

CALLING ALL CHURCHES TO OBSERVE

Day of  
**Prayer**  
for the  
**Nation**

18TH AUGUST 2019 AS



Facilitated by  
Evangelical  
Fellowship of  
India

**PRAY FOR THE PEACE,  
PROSPERITY AND  
STABILITY OF  
OUR NATION**

**STAND IN THE GAP! BLESS INDIA!**

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## INTRODUCTION

### EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP OF INDIA

The Evangelical Fellowship of India founded in 1951, is a national alliance of evangelical Christians. As a central network of evangelicals and a service organization, it is the custodian of Evangelical faith, movement and values in India, representing the Evangelical voice, building capacity and promoting participation in nation building.

EFI is a charter member of the World Evangelical Alliance. Its membership includes 55 protestant denominations and related congregations (over 65,000 Churches), over 150 Church related mission agencies and organizations and thousands of individual members

### DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE NATION

God loves the nation of India and is at work in it. The Church has been called to pray and work for the peace, prosperity and stability of the nation. The state of our nation and the challenges it faces, stirs us to look to the face of the Almighty God and to pray for His unceasing blessings on India.

Recognizing the need for intercession, the Evangelical Fellowship of India humbly initiated the “**National Day of Prayer Campaign**” in 2017. EFI Member Churches and Bodies resolved to observe the National Day of Prayer annually on the Sunday closest to Independence Day of India.

Last year over 30000 churches belonging to various denominations across India joined in the intercession for the needs of the nation, united in prayer.

This year EFI is humbly facilitating the observance of the **National Day of Prayer** on **18<sup>th</sup> August 2019**. We appeal to all Churches, Prayer Movements, Christian organizations and individual Christians across denominations, to observe **18<sup>th</sup> August 2019**, which is a **Sunday**, as a day dedicated to prayer for the well-being, peace and prosperity of our country.

## SCRIPTURES TO PRAY FOR OURSELVES

I Timothy 2:1-2 – I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

I Peter 2:17 – Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honour the emperor.

Romans 13:1 – Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

Jeremiah 29:7 – Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.

II Chronicles 7:14 – if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

## SCRIPTURES TO PRAY FOR OUR LEADERS

Psalms 2:10-11 – Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling.

Proverbs 11:14 – For lack of guidance a nation falls, but victory is won through many advisers.

Proverbs 21:1 – The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.

Job 12:23-25 – He makes nations great, and destroys them; he enlarges nations, and disperses them.

Proverbs 2:1-8 – My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, 2) turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding— 3) indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, 4) and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, 5) then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. 6) For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding. 7) He holds success in store for the upright, He is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, 8) for He guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.

## PRAYERS AND PASSAGES

### PRAISE AND RESTORATION

#### PRAISING GOD

O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and you have crowned him with glory and honour. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen—even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth! (Psalm 8:1-9)

Blessed are you, Lord God; Blessed are you for ever. Holy is your name; Blessed are you for ever. Great is your mercy for your people; Blessed are you for ever. Amen

#### THANKFULNESS FOR BEING CHILDREN OF GOD

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12).

**Dear Heavenly Father** we praise you for your amazing and everlasting love towards us. Thank you for sending your Son, the Lord Jesus to be a sacrifice for the sins of the world. We thank you that anyone who believes in you by faith you grant us your grace to them to be called your children. We thank you for assurance of salvation. Help us to share the good news of your love with some today.

#### FORGIVENESS AND RENEWAL

If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land (2 Chronicles 7:14).

**Our Heavenly Father** we believe in your promises. Listen to our prayer, as we humble ourselves before you and ask forgiveness of our sins. You have promised, if we confess our sins, you are faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9) Make us a blessing for our nation and heal our land.

### THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

#### BEING SALT AND LIGHT

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16)

**Dear Heavenly Father**, may our actions draw attention to you, to the richness you bring to all life and the abundance you share, setting the scene for us to share too. Help us to bring light into all the darkness of life, spreading hope for a better world, a world where justice is made real by your children living together in harmony. Help us to bring salt into the blandness of life, encouraging vitality and joy in living in a world that dares to hope for the future that you promise where all your children will know themselves loved and valued and treasured, created in your image, bringing you glory forever.

#### BEING COMPASSIONATE

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

**Dear Loving and Compassionate God**, Giver of all gifts, we pray especially today for the mercy and love You give us. Open our hearts and minds to You. Give us the grace to accept your mercy. As we live each day, we pray for those less fortunate, especially those who are hurting, and whose wounds need to be healed. Help us become involved in ways that show them how deeply we care. Give us the personal courage to listen to their concerns and help them find the solutions to which they are entitled as Your children and our brothers and sisters.

#### MAKING DISCIPLES

Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:18-20).

**Dear Lord Jesus** we rejoice that you have all authority in heaven and earth and we are your children, called and equipped by you to go and make disciples of all nations. Empower us to obey your command and be involved in life-to-life equipping relationships.

#### PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS

Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field. (Matthew 9:38)

**Dear Lord Jesus**, we know that the real need of troubled and wayward humanity is met by You alone. We pray that you would reveal yourself as your workers go into the world to proclaim your Word and share the Good News.

#### THE HOME

##### LOVING AND CARING FAMILIES

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. (Ephesians 5:25)

Fathers, do not exasperate your children, instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)

**Dear heavenly Father**, fill our homes and families with love and respect for each other so that we might together glorify your holy name. Enable us to reach out to other families who are in need with your love and grace.

#### CHILDREN

Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." And he laid his hands on them and went away. (Matthew 19:13-15).

**Dear Heavenly Father**, we repent of our sins for neglecting and marginalising children and in our church programs and have not focused on them or spent our resources on them. We thank you for the slave girl, whose witness brought Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, to realise and witness to the living and true God. (2 Kings 5:15).

#### YOUTH

How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. (Psalm 119:19)

**Dear Heavenly Father**, we lift up to your throne of grace, the precious young people you have given to our Church and Nation. We pray that you will fill today's youth with a longing for you and a hunger to live in your Word. Give them a passion to share your Gospel and your work in their lives with others. Deliver them from evil and keep them steadfastly in the way of righteousness and good works. May they be a blessing to the nation where you have placed them and ambassadors for you.

#### THE ELDERLY

Do not cast me off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength fails. (Psalm 71: 9)

**Dear Father God**, we thank you for our elders. We thank you for the wisdom and experience they have and their willingness to help us with their resources. We thank you for your blessings on their lives and pray that you would keep them healthy, cheerful and fruitful for your glory. Fill them with peace, joy and contentment so that they can always reflect Your love and compassion.

#### HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. Luke 2:52.

**Dear heavenly Father**, we ask that all our educational institutions would impart such knowledge so that it caters to the overall development of students: physical, mental, social and spiritual. May the world understand that you are the true source of knowledge and in knowing you we find meaning and purpose for our lives? We pray that children all around the world would have the opportunity to study and no child would be denied the joy of learning based on his faith, gender and poverty.

## FOR THE NATION AND ITS LEADERS

### PRAYER FOR THE NATION

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance. (Psalm 33:12)

**Loving Father God**, you are the King of kings and the Lord of rulers. You bless all the rulers and their people who honour You and serve You. Bless our nation, O God! We pray for our nation and for all who live in it. Give all the rulers and authorities Your knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. Help them to fear You and honour You. Let them also render justice to our people. Let Your righteousness fill our nation. Let all the forces of darkness, derision, destruction and demons be destroyed. Let there be peace and prosperity in our nation. Father God, we also pray for the people of our nation. Bless the efforts of their hands. Let our nation overflow with milk and honey. Let our barns be full. Let Your joy rule our hearts. Let Your peace rule our nation. Let Your justice fill our nation. Let Your righteousness control our lives. Father God! Shower Your blessings on every one of us in this nation today and forever. Help us to live in freedom and peace and prosperity. Almighty God, bless our nation and make it true to the ideas of freedom and justice and brotherhood for all who make it great.

### PRAYER FOR POLITICAL LEADERS

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people, for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

**God of power and might**, wisdom and justice, through you authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgment is decreed. Assist with your spirit of counsel and fortitude the President, the Prime Minister, the members of parliament and legislative assemblies and other political leaders of our nation, India. May they always seek the ways of righteousness, justice and mercy. Grant that they may be enabled by your powerful protection to lead our country with honesty and integrity.

### THE ARMED FORCES

Blessed be the Lord, my rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle; he is my steadfast love and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield and he in whom I take refuge, who subdues peoples under me. (Psalm 144: 1-2)

**Heavenly Father**, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women in our Armed Forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; and give them courage to face the perils that beset them; and help them to know that nothing can separate them from your love.

### PRAYER FOR COURTS AND JUDICIAL SYSTEM

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you. (Psalm 89:14)



**Dear God**, you love righteousness and hate lawlessness, and are righteous in all your ways. The scepter (authority) of your Kingdom is the scepter of uprightness and the foundation of your sovereign power is righteousness and justice. We pray for our courts and judicial systems that they would promote righteousness and justice. We pray for all judges, lawyers and court personnel; may you bless them with much wisdom and your fear so that the rule of law is upheld. We pray for the cases that are piled up in courts, that they may be heard and resolved soon and the system of justice may not be exploitative or corrupt or overtly expensive and out of reach of the hand of the poor and the marginalized.

#### CIVIL SERVANTS

Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others (Philippians 2:4)

**Dear Lord Jesus Christ**, we commit all civil servants into your care and thank you for the work they do. We pray that their hearts would be sensitive to the people and communities they serve so that they would place the interests of others before their own. We pray specifically for those we know by name.

#### POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked. (Psalm 82: 3 – 4)

**Almighty God**, we pray that you would watch over our dear police officers and protect them with your love. Please guide them as they keep us safe both day and night and hold them firmly in your care should danger come their way. Give them true strength and courage as they serve till duty's end and please protect their families and their friends.

#### HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

Behold, I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth. (Jeremiah 33:6)

**O merciful Father**, who have wonderfully fashioned human beings in your own image, and have made our body to be a temple of the Holy Spirit, sanctify, we pray you, our doctors and nurses and all those whom you have called to study and practice the arts of healing the sick and the prevention of disease and pain. Strengthen them by your life-giving Spirit, that by their ministries the health of the community may be promoted and your creation glorified.

#### TEACHERS

Hold on to instruction; don't let go. Guard it, for it is your life. (Proverbs 4:13)

**Dear God**, Grant our teachers an abundance of Your wisdom. Prepare their hearts to welcome and love our loved ones, and may we make sure to show them love and respect in return. Give them grace as they help students who aren't thriving, courage to say what needs to be said, tools and knowledge on how and when to speak love, and strength when they feel weak. When they feel unseen, remind them that no moment goes unnoticed. They are shaping the future in one million small - yet incredibly important - ways every day. We are overwhelmed with gratitude for the gift of learning they share with our children. Bless them, Lord, and may they see even just a glimpse of how their faithfulness will forever impact generations to come.

#### INTEGRITY AND TRANSPARENCY

This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. (Romans 13:6-7).

**Dear heavenly Father,** may your people set an example of integrity and transparency. Help us to live truthful lives and raise our voices against corruption in all areas of life.

#### CORRUPTION

When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan. (Proverbs 29:2)

**Dear Father in Heaven,** you always provide for all your creatures so that all may live as you have willed. You have blessed our country with rich human and natural resources to be used to your honour and glory and for the common good of all our citizens. We are deeply sorry for the wrong use of these your gifts and blessing through act of injustice, bribery and corruption, as a result of which many of our people are hungry, sick ignorant and defenceless. We believe that You alone can heal us and our nation of this sickness. We therefore beg you to touch our lives and the lives of our leaders and people so that we may all realise the evil of bribery and corruption and work hard to eliminate it. Raise up for us God fearing leaders who care for us and who will lead us in the path of prosperity, integrity and the common good.

#### EQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. (Deuteronomy 8:18)

My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19)

**Dear heavenly Father,** we pray that there would be just and fair distribution of the resources that you have blessed us with. May people all over the world recognize you as the source of all wealth and be faithful steward of all resources. Help us overcome greed through your spirit and loosen the hold of money over our lives. Help us cherish people rather than wealth and make us cheerful givers, so that no one will have too little and no one will have too much.

#### THE ECONOMY

Remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth. (Deuteronomy 8:18)

**Gracious God,** we know that your love is infinite and that you care about all areas of our life. In times of economic insecurity, help us to trust that all of our security is in you. Keep us mindful that you always have and always will provide for our needs. Apart from you we can do nothing.

**Merciful God,** we ask that you give our leaders the wisdom to guide our nation and the world out of the current economic crisis. Help us to protect the poor and all those who are struggling during this difficult time. Provide for their needs and give them hope. Open new

opportunities for them and furnish the resources they need to live with dignity. Encourage those who have enough to share essential resources with those who lack the necessities of life, and to do so with humble, grateful and loving hearts.

#### PRAYER FOR JUSTICE

Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God (Proverbs 2:5)  
**Dear Lord**, we ask that the fear of you that is the beginning of all wisdom would fall on all those who are involved in making decisions that define justice in the nations. Fill the hearts of people with the fire of your love and with the desire to ensure justice for all.

#### FREEDOM OF RELIGION

O God our Creator, from your provident hand we have received our right to life and liberty. You have called us as your people and given us the right and the duty to worship you, the only true God, and your Son, Jesus Christ. Through the power and working of your Holy Spirit, you call us to live out our faith in the midst of the world, bringing the light and the saving truth of the Gospel to every corner of society. We ask you to bless us in our vigilance for the gift of religious liberty. Give us the strength of mind and heart to readily defend our freedoms when they are threatened; give us courage in making our voices heard on behalf of the rights of your Church and the freedom of conscience of all people of faith.

(Adapted from the Prayer for the Protection of Religious Liberty by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for the Fortnight for Freedom, 2012)

#### SPECIAL PRAYERS

##### CHILDREN AT RISK

He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men's report of the star's first appearance (Matthew 2:16).

**Dear Heavenly Father**, we pray that you would be with children in all nations today, especially those who are abandoned, orphaned, destitute, trafficked or abused. May the governments and people stop this abuse and your people take lead in prevention protection, rescue and rehabilitation of children who are trafficked and abused.

##### POOR AND THE SUFFERING

If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday. (Isaiah 58:10)

**Dear Lord God**, you came to give honour to the least, those forgotten, overlooked and misjudged. You came to give first place to the last, those left behind, misunderstood and undervalued. You came to give a warm welcome to the lost, those who are orphaned, abandoned and destitute. Help us to be your ears to listen to their cries. Help us to be your voice speaking out love and acceptance. Help us to be your feet walking beside those in need. Help us to be your hands to clothe, feed and shelter them.

#### POOR AS AGENTS OF TRANSFORMATION

There was a little city with few men in it, and a great king came against it and besieged it, building great siege works against it. But there was found in it a poor, wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that poor man. But I say that wisdom is better than might, though the poor man's wisdom is despised and his words are not heard. (Ecclesiastes 9:14-16). If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noon day (Isaiah 58:10).

**Dear Heavenly Father,** we realise that the poor are also agents of transformation. We pray rich people and rulers of our nation will not use power for domination and discrimination of the poor, rather provided them with opportunities and resources for development. May your Church across the earth would take on your burden for those who are suffering from sickness, poverty, disease, and malnutrition all over the world.

#### THE DISABLED

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sin (Isaiah 35:5)

**Dear Lord God of compassion,** in Jesus Christ you cared for those who were blind or deaf, crippled or slow to learn. Though all of us need help, give special care to those who are disabled, particularly those we name in silence. By our concern may they know the love you have for them, and come to trust you; through Jesus Christ who came to heal.

#### PRISONERS

Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also. (Hebrews 13: 3)

**Dear Lord Jesus Christ,** teach us to reach out to those who are in prison, remembering that we have all sinned and are offered a second chance to live in the righteousness of Christ

#### THE HOMELESS

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' (Matthew 25: 34 – 36)

**God of compassion,** your love for humanity was revealed in Jesus, whose earthly life began in the poverty of a stable and ended in the pain and isolation of the cross; we hold before you those who are homeless and needy. Draw near and comfort them in spirit and bless those who work to provide them with shelter, food and friendship. May your Church be a source of comfort and friendship to them.

#### PRAYER FOR PEOPLE SUFFERING ABUSE AND VIOLENCE

O Lord, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more. (Psalm 10:17-18)

**Almighty God,** we pray for all victims of abuse and violence. We ask you to surround them with Your care and protect them by Your loving might and permit them to enjoy health and

healing, wholeness and strength, calmness and peace and love. Most of all, we pray that they feel Your presence and be confident in You. Lord God, your own Son was delivered into the hands of the wicked, yet he prayed for his persecutors and overcame hatred with the blood of the cross. Grant those who stand against violence, peace of mind and a renewed faith in your protection and care. Protect us all from the violence of others, keep us safe from the weapons of hate, and restore to us tranquillity and peace.

#### PRAYER FOR WOMEN SUFFERING ABUSE AND GENDER VIOLENCE

The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. (Psalm 9:9)

**Great God**, we give you thanks that you call us out of silence to name hidden and domestic gender violence. We pray for all those women who despite suffering from violence, continue to care for family and children, to grow and prepare food, carry water, earn a living and offer support to others. We pray for women who are trafficked as domestic or sex workers; for women who are raped and do not know how to find words to name their pain or a way into the future. We pray for transformation of our societies which often find it easier to judge the victims of violence than to solve the problems of injustice. We pray that women's voices may be heard and taken into account in all peace and reconciliation work. We pray for a transformation in the violent way many men act towards and think about women. We pray and look forward to the age of peace, when violence is banished, both women and men are able to love and to be loved, and the work and wealth of our world is justly shared.

#### MEDIA, ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy meditate on these things. (Philippians 4:8)

**Dear heavenly Father** you are the creator of all things, and you have made us in your image so that we are creative like you. We acknowledge the immense influence of media and sports on our lives. We pray that the things the world sees, hears, reads, and watches would be glorifying to you. Let the media report incident unbiased and in a manner, that would only communicate truth and not propaganda. We pray for the freedom of the press to be upheld in our country and for the freedom of expression to thrive. We pray that sport will united instead of dividing the society. May the arts and entertainment industries be creative and celebrate that what is beautiful and pure. Let creativity lead the world back to you, the creator.

## **PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH – BY RELEASE INTERNATIONAL**

Sovereign God,  
we worship You  
and we acknowledge that You know all of those  
who suffer in Your name.

We remember those who are imprisoned for their faith  
and ask that they would join with the Apostle Paul  
to see that even though they remain captive,  
their chains have furthered the gospel,  
not frustrated it.

May they inspire and embolden their fellow believers  
to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

God of all comfort,  
for those who are tortured both in body and mind,  
give them the grace to endure  
and to see their suffering as part of following in Christ's footsteps.

Merciful God,  
for those asked to pay the ultimate price;  
who are martyred because of their love for You,  
may they truly know Christ  
and the power of His resurrection  
and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings,  
becoming like Him in His death.

Father God,  
for those who are widowed and orphaned  
may they know the comfort that comes from Your promised presence  
even when they walk through the valley.

May they be strengthened by Your Spirit,  
enabling them to rejoice with the psalmist  
as they proclaim that the Lord will not abandon them in death.

Heavenly Father,  
we ask that You would make us ever mindful of our brothers and sisters around the world  
who need us to stand with them  
as they suffer in Your name.

Teach us what it means  
to overcome by the blood of the Lamb  
and by the word of our testimony;  
we pray that we would not love our lives so much as to shrink from death.  
O Lord, hear our prayer.