

# An Urgent Plea to Pray for the Nations

So many Americans live in a comfortable bubble. We enjoy first-world benefits, even in the midst of a pandemic. We complain when our steaks aren't cooked right, when the internet is slow, when flights are crowded or when our Amazon packages don't arrive in two days. We are spoiled because we are so ignorant about how the rest of the world lives.

One way I resist this smug entitlement is by praying for those who are less fortunate than I am. And there has never been a better time for us to remember people who are struggling. If you think 2021 is difficult, multiply your hardships by five or 10 times, and you can better imagine how life is elsewhere.

Below is a list of nations I'm praying for regularly, with a brief explanation of the problems they face. Please join me.

**Afghanistan.** Insiders report that a wave of persecution against Christians began as soon as U.S. troops were withdrawn from Afghanistan a few weeks ago. A dozen leaders of the underground house church movement there have reportedly been martyred, and thousands of orphans are in danger of being sold into jihad sex slavery. Observers fear that if the Taliban regains control of Afghanistan, women will be forced to wear burkas, and girls will be pulled out of school. Pray for protection of the church and freedom for the Afghan people.

**Cuba.** After Cuban citizens took to the streets in early July to demand an end to communism, government forces loyal to Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez arrested hundreds of freedom activists. The government also shut down the internet, cutting off communication so protesters would be isolated. Pray for the suffering church in Cuba, and pray that freedom will replace tyranny.

**Haiti.** The July 7 assassination of Haiti's president, Jovenal Moise, is only one of many problems plaguing the small island nation. Haiti never recovered from the 2010 earthquake that destroyed the capital, and rival gangs took over large sectors of the country during Moise's term. Today the country is under martial law, while its broken health care system is unable to handle the COVID-19 pandemic. The people of this country are in despair.

**Nigeria.** Africa's most populous country is experiencing a deadly wave of violence. In the northern part of the country, Muslim terrorists are burning churches, killing villagers and kidnapping students. In other regions, bandits and militants are killing Nigerian soldiers and robbing local residents. In April 2021 alone, 600 civilians were killed, and armed groups abducted 406 people. Pray for God's peace in this troubled nation.

**South Africa.** The worst violence to hit South Africa in years erupted in mid-July after former president Jacob Zuma was jailed on corruption charges. Warehouses, malls and other stores have been stripped by looters, cars have been burned and up to 212 people have died in violent skirmishes. And in the midst of the violence, a second wave of the coronavirus has been spreading. Pray for racial healing and an intervention of peace.

**India.** Researchers now believe that between 3 and 4 million people have died of COVID-19 in India, far above the government's official count. If true, this would make the pandemic the biggest tragedy in India since it gained independence from Great Britain in 1947. Funeral pyres burn around the clock in India's large cities, and bodies of dead victims have been washing up on the edges of the River Ganges. Pray for a spiritual intervention in this broken nation.

**Indonesia.** The world's fourth most populous country is now facing a deadly second wave of COVID-19, and the deaths

include many pastors who leave their troubled flocks behind. After the delta variant of the virus spread from India, the Red Cross announced that Indonesia is “on the edge of a COVID-19 catastrophe.” In July more than 30,000 new cases were being reported each day, and patients with breathing problems have limited access to oxygen. Pray for an end to this pandemic.

**Lebanon.** Some Lebanese people have declared their nation officially “unlivable.” The people suffer from hyperinflation, gasoline and power shortages and lack of medicines. The country has been without a government since the massive explosion of a warehouse full of ammonium nitrate on Aug. 4, 2020. More than 6,000 people were injured in that disaster at the Port of Beirut, and 211 died. The cabinet of Prime Minister Hassan Diab resigned after the incident. Pray for peace and supernatural recovery for Lebanon.

**Venezuela.** This once-prosperous nation is now an unimaginable disaster. Venezuela’s debt is more than double the size of its economy. About 95% of Venezuelans live in poverty. The national inflation rate is 6,500%. And because of the pandemic, the supply line is broken, and people cannot get food, water, fuel or medicine. Pray for a miracle of deliverance for the Venezuelan people.

**Let’s pray:** *Lord Jesus, deliver this world from evil. Bring Your peace where there is chaos. Bring Your provision where there is hunger. Bring Your freedom where there is tyranny. Bring Your comfort where there is despair. May Your kingdom come and Your will be done. Amen. {eo}*

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