

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

for the Persecuted Church

Persecuted: Not Abandoned



FACTS

GEOGRAPHY

Area: 120,538 sq km. Northern half of the Korean Peninsula, mostly hills and mountains separated by deep, narrow valleys.

PEOPLE

Population 22.7 millions (07/09). Racially homogeneous; there is a small Chinese community and a few ethnic Japanese. Language: Korean.

ECONOMY

Heavily industrialized, this centralized socialist economy is in freefall. Large-scale military spending draws off resources needed for investment and civilian consumption. Severe flooding in 2007 aggravated chronic food shortages.

GOVERNMENT

Communist state one-man dictatorship. Capital: Pyongyang. 9 provinces and 2 municipalities. Independence: 15 Aug 1945 (from Japan). Chief of state: KIM Jong Il. Major party - Korean Workers' Party.

Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea

North Korea

North Korea is one of the most repressive countries in the world, whose leader, Kim Jong Il is worshiped as a god. This country allows absolutely NO political or religious freedom. North Koreans are obligated by law to hang pictures of their “Dear Leader” in their houses, schools and workplaces. Those who refuse to accept the leader as supreme authority are severely punished.

The current number of religious believers is unknown but it is estimated there are as many as 500, 000 Christians living in NK. Individuals found carrying Bibles or evangelising are arrested, harshly punished and imprisoned without charge. Tens of thousands of Christians are currently in prison camps suffering all sorts of inhuman cruelties. Religious prisoners, esp. Christians, are given the most dangerous duties in prison.

Famine, droughts, political and religious oppressions have forced thousands to flee to China. Many Christians in China risk huge fines by harbouring those who've escaped. Refugees who are forcibly repatriated are regarded as traitors and are subject to arrest, imprisonment, torture and execution. Refugees are interrogated by the authorities to determine if they have converted to Christianity. The government in recent years has stepped up tighter control by offering rewards to persons who could identify or give information about those doing missionary work at the Chinese border.

PRAYER POINTS:

Pray that the dictatorial stranglehold the communist party has had on NK would be broken

Pray that the adverse economic conditions would be used of God to open the government to allowing foreign aid into the country resulting both in the relief of hunger and more religious freedom

Pray that the Lord might protect both the sheltering hosts (in China) and the escapees from harm and use them to reap a great harvest among these disillusioned and desperate people.

Kim Sung Min, a former propaganda officer for the North Korean Army, is now fighting for the freedom and faith of his home country. Once a diehard socialist, Mr. Kim became disillusioned when he saw the lack of freedom and opportunity in North Korea while serving in the military. After defecting, being arrested and escaping again, Mr. Kim began spreading a new message of hope and liberty.

Mr. Kim's eyes were opened to the modern-day Holocaust that was going on around him in North Korea, where Christianity is illegal and even failing to keep a portrait of Kim Jong-Il clean can mean being sent to a political prison camp. Like thousands of other North Koreans, he defected to China. But his newfound Christian faith compelled him to spread that message of hope to his fellow North Koreans. So, he became a prominent freedom fighter and advocate for religious freedom for North Korea.

Pray for Mr Kim to stand firm in his faith as he prays for his own country