FOR THE

LOVE

OF

GOD

Volume 2

30 DAYS TO EXPLORE
THE WORLD AND THE WORD

platform 67
Until the whole world hears
The great thing about praying for the nations is that we are bringing before the Lord something that He has already determined will happen: **He will be praised among all peoples!**

We can pray for the detail of routine mission activity, the conversations and events of today, but pray also for what needs to come next: **for the outward spread of the gospel to new peoples and new places everywhere**

*Until the whole world hears,*

*Platform 67*
UNTIL THE WHOLE WORLD HEARS

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With an ageing society and sinking birthrate, Japan’s population is expected to halve by the end of the century. In Asia, only South Korea has a higher suicide rate, especially among high schoolers. Meanwhile, the Japanese remain the second largest unreached people in the world. Many towns with populations up to 50,000 have no real witness. Gospel churches are often in decline and divided. Many have no children’s work at all.

Pray for an awakening among churches. Every new generation needs to be evangelised afresh so pray for urgent, faith-filled witness among young people.

List the promises God makes. How will the judgement of Genesis 11:8 be reversed?
Almost all Vietnamese worship the spirits of the dead. **Most homes have an altar for offerings of food and prayers to ancestors.** In a country where extended family is hugely important, those who leave this traditional lifestyle to follow Jesus encounter persecution.

Most face prompt excommunication from family, community and the authorities. **Persecution is treated as normal Christianity. Through it all, the church continues to grow!**

**Pray for more believers to be equipped to handle persecution. Ask for an abundance of local Christian support for those enduring trials. May they be found faithful today.**

**EXODUS 9:16**

*Under Moses, Israel would be challenged to live in ways that reflect God’s character. What global purpose did God have in raising up Moses to lead Israel?*
SOUTH EAST ASIA
EAST TIMOR

During 25 years of Indonesian rule, 100,000 Timorese are thought to have died from disease and hunger. Independence came in 2002. More than 40% live below the poverty line. Barely half the population can read.

In a recent Unicef report, 75% of children reported experiencing physical violence at the hands of their teachers. The overwhelming majority of the one million or so population are Roman Catholic and urgently need Jesus.

Pray for many to hear God’s Word online in their own Tetun Dili language. Pray for Malaysian believers evangelising university students. May He lift the veil of darkness.

JOSHUA 2

Notice how those who are not from God’s people begin to associate with Israel. Why would Gentiles like Rahab want to ally themselves with God’s people?
SOUTHEAST ASIA
CAMBODIA

A million children are lured into Asia’s sex trade every year, some as young as five years old. In Cambodia, half are sold by someone they know to work as prostitutes or as drug couriers, or as workers in factories and farms.

Many move from rural villages to city centres in search of a brighter future. Some Christian-run safe houses and rescue centres are operating and employment skills are being provided.

Pray for rural areas with less Christian witness. Pray for many more listeners to Christian radio; and for effective physical, mental and spiritual relief for those in need.

JOSHUA 9

The Lord again draws Gentiles to Himself. What attracted the Gibeonites to God and His people?
It is common to see Bhutanese males prostrate on the ground, in the flawed hope of spiritual merit. For all the so-called happiness, this is an unevangelised place. Most churches can only meet in homes.

Prison sentences have been issued to Christians receiving financial help from abroad. However, growing numbers of foreigners pass through the capital, Thimphu, including Nepalese and Chinese with vibrant Christians among them.

Pray for locally-driven, gospel communities with eyes on Jesus for their every need. Ask God to sweep through the deep darkness and save many. “Your kingdom come!”

Ruth, a Gentile, shows the way forward: joining the people of God comes through a relationship with the Kinsman-Redeemer Himself.
Conversion to Christianity remains difficult in Morocco where to be Moroccan is to be Muslim. Those coming to faith often face opposition from family and friends. Few churches exist.

The coastal Spanish enclave of Melilla has provided a gateway into Morocco for evangelists and for the supply of Christian literature. Internet-based Christian radio is available and many listen to the regular online broadcasts.

Pray for many more mature, church leaders. Pray for effective teaching, in Arabic and Berber, of the Bible’s content, doctrines, and application to life and witness.

1 SAMUEL 5

In what ways does God make absolutely clear to unbelieving, disobedient nations how supremely great He is?
Much of today’s missionary work is conducted not by westerners but by churches from Africa and Latin America. Nigeria’s prayer movement is unusually strong and its contribution to world missions enormous.

However, with a population approaching 200 million and hundreds of languages and distinct people groups, urgent work is still needed, especially in the north where Islamic influence is strong.

Ask God for a major breakthrough among the nomadic Fulani people. Pray for the salvation of more influential tribal chiefs and for entire Fulani families to come to faith.

1 SAMUEL 17

Notice the determination of the anointed king to defend and uphold the honour and reputation of God’s name before the surrounding Gentile nations.
Tucked into the heart of Africa, Chad rarely makes international news. **This is one of the world’s poorest countries – life expectancy is barely 47 years.** At least 70 languages have no Bible portions translated at all, including the Marfa language.

The 17,000 Marfa people live more than 100 miles from the nearest major town. **Isolation is one reason why Chad has more unreached people groups than almost any other African country.**

**Ask God for more Bible translators, local and expatriate. Pray for strong devotional lives and effective teaching among the few Marfa believers. Pray for unreached tribes.**

**PSALMS 1-2**

*How will the nations come to enjoy God’s blessing? Their response to the Lord’s Anointed One is all-defining – Kiss the Son!*
AIDS threatens the lives of nearly an entire generation. **Four million live in Nairobi where the city’s slum dwellers are among Africa’s most severely malnourished.** Unreached areas largely practise a mix of Islam and folk religion.

Converts in the northeast and coastal regions frequently face persecution. Kenya stands out however for the millions who follow Christ and millions more who are nominal in their Christianity.

**Ask God to hold back the creeping terrorism. Pray for Spirit-filled preachers to strengthen congregations and for many more Kenyans to sacrificially evangelise unreached tribes.**

**PSALM 14**

*God’s Word is clear about those too proud to bow before His Anointed. What do you think this means for peoples who have never heard the gospel?*
Notice the missionary purpose behind God’s relationship with us. He promised to bless Abraham so that he could bless others. Likewise, He blesses His people so His ways become known to others.

This is the fourth largest island in the world and the ten remaining unreached peoples here are often remote. The island’s northern tip is home to one such group, the Antakarana. Ancestral worship and animal sacrifice are common.

There are small portions of the Bible available and a set of Bible stories has been now produced in the local language. Hard-core, determined, pioneering gospel work is underway.

Pray for more trained workers willing to live in isolated areas. Ask God to bring many to repentance and for vibrant, sustainable, faith-filled churches across northern Madagascar.

**PSALM 67**

Notice the missionary purpose behind God’s relationship with us. He promised to bless Abraham so that he could bless others. Likewise, He blesses His people so His ways become known to others.
The annual Montreux Jazz Festival brings 250,000 tourists to Lake Geneva’s eastern tip. That’s ten times the population of the town. The Easter Polymanga Festival attracts 40,000 young people. Christmas markets draw thousands more.

Many come from unreached peoples who might never otherwise hear the gospel. The lakefront promenade is filled with events, cafes and stalls, including one kiosk making Bibles available in 40 languages.

Ask for conviction, repentance and life-changing gospel conversations. Pray for evangelists making Jesus known all year round to Montreux’s visitors.

Psalm 117

God may have had a specific focus on Israel but the summons to praise goes to all nations and all peoples. His character makes Him worthy of worship by all.
Political life is precarious and unstable, doing little to create public confidence. **Barely 0.5% of the 61 million population are faithful followers of Christ.** Good theological books are available and Italian believers are increasingly confident in witness.

Christian presence in more secular northern regions is extremely low and **Italy remains one of Europe’s primary mission concerns.**

**Pray for churches to network in urban church planting. Pray urgently for more faith-filled Italian Christians to radically follow Jesus in homes, schools and the workplace.**

**2 CHRONICLES 6:32-33**

The Queen of Sheba wouldn’t be the only Gentile interested in Israel’s worship. Solomon rightly assumes that non-Israelites will hear of God’s reputation and be drawn to Him. How can you better reflect God’s attractiveness to others?
Moldova is considered one of the most Christian countries in the world. How many actually know Jesus is a different question. Almost half the Moldovan workforce work overseas resulting in a shrinking population. Government grants for those wanting to return home to begin businesses have helped provide jobs but this is still the poorest country in Europe – and the heaviest drinkers in the world. Internet connectivity is widely available.

Pray for the minority Gagauzi people, Turkish in background but with growing numbers of born again believers among them. Ask for many to listen to the Scriptures online.

God deals with not only Nineveh but a hard-hearted, selfish, pitiless Jonah. Notice how God’s blessing to all peoples extends even to the most rebellious, violent, hate-filled of peoples.
A century after Nineveh repented, the city slid back into godlessness. God will not tolerate nations, ancient or modern, that oppose His ways. What comfort might there be for suffering believers?

Pray for the gospel message to reach every Basque town and for more workers to minister in the Basque language. Pray for writing and wide distribution of children’s resources.

The Basque are probably Europe’s least-reached people. They have worked hard to guard their cultural identity and unique language but in the last 30 years the Basque have moved from almost complete adherence to Catholicism to being almost entirely atheistic. There are currently no Basque-speaking churches. Gospel resources are limited. Workers need wisdom in knowing how to talk about Christ, disciple, and plant vibrant churches.

Nahum 1

A century after Nineveh repented, the city slid back into godlessness. God will not tolerate nations, ancient or modern, that oppose His ways. What comfort might there be for suffering believers?
Growing evangelical churches are providing answers to the large numbers of Belgians who are disinterested in religion. With both the European Union and NATO headquartered in the capital, Brussels, this is a hugely influential part of the world. International churches are attracting visitors. Immigration has turned Belgium into a melting-pot of cultures, Islam now being the second most practised faith after Catholicism.

Pray for many international visitors to have a profound encounter with Christ here. Pray for more gifted French – and Flemish – speaking preachers.

**AMOS 9:11-13**

Despite Israel’s failings, the prophets insist God’s missionary purposes – rooted deep in the Old Testament – remain on track. What will happen after Israel’s exile? Read Acts 15 to see what Peter understood from Amos.
CENTRAL AMERICA
HONDURAS

One of the region’s poorest countries, abandoned children and children-at-risk are commonplace given the context of HIV/AIDS, prostitution and unemployment. San Pedro Sula is one of the most violent cities in the world.

Climate change has hit farming communities extremely hard. It is little wonder so many are so desperate to leave Honduras. More than a quarter of the population are strong, evangelical believers.

Pray for Christian parents raising young families today. May they not be anxious. May the peace of God, transcending all understanding, guard hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

DANIEL 4

Not only does God rescue rebellious nations, He also uses rebellious, Gentile kings to ensure others hear of all that He has done.
SOUTH AMERICA
URUGUAY

With a growing economy, and the highest percentage of atheists and non-religious people of any country in North, South or Central America, secularism is taking root. **Half the population claims to be Roman Catholic but only 2% attend mass regularly.**

Growth in numbers of churches in the last twenty years has been strong, though 75% have no more than 40 people attending. **Most pastors serve part-time and lack adequate Bible training.**

**Ask the Lord to help faithful Christians live and share gospel-culture in the homes and workplace. Pray for young people to understand the better story that Jesus brings.**

**HAGGAI 2:6-9**

*As the Old Testament draws to a close, God brings His people back to what really matters. What does the Lord promise He will do in the future?*
SOUTH AMERICA

VENEZUELA

Falling oil prices and short-sighted government policy have led to shortages of basic needs, including food and medicines. There are regular failures in public services and transport systems. Prices has been doubling every 26 days.

This is an economic crisis affecting every home and has led to a sustained exodus of well over 3 million from the country. Stable, God-fearing government leaders are absent.

Ask for grace in developing church leaders when so many leave the country. Pray for bold university ministry. May crisis lead to steady faith and strong congregations.

MATTHEW 2:1-12

Considering Genesis 12:3, why might Matthew tell us that the magi were the first to visit Jesus?
This is an ethnically diverse population largely enjoying peace and affluence. Immigrant communities are now large and many need the gospel. **There are no known believers among Tunisians, Basque or Kurds settling here.**

In the last century, Canada’s evangelicals dropped from 25% to 8% of the population with a corresponding fall in the influence of the gospel on society. Few see Christian faith as relevant.

*Pray that political leaders will be surrounded by godly advisors. Pray for gospel-breakthrough among the eight million French speakers, the country’s largest missionfield.*

**MATTHEW 8:5-13**

*Why is the Roman centurion promised a place in the kingdom, alongside Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?*
Pray that political leaders will be surrounded by godly advisors. Pray for gospel-breakthrough among the eight million French speakers, the country’s largest missionfield.

**MATTHEW 28:18-20**

*What responsibilities do all disciples have towards the nations, and why? What help is promised?*
The poorest of the former Soviet republics. Water, air pollution and soil erosion are concerns. Mountainous terrain (70% of food is imported) makes reaching the many unreached communities difficult. So too does government law.

**Evangelism without government approval is prohibited and has driven the church underground.** Creative ministries and social media are proving effective platforms for careful witness.

Pray for fruitful gospel conversations with Muslim neighbours; for more overseas skilled Christian businesses and non-profits to tackle the many environmental challenges.

**MARK 13:9-13**

*Despite opposition, what must take place before Jesus returns?*
The call to prayer, five times a day, is not unusual across Muslim cities. The Uzbek capital, Tashkent, however, has been different. The authorities’ fear of militancy has long silenced the public calls. With a new government, that is changing and the loudspeakers are beginning to call the faithful back to their mosques. Barely 0.01% of Uzbeks know Christ in a meaningful way. For Christians meanwhile, freedom to worship or own a Bible remains under threat. Pressure to register churches has increased.

Pray for confident and careful gospel witness. Ask the Lord to sustain the growing underground churches. Pray for effective ministry through social media.

LUKE 14:15-24

Who will be in God’s eternal banquet and who is to bring them in?
CENTRAL ASIA
AZERBAIJAN

With Iran to the south, Russia to the north, Armenia and Turkey to the east, this is a region to keep prayerful eyes on. Ruled by the Aliyev family since 1993, oil reserves have brought both economic progress and serious corruption. Few churches register with the authorities and religious persecution has escalated. Those regarded as belonging to “extremist” groups, Christians included, risk losing their citizenship. Nine million Azeris need salvation.

Pray for more quality Christian books in Azeri languages; for online scriptures to be widely and safely downloaded; for extraordinary blessing on one-to-one witness in the workplace.

LUKE 24:44-49

What three things does Jesus say must (or will) happen?
Notice how God uses everyone to take the gospel to people (and peoples) beyond Jerusalem. What has helped you befriend those from other cultures? What makes it harder?

Pray that Kazakh believers will remain determined in their faith and, despite opposition, effective in making Jesus known. Pray for more children to hear truth and be saved.

ACTS 8:1-4

Efforts to promote the wider use of the Kazakh language and celebrate Kazakh history and culture have been successful. Most now speak Kazakh. **There is a renewed focus on Islam, up to 70% of the population now identifying themselves as Muslim.** State regulation has forced hundreds of churches to close. Downloading online Scriptures has got people in trouble. Missionary activity is outlawed. Vast rural areas need to hear the Good News.
What did the early church need to learn about the Gentiles?
At a later point, Paul will frequently quote the Old Testament to explain why gospel ministry must always move out to the nations. See Romans 15 for example.

Ask the Lord to make the country’s Christians the best of citizens, exemplary in conduct and public witness. Pray for gospel-awakening among the majority population.

Religious activity and religious materials are censored. Ninety-five percent of the population are Muslim. Unsurprisingly, virtually all gospel work takes place underground. Arrests, hostile threats and police raids on house churches, are not unusual.

Believers are frequently portrayed as disloyal extremists. Young Christian leaders are proving courageous in witnessing, resulting in family members coming to Christ.
Almost half the world’s Jews now live in Israel. Nine out of ten Jewish Israelis are immigrants or descendants of immigrants. About a third speak Russian. The country has evolved from being famous for its oranges to being a hub for research and development with the highest proportion of new business start-ups and technology companies per population in the world.

Pray for clear Christian witness in the workplace. Remember those telling Russian-speaking Jews about Jesus. Pray they would receive and read the Bible.

ACTS 16:6-40

Lydia’s conversion is a remarkable reminder of the inclusive nature of God’s mission purposes. Did you notice Gentiles finding faith in this chapter?
Oil and Islam are key to the country’s future. The country welcomes 20 million visitors a year, two million alone during the annual Hajj pilgrimage. Religious tourism is flourishing but not all Saudis are content. Atheism is growing on the Saudi peninsula. Many Saudis travel internationally and are open to talking about Christ. The kingdom tops the world in Snapchat usage. There are no known Saudi churches.

Pray for evangelism and effective discipleship among Saudi students overseas. May they grow strong. Many Saudis watch Christian TV in the Middle East. Ask the Lord to use it.

ROMANS 15:14-33

Notice Paul’s determination to carry the gospel to new peoples and nations. How does Paul experience churches partnering together for the gospel?
MIDDLE EAST
OMAN

With oil reserves declining, Oman has begun to focus on tourism and welcoming outsiders. Close to 3 million (of the 4 million population) are connected through social media meaning gospel material is available and being shared. **Muslims are not permitted to convert to Christ. There are still very few Omani Christians.** The elderly Sultan Qaboos is dearly loved by Omanis and is very influential. Wouldn’t it be great if he was soundly saved!

Ask God to root Oman’s few followers of Christ in His Word, and give courage in sharing Good News. Pray for entire families to come to faith and for vibrant Omani churches.

PHILIPPIANS 4:1-20

*How was the Philippian church involved in Paul’s gospel mission?*
MIDDLE EAST
QATAR

Probably the richest country in the world but conversion for Qatari Arabs is still considered apostasy. About 90% of the population are thought to be expats, mostly from India, Nepal and the Philippines.

Believers among them can worship freely and without fear. However, Christians caught sharing their faith with Muslims can face jail time of up to 10 years. No known indigenous Qatari churches exist.

Ask the Lord to send internationals with employment opportunities and hearts for evangelism to connect with Qataris. Pray for courageous faith for the few Qatari believers.

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-7

Who should we be praying for and why? What can you do to pray more for different parts of the world?
Of all the countries opening their doors to Syria’s refugees, Jordan has been the most affected. Refugees often live in poorer, urban areas. They need education, energy supplies, health care, and long term resettlement solutions.

Jordan is home to the first refugee camp in the world powered by renewable energy, meaning improved living conditions, better storage of food, and longer hours for children to do their homework.

Ask God to open wide the doors for Jordanian gospel work, for generous Christian love to outsiders, despite restrictions. Remember new faith communities among refugees.

REVELATION 7:9-17

How does John see God fulfil the promises to Abraham?