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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2014

Living in Babylon

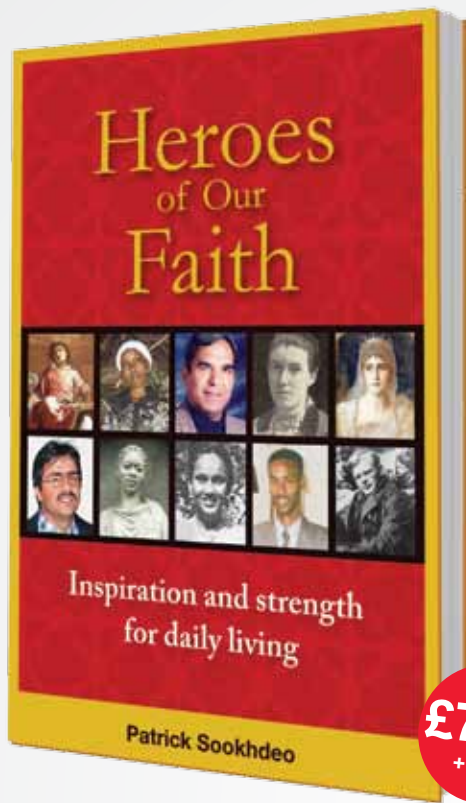
*Faithful to Christ in a
hostile world*

IN THIS ISSUE

Suffering Church Action Week

26 October – 2 November 2014

15 pages of information and resources inside



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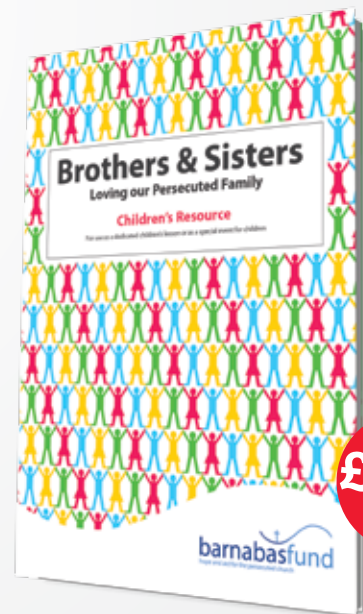
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Living in Babylon

At the end of his first letter, Peter sends greetings to his readers. He writes “She who is in Babylon ... sends you her greetings” (1 Peter 5:13). Visiting the ancient city of Babylon, south of Baghdad, some years ago, walking its streets on stones laid thousands of years ago, the very stones that Daniel himself walked on, and remembering the words of the psalm, “By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept” (Psalm 137:1), I thought of the significance of Babylon in world history. The next day, at church, I took my leave of the saints to return to the UK and they said to me, “Take our greetings to Christians around the world.”

I have often reflected on the greetings of the saints in the context of Babylon. What

did Babylon mean for Peter? Was it just a geographical location, or did it have a deeper significance? In Biblical history, Babylon appears first in connection

with Babel (Genesis 10:10; 11:1-9). As humankind tried to reach God and built a tower as a gate to heaven, so God sent confusion into their midst. Later, Babylon came to signify conflict and often appalling cruelty. The Babylonians were noted both for their prowess in war and their ruthless brutality. Still later, it came to speak of corruption, particularly in the book of Revelation. Here the corruption is economic as well as spiritual as well as moral. Babylon speaks of human depravity that not only corrupts but destroys.

In Psalm 137 the exiles of Israel sit down and weep when they remember Jerusalem. They are in Babylon, and they are experiencing the grievous reality of alienation, of dislocation, of discrimination, of persecution and of death. For them, Babylon has become a crucible of suffering. Life seems to be just one long, hopeless existence. Peter in his reference to being in Babylon is

perhaps thinking of this but applying it to his present day and to Rome. For it is Rome that is now the place of persecution, where Christians would experience the most appalling of sufferings.

The Church lives in Babylon but Babylon does not live within the Church. She represents the other, the spiritual, the divine here on earth. As the body of Christ she reflects both the love and the glory of Christ in a fallen world. Today, our world is marked by confusion, by endless conflicts and numerous cruelties; corruption exists at every level, and in some contexts Babylon has entered into the very soul of some Christians and churches. Yet as followers of Christ, we must remain faithful to our Lord.

In the book of Habakkuk, where the

prophet simply cannot understand how God has raised up Babylon, such a cruel nation, to inflict such appalling sufferings on His people, he sees the need not

only to write down his vision but also to see to the end. In chapter 2, verse 14, he sees the future, a future born out of hope and a future that will ultimately be victorious, for the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. But he sees something else: the need to be faithful and to trust God when all else seems to fail. “Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour” (Habakkuk 3:17-18).

As Christians today, living in Babylon, we need to have this future of hope ever before us and to be faithful in the difficult times, even if it seems that there is no respite to our sufferings. We must put our faith in God and place our lives into His hands and trust Him for the future.

*The Church lives in
Babylon but Babylon does
not live within the Church*

Dr Patrick Sookhdeo
International Director

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£443,335 for food and basic needs for three months in Syria
(US\$758,908; €557,450)

Aleppo's poorest surviving



A Syrian Christian couple with their food package

"Without your help and support, we would have never been able to survive," said Adel, a Syrian Christian from Aleppo, who has been receiving monthly food baskets from Barnabas Fund since September 2013.

Adel hails originally from Djabal al Sayde, one of the city's poorest neighbourhoods. But on Good Friday 2013, rebels invaded his neighbourhood; he and his family were forced to flee, and ever since they have been living as displaced persons elsewhere. Already impoverished, they lost all their possessions on that day.

Through one of our partners, Adel's family, and more than 240 other Christian families from Djabal al Sayde, are getting a food package every month and milk powder for all children under eleven. This April, they also received new clothes for Easter, and they were given summer clothes in May. This group is just one of many groups of needy and displaced Christians in Syria whom Barnabas Fund is helping to feed.

Project reference
00-1032 (Middle East Fund to help Christians in Syria)



£14,718 for cattle in Niger
(US\$25,000; €18,429)

Livestock bring joy



Over three days the Christians learned how to take care of the animals

"You have put joy in our faces," said a Christian in Niger who belongs to one of the small Christian communities that received livestock via Barnabas Fund for generating income.

The Christians also received three days of training to learn how to take care of the animals. The earnings from selling the fattened animals will be used to support their businesses and to buy more livestock. Life is increasingly difficult because of how unpredictable the climate has become.

Much of their joy came from realising that even as a tiny Christian minority in a Muslim-majority country, they were remembered. "It will soon be almost twelve years that we do not know if every year will be a good year for food," one of the new owners said. The 46 cows and oxen, 27 goats and sheep, 20 carts and supplies of seed will provide them with the tools to get through this period of food insecurity.

Project reference
00-356 (Small Business Start-up Fund)



£20,564 for pastors and evangelists in Pakistan
(US\$34,930; €25,742)

Serving the Lord with peace of mind



Patras during a church service

Pastoring a lively congregation of over 200 members in the city of Multan, Pakistan, is keeping Patras, a Barnabas-funded pastor, on his toes.

In just one month three families joined the church and 23 people accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour. He also baptised six people and prepared nine more for baptism. This is something to praise God for in a country where Christian activity is regularly met with hostility, and sometimes even violence, by the Muslim majority.

Patras considers the support from Barnabas Fund a blessing for his family. "[It] is covering many things and making me able to serve the Lord with peace of mind."

Another 74 pastors, 2 assistant pastors and 26 women workers are receiving the same on-going support. Those with families receive £21 (US\$36; €26) per month, and single workers and widows receive £14 (US\$24; €18). This covers 50% of their monthly needs.

Project reference
41-432



is helping

Strengthened and encouraged. This is how many Christians tell us they feel when they receive support from Barnabas Fund. Thank you for making this possible. The following pages are just a few examples of the many ways we have recently helped persecuted and pressurised Christians.

£3,528 for seminar in Kyrgyzstan
(US\$5,700; €4,192)

£2,400 for a deep tube well, painting and electricity in Bangladesh
(US\$4,076; €3,005)

£10,308 for church building in India
(US\$17,508; €12,904)

Gaining Biblical grounding

Church again after five years



The congregation in front of their new church

A jubilant procession of more than 100 Christians, many of whom were singing, dancing and playing drums, preceded the re-opening of Sasimaha church in Orissa state, North India, in May this year. After being bereft of a building for over five years, the congregation celebrated the dedication of a new-built church, constructed with resources from Barnabas Fund.

Their previous church building was one of the hundreds of churches destroyed by Hindu extremists during the severe anti-Christian violence that erupted in Orissa state in December 2007 and August 2008. Many members of the congregation also lost their homes during the violence, so the new church building is a symbol of hope and restoration.

Two more churches, also built with support from Barnabas Fund, were opened in the same month.

Project reference
21-723



Water for the thirsty



Barnabas funds the construction of wells in Bangladesh

A church in Bangladesh now has access to water thanks to a deep tube well that was built on their premises with support from Barnabas Fund.

It has solved a big problem for them, especially in March to July, when the entire north of the country suffers from a severe water shortage. "It was really difficult to carry the water from a long distance, and the normal tube well does not work during the dry season," said one church member. Christians in Bangladesh are often prevented from drawing from public wells by Muslims.

This active church now has enough water for their Sunday school programme, seminars and church services. "We are very happy and give thanks to our God," said another member. "While we attend the church services, we always feel good and are praising God for the wonderful opportunity for the new believers."

Barnabas Fund also paid for the painting of the church and installing its electricity supply.

Project reference
04-1127



Christian women share a Bible during a seminar

"I was very surprised by it," said "Zarifa", one of the participants, about the Biblical teaching she received at a seminar in Kyrgyzstan supported by Barnabas Fund. "We studied the Gospel of Mark [...and] I saw that Jesus has all authority, and preached with this authority."

The teaching was eye-opening for many of the 55 Christians, almost all converts from Islam and church leaders from small towns and villages throughout the country. They have virtually no access to Biblical training, and the studies were a great boost to their faith and ministry.

Another invaluable part of the three-day course was the opportunity to meet fellow church leaders, who are all dealing with similar issues, such as isolation and persecution from Muslim relatives and local Muslim communities. The close contacts they could build up are helping them form a national Christian community.

This is the third seminar of this kind that Barnabas Fund has supported in Kyrgyzstan.

Project reference
00-430 (Leadership Training Fund)



bringing hope,

Head start for Christian tots

Three newly kitted-out Christian nurseries are giving 205 impoverished Christian youngsters in three villages in Upper Egypt a head start in life.

With support from Barnabas Fund, last year the Christian nurseries were able to buy educational resources that have greatly improved the quality of the nurseries. The resources, such as a puppet theatre and puppets, posters, computers, a projector and playground equipment, are making the youngsters' learning experience much more hands-on and enjoyable. Child-sized tables and chairs, and cupboards, have made the classrooms more orderly. And with the new

kitchen equipment, the staff of two nurseries can prepare daily, nutritious meals for the children.

Theresa, a teacher, says that the educational games are helping the children understand and retain information more quickly. The teachers, all Christians, are also using the new resources to tell Bible stories to the children in a more accessible and lively fashion.

Many of the children come from very poor backgrounds, but they are now getting a good preparation for primary school at a minimal fee.



The children are now happier to attend the nurseries

£7,736 for equipping three kindergartens in Egypt
(US\$13,131; €9,680)



Project reference 11-424

Teenager's prayer answered

"I started seriously praying and worshipping before the Lord Jesus as tears fell down," writes Benaria in Indonesia, relating the struggle she went through when her parents told her at age 15 that they were too poor to continue paying her school fees.

Many impoverished Christian parents in Indonesia facing this problem have no other option than ending their children's education or sending them to Islamic boarding schools, as these often offer reduced fees. At such schools the Christian children experience harassment for their faith and pressure to convert to Islam.

Benaria prayed, "I trust you Lord, that you will be able to pave the way for me to continue my schooling. You have said not to worry." After six months, her prayers were answered, and she

was admitted to a Christian secondary boarding school that is supported by Barnabas Fund.

Situated in a province that is 96.6% Muslim, the school's main aim is to offer underprivileged Christian children such as Benaria a Christian alternative to the Muslim boarding schools.

Alongside the regular national curriculum, the 70 attending students are receiving a thorough education in Christian theology. Last year all twelve final-year students who took the national exam graduated with a diploma.

Benaria continues to experience God's providence at school. "When I need something, for example, soap, detergent or toothpaste, God always sends people who are kind to share His love to me."



All final-year students graduated with a diploma last year

£4,122 for Christian secondary school in Indonesia
(US\$7,000; €5,160)



Project reference 22-1170

transforming lives

Equipped to serve troubled communities

“It has helped me to grow in the knowledge of God and fellowship with Him and His people.”



The ministry also organises Christian youth camps

“All the lessons are very powerful and practical,” said a student who is following a Barnabas-funded Bible training course in India. The courses greatly build up the students’ faith and enable them to make a difference to their hurting community.

Brave decision

Many of the 419 students and 54 tutors are converts from other religions. Their decision to become Christians was a brave one. In rural north-east India where they live, turning to Christ is thought to put you into the lowest and most despised social group.

Their families, most of whom are part of a Nepalese minority, often oppose their conversion and continue to make life difficult for them afterwards. Prashana, one of the students, said about her

conversion from Hinduism, “My papa [...] did not like to hear the name of Jesus. [My parents] beat me physically many times.”

This is why the course focuses on building up the personal faith of the students so that they can stand strong when their families and communities oppose them, and reach out to them in love. The tutors are trained to counsel and nurture the students with moral and prayer support.

The course has helped Prashana learn the Word of God more deeply. She said, “It has helped me to grow in the knowledge of God and fellowship with Him and His people.”

Becoming leaders

Another focus of the course is preparation for Christian leadership roles. Most of the students

are already a great support to their pastors and leaders.

Mr Lepcha was a Buddhist monk for 23 years before turning to Christ. He started serving in his church as an elder after successfully completing the tutor training. “The training helped me to establish the foundation of my faith in the Word of God and build my life on it. I deliberately teach the course to my friends.”

£4,794 for Bible training course in India
(US\$8,218; €6,045)



Project reference 21-1012



Living in Babylon

Faithful to Christ in a hostile world



**Suffering Church
Action Week 2014**

As Christians, we are exiles here on earth, living in a land that is not our heavenly home. As a result, we are often despised and rejected because our values and practices are different from those of wider society. In many parts of the world Christians suffer discrimination, harassment and violence, and even in the West believers face social pressure to water down or abandon the faith.








The New Testament uses the name “Babylon” to refer to the Roman Empire as a place of exile and suffering for God’s people. And today, Christians everywhere live in our own “Babylons”, experiencing various levels of contempt, rejection and hostility for Christ’s sake.

But we are called to stay faithful to Christ in our hostile world. In this year’s Suffering Church Action Week, which will run from 26 October to 2 November,* Barnabas Fund is calling on all Christians to join us in offering practical and spiritual

support to our brothers and sisters in Christ who suffer most severely because of their faith in Him, to help them withstand the persecutions that they face. The week also provides an opportunity to build ourselves up in our own faith, so we too can resist the pressure to fall away. It will include a Barnabas Day of Prayer on Saturday 1 November, and we are also sponsoring the International Day of Prayer on Sunday 16 November (Please see page 19 for further details of these events.)

The following pages provide various perspectives on the theme of living in Babylon and offer suggestions for how you and your church could get involved in Suffering Church Action Week. A free Living in Babylon Inspiration Pack is also available to order, which includes examples of all the materials you will need to take part. For more information about this, please turn to pages 20-21 or visit www.livinginbabylon.org.

*If preferred, the resources can be used at another time of year more suitable to your church’s calendar.

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Living in Babylon today

*Persecuted believers
suffering for Christ's sake*

The name “Babylon” evokes images of captivity and intense suffering for the people of God in the Old Testament. In the New Testament too, where the name is used mainly to refer to the oppressive Roman Empire, “Babylon” signifies a place of persecution.

But the suffering of God's people is not just a historical fact. Ever since the persecution of the early Church, Christians in a vast majority of places have endured some measure of contempt, rejection and hostility because of their faith. Today, our persecuted brothers and sisters live in their own Babylons, suffering discrimination, harassment and violence for Christ's sake.

These Babylons can be roughly divided into three categories: the Islamic, that of other religions, and the secular. This article will explore these contexts, using historical examples and highlighting the plight of Christians today. It also includes examples of the ways in which Barnabas Fund helps believers suffering in these Babylons (please see grey boxes).



“Living in Babylon” under Islam

Much of the persecution that Christians currently suffer is at the hands of Muslims. Christians living in Muslim-majority contexts may be treated as second-class citizens by their communities, oppressed by governments that deny them religious freedom, or viciously attacked.

Second-class citizens

Anti-Christian hostility dates back to Muhammad and the first Muslims. Under sharia law, which was codified between the 7th and 10th centuries, Christians living in territory conquered by Muslims are given three options: live under crippling restrictions and pay the humiliating *jizya* tax, convert to Islam or face death. Believers who choose the first are given *dhimmi* status, under which they are second-class citizens, seen as inferior to Muslims and treated accordingly.

The spread of Islam had a devastating effect on Christian communities. As the Arab armies made rapid conquests in the 7th century, Christianity declined in the Middle East and within a few centuries was completely wiped out from parts of North Africa. When Constantinople fell to the Ottomans in 1453, all Christians in the Ottoman Empire were subjugated as *dhimmis*.

The attitude of contempt created in Muslim-majority contexts by centuries of sharia law means that Christians, even in secular Muslim states, still experience discrimination today. In Pakistan, for example, Christians are often barred

All schools of sharia law mandate the death penalty for adult males who leave Islam, and most also prescribe it for female apostates. Many Muslims still consider this an appropriate punishment, and it is enshrined in law in seven states. These include Saudi Arabia, where the legal system is based on the government's strict interpretation of sharia. All Saudi citizens must be Muslims. Although the death penalty is enforced judicially only very rarely even in Saudi Arabia, in many countries a raft of other penalties are used against those who leave Islam. In any context, apostates can be at risk from relatives or radical Muslims who take the law into their own hands.

The sufferings of Meriam Ibrahim, a Christian mother in Sudan, are a shocking and unusual example of the apostasy law in action. Meriam was sentenced to death in May 2014. Even though she was raised as a Christian, she is considered to have been born into Islam because her father is a Muslim. Although an international outcry prompted her release, she was briefly rearrested and at the time of writing is barred from leaving Sudan.

Under threat from Islamists

In recent decades, Christian minorities in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia have been increasingly endangered by Islamism, or political Islam. The Islamist agenda, which is advanced by the ballot box and by the bullet, is in part a response to the perceived failures of

Barnabas projects in Islamic contexts

Defending the defenceless

Savan's Christian lawyers worked through the night of 31 March to file a High Court appeal in Pakistan after Savan, a Christian, was sentenced to death on 27 March for insulting Muhammad. The court had given the lawyers just seven days to appeal the sentence.

Long-term support from Barnabas Fund is enabling these Christian lawyers to provide legal assistance, often for free, to Christians in their country. Many of our brothers and sisters have been falsely accused of blasphemy by Muslims, or ill-treated, attacked or raped. As part of a marginalised Christian minority, they are extremely vulnerable to treatment such as this, and most are far too poor to pay for their legal defence.

In Savan's case it soon became clear what lay behind the accusation. Muslim factory owners and extremists were using it as a subterfuge to take over Christian property. On the same day that Savan was accused by a Muslim friend, Muslim extremists took to the streets of the Christian neighbourhood where Savan lived and burned down over 200 homes belonging to Christian families.

The lawyers continue to work on the case of Savan, who has been in prison since the accusation on 8 March 2013. They expect it will take three or four years for a High Court hearing to take place. They are also providing legal assistance for Christians whose houses were burned down.

Project reference: 41-645

Discrimination has mired many in crippling cycles of poverty and illiteracy

from all but the lowliest, poorest-paid jobs. This discrimination has mired many in crippling cycles of poverty and illiteracy. Children of believing families face harassment in the classroom and may be deliberately failed in exams.

Anti-Christian hostility in Pakistan also manifests itself in brutal violence against communities and individuals, including sexual abuse. Each year, hundreds of Christian girls and women are kidnapped, sexually assaulted and forced to convert to Islam and marry their Muslim captors.

secular Islamic states and to perceived humiliation of Muslims at the hands of Western powers.

State Islamisation can have shattering consequences for Christians. The 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran, where state persecution still blights the lives of believers, was an early example. In some countries, official Islamisation has led to increased use of “blasphemy laws”. In Pakistan and Egypt, these pernicious laws are often misused to settle personal grudges, and Christians are particularly vulnerable to false accusations.



Free from financial dependence

A microloan from Barnabas Fund has helped "Joseph" in Senegal gain financial independence.

Like many African people, Joseph worked out his finances together with his extended family. And so when he converted to Christianity, he lost his income. His relatives broke all ties with him, and his stepfather, an imam of a mosque, even tried to take his wife and children from him. Joseph and his wife and children ended up living in an unfinished home on a construction site. Rain ruined the few possessions they had taken with them.

The loan from Barnabas enabled him to open a bread-making business. He opened three stalls on the outskirts of Dakar, the capital, and started selling bread that he had bought from several large bakeries in the city. After six months Joseph's business was doing so well that he could open two more stalls.

Besides Joseph, another eleven converts from Islam in Senegal received small sums from Barnabas Fund to help them become self-sufficient. Their businesses, which include shoemaking, carpentry and wholesale vegetable trading, are all prospering. The money that is recouped from their loan repayments is being used to provide loans to more converts.

Project reference: 00-356
(Small Business Start-up Fund)



Dielynaba now can provide for herself with her sewing business

Believers have been arrested, and in some cases punished, for "crimes" that are entirely fabricated or as trivial as "liking" a Facebook page run by Egyptian converts from Islam to Christianity. In Pakistan, defiling the name of Muhammad carries a mandatory death sentence, although no-one has actually been executed.

Violent Islamist militias also threaten the survival of our brothers and sisters. In Islamic countries where such groups are dominant or powerful, such as Afghanistan and Somalia, Christians are so greatly at risk that most meet secretly or follow Jesus in isolation. Islamist groups also pursue jihad (holy war) in countries in which both Muslim and Christian communities are strongly present.

development, ISIS has announced the formation of a caliphate, or Islamic state, in the Middle East. It has presented Christians in Raqqa, Syria, with the age-old ultimatum: live as *dhimmi* under crippling restrictions, convert to Islam or die. In Mosul, Iraq, it has established sharia punishments such as amputation for thieves, crucifixion for criminals and the death penalty for apostasy.

Other religions and "living in Babylon"

It is not only in Islamic contexts that Christian minorities live in a Babylon created by members of the majority religion. Beginning with the abuses of the pagan Roman Empire and the massacre of Christians by Zoroastrian Shapur

Christians are so greatly at risk that most meet secretly or follow Jesus in isolation

Thousands of people have been killed by Boko Haram, which is attacking Christians and other targets in an attempt to create an Islamic state in Northern Nigeria. It is thought that at least 450 were slaughtered in attacks on Christian areas in May and June 2014 alone. Believers in some parts of Tanzania, where Christians and Muslims have long lived side by side in peace, are also now under threat from extremists.

The political turmoil of the "Arab Spring" presented Islamists in the Middle East and North Africa with an opportunity to advance their cause by both political and violent means. Egypt's year of Islamist rule (June 2012 – July 2013) caused great suffering for the country's Christian minority, which is still enduring attacks by Islamists protesting against the removal of former president Mohammed Morsi. A recent spike in targeted violence has also rocked the expatriate Christian community in Libya.

And Syria's brutal civil war is now largely being fought by Islamist opposition fighters who deliberately target Christians. One such group, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS), has launched a violent insurgency in Iraq that has displaced thousands of Christians, further decimating a community much diminished by over a decade of targeted violence. In a terrifying

Il in Persia in 341 AD, history is littered with examples of the persecution of believers by the followers of other religions, and this continues today.

As Christian mission expanded during and after the 16th century, missionaries and converts became the targets of people who saw them as a threat to traditional religious practices and national unity. Believers in Japan, China and Madagascar were amongst those targeted in this way. In the Indian sub-continent, a huge growth in Christianity in the 1800s led to an angry backlash from Hindus as well as Muslims.

Even though Hindu and Buddhist teachings advocate tolerance, some Christians living as a minority among Hindus and Buddhists are still ruthlessly persecuted today. Attacks by Hindu nationalists in India range from the large-scale and communal, such as violent raids on worship services and the demolition of church buildings, to brutality against individuals, especially converts from Hinduism. In a recent horrific incident, Nimmaka Laxmaya (50) was killed by Hindu extremists who mistook him for his newly-baptised son. The killers later told Nimmaka's son, "We killed your father because he refused to deny Jesus Christ."

Barnabas projects where other religions are dominant

“My Jesus gave this house to me”

“My Jesus gave this house to me,” said Sumitra in Orissa, India, standing with her son in front of their new home that was built thanks to Barnabas Fund. “[He] hears our prayers and answers. He keeps account of our tears, too,” she added.

This mother and son have certainly known their share of tears. For the last five years, they have been living in desperate poverty after their home and possessions were destroyed by extremist Hindus, who went on a spree of anti-Christian violence in December 2007 and August 2008.

In the last three years, Barnabas has been building hundreds of houses to help other Christians who became homeless at the same time. So far, 1,166 houses have been fully constructed or repaired. Another 335 are under construction, and plans are in place to build hundreds more.

Sumitra is overjoyed to have a home again. “Our God cares for us,” she said. “Thanks to each one of you who toiled hard to give us a house.”

Project reference: 21-723

Safe ride for threatened schoolboy

“My son is very happy today,” said “Kapila’s” father in Sri Lanka on the day his family received funds from Barnabas for a three-wheeler taxi. “He was always scared to walk alone to the school, but now we all can go together.”

The taxi will enable Kapila’s father to bring his son to school in safety. The Christian family has been receiving threats after a Buddhist monk attacked Kapila at his school.

On the day of the attack, the Buddhist monk, who teaches Buddhism at the school, ordered Kapila to sit on the front row. As the only non-Buddhist student present, Kapila had tried to move to the back of the class. The Buddhist monk then asked him to recite the names of Buddha’s parents. When Kapila replied that he was Christian, the monk beat him severely.

Kapila was bleeding from his left ear, but the teachers forced him to sit through the classes, and even threatened the youngster with more violence if he told anyone about the assault. That night Kapila started to vomit and finally admitted to his father what had happened. His father brought him to a hospital the next morning and is concerned that Kapila might never regain his hearing.

The Buddhist monk also threatened Kapila’s father with violence if he reported the incident. He reported it anyway, but, as is often the case with incidents involving Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka, the police have not started an investigation.

The three-wheeler was an answer to prayer for Kapila’s father. “With all the threats, I was thinking how I could take my kids to school safely. This vehicle made it easy.” The taxi also provides another source of income for the impoverished family.

Project reference: 00-345 (Victims of Violence Fund)

Indian believers are also oppressed by the political arm of the Hindu nationalist movement, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP, which won the country’s general election in May, had already introduced “anti-conversion” laws, which threaten legitimate Christian evangelism, in several states under its control and has pledged to introduce similar legislation nationwide.

Believers in Sri Lanka are also under the twin pressures of official restrictions and extremist violence, but in this case the oppressors and attackers are most often Buddhist nationalists. One Christian group in the country recorded at least 65 attacks on Christians in 2013; these numerous accounts were dismissed by a government minister, who said that they might be “made up”. Christians also face difficulties in building churches and discrimination in education. In February 2014, a six-year-old girl from a Christian family was punished by her head teacher for refusing to take part in a Buddhist ritual.

The military government of Burma (Myanmar) co-opts Buddhism in its attempts to reinforce its power by creating a unified national identity. Predominantly Christian ethnic groups suffer horrendous abuses at the hands of the army. The government actively promotes Buddhism and restricts Christian activities.

Converts from traditional religions in Laos and Vietnam are also at risk of harassment and violence by their animist neighbours, who sometimes forcibly evict whole families from their villages.

Secular “Babylons”

Since the 1917 Russian Revolution, many new Babylons have been created in Marxist countries or those with ruling systems based on similar ideologies. Christians are often seen as a threat to national security in these contexts, and their activities are strictly controlled.

North Korea, which is regularly named as the worst country in the world in which to be a Christian, is one such context. Despite the state’s espousal of atheism, all North Koreans are expected to follow *Juche* (self-reliance), a political system that venerates the ruling Kim family. It is illegal to be a Christian or take part in any Christian activity; people caught with Bibles were among 80 prisoners publicly executed in November 2013. Christians are often sent to prison labour camps, where they are abused, tortured and worked to death.



Barnabas projects in secular contexts

In their hour of need

A Barnabas-funded ministry is proving to be a life-line to hundreds of Eritrean Christian refugees in Egypt.

Having escaped from their country's increasingly harsh, anti-Christian, post-Communist government, many Eritrean Christians are defenceless against the dangers that lie ahead on their journey. The ministry is there for them in their hour of need.

In 2013, over 250 stranded Christian Eritrean refugees were able to live in houses provided by the ministry for a period of time. Many had ended up there after having been trafficked or kidnapped in Sudan or Egypt's Sinai desert. Others had just been released from Egyptian prisons. Almost all experienced brutal torture and abuse.

Over 700 imprisoned Eritrean Christians received food, clothes, shoes, medicines and sanitary items while in prison in Egypt, and another 150 prisoners received pastoral support.

Now these brothers and sisters are able to restart their lives outside Eritrea.

Project reference: 12-954

Creative ways to inform Christians

Most Christian literature in Azerbaijan is banned, and Christians are forbidden to share the Gospel. But praise God that a church there received permission from the secular government to start a general newspaper last year.

Besides articles on international and national current affairs, the monthly newspaper holds much Christian content. With some copies passing through many different hands, the 1,500 copies that are distributed throughout the country are reaching thousands of Christians.

For many Christian Azeris the newspaper is enabling them to read the Bible in the Azeri language for the first time. Every month several chapters from the Bible are published in the Azeri language.

Christians in rural areas are using the articles on Bible teaching, and those on practical or doctrinal matters, for their Bible studies and home groups.

And they are learning what their rights are as Christians under the current law of the country through articles on freedom of religion, worship, and particular administrative laws.

Some Christians are also using the paper as a way to share the Gospel, and several people have found the Lord through it.

Project reference: 03-1117

In Eritrea, Christians are grievously persecuted by the repressive post-Communist authorities. Members of unregistered churches are subject to harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention. Over 1,000 Christians are thought to be in prison; some church leaders have been held for over ten years. Those detained may be held in miserable, dangerous conditions in metal shipping containers. Some have died in custody.

Christians are also viewed as a threat by the Communist authorities in China and Vietnam, who persecute members of house churches. Believers are subject to severe restrictions, harassment and sometimes imprisonment. Religious belief is incompatible with membership of the Chinese Communist Party, so even Chinese Christians in the two legally recognised denominations, which are tightly controlled by the government, suffer discrimination in employment.

Believers in several countries in Central Asia are also subject to restrictions on their activities and may be harassed, fined, arrested and even imprisoned for taking part in unregistered religious activities.



Please pray

Give thanks for the steadfast, inspiring witness of persecuted Christians who remain faithful to Christ even as they are living in Babylon, facing suffering and oppression. Pray that they will know the Lord's comfort throughout all they endure. Ask Him to sustain them, protect them and provide for them. Pray also for believers in the West, who may endure contempt and hostility, albeit at a much lower level, that they will be encouraged by the example of their suffering brothers and sisters.



Imprisoned Eritrean Christians in a crowded prison in Egypt

A Sunday morning in Babylon

*“Go home
before you get
into trouble”*

*“I’ve come to
warn you!”*

*“I don’t want
to be seen
here!”*

*“Now I’ve lost
my job!”*

This drama could be performed as part of a Suffering Church Sunday service or other SCAW event. No previous acting experience is required!

The drama, which is set in a church service, aims to help your congregation understand what life is like for persecuted Christians who are “living in Babylon”. Please consider carefully whether it will be appropriate for your church, taking into account the feelings of children and the elderly in particular.

We advise that you advertise well in advance that a drama will be taking place and make it clear at all times, perhaps by a notice on a screen, that the events taking place are not real, just in case your actors are a little too convincing! You may choose to include or omit the dialogue between Points A and B, as you prefer.

Characters

PREACHER: The preacher's lines could be read either by the person who will be preaching the message that day, or by somebody else. The real name of the person playing the PREACHER could be used.

NEIGHBOUR

POLICEMAN

FIRST, SECOND, THIRD and FOURTH MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION:

These should be sitting amongst those watching the drama, at points where they can be seen and heard by everyone. If you have a smaller cast, the lines said by the third and fourth members could be read by the first and second instead.

CHURCH MEMBER (of another local church)

Please feel free to adapt the script to reflect the gender of your cast members.

PREACHER: We're going to be looking today at what it would have been like for God's people in Babylon in Daniel's time. They were captives far from home, amongst a foreign people with different traditions, and they were looked upon with great suspicion and hostility. It's hard for us to imagine the kind of pressure they would have experienced –

[The preacher is interrupted by a non-Christian neighbour, who has come into the church to look for him/her.]

NEIGHBOUR: Oh, hi [*preacher's name*]! I saw your car outside as I was driving past and I thought I'd pop in and give you your jacket. [*Gives jacket*] You left it in my car. [*Turns and notices congregation, reacting with surprise and hostility*] Oh ... what's all this? Of course... I forgot you did this church stuff on a Sunday. You know what, never mind. I don't want to be seen here! I'll see you later ... or maybe not.

[She exits.]

PREACHER: Sorry about that – she's my next-door neighbour. I don't know what's got into her! As I was saying, it would have been very hard to remain faithful to God in Daniel's time. He faced a terrifying punishment from the authorities, just for praying.

[Enter POLICEMAN, interrupting.]

POLICEMAN: I'm sorry, ladies and gentlemen, but what are you all doing here? Don't you know this sort of thing was made illegal this week? No Christian gatherings in a public place. The prime minister was on TV saying so! I appreciate you might not have heard, but I think you'd all better go home now, before you get into trouble.

PREACHER: Excuse me, but I think you'll find we have a right to meet together and worship. I know you're just doing your job, but coming to church is one of our human rights, and we're not doing any harm.

POLICEMAN: And what about your neighbours' rights not to be disturbed by your music? This church isn't wanted here. If you won't tell your congregation to go home, I'll have to take you down to the station.

PREACHER: Anyone is free to leave at any time, but I won't tell them to go.

POLICEMAN: You'd better come with me, then.

[PREACHER and POLICEMAN begin to exit together.]

FIRST MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION: [*Stands up*] Well, if we can't meet here, we can always meet together in our own homes. We could meet at my house.

POLICEMAN: [*Over his shoulder*] I wouldn't do that either, if I were you. Just a word of advice. I heard a rumour that private Christian gatherings will soon be illegal too.

[PREACHER and POLICEMAN exit. FIRST MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION sits down. There is a moment of silence before the sound of a text message beeping is heard.]

SECOND MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION: [*Stands, looking at mobile phone*] It's from my boss – he says I needn't bother coming in on Monday, because he doesn't employ people like me! It must be because I told him I'm a Christian. I knew he was off with me after that. Now I've lost my job!

FIRST MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION: [*Stands, after a moment of silence*] Look, don't worry. I'm

sure this will all blow over. They can't treat us like this. They can't take away our jobs and arrest our pastor just because we're Christians. Somebody has got to speak out for us!

Point A: You may choose to skip ahead to Point B at this point, missing out the intervening dialogue.

THIRD MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION: Wait, who's that?

[A member of another local church runs into the room, panting.]

CHURCH MEMBER: I've just come from the church down the road – I've come to warn you! We were having our morning service when all these angry people turned up and started shouting that we should go home and that Christians aren't welcome here! There's a huge crowd of them and they started smashing things – I think they're heading for this church now!

[THIRD and FOURTH MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION stand up in dismay.]

FOURTH MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION: What do we do now?!

Point B

[The scene freezes. The PREACHER walks back onstage and the MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION sit down.]

PREACHER: The events you've just watched may seem far-fetched to us. It is hard to imagine being punished for having a church service, or losing our jobs because we are following Jesus. But for Christians in many parts of the world, living in Babylon is not just something to learn about; it is a reality. What would you do in this situation?

Amazingly, persecuted Christians keep on going to church, even if they know they might not come home again. Suffering congregations are often the strongest in faith and most joyful in worship. There is a lot we can learn from their example. But they need our prayers and support to remain faithful to Christ in their hostile world.

“By the rivers of Babylon...”

(Psalm 137:1)

Living for Christ in a hostile world

The following sermon outline can be used at a Suffering Church Action Week service or meeting. It can be read out as it stands, though you are encouraged to add some illustrations, from the Spotlight article on pages 9-13 or elsewhere. Alternatively, it can be used as a framework for your own ideas and applications.

“**B**y the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion... How can we sing the songs of the LORD while in a foreign land?” The heartbreaking cry of the people of Israel, in captivity and torment and exiled far from their home, has inspired great works of music and literature. It puts across better than any bare description the misery of God’s people living in Babylon and the difficulty of worshipping Him in such an unfamiliar and unfriendly context.

This year the theme of Barnabas Fund’s Suffering Church Action Week is “Living in Babylon: Faithful to Christ in a hostile world”. It suggests that the deep distress of Israel in its exile in Babylon, which Psalm 137 expresses so powerfully, is similar in some way to the experience of Christians today.

But the city of Babylon, where the Israelites were taken, disappeared a long time ago! So what does it mean to say that God’s people today are living in Babylon? To answer that question, we need to go back to the opening chapters of the Bible.

The tower of Babel

Babylon appears in Genesis 10:10, as part of the kingdom of Nimrod, who is said to be the first mighty warrior. It is the

location of the tower of Babel described in the following chapter. People there try to build a city with a tower reaching to the heavens, so that they can make a name for themselves and stay together. But the LORD confuses their speech so that they cannot understand each other, and He scatters them over the face of the earth.

So the first time it features in the Biblical story, Babylon stands for aggressive human power and arrogant human pride. It represents humanity’s use of its might without reference to God, to exalt itself against God and seek to establish its independence from Him. But it also points to the confusion and frustration of this attempt by God, and its eventual and complete failure.

This power and pride that tries to put humans in the place of God is found in human societies and regimes in all times and places. It stands against God’s plan to establish His rule on earth as it is in heaven, and against us Christians too, whom God has called to live under His rule and to spread it. So in this sense, all Christians live in Babylon, and we all suffer its opposition.

But if that is so, how are we to live for Christ in the midst of a hostile world?

Judgment and exile

The Old Testament (OT) prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel threaten Judah (the southern Israelite kingdom) with defeat and plunder at the hands of Babylon (e.g. Jeremiah 25:1-11; Ezekiel 23). The people and their kings will be taken into a long exile, and the land will be laid waste. This disaster will not be just an accident of history, but a divine judgment on the people's worship of false gods – not least the gods of Babylon itself – and their immorality. Babylon will be the LORD's instrument to punish the sinfulness of His people and other nations.

This message from the prophets is a warning to God's people in every age to remain distinct from the ungodly and unrighteous culture that surrounds them, and not to join in the false worship and impure conduct of their neighbours. The values and practices of our society may sometimes seem very attractive, but to join in with them provokes God's judgment against us. And ironically, the instrument of that judgment can sometimes be the very society whose sinful lifestyle we have chosen to adopt, as its people become hostile to us and turn against us all the same.

The OT records a number of different responses to Israel's exile in Babylon. Psalm 137 expresses the people's intense grief and asks how they can worship the LORD away from their own land; it also declares their strong desire for vengeance to fall on Babylon. Jeremiah, on the other hand, urges Israel to accept the rule of Babylon as a fact for the time being, to settle down there and even to seek its peace and prosperity (Jeremiah 27 – 29). And in Daniel chapters 1 to 5, we read of godly Israelites in Babylon, finding their way through life-threatening challenges without compromising their integrity, and even rising to leading positions in the government.

For Christians living in our own Babylon, these texts provide us with a range of options for handling the opportunities and the hazards. The best approach in each case will depend on the particular cultural context in which we find ourselves, and it will have to be worked out in light of New Testament (NT) teaching and practice. But all the options have in common the concern to honour God in the midst of an alien and hostile culture. This is the basic demand that God makes of us, whatever the particular challenges we may face.

Babylon falls – and rises

For the OT prophets, the defeat of Judah by Babylon and its exile there is not the last word. They also say that eventually Babylon itself will be judged by the LORD for its brutality and pride, its idolatry and greed, and its merciless treatment of Israel and other conquered nations (Isaiah 21; Jeremiah 50 – 51). Babylon has failed to recognise the LORD's kingship and its role as His servant; in a memorable passage, Isaiah recounts how its king tried to ascend to heaven and be equal with God (Isaiah 14).

The LORD will pour out His wrath and vengeance on Babylon through the hands of other nations. The city will be humiliated and left desolate; its king will be brought down and its gods defeated. Daniel chapter 5 refers briefly to the fulfilment of this

promise. Later chapters of Isaiah (40 – 55) declare that Israel will be released from its captivity in Babylon and will return to the Promised Land, while the book of Ezra recounts the homecoming of (at least) two groups of exiles.

But the wider vision of the prophets for Israel's return from exile includes the ending of all their oppression, and this does not happen at this time. Instead, the book of Daniel refers to a series of empires arising to replace Babylon (Daniel 2 – 7). And by NT times, the Roman Empire has taken on the role of Babylon as the dominant and repressive world power. It opposes God by denying Him and demanding worship for itself; it practises exploitation, tyranny and violence; it deceives and corrupts the earth (Revelation 17 – 18). Under its rule, God's people live in exile, away from their heavenly home (1 Peter 1:1; 5:13), and they suffer severe persecutions at its hands (Revelation 17:6).

So the Biblical imagery of Babylon can be extended to any heavy-handed and dictatorial authority or system that exalts itself against God and oppresses His people. Such powers may be religious or secular, and they may be national, regional or worldwide. But the call to Christians living in all of these Babylons is basically the same: to separate ourselves from their evil practices (Revelation 18:4); to maintain our distinctively Christian faith and lifestyle in the midst of our exile (1 Peter 2:11-12), and to persevere in faithful witness to Jesus, even (if necessary) to the point of death (Revelation 12:11).

The end of oppression

However, the NT teaches that the oppression of God's people will not last for ever. The tower of Babel came to nothing, and so too will Babylon. It will be destroyed by its own evil and by God's coming against it in final judgment and wrath. The city will be left desolate, and those who made an idol of it and profited from its luxury will weep over it. But heaven will rejoice at its fall (Revelation 19), and God's people will be delivered from its clutches and enter a quite different city: the new Jerusalem, where there is peace and righteousness (Revelation 21 – 22). Although the writer is thinking primarily of Rome, his vision assures us that in the end every Babylon will be brought down.

By keeping ourselves pure and distinct in the midst of our own Babylon, we keep ourselves safe from the judgment that will eventually fall upon it. And in this way we can also be confident of sharing in the salvation and holiness of God's eternal city, which will finally replace all the Babylons of the world. This hope can sustain us as we seek to live faithfully for Christ in the midst of our hostile world.

¹Babylon was the capital of an ancient Near Eastern empire in the middle of the first millennium BC, but in 539BC it fell to the Persians. As a political entity the empire disappeared from the map, and in the 3rd century BC the inhabitants of the city were deported. At that point the history of Babylon effectively ended, and no Christians have ever lived there.

Exiles in Babylon, living for Christ

This study is on the same theme as the sermon outline (pages 16-17) and looks at some of the same passages mentioned in it. It can be used before or after hearing the sermon. If it is used without the sermon, it may be helpful for the group leader to read through the outline beforehand. The section at the end entitled “Digging deeper” is intended for those who would like to explore the theme in more depth.

Introduction

1. Where have you encountered the name “Babylon” (books, music, the Bible)? What words and thoughts come to your mind when you hear it?

2. Read Psalm 137. What does it tell us about the experience of the Israelites living in Babylon in the 6th century BC? How do you react to the idea that Christians today are living in Babylon?

The tower of Babel

3. Read Genesis 11:1-9. What do the people try to do, and why? What does the LORD do in response, and why?

4. If Babel in the story is Babylon, what might Babylon stand for? In what sense then can persecuted Christians – and we – be said to live in Babylon?

Judgment and exile

5. Read Jeremiah 25:1-11. Of what sins does the prophet accuse the people of Judah? What punishment is prescribed for these?

6. In what ways are we tempted to embrace the values and practices of the non-Christian society we live in? How can we maintain our distinctiveness?

7. How do you deal with the challenges of worshipping and serving the Lord in your own culture? In what ways is this particularly hard for Christians in contexts of severe persecution?

Babylon falls – and rises

8. Read Isaiah 14:1-23. Why does the LORD act in judgment against Babylon? What action does he promise to take against it?

9. In what ways do Christians today still suffer at the hands of Babylon-style regimes or societies? (You will find some examples on pages 9-13 of this magazine.) How do these resemble the picture of Babylon we have found in the Bible?

10. How do the New Testament writers call us to live in the context of our exile in Babylon (see 1 Peter 2:11-12; Revelation 12:11; 18:4)? What might this mean for you in practice in the context where you live?

The end of oppression

11. Read Revelation 18. What does the writer say will happen to Rome (and every other “Babylon”)? What is the effect of that for God’s people?

12. How is this teaching an incentive for persecuted Christians to keep themselves pure and distinct in the hostile societies where they live? How can we support them – and each other – in doing this?

Digging deeper

13. Psalm 137 expresses grief at the people’s exile and a desire for vengeance against their oppressors. What other Biblical approaches are possible to the challenges of life in Babylon? (If you get stuck, read Jeremiah 29:4-7 and Daniel 2:48-49 for some examples.)

14. What effects is the judgment of Babylon supposed to have for God’s people (for example, see Isaiah 14:1-3)? How far were these promises fulfilled, or not, at the time (see Ezra 9:8-9), and how far are they still to be fulfilled?

15. Read Revelation 17 and 18 and list the characteristics of Babylon/Rome as the dominant and oppressive world power. What parallels can you see with modern regimes and societies, such as those where Christians are most severely persecuted?



Barnabas Fund Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church

Saturday 1 November 2014

Saturday 1 November is the Barnabas Fund Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. We are calling on Christians around the world to join with us in lifting up our suffering brothers and sisters to the Lord, asking Him to strengthen them to be faithful to Him in the face of hostility. However you get involved, your prayers will mean so much to the persecuted Christians whom we serve.

Getting involved

The special website devoted to Suffering Church Action Week (www.livinginbabylon.org) contains a map that marks the location of prayer events that have been registered with us. You can join in an event in your area or use the map as an inspiration for your own prayers, interceding for other Christians as they meet to pray around the world.



If an event has not been organised near you, why not set up your own for people in your church or area, or for your own Christian friends? If you are willing to open the event more widely, then please register it on the online map. Or you could simply commit to praying as an individual or small group on 1 November.



Uganda

Worldwide prayer

The level of interest in the 2013 Day of Prayer was most encouraging, and we received some very positive reports:

In New Delhi, Afghan refugees met to pray together:

"The prayer guide was very helpful to know for what and to whom should we pray, we had a wonderful time of prayer... there were 15 of us, and we prayed for two hours... it was really encouraging because we were feeling in our spirit that other people of God were also praying together with us in different countries."

In England, Waverton Evangelical Fellowship were inspired to continue praying:

"We are encouraged that out of this Day of Prayer a regular monthly prayer meeting for the persecuted Church will take place in our home and we will be prayer partners for Barnabas Fund."

From Chad:

"We give God thanks for the privilege we had to join others around the world to pray for the persecuted. We were 22 persons at the meeting... we prayed for two hours from 4pm till 6pm. We prayed particularly for children of CAR, Egypt, Sudan, Nigeria, Pakistan, North Korea and Chad. We were greatly encouraged."



Chad

Helpful resources

Two booklets to aid your prayers are included in the SCAW Inspiration Pack.



Praying for the Persecuted Church 2014. Each page of this booklet focuses on a particular country, a specific kind of persecution or a special theme, with background information and a prayer point. It contains detailed information on the most important contexts in which Christians face discrimination, harassment and violence for their faith.

Living in Babylon: Faithful to Christ in a hostile world. This devotional resource has been designed specifically for SCAW, although it can be used at any time. It includes daily readings and prayers from 1 Peter based on the theme for the week. For each of the eight days, you will find a suggested reading, a key verse and a comment including ideas for prayer.



International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church

This year, Barnabas is also sponsoring the International Day of Prayer (IDOP) for the Persecuted Church on 16 November 2014. IDOP is a global day of intercession for persecuted Christians worldwide. It presents another great opportunity to unite with other Christians in praying for suffering believers throughout the world and asking the Lord to change the hearts of their oppressors.













India



Getting equipped for Suffering Church Action Week couldn't be easier. Just order our free Living in Babylon Inspiration Pack, and we'll provide you with everything you will need to get started.

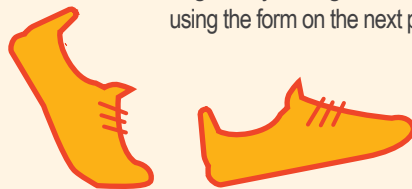
The Inspiration Pack includes (one of each):

	A DVD about Barnabas Fund's work, including a video, a sermon PowerPoint presentation with photos and a recording of "Living in Babylon", an original children's song by Andrew Fleet		An eight-day devotional booklet to help you pray through the week*		A sample Gift Aid envelope for a donation
	An A3 Living in Babylon poster to advertise your Suffering Church Action Week events*		<i>Praying for the Persecuted Church 2014</i> booklet		An additional copy of this issue of <i>Barnabas Aid</i> magazine
	A lesson plan for an activity for children and young people		Prayer bookmark	Prayer resources can be used during the Barnabas Fund Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church on Saturday 1 November or the International Day of Prayer on Sunday 16 November (please see page 19 for further information).	
	A copy of <i>Being Brave for Jesus</i> children's magazine*		A money box that could be used when taking up a collection or for individuals to use at home		

***These items can also be downloaded at www.livinginbabylon.org or printed out from the DVD.**

Sponsorship form

If you're planning a sponsored event for Barnabas, let us take the hassle out of your preparations. Download a pre-prepared sponsorship form from www.livinginbabylon.org or order hard copies using the form on the next page.









+ + Thinking big? + +

Extra quantities of any of the resources in the pack can be ordered for free. You may find it especially useful to order extras of the following items:

A3 poster, *Praying for the Persecuted Church 2014* booklet, eight-day devotional booklet, *Being Brave for Jesus* children's magazine, lesson plan for children and young people, money box and Gift Aid envelope.

For example, you may want to order an eight-day devotional booklet for each member of your home group, or a children's magazine for each child in your Sunday School class. You could also place a Gift Aid envelope on each seat at your Suffering Church Sunday service, so that Barnabas Fund can claim an extra 25p from the government for every £1 given by a UK taxpayer.

Suggested songs for your Suffering Church Sunday service

-  "God of the poor (Beauty for brokenness)" (Graham Kendrick, *Mission Praise* 806)
-  "Still, my soul be still" (Keith and Kristen Getty and Stuart Townend)
-  "There is a hope" (Stuart Townend and Mark Edwards)
-  "Great is thy faithfulness" (Thomas O. Chisholm, *Mission Praise* 200)
-  "The Church's one foundation" (S.J. Stone, *Mission Praise* 640)
-  "Living in Babylon" (Original children's song by Andrew Fleet. Lyrics can be found in the lesson plan for children and young people, and the score and a recording of the song are included on the DVD. Both are included in the Inspiration Pack.)

Suffering Church Action Week Offering

Persecuted Christians need spiritual support to stand firm in their hostile world, and they are also encouraged in their faith when we show them the love of Christ by meeting their material needs. Please turn to pages 9-13 to read about some of the many ways in which Barnabas Fund helps our persecuted brothers and sisters.



If you take up an offering for persecuted Christians on Suffering Church Sunday, you may like to use it to support a particular project or need described in these pages. If not, we recommend that you donate it to our General Fund (project number 000). Giving to the General Fund allows us flexibility in allocating funds, so that we can use your donation wherever the need is greatest. It also enables us to react quickly to emergency situations and is used for needs that are too sensitive for us to publicise.

Tell us what you think!

We aim to make our resources as relevant, useful and inclusive as possible. But we can make this happen only if we know what our supporters need and want. Please let us know what you think about this year's resources: what was useful, what could be improved and if there is anything you would like to see included in the future. You can provide your feedback by filling in the online form at www.livinginbabylon.org or by contacting your nearest Barnabas office (addresses on back cover).



A Prayer for the Persecuted Church



Our Father in heaven, we praise You for making us citizens of Your heavenly kingdom. We thank You for your love and faithfulness. Thank You also for calling us Your own in the midst of oppression and persecution.

We pray for our brothers and sisters in many countries who suffer acute discrimination, harassment and violence because their values and behaviour are different from those of their families and communities. We pray that You will give them courage and strength for all that they have to endure. We ask that You will sustain them to bear unjust suffering, through the example of Christ and the promise of their heavenly inheritance. And we pray that the eyes of their persecutors may be opened to recognise You as Lord and Saviour.

We pray too for ourselves, in whatever situations of contempt and rejection we may face for the Name of Christ. We ask You to build us up in our faith and discipleship, so that we can resist all pressure and temptation to fail You or deny You.

We pray that through this Suffering Church Action Week You will enable us to support and encourage one another within the family of believers. We thank You for the day when Your kingdom will come and all tears will be wiped away as we see You face to face.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

Please send me a *Living in Babylon* Inspiration Pack

Additionally, please also send me the following resource(s) (*state quantity of each*):

.....

Name

Address

.....

.....

Email address

Phone

Name of church/group

.....

Please add my Suffering Church Action Week event to the online map

Location

.....

Type of event: (i.e. church service, prayer meeting, other)

.....

Time:

Open to public: Yes No



Action Plan

There are many ways in which to highlight the plight of persecuted Christians who are “living in Babylon”, and to build ourselves up in our own faith, during Suffering Church Action Week. Below are some ideas for events and activities. We invite you to make the most of the opportunities the week offers, enjoy supporting your fellow believers and keep in touch by sharing your events at www.livinginbabylon.org.

All the resources highlighted on this page are included in a free Suffering Church Action Week Inspiration Pack, available to order now (see pages 20-21).

Children's Events

Focus your weekly ministry for children and young people on the persecuted Church and being faithful in a hostile world, using the **lesson plan** provided. You could also plan a “light party”, or other event as an alternative to Halloween, on the theme of being faithful.

Being Brave for Jesus, a fun-packed children's magazine that aims to encourage young readers in their faith, is also available.



Fundraising

Fundraising ideas are limited only by your imagination. You could hold a sale, concert or auction on behalf of Barnabas, or arrange a “dress down” day, quiz night or car wash. You could challenge yourself to take part in a sponsored event, or sell the products of your own particular skills, such as crafts or painted portraits. Available resources include a **poster**, a **money box** and **Gift Aid envelopes** for collecting donations. A sponsorship form can be downloaded from www.livinginbabylon.org.



Bible Studies

Devote your Bible study or home group meeting to this year's theme. The **Bible study** on “Exiles in Babylon” on page 18 of this magazine can be used to structure and focus your meeting. Take time to pray for persecuted Christians, to identify actions you could take on their behalf as individuals or as a group, and to encourage one another. You could also use this Bible study, or the **eight-day devotional booklet**, in your own quiet time.



Prayer

Organise a prayer meeting focused on lifting up our persecuted brothers and sisters to the Lord. Saturday 1 November is the Barnabas Fund Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, and we are also sponsoring the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church on Sunday 16 November (see page 19 for further information). A **prayer booklet**, *Praying for the Persecuted Church 2014*, is available to aid your intercession. You could also pray individually, using our Suffering Church Action Week **eight-day devotional booklet** on 1 Peter. A **prayer bookmark** is also available.



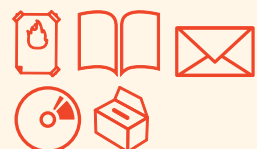
Suffering Church Sunday Service

Dedicate a special service on 26 October or 2 November (or any other Sunday that suits the church calendar) to remember those who are “living in Babylon”, suffering for their faith in Jesus Christ. Available resources for this service include a **sermon outline**, “By the rivers of Babylon” (see pages 16-17), a **drama** (pp. 14-15), a **DVD**, a **poster**, a **money box** and **Gift Aid envelopes** for each seat. You could also make a display board for your church using photographs and information from *Barnabas Aid* or our website, www.barnabasfund.org.



Coffee Mornings

Hold a coffee morning at your church or home, and place **magazines** and other resources on the tables along with **money boxes** or **Gift Aid envelopes**. Share the theme of *Living in Babylon: Faithful to Christ in a hostile world*, perhaps using the article on pages 9-13 of this magazine or the video on the **DVD**, and invite prayer for persecuted Christians.



CONDEMNED CHRISTIAN WOMAN CLEARED AND FREED

SUDAN – A Christian wife and mother who was sentenced to death for apostasy has been cleared on appeal and released from prison, though at the time of writing she has been stopped from leaving the country.

Meriam Yahia Ibrahim (27) had refused to accept a reprieve by converting to Islam, telling the court, “I am a Christian and I have never been a Muslim.” She is considered a Muslim under sharia because she was born to a Muslim father, even though she has never practised

*“I am a Christian
and I have never
been a Muslim.”*



Meriam Ibrahim and her children in prison

Islam. Her father left when she was six, and her Christian mother raised Meriam as a Christian. Meriam was also convicted of adultery because of her marriage to a Christian man, which is illegal for a Muslim woman according to sharia, and sentenced to receive 100 lashes.

Meriam, a doctor and businesswoman, was detained in February. Her young son, Martin, was kept in prison with her, and after her sentencing on 11 May she gave birth to a second child, a daughter

named Maya. Her husband, Daniel Wani, is in a wheelchair and struggled to cope without her help.

The case attracted international attention and widespread condemnation. In Sudan, however, the reaction was more mixed. While some people opposed the execution, extremist groups pressurised the government to uphold the sentence and issued death threats against Meriam’s legal team, saying their actions had been “un-Islamic”.

Then on 23 June, Meriam was

set free from Omdurman Federal Women’s Prison with the two children and was reunited with Daniel. Her release was ordered by Khartoum Court of Appeals, which cleared her of all charges.

But the next day, the family were detained at Khartoum airport by around 40 security agents as they tried to leave the country, to go to the US via South Sudan. Meriam was charged with obtaining a false travel document, which is punishable with a jail sentence, and

was held at Khartoum police station. She was released again days later, but on condition that she did not leave the country.

Daniel, who has dual US and South Sudanese citizenship, had previously said that the family would need to leave Sudan if Meriam was freed and had been seeking asylum in America. Meriam’s accuser, a man claiming to be her brother, has publicly warned that the family would carry out the death penalty if she was acquitted.

CHRISTIANS MASSACRED BY ISLAMIST MILITANTS

NIGERIA – The predominantly Christian area of Gwoza in Borno state, Northern Nigeria, is under siege by suspected Boko Haram militants, who have been rampaging through villages. It is thought that hundreds have been massacred. The area has been repeatedly targeted by Boko Haram in its bloody insurgency to establish an

Islamic state in Northern Nigeria.

On Sunday 25 May, 21 Christians were massacred during a worship service in Gwoza town. The following day, militants attacked Chinene and surrounding villages, killing eight Christians; they torched six churches and numerous shops and homes.

Then on Sunday 1 June, a church in Attagara village came under attack

during a service; nine Christians were killed. Two days later, militants returned disguised as soldiers, pretending they had come to protect residents. They ushered villagers into the church, surrounded them and opened fire. The attackers went on to target neighbouring villages.

A number of kidnappings have also taken place, adding to those of

around 270 teenage girls taken from a school in Chibok, also in Borno state, on the night of 14 April. A recent video taken by an intermediary shows eight of the Chibok girls speaking about their ordeal for their first time. They plead for their release, saying that they were taken by force and are hungry. Some are unwell and need medical attention.

CONCERN AS HINDU NATIONALISTS WIN POWER



Narendra Modi, the new Hindu nationalist prime minister of India (Source: Narendra Modi, Flickr)

INDIA — Concerns have been raised for Christians and other minorities in India following the landslide victory of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the country's general election. Its leader, Narendra Modi, a divisive

and controversial figure, has become prime minister. The BJP is the political wing of a Hindu nationalist movement, Hindutva, which is striving to make India a religiously pure nation.

The BJP has given support to Hindu extremist groups that

attack Christians, and states under the party's rule have generally experienced a rise in anti-Christian violence. The party was at the helm of Orissa state during the horrendous 2007-08 riots in which Hindu militants rampaged through

villages, torching houses and churches and leaving thousands of Christians wounded or homeless.

Christian leaders were alarmed by Modi's response to a question put to him in a television interview during the election. He was asked what steps he would take to protect churches from attack and replied, "I have never heard of such incidents taking place." Yet last year, around 4,000 Christians were targeted in acts of violence, which were mostly carried out by Hindu extremists, and there were around 100 attacks on churches or worship meetings.

The BJP also poses a threat to religious freedom. It has already introduced "anti-conversion" laws in a number of states, which are regularly used as a pretext by Hindu extremists to attack Christians – whom they falsely accuse of converting people by force or allurements – and also to prevent legitimate Christian evangelism. Prior to the general election, the BJP pledged to introduce national legislation to curb "missionary" activity and end proselytising if elected.

CHRISTIANS KIDNAPPED, ACCUSED OF BLASPHEMY

EGYPT — Two Egyptian Christians have been kidnapped by suspected Islamic militants in the Sinai Peninsula as the community continues to be targeted.

Wadie Ramses, a well-known surgeon, was seized in El-Arish on 14 June. The assailants opened fire on his vehicle and took him away wounded. They later demanded a ransom of ten million Egyptian Pounds (£800,000; US\$1.4 million) for his release. Two days later, Christian merchant Gemal Shenouda was captured near his home in El-Arish. No immediate ransom demand was made. It is thought that Islamic militants with links to al-Qaeda,

who have been behind escalating violence in Sinai, are responsible for the kidnappings.

Kidnapping for ransom has been a persistent problem for the Christian community amid the

political upheaval and instability following the "Arab Spring" revolution of 2011. Christian women have increasingly been targeted to force them to convert to Islam and marry their captors. The victims are often subjected to violence and rape.

A young Christian man has also been charged under Egypt's "blasphemy" law for "liking" a Facebook page that local Muslims deemed offensive to Islam. Kerolos Shouky Attallah (29) of El-Mahameed

village near Luxor was accused of showing disdain or contempt for a heavenly religion.

Kerolos was accused after clicking the "like" button on a Facebook page run by a group of converts from Islam to Christianity.

On 28 May, Muslims printed and distributed leaflets demanding that he be expelled from the village. He then "unliked" the page, but this did not prevent villagers from attacking his home the following day.

Police were called to the scene and arrested Kerolos, who was subsequently charged. No charges were brought against the Muslim attackers. Ahead of his scheduled hearing on 2 June, Islamists launched an attack on El-Mahameed, torching a number of Christian-owned shops. The case was postponed after Islamists brought around 20 lawyers to court to support the blasphemy allegation.

Kidnapping for ransom has been a persistent problem for the Christian community

ISLAMIST MILITANTS SEIZE TERRITORY

IRAQ – The militant Islamist group the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) has captured swathes of territory in Iraq, including Mosul, Iraq's second city, where many Christians live.

ISIS, which is fighting to establish a strict Islamic state in Iraq and Syria, launched its assault on Mosul on 6 June. Militants seized weapons and helicopters, freed over 3,000 prisoners and burned down buildings. Churches were looted and torched, and Christian villages around the city were destroyed. ISIS raised black jihadist flags and announced over loudspeakers that they had "come to liberate" Mosul.

On 9 June, police came to senior

Christian leaders in Mosul and advised the Christian community to leave. They fled immediately, leaving everything behind as they sought refuge in villages in the Nineveh

included sharia penalties, such as the amputation of limbs for thieves, crucifixion for criminals and the death penalty for apostasy. All women were required to cover

the Islamic month of fasting – ISIS declared the restoration of the caliphate, a united Islamic state under one ruler or caliph, in the cross-border territory it controls, from the northern Syrian province of Aleppo to the eastern Iraqi province of Diyala. The group said it will now be known simply as the Islamic State, indicating that it is no longer confined to Iraq and Syria.

ISIS, which grew out of al-Qaeda, is notorious for its brutality, especially towards Christians and non-Sunni Muslims. It has carried out beheadings, crucifixions and other atrocities in parts of Syria that are under its control.

Churches were looted and torched, and Christian villages around the city were destroyed

valley. Before the ISIS takeover, Christians had already been leaving Mosul at a rate of around ten a day; those left behind were the most vulnerable: the elderly and the sick.

Two days after taking over Mosul, ISIS published its rules for people living in the area. These

themselves and not leave their homes unless necessary.

ISIS militants then advanced south, prompting Christians to leave Kirkuk. They also control areas of the plains west of Mosul that extend to Syria. On Sunday (29 June) – marking the first day of Ramadan,

FIFTY KILLED IN AL- SHABAAB ATTACK

KENYA – Around 50 people have been killed in an attack by the Somali-based Islamist group al-Shabaab on a mainly Christian town. The militants descended on Mpeketoni, a coastal town in Lamu district, on 15 June. They threw explosives into the local police station before looting its armoury and going on a shooting spree throughout the town, shouting "Allahu Akhbar" ("Allah is great").

The gunmen went door to door questioning occupants about their faith and shooting those who said they were not Muslims and did not speak Somali. Six children of pastors were said to be among the dead. The gunmen also targeted people who were watching a World Cup football match at bars and hotels. Women were ordered to watch as their men were killed.

TEENAGER RAPED AND POISONED

PAKISTAN – A Christian teenager has been raped and killed by a young Muslim man. Sanwal Masih (17) from Gujranwala died on 29 May. He had been violated and poisoned at the estate where he worked at Dhalla Chatta Tehsil, Wazirabad.

Sanwal's uncle took him to hospital, but owing to his critical

condition, he had to be transferred to another unit. On the way there, Sanwal told his uncle what had happened to him. He died on transfer to a third hospital.

The owner of the estate came to the family's house and threatened them in an attempt to force them to bury the body immediately. But

they refused and reported Sanwal's murder to the police. A post-mortem was carried out, and the accused man was arrested.

In a more encouraging development, the country's Supreme Court has directed the government to take a number of steps to protect religious minorities from violence

A post-mortem was carried out, and the accused man was arrested



Pakistani Christians protest in Lahore against the seizure of church property

and intolerance. These include the formation of a National Council for Minority Rights.

The Supreme Court ruling came just days after more than 1,500 Christians staged a protest in Lahore over the grabbing of church-owned property by the Punjab government, a case that highlights the abuse of minority rights.

From one courageous child to others

As we approach this year's Suffering Church Action Week, we would like to share the story of a young lady who was inspired by the theme of last year's week to reach out to persecuted Christian children.



Hannah-Kate with her collection jar and the lovely letter she wrote to us

Nine-year-old Hannah-Kate Fisher from Dumfries, Scotland, heard about Barnabas Fund's *Children of Courage* campaign at Glen Aros Christian Fellowship, the church she attends. Using the template provided in our *Being Brave for Jesus* children's magazine, Hannah-Kate collected coins for needy Christian children in a jar that she had decorated. She wrote:

"I have been collecting money for children of courage. I collected £4.43p. I also hope this shall help the boys and girls who believe in the Holy Spirit and help them to a better life. It was very fun collecting the money for the children and my Dad gave me loads of coins. It was quite special to me."

Hannah-Kate's gift will help Barnabas Fund bring hope to suffering children who often have nobody else to help them. Many other children and young people supported *Children of Courage*; well done to Hannah-Kate and everybody else who took part!

Please turn to page 22 to read suggestions for how supporters of all ages can get involved in this year's Suffering Church Action Week.

A commitment to pray in Russia

After hearing a talk by a Barnabas Fund staff member at a conference, a pastor in Magnitogorsk in southern Russia was inspired to start an extraordinary weekly prayer meeting. Pastor Andrew wrote:

"After meeting with you the Lord prompted me to start night-time prayer in the church. We pray for Egypt and other countries in Africa all because of Barnabas Fund. Prayer begins every Friday at 10pm and continues until the morning; sometimes to 8am, sometimes to 5am. Many come to prayer, even

immediately after work. Brothers and sisters pray fervently... the Holy Spirit leads us. If there are other prayer needs we are ready to serve."

These Christians, who themselves live in a country where it is not always easy to follow Jesus, have made an amazing commitment to pray for persecuted believers. We are so thankful to them and to all the prayer warriors who intercede for our suffering brothers and sisters.

Any time that you can set aside for prayer will be so appreciated by persecuted Christians. Will you make a commitment to pray for them regularly?

Harvest offering for hungry Christians

HARVEST is a great opportunity to remember our suffering brothers and sisters around the world.

Would you consider taking up a thanksgiving offering for hungry Christians, such as those displaced from Mosul, Iraq, those affected by the current famine in Kenya and those in many other situations?

00-636 Feeding Fund
20-246 Feeding Christians in Iraq
25-608 Emergency Famine Relief in Kenya



Need a Direct Debit holiday? No problem



Barnabas Fund is so grateful to all supporters who give to our work by Direct Debit, and we aim to provide as much flexibility as possible. If you want to continue your Direct Debit gifts but need to suspend them for one, two or three months, we easily can arrange this for you.

You may be happy with your regular giving but be moving house, getting married, going away for a time or just in need of a "breather". If so, we will be happy to accommodate your wish to reduce or stop your generous gifts for a few months.

It is much quicker and easier to suspend your Direct Debit than to cancel it and set up a new one a few months later, and it is also more cost-effective for us. Get in touch with us, and we can arrange a Direct Debit holiday to help you to make ends meet.

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO HELP THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

www.barnabasfund.org
0800 587 4006



Title..... Full Name

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Postcode..... Telephone

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PLEASE USE MY GIFT FOR Wherever the need is the greatest (General Fund)
 Other.....*(give reference number of project to be supported)

I have made an internet transfer to the Barnabas Fund bank account
(Sort Code: 20-26-46) Account Number: 50133299

(On your transfer, please quote as your reference your postcode and house number. To receive a letter thanking you for your donation please add the letters TY to the end of the reference.)

HERE IS MY SINGLE GIFT OF £

I enclose a cheque/voucher payable to "Barnabas Fund" OR

Please debit my Visa Mastercard CAF

American Express Maestro CAF card /other charity card

Card Number

Maestro issue number or issue date

Expiry Date Signature

I do not require an acknowledgement of this gift Mag 09/14

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A direct debit can be set up either by completing the form below, by telephoning the number above or by going to our website.

£

(amount in words)

Please start on 1st/11th/15th/21st of(month) and then every month/quarter/year (delete as applicable) until further notice. This Direct Debit is a new one/in addition to/replaces an earlier Standing Order/Direct Debit in favour of Barnabas Fund. (delete as applicable).



Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit



Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send it to:
 Barnabas Fund, 9 Priory Row, Coventry CV1 5EX

Name and full postal address of your bank or building society

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Bank/building society account number

Branch sort code

Service User Number

Reference (Barnabas Fund to complete)

Instruction to your bank or building society: Please pay Barnabas Fund Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured to by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Barnabas Fund and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society. DD18

Signature(s)

Date

GIFT AID DECLARATION (Applicable to UK tax payers only)

Name of charity: **Barnabas Fund**

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money made: (Please tick all boxes you wish to apply)

this gift and if applicable in the past 4 years in the future

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give.

Signature..... Date

Please inform us if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Mag 09/14

Please return this form to Barnabas Fund at your national office or to the UK office. Addresses are on the back cover. Barnabas Fund will not give your address, telephone number or email to anyone else.

Supporters in Germany: please turn to back cover for how to send gifts to Barnabas Fund. Phone **0800 587 4006** or visit our website at **www.barnabasfund.org** to make a donation by Direct Debit, credit or debit card. From outside UK phone **+44 1672 565031**.

*If the project chosen is sufficiently funded, we reserve the right to use designated gifts either for another project of a similar type or for another project in the same country.

Registered Charity number 1092935 Company registered in England number 4029536

ALTERNATIVE GIFT CARD

If you would like to make a donation as an alternative gift for a friend or relative, we can supply you with an attractive "Thank you" card, which you can send to the person for whom you have made the donation. Please fill in the details as you would like them to appear on the card.



A



B



C



D



E



F

"Dear A gift of £ has been received on your behalf

from..... This gift will assist Christians who are persecuted for their faith. With many thanks on behalf of the persecuted Church"

Tick here if you do not want the amount to be stated on the card

Tick here if you do wish details about the project to be included on the card

Please state your preferred card choice (see left):

If you would like to have the card sent directly to the recipient, or if you would prefer to receive blank cards and fill them out yourself, please contact your national office (address details on back cover).

If you would like more cards, please photocopy the form or attach a separate piece of paper with the details for extra cards and send it with your donation. You can also call your nearest Barnabas Fund office with the details and pay by credit/debit card over the phone.

THE DIRECT DEBIT GUARANTEE

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We work by:

- directing our aid only to Christians, although its benefits may not be exclusive to them (“As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, **especially to those who belong to the family of believers.**” Galatians 6:10, emphasis added)
- aiming the majority of our aid at Christians living in Muslim environments
- channelling money from Christians through Christians to Christians
- channelling money through existing structures in the countries where funds are sent (e.g. local churches or Christian organisations)
- using the money to fund projects that have been developed by local Christians in their own communities, countries or regions
- considering any request, however small
- acting as equal partners with the persecuted Church, whose leaders often help shape our overall direction

- acting on behalf of the persecuted Church, to be their voice – making their needs known to Christians around the world and the injustice of their persecution known to governments and international bodies

We seek to:

- meet both practical and spiritual needs
- encourage, strengthen and enable the existing local Church and Christian communities – so they can maintain their presence and witness rather than setting up our own structures or sending out missionaries
- tackle persecution at its root by making known the aspects of the Islamic faith and other ideologies that result in injustice and oppression of non-believers
- inform and enable Christians in the West to respond to the growing challenge of Islam to Church, society and mission in their own countries

- facilitate global intercession for the persecuted Church by providing comprehensive prayer materials

We believe:

- we are called to address both religious and secular ideologies that deny full religious liberty to Christian minorities – while continuing to show God’s love to all people
- in the clear Biblical teaching that Christians should treat all people of all faiths with love and compassion, even those who seek to persecute them
- in the power of prayer to change people’s lives and situations, either through grace to endure or through deliverance from suffering

“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”
(Matthew 25:40)

How to find us

You may contact Barnabas Fund at the following addresses:

UK

9 Priory Row, Coventry CV1 5EX

Telephone 024 7623 1923 **Fax** 024 7683 4718

From outside the UK

Telephone +44 24 7623 1923 **Fax** +44 24 7683 4718

Email info@barnabasfund.org

Registered charity number 1092935

Company registered in England number 4029536

For a list of all trustees, please contact Barnabas Fund UK at the Coventry address above.

Australia

PO BOX 3527, LOGANHOLME, QLD 4129

Telephone (07) 3806 1076 or 1300 365 799

Fax (07) 3806 4076 **Email** bfaustralia@barnabasfund.org

Germany

German supporters may send gifts for Barnabas Fund via Hilfe für Brüder who will provide you with a tax-deductible receipt. Please mention that the donation is for “SPC 20 Barnabas Fund”. If you would like your donation to go to a specific project of Barnabas Fund, please inform the Barnabas Fund office in Pewsey, UK.

Account holder: Hilfe für Brüder e.V.

Account number: 415 600

Bank: Evang Kreditgenossenschaft Stuttgart

Bankcode (BLZ): 520 604 10

New Zealand

PO Box 27 6018, Manukau City, Auckland, 2241

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Livingston, EH54 0EZ

Telephone 07772 846389

Email scotland@barnabasfund.org

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Kay Poh Road Baptist Church, 7 Kay Poh Road,

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