGOS (Davao Del Sur)



- UPRISING CENTRAL

MINDANAO (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, and General Santos)

FB: United Prayer Rising Mindanao

FB: United Prayer Rising North Mindanao

IG: @uprisingmindanao

Resources

14 Pray for Zero Video: Invitation to Pray for Nothing...



Watch this compelling video from Pray for Zero... and let's be challenged and prompted to pray for zero people not to have access to God's word in their language by 2025.

Let's Pray that nobody misses out on hearing about the redeeming message of God's saving grace.

Watch the video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vtt7vKGhiL0

Download the Pray for Zero <u>Prayer Card</u> which lists countries with just one remaining language that needs translating.

Become a prayer partner! It's simple and easy: Text "ZERO" to 313131 or visit https://seedcompany.com/prayer

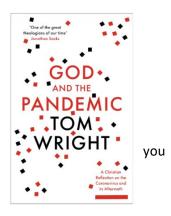
Together, we can reach ZERO.

15 Book / EBook: God and the Pandemic – Tom Wright

A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and its Aftermath

Tom Wright is one of the best Theologians of our time and gives biblical insight to the chaos of the pandemic right now.

Tom examines these reactions to the virus and finds them wanting. Instead, he invites to consider a different way of seeing and responding – a way that draws on the teachings and examples of scripture, and above all on the way of living, thinking and praying revealed to us by Jesus.



'This is a classic Tom Wright. It is accessible to almost anyone asking questions, and yet it manages to be demanding for those who think they know the answers. It is superbly written, utterly Bible based, and leaves one satisfied at having learned and yet wanting to know more. I read it in a sitting with pleasure, provocation, and profit. Do not hesitate!' - Archbishop Justin Welby

Pandemic, Panic, Pangolin, Pandemonium. . .

What are we supposed to think about the coronavirus crisis? Some people think they know: 'This is a sign of the End,' they say. 'It's all predicted in the book of Revelation.'

Others disagree but are equally clear: 'This is a call to repent. God is judging the world and through this disease, he's telling us to change.'

Some join in the chorus of blame and condemnation: 'It's the fault of the Chinese, the government, the World Health Organization. . .'

- For Christians looking to understand the coronavirus crisis
- Tom Wright offers a Bible based way to respond to events right now
- You'll find a way to live through and tackle the effects of COVID-19

Available from Amazon as paperback and Kindle / Download / Audio Book By Tom Wright, Paperback, 88 pages.

About IPC

16 About International Prayer Connect (IPC)

OUR VISION:

"Compelled by God to seek Christ's glory worldwide for the blessing, healing, and transforming of the nations, International Prayer Connect exists as a coalition of prayer networkers and mobilizers working together to motivate, develop and equip national movements and local churches to fill all nations with prayer for the fulfilment of the Great Commandment and the completion of the Great Commission."

HOW WE OPERATE:

The IPC is not an organization as such. We are a fellowship of people involved in mobilizing prayer throughout the world. We function as an international "network of networks", connecting international, regional, and national prayer ministries and networks. We also arrange or support special prayer initiatives that bring prayer leaders together from time to time to pray for matters of regional and global concern to the Body of Christ. Regional prayer summits have been arranged or supported by the IPC in most regions of the world as well as international prayer initiatives for the United Nations, Hollywood, and other issues.

The IPC is led by an international leadership team, now called the International Prayer Council, is composed of twenty leaders who coordinate regional prayer networks or international prayer initiatives of various kinds. We seek to be catalysts and connectors within the global prayer movement towards the fulfilment of Habakkuk 2:14- that "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

We do not have an official membership but connect with individuals and networks through IPC Connections, a periodical newsletter distributed via e-mail to give prayer information to interested people. Please share this newsletter with prayer coordinators, prayer network leaders, and others who have an interest in the global prayer movement so that they can be informed about different prayer initiatives, existing prayer networks, and how to participate in them.

17 Credits

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