

JUL – AUG 2026

STAND!

by Goshen International Ministries



I will sing to the
Lord as long as I
live. I will praise
my God till my last
breath!

(Ps 104:33)

Until Their
Last Breath

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Dear Friends,

We lose emotional bearing when our world falls apart because of a tragic death, devastating loss or a shattered sense of safety.

Maintaining emotional stability and a posture of humility, surrender and trust in the Lord during such times can be extremely taxing.

Emotions fluctuate as if you are being tossed around during a spell of extreme mid-flight turbulence.

Pastor Aaris, who lost four out of his nine sons to anti-Christian acts of violence, would have had his emotional bearing tested to the limit. Yet, it did not stop him and his family from persisting in sharing the Gospel and serving the very community who persecuted them.

Instead, they chose again and again to forgive and bless their persecutors even though some of those who attacked them remain unrepentant.

Be encouraged by their story on page 4 of this issue of Stand! Magazine.

Ephesians 5:30

For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones (Eph 5:30).

Blessings!



**Give a
LOVE
Offering**

For gifts to GOSHEN INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES LIMITED :

- 1) Bank Transfer to OCBC Bank Code: 7339 Account: 508-308962-001
 - 2) PayNow: UEN No. 198204059M
 - 3) By Cheque issued in favour of GOSHEN INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES LIMITED
- Please mail cheque to: 170 Upper Bukit Timah Road, #03-22 Bukit Timah Shopping Centre, Singapore 588179

(For all love gifts, please e-mail admin@gosheninternational.org or WhatsApp 9788 0457 to facilitate our accountability to you. If you are giving towards a specific project or cause, please indicate the name of the project or cause in your e-mail. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions with respect to the projects that we are undertaking in support of the persecuted church. Many blessings to you in the Name of the Lord!)

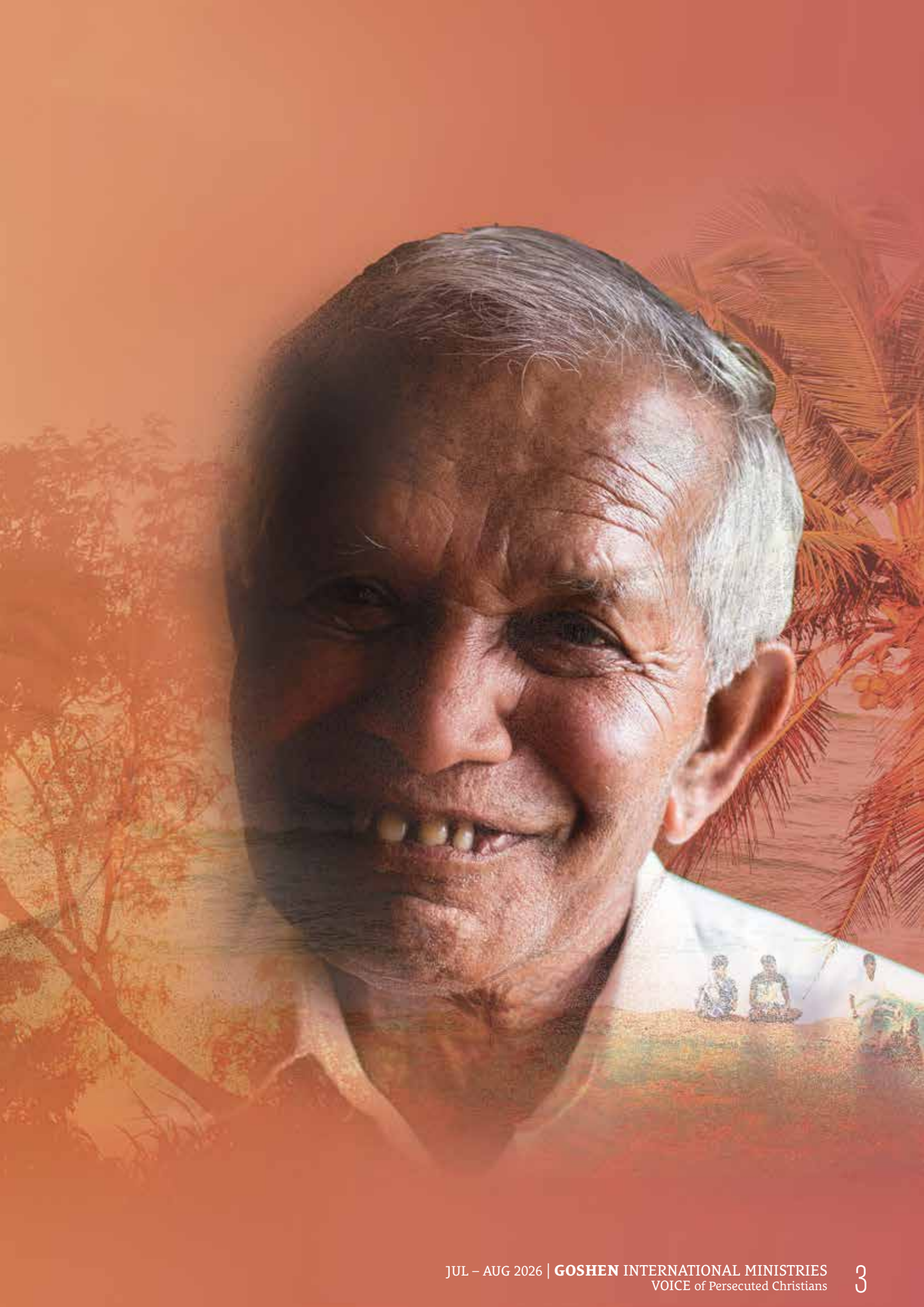
How we can serve you:

We will love the opportunity to visit your church or small group to raise awareness of Persecuted Christians among those in your circle of influence. We can share in your services or meetings, run mission booths and conduct interesting activities for people of all ages. By inviting us, you may be playing an important part to support our persecuted brethren.

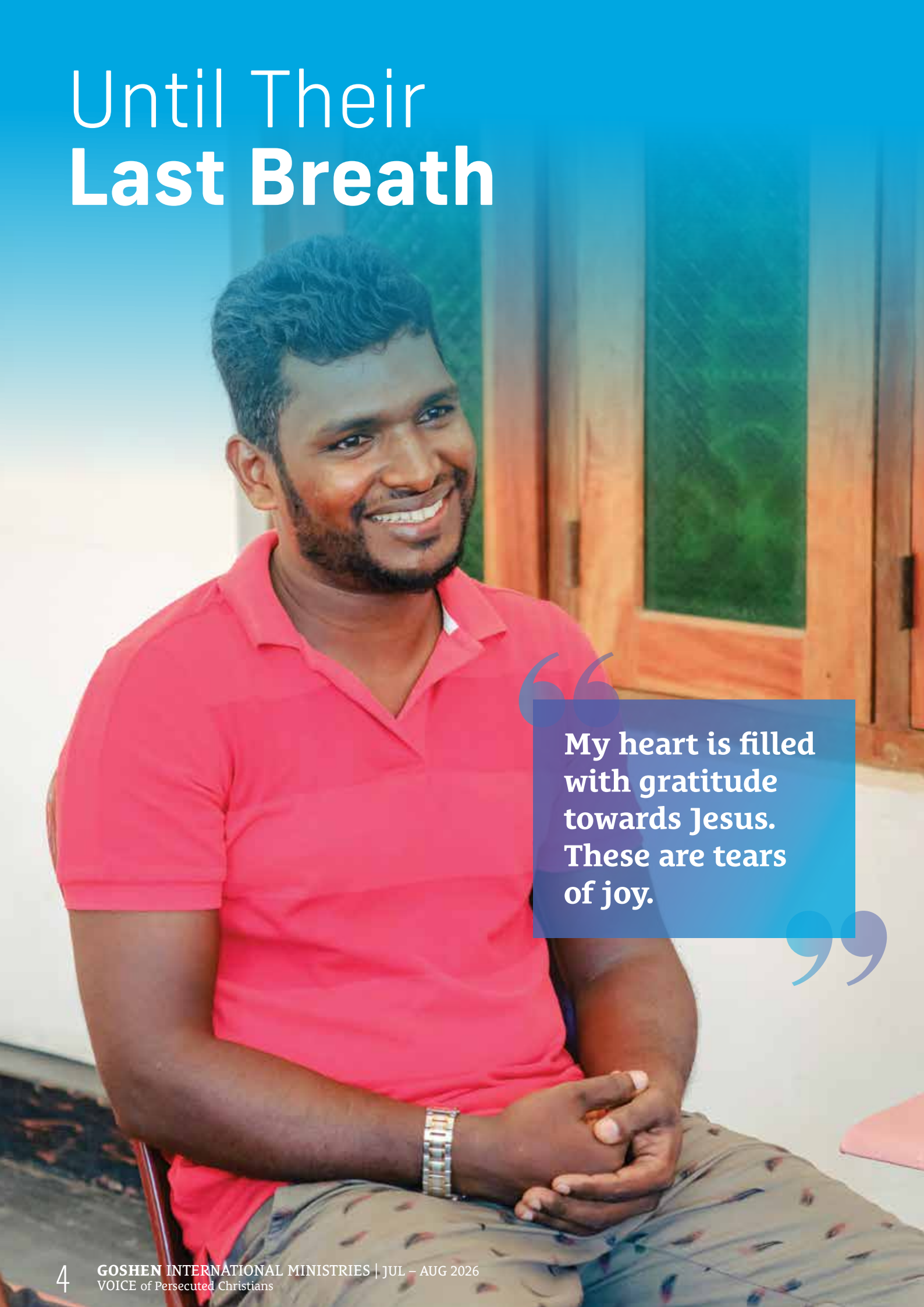
WhatsApp us at **9788-0457** or email: **admin@gosheninternational.org** for more information.



Scan the QR code for a soft copy of the Stand!



Until Their Last Breath

A photograph of a man with dark skin and a beard, wearing a bright red polo shirt, sitting in a wooden chair. He is smiling and looking slightly to the right. His hands are clasped in his lap. He is wearing a silver watch on his left wrist. The background shows a wooden door with a green screen. A blue and purple gradient quote box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

“My heart is filled
with gratitude
towards Jesus.
These are tears
of joy.”

An attack that left three Christian brothers gravely wounded birthed a vision to invite their persecutors into the family of God.

On a bright summer day, as palm branches rasped quietly in the breeze and macaque monkeys scampered along the eaves of the nearby church, Selvan sat with his family in the peaceful shade of their covered porch and recalled one life-changing day.

Selvan was overcome with emotion and tears as he shared his story. “My heart is filled with gratitude towards Jesus. These are tears of joy,” he said.

Four years ago, Selvan and his brothers were eagerly helping to prepare for their cousin’s wedding festivities. Their cousin, the only girl amongst all the cousins, was as close as a sister to them. Her upcoming wedding was a joyful event for the family who had suffered much loss and grief.

Selvan had lost his mother, four brothers and several cousins in Sri Lanka’s 25-year civil war between the Sinhalese-majority government and the Tamil insurgents. As Christians, they had the hope of seeing their loved ones in heaven, but it did not diminish their grief.

Selvan’s father Aaris, the founding pastor of Gethsemane Church, was especially concerned about the well-being of his family and congregation. All of his sons were engaged in active Christian ministry. His children faced opposition at work and in the society whilst his grandchildren faced persecution in school because of their faith in Christ. As they were building the kingdom of God, they were persecuted by those opposed to the gospel.

Some of the persecution is indirect, for example, Christians are offered a lower price when they sell their crops, or they are excluded from social functions. But sometimes the opposition is overt, for example, village officials refuse to sign and approve documents needed for projects or for the collection of government benefits if the person requesting those documents is a Christian.

There are times the opposition turned violent - Pastor Aaris was beaten up and his home was pelted with stones. However, the church continued growing, and this angered the villagers. Selvan’s family was concerned that the persecution would escalate. Having lost four of his nine sons already, Pastor Aaris was burdened by the fear of losing more of them to anti-Christian acts of violence. So, the wedding was a welcome occasion for joy.

Weddings in their rural area of Sri Lanka are community events. Often the whole village not only knows about the event but will turn out to bless the new couple. In the days leading up to their cousin’s wedding, however, the local response was ominous.

They decorated the street with lights about three days before the wedding but people would come, on motorcycles, and cut the wires so that the lights would go off. Twice the family repaired the lights, and twice more the men returned to cut them off. The joyous ceremony took place in the church and the long-awaited party got underway at the family home two doors down. At the wishes of the couple and their families, Christian praise music filled the festive courtyard.

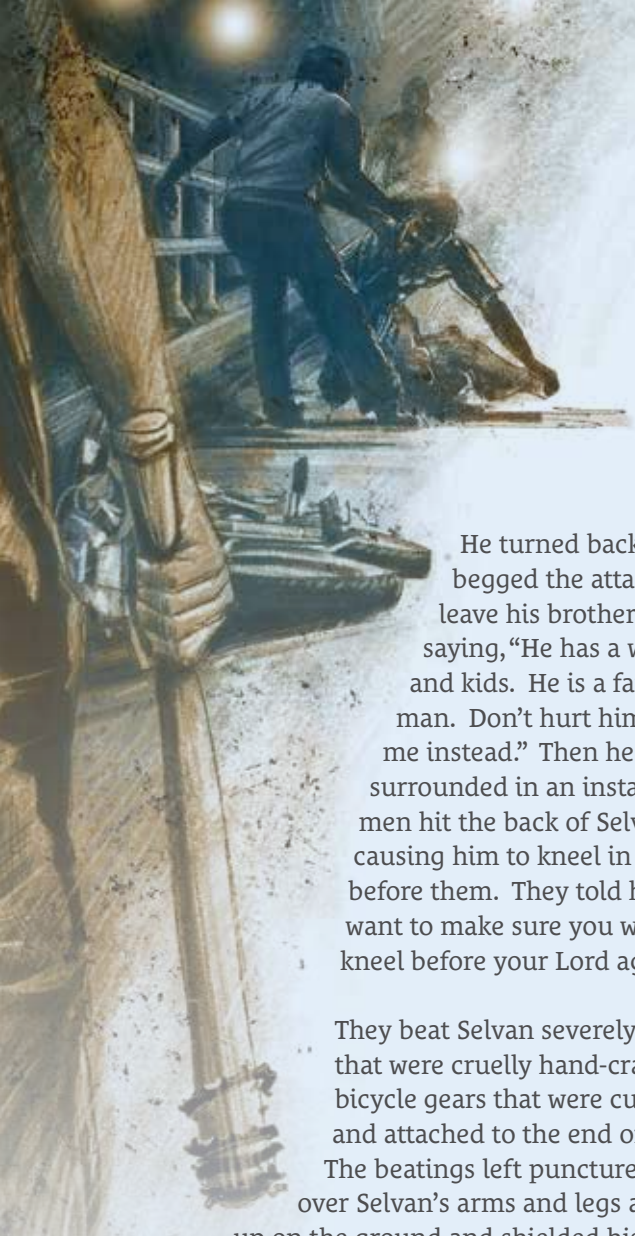
Some neighbours, however, were unhappy with the choice of music. They came over and asked Selvan’s family to change the music into something they can dance to because they were celebrating someone’s birthday. “They were just trying to pick a fight with us,” Selvan recalled.

When their demand was not met, the neighbours became angry. They started pulling down more lights, and throwing rocks to break down the canopy that had been erected for the occasion, before storming off. A few moments later, they heaved a stone over the fence which struck one of Selvan’s brothers in the head.

The police were called in but refused to provide any help or protection. So, Selvan and his oldest brother, Caleb, helped their injured brother onto the back of a motorcycle and took him to the local hospital. Around midnight, after their injured brother was admitted, Selvan and Caleb went to the police station to file a criminal complaint about the assault.

On the slow drive home, they discovered a pile of large stones and debris strewn haphazardly along the bridge near their house so they slowed down. As they did so, stones were thrown at the brothers causing them to fall off the motorcycle. Instantly, the brothers were surrounded and attacked by a group of men – some they knew from the community, some were parents of students who received free tutoring in church, and others were older students. It was later confirmed that this ambush was coordinated by an informant from the police station.

Selvan yelled for his brother to run and he took off as fast as he could, but soon realized that Caleb was not with him. In the darkness, Selvan could not see what was happening, but he heard shouts and could tell his brother was in trouble.



He turned back and begged the attackers to leave his brother alone, saying, “He has a wife and kids. He is a family man. Don’t hurt him, hurt me instead.” Then he was surrounded in an instant. The men hit the back of Selvan’s legs causing him to kneel in surrender before them. They told him, “We want to make sure you will never kneel before your Lord again!”

They beat Selvan severely with clubs that were cruelly hand-crafted from bicycle gears that were cut in half and attached to the end of a stick. The beatings left puncture wounds all over Selvan’s arms and legs as he curled up on the ground and shielded his head.

The men finally stopped the attack when Selvan’s arms and legs were broken and blood was oozing from countless wounds on his body. Thinking he was either dying or already dead, the men threw his body into a nearby ditch, when in fact Selvan was just playing dead in order to save himself.

Caleb, who had a deep wound on the side of his face from a machete blow that had glanced off his helmet, had passed out by the time the attackers turned their attention to Selvan. When he regained consciousness, he staggered home to get help, arriving about 20 minutes after the attack had begun. The men in the family went in search of Selvan and finally found him in the ditch.

The two brothers were treated at the local government-run hospital where their other brother was already being treated, but the facility was not equipped to provide the level of trauma care Selvan required. Their father pleaded for help and a front-line worker responded, rallying help from members of the global Body of Christ.

A couple of days after the attack, Selvan was moved to a private hospital where he received the surgeries he needed. Six days later, he was moved into a rented house nearby so he could continue his daily treatments in the hospital. He stayed in this rented house for one month. His orthopaedic doctor warned that recovery would be a slow and long process – it would take about six months before he could start walking.

However, the Lord healed Selvan completely. Just 30 days after his surgery, Selvan walked into the astonished doctor’s examination room and a year later, he was playing competitive soccer. In the four years since the attack, he got married and welcomed his first daughter. The only evidence left of the devastating attack are the scars on his body, the X-rays and memories.



Selvan shows X-ray images of some of the surgical repairs he required after the attack.

In the aftermath of the attack, Selvan said the Lord led his family and his church on a journey of forgiveness and hope. They fasted for 10 days and prayed for divine revelation on how to reach out to the men who led the attack. At the end of 40 days of prayer, Selvan approached and gifted one of the ringleaders of the attack with a Bible.

“We are not giving you this Bible to convert you,” Selvan assured the man. “We don’t want you to change your religion but to change your heart.” The man received the Bible without anger.

Not long after that, when Selvan saw another of his attacker walking in front of the family home, he felt a prompting to invite the man in. The man accepted the invitation and received Selvan’s hospitality. Over cups of hot tea or chai, Selvan was able to express his love and forgiveness towards the man and shared the gospel with him.



Since the brutal attack, Selvan (center) has continued to serve the church and community with his family. Pictured with him (left to right) are his brothers Arjunan and Caleb, his father, Pastor Aaris, and his wife, Aanya.

“If it was just me inviting him, he would not have come, but it was the Lord who brought him in,” Selvan said.

Caleb said his role as the teaching pastor in the church now includes training the congregation on how to persevere and forgive in the face of opposition. The best teaching, he said, is done by our lives as a living example – when we forgive those who attacked and hurt us.

That example has empowered the church to continue worshiping together and serving the community. They still offer tutoring for local students, making a special point to care for the children whose fathers attacked Caleb and Selvan. The church even plans to expand the tutoring ministry to establish a better-quality school for the community.

During an overnight prayer vigil at the church on New Year’s Eve the following year, one of the attackers and his family came to the church service and asked the

family and the whole congregation for forgiveness. Others have acknowledged that the brothers, whom they intended to kill, had been saved by their God.

However, some of the attackers have remained unrepentant. One took his own life and another has issued new death threats against Pastor Caleb. Some village leaders planned to build a tall shrine next to the church so as to block it from view.

However, none of these plans have stopped the bold vision and witness of the church.

“There are 1,500 people in this village, so our plan is that the whole 1,500 will be saved and come to the church,” Selvan said. “We believe that this whole community will become believers. That is why we keep moving forward in our ministry. Until the last breath, we want to serve the Lord.”

(Article by The Voice of the Martyrs as adapted by Goshen)

Selvan believes the Lord will bring many in the community to faith in Christ through this attack and the family’s forgiveness. Church leaders are planning to expand the church building to accommodate the whole village.



If You Save Me, I Will Preach the Gospel



It was 1 am in the night.

Hannu was sound asleep alone in his hotel room when a loud jarring sound jolted him from his slumber. He opened his eyes slowly, adjusting to the darkness around him. His eyelids heavy with sleep, he wondered if he was still dreaming.

Looking around in the dark, he realized that it was not yet morning but the telephone on his bedside table was ringing. Rubbing sleep from his eyes, Hannu rolled over, picked up the receiver and said, “Hello?”. “You have to come down to the reception desk now. The police are here looking for you because you brought illegal books into Libya,” came the stern reply.

His eyes widened and fear gripped his heart at the mention of ‘the police’ and ‘illegal books’. “How did the police know about the Bibles in the luggage bag that a brother on my team asked me to help to carry?” he thought to himself.

His heart started pounding as he put down the receiver. Apprehensive thoughts of all the things the police could do to him – interrogation, torture, arrest, imprisonment, or even death, flitted across his mind

like a movie screening. His eyebrows furrowed as he remembered he was the pastor of a church in Finland and family was waiting for him at home in Finland. “What will happen to them if I get arrested?” he thought.

This trip to Libya was not what Hannu had expected. It was his first time in Libya and it was supposed to be an initial eye-opening expedition to explore the possibilities of ministry to the people there.

All Hannu knew about that place was that it was a very tough and extreme country with no known Christians or churches then. So he joined a team to visit not knowing that this team of Christians intended to bring in Bibles and Christian materials for distribution.

Just the day before, Hannu flew from Finland to Malta to meet this team of believers. Together the group flew to the capital city of Libya. He thought his role in the team was just to help and pray for them while they did their work. He did not bring any Bibles or Christian literature with him on this trip but one brother on the team asked Hannu to help him carry his luggage bag which was too heavy for him. This bag was filled with Bibles and Christian literature.

Not thinking much about the consequences, Hannu agreed to help carry the brother's luggage. As the group walked towards customs, his jaw tightened and every muscle in his body tensed up when he saw the heightened security, prolific surveillance cameras and military presence in the airport. Fear gripped and temporarily paralysed him for he had heard that another group who brought Bibles into the same country were caught and sent to prison.

Worried and fearful for his safety, Hannu desperately pleaded with God for help. He tried to keep his composure as he walked past customs officers. Fortunately, no officer stopped him or asked to check his luggage bags.

As the tension and threat of harm faded with each step he took away from the customs checkpoint, Hannu heaved a sigh of relief and thanked God for helping him.

Now at 1 am, all that tension, stress and anxiety from the earlier episode at the customs checkpoint came flooding back as the phone rang a second time with the same voice repeating the same message – “The police are here, come down to the reception desk!”

Then God spoke to Hannu, “Do you remember what you preached one week ago from Rom 8:38-39 about believers being more than conquerors - neither death nor life, angels nor demons, the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus?”

Hannu knew there and then that it was time to apply that Word of God in his own life. He knelt down in the hotel room and repented for letting fear overwhelm him. He also asked the Lord for forgiveness for his prejudice against a specific group of religious people.

He told God, “If you save me, I will preach the gospel to these people.”

Then something happened in the silent, dark hotel room. While still on his knees, Hannu suddenly felt the tangible presence of the Lord in the room which so overwhelmed him that he could not utter a word and completely lost track of time. He did not go down to the reception desk that night and he did not receive any more phone calls. His trip continued as planned and Hannu was able to return safely to Finland.

One month after he returned to Finland, a member of his church told Hannu that one night she was woken up from her sleep with a vision of Hannu's face. So, she prayed for him for a long time even though she did not know what had happened to her pastor. She stopped praying only when she felt the peace of the Lord. And that was the exact date and time Hannu received the telephone call from the police in the hotel room.

God had miraculously saved Hannu.

That was the start of his work among unreached people groups and persecuted believers in Syria, Jordan, Africa and other parts of the world.

Many people in these nations were coming to faith in Christ.

For many years, Hannu, his wife and two sons lived among persecuted believers. They

discipled and prayed for those who had been kicked out of their families, and who were not allowed to study, work, get married or receive any inheritance from their family simply because of their Christian faith.

These persecuted believers live in hiding in safe houses situated in secluded places and mountainous regions. Many of them are severely scarred, physically and emotionally, and are even paralysed because of repeated and cruel beatings and punishments meted out by their own family members.



The safe house is a transit place where these traumatised believers receive healing, counselling, rehabilitation and teaching of the Bible. They also obtain help with education as well as finding a job, and are given a new identity so that they can relocate away from their community.

Most of these persecuted believers have suffered at length at the hands of their persecutors. Yet, they choose to forgive and bless the very people who scarred them and destroyed their lives. “I have learnt the true meaning of forgiveness from these persecuted believers,” Hannu said.

(Hannu Lahtinen is the CEO of The Voice of the Martyrs, Finland.)

***Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone....
If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.***

(Rom 12:17, 20a)

PROJECT- Relief for Victims of Anti-Christian Acts of Violence in Burkina Faso



Displaced children
waiting for distribution
of educational supplies.

Besides pain and suffering, acts of violence perpetrated against Christians in Burkina Faso have displaced many families and exposed vulnerable children to exploitation, human traffickers and severe psychological trauma.

Poverty and a lack of education can lead children and teenagers to be deceived into forced labour by unscrupulous employers or recruited by violent insurgents in exchange for provision and a means of survival.

Goshen has been raising funds to provide educational opportunities for about 1,138 displaced Christian children in Burkina Faso. Some of these young ones are orphans or are children of widows and pastors.

All funds raised will be used to subsidise the cost of school fees, uniforms, supplies and one meal a day. However, we are still short of funds.

If you have a heart for the persecuted or for children and youths, or feel led by the Lord to help these believers in Burkina Faso, please see the details below for the ways through which you can send your gift.

Gifts towards our current project can be made payable to:
GOSHEN INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES LIMITED

OCBC Bank Code : 7339
Account : 508-308962-001 (for Fund Transfer)

Pay Now : UEN No. 198204059M

For a direct deposit into our bank account, please email us at
admin@gosheninternational.org or WhatsApp **9788 0457**
to facilitate our accountability to you.

(In your e-mail to us, please indicate your name and contact number and the specific project you wish to give to. In the event the target fund is reached, any excess will be channelled to the general fund which goes towards assisting persecuted Christians.)



GOSHEN INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES OUR PURPOSE

We aim to actively serve the Lord and our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ around the world by praying for them, standing with them, encouraging them, helping them in practical ways and learning lessons of true discipleship from them.

*I will sing to the Lord all my life. I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.
(Ps 104:33)*

Praising God in hard times is not about pretending everything is fine, but rather choosing to focus on God's character rather than current circumstances.

Praise him anyway, irrespective of the unpredictable vicissitudes of life. Praise will anchor your heart on God's unchanging character.

Join us every month at Goshen's Fellowship Night to praise God and stand with our persecuted brothers and sisters-in-Christ.

DATE / DAY / TIME

Tuesday
7.30pm to 9.30pm
(7th July & 11th August)

VENUE

Church of Our Saviour
130 Margaret Drive
Singapore 149300

EVENT

**Goshen Fellowship
Night**

(Look out for more details and updates on Goshen's Facebook page.)

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