

Eritreans in Israel

Israel's government is using the recent peace treaty between Ethiopia and Eritrea as an excuse to send about 30,000 Eritrean refugees back to Eritrea. But the reason the Eritrean Christians fled their country was not the war, but the brutal persecution by their own government – and that officially has not changed. While the Israeli government has been cruel to these refugees, local Israeli citizens have been sympathetic and helpful.

Poland: against the tide

The Polish government has refused to adopt the European Union's "Charter of Fundamental Rights". Poland's objection is that the report does not mention the protection of Christians and Jews from discrimination, although it does mention the protection of immigrants, women and LGBT people. As Christians in Europe become, like Jews, an increasingly despised minority, pray that the Polish government's action may help to halt the erosion of religious liberty in Europe.

Barnabas Fund

Papuan picture books

A project is underway to put Scripture stories into simple language and pictorial form for readers of the Papuan Malay language. The aim is to put this material into 300 people groups of Papua (once West New Guinea, now part of Indonesia).

Wycliffe

Good News Clubs in Belize

The educational system in the Central American country of Belize has offered an opportunity to reach children with the gospel through the opening of 114 Good News Clubs in schools. Child Evangelism Fellowship is partnering with local churches that are willing to adopt a school in their neighbourhood for ongoing outreach. More than 250 teachers have received special training, and about 10,000 children are hearing the message of Christ. Schools in Belize are part of a church-state system in which the churches operate the schools on behalf of the government.

Christian Newswire

From a Philippines' church leader

"In Cantilan, 64 kms from the Bible college, even before we can build a building for the young congregation, they already have a daughter church 10 kms away. A second daughter church is now being started in another village. The same is true in Surigao City, where the church has now two daughter churches. Seven new churches have been planted in Davao del Norte and with the openings given by God in that area, more towns and villages are asking for workers to preach and teach God's Word.

"God's work through his people is so amazing that we can only bow down and worship him who is building his church triumphantly! The Lord has also prospered our Mobile Seminary, and Bridgeway books have been one of the main tools we use. We wish we could give these books to all our graduates but because of limited supply we must prioritise, so provide them only to our top graduates as awards."

Sola Gratia

The Persian Gulf region

The Bible Society working in the Gulf states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates achieved a number of strategic and operational targets during 2018. Hundreds of people visited its stall at the Bahrain International Book Fair, especially people from neighbouring Saudi Arabia. There is a thirst in the region to know more about the Bible and Christianity, in spite of some obstruction to Christian programs such as Adult Literacy, Audio Ministry, Story Telling, Children and Youth programs, Scripture Distribution, and Trauma Healing. But this has not stopped initiatives to expand these ministries in 2019.

Bible Society

Reacting to mindless violence

From around the world we hear reports of Muslims turning to Christ in increasing numbers. More Muslims have become believers in Jesus over the past fifty years than in the whole previous history of Islam. One factor in this is the disillusionment that many Muslims feel because of the mindless and brutal violence increasingly associated with Islam.

In **Sudan**, a vehemently Muslim country, when a Christian pastor led more than fifty Muslims to Christ, his house was attacked by six masked Islamists who brutally dismembered his wife and family before his eyes and then murdered him. But at the funeral that followed soon after, a further two hundred people gave their lives to Christ. The blood of the martyrs has always been the seed of the church.

Barnabas Fund

The gospel spreading in Senegal

Whatever the reason, people in Muslim-dominated areas of Africa are keen to learn about Jesus. To live in some of these countries is to be considered Muslim, but often it is more about cultural influence than a personal faith. In Senegal, for instance, where 91% of the population is Muslim, home-to-home visiting, distribution of Christian literature, open-air evangelism and street films are seeing a positive response to the gospel. Christian workers may meet opposition, but many people are willing to listen and talk about Jesus. *Mission Network News*

Sad Syria

President Assad may claim to have won in Syria, but Syria hardly exists. More than 80% of Syrians live below the poverty line, 70% under extreme poverty, 58% are unemployed, half the children have dropped out of school and average life expectancy is 20 years. Half a million Syrians have been killed since the start of the war, and hundreds of thousands wounded, displaced, forcibly detained or simply disappeared. A return to stability is not in sight.

At the beginning of the conflict, Syrian Christians were more optimistic than those in Iraq, but now they are mostly in total despair. They do not belong to any side in the conflict, but in many ways they suffer more than most. *Manara*

Central Asia

In the first court hearing of two young Central Asian national missionaries, the prosecutor's evidence against them included sixteen confiscated books, one of which was a Bible. The judge began reading the Bible for himself and declared it to be 'a very good book.' He then asked if the Christians would donate their books to the city library. Of course they agreed. The judge found the two men not guilty of the illegal religious activity they had been charged with, and their books are now in the public library where many people can read them.

Rwanda's churches under threat

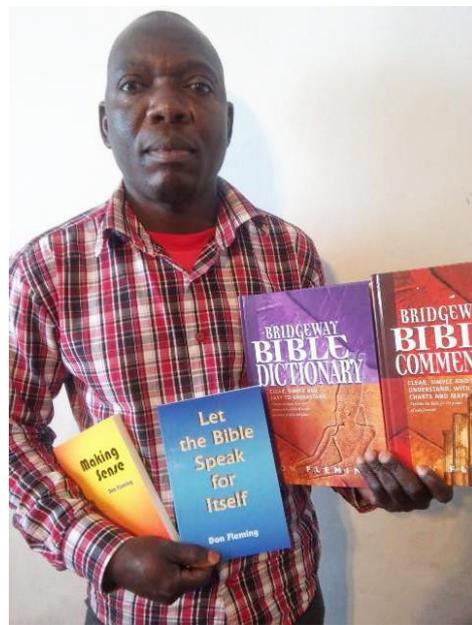
In the past year, the Rwandan government has shut down an estimated 7,000 churches across the country on the pretext that buildings do not meet newly introduced building regulations. Even though 90% of Rwanda's population identify as Christians, churches now know they are under observation by unsympathetic authorities. Many Christians have begun to meet secretly. *Barnabas Fund*

Nepali Christians resolute

A recent law making it illegal to convert a Hindu to Christianity has given Nepal's Hindu nationalists the feeling that they can do as they like. Over the past fifty years Nepal has been one of the world's largest church growth regions, but now the enemy is fighting back. Churches have been attacked, bombed and set on fire. But Christians refuse to be cowed and many are courageously carry on their ministries as before. *Barnabas Fund*

From a Nigerian church elder

"We are overwhelmed with joy to receive these gifts of books from you. To be honest, I can't afford to buy books, yet as an under-shepherd I need this knowledge to make me effective in my ministry. I must feed the flocks of God, but the finances and family challenges will not give me space to buy books that can equip me for this work. Your extension of your love to me has given me a wealth of knowledge." *Bridgeway*



Bibles for North Korea

North Korea's Christians are so hungry for a Bible that they will risk 15 years in a labour camp, or even death, to acquire a copy. It is the object they most want to get their hands on. A Christian ministry is working to smuggle 100,000 Bibles into the country. *Christian Headlines*