



MONTHLY PRAYER UPDATE



An Entire Family Comes to Christ through a Shoebox Gift!

Zumrat is a believer in a small fellowship located in a sensitive country. A sensitive country is one where there are serious social, ethnic or political challenges to sharing the Gospel. Zumrat has a big heart for the children of her town. For years as she walked in her town and saw a child, she would pray with tears: "Dear Lord, you love these little ones. You sent your own Son to die on the cross for them. Help me and teach me how to tell them about Your love!"

Last year Zumrat attended an Operation Christmas Child Ministry Partners' training. When she heard that "every shoebox is a Gospel Opportunity," she was cut to her heart. She immediately asked her pastor to apply for 50 boxes. One of those 50 children, who came for the outreach event at the church, was a girl named Victoria. For the 14-year-old girl her box became a real "Gospel Opportunity."

Victoria appeared to be the oldest child in her family. She helped her parents take care of her siblings: three younger brothers and a little sister with Down syndrome. Her mom and dad worked hard to provide for their children as there are very limited opportunities for a big family in their post-Soviet city. Victoria often cried.

The message about a God who loved the whole world and gave His only Son Jesus, changed her world. She opened her heart for the Christmas Child. Now Zumrat and Victoria became good friends and sisters in Christ. They began praying together for the girl's family. They saw a change in Victoria's life - smiling, singing. With Victoria's shoebox, the gift of hope came into their home. Her mother became a Christian next and now she is getting prepared for the baptism. Then her dad received Jesus as his Lord and Savior and brought his two sisters to church one of them an alcoholic. Victoria's two aunts now go to church and bring their children.

Now every time Zumrat sees Victoria's family, she gives thanks to the Lord for His amazing love and the victory Jesus won on the Calvary. She hugs Victoria and whispers to her ear: "Never give up! You are now a disciple of Christ!"



A Powerful Pattern of Prayer

There are 650 prayers contained in the Bible. We can learn much about the power of prayer by studying these prayers, looking at who prayed them and observing the circumstances in which they were prayed. In 2 Chronicles 20 we find the nation of Judah in deep trouble surrounded by several enemy nations who are conspiring to attack. The King of Judah, Jehoshaphat, is a good king but the scriptures tell us he was filled with fear. In his desperation, Jehoshaphat calls on the entire nation to turn to the Lord in prayer and fasting.

As Jehoshaphat stands and leads the people in calling out to God, we see that he has a very strategic and powerful pattern to his prayer. Jehoshaphat begins his prayer by worshipping God for His omnipotence and supremacy by praying, *“O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you.”* (2 Chronicles 20:6). By starting his prayer this way Jehoshaphat redirects the focus of the people from the threats of their enemies to their awesome, unconquerable God. Next in his prayer, Jehoshaphat recounts how faithfully God has provided in the past by praying, *“Did you not, our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend?”* (2 Chronicles 20:7). Here, Jehoshaphat is reminding God’s people that God is always faithful and always keeps His promises.

The way Jehoshaphat closes his prayer models for us the kind of humility and surrender that God honors. He closes by praying, *“For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”* (2 Chronicles 20:12). Here, Jehoshaphat is modeling for the people a heart that desires God’s will and God’s way as he places their entire situation back into the hands of the Lord. As chapter 20 goes on to report, God honored and answered this prayer of Jehoshaphat’s by completely destroying the enemies of Judah as the people worshipped and trusted in God alone. As we grow in prayer and as intercessors, this prayer by Jehoshaphat is a powerful model for us to emulate as we seek to make ourselves small, make God big, and always place the battle back into His hands.

Operation Christmas Child

International Prayer Requests: **Sensitive Countries in the Middle East**

Week 1: April 1-7 Sensitive Country

- Praise God for the arrival of the four containers, representing 32,000 Gospel opportunities!
- Please pray that all of the containers are quickly cleared to enter the country.
- Please pray that tax exemption will be granted on each container.
- Please pray for the teams as they try to catch up on their season as containers came late.
- Praise God for a successful National Coordinator role network in the country.
- Praise God for current political stability in the country.

Week 2: April 8-14 Sensitive Country

- Praise the Lord that some areas have been liberated from terrorists and Christian families can go back to their homes.
- Praise the Lord that the National Leadership Team was able to send containers into the capital city.
- Please pray for the newly selected National Leadership Team members that they will be unified and grow in dependence on the Spirit for their ministry.
- Please pray for the children and teachers currently going through The Greatest Journey, that many disciples of Jesus will be made.
- Please pray to our God who is the Way-Maker for opportunities to go to serve in the areas previously occupied by ISIS.

Week 3: April 15-21 Sensitive Country

- Praise God that our Ministry Partners have received their shoebox gifts and pray for the Holy Spirit's protection and anointing on the upcoming Outreach Events.
- Praise Jehovah Jireh, our God who provides, for providing a storage place for the incoming shoebox gifts.
- Praise God for the opportunity the team had to minister to Ministry Partners in a difficult city. They are serving in the midst of deep spiritual darkness and they are a true light of Jesus.
- Please pray for the vendor to print The Greatest Journey materials for next season.
- Please pray for wisdom and opportunity from the Holy Spirit to use The Greatest Journey to reach out to unsaved children and their families.

Week 4: April 22-30

- Praise God for the new National Leadership Team members and their heart for Jesus and love for children.
- Praise the Lord for the many opportunities three teams had to minister to their Ministry Partners in the very sensitive areas.
- Please pray for Christ's comfort for a team member who recently lost their mother.
- Please pray for the Spirit's perfect wisdom and hearts that are fully dependent on Him during the upcoming strategic planning for this country.
- Please pray blessings on the newly wed Logistics Coordinator and protection over his family.

Forward this e-mail to a friend who you think would be interested praying for or learning more about the ministry of Operation Christmas Child.

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