

Stand!

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. (Isaiah 60:1)

Are You Persecution Ready?

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Goshen Events in March/April 2018

Month of March and April 2018

Date / Day / Time	Venue	Event
Thursday 7.30pm - 10pm (Every Thursday)	170 Upper Bukit Timah Road #19-01 Bukit Timah Shopping Centre, Singapore 588179	ONE TWENTY@ TALK ABOUT THURSDAY Ministering in Word and praying for the needs of the body of Christ.
Thursday 7.30pm - 10pm (1st March and 12th April)	170 Upper Bukit Timah Road #19-01 Bukit Timah Shopping Centre, Singapore 588179	GOSHEN PRAYER MEETING for the persecuted and afflicted brethren.

For other events which may be launched after distribution of this issue, kindly look out for updates on our Goshen's Facebook



Why STAND? By the power of His strength, we aspire to stand firmly through the storms that are sweeping through Asia and the world. In the 2nd issue of our magazine, we share with you what suffering is like in times of persecution and the need to remind ourselves that persecution may creep in upon believers living in previously free lands.

*"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you."
(Isaiah 60:1)*

To unsubscribe from STAND!, please email admin@gosheninternational.org or call 64560042.

Goshen International Ministries Limited is a non-denominational charity serving the persecuted and afflicted church in Asia and beyond. We are incorporated under the Charities and Companies Act of the Republic of Singapore.

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Welcome to the second issue of Goshen's bimonthly magazine STAND!

I had my first involvement with the persecuted church in 2015 when I volunteered as a Champion to raise awareness of the level of persecution worldwide. As a newbie in this role, I went to the Open Doors Singapore office and was given a thumb drive with information of the persecuted church to work on. I began my own research of the countries on how the believers there were being persecuted. My heart was burdened, as well as encouraged, seeing their suffering and their strength in times of persecution. Wow, being persecuted for our faith in Christ is real.

Speaking in a Methodist Church during their Ladies Lunch Fellowship, the ladies listened attentively as I flipped the slides of the suffering church in various countries. Brutality, imprisonment under unreasonable grounds, martyred for their faith and many ran for their life. I can sense that the hearts of the ladies were grieving for persecuted brothers and sisters around the world and muttering a prayer under their breath - "Lord, deliver them."

In 2016, I joined Goshen. I was convicted when I learned that the Board of Directors has chosen to fine tune the focus on affliction and persecution in Asia first then beyond. Why?

The Open Doors World Watch List for 2013 and 2016 reports that persecution in Asian countries is on the rise. According to the List, North Korea is still top of the list in terms of its persecution of believers there. Sri Lanka has now moved back to its previous 45th position. Vietnam, previously ranked 21st in the List has now risen to 17th position. Pakistan has moved up from the 14th to the 4th position. India climbed to the 15th from 31st and is probably making it way higher up those ranks.

Since we live in the same Asian continent, such reports should awaken within us a sense of deep concern for the afflicted and persecuted church in Asia.

My heart is burdened as I know there are still many people out there who are not aware of the affliction and persecution of fellow believers in other parts of Asia. I hope that we can, in some small way, awaken a deeper burden to pray for and reach out to fellow believers in our part of the world who are suffering such plight.

Through the articles in our magazine, we hope to give our readers a glimpse of the afflicted and persecuted church in Asia so that we are aware that the persecution of believers is all too real in our fallen world and that believers ought to pray for one another, encourage each other, and stand together with each other in the unity of our faith in the Lord. 🙏

John 15:18

"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.

1 Peter 4:12-14

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

Yours in Christ,

Betsy Goh



A big **Thank you** for your love gifts. We have reached our target in terms of the raising the amount of funds needed for this project! Praise the Lord.

All 55 pastors have been fully sponsored for the training conference in February 2018.

The fund has been disbursed to them and Bibles we purchased from out of the funds have been distributed to them.

The Lord willing, our Chairman will personally be there at the conference in February and we will feature the event and their testimonies in our next issue. Watch this space.

Thank you for sowing into the Kingdom of God, for those who sow generously will reap generously (2 Corinthians 9:6b). Because of your generosity many others have been blessed. Once again, a big thank you and may the Lord bless all of you! 🌱

My childhood was a miserable one.

At ten years of age, I started working as a street shoe-shine boy, selling vegetables and plastic bags door-to-door in order to support my mother and pay for my school fees. My father was a construction worker and a drunkard who abused all of us verbally, physically and emotionally almost daily.

Thankfully, 'Baguio Save our Street' rescued me when I was in grade 3 and supported me until I finished college. God is good to me and He is indeed a God who provides.

Life as an adult was also painful. I had to work three jobs a day, most of the time, to make ends meet. I was supporting my parents, siblings and their families and paying back endless accumulative interests from loans borrowed. I would often drown my misery with heavy drinking and illicit relationships but these habits did not heal my inner wounds. Instead, I became more depressed.

In 2010, my grandmother brought me to her church where I surrendered my life to God and was baptised in the Holy Spirit. Since then, I was able to stay focused and was less fearful. As I surrendered my problems to God, something wonderful happened. The person who loaned me the money decided to waive the interest and also

granted me more time to pay back the principal amount!

Although I am still paying back the loan, I am relieved to see the principal amount reducing. Previously, I was not able to even pay the ever-mounting interest cycle.

In 2016, Pastor Ria encouraged me to attend Secret Gardens Seminar which I did. At the seminar, I was so blessed to meet the Oikos family who played a major part in restoring my self-worth in Christ. I learned the true meaning of forgiving those who hurt me. Oikos also inspired me to continue with the childrens' ministry in Baguio. There are still countless numbers of abused street children in the Philippines who are in a worse situation than the one I found myself in. As I experienced hardships growing up, I do not like them to go through the same sufferings I went through.

I now conduct Bible studies twice weekly to about 50 children in three different locations. I also tutor them in their school work, support them with their school supplies and am involved in a program to feed them. I thank God for giving me a second chance in life and I hope to raise more young people to run this project with me to reach out to more children.

Joseph, Age 34



PERSECUTION READY

Over the last few years, Christians around the world have noticed that there has been a marked increase in persecution against fellow believers in various places.

Persecution in one form or other has continued to test the faith of our brothers and sisters in those regions of the world that have long been hostile to the faith. As a matter of fact, in places like Syria and northern Iraq, news reports have caught the world's attention to the suffering of Christians and non-Christians alike at the hands of brutal and merciless bands of extremist groups bent on wrecking destruction wherever they go.

However, while the plight of believers in regions that have long been intolerant of the faith continues unabated, observers have also noted that areas of the world that have traditionally been the bastions of freedom and democracy are increasingly becoming places where the rejection of conventional sexual norms and traditional morality have resulted in the persecution of conservative people in general and Christians in particular.

As a matter of fact, in various parts of the US and of Western Europe where the Christian faith used to serve as the civilizational bedrock of western culture and societies, the beliefs, values and institutions of Biblical Christianity have in the last few years been subjected to ridicule and scorn by some sectors of society where it was once held in high esteem. Even in a secular and traditionally-tolerant society like India, outbreaks of persecution against believers have recently been known to have taken place in a number of localities in the country.

This changed situation with respect to the increase of persecution in several parts of the world warrants a re-evaluation of our attitudes toward the issue of persecution in general and toward the suffering church in particular. Going forward, people living in relatively persecution-free countries should not blithely assume that things will always continue to be like it used to in times past.

This is not to suggest that persecution is suddenly going to break out everywhere in the world today all at once. Rather, what is needed is that in view of the times in which we are living in, a mental and spiritual readjustment is probably the wise thing for Christians to do just in case persecution were to rear its ugly head in places where we least expect it to.

It is always better to be spiritually and psychologically prepared than not to be prepared. The apostle Peter admonished his readers not to be surprised (as some Christians living in traditionally persecution-free countries apparently are when they observe disturbing developments in their societies) "at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange things were happening to you" (1 Peter 4:12). By warning his readers not to be surprised at the outbreak of persecution, Peter was trying to fortify the faith of fellow believers.

If believers are not taught that hostility against the faith is something that can actually happen, some Christians will be so shaken if persecution were to break out in their society that they may even entertain

the thought of quitting altogether. This is especially so among those who have been living with the impression that being a Christian means that there will be no occasion when the Lord will test us on the fundamental question of whether we really cherish the Lord Jesus more than we value other things in life – things like convenience, comfort, reputation, possessions, selfish ambitions.

Being spiritually and psychologically prepared means that we make a consciously deliberate decision to give our allegiance to our Heavenly Father and to the Lord Jesus— above all that the world system has to offer. It means that we make that prior commitment to cherish the Lord above all things before the trials of persecution even appear on the far-horizon. The three Hebrew children of Daniel 3 did not wait till the day of trial came upon them to decide to only worship the Lord and not Nebuchadnezzar's image. By the workings of God's grace in their souls, they had already settled the issue in their hearts way ahead of time before they went through the fiery trial of persecution. The best preparation that one can make is to first and foremost settle this basic existential question in our lives first – whether to cherish the Lord with all our hearts above all the things this world has to offer. To begin addressing this question only when the fires of persecution hit close to home would not be the wise thing to do in the light of the times that we are living in where we see fellow believers elsewhere in the world being put to the test.

“BEING SPIRITUALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY PREPARED TO FACE THE ADVERSITIES OF PERSECUTION DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE ARE TO LIVE OUR LIVES IN DREAD AND CONSTANT FEAR OF PERSECUTION BREAKING OUT.”

After all, in a worst-case scenario where if full-fledged persecution were ever to take place in any one society, Christians there are to “... keep on rejoicing so that at the revelation of His glory you (we) may rejoice with exultation” (1 Peter 4:13). This is because if we are “... reviled for the Name of Christ, you (we) are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you” (verse 14). In other words, the “worst” (from a purely human perspective) that can happen is that when persecution breaks out, God's glory becomes more and more evident in our lives than ever before! When we prepare to face

persecution, do remember to also expect our lives to be covered by the glory of God! Earnestly expecting to be covered by His glory is a vital part of preparing to face persecution!

In many countries though, the Lord has graciously spared believers from the fiery ordeal of persecution, but being spiritually and psychologically prepared is still necessary in the event that persecution were to rear its ugly head someday. In those lands where religious freedom holds sway, believers who are spiritually and psychologically prepared to face persecution are those who have attitudinally switched their emotional attachments from the things of this world to those things that really matter in life, which is the Lord Himself and to live out His purposes for our lives. Those who are persecution-ready strongly hold on to eternal values, like truth, love, humility, moral courage.

On top of that, people who make the decision to prepare to face persecution are likely to go out of their way to pray for and to render help, encouragement, and support to those who are going through the trials of the persecution. They gave themselves wholeheartedly to the Lord's service and to a deep commitment to the task of strengthening the Body of Christ.

This willingness and readiness to go out of our way to pray, support and encourage those who are facing persecution is something that pleases the Lord. As a matter of fact, one of the reasons why the Lord allows some places to be spared the fires of persecution is because He is expecting His people living in free lands to extend their love and compassion for those parts of the Body of Christ who are undergoing the trials and sufferings of persecution.

But if the Lord were to decide that Christians living in free lands should someday also have their loyalties to Him be tested by the fires of persecution, Christians living in these lands should be prepared to go through what the Lord has ordained and emerge a victorious church in the midst of the trial. Whether the Lord wants Christians in any one particular community to go through persecution or not, His children must be spiritually and mentally prepared for any eventuality that might transpire. This reminder to be ready to face persecution graciously and courageously should serve as an opportunity for each one of us to take stock of our lives by re-prioritizing our lives around what really counts for all eternity --- our relationship with the Lord, our investment in the eternal destinies of people whom Christ gave His life for, and our dedication to humbly serve Him no matter what comes upon us in life. 🌍

BAIK-COFFEE – AN ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOOD

Can you imagine living beneath a bridge by the railway station right next to a flood canal?

Imagine raising young children living amidst all the filth, noise and pungent odours of a canal with no clean water for washing or drinking and without any access to electricity.

Tanah Abang Railway station is located in Kampung Bali (central Jakarta), toward the east side of the West Flood Canal. The flood canal is a system of canals built to control flooding by diverting water from different parts of the city into the sea. The railway station is prone to flooding because the canal and the station are only separated by a small narrow embankment.

Under these cramped, filthy and noisy conditions, 6 IBUs (meaning “mother” in Indonesian) and their children live in makeshift shelters under the bridge at the railway station. Abandoned by their husbands & families, burdened with huge debts, these women had to work to support themselves and their children. Some of them have between 1 to 7 children each. At the present moment, 2 of the IBUs are pregnant with child. With no education or skills, they resort to the only profession they feel themselves capable of doing – prostitution. To make matters worse, they find themselves under the control of a “pimp”.



Most of their children have no birth certificates, as a result of which they are not able to register for formal schooling. Some of them beg in the streets to help supplement the family income. When they come of age, their daughters are at risk of having to resort to the same trade they see their mothers engaged in – prostitution – because they seemingly can't or don't know how to extricate themselves out of their debt-laden, poverty-stricken situation.

2 years ago, Associate Pastor Wilma* who was then studying in STT Bethel Bible School chanced upon these IBUs and their children and began to minister to them. Wilma and her team taught them character training, healthcare and waterbank drinking water. Their ministry, which

started with only 20 children has over two years grown to 200 children in 4 street corners.

Six of the mothers of these children volunteered to help in the children's ministry every Saturday. They would sweep the road and set up plastic tents and gather the children together to learn about character building from Wilma and her team of volunteers from Bible School. These 6 IBUs were initially paid a token sum for their volunteer work, but the ministry was unable to continue to pay them because all sponsorship funds were exhausted by the 3rd month. Undaunted, these 6 IBUs continued to help without receiving any remuneration for their work.

Touched by Lord through the ministry of Wilma and her team of volunteers, these IBUs are now in the midst of making arrangements to leave the sex trade altogether, and switching to alternative ways of making a living. One of the 6 IBUs suggested selling coffee on bicycles around the Tanah Abang Bridge, which happens to be a high-traffic and densely populated area. This seemed like a very plausible and successful trade except that the IBUs do not have the capital to start this business.

This is where Goshen International Ministries Limited stepped in to provide some sponsorship funds for the purchase of bicycles and other necessary items & ingredients needed to start making coffee for sale.



Let's pray that this Baik-Coffee Project will take-off and be a huge success. Pray that the proceeds will be sufficient to cover all the financial needs of these IBUs and their families; that they can leave the sex trade in its entirety and that their young children will be able to enroll themselves in school. Pray also that more of these IBUs and their families will someday be able to have homes of their own and that their living conditions will be significantly improved.



* Name changed to preserve the anonymity of the individual.

This is one of the ways Goshen serves the afflicted and persecuted church. If you would like to sow into the Kingdom of God, you may consider contributing love gifts or donations to Goshen's general fund (details are found in the attached Prayer Calendar). This is one area your love gifts (donations) will reach believers who are afflicted and persecuted.



Once a month, brothers and sisters from various churches come together for a time of intercession for the afflicted and persecuted church in Asia and beyond. We also pray for the leaders of nations to rule in righteousness and support religious freedom.

In this page, we would like to share some photos of brothers and sisters making intercession together, as they cry out to our Abba Father to intervene, strengthen and comfort our fellow believers undergoing hardships and sufferings. We have intentionally blurred the photos to provide them with some degree of anonymity.

2 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.





As His Word promises us, we believe that every prayer has been heard in His throne room. As Psalms 141:2 says our prayers are counted as incense before Him as we lift up our hands as the evening sacrifice. And as Revelation 8:3-4 says: "and another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel".

We have a BIG God who can make a way of escape for those who suffer persecution and various forms of afflictions. We will continue to uphold them in our prayers.

Come, join us to pray for the persecuted church.

Goshen's prayer meetings for the month of March and April will be held on 1st March 2018 and 12th April 2018 at Bukit Timah Shopping Centre #19-01 Prayer Tower. 🌍





Pastor Gideon's lifeless body was reportedly found hanging from the rafters of the church by parishioners of Maknayeem Church near Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu when they attempted to enter the church for a prayer & fasting meeting.

Parishioners remember Pastor Gideon as a devout Christian who prays a lot and who preached about living peacefully with everyone in the community.

Church members were grieved as they raised questions about the missing gold ring on Pastor Gideon's finger and signs of welts, bruising and torture on his body.

Another incident of hardships suffered by believers took place in Jammu and Kashmir in January 2018 when angry mobs burned Sehale Christ Church of Seri Panchayat and several Christian business outlets.

Some estimates have it that Christians constitute slightly over 2% of the population.

Reports from various sources suggest that persecution of believers in parts of the country

is on the increase. There has also been concern over recently-enacted regulations that have made it difficult to share the gospel freely with people.

Let us uphold India before the Lord. Let us pray for the protection of the believers in the country; that they will stand firm in the faith in the face of affliction and persecution.

May God keep the innocent safe from those who intend to do them harm (Psalm 140:4).

In spite of the persecution and obstacles many Christians face, pray that God will open doors for them to take the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ into every town and village that and many will come to know His love and accept Him into their hearts as their personal Savior.

Pray that God's people in India put aside their petty differences and seek to live in love and unity with each other, and pray that the Holy Spirit endue them with divine courage, wisdom and discernment as they live out and share their faith. 🙏

A GUIDE ON HOW TO HAVE A TIME OF PERSONAL INTERCESSION

One of the most important subject matter that the Lord Jesus taught in His ministry was on the subject of prayer.

One type of prayer He taught His disciples was intercessory prayer. Intercessory prayer is that form of prayer where our prayers bridge the gap between the Lord and those who are not able to pray for themselves or who require us to join them in praying over some issue that concerns them.

When we engage in intercession, we are praying for God's mercy, intervention and forgiveness on behalf of individuals, groups of people or nations.

Do you have the burden to intercede for the afflicted and persecuted church?

Ezekiel 22 : 30-31

"I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none."

1. Read widely the Christian sites that carry true and authentic news concerning the affliction and persecution of believers worldwide. You may also follow our weekly prayer calendar to pray alongside with Goshen.
2. Identify the issues of the afflicted and persecuted. These could range from praying for our brothers and sisters to be protected from being harmed by terrorists or extreme militants; or from the deleterious effects of occult-inspired curses; victimization by third parties, oppression, and injustice due to the lack of religious freedom or simply from the poverty cycle where being able to receive basic educational or health care or job opportunities are few and far between.
3. Begin with a time of praise and worship before interceding. We humble ourselves and come in repentance, pray and seek Him. He is the only Lord and God that deserves our worship.
4. Like Jesus who prays in agony (sorrowful and troubled), we also cry out to God over the sufferings of His people. Read Matthew 26:36-46.
5. Pray for God's mercy over predators, bullies, and terrorists. Pray that the Lord release His strength and

courage to the victims so that they might stand firm in their faith.

6. Exercise spiritual authority over the situation that you are praying for. In the gospel of Matthew Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. God has given us access to the unlimited power of Jesus Christ – a power far greater than that of any so-called "superpower" on earth.
7. Be thankful and rejoice for being able to partake in Christ's suffering. Hebrews 13:3. Partaking in Christ's sufferings simply means sharing in the sufferings of fellow believers by being a channel of God's strength, comfort, and encouragement in their lives. In prayers, remember those who are being mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering the same injustice.
8. Join a prayer group so as to share your intercessory burdens with other like-minded members of the Body of Christ. It is always encouraging to pray together as members of the same Body.

Ephesians 6:12

For we wrestle not with flesh and blood but against the spiritual powers of darkness in the supernatural sphere.

Learn more about prayer and spiritual warfare by reading the book, **PRAYER: the real battle** written by **Brother Andrew and Al Janssen**. You may email admin@gosheninternational.org and get a copy for S\$8.00 excluding postage. 📧

