



'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.'

Psalm 46:1 (NIV)

Hello Jane,

The challenges in our work overseas continue, but your love, generosity and prayers for people affected by leprosy encourage me every day. Thank you for lifting our Leprosy Mission family up in prayer so faithfully.

When praying about what to share with you today, I was reminded of the story in Exodus 17. Joshua and the Israelites were fighting the enemy Amalek, a battle influenced by Moses who was stood on a nearby hill.

God instructed Moses to hold up his staff throughout the battle; God would work through this act of faith to give the Israelites victory. When Moses was weary and dropped his staff, the enemy began to gain advantage over the Israelites. However, when Aaron and Hur supported his arms to hold the staff up, the Israelites overcame their enemy and won the fight.

Following that battle, Moses built an altar to God, proclaiming: 'The Lord is my banner.'

Reflecting on this story, I felt that the Holy Spirit was reminding me that our prayers for our brothers and sisters around the world are like this act of support for Moses. Our prayers are a banner of protection and victory as they face one of their biggest battles of their lives.

Since my last email to you, we have received regular prayer requests from India, Nepal and Bangladesh. Many staff and patients have contracted coronavirus, and we have heard the very sad news that several of our overseas team have died as a result.

This is a huge loss for their loved ones, and a tragedy for our Leprosy Mission family and the people we serve. Recruiting staff to work with people affected by leprosy is always a challenge, especially when competing against better paid positions in private medical hospitals.



You may also be aware from current news coverage that India faces a huge challenge in dealing with coronavirus. Our hospitals there are stretched on several fronts and have suffered huge financial losses during the pandemic. Staff have taken a pay cut and many are struggling to cope financially. Sonali, who works on the Karuna Project in Mumbai, told us:

'This has been a very challenging time for us financially. I had to take a cut in my salary and my husband's salary was not coming through. The sickness of our loved ones made it all the more difficult to manage our mounting expenses. But this whole experience was a faith building exercise for me and my husband. We thank God we have survived through all of this so far.'

I'm sure that, like me, you are struck by the honesty, faith and trust expressed in Sonali's words.

Please join me in praying for all of our overseas staff as they face their own personal battles for survival. Pray for peace and good rest for our country leaders: Dr Mary Verghese in India, Mr Salomon Sumon Halder in Bangladesh, and Mr Shovakhar Kandel in Nepal.

May God give them abundant wisdom and supernatural provision. Pray too for the blood of Jesus to protect every staff member and every person affected by leprosy who needs help, hope and healing more than ever.

With every blessing,

Alisia O'Sullivan

Executive Office Coordinator