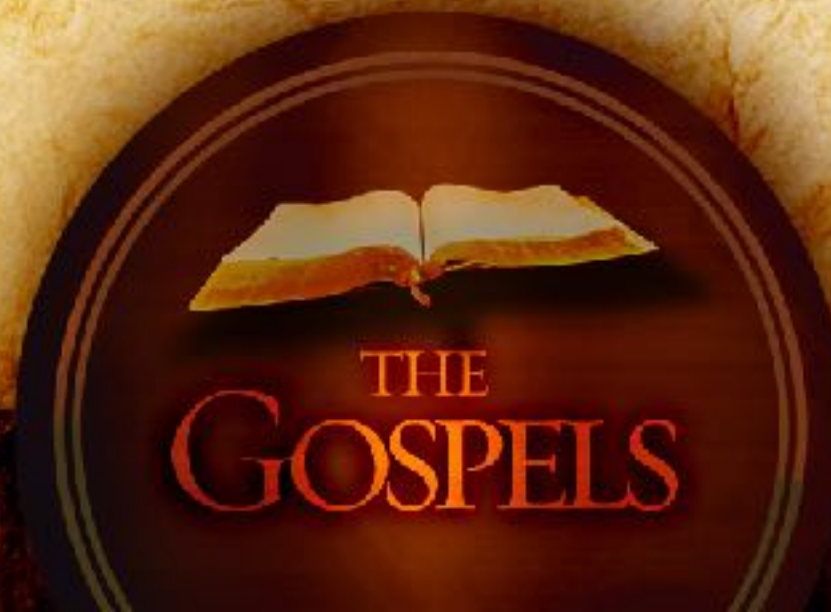




# MATTHEW

Who is YOUR King?!?





# *Will We Embrace the Cross?*



Matthew 27:39-49





INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER  
FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

# PRAYING FOR

PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

as they give up their rights and safety  
in this world, enduring opposition, in order  
to boldly advance the gospel.





In fact, everyone who wants to  
live a godly life in Christ Jesus  
will be persecuted

2 Timothy 3:12









Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. **For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.**

Matthew 16:24-25





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**Matthew 16:24-25**



Gospel workers on the front lines of ministry in Central Asia share the gospel with everyone they meet — even the secret police.





# PRAY

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For these front-line workers and others like them to continue walking in obedience, joyfully giving their lives in order to lead others to new life in Christ.



Ethiopian Christians baptize former Somali Muslims in the backyard of a church building that was once a brothel.





# PRAY

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With thanks to God for these new believers in Ethiopia and others like them who are won to Christ on the world's most difficult and dangerous mission fields.







# MY PRAYER TODAY

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Father, You are my Lord, and I choose  
to be Your faithful witness.



# MY PRAYER TODAY

---

May I draw encouragement from our persecuted  
Christian family and lay all of my desires,  
competing identities and rights aside to live solely  
for the sake of Your name. In Jesus' name, amen.









If they persecuted Me, they will  
also persecute you.

John 15:2 0b





. . . know [Christ] and the power  
of His resurrection, and the  
fellowship of His sufferings,  
being conformed to His death.

Philippians 3:10





. . . know [Christ] and the power  
of His resurrection, and the  
fellowship of His sufferings,  
being conformed to His death.

Philippians 3:10





Then she called the name of  
the Lord who spoke to her,  
You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for  
she said, “Have I also here seen  
Him who sees me?”

Genesis 16:13





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she said, “Have I also here seen  
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Genesis 16:13





**The Lord *is* near to those who  
have a broken heart, and saves  
such as have a contrite spirit.**

Psalm 34:18



# Cross & Tomb Narratives (27:27-66)

(27-31) Soldiers mocking

(32) Simon bearing Jesus's cross

(33-38) Soldiers crucifying the King

(39-44) Multiple \_\_\_\_\_

(45-46) \_\_\_\_\_!

(47-49) Multiple \_\_\_\_\_

(50-54) Soldiers acknowledging God's Son

(55-61) Joseph burying Jesus's body

(62-66) Soldiers guarding



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And those who passed by  
blasphemed Him, wagging their  
heads and saying, “You who destroy  
the temple and build *it* in three days,  
save Yourself! If You are the Son of  
God, come down from the cross.”

Matthew 27:39-40





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Matthew 27:39-40





Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

Matthew 27:41-43





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Matthew 27:41-43





He saved others; Himself He  
cannot save.

Matthew 27:42a





He saved others; Himself He  
cannot save.

Matthew 27:42a





He saved others; Himself He  
cannot save.

Matthew 27:42a



A piece of aged, textured paper with a metal nail pinned to the top left corner. The paper has a mottled, yellowish-brown appearance with visible fibers and creases. The nail is a simple metal pin, angled downwards and to the right. The background is dark and textured.

Cross-bearing is a **platform** for the gospel.



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But I want you to know, brethren, that the things *which happened* to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ!

Philippians 1:12-13





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**Prem Pradham**  
(1924–1998)



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If He is the King of Israel, let Him now  
come down from the cross, and we will  
believe Him.

Matthew 27:42b





If He is the King of Israel, let Him now  
come down from the cross, and we will  
believe Him.

Matthew 27:42b





. . .humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:8b





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Philippians 2:8b





Cross-bearing is a platform for the gospel.





Cross-bearing is a platform for the gospel.

Cross-bearing is our pathway to glory.





For I consider that the sufferings of this  
present time are not worthy *to be*  
*compared* with the glory which shall be  
revealed in us.

Matthew 8:18





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For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Philippians 3:20-21





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Philippians 3:20-21





we . . . glory in tribulations, knowing that  
tribulation produces perseverance; and  
perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Romans 5:3b





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Romans 5:3b





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Romans 5:3b





He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now  
if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the  
Son of God.' ”

Matthew 27:43





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Matthew 27:43





“This is My beloved Son, in whom  
I am well pleased.”

Matthew 3:17b





“This is My beloved Son, in whom  
I am well pleased.”

Matthew 3:17b





Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him;  
He has put *Him* to grief when You make His  
soul an offering for sin

Isaiah 53:10b





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Isaiah 53:10b





Cross-bearing is a platform for the gospel.

Cross-bearing is our pathway to glory.





Cross-bearing is a platform for the gospel.

Cross-bearing is our pathway to glory.

Cross-bearing is the proof of our acceptance.





“My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.”

Hebrews 2:5b-6





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Hebrews 2:5b-6





Now no chastening seems to be joyful for  
the present, but painful; nevertheless,  
afterward it yields  
the peaceable fruit of righteousness  
to those who have been trained by it

Hebrews 2:11





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[But God] said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10





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*When I am weak . . .*

Embrace the cross!



*When I am weak . . .*



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