



# How to Pray for... **WIDOWS**



The death of a spouse is traumatic for anyone. Beyond the grief, there are life-changing consequences of such a loss. When the family was already poor or vulnerable, the death of a husband puts his widow in a dire situation. In too many places, widows cannot claim property rights. And there are many cultures where women are not expected, or even allowed, to work outside the home. In low-income countries, about two-thirds of girls aren't educated past primary school.<sup>1</sup> Without land, job skills, education, or work opportunities, many widows sink into deep poverty and exploitation. If extended family doesn't come forward to care for the widow and her children, their circumstances quickly become desperate. Depression and suicide are rampant.

About 75 percent of unmarried widows live in the Majority World. More than 38 million live in extreme poverty, and their numbers continue to increase due to wars, diseases, famines, and the common practice of marrying girls to much older men.<sup>2</sup> Yet every one of these women and girls has a Heavenly Father who knows her name and numbers the hairs on her head. He does not forget or abandon them. And He calls His Church to care for them in their distress.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the World Bank <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/publication/missed-opportunities-the-high-cost-of-not-educating-girls>

<sup>2</sup> The facts and statistics in this prayer update are drawn from Loomba Foundation's research. <http://www.theloombafoundation.org/>

# Please pray with us...

- That widows would know their true identity as image bearers of their Creator and beloved daughters of God. Pray that this truth would give them hope for their future and certainty that they can overcome even the most desperate situation. Pray that they will be comforted in all their grief.
- That widows living in poverty would be protected from exploitation and violence, and that they would have the ability and resources to provide for their children. Pray that orphans will have opportunities to attend school and that families will have their basic needs for food and shelter met.
- For extended family to give widows a place of honor and respect as well as providing for their physical needs.
- For churches in the Majority World to care for widows. Pray that they would understand their calling and would have the skill, ability, and creativity to meet widows' and orphans' complex needs.
- For societies to value women and girls. Pray that girls would be educated, that women would have equal opportunity to earn income, and that parents would not sell their daughters into child marriage.
- For governments to make just laws that protect widows. Pray that leaders would be aware and concerned about the plight of widows. Pray especially for laws that allow widows to inherit and own property and that protect them from exploitation.

*Sing to God, sing in praise of His name,  
extol Him who rides on the clouds;  
rejoice before Him—His name is the Lord.  
A Father to the fatherless, a Defender of widows,  
is God in His holy dwelling.  
Psalm 68:4-5*

*Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless. If you do and they  
cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry.  
Exodus 22:22-23*

*For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God,  
mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes.  
He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the  
foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.  
Deuteronomy 10:17-18*



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