



THE

VOICE

OF THE
MARTYRS

MARCH 2025

UNSILENCED

TORTURED BY THE KGB



"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them." Heb 13:3

Faithful in Between

In 2002, after meeting with persecuted Christians in Central Asia, I wrote an article titled “Between a Mosque and a Monument.” The article described persecution that Christians in the former Soviet republics were suffering from Muslim family members - “a Mosque”, as well as former Communist authorities - “a Monument”. Since the fall of the Soviet Union and its communist ideology, people there had become more devoutly Islamic, while their government leaders who had been tutored by Communist rulers retained a mistrust of all religion as a threat to their authority.

Last year I made a return visit to Central Asia. Sadly, our Christian brothers and sisters still face persecution motivated by both ideologies. Islam has continued to gain influence in the past 23 years, and Soviet-style oppression remains a common tool of governments across the region.

Yet I heard story after story about people coming to faith in Christ, with churches growing despite government efforts to close them down and silence their witness.

Those in Central Asia who place their faith in Christ — like Silas — *know* they will pay a price. One pastor said, “If the Holy Spirit doesn’t put His arm around us, we cannot overcome our fear.” The Holy Spirit is comforting and emboldening God’s children, and they are overcoming their fear to proclaim the Gospel.

The government of one country in the region recently tightened restrictions on religious instruction for children. Parents are now threatened with having children removed from their home if the children attend a church meeting.

Another pastor in the region reminded us that there is always a price to pay when we work to advance Christ’s kingdom. “I think churches should sacrifice something to see spiritual results,” he said. “And it always hurts.” As you will read in the stories in these magazines, Christians in hostile areas and restricted nations are willing to make such sacrifices, and they are seeing the spiritual fruit of their work. Their examples challenge me. If a willingness to sacrifice is necessary for the gain of spiritual fruit, how should that affect my Christian life? What about yours?

While you probably aren’t caught between a mosque and a monument, you may be caught between a serious medical condition and a difficult job situation, or between a wayward child and an economic setback. Our faithful Christian family members in Central Asia demonstrate how we can follow Christ and remain Christ’s bold witnesses.

My prayer is that you and I will be willing to make any sacrifice to see God glorified in our cities, workplaces, schools and homes. “Jesus, your kingdom come. Your will be done. Even when we are ‘caught between.’”

*Todd Nettleton
Host, The Voice of the Martyrs Radio*

About the cover: *Silas was persecuted for his Christian witness under Soviet-style oppression in Turkmenistan.*





Acts 18:8-10 - KJV

And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.



*Be not afraid, but speak,
and hold not thy peace:
For I am with thee.*



in TURKMENISTAN

Persecuted for his Christian witness under Soviet-style oppression, a Turkmen pastor continues to broadcast the Gospel in his restricted Central Asian nation.

While growing up in the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic, Silas wrestled with his identity. His family cherished their Muslim culture at home, but they publicly adopted the dominant Soviet culture. So Silas prayed Islamic prayers and read the Quran with his mother, even as his communist school teachers taught him that Allah did not exist.

As a teenager, Silas had many questions about his own existence as well as the existence of Allah. He wondered why we have to die and why Allah seemed so far from him. He told people that he was an atheist in his head and a Muslim in his heart.

“Since I couldn’t find the right answers to satisfy my soul,” he said, “I thought maybe atheism made the most sense. That is why I became more atheist.”

Silas graduated from high school in the early 1990s, and during the next few years he got married and started a family. At around the same time, in 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed and Turkmenistan gained its independence.

“There was a lot of uncertainty,” Silas said. “People were losing everything, kind of restarting every aspect of their lives with a new country. For us, there was an uncertainty of how life will continue after the Soviet Union.”

And soon, both his Islamic concept of Allah and his atheistic worldview also crumbled.

A HOLY FIRE

One day in 1994, Silas’s brother-in-law told him that he had become a Christian. Silas was shocked; he had always

associated the Christian God with their Russian oppressors. His only exposure to Christianity had been on TV or in books. Still, he listened carefully when his brother-in-law talked about Jesus Christ.

“The person of Christ and the stories about His life ... that he was sharing are what really attracted me to Him,” Silas said. “I wanted to know more.”

His brother-in-law had a copy of the JESUS film, a movie about the life of Christ that is used for evangelism. So Silas watched the movie with his wife, Yelena, whose father owned the only VHS player in the village.

“The moment I started watching the movie,” Silas recalled, “I heard Jesus speaking Turkmen, my language. The Gospel became real, not only knowledge to my head but ... touching my soul, my heart. As I watched the movie of the life of Christ, it answered all my questions. I accepted Christ and gave my life to Him.”

Overwhelmed with joy, Silas ran home and shared the Gospel with his 75-year-old mother, who also placed her faith in Christ. Then he went into the village and shared the Good News with everyone he met.

After getting a small Russian-language pocket Bible that included the

New Testament and Psalms, Silas began reading it aloud to friends, neighbours and family members. While many were initially sceptical hearing it in Russian, most continued to listen and several came to faith in Christ. Silas said he believes these Christians became the first church in Turkmenistan.

“We didn’t know how to do church, how to fellowship or how to read the Bible and understand it,” he said. “We tried to meet up with Believers at times and pray together. We were learning everything new. We didn’t know how to do the Christian life. We were all learning at the same time.”

Some of the villagers were not happy about Silas’s evangelistic efforts, especially after some teenagers came to faith in Christ. The villagers spread lies about him, claiming he was a Russian priest who was converting people to the Russian religion. They increasingly ostracized Silas and the other Believers, and occasionally threatened them.

Still, Silas and his small house-church couldn’t help but proclaim the Gospel.

“Nobody disciplined us or told us to evangelize,” Silas said. “It was purely the Holy Spirit giving us this joy of salvation, experience of salvation in

Christ, and we were naturally going and talking about it.”

BECOMING A THREAT

Later that year, Silas moved to Ashgabat, Turkmenistan’s capital, to study international law. For the time being, Yelena and their two young children remained in the village, several hundred kilometres away from Silas.

“God was doing a tremendous work,” Silas said. “Even as I left, some of the Believers started gathering in my house regularly.”

After settling in Ashgabat, Silas joined a house-church that was affiliated with an official Russian church. He received baptism and instruction in the faith, and he even obtained a copy of a Turkmen-language Bible, which the government had declared illegal.

He shared the Gospel with everyone he could, including many classmates whose parents were Communist leaders — members of the KGB, the ministry of foreign affairs and the presidential guard.

“I was never afraid,” Silas said. “I thought, ‘This is my right. I can share my faith.’”

After completing his university studies, Silas remained in Ashgabat,



where Yelena and their two children joined him. Feeling pressured to live up to his family's expectations, he became a lawyer for the Ministry of Trade and Foreign Economic Relations, but he did not enjoy the work.

After about a year, he quit his job to become a pastor, prompting his father to disown him. Still, Silas persisted in his plan to preach the Gospel and plant house-churches in and around Ashgabat. "My calling was more important to me," he said. "The kingdom work was more important to me."

One obstacle for Silas was explaining to Turkmen how they could be Christians without adopting the Russian culture that had been imposed on them during the Soviet era. "We would go to our people and say, 'You don't need to change your Turkmen identity,'" Silas said; "Jesus loves and knows Turkmen."

During his first year as a pastor, the house-churches he planted grew from 30 members total to more than 100 Believers. Entire families were coming to faith in Christ. "All of them were ... finding hope and transformation," he said. "A lot of them were drug addicts, alcoholics and very abusive. A lot of wives came to the Lord because their husband became a different person."

Since the JESUS film had helped lead Silas to faith in Christ, he wanted to get it to as many Turkmen as he could. But knowing that few people owned a VHS player, he had to get creative. He recorded the audio from the film on cassette tapes and then distributed the cassettes so people could listen in the privacy of their car.

Eventually, authorities learned about Silas's persistent evangelism and growing house-churches. Silas said they viewed the church growth as a political movement created by the West to destabilize the country.

"Ten thousand JESUS film cassettes were distributed by our church," Silas said. "That is one of the reasons that I was

targeted and my church was targeted. Those cassettes started making their way everywhere."

MOUNTING PRESSURE

One day, the authorities raided Silas's house-churches, confiscating 1,000 cassettes and numerous Bibles. "They came with cameras and started recording us," Silas recalled. "It was local authorities, a local imam, the KGB and the police. They were scaring people, writing down names, saying, 'You can't gather in this setting! You are not allowed to spread the Gospel!'"

Silas tried to use his background in law to challenge their interpretation of Turkmenistan's constitution, which guarantees religious freedom. But his arguments were no match for their strong-arm tactics. By threatening their jobs or university status, authorities coerced Believers to sign documents stating they would stop attending church services.

Many church members were afraid. "Less than two years after being established and growing, and then suddenly the strength of the government started to crush it down," Silas said. "That is why it was very tough for many Believers."

Police arrested Silas and banned him from living in Ashgabat, before putting him on a train back to his home village. They couldn't get rid of him that easily, however. "They didn't have someone escorting me all the way," Silas said, "so I jumped off the train after a couple stations and came back and I was leading the church again."

Authorities arrested Silas again. In fact, they arrested him repeatedly for disobeying their orders, and each time they increased the pressure on him and his family.

When the house-churches gathered in Ashgabat, Silas and other church members occasionally spotted informants who had infiltrated the congregations. One man told Silas that the KGB had beaten him and held a gun to his head, ordering him

"Less than two years after being established and growing, and then suddenly the big machine of the government started to crush it down," Silas said. "That is why it was very tough for many Believers."



to spy on the churches. “We looked at it with grace,” Silas said. “We understood that may happen.”

While Silas had focused primarily on the churches in Ashgabat, the house-church network in his village had grown to more than 500 Believers. And authorities there also started pressuring Christians.

“When the government, police and the KGB got involved, we had only 100 Believers still meeting in secret,” Silas said. “The effect was huge. People were afraid. In our church alone, about 40 people stopped coming regularly and stopped associating with us. They were in constant fear.”

Despite the growing pressure, Silas continued to lead and encourage both church networks. Then, in early 2000, efforts to stop his evangelism reached a new level — a smear campaign. An Ashgabat newspaper published a story claiming that Silas was the leader of an underground religious sect and that he had betrayed his country by working with a foreign government.

“I found the author of that article and I confronted him,” Silas said. “I said, ‘Why did you write these things about me without knowing me or interviewing me?’ He said, ‘Oh, it wasn’t me. I was ordered by the KGB.’”

Silas met with a lawyer about suing the newspaper for libel, but the lawyer warned against fighting anyone with ties to the Communist-style government. “You want to be alive?” his lawyer asked pointedly. “Do you want your kids and your wife to be in a car accident ... and you lose them? This is what they are going to do. Be careful. Don’t go against them.”

Since Turkmenistan had gained independence almost a decade earlier, Silas no longer viewed his country as a Communist regime. He couldn’t believe that such an attack could happen to him. But he had underestimated the Turkmen authorities.

THE DARKEST OF DAYS

One day in August, Silas and Yelena, who was five months pregnant, were driving from Ashgabat to their home village. Their two young children sat in the back seat.

Soon after they left a KGB checkpoint, a truck coming from the opposite direction headed directly for their car. Silas swerved off the road, causing the car to roll down a ravine and come to rest upside down.

When Silas checked on each member of his family, he saw that Yelena was bleeding from her abdomen and that their son’s head was bleeding severely. Their daughter had only minor injuries.

Soon after Silas and his family crawled out of their overturned car, the police and KGB agents arrived. “You could see in their faces that they were upset that they found us alive,” Silas recalled.

As his wife and son lay bleeding and crying in severe pain, the KGB agents dragged Silas away. “I want to help them!” Silas yelled, fighting to get free. “I am staying with them!”

The authorities shoved him into a car and sped off, leaving Silas’s family injured and stranded in the desert heat. The agents drove for an hour before taking Silas inside a building, where they beat and interrogated him for three hours.

Finally, they drove him back to the accident site, and Silas could see that Yelena had lost a lot of blood. He flagged down a passerby, and the family hitched a ride to Ashgabat. “My wife ended up in the hospital and lost the baby,” Silas said. “I almost lost my wife.”

After repeated raids on the house-churches, multiple threats and interrogations, and a traumatic attack on his family that killed his unborn son, Silas said he didn’t think they could lose anything else. But authorities found more to take from them.

In Turkmenistan, a mother customarily receives the body of her stillborn baby for a proper burial, but the hospital denied Yelena and Silas such dignity and closure. “They didn’t give

Under the Watchful Eye of the KGB

The intelligence arm of the Communist Party in Soviet Russia, and later the Soviet Union (USSR), had been well established — and feared — since the October Revolution, in 1917. But it didn’t officially become known as the KGB (an acronym for “Committee for State Security”) until 1954.

Initially collecting intelligence primarily on its own citizens, the KGB soon evolved into a global spy network, stealing technology and infiltrating positions of power and influence. The KGB also collected intelligence on Christians in the Soviet Union, including those in Turkmenistan, who refused to worship in the Communist-controlled official church and comply with Communist ideals. Many Christians were imprisoned for this noncompliance.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, in 1991, the KGB was also dissolved. The agency’s tactics of surveilling and terrorizing its own citizens, however, continued in many former Soviet republics under different governmental agencies that retained ties to Russia’s intelligence services. In Turkmenistan, that agency was called the KNB. Despite the name changes following the collapse of the Soviet Union, many who lived under the watchful eye of the KGB — like Silas — continue to use that acronym when referring to their country’s intelligence service. ■



▲ Silas and his family were run off the road by a truck as depicted in this illustration. His wife, Yelena, who was pregnant at the time, nearly died. Their unborn child did not survive.

the baby to her,” Silas said, his voice trembling with emotion. “They threw our baby into the garbage can. Yelena was begging them to give the child to us, but they didn’t listen. I think that was one of the most painful things.”

In a way, the pain was only beginning. Weeks later, KGB agents arrested Silas again, taking him into a room where they punched him, kicked him and stomped on him. The beatings continued for several days. “It was one of the darkest moments of my life,” he said. “I thought it was going to be the end.”

As the torture continued, the agents connected wires to Silas’s fingers and ears and began shocking him with high-voltage electrical charges. They also stuck needles under his fingernails and pinched his fingertips with large tongs. Another time, they put a gas mask on him that was connected to an air source, and they shut off the air to suffocate him.

“I never thought those torture methods existed,” Silas said. “All of a sudden, they are bringing in all the torture tools. It was very scary, hard and painful. They deprived me of sleep and used every methodology they developed to inflict emotional and physical pain. At the same time, they were threatening to do the same thing to my wife. It was unbelievable.”

In addition to the physical pain, Silas said he felt as if he were under a strong spiritual attack.

“The spiritual attack is so real, more than the physical attack,” he said. “The only thing that carried me through the darkest moment spiritually was I started seeing Jesus in a different way. Jesus’ prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane made sense to me. The Lord himself, a perfect man, was begging God that this would not take place. He was stressed. He was worried. He even started sweating blood. That helped me,

knowing that Jesus understood my fear. The Holy Spirit was speaking through that.”

While the agents tortured Silas, they also attacked his Christian faith and tried to get him to doubt his beliefs. Fighting off the pain, Silas responded by sharing his testimony and the Gospel. But the agents just grew angrier and berated him for creating the cassettes of the JESUS film.

“You have a radio-TV voice,” an agent told him. “Why are you doing this? You created this, distributed it and now you’re having trouble with us. You could have been a speaker on national TV, praising our president and living a good life.”

An agent grabbed Silas by the throat and choked him for narrating the Gospel on the cassettes. “I was choked so many times I couldn’t speak,” Silas said.

Later, Silas noticed the KGB agents quietly discussing the confiscated cassettes. And he saw several of them grab a copy for themselves before the total number of cassettes was noted on the raid report. “It was amazing to see the other side of the work God is doing,” Silas said. “On one hand, they tried to destroy the kingdom work. On the other hand, they distributed the cassettes among themselves.”

As the beatings continued, the agents threatened to take Silas and his family to the border. “We can kill you there easily,” one of them said.

Exhausted by the torture and fearing more pain, he cried out to God in desperation. “Will You please take my life and take me to Yourself?” he prayed. “I can’t bear this pain anymore. Would You help me?”

A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

While Silas was detained, KGB agents monitored and visited

the home where Yelena and the children were staying. They verbally and sexually harassed her in front of the children and the women who had helped them. “They were abusive in every way other than physically abusing,” Silas said. “But she was able to deter them using wise words.”

Eventually, one agent ordered the others to stop the harassment. And at about the same time, people started supporting Silas. His story gained international attention when an American diplomat publicly called for his release and for the release of other Turkmen church leaders.

“All of a sudden, their attitude changed because they said some in the international community heard about what they were doing to us,” Silas said. “That actually helped us from being in prison for a long time.”

After weeks of beatings, Silas received word that he was being released. The other imprisoned church leaders also were released.

An agent who had been in the room while Silas was being tortured, spoke with Silas before he left the prison. “Would you forgive me?” the man asked. “Would you pray for my family? I couldn’t listen to the cry of my heart and stop treating you that way because I was afraid they would put me in the same position if I protected you and didn’t obey their orders.”

Silas was unable to respond because of damage to his vocal cords, but he later learned that the agent was the same man who had stood up for Yelena.

While he was released from prison because of international scrutiny, Silas wasn’t free. Authorities pressured him to sign a document giving them control of his house. And when he refused, they arrested and beat him again.

“They said that I did these criminal things because I preached the Gospel,” Silas said. “And now they could confiscate my house and it would be taken by the government for public use. It was a common practice at the time.”

After the agents threatened to kill his children, Silas relented and signed the document. Then, at 2 a.m., the agents handcuffed him and took him to his house, where they also forced Yelena to sign the document.

The next morning, the KGB returned and ordered the family to gather their belongings and vacate the house. “We only had three hours to pack,” Silas said. “Then they came and sealed my house.”

With nowhere to go, Silas and Yelena decided to hide in the city for a while before returning to their village. They soon heard that the KGB had interrogated Silas’s parents, demanding to know his location. They also harassed Yelena’s family, confiscating her dad’s car and interrogating her brother. Then they arrested a neighbour, who was the leader of a house-church. They tortured him for a few days, trying to coerce him to disclose Silas’s whereabouts.

“He called me and said, ‘Man, they are after you. If you want to be alive, don’t come here. Disappear.’” Silas and Yelena decided it was time to leave the country.

ON THE RUN

On 10 January, 2001, Silas and his family took advantage of a three-day pass that allowed Turkmen to freely cross the border into a neighbouring country, but they had no intention of returning. “I was still worried they were going to

arrest me and harm my family,” Silas said.

The family stayed with relatives for three days before traveling deeper into the country to hide from government authorities, who cooperated with the KGB and could return them to Turkmenistan. While in hiding, Silas felt an overwhelming sense of guilt for leaving his country and churches behind. He had a strong desire to continue serving the church in Turkmenistan.

“I was crying, ‘Lord, why is this happening? I love my people! I love You! I want to serve. I want to see people come to the Lord.’” Then he recalled Matthew 10:23, where Jesus says, “*But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.*”

“It has been a part of Christianity from the beginning,” Silas said. “Even the first Christians did that, and it served as an expansion of His kingdom.”

Silas said he sensed God telling him, “Just trust me and I will provide. I will open doors that nobody can close. Keep that passion and fire in your heart, and there will be opportunities again.”

Soon, some Russian pastors provided an apartment for them. And two months later, a former member of the Russian mafia who had become a Christian made them fake ID cards and smuggled them into Russia.

Shortly after they entered Russia, God answered Silas’s prayers. His ability to speak was restored, and he reconnected with a man he had met years earlier who worked with a Christian radio ministry. The man asked Silas if he wanted to create Christian radio programmes in the Turkmen language.

When he readily agreed, the two men began meeting in a small studio in St. Petersburg, Russia, where they recorded 15-minute segments that were broadcast on the station’s radio network in Turkmenistan.

“That is how we reengaged with the ministry for our people,” Silas said. “That was God opening the door that the enemy didn’t have a chance to close. In fact, it was huge. Many people were hearing the Gospel through that.”

Although they were farther away from Turkmenistan, Silas’s family was still at risk of being discovered by the KGB in Russia. They moved cautiously and felt unsettled for nearly a year. Then, God provided a sense of peace and security they hadn’t felt for a very long time.

A GREATER REACH

In November 2001, Silas’s family was granted refugee status in Norway.

Since then, Silas has built a recording studio and expanded his broadcast ministry to include daily Bible teaching and segments that encourage Believers and church leaders in Turkmenistan who have experienced persecution. He also uses social media to proclaim the Gospel and minister to underground Believers.

He said he never could have imagined the ministry he has today when he was forced to flee Turkmenistan. “Daily in the Turkmen language, we have a two-hour broadcasting of Bible teaching and other programmes,” he said. “Those programmes are also on YouTube. We are everywhere. People in Afghanistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey are watching our programmes. We have daily communication with many people from Iran through Instagram and Facebook. We also

do the Uzbek language now. Not only that, but we also started doing sign language programmes.”

Reflecting on all that has happened, Silas said he can see how God was with him amid his pain and how He worked on his heart. “Going through that painful experience and being in that moment of weakness made me realize my only hope is God,” he said. “Before, I was young and on fire. I was operating in a sense from my own power. But through this experience, God showed me the power is not in me; the power is in Him. It’s like the passages where Paul says, ‘I am not going to boast in my strength or accomplishments, but I am going to boast in my weakness because in my weakness the power of God is revealed.’”

Silas has forgiven the KGB agents who harmed his family and killed his unborn son, especially the one who showed remorse and tried to help him. “I hope and I pray for his soul,” Silas said, “that he finds the truth and so do many others, even among those who serve that system.”

Today, 94% of Turkmen are Sunni Muslims, and only 4% are Christians. Although much time has passed since Silas and Yelena lived in Turkmenistan, which now has a different president, Silas said life is still difficult for Christians there. “They are still anti-Christian, but I think it is not like the level that it was,” he said. “They are not

targeting Christians or coming after them like they did during our time.”

Churches meet openly in Turkmenistan, but they are still closely monitored. Christians’ homes may be raided at any time by authorities searching for Christian literature, and some families still worship in secret. If the government learns of a Turkmen becoming a Christian, that person may face harassment and pressure. It is also difficult for Believers to travel outside the country for Christian training or encouragement. VOM helps families of imprisoned pastors and distributes Christian literature throughout the country.

Meanwhile, house-church leaders have become more creative in their approach to proclaiming the Gospel. “They are not like giving 10,000 ... JESUS film cassettes and distributing it,” Silas quipped. “They are finding the balance to continue their ministry, preaching



▼ Despite the cruelty Silas and Yelena endured from the KGB, they retain their joy in the Lord.





the Gospel and ... interacting with the culture and the family.”

Silas requested prayer for the underground churches and the Front-Line Workers who take great risks to proclaim the Gospel in Turkmenistan. He also requested prayer for the nation’s leaders and members of the KGB. He hopes they will listen to his broadcasts or follow his ministry on social media so they will come to know Jesus Christ. ■

▲ Reflecting on his early days in ministry, Silas says persecution helped him learn to depend on God alone.

► Today, Silas shares the Gospel in Turkmenistan through daily broadcasts that include Bible teaching and encouragement for Christians who have experienced persecution.



Partner

IN THE GOSPEL

WORKING IN HOSTILE AREAS AND RESTRICTED NATIONS IS LONELY AND DIFFICULT. *It's vital that Front-Line Workers know that fellow Believers are partnering with them in prayer and investing in God's work alongside them. We invite you to support our Christian brothers and sisters who are working to advance God's kingdom in the world's most difficult and dangerous places to follow Christ.*



YOUR SUPPORT REALLY MATTERS

Our organisation exists to aid Christians persecuted for their faith. There is a place for everyone to be part of our family, whether it's by simply following our stories, praying for one another or funding a project. Whichever way you choose to engage, we will value it dearly and honour your support with discipline, and integrity.

We value your trust in what we do.

Give a gift that has an eternal reward - go to www.persecutionsa.org/donate

Bank details also available on the second last page.



Divine endured six surgeries and remained bedridden for months after being severely burned in an attack on her church.

But as soon as she was physically able, she started attending the hospital's daily chapel services.

Her story appeared in our October 2024 Newsletter.



Get Involved

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them." Heb 13:3



PRAY

Pray for Christians like Divine. Pray that they will remain firm in faith as they recover from trauma and injuries and that they will be comforted as they help comfort others who have suffered great loss. Pray also that their faithful witness to Christ will lead their persecutors to repent and come to know the Lord.



HELP PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

When Christians face persecution because of their faith, the global body of Christ provides encouragement and support, assuring them that they are not alone. Your gift may be used to provide medical care, furnish temporary shelter, supply food, meet other unique needs and equip our brothers and sisters to be bold witnesses.



WHERE NEEDED MOST

The Voice of the Martyrs has served our persecuted Christian family in the most difficult and dangerous parts of the world for more than 55 years. Your gift to "Where Needed Most" will be used to help Christians in hostile areas and restricted nations and to draw other members of the body of Christ into fellowship with them.

Donate:



Banking details: Christian Mission International

Nedbank

Account no.: 1925-024946 (Cheque)
Branch Code: 192505 (Bedfordview)
Ref: Your Name/Cell Number

Standard Bank

Account no.: 02-249-5592 (Cheque)
Branch Code: 018305 (Bedford Gardens)
Ref: Your Name/Cell Number

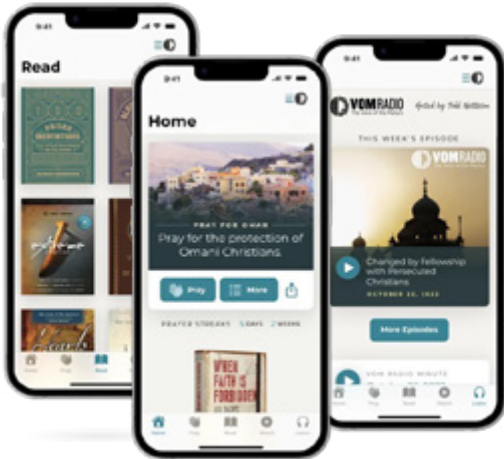
ABSA Bank

Account no.: 909-861-7711 (Savings)
Branch Code: 632005 (Bedford Centre)
Ref: Your Name/Cell Number

Follow us:



Helpful Prayer and Information Resource:



Download our FREE "VOM App" ON YOUR SMARTPHONE.

Type in "Voice of the Martyrs" when searching or click on the appropriate Google Play or App Store icon.

Daily reminders to pray for the persecuted; research Hostile or Restricted countries and the work VOM are doing there; connect to VOMRadio plus much, much more.



VOM App



Christian Mission International - The Voice of the Martyrs, South Africa.

CMI | P. O. Box 7157, Primrose Hill, 1417 South Africa | **Tel: 010 777 0114** (8am-1pm) | **Cell: 076-022-3336** (8am-5pm)
Email: cmi@vomsa.org / bianca@vomsa.org | Website: www.persecutionsa.org |
Facebook@cmivomsa | Instagram@cmi - vomsa

Directors: Mr A.B. Illman (Executive); Pastor R. Marsh; Mr R. Keir; Mr D. Kirton

© Permission to reprint any portion of this special report must be obtained from Christian Mission International.

Prayer Diary

March 2025

S	1. JORDAN	Pray for Ghazal, who was hospitalized when her husband beat her severely for placing her faith in Christ.
S	2. BURUNDI	Pray for young Christian converts, who face harsh persecution from the close-knit Muslim community.
M	3. CHAD	Pray that Christians who are persecuted by family members or Islamists will experience God's peace and provision.
T	4. UGANDA	Pray for the families of 37 students who were killed in a 2023 Islamist attack on a Christian school.
W	5. IRAN	Praise God for the Bibles that have been smuggled into Iran. Pray for the success of ongoing Bible distributions.
T	6. INDIA	Pray for Pastor Santosh. His church has been vandalized, and he has been harassed and pressured by Hindu radicals.
F	7. SIERRA LEONE	Pray that the Gospel will reach the 50% of Sierra Leoneans who are Muslims and 37% who practice ethnic religions.
S	8. ERITREA	Pray for the hundreds of Believers who have been imprisoned for their faith, often without trial.
S	9. MYANMAR	Pray that many among Myanmar's Burman ethnic majority will come to faith in Christ.
M	10. TURKEY	Pray for Pastor Nurettin, who leads a small church of Kurdish Christians.
T	11. KUWAIT	Praise God for openness to the Gospel among younger Kuwaitis and for the courageous Front-Line Workers reaching them.
W	12. KAZAKHSTAN	Pray that Christians like Ali and Ismail, who lost their jobs because of their faith, will experience God's provision.
T	13. LEBANON	More than a million Syrian refugees have entered Lebanon since 2012. Pray that many will come to know Christ.
F	14. TOGO	Many Togolese follow traditional religions. Pray that they will be set free from spiritual bondage.
S	15. CUBA	Pray that Christian children will remain firm in faith while being taught atheistic ideologies at school.
S	16. DJIBOUTI	Pray for the advancement of the Gospel despite government efforts to limit Christianity's growth.
M	17. MOROCCO	Pray for a spirit of unity in Christian communities, and pray that Believers will grow in faith.
T	18. GUINEA	Using Philippians 1:9–11 as a guide, pray that Christians will have opportunities to grow in biblical understanding.
W	19. NIGERIA	Pray for the boldness of Front-Line Workers in areas where Islamist violence is common.
T	20. BHUTAN	Pray for Christians like Karna, Deki and Ratno, who have lost jobs and citizenship because of their faith.
F	21. PHILIPPINES	Praise God that many Christians have remained in Muslim-dominated Mindanao as bold witnesses for Christ.
S	22. COLOMBIA	Pray for the protection of Christian children, who are often forced to join guerrilla groups.
S	23. AZERBAIJAN	Pray that children who receive children's Bibles will place their faith in Christ.
M	24. MEXICO	Pray that outreach bases in remote areas will bear spiritual fruit in reaching indigenous groups with the Gospel.
T	25. LIBYA	Pray that new Christians persecuted by their families, communities and radical Muslims will remain firm in Christ.
W	26. UZBEKISTAN	Pray that unregistered house-churches will remain undetected by the government.
T	27. SRI LANKA	Pray that a church will be firmly established in a village where Christmas Care Packs were distributed.
F	28. AFGHANISTAN	Pray for Christians who have remained in the country and face extreme persecution from the ruling Taliban.
S	29. MAURITANIA	Pray that indigenous Christians will experience God's peace; leaving Islam is illegal in Mauritania.
S	30. SOMALIA	More Somalis live outside the country than within its borders. Pray that Somalis everywhere will hear the Gospel.
M	31. DRC*	Pray for Divine, who was orphaned and badly burned when rebels set her church on fire.

*DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO