

A woman in traditional attire, including a brown headwrap and a white shawl, sits in the foreground. She has a serious expression and is looking directly at the camera. Her hands are clasped in front of her. In the background, other people are visible, some sitting on the ground, suggesting a camp or a place of displacement. The setting is outdoors with dry, brownish ground and a clear sky.

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

Voice
of Persecuted Christians

**PRAY FOR
CHRISTIANS
IN FLIGHT**

IDOP 2021

PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS IN

FLIGHT

'Persecution, war and violence have forced hundreds of thousands of Christians to flee as refugees. Your help is saving and rebuilding lives.' Release CEO Paul Robinson



SYRIA: An estimated 700,000 Christians have fled following years of civil war and persecution. Many now live in refugee camps in neighbouring states.

IRAN: The authorities harass and imprison the leaders of underground churches – forcing a number to seek refuge in neighbouring Turkey.

AFGHANISTAN: Christians – a tiny minority – fear that persecution will increase under the restored Taliban regime.



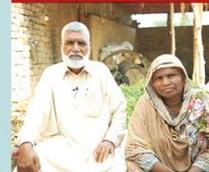
NORTH KOREA: Practising faith is forbidden. Some Christians have defected and live under cover in China – or make the dangerous journey to South Korea.

NORTH KOREA
SOUTH KOREA

IRAQ: Up to 90 per cent of the Christian population have left the country since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003. Instability and violence cause many to remain displaced in Kurdistan (pictured).



PAKISTAN: Christians live as second-class citizens. Some who have been accused of blasphemy or threatened with violence have fled to Thailand and other countries.



NIGERIA: Jihadists continue to wage war against believers in north and central Nigeria. Thousands have been killed and hundreds of thousands now live in camps for displaced people.



ERITREA: Persecution, forced conscription and economic misery have driven many thousands of Christians into refugee camps in Ethiopia and Sudan.



SOMALIA: Three million Somalis are displaced inside the country. Persecution by al-Shabaab militants has driven Christians into Kenya.

ETHIOPIA: Conflict in Tigray forced tens of thousands of people – including persecuted Christians from Eritrea – to flee to Sudan. Many remain displaced within Ethiopia.

People movements in-country and to other countries
 Release partner has provided help

The UN estimates that at the end of 2020 82 million people were forcibly displaced globally – double the number displaced in 2011.¹

RELEASE INTERNATIONAL

Release International: PO Box 54, Orpington BR5 4RT
T: 01689 823491 E: info@releaseinternational.org





Although many Christians managed to leave **Afghanistan** ahead of the Taliban advance, there are still thought to be several thousand in the country. Many Christians who remain are trapped, unable to leave through sealed borders. Some have received death threats. Others have fled to remote areas to escape the Taliban.

Release International partners continue to provide critical support through broadcast media. This is a vital lifeline in hard-to-reach locations. It will now be much more difficult and dangerous for believers and seekers in Afghanistan to access Biblical materials, so radio ministry is a key tool.



More than 150 people were killed when Boko Haram attacked Daniel's village – including his three sons and his father. His wife was also abducted and forcibly married to a Muslim.

Daniel managed to escape and fled to Maiduguri, the state capital, where he now lives on a camp for internally displaced people.

By the grace of God – and despite all he has been through – Daniel remains firm in his faith. “I have surrendered my life to Christ,” he said.

Daniel, Nigeria



Tsedal's husband, Ftsum, was arrested when Eritrean secret police began rounding up Christians. Despite constant ill-treatment, he refused to renounce his faith. Two years later he died in prison.

After Tsedal received support from a ministry related to Release International, the Eritrean security forces began spying on her.

Tsedal fled to neighbouring Ethiopia, where she spent several months living in a refugee camp, before resettling in a small Ethiopian town. Despite all she has been through, her trust in God remains strong.

Tsedal, Ethiopia



Morteza and Arezou ran a house church in Iran but their lives changed forever the day they were summoned by Iran's state intelligence agency for questioning.

Morteza was subsequently threatened and eventually his business was closed down. Finally the couple felt they had no option but to flee. They left everything behind and made their way to Turkey.

By the grace of God they became involved in Christian ministry in Turkey – and have seen more than 300 people baptised.

Morteza and Arezou, Turkey

BIBLE READING | 1 PETER 1: 1-7



¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are **elect exiles** of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

PRAYER POINTS

**I WILL NOT
ABANDON
THEM!**

- Pray for Christians for whom fleeing from persecution is the only option. Pray for God's **protection and provision**. Pray also for **God's grace** in the emotional turmoil of leaving everything behind.
- Pray for the country of **Afghanistan**; that believers will remember that God knows everything, He cares for them and will provide for them even in the most difficult of times.
- Pray that the global church and NGOs supporting **Christians in Afghanistan** respond to calls for help with compassion, wisdom and boldness, and help people to find God in the midst of trouble and great distress.



PRAYER POINTS

**I WILL NOT
ABANDON
THEM!**

- Pray for **Eritrean Christians** on refugee camps in Ethiopia – particularly those caught up in the current conflict in Tigray.
- Pray for **Christians from Syria and Iraq** who have fled to the northern Kurdistan region.
- Pray for **Christians in Nigeria** who have become refugees in their own country as a result of Islamist attacks.
- Pray for **Release International partners** who care for displaced Christians: that they will be able to provide the necessary physical needs – but also to give pastoral and spiritual support.



For more information and to sign up for regular prayer updates please visit:

www.releaseinternational.org

[ABOUT US](#)

[PERSECUTION WATCH](#)

[PROJECTS](#)

[GET INVOLVED](#)

[CONTACT](#)

[GIVE](#)

[MORE](#)



RELEASE INTERNATIONAL



voice

of Persecuted Christians

www.releaseinternational.org

[#iwillnotabandonthem](https://twitter.com/iwillnotabandonthem)

