“Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid.”
Isaiah 12:2
**India**

**Monday 1 July**
The rise of Hindu extremism threatens the very survival of the church in India (see Magazine p7). Pray that the BJP, a Hindu nationalist party that was returned to power in May’s elections, will resist the influence of extremist groups who want to wipe out non-Hindu groups from India. Pray that they will govern wisely and ensure justice for all Indians, including Christians and other minorities.

**Tuesday 2 July**
Following the re-election of the BJP, many fear that anti-conversion laws will be put in place in more states – eight states already have anti-conversion laws and they are frequently abused to target Christians and other minorities. Ask the Lord to prevent the spread of these laws in other states.

**Wednesday 3 July**
In response to the increase in persecution, Open Doors is stepping up its efforts through local partners to strengthen the most vulnerable believers with practical support, biblical training and legal aid. Ask God to encourage His people in India to stand firm through the prayers and support of the church worldwide.

**Thursday 4 July**
Give thanks for the courage of Open Doors local partners like Abishek, who take great risks to help those who have suffered violent attacks (see Magazine p8). Ask God to protect Abishek and use him to bring hope and healing to vulnerable believers when they need it most.

**Friday 5 July**
Jenita’s husband was murdered for his faith leaving her with three children to raise (aged 5, 3 and 18 months). Pray for wisdom for Open Doors partners supporting the family. Abishek says, “I went to that family and I cried with them, I encouraged them, I comforted them from the Word of God. [Jenita] was telling me, ‘Thank you so much. Nobody has come like that and comforted us.’”

**Saturday 6 July**
Pray for Naveen*, whose neighbour falsely accused him of conversion and insulting Hindu deities after he held a prayer meeting in his house. There is an ongoing court case against him. Pray for Naveen’s encouragement, and ask God to change his neighbour’s heart and draw him to Himself.

**Sunday 7 July**
Open Doors local partners are providing basic legal training this month to help believers to know how to exercise their legal rights. Pray that this training will equip Christians with a greater knowledge of how to defend themselves against false accusations and imprisonment.

**Monday 8 July**
Praise God that Open Doors partners were able to help some churches to reopen officially after they had been closed down due to false charges by Hindu extremists. Ask God to bless and protect these churches and pray that more churches can be reached with this kind of support.

**Sri Lanka**

**Tuesday 9 July**
Pray for God’s comfort for the many believers bereaved in the Easter bomb attacks which killed over 250 people (see Magazine p14). Pastor Kumaran, whose 12-year-old son Malkiya was killed, says: “I’m not asking God why, I’m only asking how I can pass through this, and how long.”

**Wednesday 10 July**
Pray for those suffering from physical injuries or trauma in the wake of the attacks. Ask God to heal them physically and spiritually and pray for Open Doors workers providing trauma care and practical support for around 250 affected families.

**Thursday 11 July**
Give thanks that many believers are holding fast to Jesus, despite their grief. Verl, whose 13-year-old son Jackson was killed, says: “God is good, God is great. My foundation is Jesus Christ. I’m zero. Jesus is everything. My son was mine for 13 years, but he is His forever.”

**Friday 12 July**
Ask the Lord to unite and strengthen the churches in Sri Lanka. Christians living in majority Buddhist areas face strong opposition from non-believers, including verbal harassment, social intimidation and even death threats. Pray for the believers to be strong and very courageous.

**Bangladesh**

**Saturday 13 July**
The Bangladeshi government is increasingly giving in to the demands of local Islamic groups, which monitor minorities, especially converts to Christianity. Ask the Lord to give believers courage and boldness to tell others about His love.

**Sunday 14 July**
Pray for a Youth Camp being held in July which will bring together young people from different backgrounds and denominations. Pray for unity, for openness to learn from each other, and for Christ-centred lives that will impact their communities.

**Monday 15 July**
Pray for Open Doors workers visiting discipleship and adult literacy projects to assess how these activities are going, how they can be improved and what the challenges are. Pray for safe travel, good interactions with the believers and wisdom to know how best to strengthen the church.
Give thanks for ANSWEARED PRAYER

Thank you to everyone who has been praying for our trauma work in Nigeria. We are very happy to announce that the Open Doors’ trauma centre in Nigeria has welcomed its first visitors.

The launch had been delayed for a year because of the deteriorating security situation in northern Nigeria, but the doors have now finally opened, and already the courses are transforming lives.

Peter,* a pastor from northern Nigeria, attended one of the first courses. He said, “Suddenly, I saw the Scripture in new light, clearly indicating how God understands my pain and brokenness and how He has been in my situation. He understands it and offers hope and healing.

He added, “[This training] led me and my brokenness straight to the foot of the cross and I’m willing more than ever to be made whole.”

The centre is intended as a place where trauma victims can come for extended care to find peace and to start out on the road to healing. But the centre also trains Christian leaders and teachers in trauma care and response. Already, 15 institutions have sent representatives for training. These leaders are crucial, as they will refer survivors from the field to the centre and will also receive them back home for longterm care and support.

One of the courses was a clinic for survivors of attacks by Muslim Fulani herdsmen. These victims were driven from their communities and have been living in camps for internally displaced people, so this was the first time for months that they had had a good meal and a bed to sleep in.

For one participant, who lost his daughter in an attack, it was a sad, but powerful moment: “I have been feeling numb since then. I have not been able to grieve and process my pains. During the programme I broke down and cried for the first time. That night I slept well without any bad dreams for the first time.”

The trauma centre has also held its first women’s clinic, welcoming 15 women who had experienced terrorist attacks.

“Prior to the programme, they were quiet and reserved,” said a trauma care trainer. “However, after going through the healing sessions and each woman sharing her story, there was tremendous change. They sang and danced every evening for about an hour before bedtime! Many of them said they thought all hope was lost, but their hope was rekindled at the programme.”

PRAY

• Thank the Lord for the generous support that has enabled the centre to open, and for the impact that it is already having on peoples’ lives

• For wisdom and patience for the centre workers as they bring God’s love to the wounded and the broken

• For protection for the centre, staff, volunteers and visitors. The situation in the area remains volatile.

You can watch a film from the trauma centre at www.opendoorsuk.org/nigeria

*names changed for security reasons
Tuesday 16 July – China
Open Doors partners are working on audio versions of the New Testament for an unreached Buddhist people group. Many believers are illiterate. Pray for the spiritual health of the translators, publishers and their families, and for protection against security breaches.

Wednesday 17 July – China
Ammar*, a believer from a Muslim background in northwest China, was arrested six months ago by the authorities. He is forced to study atheism every day and must pass exams if he is to salvage any hope of release. Ask God to protect his mind and give him strength to persevere in his faith.

Thursday 18 July – North Korea
Ask God to protect Open Doors secret workers smuggling food into the country. A North Korean believer told us, “Recently, North Korean citizens were asked to donate money towards several construction projects. In the meantime, often we don’t get any food rations. The situation of the powerless North Korean citizens is getting worse.”

Friday 19 July – Vietnam
Tran* (18), his wife Chau* (16) and their 7-month-old baby were thrown out of their village when they chose to follow Jesus. They were forced to live in a small tent in a forest. Ask the Lord to strengthen them in their faith and pray for those helping them to build a new house.

Saturday 20 July – Laos
Any* pastors a congregation of 580 believers. He is also a health care volunteer, thanks to training funded by Open Doors. This has helped him share Christ with those who are sick. “Persecution is not as hard as it was before,” he says. “Before, the kids would run away whenever they saw me holding my medicine kit. But now they are no longer afraid. I thank God for making me attend this training.”

Sunday 21 July – Laos
Nathee* came to Christ after being healed of an illness. He attended a persecution survival course run by Open Doors and now wants to go to local villages to share the gospel. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide him and enable him to speak the word of God boldly.

Monday 22 July – Myanmar
Pray for children’s camps taking place this summer. Pray that they will be places of fun where children meet Jesus, and that they will have courage to share what they’ve learned with their families.

Persecuted women

Tuesday 23 July – Ethiopia
When Abeba* (20) left Islam to follow Jesus, her father threatened her so severely that she fled home. Open Doors helped her with livelihood training so she could set up a cafe. Ask God to bless the business and pray that she will influence her community with the gospel.

Wednesday 24 July – Ethiopia
Berhane’s* family rejected her when she became a Christian, but her faith continued to grow. She became an evangelist who works in dangerous areas. “I go places (with the gospel) where almost no one else dares to go. God is my shepherd. He is the one walking with me.” She has now planted nine churches! Pray for more workers to join her in this important work.

Thursday 25 July – CAR
Pray for widow Leonie (45), whose in-laws rejected her after she refused to have traditional Islamic mourning rites at her husband’s funeral. She must now bring up her children alone. “I thank God for using the church to support me,” she says. “If they hadn’t been here, where would I be today? I will never leave this Jesus. Pray for me, please.”

Friday 26 July – Vietnam
Ahn* ministers to youth in her community but is facing opposition from the authorities. She recently attended persecution survival training run by Open Doors partners. “The course helped me know about the reality of persecution,” she says. “That’s why we were able to respond with kindness when government officials came and persecuted us. I was even able to share the gospel to them.”

Saturday 27 July – Kyrgyzstan
When Amira* chose to follow Jesus, her family put her under house arrest and tried to force her to marry a Muslim man. She escaped and is now in a safe house. Pray for her safety and protection from being forced into marriage.

Sunday 28 July – China
Praise God for an Open Doors project caring for North Korean women who have been trafficked to China. Pray for a sister who recently came to faith through this project. Ask God to use Open Doors workers to help her grow in faith, and pray that many more women will discover Jesus through this project.

Monday 29 July – India
Open Doors’ local partners provide seminars for women who face persecution. Ask God to use this training to bring healing and strength to all who attend. One attendee says, “This seminar has given me strength to carry on through my difficult days.”

Tuesday 30 July – Yemen
The few Yemeni believers are often very isolated. Pray for three young women who recently came to faith in Jesus. Ask God to provide a safe way for them to study His Word and meet with other believers.

Wednesday 31 July – UK&I
The findings of the Foreign Office Review into UK support for persecuted Christians are due for release in July. Open Doors has been able to provide detailed evidence and challenging recommendations to the review team. Pray that these recommendations will be followed up by the government.

*name changed for security reasons
‘I am not well educated but now I can be a professional tailor’

Indian Christians from rural areas are often poor and face discrimination because of their faith, particularly in the area of job opportunities. But with your help, Open Doors is working through our local partners to provide vocational training so our brothers and sisters can earn an income and provide for their families.

Richa is a tailoring teacher who works in one of 15 small training centres set up across India to teach persecuted women tailoring skills. “We equip the women by training them in skills like tailoring and embroidery,” she says. “After getting trained they can either work professionally in shops or open their own boutique. It’s a six-month course and by the time they finish, they are trained enough to stitch a variety of Indian clothing.”

Rita is another beneficiary of the tailoring course. She shares her challenges sadly. “I come from a very poor family. We are socially boycotted in our community because of our Christian faith. We are not given equal opportunities to work even as daily wages workers in our village. Our ration card (an official document by the government that enables the poorest families to purchase basic food items at subsidised rates) was also dismissed after we became Christians and we were very discouraged.

“I then came to know about this tailoring centre. I attended the classes regularly and I have learnt a lot. I am so thankful to Open Doors partners for this opportunity. Tailoring classes are very expensive everywhere else but here I am learning for free.”

As well as teaching valuable skills, the centres also have another purpose. “We also want to strengthen these women spiritually,” explains Richa. “Before the classes begin we have a small fellowship where we share from the Word and pray for concerns.”

Kavitha recently completed her training at the centre. Her eyes twinkling, she shares, “When the teacher informed us about starting a sewing centre I immediately joined. I am so grateful that today I am able to stitch not only for myself but also for my child and my other family members.”

Lalita’s voice softens as she explains how desperately she needed this training. “I have three children and our livelihood depends solely on my husband, who is a daily wages labour. After becoming Christians, we have been socially boycotted and discriminated against in our community. I am not well educated and so I could only work as a domestic helper, which doesn’t pay well. Now, thankfully, I can be a professional tailor and earn to support my family.”

“I have been learning tailoring and embroidery for the last four months in this centre,” says Devika, another trainee. “Apart from the practical skills I am acquiring here, I am also blessed spiritually. We pray, sing and learn from the Word. We feel so strengthened.”

PRAY

• Ask God to bless each woman taking part in this training so she can use her new skills to earn a better income

• For wisdom for Open Doors partners running these projects. Ask God to expand their reach so that more women can be strengthened through projects like this.
**India**

**Thursday 1 August**
Open Doors supports local Rapid Response teams who bring emergency aid, medical care and spiritual support to victims of violence. Pray for protection for those travelling into dangerous situations, and pray that they would be the loving hands of Jesus to those who are hurting.

**Friday 2 August**
Kirti* is a young widow whose husband was killed for his Christian faith. She was seriously injured in the attack, making it difficult for her to work. Pray for Open Doors partners providing her with medical care and livelihood support, and pray that her children will do well in their education.

**Saturday 3 August**
Please pray for Kiran*. The village chief is trying to take his land by force because he has converted to Christianity. His son was arrested under false allegations of conversion and brutally beaten by the police. Pray for protection for Kiran, for healing for his son and for a change of heart for the village chief.

**Sunday 4 August**
In remote parts of central India, Christians are isolated because pastors and Christians from other areas are prohibited from entering the villages; many villages have hoardings saying that Christians are not allowed. Pray for strength and comfort for isolated believers, and that Christians will soon be free to enter these villages again.

**Monday 5 August**
Pray for Open Doors local partners providing persecution survival training to help Christians to respond biblically when they face persecution. One trainee says, “I now encourage people because I know they are not alone. They are also supported by your prayers.” Pray that those who attend will be filled with courage and boldness.

**Tuesday 6 August**
Ranjit* and Ranveer* are under police surveillance because of their outreach activities. They have been called by the police for questioning many times. Pray for their protection, and for courage and wisdom as they share the love of Jesus with others.

**Wednesday 7 August**
Open Doors’ local partners provide biblical training for church leaders who are facing opposition. “We need to give training to the church leaders,” explains one partner. “It will boost their faith to be persistent.” Pray that the church leaders who attend will leave feeling equipped and encouraged.

**Hope for the Middle East**

**Thursday 8 August – Syria**
Pray for Syria’s young people. “Most of them are lost in life and searching for their purpose,” says Riene, the wife of a youth leader. “We pray for our youth to be strengthened in faith and to have the courage to go out in the world and lead people to Jesus, to be a light in their homes, colleges, jobs and among their friends.”

**Friday 9 August – Syria**
Poverty has forced many Syrian children to leave school and become beggars or criminals, living on the streets. Thank God for the centers of hope run by Open Doors partners all around Syria, where many children find love and care. Pray that these street children will also be reached with food, clothes and education.

**Tuesday 13 August – Iraq**
Many young people from the Nineveh plain are unemployed and struggling to find jobs. Pray that livelihood training and income generating projects provided by Open Doors partners will motivate young people to stay in their towns and villages.

**Wednesday 14 August – Iraq**
The increase in the number of militias supported by Iran on the streets of Baghdad is causing fear and panic among civilians, especially because they are ready and willing to fight with Iran against US forces. Pray for peace for Iraq, and pray that God’s people will know that God is their salvation and will trust and not be afraid (Isaiah 12:2).

**Thursday 15 August – Iraq**
Pray for the church in Iraq to stand strong in the midst of persecution. Pray that they will play a positive role in their communities and will be a light in the darkness that has spread across the country.

*name changed for security reasons.*
Leaving idols for the God who speaks

In the remote rainforest of the Central African Republic, Pierre was born as the son of the village high priest. He was expected to follow in his father’s footsteps, performing rituals in worship of the local god Dakwe. But one day, a deacon visiting from a neighbouring village offered to pray with Pierre.

“When he was praying, it was as if my heart was vibrating,” Pierre says. “So, when he finished praying, I asked him: ‘Can I go and try your God?’

Pierre attended church for a month before deciding to give his life to Christ. But at first, like many converts from traditional religions, Pierre tried to mix his new faith in Christ with his old beliefs.

“One day, I fell sick with a swollen stomach. First of all, we started with that idol, Dakwe. Every time that sick people came to us, we would place them before that idol and they would receive healing. Why then, when I fell sick, they were praying for me, but it wasn’t working?”

After three years ill at home, Pierre heard a voice that he will never forget...

“I heard a voice that said, ‘Pierre, you shall be healed.’ We had a god, Dakwe, who healed us, who did everything for us, but he did not speak. I had never heard that voice before. But here was God telling me, ‘Pierre, you shall be healed.’ So I decided that I would follow only Him.

As a sign that he had left ancestral worship behind, Pierre decided to burn the container in which the idol Dakwe dwelt.

“I decided to pull out all the gods that were in our house and I burned them all... I gathered them all up and I burnt everything. But it was not easy.”

Pierre’s decision came at a cost; the villagers reacted angrily and threatened him. He survived several attempts on his life – proof to him that Jesus was more powerful than Dakwe. After he received training from Open Doors partners, Pierre became a pastor. Now he preaches the gospel to those who fear the magic of the idols.

“I am a great witness to my brothers in this district... Pray that those idols would have no impact but would lose their grip in our district.”

You can watch Pierre tell his story on our Prayer News page: www.opendoorsuk.org/prayernews

Pierre burns an object of pagan worship

Pierre talks to Open Doors partners in CAR

PRAY:

• Thank the Lord for Pierre’s courageous faith and ask Him to continue to protect Pierre from those who oppose him

• Ask God to use Pierre’s testimony to help many others in his community to discover the freedom that Jesus brings

• For Open Doors partners supporting Christians in this region with discipleship and biblical training to equip them to stand firm in the face of persecution.
Nepal

Friday 16 August
Seema* and her daughter suffer from leprosy, but because they are Christians, their family members don’t support them. Ask God to heal Seema and her daughter and provide for their needs. Pray that the hearts of her family will be softened by God’s love.

Saturday 17 August
Arun* is a retired army official who accepted Christ while serving in the military, but experienced persecution in the military forces. He has a vision to create a forum to encourage Christians in the military. Ask God to help him turn his vision into a reality.

Sunday 18 August
The speaker of the Nepal Communist Party has said that international NGOs should be closed down. Most development work in Nepal is carried out by NGOs, so this would devastate those who depend on them for their livelihoods. Ask God to change the hearts of those who are trying to close down NGOs.

Monday 19 August
Pray for a church that has been told to leave the building where it meets after police interrogated its members. So far no one is willing to provide space for the church to hold services. Ask God to provide a new meeting place and pray that the believers will stand strong in their faith.

Tuesday 20 August
Pray for several women’s seminars being run by Open Doors local partners in different parts of Nepal. Pray for protection for all who are travelling to conduct and attend the programmes and pray that the participants will be inspired to apply the teaching in their daily lives.

Wednesday 21 August
Ask God to bless three persecution survival seminars being run by Open Doors this month. One believer who attended a seminar earlier in the year told us, “When my family came to know about my faith, I was beaten and expelled from my family. I have often been discouraged, but I feel so blessed that I could come to this seminar today. I learnt here that we need to cling onto Jesus in all circumstances.”

Thursday 22 August
The UN General Assembly has designated today as the first ever International Day Commemorating Victims of Acts of Violence based on Religion or Belief. Pray that the day will spur those in positions of influence to move from awareness of the issues to impactful change for those facing violence for their faith.

Africa

Friday 23 August – Sudan
Pray for peace in Sudan, as political unrest continues. Ask the Lord to strengthen and protect His people in this time of instability, and pray for wisdom for church leaders as they guide church members through these tumultuous times.

Saturday 24 August – Ethiopia
Pray for Open Doors partners providing medical assistance to 26 believers injured when their church was attacked by a Muslim mob. “We all have been experiencing fear and discouragement,” said the church leaders. “Your presence here, more than any other support, is helping us to overcome fear.”

Sunday 25 August – Eritrea
Over 140 believers were arrested in the capital, Asmara, in May, including 104 women and 14 children. Pray for their physical and spiritual protection and ask the Lord to protect and sustain them.

Monday 26 August – Guinea
Give thanks that Open Doors has been able to dig a well for a small Christian community in the remote village of Bélékpala. “This well has made all the difference,” says Pastor Pierre. “Our fellow villagers saw that we were recognised by other Christians. On top of that we, the hated and ostracised Christians, have invited all our fellow villagers to freely use ‘our’ well.”

Tuesday 27 August – CAR
Pray for Pastor Franco, who is determined to share the gospel with members of the rebel anti-Balaka group. “We want people to put their trust in our Almighty God who gives everlasting life,” says Pastor Franco. “So, we just keep sharing the gospel with them.”

Wednesday 28 August – Nigeria
Keep praying for the release of Christian schoolgirl Leah Sharibu (15), abducted by Boko Haram in February 2018. Ask God to protect and sustain Leah, and strengthen and encourage her parents.

Thursday 29 August – Nigeria
Give thanks that the Open Doors Trauma Centre has finally opened its doors after a year-long delay due to security challenges. A pastor who attended one of the first trauma courses says, “[The training] led me and my brokenness straight to the foot of the cross and I’m willing more than ever to be made whole.”

Friday 30 August – Ivory Coast
When Tiekoma (33) left his traditional religion to follow Jesus, his family was furious and threatened him. They confiscated his farmland, making it very hard for him to survive. Pray for God’s protection and provision for Tiekoma and for the salvation of his family.

Saturday 31 August – DRC
Over 20 attacks on Christian communities were recorded in the first five months of 2019, in which 90 people died, 131 were kidnapped and over 12,000 displaced. “The situation is drastically declining,” says Open Doors’ team leader for the country. “Pray for God to relieve the suffering of the people in this part of the country.”

For the latest news and to sign up for weekly email prayer alerts, go to www.opendoorsuk.org
Hoping in the Lord

“I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in His word I put my hope...” – Psalm 130:5

When trials come and circumstances change for the worse, who do we turn to for stability? Where do we put our hope?

Open Doors partners recently met with Christians in Nepal who run Christian NGOs. They are coming under increasing pressure to shut down after being falsely accused of using their operations to coerce people to convert to Christianity (which is now legally punishable in Nepal).

Last year at least 13 Christians were arrested and more than 22 false accusations of forced conversion were made against Christians in mainstream newspapers.

Threats to Christian leaders and churches have become very common and many are anxious about what might happen next.

One pastor shared openly, “I realise that Christian leaders are monitored and our lives and ministries are always at a risk. I am sometimes very disturbed – but I hope in the Lord.”

Everything around us can shift in the blink of an eye – but our God is a solid Rock upon whom we can stand. Establishing God as our firm foundation when things are going well means that, when tests and trials do come, we can declare that our hope is in the Lord and His Word, ‘for no word from the Lord will ever fail’ (Luke 1:37).

Lord Jesus, thank You that You never change – You are the same yesterday, today and forever. Help me to rely on You when everything around me seems to shift and change. When circumstances threaten to overwhelm me, lead me to the rock that is higher than I.