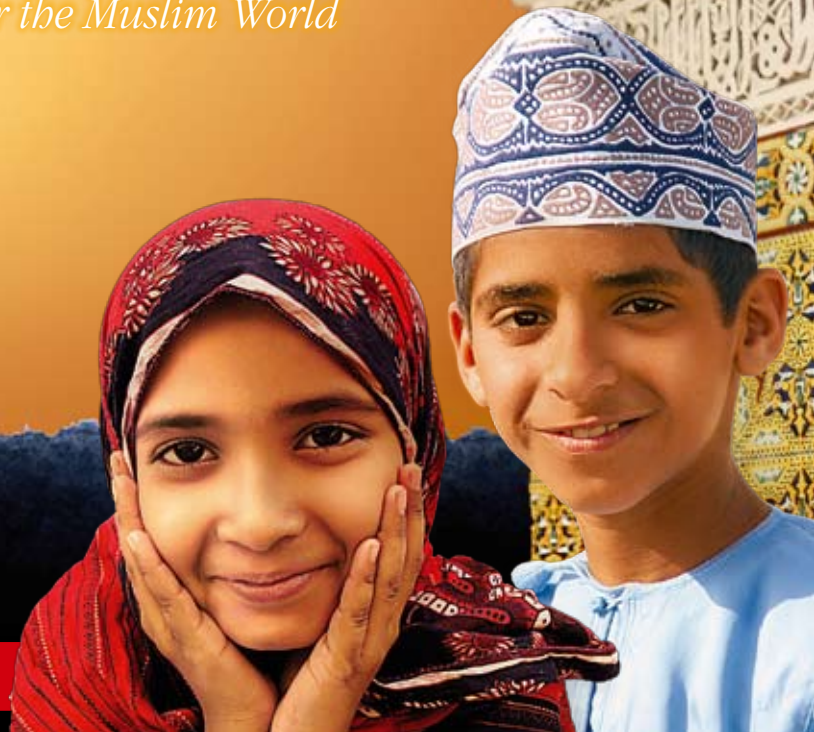


30 Days 2009

of Prayer for the Muslim World

August 22
through
September 20

Loving Muslims Through Prayer



Inside Cover

It is good to view this document in a facing pages mode.

Otherwise in a single page mode.

Introduction

This call to prayer for Muslims originally came during a meeting of several Christian leaders in the Middle East in 1992. Several believers involved in an international movement strongly sensed God's desire to call as many Christians as possible to pray for the Muslim world. A prayer movement was planned to coincide with the Islamic month of Ramadan. It was intended that "30 Days" should be during the month of Ramadan for at least two reasons: (1) as a means for Christians to identify themselves with Muslims during a fixed period of the year, (2) to call upon God's sovereign intervention in the lives of Muslims during a time of the year when they are particularly religious. Please note that praying during the month of Ramadan does not mean that we conform ourselves to the Muslim practices of fasting and prayer.

As believers in Jesus we disagree with Islamic ideas, theology and practice in several areas. However, the "30 Days" movement emphasizes God's love for Muslims. We encourage all believers in the Messiah to cultivate a spirit of humility, love, respect and service toward Muslims.

The goal of this prayer guide is to inspire and direct each reader as he or she intercedes for the Muslim world. However, it is far from being completely informative. We encourage you to seek further information and so gain a greater understanding of the Islamic world and God's activities among Muslims. Again this year we have included a number of testimonies to encourage your faith as you pray. God loves Muslims. He wants them to come to know Him.

The Editors

See our main web site at <http://www.30-days.net>



2009 Subjects and Prayer Topics

Each year in the "30 Days" prayer material we try to inform our readers more about Islam. This year we have a special focus concerning the family of Mohammed. We hope that you will gain insight into the life and family of this man who continues to greatly influence Muslims through his preaching and example. In addition, we are trying to focus much of our prayer efforts on some of the most remote and largely unreached Muslim peoples. God has not forgotten them. God is awesome, and He knows the hairs on the head of every individual who is Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish or Christian.

Subjects and prayer topics in this edition of 30 Days:

- Christian and Muslim differences, misunderstandings, attitudes and false ideas
- Prayer for people with names taken from the family of Mohammed
- Prayer for peoples, cities, tribes, tongues and nations
- Special focus on unreached peoples without any committed Gospel witness
- What is it like to be a "secret believer"?
- Ministries are needed: healing, deliverance, etc.
- Testimonies of people who have found new life in the Messiah
- Maps on page 10

Why pray for Muslims?

Common and yet different values and beliefs



Believers in the Messiah, Jesus, have many beliefs and values in common with Muslims, not only concerning faith-related issues but also moral values. People from both faith communities agree that our world has become a dangerous place. Believers in Jesus and Muslims can both be in agreement concerning the following text in 2 Timothy 3:2-5:

“... Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.”

Believers in the Messiah and Muslims share similar common values for daily living: faithfulness (to God and in relationships), honesty, compassion, honour, humility, chastity, self-sacrifice, mercy and love.

Muslims and Christians believe that there is one God, but are we worshipping the same God in word and deed? One might also ask: In a time when many people think that all roads and all religions lead to the one true God, why should one pray for Muslims to come to salvation? Does it make any difference? Are they not already accepted by God?

Certainly Muslims are loved by God. Without doing anything they are loved by Him. God counts Muslim children and adults as precious. He loves every aspect of their languages, food, attitudes and daily life which are truly good and right. However, this does not mean that Muslims have entered into eternal life or have had their sins forgiven.

Let us pray for Muslims so they can enter into the Messiah's eternal kingdom.

Muslims are not inspired by the hope of a new world in which Jesus, the crucified and risen Messiah, reigns as King. Most Muslims have actually been trained not to believe that Jesus died and rose again. In general they know little of His forgiveness. They believe that Jesus was a prophet sent from God but they generally never think of Him as God's appointed King who reigns over the nations (Mt 28:18-20). It is precisely “believing the Gospel of the Kingdom” which is a problem. Like all people everywhere and in all cultures, Muslims are called to turn from evil and believe the Gospel of the Kingdom. Most Muslims

around the world have not even had an opportunity to hear the Good News of Jesus' death for sins and His resurrection, which liberates us from the power of sin, death and demonic bondage.

For various reasons which will be discussed later in this booklet, Muslims do not believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Believers in the Messiah are always rejoicing that “God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 4:9-10).

Jesus has come so that we can have life and have it in abundance (John 10:10). Therefore let us pray for Muslims so they can enter into that life in the Messiah's eternal kingdom.

MUSLIM POPULATIONS

Africa	400 million
Middle East	250 million
Asia	800 million
Europe	25+ million
Americas	5+ million
Total	1.48 billion

The table above gives the approximate numbers of Muslims in various regions of the world. In the last 50 years probably no more than one or two million Muslims have come to saving faith in the Messiah. Some people might give a somewhat higher figure. Whatever the real number, it is relatively small, and a breakthrough is needed.



The last of the unreached

There are about 220 Muslim peoples around the world with over 100,000 members each, and these peoples have no local committed Christian witness. In addition, there are no known believers who are specifically planning to take the Gospel of the Kingdom to them. A short list of some of these peoples is on this page. In addition there are huge numbers of Muslims in peoples where there is a small Christian witness, but the Muslims still have never heard the Gospel in a meaningful and culturally adapted way. This is true of millions of Arabs in the Middle East as well as millions more in Africa and Southeast Asia.

Jesus said, “This Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Mt. 24:14). The end of the age and the dawning of God’s new world will not come about before all people from different religions and cultures have had an opportunity to hear and to respond to the message. In this prayer booklet we have made a significant effort to focus our prayers on unreached peoples without neglecting Muslims in more visible and well known settings. You will find several completely unreached groups listed in our “Prayer for the Peoples” sections.

A list of the 220 Muslim peoples mentioned above is available on our web site: www.30-days.net. (There are hundreds of smaller peoples as well.)

Below: Some Muslim peoples of over 100,000 people without any known Gospel witness ...

<i>Saho of Eritrea</i>	211,000
<i>Maraikayar of India</i>	127,000
<i>Mawalud of India</i>	1,161,000
<i>Nikari of India</i>	151,000
<i>Pashtun of India</i>	13,280,000
<i>Thulukkan of India</i>	269,000
<i>Asahan of Indonesia</i>	541,000
<i>Bangka of Indonesia</i>	340,000
<i>Belitung of Indonesia</i>	100,000
<i>Gayo of Indonesia</i>	300,000
<i>Kangean of Indonesia</i>	1,100,000
<i>Takistani of Iran</i>	330,000
<i>Afshari of Iran</i>	1,230,000
<i>Khorasani Turk of Iran</i>	832,000
<i>Seraiki of Pakistan</i>	17,854,000
<i>W. Baluch of Pakistan</i>	1,261,000
<i>Burig of Pakistan</i>	474,000
<i>Kho of Pakistan</i>	314,000
<i>Kolaj of Pakistan</i>	410,000
<i>Awan of India</i>	618,000
<i>Chhimba of India</i>	1,047,000
<i>Kamboh of India</i>	1,525,000
<i>Kunjra of India</i>	1,601,000
<i>Makhmi of India</i>	499,000
<i>Mappila of India</i>	9,635,000
<i>Kerinci of Indonesia</i>	260,000
<i>Lembak of Indonesia</i>	120,000

How should we use this booklet?



Over the coming weeks, you may pray and fast in a variety of ways. Some days five minutes may be all that God will ask from some in this prayer effort. However, participants will sometimes be guided to pray for much longer periods. You can use this booklet to pray during your own prayer times, or join with others to pray together. We would encourage you to find creative ways to involve as many people as possible in this prayer focus. Jesus gave special promises of blessing for Christians who pray and agree as a group (Mt. 18:20).

Please use the Bible as much as possible in prayer. We have included various Bible references throughout the booklet. It would be good to meditate on these texts and speak them out in prayer. Proclaim them before God; ask Him to inspire you. This will build your faith and God can give you new insights for prayer based on His Word.

You could organise some weekly or twice weekly meetings over the 30 day period with your church, your youth group, cell groups, or children's groups. Have others join with you in a special meal using the prayer topic for that day. You could find out all you can about that particular culture, including food and dress, music, etc.

It is helpful if one person is chosen as the leader / facilitator of the group for that time of prayer. This person can give direction and cohesion to the group. It is helpful if the group focuses its prayers for one subject area at a time, rather than constantly changing focus. Each person should wait before moving on to a different topic, allowing each one to pray their prayers over the current subject area (1 Cor. 14:40). God is creative, and has made us in His image, so we can expect creative ideas and prayers as we seek Him. The Holy Spirit will lead you in prayer (Rom. 8:26).

August 22, 2009

Day 1

Our attitudes

Unbelief, Belief and Love

Scriptures to meditate and proclaim in prayer: Mt. 19:26, Jeremiah 32:27, Romans 12:1-2

It is often said that Muslims are hard to reach with the Gospel. For religious, cultural and spiritual reasons this is often true. However it is not impossible. The Bible tells us that nothing is impossible for God (Mt. 19:26). Do I agree with God that nothing is too hard for Him?

Faith is important but do I also love Muslims? What is my most profound reaction when I meet them, when I see them on television? How would I react if a man in Islamic clothing came to my church? How would I react if a new believer from a Muslim background wanted to marry into my family? Would I be willing to give a thousand dollars so someone could proclaim the Gospel among Muslims? Would I be willing to sit and eat with a Muslim in a crowded restaurant? Have I been involved in criticizing them without knowing them? Am I fearful of Muslims? Is my main attitude toward them one of mistrust? Am I able to do as Jesus says, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself"? Is this my desire, is this my goal?

► *Be honest with God. Pray as He directs you. (Use the scriptures cited above.) If it seems appropriate, pray for yourself and / or other believers around the world who may also be struggling with their attitudes, ideas and actions toward Muslims.*



The word "Islam" simply means submission to God, and a Muslim is one who follows the laws and practices of Islam. Muslims say Islam has its origins with Adam. According to them Abraham, Moses, David, Jonah and Jesus all taught and practised versions of Islam.



A believer's testimony and some significant questions about Islam and Muslims

The author of the following paragraph loves Muslims very much.

“I want you to know that I have personally survived two attempts by Muslim extremist crowds to lynch me. Once in 1986 because I was a Westerner and once because of my witness concerning Jesus Christ in 1989. I have received more death threats from Muslim extremists than I can count. I have been arrested, I have had my home searched and my Bibles have been confiscated. The police have interrogated me

“I have received more death threats from Muslim extremists than I can count.”

about my faith and witness. I have close friends who have been tortured. I think I can honestly say that I have earned the right to say that I am not naïve about Muslim extremism. But I want to ask: What does our Christian faith say about the attitude we should have as believers toward Islam and Muslims in the world today?”

Joseph, the author of the previous paragraph, asks other questions: What image springs to the mind of most Christians when they think about Muslims? The Twin towers? Osama bin Laden? Are we called to defend “Christian civilisation” or are we willing to lay down our lives in love for Muslims and

share with them the Good News of Jesus? Are we interested in self preservation or self-giving for the Gospel? Joseph believes that the Christian faith is primarily costly discipleship to Jesus Christ the Crucified. What do we believe? (See 1 Peter 3:15, Mark 8:34-35, Mt. 5:39 and 44).*

In the words of Floyd McClung there is a life-giving way to think and act concerning Islam and Muslims:

Radical Prayer – Pray with love and faith for Muslims to experience the mercy and grace of God.

Persevering Faith – Believe God to raise up committed, trained believers to take God’s message to Muslims and establish new groups of believers.

Extreme Sacrifice – The militancy of Muslims is best responded to by sacrificial love and a willingness to suffer and even die to make Jesus known.

Rather than responding in fear or disdain toward Muslims, McClung believes we should respond in the opposite spirit, in an attitude of Christ-like love. The “30 Days” movement shares this belief.

* Taken from the book “From Seed to Fruit,” pages 318-323. Published by William Carey Library, Pasadena, CA 2008.

MUSLIMS BELIEVE IN ...

One God, the Creator of all things

Angels and evil spirits

Prophets (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jonah, Jesus, Mohammed)

Mohammed, the last and greatest prophet

Holy books (the Torah, Zabur (Psalms), Injil (Gospel) and the Qur'an)

The Day of Judgement for all people

The Bible has been corrupted and modified by Jews and Christians.



Jesus says,

“You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”

Are my ideas and attitudes toward Muslims shaped by this commandment?

Muslim attitudes

Concerning the West and Christians in General

Many Muslims would have preferred to maintain a traditional lifestyle and to have limited their contact with non-Muslims to a minimum. However, for decades the world has continued to move toward greater interaction. Globalisation, the Internet, television, improved travel and communications bring Muslims and non-Muslims into constant contact. Some Muslims are delighted; others cringe.

For many Muslims Western society is Christian. Many of them do not make any differentiation between Western culture and Christianity. For Muslims, alcohol consumption, pornography, popular films, music, a liberal lifestyle and a lack of public religious practise are sure signs of the failure of Western countries. For them, the word “Christian” signifies materialism, a lack of spirituality and moral failure. Because of this numerous Muslims reject trends and attitudes that come from Western society, which they consider perverted. Islamic fundamentalists and terrorists have termed Western societies as Satanic. Muslims often believe that Christians are deceived and that they have an obligation to lead them to the truth of Islam.

On the other hand, many Muslims do not practise their own religion regularly. They find themselves torn between Islam and Western values and culture. The relationships between Muslims and Westerners are sometimes tense. Each have attitudes of suspicion, rejection and feelings of injustice toward the other. This can lead to hatred. In addition, simple non-moral differences between cultures can be a major source of prejudice, problems and misunderstandings.



Unfortunately, believers are not always good examples of God's character. In the words of one person who knows Muslims well, “Many Muslims have never met a believer who is actually living a real Christian life. This is certainly one of the greatest hindrances to effectively making the Messiah known among Muslims.”

Prayer Requests:

► *Pray that Muslims will be able to meet sincere practising believers and discern how they are different from cultural Christians.*

Scriptures to meditate on and proclaim in prayer: Leviticus 19:2, Mt 5:48, Rom 12:2

Jesus, the Son of God

Muslims almost always object to using the title “Son of God” concerning Jesus. The main reason is that many Muslims believe the phrase “Son of God” implies that God the Father had sexual relations with Mary and that Jesus (the Son) was born of this union. Some understand the Christian Trinity as consisting of the Father, Mary and Jesus. Christians actually do not believe this and like Muslims we find the idea repulsive and blasphemous. Unfortunately this is often the Muslim understanding of the phrase “Son of God.”

In Christianity, the title, “Son of God” indicates the majesty, honour and glory of Jesus (2 Peter 1:16-18). The title is tied not only to His divinity but also to His kingship. Nathan’s prophecy in 2 Samuel 7:12-14, one of the early prophecies of the Messianic King, speaks of David’s descendant as God’s Son. “When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you,

who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me.” It is certain that the early believers understood Jesus’ role as “Son of God” as being related to kingship: “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel” (John 1:49, 11:27, 20:31 and Rom 1:1-5). The messianic king’s appointment was described as begetting a son (Psalm 2:7, Acts 13:33, Heb 1:5). You can find a longer article on this subject on our web site. We also explore Jesus’ divinity further in the article “Jesus, the Messiah and the Word of God” later in this booklet.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *May God bring real breakthroughs in this area of Muslim misunderstanding. This subject is one of the most significant hindrances for Muslims coming to Christ. Believers need wisdom in addressing this issue.*
- ▶ *Pray for Muslims to have a biblical understanding of the phrase “Son of God.” Meditate on and proclaim in prayer the texts cited above.*



PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLES

Sudan

The Gubayna people

The 1.3 million Gubayna are a largely nomadic people living in Central Sudan. Not much is known about this people other than that they are Sudanese Arabs who trace their heritage to the Bedouin who wandered the deserts of Saudi Arabia centuries ago.

The Gubayna embrace rigid codes of honour, loyalty and hospitality, the strong role of men in society, the value of children, subservience of women and the five pillars of Islam. To confess Jesus as Lord is not well accepted and has serious consequences. Pray that fear of persecution from Islamic relatives will not hinder the Gubayna as they consider the Gospel. No one is actively reaching this people group.

Secret believers ... *The real cost of following Jesus*

For a former Muslim, becoming a believer in the Messiah is more than simply changing religion. In leaving Islam, the person has left his identity. The consequences of this choice are terrible: new believers are often rejected by other Muslims, and their family, and sometimes they are forced to divorce and they lose their children. They can lose their inheritance, their employment, their lodging, sometimes they receive death threats and some are actually killed. In many cases they are obliged to live their new faith in secret because of the fear of persecution. They become real “secret believers.” Many are isolated, and it is very difficult for them to persevere in their faith. The new believer needs a new identity.

In Islamic countries new believers in the Messiah from a Muslim background can experience very dramatic situations. According to Islamic law, the sharia, it is forbidden for

a Muslim to change religion. In Saudi Arabia, Iran, the Maldiv Islands, Afghanistan and Yemen people can be subject to the death penalty if it is discovered that they have changed religion. However, death threats do not always come from governments. In Afghanistan and generally in the countries of the former Soviet Union, the family of a new believer will sometimes try to save their honour by shedding blood (it is considered shameful for the family for someone to leave Islam and become a member of another faith). In Somalia Islamic fundamentalists will hunt down new believers to put them to death. For more information see the web site: <http://www.secretbelievers.org/>

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *Pray for the secret believers who are even now facing the possibility of death. May God protect them.*
- ▶ *Pray for their families that they also may be attracted to the light of Christ. Pray that there would be a change of mentality so that Muslims can accept believers in the Messiah as honourable members of society.*
- ▶ *Pray that the situation of the secret believers would be better known and that believers all over the world could give them help.*



Testimony of a secret believer: Even after coming to faith in Jesus in our passport it is always written that we are Muslims because it is legally forbidden to modify it. One is supposed to present it everywhere. I am very happy that my husband did not lose his job when his employer learned that he had become a follower of Jesus.



Abdullah and Amina

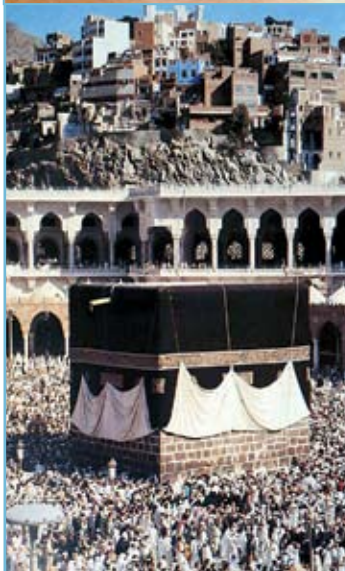
Mohammed's parents

أمنة عبدالله

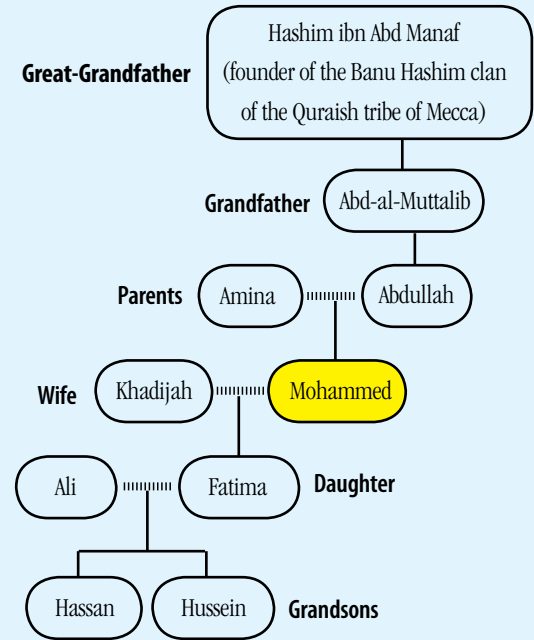
Relatively little is known of the lives of Mohammed's parents. The father of Mohammed, Abdullah, lived from AD 545-570. His full name was Abd Allah ibn Abd al Muttalib. Allah is the word for "God" in Arabic. Abd Allah means "servant or slave of God." Abdullah died six months before Mohammed was born. It is not known when Amina, the mother of Mohammed, was born. Her name means "trustworthy or faithful." It is said that Amina, took Mohammed to visit his maternal uncles of the an-Najjar tribe, in Medina. On her way back to Mecca, she died when Mohammed was just six years old, leaving him an orphan. Mohammed went to live with his grandfather and then with an uncle.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ Pray for the millions of living Abdullahs and Aminas around the world, that they would discover the the Messiah.
- ▶ Pray that the Abdullahs could discover real freedom as servants of God's anointed King, Jesus.
- ▶ Pray for each woman named Amina, that she might discover that Jesus is the most trustworthy one.



Mohammed's Family Tree



Notes: Muslims generally believe that Mohammed is a descendant of Abraham and Ishmael. His grandfather was the guardian of the Kaaba in Mecca (photos). Mohammed had more than ten wives and concubines after Khadijah's death (without any other natural offspring). Three other "daughters" lived in Khadijah's household with Mohammed. Apparently they were from a previous marriage of Khadijah or possibly they were her sister's children. It is impossible to be certain.

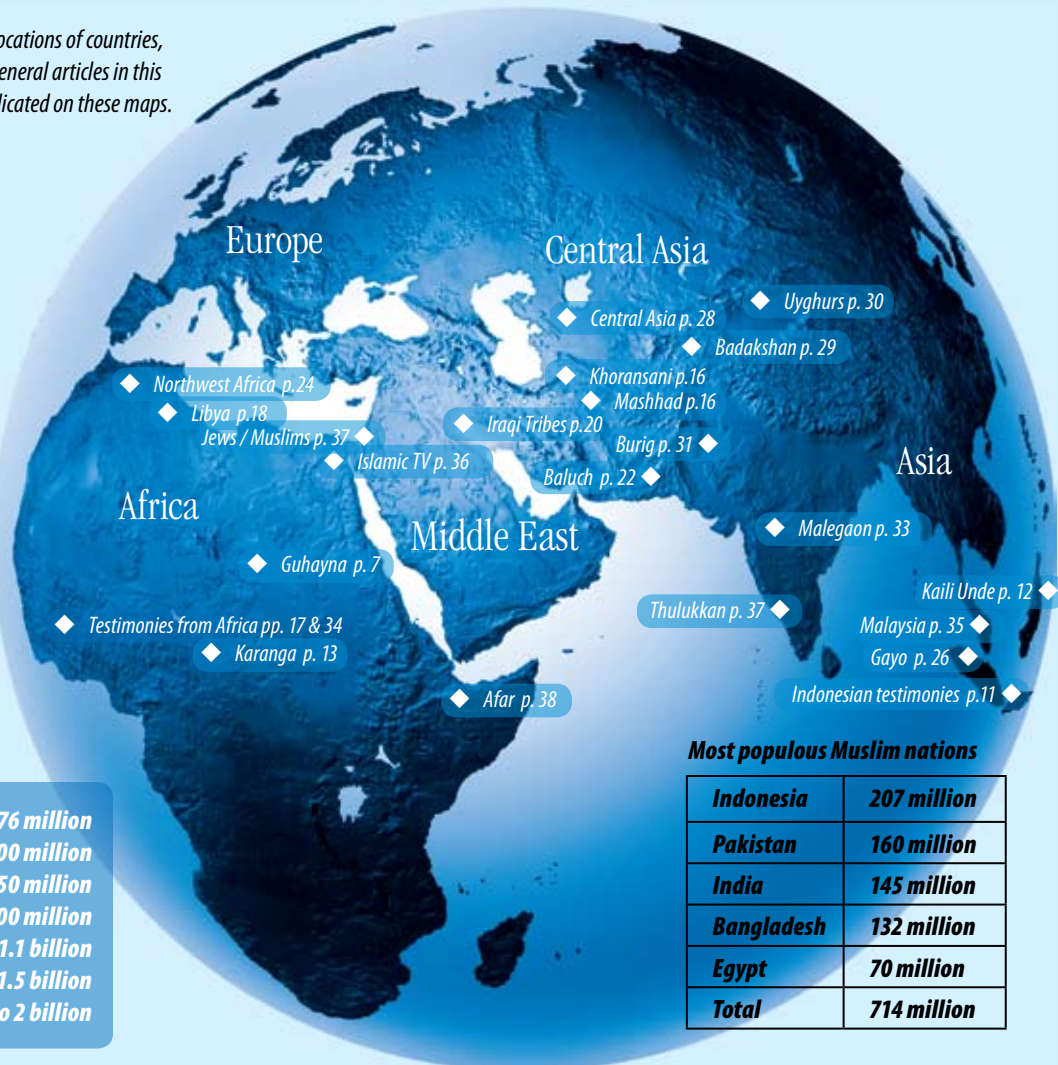
Several geographic locations of countries, peoples, cities and general articles in this prayer booklet are indicated on these maps.

◆ Somalis in Minnesota p. 22

North America

South America

Buddhists: 376 million
Chinese Traditional Religions: 400 million
Animists / African Tribal Religions / Other: 450 million
Hindus: 900 million
Secular / Atheist: 1.1 billion
Muslims of all types: 1.45 - 1.5 billion
Christians of all denominations worldwide: 1.6 to 2 billion



Europe

Central Asia

Asia

Africa

Middle East

◆ Central Asia p. 28

◆ Uyghurs p. 30

◆ Badakshan p. 29

◆ Northwest Africa p. 24

◆ Khoransani p. 16

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◆ Jews / Muslims p. 37

◆ Iraqi Tribes p. 20

◆ Islamic TV p. 36

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◆ Kaili Unde p. 12

◆ Testimonies from Africa pp. 17 & 34

◆ Malaysia p. 35

◆ Karanga p. 13

◆ Gayo p. 26

◆ Afar p. 38

◆ Indonesian testimonies p. 11

Most populous Muslim nations

Indonesia	207 million
Pakistan	160 million
India	145 million
Bangladesh	132 million
Egypt	70 million
Total	714 million

Testimonies from Indonesia

Jesus in the workplace: Ahmed

Jesus promised, “Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them” (Mt 18:20). Many Muslim seekers and believers in Jesus are indeed experiencing His presence as they gather in homes in His name. We learned recently from our friend and worker “Jasmine” that Jesus is present also in the workplace, in fields and farmers’ markets! “Ahmad” is a believer in Jesus who was baptised a few months ago (in the cement water holding tub of a cramped bathroom!). Sometimes he works on construction projects or in the fields when the land owner needs an extra hired hand. In recent months, Ahmad has had free time to visit rice fields near his home. There among the sheaves of rice he has befriended two day-workers, inviting them to share personal stories and to pray with him. He reads aloud to them from photocopied texts of Scripture and offers explanation. Early in his acquaintance with these two men, Ahmad explained why he prays in the name of Jesus the Messiah. Now the three meet in Jesus’ name regularly. Jesus is with Ahmad as he visits those fields, for Jesus himself promised His disciples, “I am with you always.”



Jesus in the workplace: Aisha

Aisha (pseudonym) is another believer in Jesus who rises early to sell fish at the local market. Prayers that resulted in blessing on her business were what first attracted her to follow Jesus. Now she has faithfully participated in a home-based community of Jesus-followers for over three years. Gatherings are simple: Scriptures are read, stories shared and prayers offered for one another. Earlier this year Aisha decided that she could start a similar gathering ... at the market! So most late

afternoons when the market has quieted, she gathers with up to six others. “We are God’s creation,” she says. “Sharing with each other and praying together will help us stay close to God.” In recent weeks this small group has enjoyed readings from Genesis and from the life of Jesus. Jesus is with Aisha as she loves others in His name. Boldly proclaiming authority and blessing through Jesus the Messiah, Aisha and Ahmad are seeing the Kingdom of God established in places where people naturally gather. Thank you, Lord!

Editor’s note:

In this prayer booklet there are a number of testimonies from new believers who have suffered rejection and even significant persecution from their families and government authorities. Like people everywhere, Muslims are generally hospitable and decent people. They do not particularly like violence or being harsh. Muslims can be motivated by a sincere desire to turn their loved ones back to

what they perceive as being the right path: Islam. In order to do this they will often bring significant pressures to bear on people who have left or who are seeking to leave the Islamic religion, even threatening them with death. In publishing these stories we are not wanting to criticise or judge the heart motives of Muslims. We simply want to tell how God has worked in the lives of many. May God help us all to walk in His ways.



Healing needed

It is clear in the Gospels that Jesus healed many people. Some of these healings are so spectacular that whole towns were in awe of God. Other healings are less obvious, and Jesus Himself commanded certain people not to speak of their healing publicly. May God raise up multitudes of believers in the Muslim world to be used by God in healing. It is not so much that spectacular healings or big name ministries are needed; Praying for the sick and expecting healing should be fairly normal for believers.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *Meditate on these texts and proclaim them in prayer: Matthew 10:1 and 8; Luke 9:2; 10:9*
- ▶ *Thank God for the many healings which have been reported from the Muslim world. This has been a positive witness for the Gospel. Pray for an abundance of faith (James 5:14-15).*
- ▶ *Health workers are needed especially in Africa and Asia.*



The Kaili Unde

A small, but not forgotten people

THE DATES FOR RAMADAN

This prayer guide is designed to be used during the Islamic month of Ramadan. The dates for Ramadan are established according to the Islamic lunar calendar. In 2009, Ramadan will be from about August 22 through September 20th. This will vary from country to country. The fasting period normally begins and ends with the sighting of the crescent moon. For more information consult the web site: www.moonsighting.com. Because of the changing nature of the Islamic year the 2009 booklet is actually our 18th edition. There have been 18 Islamic lunar years since the beginning of "30 Days" in March 1993. This is the year 1430 of the Islamic lunar calendar. (Note: The moon is not an object of worship in Islam. No Muslim has ever remotely suggested worshipping the moon.)



The 22,000 Kaili Unde live on the west coast in the province of Central Sulawesi in Indonesia. Most Kaili Unde are dedicated Muslims. They are convinced that they will eventually be judged according to their way of life. However, their religious life is mixed with ancient animistic beliefs too. Many of them regularly seek help from the local Dukun (shaman or magic priest) to be cured of illness or evil spirits. When a new house is built, the Kaili Unde always give gifts to both the good and evil spirits. The bigger the house, the bigger the gift. Only a few Kaili Unde have come to the Messiah. Unfortunately, there is no Bible or Christian material in their language.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *Pray for an openness and a willingness to obey the Gospel among the Kaili Unde (Romans 1:5 and 16:26).*
- ▶ *Pray they can hear and see the Indonesian Christian radio and TV and thus find the way to Christ.*
- ▶ *Pray the power of darkness and enslavement to spirits be broken and their eyes opened, so that the Kaili Unde can be freed (Acts 10:38 and 26:18).*



PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLES

Chad

The Karanga people

The Karanga are a people group related to the larger Bantu people. In Chad, they number around 117,000. They speak their own language and live in a small area outside the city of Abeche in South Central Chad. A major source of income for the Karanga is the farming of crops, ranging from groundnuts and sesame to grains and wheat. Much of their planting is based on the amount of rainfall, so drought is always a serious threat to their livelihood. In recent years, the people here have also seen some damage to their crops from grain-eating birds who steal much of their harvest.

▶ *Little is known about the Karanga. Prayer is needed to see them come to a knowledge of the One True God made manifest in Christ.*

Arabs in the Bible

God really loves Arabs

Muslims are found in literally hundreds of different ethnic groups around the world. Possibly three quarters of the world's Muslims are not from an Arabic background; however, Mohammed's Arab lifestyle and cultural background have profoundly influenced Islam. Knowing that Islam has such deep roots in Arabia it would be good for all Christians to understand that God really loves Arabs. The Bible is a major source of Arab genealogies. We know that there are at least three types of Middle-Eastern Arabs: the Joktanites, the Ishmaelites and the Keturahites.

The Descendants of Joktan

Many Arabs see themselves as descendants of Joktan (Gen 10:25). The Arabs call him "Kahtan." One of the very famous tribes descending from Joktan was Sheba whose descendants founded the kingdom of the Sabaeans in Yemen and Africa. The Arabs call the famous queen of Sheba by the name "Bilquis." Her visit to Jerusalem during king Solomon's reign is an example of how God's people had an influence on Arabia even in Old Testament times. Solomon writes one of the so called "Messianic Psalms" (Ps. 72) partly with Sheba in mind (see verses 10 and 15). Jesus speaks very positively concerning the Queen of Sheba (Mt. 12:42). It would ap-



pear that at least some of the Semitic tribes worshipped the God of Shem even if they did not know him fully.

The Descendants of Ishmael

God made promises to Abraham concerning Ishmael that he would bless him exceedingly (Gen. 17:18-27). God's covenant to bless all the nations did not come through Ishmael but rather through Isaac, however, God did not forget Ishmael. His descendants are included in God's promise to bless all the nations (all ethnic groups around the world) through the seed of Abraham (See Gen. 12:1-3; 18:18; 22:18; 24:4; and 28:14). This promised blessing was eventually fulfilled in Jesus.

It is remarkable that Ishmael's name is a revelation concerning God's person and character. His name means "God hears". God clearly heard the distress of Hagar when she called out for help in the desert (Gen. 16:1-16). It was God who designated the name. The name Ishmael is an everlasting testimony of God's concern for the weak, the afflicted and those who are unjustly treated.

The descendants of Ishmael seem to have settled predominantly in northern Arabia. One of Ishmael's twelve sons named Nabajoth (Nebaioth) fathered (See over)



the tribe which eventually became the head of the Nabatean kingdom. The kingdom's famous capital, Petra, is in present day Jordan. Muslims believe that Mohammed was descended from Nabajoth.

The Descendants of Abraham through Keturah

After Sarah's death Abraham took another wife (or concubine) named Keturah (Gen 25:1-3). Abraham had six other sons through Keturah after the birth of Isaac (Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah). All of Keturah's sons eventually became the heads of Arab tribes. Later Moses married Zipporah the daughter of Jethro the priest of Midian, (Ex 2:16-22). Jethro recognized the true God and even gave Moses good advice which apparently pleased the Lord (Exodus 18). Certainly the Midianites had some revelation of God through their father Abraham. The Midianites also attacked Israel during the time of Gideon.

The Arabs were involved in gross idolatry for many centuries. In a very similar way the Jews were also involved in idolatry and God gave them scriptures and prophets to bring them back to repentance. Mohammed (AD 570 -

632) eventually sought to turn the Arabs from their idolatry to worship the God of Abraham, Moses and Jesus but he did not have a full revelation of God. His distorted understanding led his people into error and this has resulted in present day Islam.

Hope of Salvation for Arabs

Millions of Arabs around the world already identify themselves with the Messiah. Many are in the ancient churches of the Middle East in Lebanon, Egypt and Iraq. Isaiah the prophet speaks of a time when the glory of the Lord will be manifested among the Arabs (Isaiah 60:1-7).

We also find encouragement to believe God for the salvation of a multitude of Arabs from the story of Pentecost. On the day of Pentecost some of those who were filled with the Spirit spoke of the mighty deeds of God in Arabic (see Acts 2:11). The praises of God were proclaimed in Arabic before they were ever proclaimed in English, French, German or Spanish! Arabs can also be blessed with Abraham through Christ.

Recommended reading: "Understanding the Arab World" by Louis Bahjat Hamada

THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

The Islamic religion is lived out according to five main "pillars" which are obligatory religious practices for all adult Muslims:

1. Reciting the Creed (shahada) - "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet".
2. Prayer (salat) - Five times each day.
3. Almsgiving (zakat) - Both obligatory and voluntary giving to the poor.
4. Fasting (saum) - Especially during the "holy" month of Ramadan.
5. Pilgrimage (hajj) - At least once in a lifetime to Mecca, known as the Hajj.



Mohammed

Mohammed is revered by all Muslims as the last and greatest prophet. In Islam, Mohammed is considered the “ideal man.” Mohammed is in no way considered divine, nor is he worshipped, but he is the model for all Muslims concerning how they should conduct themselves. No images of Mohammed are permitted (in order to prevent idolatry). His name actually means “The Praised One.”

The Early life of Mohammed: Mohammed was born in AD 570 in Mecca, a city in Saudi Arabia. He was a member of the Hashim clan of the powerful Quraysh tribe. During much of Mohammed’s lifetime pagan idol worship abounded in Arabia. An estimated 360 gods and goddesses were adored by the Arabs in Mecca, which was a major centre of idolatry in the region. Muslim historians think that even as a boy Mohammed detested idol worship and lived a morally pure life.

Initial Revelations: According to Muslims, at the age of 40, in AD 610 that Mohammed supposedly began to receive

محمد

revelations and instruction that he believed were from the archangel Gabriel (Gibrail in Arabic). These “revelations” form the basis of the Qur’an. Mohammed proclaimed that his revelations were the final and superior message from the One Supreme God, although at the beginning Mohammed even doubted that he was a prophet. He banned the worship of idols and established civil and religious order in Medina and eventually Mecca. Mohammed died of natural causes in AD 632 in Medina, Saudi Arabia.

Relations with Jews and Christians: During his life, Mohammed met many people who were at least nominal Christians. He also learned many religious ideas and customs from Jewish clans that were living in the region of Mecca and Medina. Mohammed’s role as prophet was not accepted by the Jews, leading to serious conflict. Jewish and Christian ideas, practices and history are very present in the Qur’an, although they are often distorted.



A guide for Muslims

Mohammed’s non-Qur’anic declarations, his personal habits and actions serve as a guide for all Muslims. The eyewitness accounts and other stories about his life are called the “hadiths.” The hadiths help Muslims discern what is good and right. Jesus is the ideal human being for Christians.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *There are millions of Muslims named Mohammed around the world. The name Mohammed is spelled in different ways in various places and cultures: Mohammad, Mohamed, Muhammed, Muhammad, Mahommed, Mehmed, Mehmet, Mahomet, Magomed and even Maxamed. In prayer, cite these names before God.*
- ▶ *Pray that the Mohammeds of this world would come to know that there is another one who is honoured in heaven and earth and who has a name above all names. May millions of Mohammeds come to faith in the Messiah (See Acts 4:12, Phil. 2:10).*

Mashhad in Iran

The Gospel is largely unknown

In AD 818 Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (Ali Reza) the seventh descendant of the Islamic prophet Mohamed was poisoned and buried in the small town which later became the city of Mashhad in North-eastern Iran. Ali Reza was known for his piety and he is now revered by Iranian Shi'a Muslims. He was the eighth Imam (head spiritual leader) of Shi'a Islam. Some considered him leader of all Muslims. His life and position made his tomb a sacred place for pilgrims. Over ten million people (mostly Iranians) visit his tomb each year.

Mashhad has grown significantly during recent years. Large malls and super markets as well as department stores, parks and other attractions have popped up in the city. Agricultural and industrial activity has boomed during the past decades in suburban areas. Mashhad has become the second largest city in Iran with a population of about 2.5 million people.

No one really knows how many people in Mashhad believe in Jesus as their saving king. All of them are under the threat of government persecution. One of Iran's leading Protestant pastors from



Mashhad was executed by hanging in December 1990 after a sharia court (an Islamic Court) condemned him. Even now many other believers from Mashhad have suffered for their faith. The vast majority of people in the city have very little understanding of the Gospel. Happily, the number of Iranian believers continues to grow even during persecution.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *(Scriptures to meditate on and to proclaim in prayer: Acts 7:55-60, Luke 23:34, Luke 11:4).*
- ▶ *Pray for the millions of people in this city who do not know the living God. Even if they have heard much about the God of Abraham through Islamic traditions and the Qur'an, most of them still know very little of the true God by personal experience. They are far from receiving forgiveness and new life through the Messiah.*

The Khorasani Turks

No one to proclaim the Gospel to them

More than 830,000 Khorasani Turks live in the northern part of the Khorasan province (northwest of Mashhad). Khorasan is an important agricultural area and most Khorasani Turks are farmers. They use both traditional and modern irrigation methods to produce wheat, barley, rice, cotton, sugar beets, potatoes, alfalfa, melons, and caraway. Sheep, goats, and cows provide Khorasani Turk families with milk, butter, oil, and meat. They are skillful craftsmen of jewellery, dolls, and glassware. They also weave beautiful rugs, cloth, and carpets known for their exquisite designs. The Khorasani Turks are 100 per cent Muslim, and their society is organized around traditional Muslim rules. At the present time, there are no known Khorasani Turk believers. Living in a very remote corner of the world, they are currently without Gospel resources in their own language, and there is no specific effort to implant believing congregations among them.

Prayer Requests :

- ▶ *Pray that God will open doors for Christian businessmen and others to share Christ with the Khorasani Turks.*
- ▶ *Ask God to raise up qualified linguists to translate the Bible into the Khorasani language.*

Testimonies from Africa

Timo, in Darfur

You wouldn't ever guess that he is someone called by God to reach his own people. He looks like any other young Sudanese... eating like all the others, moving around on transport like all the others, even wearing the traditional Muslim 'jalabiyya' like most Muslims in Darfur. But Timo is a light in the darkness. He brings Living Water to people in a dry and weary land. He is reaching out to those in this war-torn area.

The refugee camps spread for miles around the capital city of Darfur. Most days, Timo wakes early and prepares something to eat with his house-mate Abdo. He pulls the long white 'jalabiyya' over his head and place the small white 'tagiyya' on his head. He walks to the bus station with many others, waits in a long time for the right bus, and then pays a few precious coins for his ride to the edge of town. The bus unloads at the guarded gate of the refugee camp. People wander in and out, many of them being stopped for questioning or to be searched. If Timo were white, he would have a hard time clearing security. If he announced that he was bringing the Gospel message inside the camp walls, he would most certainly not be allowed. But Timo blends right in... and no one can see the Bibles he is carrying underneath the loose outer garment.

He has come to disciple the believers in the camp. He makes this journey as often as he can to meet together with new believers who would have no other way to learn the word of God. Because of this humble, obedient Sudanese servant named Timo... light is being spread amongst the lost in Darfur.



Jouma

I was a practising Muslim when I believed in Jesus the Messiah in June 1999. At that time I was also married but my wife left me because of the persecution which followed my turning to the Messiah. My larger family also encouraged my wife to leave me, disowned me and confiscated my possessions.

My pastor also tried to bring my wife back into my life but in vain. I remained faithful to the Lord despite all these events and their threats. Some even tried to keep me from worship meetings which I could only attend after walking seven kilometres from my village. Finally I had to leave my family for three months in order to be strengthened and encouraged in my faith. I eventually became a pastor myself.

Laouali from Nigeria

I was Muslim and I went to a Qur'anic school in Kano, Nigeria for three years. I even studied the history of Jesus through some references in the Qur'an. When I arrived back home from my studies I started to have relationships with some practising Christians. My father and my brothers became suspicious of me and wanted to send me back to the leader of the Qur'anic school. But when I refused to go the school leader came to me. My family promised me money for business and even a marriage if I would break off all relations with believers in Jesus but I did not listen to them. Having seen the 'Jesus' film I thought that I might even be able to deceive the Christians as a type of "secret agent" for Islam but I really did meet the Messiah myself. My family pushed me out of my home and happily some believers took me in for a whole year until I went to a Bible School. Now I am a pastor.

In Islam Jesus is considered to be a messenger of God, a prophet, who was sent to guide the Israelites. His message was given with a new scripture, the Injil (Gospel). The Qur'an affirms that Jesus was born to the virgin Mary (Maryam) by the decree of God. Jesus had the ability to perform miracles by God's command. Like other prophets in Islam, Jesus is considered to have been a good Muslim (that is, someone who was submitted to God). Jesus preached to His people to live in submission to God's will. For Muslims Jesus was actually preaching an earlier form of Islam.

In recent years many Muslims have cited the book "The Gospel of Barnabas" (available on the web) in order to show that Jesus was a good Muslim. Jesus is portrayed in the book as a prophet who prays, speaks and acts exactly like traditional Muslims.

The book seems to have been written in Europe sometime during the 14th–16th centuries. It includes geographical and historical inaccuracies as well as errors about Christian and Islamic beliefs. In the Gospel of Barnabas Mohammed is called the Messiah which means "anointed one" (Christ) while in normal Islamic belief Jesus is understood as being the Messiah. In several places the Qur'an itself proclaims that Jesus is the Messiah (see our article for day 22). In the Gospel of Barnabas Jesus is called the Christ (chapter 6). The author did not realize

that The word Christ is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word Messiah. This is a significant error.

***Here are quotes from chapters 96 and 97:** Jesus answered: "As God lives, in whose presence my soul stands, I am not the Messiah whom all the tribes of the earth expect, even as God promised to our father Abraham, saying: 'In your seed will I bless all the tribes of the earth.' But when God shall take me away from the world, Satan will raise again ... making the impious believe that I am God and son of God, whence my words and my doctrine shall be contaminated ... God will send his messenger who shall come from the south with power, and shall destroy the idols with the idolaters ... The name of the Messiah is admirable ... Mohammed is his blessed name."*

See "Gospel of Barnabas" at www.answering-islam.org

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ Pray that believers will accurately be able to show that Jesus was always submitted to the Father but He was more than simply a good prophet.
- ▶ May God give Muslims insights into the errors of the Gospel of Barnabas.
- ▶ Meditate on these texts in prayer: Mt 5:43-48, Heb 1:5-8.

Today is the 40th anniversary of the Libyan Revolution which brought Colonel Muammar Qadhafi to power in Libya. Forty years ago very few people in Libya knew the Lord and this is still true today. Native Libyans who believe in Jesus probably number less than fifty people out of a population of 6.2 million. Pray for labourers who will sow, water and harvest. For more information write: pray4ly@gmail.com



“In remembrance of Me”

How Christ is honoured by His followers



Friday night. Jasmine has just arrived from her workplace in the city. Gracious, sincere village neighbours greet Jasmine warmly at the home of her daughter and son-in-law. They take their places in a circle on the tika, a floor mat of woven reeds. Someone reaches to the top shelf of a closet and takes down a stack of photocopied, large-font Scripture portions. Jasmine readies her reading glasses and settles herself in a cross-legged position on the tika...

This regular gathering is an example of communities of faith in Jesus the Messiah that are springing up throughout Indonesia. These gatherings may look different from what we see in our own cultural settings, but Jesus is being made known; He is being honoured!

... Someone prays an opening prayer for protection from demonic interference. Sharing proceeds around the circle as each person tells about the past week. The conversation is friendly and open. Then one of the leaders in the group begins a spontaneous prayer of praise, while someone else recites prayers from the Psalms. The selected Scripture reading for the night is distributed to those who can read. The first person to read opens with the main text of Exodus 34:6, followed by a traditional recited confessional statement in Arabic, “In the name of God, the Most Merciful,

the Most Compassionate.” People take turns reading out loud, verse by verse, around the circle. The text is read a second and sometimes even a third time, so that it will be taken to heart. Some simple questions are asked for review and discussion.

“This is the blood of the Messiah”

Afterwards everyone in the circle prays for the others and for their nation. These prayers are different from ritual prayers in Arabic - Jasmine says emphatically - for they are offered in the name of THE MESSIAH, THEIR SAVIOUR. After the prayers for one another, a time of relaxed fellowship begins with drinking tea and eating food from local crops.

Someone pours a common traditional drink, saying, “This is the blood of the Messiah,” then says, “We do this to remember Him and be refreshed. Christ gives us life!” Bread (not a traditional staple but now available in the area) is also broken in remembrance of Christ. After enjoying the fellowship until late night, someone closes in prayer, and the families go home. They meet together daily as extended households until the larger community gatherings again... in remembrance of Him.

September 2, 2009

Day 12



Prayer Requests:

Around the world Muslims who have encountered the Messiah have to find culturally appropriate ways to worship. Some have adopted worship styles and attitudes from other cultures while adapting it to their needs. Others have developed unique cultural expressions of their faith. The use of the Qur'an stand (above) for the Bible is a simple example of cultural adaptation.

► *Pray for former Muslims in your city, region, and country, that the beauty of local cultural expressions may be manifest in worship (songs, preaching and teaching styles and new ways of living which bring worship into the heart of daily experience).*

Pray for the Iraqi tribes

A large percentage of Iraqi Arabs trace their ancestry back to one of several tribal confederations. Each of these groups is divided into tribes, clans, houses and extended families. There are possibly 20-30 confederations with over 100,000 people and possibly over 1,000 tribal organisations in the country. Tribalism is central to Iraqi cultural identity. "Iraqi culture builds to a very large extent on tribal traditions. From a cultural point of view, you cannot understand Iraq without understanding the importance of tribalism."* Tribes are grouped into federations (qabila), the clan (fukhdh), the house (beit) and the extended family (khams). A khams consists of all male-born children who share the same great-great grandfather (five generations of men in a single family). The Bible tells us that people from every tribe and tongue will one day be before the throne of God (Rev. 5:9). *<http://www.cfr.org/publication/7681/#12>



Several of the main tribal confederations:

the Muntafiq

the Zubayd

the Dulaym

the 'Ubayd

the Khaz'al

the Bani Lam

the Al Bu Muhammed

the Rabi'a

the Ka'b

the Shammar

the Anaza

the Bani Tamim

the Zafir

The Bani Malik

The Khaza'il

The Bani Ka'b

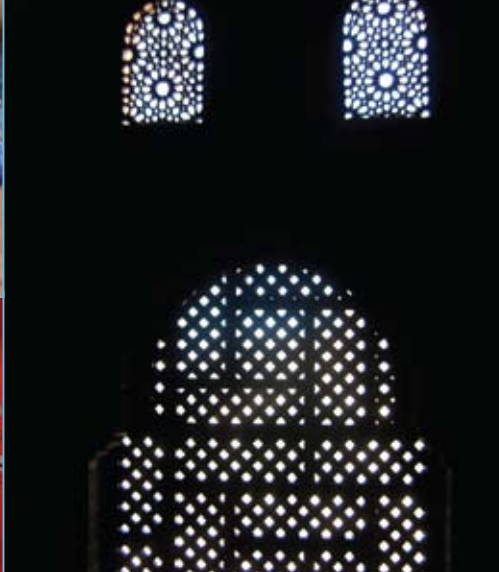
The Jubour

The Azza



Prayer topics:

- ▶ *The pain and suffering of the Iraqi people is very great. Pray for healing from the pain and a positive rebirth of Iraqi society after years of bloodshed, privations and hopelessness. See the database of the following site: www.iraqbodycount.org/*
- ▶ *Pray for the heads of tribes, clans, houses and enlarged families. God wants whole confederations, tribes and clans to turn to His salvation. Pray that many would discover new life in Christ. True lasting change and hope will only be found in the Messiah. The tribal leaders should take their notions of service, leadership and humility from Jesus. Use the list on the right in your prayers.*
- ▶ *A very high percentage of Iraqi believers have had to flee the country. Iraq has become a very dangerous country for believers.*



THE GOSPEL AND CULTURE

While the religious differences between Christians and Muslims are significant, sometimes cultural differences can be even greater sources of misunderstanding and mistrust. Different perspectives can also be opportunities to learn from each other. Cultural differences may inhibit or enhance our ability to proclaim Christ, as well as a Muslim's ability to receive our message. Below is a list some basic differences between Western culture and many African and Oriental Islamic cultures. (These characteristics are generalisations. There may be many exceptions in various nations and regions):

Western societies:

Individualism, independence and initiative are encouraged

Time oriented (exact times, for example: one arrives on time)

Future oriented (seeing opportunities and foreseeing problems)

Performance oriented (ability and accomplishments are important)

Freedom to show weakness

Egalitarian relationships / Direct communication

Analytical thinking / concept oriented

African and Oriental Islamic societies:

Community / group oriented

Event oriented (general times, example: arrival when an event happens)

Present oriented (enjoy the present, take action when crises develop)

Status oriented (class, age, family and reputation are important)

Fear of showing weakness or admitting failures (shame cultures)

Indirect communication (seeking to not offend or to dishonour)

Holistic thinking / experience / circumstance oriented

Simple questions

One very real difference between accepted Western and Islamic cultural norms can be found in simple conversation. In many Islamic societies a man is not permitted to inquire about the another man's wife in direct conversation. One can ask about how things are "at home" instead of asking the question directly: "How is your wife?" It could sometimes be deemed incorrect, impolite and even possibly a bit suspicious for a man to ask directly about another man's wife even if the two men are friends.



Somalis in the USA

Dreams of peace

Since 1991, hundreds of thousands of Somalis have died in their own brutal civil war. Millions have fled their homes seeking refuge in neighbouring countries and around the world. Tens of thousands now live in cities like Rome, Stockholm, London and Seattle, as well as in smaller communities such as a town of 3,000 in rural America with about 300 Somalis. Some live in large public housing complexes while others know life in sprawling suburbs.

Almost all Somalis in America are refugees from their own civil war. All face complex issues regarding their future and their commitment to Islam. They tend to settle in cities where they have been welcomed. Often they live in tight knit communities that emphasise adherence to Islam and are not generally open to other beliefs. However, they are still known for warm hospital-

ity and deep friendship. Many first generation immigrant Somalis (age 35 and older) dream of returning to a restored, peaceful Somalia. Second and third generation immigrant Somalis (age 34 and younger) face a tremendous identity struggle.

Minnesota is home to between 30,000 and 70,000 Somalis. The vast majority work hard at learning English and adapting while trying to earn enough money to support themselves, as well as their families back in Somalia. Since December 2007, six Somali young men have been murdered by other Somalis as a result of tensions in the community. This violence expresses the tremendous pain and challenges that come from living in a new culture. Christians in the region are increasingly aware of their need to love and serve their Somali neighbours.

Prayer Requests:

► *Pray that God would give true “shalom” peace to Somalia and its people around the world. Pray that God would open the eyes of Somalis in the States to see the surpassing value of the Kingdom of God (Mt 13:44-46).*

PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLES Pakistan *The Western Baluch people*

The 1.2 million Western Baluch of Pakistan are part of a larger Baluch community of more than 8 million people whose homeland straddles the borders of Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan.

The Baluch have overcome the obstacles of living in an extremely harsh, arid climate. They make their living as farmers (their chief crop is wheat) and as semi-nomadic shepherds (raising sheep, cattle and goats). Basically self sufficient, they rely on their own skills to build homes and develop the tools necessary for daily life.

Prior to the coming of Islam, the Baluch were probably followers of Zoroaster, but today they are Sunni Muslims. Their societies are organized into clans and tribes ruled by male elders and ultimately chiefs.

Pray for the heads of clans and families to come to Jesus. Ask for teams/workers doing relief and development.

Pray for other Baluch believers to share their faith with these Western Baluch.

Pray for the Scriptures to soon be available in Western Baluchi.



The Cross

Most Muslims do not believe that Jesus died on the cross

They said boasting, “We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah”; but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them for surely they killed him not. No, Allah raised him up unto Himself; and Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise. (Qur’an, Chapter “The Women” 4:157-158)

There are a variety of Muslim opinions concerning the last days of Jesus and His crucifixion and resurrection. Early Islamic scholarship appears to be largely silent about the subject. Indeed the vast Hadith collections (traditions about Mohammed) of the Islamic scholars Burkhari and Muslim say nothing about the crucifixion.

Most Muslims believe that death by crucifixion was not a worthy death for a good prophet like Jesus. Based on the Qur’anic passage cited above, the majority of Muslims in our day say that Jesus never went to the cross. It is commonly thought that He was taken up into heaven without dying and that someone else died on the cross in His place. There are several variations on this theory, but many Muslims say that Judas, the disciple, was actually crucified instead of



The cross of love

Jesus. Supposedly he was made to look like Jesus and was crucified as a punishment from God because of his betrayal. Other Muslims believe that Jesus was crucified but He survived and died later or that He survived, then was elevated to heaven and did not die at all. (See our web site for more information).

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *Believers in Jesus need to explain Christ’s death and resurrection simply and with much care. Muslims need to understand why the Messiah needed to die and how His resurrection brings us new life.*
- ▶ *Pray especially that Jesus would be increasingly revealed to Muslims as the victorious one who has overcome our sin and guilt, bondage to evil spirits and the horrors of death to bring us salvation. Pray for Muslims in your region, country and elsewhere according to Luke 24:19-26 and Acts 3:13-16.*

MUSLIM IDEAS ABOUT JESUS

Jesus was conceived miraculously by God in the womb of Mary.

Jesus is only a prophet, he is not divine.

Jesus was actually a good Muslim and he taught an earlier form of Islam to the Jewish people.

Jesus did not die on the cross. He went directly to heaven.

Jesus will come again one day, he will marry, he will have children. He will correct the errors which Christians have said about him. He will die and be judged like all men at the Last Judgment.



Northwest Africa



Out of the 78 million people in the three nations of Northwest Africa (Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco), possibly only 50,000 are native believers in the Messiah.

Algeria: population 33.8 million

According to some estimates there are possibly 25,000-50,000 Algerian believers of all denominations (Catholic, Protestant, Pentecostal and other). Some believe that the numbers are greater and there are various degrees of commitment to Christ which are manifest among them. Many Algerians have discovered Jesus through visions, dreams and supernatural events. Many more have discovered the Messiah in recent years through meeting other Algerian believers as well as through radio, satellite TV and films. Significant numbers of people have come to faith. As a result in 2006 a law was passed opening the door to official persecution of Algerian believers. Several have been arrested, detained and tried for various offenses. While the situation is not as grave as in Iran or Saudi Arabia, Algerian believers

are under increased supervision and have experienced the beginnings of significant governmental persecution. They have been courageous and generally continue to affirm their faith.

Proselytising is a criminal offense. Any individual trying to convert a Muslim either through education, health, social, culture or financial means can be sentenced up to five years in jail with a maximum fine of \$7,000. *Pray along the lines of Acts 4:29-31. See more details at <http://www.persecution.org>*

Tunisia: population 10.5 million

Tunisia has the appearance of being a Muslim country, however, the number of committed Muslims is limited. The vast majority of Tunisians are pursuing their dreams of having a better lifestyle. Tunisians need to reflect more on the meaning and the brevity of life. Tunisian believers number less than 1,000. *Pray using Mt 6:24-34.*

Morocco: population 33.8 million

A very small number of Moroccan believers exist (possibly only a few thousand). Their numbers are slowly increasing, but the knowledge of the Gospel in Morocco is very limited. Believers have suffered significant threats and mistreatment by relatives and some government officials. *Pray along the lines of Isaiah 40:9-11; 52:7. Pray for king Mohammed VI and the royal family. Hassan, the Crown Prince, is six years old.*



Women in difficult situations

Married to a Muslim in Canada

See: 1 Peter 3:1-2

Everyday I wake up next to the man that I married. He is a Muslim and I am a follower of Jesus. When we decided to get married, neither of us was practising our faith, so it was an easy decision. In fact, our faiths looked quite similar in many ways and he had convinced me that they were indeed very similar. Even though I knew I had married a Muslim, his decision to start practising (just one year after getting married) came as a huge surprise to me. It totally upset the balance that we had living out our faiths in a very

nominal way. Along with anger at him for changing, I also felt a growing resentment towards his religion that was apparently stealing my loving, caring husband and replacing him with someone who was so focused on rules, regulations and merciless rituals. Our romantic relationship definitely suffered.

My husband's rule-keeping deeply affects my life. For example, during Ramadan it is especially challenging because he will basically not touch me all day. This is hard for me because I see marriage as an open, living, breathing expression of love and commitment to each other. Sometimes, physical expression is needed to say what words cannot.



Malika in Central Asia

Malika's husband who was involved in criminal activities was killed. Malika remained alone with her four children for some time. Then she met several believers and came to Christ herself. Since her entire family were Muslims, Malika and her children were forced out of their home when her family learned about her choice for Jesus. She lost everything she had. She no longer had a place to live nor a means to earn money. Two of her children were sick, one who was 12 even needed regular heart medicine. Malika kept her faith and her new family helped her work things out.



Asha in the USA

I asked a Somali friend to tell me about the market in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. She began to tell me of the sounds and sights she remembers from her happy days in Somalia, and of the people she would have run into at the market. I looked her in the eyes and said, "Asha, I'd love to visit your homeland with you someday." She took my hand in hers and her eyes welled up with tears, she wasn't crying because I had said something sentimental. She was full of grief as she told me, "My friend, the Somalia of my memories no longer exists." (See the article on Day 14).

Fatimah

فاطمة

Mohammed's daughter

Born in Mecca in AD 605, died in Medina in AD 632. Fatimah (Fatima) was the name of the favourite daughter of Mohammed. Her name means “she who weans.” She was considered one of four perfect women by Mohammed. The others were Mohammed’s own first wife, Khadijah, the mother of Fatimah; Mary, the mother of Jesus; and Asiya, the wife of an ancient Pharaoh.

Fatimah is known as a loving and devoted daughter, mother and wife, as well as a sincere Muslim. At the age of 19 Fatimah married Ali. Their life together was simple, frugal and not without hardship and deprivation. Because of his piety, apparently Ali was not greatly interested in material wealth. Fatimah’s acts of kindness toward the poor and destitute earned her praise from many. She gave birth to two sons and two daughters. In AD 632 after the death of her father she also passed away either by an accident or by natural causes.

Fatimah was apparently a good influence, but her name is also associated with an occult object that has fairly negative influence in the Muslim world. This so-called “Hand of Fatimah” is used by Muslims in amulets, charms and jewellery to ward off evil spiritual influences.

- ▶ *Pray according to Acts 19:18-20 concerning occult influences.*
- ▶ *Pray for the millions of Muslim women named Fatimah to find new life in Jesus.*



PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLES Indonesia *The Gayo people*

The Gayo people (pop. 300,000) live in the remote central highlands of the Aceh Province on the island of Sumatra. Their homeland reaches heights of over 2,000 metres, extending over hundreds of kilometres. The Gayo speak in two dialects but do not have a written language. They pass down folk tales and oral stories in the form of poetry. Their main source of income is farming, coffee, fishing and forest products. Their embroidery has colourful gold designs. They need medical workers to improve health conditions. Predominantly Muslim, most Gayo also worship and make offerings to spirits, saints, and ancestors. There are no known Gayo believers and no one is specifically taking the Gospel to them. See Acts 26:18.

Deliver them from evil

Muslims worldwide are often afraid of evil coming from the spirit world. This fear is a source of profound unspoken anxiety for many. Islam has a complex and multifaceted set of beliefs about the invisible forces at work around us. These beliefs also vary greatly from one region and one people to another. Muslims not only believe in the existence of angels but also in Jinn (Djinn), who also populate this world. Jinn are very similar to humans: they have their own social organisation and activities, yet they can also change their appearance and become visible or invisible at will. Most Muslim theologians believe that Shaitan (Satan, also called Iblis) belongs to the Jinn. These beings were supposedly created just before the creation of mankind. They do both good and evil. The term “Jinn” is related to the English word “genie” known through Arabian folk stories.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *Jesus is the true Lord of the world. All authority has been given to Him. Pray that Muslims would experience Jesus' saving ability to deliver them from the powers of darkness. May believers be more able to help Muslims in this realm. Pray for Muslims you know and others using the following texts: Mt 8:16, 10:1 and Acts 5:16, 8:17.*

علي

Ali

*Mohammed's cousin
and adopted son****Born in about AD 600 – died January AD 661***

Ali was the cousin, adopted son and son-in-law of Mohammed. He married Mohammed's daughter Fatimah in AD 624. His name means "exalted, noble." He reigned over the Muslim empire as Caliph from AD 656 to 661. Shi'a (Shiite) Muslims regard Ali as the first true infallible Imam and consider he and his descendants (Hassan and Hussein) as the rightful successors to Mohammed. Disagreement over succession eventually split Islam into the Sunni and Shi'a branches. Ali encountered opposition and civil war during his reign. At about age 60 Ali suffered an assassination attempt while praying in the mosque of Kufa in Iraq - he died soon afterwards. The main mosque of Najaf, Iraq is supposedly his final burial place and has become a major Shi'a shrine dedicated to his memory.

Definition: *The Caliph is the title for the leader of the Islamic Ummah, the worldwide Islamic community or nation which should ideally be ruled by the religious law, the Shari'ah. The word is derived from the Arabic word which means "successor" or "representative." The early Caliphs in particular were seen as Mohammed's successors.*

*The Shrine of Hussein at Karbala, Iraq*

حسن

Hassan

Born in March AD 625 died March AD 670

Hassan (Hasan) was the grandson of Mohammed and the son of Ali and Mohammed's daughter Fatima. His name means "handsome one." Hassan's succession to the Caliphate was contested and eventually he conceded in order to avoid bloodshed. He retired to a quiet life in Medina till he died, poisoned by his wife, many years later. He is regarded by all Muslims as a martyr.

*The Shrine of Ali at Najaf, Iraq***Prayer Requests:**

- ▶ *There are literally millions of Muslim men around the world who are named Ali, Hassan and Hussein. Pray for them to encounter the living Messiah (Acts 7:56 and 9:1-5).*
- ▶ *Millions of Iranians and Iraqis commemorate the memory of Hussein's death each year. Sometimes as many as 7-8 million pilgrims visit Karbala during that time. Many Shi'a men will cut and flail themselves, shedding blood in the memory of Hussein. A popular Shi'a saying tells us, "a single tear shed for Hussein washes away a hundred sins." Pray that Shi'as of Iraq and Iran could see the value of the blood of Jesus (1 Peter 1:18-19).*

حسين

Hussein

Born January AD 626 at Medina in Saudi Arabia, died October AD 680 at Karbala in Iraq. Hussein was the second grandson of Mohammed through Fatima. His name means little Hassan, "the little handsome one." Hussein, son of Ali, is revered as a martyr, having died in a struggle for the Caliphate. The anniversary of his martyrdom is called "Ashura," which is a day of mourning and religious observance especially for Shi'a Muslims. Hussein's death was significant because it launched the Shi'a movement which is so prominent today in Iraq and Iran; they believe that Hussein should have been Caliph.

Central Asia update

Persecution on the rise

The vast area called Central Asia is home for more than 100 million people. A large majority of Central Asians are Muslims though there are significant numbers of Russians, Ukrainians and Chinese. Many Muslims in the region do not practice Islam with zeal but the number of committed Muslims seems to be growing in the whole region. People are returning to their historic cultural and religious roots after many decades of atheistic communist domination.

In the 1990s hundreds of believers made their way to Central Asia in order to live there and proclaim the Gospel in the region. Thousands of people came to the Lord in the former Soviet Republics at that time. However, in recent years most governments in the region have started to persecute believers. The majority of foreign believers who sought to proclaim Christ have been expelled from one country after another.

In 2008 and 2009 Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan voted laws which significantly restrain religious liberty. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan had already become very oppressive for individuals and whole communities of believers. The body of Christ in these countries will probably continue to suffer because proclaiming the Good News, changing religion, spiritual education for children, holding meetings and creating new communities have been made illegal or have been severely restricted. One believer who knows the region well says that “the young assemblies of believers which have developed in the last 20 years will suffer but they have deep roots. They will survive!” We still need to pray. Probably 90%+ of people in the region have never heard the Good News of the Kingdom.



Central Asia

Uzbekistan 27.35 million
Turkmenistan 5.2 million
Kyrgyzstan 5.36 million
Tajikistan 7.2 million
Kazakhstan 15.35 million
Afghanistan 32.75 million
Xinjiang Province, China 19.6 million
(See the Uyghur article on page 30)

Look up the following names of Central Asian cities on the web. You might be surprised by what you see: Urumqi, Tashkent, Dushabe, Bishkek, Ashgabat, Astana

Languages spoken in Central Asia:

Turkic languages:

Kazakh · Kyrgyz · Tatar · Turkmen · Uyghur · Uzbek

Iranian languages:

Baluchi · Bukhori · Dari · Kurdish · Pamiri · Pashto · Persian · Tajik

Other major languages:

Chinese · Mongolian · Russian · Tibetan

Prayer Points:

- ▶ *Lord, you have said, “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea.” (Hab 2:14) Lord, may you be proclaimed to all in the region (Mt 24:14).*
- ▶ *Lord, strengthen your people (2 Cor 12:9).*
- ▶ *Many are in prison or will be in prison for their faith in the coming years (Heb 13:3; Acts 16:23-25).*
- ▶ *You might pray for all the language groups and cities represented in the lists on this page. May God guide you.*

Badakshan

In the remote Pamir mountains

The soaring Pamir mountains dominate the landscape of greater Badakshan, which spills over North Eastern Afghanistan, Eastern Tajikistan and Northern Pakistan. The peoples who live in these isolated mountain communities generally feel distinct from the majority of the populations in their nations. Badakshanis speak Eastern Persian mountain languages. They are often fairer skinned than others in their countries, with Caucasian features. However, the most distinctive aspect of Badakshani identity is their religion.

Badakshan is the one part of the world where the Muslim Ismaili sect makes up the majority of the population. The Agha Khan, their spiritual leader, has become like a god to them. To quote a Badakshani: "The Agha Khan is like a living Koran for us. He shows us the way and how to live. Our religion is not stuck in history. We have a modern Imam to show us how to live in the 21st Century. We see the light of Mohammed on him." Most other Muslims consider the Ismailis to be heretics.

There are few believers in Badakshan and no known believing communities. However, many Badakshanis are coming to faith elsewhere. There are believers in Dushanbe - the capital of Tajikistan - and in Moscow, where many Tajik Badakshanis become migrant labourers. Pray for believers living in other places, that they might wisely proclaim Jesus in their communities.



Prayer Requests:

- ▶ Meditate on *Jeremiah 16:19-21* and use it in prayer.
- ▶ Pray for those who worship the Agha Khan as a god, and that they may come to a realisation that he is just a man.
- ▶ Spiritual blindness and the spirit of deception seem to be two major strongholds in Badakshan. Pray for these barriers to the Gospel to be removed.

PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLES China

The Uyghur people

The following information came from Western China as we were preparing the “30 Days” for 2009. We have asked for prayer for the Uyghurs in the past. It seems urgent to pray now. Some Uyghurs live within 400 kilometers of Badakshan (see article on page 29).

In Northwest China there are only 100-200 believers among the Uyghur people (pronounced ‘ooy-goor’) who number about 11 million in population. The Uyghurs are largely preoccupied with a) making a living and b) the strife between their Muslim / Uyghur cultural heritage and the controlling Chinese Communist system. This area was a significant point on the Silk Road from Europe and the Middle East to China and now it seems to be one of the last regions to be reached by the Body of Christ. In the past fifteen years, thousands of Muslims all along the Silk Road in Central Asia have become believers in Jesus (along with millions of Han Chinese), however, there is still no resilient Uyghur church. There are many stories of unfair treatment, as well as house fellowships being broken up as soon as they get started. Three key men are now in jail; the little community of believers is floundering. Fear keeps them from moving beyond private belief to a sharing, deep life in Christ.

► *May God guide as you pray for the Uyghurs.*



*Uyghurs from China's
Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region*



Jesus, the Word of God and the Messiah

The following texts are from the Qur'an:

The angels said: “Mary! surely Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the world. Mary! remain obedient to your Lord and humble yourself, and bow down with those who bow in worship. The angels said: Mary, surely Allah gives you good news of a Word from Him, whose name is the ‘Messiah, Isa son of Mary,’ held in honour in this world and the hereafter and of those who are near to Allah. (Al Imran 3:42-43 and 45).

The Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, is but the apostle of God and His word, which He cast into Mary and a spirit from Him (The Women, 4:169).

In these two passages Jesus Christ is clearly referred to as the Word of God and as a Word from God (in Arabic: Kalimat Allah). One would think that the Qur'an is actually echoing the text of John 1:1 in these passages: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” However Islamic scholars have mounted extensive arguments to say that the Qur'anic title given to Jesus and the biblical idea that Jesus is divine are not at all in agreement. While some Mus-

lims know that Jesus is referred to as the Word of God in the Qur'an, the vast majority do not know what it means and even fewer realize that the same title is given to Jesus in the Bible. Some believers have used the “Word of God” texts in the Qur'an as a starting point for proclaiming the Good News of the Messiah to Muslims.

In addition, the Qur'an speaks of Jesus as the Messiah (see 3:45 and 4:169 above, as well as 4.157 and 4.171). Here again the vast majority of Muslims have no idea what it means for Jesus to be the Messiah, because, in the words of one author, “the meaning of the title is almost completely glossed over in Islam.” The word “Messiah” is the same as the word Christ in Greek. It refers to the one who is anointed as king. The term carries with it not just the concept of a good king but also one who is a saviour, a deliverer, who will correct all wrongs and reign in righteousness.

► *Pray that Muslims all over the world would be inclined to ask questions and try to understand Jesus' titles: “the Word of God and the Messiah.” Meditate on the following texts and use them in prayer: John 1:1-4, 14 and Mt 16:13-17.*



PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLES

Pakistan

The Burig people

Language: Purik, Trade Language: Urdu,

Population: 474,000

The Burig and the Baltistani Bhotia (or Balti) are two ethnic groups of Tibetan origin who live in the Karakoram Mountains of northern Pakistan. The only two known Tibetan groups that have converted to Islam, their Tibetan roots can still be seen in their clothing, food, folklore, and language. The Burig depend on glacial runoff to irrigate their crops, and where water is sufficient, they grow barley, wheat, millet, and a wide variety of fruits. Because many Burig live in the northern section of the disputed Kashmir territories of India and Pakistan, their region was closed to foreign travellers for 14 years. Recently, there has been increasing tension between their pre-Islamic traditions and Islam, leaving many torn between the two major elements of their ethnic identity.

► *Pray that as the Burig reconnect with their Tibetan heritage that God would open their eyes clearly revealing Himself to them. He desires for them to be before his throne (Revelation 7:9-12).*

God's message by radio

Following-up radio listeners in the Middle East



Testimony: I am involved in Christian radio broadcasting to many Muslim countries. Sometimes the audience has the possibility to SMS, phone or write to ask for literature. However, mail packages containing Bibles are often stopped by the religious security authorities in various countries. Recently I phoned two people in remote areas of my country where I was not legally allowed to travel. I invited these two listeners to come to me instead so we wouldn't be watched.

The meeting with the first person was very short. He was glad to have found me. He took a Bible, however, he was also very nervous and said goodbye almost immediately. We agreed that he will contact me again if he needs additional literature or has questions.

The second person came under the protection of darkness after a four hour bike ride. He spoke enthusiastically about the radio broadcasts. He said that he wanted to study the Christian faith deeply (and honestly it seemed to me), so I gave him not only a Bible and study materials, but also the Jesus Film and other Gospel films. We agreed to stay in touch. A few months

after our initial meeting, I met again with the second man. He asked for more books written by believers and videos. I was able to give him these things plus testimonies of Muslims who had encountered the Messiah. Unfortunately we had no time for a personal conversation. Is he a believer or still a seeker? I was unable to find out . . . this time.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *May the Holy Spirit guide during telephone conversations and meetings with interested radio listeners. Pray for divine rendezvous (Acts 8:26-31).*
- ▶ *Pray that interested listeners, despite the watchful eyes of authorities, can receive Bibles, DVDs and other helpful material.*
- ▶ *Pray for the family members of seekers who could be opposed to listening to Gospel radio and receiving Bible materials.*

In Memory of Sergi

Sergi became a follower of Jesus while in prison near Dushanbe, Tajikistan in 2002. Upon release from prison he raised up a small group of disciples in an area of Tajikistan with a population of 200,000 but no known believers. The local secret police threatened him and asked him to leave. Local Muslim leaders also threatened him and demanded that he leave. He stayed.

One evening in 2005 while worshiping with his wife and two other believers, armed men arrived and shot him through the window. While the other three lay on the floor and escaped unharmed, Sergi's body was shot many times. Sergi died worshiping Jesus. He had been a follower of Jesus for three years.

The young men responsible for Sergi's death were arrested and are now in prison where other believers proclaim and demonstrate the love of Jesus to them. Pray with the brothers in prison that these who were willing to kill for their religion will become followers of Jesus and learn to forgive and love their enemies. (Photo: Mountains of Tajikistan)



Muslims in Malegaon, India

Malegaon is a city of about a million people located in the hot, north eastern part of Maharashtra, India (220 kilometres north-east of Mumbai). Known for its textile industry, the city is divided both physically and socially by a river. On the western side of the river reside a large number of Hindus as well as a small number of Christians. On the eastern side is a vast Muslim community (well over half of the city's population). From the top of an old fortress near the fruit and vegetable market the city's divide becomes clear. The skyline shows the minarets of almost 200 mosques on one side of the river and the cones of Buddhist and multiple Hindu temples on the other side.

In the Muslim district, the narrow streets are lined with shops where men, children, animals and vehicles circulate along with veiled women shopping for daily essentials. Tea shops are filled with men discussing their day over cups of chai (Indian tea). Several large Qur'anic schools educate boys aged of 6-25 in Islamic faith and practice. Mufti Ismail, one of Malegaon's Muslim leaders, is part of the influential council that governs Qur'anic schools throughout the country.

Most local Muslims belong to the "Ansari" people group. Many Ansaris are employed in the city's textile factories – dark, hot warehouses where raw cotton and polyester is processed, spun into thread, dyed and woven into cloth. Traditional Indian clothing is then produced from this cloth, sold and sent nationwide. Though Hindu-Muslim relationships are quite strained throughout India - in this city the communities are interdependent. Hindus from outside Malegaon provide the raw



material to Muslim loom owners. Other Hindu businessmen buy the woven cloths produced by these looms. Each community relies on the other for the success of their businesses.

The only known Christian presence in the city consists of a very small struggling Christian community. May God encourage and transform these believers to truly live out their faith and be a light across the whole city.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *Muslims in Malegaon hold firmly to the traditions, the teachings and counsel of their leaders. Even when tactfully presented with the Gospel in 2008, many Muslims would not even consider the claims of Jesus Christ nor would they read the New Testament (Injil). Pray for the salvation of their community leaders like Mufti Ismail.*
- ▶ *The average Muslim on the street in Malegaon remains in ignorance concerning some of the basic questions of belief in God. May God give them enlightenment.*
- ▶ *Some are seeking for more understanding. One Ansari truck driver was asked what to do about his shame and guilt, knowing he has sinned against God. He paused, bowed his head and then looked up saying in a sincere tone, "I do not know." In 2008 some Muslims did ask for tracts and Bibles. Pray that this openness could be directed toward personal contact with God.*

Note: *There are possibly 145 million Muslims in India. God loves them all. India has more Muslims than all the following countries combined: Yemen, Iraq, Jordan, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait and Egypt.*

They are turning to Jesus

Seeking answers, Khalid asked people who were well informed about the Qur'an to get more understanding. But as a good Muslim, his heart did not find any rest. One day Khalid paid a visit to one of his childhood friends. In his friend's home he found a book which he thought was a commentary on the Qur'an. However as he read the book his heart started to beat stronger and stronger because in the book he was finding the answers to many of his questions. That same night he had a dream in which he saw the words "I am the God that you are looking for, I am the truth". The following night he had the same dream. The next day Khalid's heart was very troubled so he went to see his friend and told him about the dreams. Then his friend explained that it was probably the God of the Bible who had revealed himself to him and he invited him to pray to that God.

Khalid was then secretly welcomed into an assembly of believers. This is not always the case. New believers from a Muslim background often have difficulties being accepted by local

assemblies. Some groups of believers fear that they will suffer persecution if they help a Muslim background believer. Having been rejected by their own family, these new believers need to find new "brothers and sisters." For more information see the web site:

<http://www.secretbelievers.org/>

Prayer requests:

- ▶ *Pray for the secret believers who ask for help from local churches and do not find it, that they will continue to hope in Christ.*
- ▶ *Pray for the leaders of believing communities in Muslim countries. They are subject to varied and serious pressures.*
- ▶ *Pray for local assemblies - that they would be willing to take the risk of helping new believers and that their communities could become real sources of refuge for those who are discovering new life in Christ.*



Testimony from West Africa

My name is Abdou. Like practically all people in my tribe in Togo I was raised as a Muslim. Having been given a basic understanding of the Qur'an, I was not very regular at normal prayer times at the mosque, however, I really loved God. Even at a very young age my lack of mosque attendance and my lack of rigor in keeping Islamic practices caused me to have problems with my father. However, at school I was a good student.

At age 19 I encountered my first real problems at school. My difficulties were apparently caused by hidden spiritual forces so as a good Muslim, I decided to seek help from God.

I even started reading some books about Jesus and I attended some Christian meetings with a friend in secret. When my father discovered this he forced me to leave home and relationships with my family deteriorated. My father disinherited me and told me not to come to his funeral. Happily some believers in the Messiah gave me help.

After several years of struggles and failure to receive my high school diploma, I finally succeeded and I was even able to enter university in 2007. Some believers have accepted me into their home. We live very simply and I continue to grow in my relationship with Jesus.

- ▶ *You should pray for Abdou and others like him in Togo.*

The Night of Power

Depending on their location on the earth, some Muslims will spend much of tonight or tomorrow night in prayer. This event commemorates Mohammed's first revelation of the Qur'an in a cave near Mecca in AD 610. Muslims call it the Night of Power. Many Muslims are more open to supernatural events at this moment during Ramadan. Some believe in increased angelic activity, others in miracles and visions. Many believe that their personal prayer requests are more likely to be answered at this time. Knowing this, it is a good moment for Christians to pray believing that God will act in the lives of seeking Muslims. Only God knows how important this could be for the salvation of many.

You might pray something like the following:

- ▶ *Lord, may Your compassion flow in our hearts for Muslims during this night. Lord, You are a father to the fatherless. You are near to those who are lowly and contrite in heart (Psalm 51:17, Is 57:15 and 66:2).*
- ▶ *Lord, may You break down all thoughts of self-righteousness through religious activity among Muslims who participate in the Night of Power. May You move them toward true humility before You (Dan 4:37).*
- ▶ *May all glory be Yours because of Your loving character and for all You have done. Lord, may You be acting during the Night of Power so that people may have a revelation of Jesus, the Messiah.*
- ▶ *Lord, remember those who are genuinely seeking Your help this night. May You give them the help they need in such a way that they will understand that it comes to them through the Messiah, Jesus (Ps 34:18, Zech 9:9).*

Malaysia

Malaysia remains a key part of the Muslim world in Southeast Asia. With a burgeoning population of 24 million, 60% of whom are Malay Muslims, the nation's influence is significant in the region. Dramatic political changes have impacted Malaysia, but of special significance is the growing focus on reaching the Malay with the love of Jesus. The Malays have been much neglected throughout the history of Christian outreach. But praise God, now there are more believers focused on reaching the Malay than ever before. Increasing numbers of national believers (Chinese, Indians, and tribal people) are seeking to proclaim their faith with respect to their Muslim neighbours and colleagues. Several pioneer communities of faith have been established among Malay Muslim-background-believers.

Prayer requests:

- ▶ *Pray for the emergence of spiritual leaders among the Malay to proclaim the Gospel, teach, and pastor their own people.*



▶ *Pray for God's working through the recently completed contextualized Malay language Scriptures, as Malays have opportunity to read them.*

▶ *Pray for the believers across Malaysia, to be salt and light and an instrument in God's hands for the unreached Malay.*

▶ *Pray for God's stirring (perhaps through dreams and visions) in the hearts of Malays. Pray that many other Malay-related unreached peoples across Southeast Asia will hunger to know God.*



Islam's new TV representatives



Islam is sometimes represented by fierce Islamic militants or religiously intolerant people. However, Muslims come from many social and cultural backgrounds and have varied opinions about many subjects. As we have indicated elsewhere in this prayer booklet, the vast majority of Muslims are basically decent people seeking to make a living and give hope for tomorrow to their children. While Islamic radicals often steal the headlines around the world, there are many voices for moderation, reasonable approaches to life, modernity and openness in the Arab Muslim World.

Outside the Middle East most people may not have heard of Amr Khaled, Mustafa Hosni, Moez Masoud, or Ahmad al-Shugairi. However these men have a significant following in the Arab world through Middle Eastern Television and the web. Amr Khaled's influence for moderate and practical Islam has been compared to the North American evangelical preacher Rick Warren. He was 13th in the list of Time magazine's 100 most influential people of the year in 2006. Amr Khaled has said, "Bin Laden is saying he is talking on behalf of Muslims, who asked him to talk on behalf of us? Nobody." Khaled even extended an olive branch to the Danes during the 2006 Islamic cartoon crisis. He has said, "During Ramadan, I love family gatherings over

food, over laughter ... Believe me, a family gathering with laughter is very important. Just like in the summer we admire the beauty of nature, in Ramadan we admire the beauty of the night ... One of the beautiful things in Ramadan is that my wife and I pray the nightly prayers together."

Moez Masoud has often spoken out for sincerity and really trying to understand people from other faiths. He has written: "I'm pretty much dedicating my life to a deeper and more profound understanding between human beings, the children of Adam. I actually named my son Adam just so that I could never be distracted from the goal."

God knows the hearts of all men. The values exhibited in their programming sometimes reflect the values of the kingdom. It is possible that Jesus would say to several of the people mentioned above: "You are not far from the kingdom of God" (Mark 12:34). To others he might say "One thing you lack ..." (Luke 18:22) It is also possible that these men are extremely far from the kingdom indeed, God knows.

Prayer Requests:

► *Pray that God will continue to use everything which is good and positive from these men to change Middle Eastern society for the better. May they and their listeners discover the Lord in a profound way, He is the giver of life (John 10:10).*

► *Believers in the Messiah in the Middle East have often been oppressed under Islam. Pray for an explosion of new spiritual life among believers across the entire Middle East which will enable them to be a channel of life for Muslims desiring sincerity, depth and real life with God.*

See the sites of the people mentioned above:

Amr Khaled : <http://www.amrkhaled.net>

Mustafa Hosni : mustafahosny.com

Ahmad al-Shugairi

(see his program "Khawater" on Youtube.com)

Moez Masoud : <http://www.moezmasoud.com/>

Loving Jews and Muslims ...

As the “30 Days” booklet for 2009 is being prepared, conflict in Gaza has broken out (January 2009). We do not know what the situation will be when you, our readers actually use the “30 Days” booklet in August and September 2009. But note, even through war and difficult circumstances, a number of Jews and Arabs have learned to respect and to love each other as disciples of Jesus. Here is a testimony from one Arab believer living in Israel / Palestine.

“As a young Palestinian refugee I fled to Nazareth with my family during a time of war. Later we found that our home in Haifa was occupied by Jews during my family’s absence. As a child I found it difficult to understand how God could love some people and put others in the street. As the years passed I became an enemy of the Jewish people. Later after having acknowledged Jesus as my Messiah, I met an old Jewish man who asked for forgiveness for the things he had done personally. His step of seeking forgiveness touched me and since that time my love for the Jewish people has not ceased to grow.” When this former refugee was asked “Is it possible for a Jordanian or a Palestinian to love Israeli soldiers?” he responded: “For followers of the Messiah the word ‘love’ has a different meaning than for those who do not know the

Lord. For us, the love of God comes through the cross of Christ.” He continued: “I have also visited Iraq. When I was there God filled my heart with love for the Iraqi Muslims. My heart was really grieved when I saw how the Iraqis and the Iranians had killed each other during the war from 1980-1988. I have also spoken of the profound love which God has given me for the Jewish people when Israeli soldiers were controlling my identity papers in Jerusalem.” He has found it possible to love Muslims and Jews.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *There are several initiatives by Messianic Jews and Arab believers for prayer and reconciliation. The transformation which God brings is the greatest hope for lasting change in the Middle East. Pray for further breakthroughs in reconciliation and deepening love and respect among Jews and Arabs (1 John 4:12 and 19).*
- ▶ *Pray that the hope of true reconciliation through Christ would be better known in Israel and Palestine becoming an example for both Jews and Muslims. Jesus is rightly presented as someone who brings personal peace. He is also very interested in bringing peace between peoples (Mt 5:9, Ephesians 2:14 and 2 Peter 3:13).*



PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLES India

The Thulukkan people

Recent political and economic reforms have sparked phenomenal growth in the Indian economy. However, in spite of its remarkable progress, India continues to suffer from high levels of poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, and environmental degradation.

More than 33 million people in southern India’s Kerala state speak Malayalam, one of the 22 languages recognized by the Indian Constitution. About 269,000 of them (just .023% of the total population of India) belong to a little-known people group called the Thulukkan. The primary religion of the Thulukkan people is Islam. Very little else is known about them. There are no known efforts to reach this people with the Gospel.

The Afar

Nomads in the Horn of Africa

An Afar song

If there is still any place

On which we have not already put our foot!

If there is still any place

On which we have not already put our herds!

The only place where we did not yet live is the sea.

We also do not want you oh grave!

The foreign land we do not want!

The foreign rivers will not water us.

Our herds expect no danger

And graze outdoors at night.

Our young men are there always there to protect them!

And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

(Revelation 7: 16-17)



Despite being known as a warrior people, the Afar are very hospitable, filled with humour and enjoy in their own way the beautiful side of life. However the challenges of daily life in the hot lowlands of the horn of Africa can be crushing. Heat and drought shape the life of these 1.5 million people, feared by their neighbours and maintaining a solitary existence. With their herds they trek across the hottest areas on earth: Africa's Danakil Desert which extends over southern Eritrea, northern Djibouti and parts of eastern Ethiopia. Most Afar are illiterate, they breed camels and live almost exclusively from camel's milk and corn bread. During drought periods in the early autumn the camel's milk is often only enough for the children – the parents live for weeks exclusively from tea extracted from coffee trees. Even in such meager times the Afar write poems and humorous and sometimes sarcastic songs about famine and the end. Visitors can be impressed with the tenacity and resilience of this people.

For centuries the Afar have had little chance to hear the Gospel. Recital of Qur'anic verses and fear of the spirits of the desert goes back generations for the Afar. But decades ago God already sent people from the Horn of Africa. Together with the few Afar believers, a radio work of high quality has been developed. The Gospel



is now heard! During the last three years many in the Ethiopian church have begun praying fervently for the Afar. Some Afar have come to faith and are being trained and baptized. They often experience harsh persecution, but they are ready to suffer. In 2008 believing Afar sisters compiled an expanded radio series for women. Thanks to the devotion and love from these sisters nomadic women have the possibility of new life in Christ.

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *Pray for the radio production team and their many listeners of this area.*
- ▶ *Pray that men and women will hear the new radio programme and open their hearts to the message of freedom.*
- ▶ *Pray that whole families will come to faith in the Messiah and establish new communities of believers.*

Helping Muslims discover

Jesus

Contrary to what is often thought, it is possible to help Muslims discover the living Messiah. Talking to Muslims about the Lord needs to take into account the context of Muslim culture and religion. In that sense our discussions with Muslims will be different from similar discussions with other people. The message is the same, the means of making it known are different.

General principles

1. Prayer: Pray for Muslim friends and acquaintances. We cannot emphasise enough our total dependence on the intervention of the Holy Spirit.

2. Have a specific goal: God wants to use us to make the Messiah known to Muslims through the Gospel. Our goal should be to make the message understandable and accessible to our Muslim friends.

3. Be open to personal and human contact: We must love Muslims sincerely, manifesting our love through kindness and respect in our relationship with them. Our goal should be to establish a genuine friendship and share our faith in that context. As with all true friendships we need to take time to understand,

appreciate and help our Muslim friends. We should want to learn from them and develop a real exchange in true enjoyable friendship.

4. Be patient: While we can speak freely of our faith from the beginning of our relationship with a Muslim, we should keep in mind that most Muslims will need to hear us many times before they even begin to consider believing in the Messiah. Do not be discouraged by objections. Remember that it is the kindness of God which leads us to repentance (Rom. 2:4).

5. Explain the Gospel in a very simple manner: Use words and terms which will be understandable to Muslims. Explain your understanding of the meaning of terms such as sin, prayer, God, Son of God and faith. These terms often convey another meaning for Muslims.

6. Give your friend a New Testament or a Bible: In particular encourage a regular reading of the books of Genesis and Exodus as well as the Gospels.

7. Emphasise God's perfect holiness: God calls for righteousness. Man is generally unrighteous and in slavery to sinful attitudes and spiritual forces. Neither education nor moral teaching can change this situation. Man needs forgiveness and a new birth.

8. Speak of God's interventions in our own lives:

Tell of His faithfulness, His love, His justice. Muslims do not understand God as one who gives and keeps promises. Your testimony of a real and active God fearing faith is very important.

9. Answer objections with kindness: Do not let yourself be carried away into passionate discussions. We are called to make friends for Jesus not to win arguments.

10. Do not be naïve if our Muslim friends express a belief in Jesus Christ and the Bible:

In one sense Muslims do believe in Jesus and the Bible; however, their faith is very different from what the Bible teaches us. They do not believe that it is possible to be in a real relationship with God as we believe. Jesus said that eternal life is to know God (John 17:3). It is not just knowing certain things about God, but to know Him personally.

Continued ...



Helping Muslims discover Jesus ...

What should we avoid?

1. Do not attack the person of Mohammed, but do not accept him as a prophet either. We are called to help people discover Jesus, not to criticise others.

2. Do not criticise the Qur'an.

3. Avoid politically-sensitive subjects like the Palestinian problem and praising Israel.

4. Do not insist on Jesus as being the Son of God: A Muslim will not understand or accept this affirmation without an appropriate explanation. Encourage your friend to read the Scriptures in order to understand.

5. Do not enter into discussions about pork and wine: We, as Christians, are sent to proclaim Jesus not to establish dietary laws. It is good to insist that drunkenness is wrong. Do not serve alcohol to Muslims.

Specific guidelines

1. Initially focus on areas of agreement: In your first contacts with Muslims and even later it is useful to be in agreement as much as possible with Muslims about our common beliefs. They believe that there is one God, the God of Abraham. In Arabic the word used for God is "Allah" (Christian Arabs also use this word for God). Muslims believe that God made the



world, that He knows all things, that He is all wise and very powerful. Muslims do not believe in the Trinity. They believe in angels and in prophets such as Abraham, Moses, David, Noah and Jesus. They believe in the last judgment. In a general sense we can agree on these points, without forgetting the differences. Affirming our common beliefs enables them to listen to us with greater understanding and openness.

2. Use stories: Tell stories about the life of Jesus and other men and women mentioned in the Bible. Most Muslims have never had an opportunity to read the Scriptures (many have never fully read their own book, the Qur'an). Learn to use parables, stories and examples from the Bible and daily life to share the message. In this way your Muslim friends will also retain your words better.

3. Use media tools: Keep an assortment of Gospels, the "Jesus" film, cassettes, CDs and DVDs available in various languages.

4. Seek them out: Do not be afraid to visit them in their homes and invite them to your own home. If you invite them for a meal buy your meat in a Muslim butcher shop or serve fish.

5. Argument: You have little chance of convincing Muslims by reasoned argument. Western logic does not carry the same weight with Muslims. Love your Muslim friends and avoid getting into discussions which push them to defend Islam (See James 3:14-17).



6. The Qur'an: You may read it, but do not necessarily use

this as the unique basis of witness. Muslims need to meet the Jesus who is revealed in the Bible. If you read the Qur'an or visit a mosque it is advisable to pray for God's protection and understanding (Eph 6:10-18).

7. Men witness to men and women to women:

Witness across gender lines is discouraged, even by correspondence. Muslim men have often tried to marry and develop romantic relationships with Christian women. Very often they believe that Christian women are sexually promiscuous and ungodly. Believing women should avoid conversation with Muslim men.

8. Prepare them for their first visit to church:

Prepare Muslim friends for their first visit to a Christian church or gathering. Explain to them briefly what will happen and what they should and should not do.

9. Opposition to Christianity: When speaking to Muslims they will probably raise objections that our faith in the Messiah is unacceptable for them. Believers need to know about these objections and be prepared to deal with them correctly. Some of these objections have been discussed elsewhere in the "30 Days" booklet. Many Muslims think that Western culture and Christianity are the same thing. This idea needs to be corrected with kindness.

10. Gentleness and kindness should dominate your witness. (See Phil 4:5; Titus 3:1-3; 1 Peter 3:15-17)

Inside Cover

It is good to view this document in a facing pages mode.

Otherwise in a single page mode.

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ISBN : 978-2-9531836-1-0

“30 Days International” maintains a positive attitude toward Muslims. Our prayer effort is not interested in denigrating or criticising Muslims or their beliefs and practice. Islam is not merely a religion or a philosophy. Islam concerns people. Jesus said, “Love your neighbour as yourself.” This prayer booklet is not designed to be used as literature for evangelism. It is produced to inform believers and encourage prayer.

30 Days International does not necessarily endorse or agree with all the arguments, ideas or attitudes presented by the web sites listed on this page. These sites contain at least some valuable material. They may have some negative and unhelpful content as well. It is possible that they are not the best sites available but the editors are simply familiar with them.

Web sites about Muslims and Islam:

Christian Sites:

<http://www.answering-islam.org>

(see the links on the 'Answering Islam' site to access a long list of sites)

<http://www.morethandreams.tv>

Muslim - Christian Dialogue:

<http://www.isaalmasih.net>

<http://www.kalimatullah.com>

Muslim Sites:

Islamic religion:

<http://www.islamic.org.uk>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam>

<http://www.answering-christianity.com/ac.htm>

<http://www.islamicity.com>

<http://www.al-islam.org>

<http://www.hajinformation.com> (Saudi Ministry of Hajj)

Other Sites:

<http://www.iraqprayer.org/> (Prayer for Iraq)

<http://www.cryoutnow.org> and www.pray-ap.info (Prayer: Middle East)

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/islam/islamsbook.html> (Islamic History)

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA> (Compendium of Muslim Texts)

<http://www.memritv.org> (News from the Middle East)

<http://www.harunyahya.com> (Islamic creationist)

<http://www.barnabasfund.org> (Persecuted believers in Muslim context)

30 Days Online: <http://www.30-days.net>

Please note: Several new resources are available on the “30 Days” site.