

***"Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods....."***  
~ Daniel 3:17-18 ESV

## INDIA & BURMA: Persecution Over Christmas

Source: Morning Star News

In areas throughout India, as well as Burma, Christmas was not a season of peace and joy. Christians faced violence and resulting injuries, as those opposed to the message of Christ stoned, slashed and terrorized local believers.

In the Kanta Kawn Township of Central Burma, 27 Christians had gathered together in a home for a Christmas service on December 17th. As they prayed, villagers surrounded the house and began throwing stones. They then broke into the house to vandalize it. Along with causing damages to the home, motorbikes, furniture and dishes, the perpetrator injured six of the worshippers.

At least 18 incidents were reported in four different Indian states. The worst attack was in Kowad village of Maharashtra. Around 20 men armed with sharp objects barged into the worship service of the New Life Fellowship Church on December 23rd and began slashing those in attendance. As a result, seven Christians were admitted to the intensive care unit of the hospital. The injuries could have been far worse had it not been for the quick thinking of Pastor Chavan's mother, who threw ground red pepper in the faces of the attackers to thwart the violent assault.

In Haridwar, Uttarakhand, a mob from the militant Hindu group Bajrang Dal stopped four buses that were transporting 200 children to a Christmas Day program. The militants demanded the arrest of the teacher, claiming the children were to be forcefully converted. Police were called and the teacher, a Hindu, was arrested but later released. All the children, who are Hindus from the slums, were simply going to view the Christmas program as a special seasonal outing.

Several similar allegations were made in Uttar Pradesh, where police were "exhausted" from calls alleging that children were being forcefully converted during the Christmas programs. In one station alone, police received at least 25 to 30 phone calls. The volume of the calls suggests a coordinated effort from militant Hindu organizations to disrupt Christmas activities.

***Despite the coordinated efforts of those in opposition to the Gospel, we praise God that the message of 'peace on earth' is continuing to reach many spiritual seekers in both Burma and India. Pray that the victims injured in these recent attacks will recover quickly. May all who've had the opportunity to hear the message of the Promised Messiah personally experience a revelation of God's tremendous love for them and willingly respond by accepting His wonderful plan of salvation for their lives.***



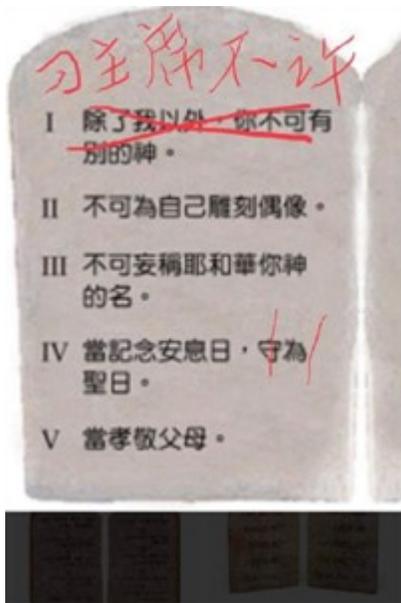
One of the injured believers in Maharashtra State, India.  
Photo: Morning Star News

Share a Prayer



## CHINA: Authorities Remove the First Commandment

Sources: Bitter Winter, ChinaAid



A digital rendition of the vandalized display.  
Photo: Bob Fu

While much of the opposition in China is aimed at the country's unregistered churches, the efforts of the government to impose allegiance to the state affects all Christians. The legally registered Three-Self Churches have faced orders to tear down their crosses. They have been forced to instead display the state flag and a photo of President Xi Jinping at the front of their churches. "Core socialist values" are to be integrated into the services as doctrine.

The demand for a primary commitment to the political party took a more blatant and ominous twist in early November when officials in Henan Province conducted a routine inspection of a church in the village of Dongcun. The entire facility was searched before an officer stopped at the pulpit where the Ten Commandments were displayed. He demanded that the first commandment be removed, and then proceeded to wipe it out. The officials chided anyone who complained, stating that "Xi Jinping opposes this statement."

In response to this action, one of the church members complained, "They are trying to corrupt our faith and make us betray God." The government's latest sanctions make it apparent that religious citizens are being mandated to give their allegiance first to the Chinese Communist Party rather than to the Lord who is rightfully referenced in the Bible as the "King of kings" and "Lord of lords."

**Pray that the Christians of this government-registered congregation and other Three-Self Churches throughout China will find their strength in Christ as they take a stand and refuse to place any other gods before Him. Also prayerfully**

**uphold the many believers belonging to unregistered churches throughout the country as they faithfully work to support and build up God's Kingdom, despite increased animosity. As believers stand up in the midst of opposition, pray that President Xi Jinping, like King Darius in Daniel 6, will come to the realization that there is only one true God.**

Share a Prayer



## PRAISE REPORT

### ALGERIA: Bookstore Allowed to Reopen

Source: Middle East Concern

In November 2017, the Algerian authorities shut down a church in Ain Turk, claiming that it had been used to "illegally print Gospels and publications intended for evangelism" (for details, see [this report](#)). On June 10th, 2018, the governor of Oran Province signed an order reopening the church ([click here](#)). However, the bookstore operated by the church was not allowed to reopen at the time, with claims that it was being used for evangelistic activities.

On December 13th, a court had overridden the governor's closure order and allowed the bookstore to reopen. Praise God for this court ruling, asking Him to wonderfully bless this opportunity to spread His Word throughout the region.

*If you would like to post a prayer of praise or petition on behalf of our persecuted family around the globe, visit [VOMC's prayer wall](#).*



The Persecution & Prayer Alert is a ministry of:  
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For information on additional ways to support members of the persecuted church overseas, review this [listing of options](#).