



THE

VOICE

OF THE MARTYRS



April

26

NEPAL A HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH

A DESPERATE
MOTHER

A HUSBAND'S
DESIRE



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

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Joshua 1:9 - KJV



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

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“Together with His Entire Household”

This magazine features testimonies of a particularly beautiful demonstration of God uniting his people in his love: families coming to faith in Christ and then, as a unit, faithfully serving the Lord in the context of great difficulty. I hope that all of us, and most especially those of us who are parents and grandparents, appreciate the beauty of a household of faith — a family that stands in this fallen world as an imperfect but beautiful picture of the church, God’s eternal family.

Whether or not we are blessed to share in faith with our own family unit, each of us should work to strengthen the families around us, as they are a means by which God displays his goodness. As we pray and work to support families, we should also strengthen and support the other God-ordained groups we constitute: our local churches, which are the immediate, incarnate manifestation of the eternal family of God — the church, consisting of all God’s people from every place and time.

In nearly all the places persecuted Christians live today, the cultures are much more collective than ours — strongly focused on groups, not individuals. Most people in the world today are, in this way, like those we read about in the New Testament, considering themselves strongly, if not inextricably, tied to their extended families and tribes. This can be helpful when people come to Christ as one, like Cornelius’ entire household in Acts 10. But this kind of communal thinking can also be a barrier to individuals coming to faith, an antecedent to persecution.

The Scriptures present us with something much more profound than either the radical individualism we see in Western culture, with human egos enthroned as gods, or the kind of communal thinking manifest within neo-Marxism or even overt Communism. Each of us must individually enter God’s kingdom through personal faith in Christ, but the only relationship God has made available to us is one with him and with the other members of his eternal family. Biblical Christianity is neither individualist nor Communist, neither selfishness disguised as liberty nor totalitarianism masquerading as equality. We are, each of us, set truly free in Christ, which makes us part of God’s eternal family. God gives us true personal freedom — in Christ and with each other.

In Acts 18, we see Crispus come to Christ “together with his entire household.” Whether you and I are currently rejoicing about the godliness of our households or sorrowing for its lack, I pray that the households in Scripture and those of the persecuted Christians in the pages of this magazine will encourage us to pray for them in perseverance and serve them in humility.

About the cover: In more collectivistic cultures like Nepal’s, the decision by one individual to follow Christ affects the entire family. For family members like Gauri, Monika and Manu, that can mean exclusion from their larger family and clan.



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LEAVING SHIVA *for Salvation in Christ*

When a Hindu priestess in Nepal turned to the church for help, she committed to following Christ — even at the cost of losing her community and reputation.

Anu Dani was not just a worshiper of the Hindu god Shiva. She was an ascetic devotee, or *sadhvi*, of the god, who is known as the Destroyer. *Sadhvis* and their male counterparts, *sadhus*, renounce the material world. Some even conduct their own funeral, signifying that they are dead to material desires. Their devotion and ascetism grants them a divine status among Hindus. Anu's fervent commitment was so well known that the local priests gave her open access to the temple as a sort of priestess instead of making her wait in line with others coming to offer sacrifices to the idols.

"I was a very strong Shiva follower," she said. "When I got into the temple, I spent hours and hours in meditation." She even began to resemble the images of her god, her hair matted into snakelike dreadlocks which she piled onto the crown of her head, her body adorned with paint and sacred beads. Seemingly in

"People considered me a healer, but I couldn't heal even my own daughter. That was a terrible thing for me. That is what led me to go to church."

return for her devotion, Anu gained the ability to tell fortunes and heal people, skills which earned her a good income and reputation.

A problem arose, though, because of the one part of the material world Anu could not renounce: her infant daughter, Monika. When Monika became gravely ill, nothing Anu or the other sadhus, seers and priests did brought healing. Anu and her husband, Prakash, took Monika to different doctors and hospitals, and still nothing relieved the painful boils and nodules that were taking over the 3-year-old's body.

"People considered me a healer, but I couldn't heal even my own daughter," Anu said. "That was a terrible thing for me. That is what led me to go to church."

Anu didn't come to church out of any interest in Jesus Christ. She had just heard around town that in the church people could be freed of evil spirits. For Anu, this was a last resort. Monika could not eat, and she was becoming so frail and weak that Anu could not even risk carrying her in a sling on her back, but instead had to carefully carry the limp child in her arms.

Just stepping into the church, Anu felt something different than her experience in Shiva's temple: a sense of hope. When she was greeted, she expressed her nagging fear that the unknown God of this church would not help her and conveyed the pressing need for her daughter's healing.

The Christians there gladly prayed for Monika and Anu. When they had finished, Anu recalled, the nodules and boils had disappeared from Monika's body. Anu felt certain that the God of this church was the real God. When Prakash met Anu and Monika on their way home, Anu told him, "I am going to go to the church now." "I will also come," her husband replied.

Choosing Sides

In Anu's mind, following the Christian God was a simple choice: He showed himself to be the true God, so she owed him her devotion. Her family, however, did not see the situation the same way. "It is not necessary that you go to church, because your daughter is already healed," they argued.

The family's appeal to Prakash to return to Hindu worship was even stronger. As the oldest son, he was responsible for conducting funeral rites to ensure his parents a favourable rebirth in the cycle of reincarnation. He wavered and gave in.

Anu considered whether her husband and extended family might be right. "In my mind I was struggling," Anu recalled. "After my daughter got healed, shall I not follow? I said, 'No, I will follow,' and I had joy in my heart. I thought if I have found peace in Jesus, then I am ready to leave all my family, no problem. Therefore, I left everything behind and decided to follow Jesus."

When Anu's parents and siblings saw that they could not convince her, they kicked her out of the family home. The pastor of the church where she learned about salvation in Jesus Christ gave her a place to stay at the church. She lived there for a week, praying and studying God's Word.

Her pastor also encouraged her to particularly pray for her husband. "One day he will also come to believe Jesus," he said. She did so, even waking in the middle of the night to pray for his salvation. At the end of the first week, Prakash joined her at the church, ready to follow Christ too. They returned to live in their village, about an hour from the church, but they still faced opposition. ■



▲ Ascetic devotees of a Hindu god, *sadhus* and *sadhvis*, renounce the material world. Some make a living telling fortunes or offering healing. As a *sadhvi*, Anu Dani could not heal her daughter.



TO HONOUR PARENTS OR TO HONOUR CHRIST?

According to a Front-Line Worker in Nepal, Prakash's dilemma as the eldest son in his family is a common stumbling block for Hindu men in coming to faith in Jesus Christ.

The pressure they experience, he explained, isn't simply that they are turning away from the family's traditional religion. They believe that they are jeopardizing the souls of their loved ones if they are not willing to perform the Hindu rites, which include igniting the fire that consumes the body of the deceased parent.

"The final rites are extremely important to Hindus," shared a Christian from India familiar with these customs. Hindus believe that "if the last rites are not performed as they are supposed to be, it really affects their next reincarnated life. If the son is not performing the rites, if he is not there, then he is preventing the parents from peacefully transitioning onward in their spiritual journey and attaining proper continuity in the cycle of rebirth. To them, it may have serious eternal consequences in their worldview."

The Front-Line Worker added that Hindu men, even when sincerely interested in knowing Christ, often postpone their decision out of a sense of responsibility for their parents.

"We have actually had people who said, 'I believe what you are saying is true, but until my parents die, I can't change. I want you to teach this to my son or my daughter, because what you have is a better way,'" he said.

Pray for Hindu men like Prakash as they struggle to balance honouring their parents with leaving Hinduism and pursuing Christ wholeheartedly. Ask the Lord to empower them to follow Christ and be a courageous and loving witness to their parents who are bound within the falsehood of their karmic Hindu worldview.

▲ In Hindu tradition, the oldest son is responsible for his parents' funeral rites, including lighting the funeral pyre that contains the loved one's body.

Nepalese society is organized according to a Hindu caste system that is meant to represent the spiritual system of *karma*, or cause and effect that impacts one's state of reincarnation. Individuals are expected to marry, work, socialize and worship within their caste. Interacting with other castes — especially those lower than one's own — affects one's community standing and religious purity. Those who come to Christ out of a Hindu background are very often considered low caste no matter their previous caste status.

Anu and Prakash's families were from the Chhetri caste, which is a higher caste in Nepal, but by becoming Christians they were relegated to the lowest caste. "Now you have become untouchable, because you have embraced a foreign God," they told Anu and Prakash.

Locals would not share food or allow them to use the well, forcing them to travel a long distance just to get water. Anu and Prakash could not attend family or community events, and Monika would not be permitted to attend the local school. They had only the clothes they

"Now you have become untouchable, because you have embraced a foreign God."

were wearing when they were evicted from their home.

But the loss and isolation didn't dampen their faith.

"I continued to keep my faith even though it was challenging and the persecution situations were there," Anu said.

She and Prakash asked to be baptized only a week later. The church celebrated with them at the riverside, and their pastor gifted them with a set of clothes each so that they could change out of their wet garments.

An Untouchable Overcomer

God's provision and care for Anu and her family through the local and global body of Christ continue to be a testimony to the local community. The church helped provide the family with their own well and a small house, where they breed goats.

Prakash had previously struggled to find work because of mental health challenges, but through prayer, he has grown stronger in faith and in health, enabling him to work steadily.

"Your God has provided everything!" Prakash's father declared one day in amazement.

"In the beginning, everybody was insulting, but now even those people who didn't used to talk to us, now they are speaking with us, interacting with us," Anu said.

They began their Christian life attending church an hour away, but their pastor presented them with a new challenge as they returned to their village. He asked them to join a local house-church with three other families — families of the low Dalit caste, which they had previously considered far inferior to their own caste position. Anu and Prakash embraced this challenge, choosing Christian fellowship over adherence to the Hindu caste system.

For a while, Anu preserved one photograph of herself as a sadhvi and a few meditation beads as reminders. One day during prayer, she felt conviction to put them away for good so that she could never be tempted by looking back

at her old life. She got rid of them immediately to mark her freedom from that part of her past.

Now, rather than being tempted to seek mystical power through an idol, she wields prayer as her weapon. "It is prayer to God that has made me strong," she said. "Now, whatever happens, even if I have to leave the village again, I am not going to leave Christ." ■



▲ Anu and Prakash were baptized in the river in their last set of clothes — their only remaining possessions after being driven from their home for their faith in Christ. *Inset:* Today, Anu is free of the spirit worship that once dominated her life.



When Gospel Seeds **YIELD DISSENSION**

Nagenndra remembers first hearing the Gospel as a teenager when Christians came to his village distributing tracts. His family followed Hinduism, and since he didn't do "anything bad," Nagenndra didn't see the need to embrace what was taught in the tract. "I thought that I have my own religion, so I put my faith in the Hindu religion," he said.

Years passed before the seed that was planted through that Gospel tract was cultivated. His nephew, a Christian, gave him a Bible, and for five years, Nagenndra read God's Word.

As Nagenndra read, he was intrigued by Christ. Nagenndra found him to be very different than the Hindu gods and goddesses that his family followed. "To bring peace, they Hindu gods have killed someone," he noted. "Jesus did not kill anyone. Rather he gave his life on the cross." As he read, he developed a respect for the Bible and considered it holy Scripture.

Taking Root and Tested

One day as he was walking to his fields, he saw a woman distributing New Testaments to children. Knowing God's

Word is sacred, he reprimanded her. "This is the Holy Scripture. Do not give it to the children, because they do not know the value of it. They may throw it away or they may not read it at home, ... then we are despising the Holy Scripture." He proceeded to tell her that she should give copies only to those who can read, who are interested and who understand the value of this holy book.

Recognizing that he was seeking the Lord, the woman contacted another Christian who invited him to a local church, where Nagenndra came to

"I have completely dedicated my life to Jesus."

faith in Christ, fully convinced that Christ is the only way to experience peace in his life. About one month later, Nagenndra was baptized.

But the peace Nagenndra experienced when the seed of the Gospel took root in his heart created tension at home.

When Nagenndra told his wife that he had become a Christian, she was angry. "We have our own religion ... our own gods," his wife argued with him. "Why did you change your religion?"

"I have completely dedicated my life to Jesus," he told her.

His wife's anger was rooted in fear. She knew their community would despise them, excommunicate them, beat them and possibly kick them out of the village for this. Nepal is a collectivist culture in which significant decisions are made by the head of the family or the community leader; decisions by other individuals are unacceptable and opposed. Families and communities especially pressure those who leave their family's religion and turn to Christ.

Nagenndra tried to assure his wife not to worry about how their community could respond to his faith in Christ and encouraged her to join him at church. After declining his invitation, she began to make life difficult for him, blaming him for various problems.

To get away from the tension at home, Nagenndra has gone each night to his fields, where he stays in a thatched hut (pictured on previous page) and prays for his wife, three daughters and two sons.

His children eventually took an



▲ Nagenndra continues discipling his children in the Christian faith as he travels to share the Gospel throughout his area.

interest in the Gospel. When he first received an audio Bible, his children listened too. They loved it so much they began fighting over it. Since he acquired more audio Bibles, they have listened every day, and he is using the stories to disciple his children, ensuring they understand them.

As his wife feared, their community has opposed Nagenndra for his decision to follow Christ. Some have threatened to kick him out of the village, saying he doesn't deserve to be part of society. But every evening as he rests in his hut, he prays for them, too.

A Surprising Harvest

The tension at home and from the community has not deterred Nagenndra from sharing the Gospel, planting seeds like those sown in his heart as a teenager. "Whether it is in the marketplace or in my shop or at home or walking around in the village," he said, "whoever I come across that is interested, I am sharing the Gospel." He has distributed Bibles, and every day he meets with six men who are seeking Christ.

Despite the troubles his wife and

his community have created for him, Nagenndra has seen God's blessings. Nagenndra recently experienced a great harvest of his crops, allowing him to pay off his debts. "Now I have a savings and am able to support my children's school fees." Through this witness, he believes his wife is beginning to understand that the God he worships is the true God. When asked how he would respond if his crops did not do well, he answered simply and with calm confidence. Even if his crops fail, God will "definitely help the righteous man."

Nagenndra said that he is going to start building a house, where he would like to begin a church fellowship in one of the rooms. Nagenndra currently has to travel several kilometers to attend church services. "If we could start the fellowship here," he said, "they will hear the Gospel."

A Front-Line Worker recently sent an update that "God is changing his wife's heart." In his thatch-covered hut, Nagenndra continues to pray for his wife's salvation — that the seed of the Gospel that once yielded dissension will take root and grow. ■



Members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) have killed, wounded and displaced thousands of Christians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), often looting and burning their homes and businesses.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

ADF Attacks Continue

Militants from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), an Islamist group, killed at least 43 people, including nine children, at a church in Komanda during the night of July 26–27, 2025. They kidnapped several others and set homes and shops on fire. Since 2018, the ADF has targeted Christians in recurring attacks. VOM supports nearly 4,000 internally displaced Believers in DRC who have fled widespread Islamist attacks.

In 2019, Jean Kaikunja lost half of his right leg in an ADF attack. ADF militants shot Jean's wife, Josephine, as she worked in their crop field. After Jean found Josephine's body, he began carrying her home when the ADF found him and asked if he was a Muslim. When he responded that he was a Christian, they attacked him with a machete and cut off his leg below the knee. Nearby Congolese troops heard Jean screaming and took him to a hospital. Though he survived the attack, he struggled emotionally and has had trouble sleeping.

VOM recently helped Jean and others like him access care designed to help heal the emotional and spiritual wounds of persecution. After receiving the care, Jean said he could sleep much better. Praise God for Jean's healing, and pray for other Congolese Christians like him who have suffered at the hands of Islamists.

AFGHANISTAN

Refugees Forced to Return

More than 6 million Afghans have fled the country due to warfare, stretching from the 1979 Russian invasion to the Taliban takeover in 2021. Most of the refugees fled to Iran and Pakistan, with a much smaller group fleeing to Tajikistan. In 2024, Pakistan began forcing Afghan refugees to return to their home country, with a deadline of spring 2025. In June 2025, after its war with Israel, Iran also ordered all Afghans living there to depart, and in July 2025, the Tajik government ordered all Afghans to leave.

Some of these Afghans have become followers of Christ while living as refugees; others are Afghan Christians who sought safety when the Taliban took over. "They are Christians who already fled persecution in their home villages and fear what could happen to them when they return," a Front-Line Worker said.

Many of these Afghan Believers will attempt to hide in Afghanistan's larger cities, but without family support networks, life will be extremely challenging. Front-Line Workers say Afghan Christians could be arrested and charged with apostasy, which carries a death sentence. They are concerned for wives and children who will be without support if their husbands and fathers are arrested. But the forced mass remigration to Afghanistan will also present opportunities for Afghan Christians to share the reason for the hope that lies within them with other former refugees struggling to resettle in their homeland.



Afghan refugees receive supplies to help them survive. Many of these Afghans, including some who have become followers of Christ while living abroad as refugees, are being forced to return to Afghanistan.

PAY IT FORWARD!

*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: **For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.***

Matthew 6:19-21

The "Church" is not a building you meet in, on a Sunday.

YOU are the "Church"

Similarly, the Persecuted "Church" is *YOUR Christian Brother or YOUR Christian Sister* who faces challenges to avoid life threatening situations and even Martyrdom, just for being a born-again Believer.

Let them know they are not forgotten.

They ALL need your prayers.

Provide help for those who have suffered persecution themselves or for the families of Christians imprisoned or martyred because of their witness. Such help will assist in the immediate aftermath of a persecution event and in meeting ongoing or long-term needs.



Your gift may be used to assist with needs like these:

- living expenses
- children's educational needs
- relocation within a nation
- legal assistance
- vocational training

Grow deeper in fellowship with our persecuted Christian family? Become a Global Ministry Partner.

When you commit to a monthly gift, you'll become a VOM Global Ministry Partner, helping address all needs in service to our persecuted brothers and sisters while being their voice to others.

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Once complete, please email it to bianca@vomsa.org

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

Prayer Diary

April 2026

W	1.	Algeria	Thank God for the many Christians in the Berber community. Pray that they will persevere in faith.
T	2.	Rwanda	Pray that pastors will have the boldness and courage to continue sharing the Gospel despite government pressure.
F	3.	Philippines	Islamists have killed Christians on the island of Mindanao. Pray for the comfort and provision of families of martyrs.
S	4.	Uganda	Praise God for churches in Uganda that reach out to their neighbours and share the Gospel with Muslims.
S	5.	Maldives	Pray for the few known indigenous Believers, who face imprisonment or expulsion if identified as a Christian.
M	6.	Kyrgyzstan	Pray that Kyrgyz working in other countries will learn about Christ and place their faith in him.
T	7.	Somalia	Most Somalis believe that to be Somali is to be Muslim. Pray for a great awakening to the Gospel among Somalis.
W	8.	Benin	Benin is the birthplace of voodooism. Pray that many will flee from voodooism and find freedom in Christ.
T	9.	Indonesia	Pray for faithful evangelists who share the Gospel among more than 220 million Muslims in Indonesia.
F	10.	Burundi	Pray for the protection and provision of Christian converts from Islam who are persecuted by their communities.
S	11.	Azerbaijan	Pray that secret police sent to monitor and raid worship services will instead come to faith in Christ.
S	12.	Mali	Pray that more Christians will have access to Bibles in their local language.
M	13.	North Korea	Using Philippians 1:9–11 as a guide, pray for the discipleship of North Korean defectors who come to know Christ.
T	14.	Malawi	Pray that Yao Christians will have courage to stand firm in their faith amid intense opposition.
W	15.	Comoros	Pray that Christian workers will complete the task of translating the Bible into native languages.
T	16.	Turkmenistan	Pray that Christians will boldly seek opportunities to share their faith.
F	17.	Sudan	Pray for Front-Line Workers helping those who have fled to the Nuba Mountains for refuge from the civil war.
S	18.	Pakistan	Many Christians in Pakistan have limited access to Bibles. Pray that every Believer will have access to God's Word.
S	19.	Venezuela	Using Romans 5:3–5 as a guide, pray that Venezuelan Christians will persevere through hardships and remain faithful.
M	20.	Bangladesh	Pray that Christian converts from Islam will be guarded from those who wish to harm them (Psalm 140:4).
T	21.	Nepal	Pray for Gambir, who was transformed after hearing the Gospel of John. Pray for others who receive audio Bibles.
W	22.	Honduras	Pray for persecuted Christians who have had their homes burned or livestock killed.
T	23.	Turkiye	Using Psalm 91 as a guide, pray for the protection of pastors who are targeted by Islamists.
F	24.	Jordan	Pray for Syrian refugees who have become Christians and now fear being returned to Syria.
S	25.	Egypt	Thank God for Egyptian missionaries who work to advance the Gospel throughout the Middle East.
S	26.	Sudan	Pray for Pastor Morris and his wife, Cabina, as they minister to thousands of displaced Sudanese.
M	27.	Niger	Pray for Pastor Moussa, who was imprisoned on false charges, and for his wife, Lariya, who was rejected by her family.
T	28.	Vietnam	Ask the Lord to comfort Tien, Duyen, Duy, Sua and others whose loved ones were killed because of their Christian faith.
W	29.	Bahrain	Pray for our Christian brothers and sisters who are rejected by their families for leaving Islam.
T	30.	Qatar	Pray that every Qatari Christian will be brought into fellowship with other Believers.

Please Stand with Persecuted Christians



Serve persecuted Christians in hostile areas and restricted nations and be a voice for them. Your gift addresses all ministry needs, including the immediate needs of our persecuted brothers and sisters, while calling Christians around the world into closer fellowship with the persecuted and to a deeper commitment to Christ.

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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



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