

Ramadan prayer focus: 11 August – 9 September 2010

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This call to prayer for Muslims originally came during a meeting of several Christian leaders in the Middle East in 1992. Several believers 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 which follows a lunar calendar. (In 2010 this is from 11 August through 9 September).

It was intended that these "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, and (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 emphasises God's love for Muslims. We encourage all believers to cultivate a spirit of humility, love, respect and service toward Muslims. For more information please visit: *The 30-Days Prayer Network*. Website: <http://www.30-days.net>

Day 1: Toward Christ like Relationships with Muslims

Pray for Christians, when they relate to Muslims to do it on the basis of the core convictions of Christian faith, not by hiding or diminishing them. Ask that they will unashamedly present Jesus, the Essence of the gospel (**1 Cor.2:2**) and that they do not confuse the good news with Christianity, patriotism, culture or our civilisation. Pray that their words and witness will be in line with Scripture, containing no overstatement, exaggeration or words taken out of context (**Matt.12:36, Ex.20:16, Matt.7:12, Matt.22:39**). Above all, ask that Christians will share their faith wisely, but not hesitate in making the best of every opportunity (**Col.4:5, James 3:17-18**). A Christian should treat others with respect, never attacking the other party (**1 Peter 3:15**).

HOW CAN I PRAY DURING RAMADAN?

Over the coming weeks, you may pray and fast in a variety of ways, as God leads you. 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 others to pray together. Jesus gave special promises of blessing for Christians who pray and agree as a group (**Matt.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 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.*

We would encourage you to find creative ways to involve as many people as possible in this prayer focus. 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 you in a special meal using the prayer topic for that day as theme. Do a bit of research on a particular Muslim culture, including food and dress, music, etc.

Guidelines: 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 on 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 (**Rom.8:26**).

Jesus says, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." Are my ideas and attitudes toward Muslims shaped by this commandment? (The 30-Days Prayer Network. Website: <http://www.30-days.net/>).

Day 2: Toward Christ like relationships with Muslims

Dialogue between Muslims and Christians provides us with opportunities to understand Muslims, build relationships, engage in peacemaking and share our faith. Ask that Christians will seek to share the gospel respectfully and boldly, without compromise – as Paul “reasoned with” people (**Acts 17:2, 17**). We have been entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation (**2 Cor.5:18-19**). *Pray for Christians ministering to Muslims, for breakthroughs in making disciples of these precious people. Pray that they will receive grace to demonstrate sacrificial love and to work toward peace. Ask for special opportunities to share Jesus' love with Muslims during the next 30 days.*

Day 3: Praying for the Muezzin

Each day across the entire Islamic world, the 'muezzin' call the men to prayer five times per day over a loudspeaker located on a minaret (tower) attached to the mosque: at dawn (fajr), noon (dhuhr), in the afternoon (asr), at sunset (maghrib) and nightfall (isha'a). On Fridays (like today) all male Muslims are supposed to attend the noontime prayers which are usually accompanied by a sermon. Sometimes recordings are used but most people prefer a live voice. In Western and non-Islamic countries muezzin often cannot make the call to prayer except on the radio or in the courtyards of local mosques because of laws restricting loud and intrusive sounds. *Their own honour and prestige are temptations, as with any public figures like pastors and politicians. Pray for the muezzin in your own country and around the world today to have a personal encounter with the living God, through Jesus Christ. Pray that in the midst of many 'voices' and messages, Muslims will hear the voice of God through the working of the Holy Spirit.*

Day 4: Pray for Syria

In Jesus' day the “news about him spread all over Syria” (**Matt.4:24**) and large crowds came to Him and followed Him. Some of the oldest churches in Christianity are found in Syria and are evidence of the extent of Jesus' impact in the region. Today more than 90% of the Syrian people are Muslim. But one predominately Muslim people group, the Kurds, is responding to the gospel. Several believe in Christ and are even meeting in their own Kurdish fellowships. *Please pray that the gospel would again be heard all over Syria and that Muslims may come to faith and start meeting and encouraging each other. Praise the Lord that Muslim Kurds are turning to Jesus. Pray for their spiritual growth and that God would raise up local evangelists from Christian and Muslim backgrounds to reach out to them.*

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT MUSLIMS

Initial Revelations: According to Muslims, it was at the age of 40, in AD 610, that Muhammad supposedly began to receive revelations and instruction that he believed were from the archangel Gabriel (Gibrail in Arabic). These 'revelations' form the basis of the Qur'an. Muhammad proclaimed that his revelations were the final and superior message from the One Supreme God, although at the beginning even Muhammad doubted that he was a prophet.

He banned the worship of idols and established civil and religious order in Medina and eventually Mecca. Muhammad died of natural causes in AD 632 in Medina, Saudi Arabia.

Day 5: Saudi Arabians in the oil business

Saudi Arabia has the largest share of oil of any nation as well as the very best technology in the oil industry. Saudis are largely Sunni Muslims; from their perspective they are all Muslims by birth. The Qur'an and the traditions concerning Muhammad are the foundations of Saudi law. Shi'ite Muslims are persecuted, but they are permitted to practise their religion in their villages and towns. Proselytising (attempt to convert someone to another religion) is not punishable by death, but by imprisonment and deportation (for some the loss of a job is as bad as death). Conversion is forbidden by the Qur'an and the penalty is death. Many of them have never had any opportunity to hear a presentation of the gospel in a way which would incline them to obey the risen Lord Jesus. *Pray for the thousands of Saudis involved in the oil industry, that they could come "to know the glory of God in the face of Jesus the Messiah" (2 Cor.4:6). Many of them live in the following cities, towns, ports and drilling settlements: Dhahran, Ras Tanura, Jubail, Dammam, Al-Khobar, Hofuf, Abqaiq, Udhailiyah and Shaybah. Take a moment to lift up in prayer each of these cities by name.*

Day 6: Fulani of Nigeria

In Nigeria many of the 15+ million Nigerian Fulani stay in small settlements and cities in Nigeria's predominantly Muslim northern region. There are numerous sub-tribes and clans of the Fulani but in Nigeria they generally fall into five large groups: The Adamawa (1.1 million) the Haabe (2.6 million), the Sokoto (2.7 million), the Toroobe (7.5 million) and the Mbororo (2.3 million). Fulani households consist of a male leader, one or more wives, 6-12 or more children, and other family members. (For more information on what God is doing among the Fulani visit: <http://www.morethandreams.tv>). *Pray for labourers to the Fulani and that God will touch and bring Fulani leaders and imams to salvation. Pray for peace and reconciliation – there are decades of strife and civil unrest between Muslims and Christians in this area.*

Day 7: Muslims of Rajasthan in India

Muslims living in the state of Rajasthan, in Western India, consist of about 60 different peoples. Out of the estimated 61 million Rajasthani population Hindus account for 88.8%, Muslims make up 8.5%, Sikhs 1.4% and Jains 1.2%. The Muslims mainly speak Hindustani which is a mixture of Hindi and Urdu. However, most read from the Hindi script. A full Bible in Hindustani is still needed. Christians have been reaching Muslims using a simple 'kurbaan story' which describes the major sacrifices in both the Old and New Testaments. Some, who have come to know by word of mouth, the story of God and man based on the Bible, are capable of telling it in a logical way. This is very helpful to illiterate believers and those seeking God. *Pray for Rajasthani Muslims who have discovered the Messiah in His fullness to be obedient to the only true and living God. Continue to pray for their spiritual growth and a completed Bible translation in Hindustani soon! Pray by name for the salvation of Rajasthani Muslims from each of the major peoples: the Pathan, Shaikh and Sayyid ethnic groups.*

Day 8: Peoples of Sudan

Sudan is a nation made up of hundreds of ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups and clans estimated at about 2,200 groups including local clans. The following is a list of 15 out of the 36 people groups of over 100,000 people, considered by some believers to be most in need of the gospel in Sudan. In fact, none of these groups has an established, long-term, native language outreach to them involving either foreigners or local Sudanese believers.

Altogether these 15 groups number possibly more than 20 million people with no known believers. *Take a moment to call out each group's name to the Lord in prayer: 1. Daju, 2. Danaagla/Kanuuz, 3. Darfur Region NSA (Northern Sudanese Arabs), 4. East Region NSA, 5. Fellata: Fulani-speaking, 6. Fellata: Hausa-speaking, 7. Kanuri, 8. Kordofan Region NSA, 9. Masalit, 10. Nile Region NSA, 11. North Region NSA, 12. Rashaida, 13. South East Region NSA, 14. White Nile Region NSA, 15. Zaghawa. Also please pray for the Bible to be translated into the Daju language very soon.*

DID YOU KNOW ABOUT A PEOPLE GROUP?

A people group can be defined as: The largest group of those who perceive themselves to have a common affinity with each other, and within which the gospel can spread without encountering significant barriers of understanding and acceptance. The barriers could be (1) Religious (2) Language (3) Social Interaction and (4) Geography (e.g. Sudan is the biggest country in Africa).

Day 9: Muslims in Norway

In Norway some estimate the Muslim population at around 150,000 people out of a total population of 4.8 million. The first mosque was built in 1974. More than 80,000 Muslims are registered members of almost 100 Muslim congregations. Today, Norway appears, as the rest of Europe, as a multi-cultural society. The vast majority of Norwegians are members of the Lutheran Church (over 80%) but relatively few are active members and many have beliefs which actually do not reflect Biblical faith. According to one poll, 32% of Norwegians indicated that they "believe there is a god / God", whereas 47% answered that they "believe there is some sort of spirit or life force" and 17% that they "do not believe there is any sort of spirit, god, or life force". Some churches have been ministering to Muslim communities for many years. *Pray for all Christian individuals and churches reaching out to Muslims to be bold and that God will, through His Spirit, bring new life to those they are ministering to. Pray for all Muslim immigrants, that they will meet believers wherever they settle, and that these will show them Jesus. Also ask for God to reveal Himself in Norwegian society, in the media and through the churches and believers.*

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT THE QUR'AN

Muslims around the world look to the Qur'an for direction in both faith and life. The Qur'an is made up of 114 chapters, called *suras*, arranged approximately in order of length from the longest chapter (*sura* 2) through the shortest (only a single line for *sura* 108). Acting as a short introduction to the scripture is the first chapter, called "The Opening", *al-Fatiha*, which is a prayer-like segment used within the Muslim *salat* (prayer) ritual. Each chapter is divided into verses, *ayas*, the total number being reckoned somewhere between 6204 and 6236, differing according to various schemes of counting. The Qur'an is roughly the same length as the New Testament. The Qur'anic 'Jesus' is emphatically not God, not the Son of God, not to be 'associated' with God, and not the "third of three".

The Qur'an shares with the Bible a common belief in a Creator God that humans are accountable to. In Islam, there is little indication to show what God is like. The god of the Muslims is not the same one Christians worship. The Qur'an describes the love of god/Allah for humans as conditional, and contains no command for humans to love either god/Allah or each other.

Day 10: Preparations for Prayer

Today again, Muslims worldwide will be preparing themselves for Friday prayer. Indeed, all week long, practising Muslims do these ritual washings in order to be pure for prayer. Ritual cleansing is very important to Muslims, as well as the specific times. This differs significantly from Christian teaching about prayer. In Islam it is impossible to pray correctly without the ritual cleansing with water, or in the absence of water, with sand. Islamic instruction about prayer is filled with long passages on exactly how to go about the cleansing process. None of the steps can be sidestepped or done in an improper way otherwise Islamic prayer loses its merit and validity. Unfortunately, no one can be saved or sanctified by ritual cleansing. *Pray for Muslims to discover the depths of sin and God's holiness so that they may forever be freed from the idea that water can ever make them fit to meet God. Pray this for people that you know personally, pray for Muslims in your city and elsewhere (Heb.8:9-12).*

PILLARS OF ISLAM

The Islamic religion is lived 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 Muhammad 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.*

Day 11: Pain in Basrah, Iraq

Al Basrah, (also called Basorah) is the capital of Basra Province in Iraq with an estimated population of about 3.8 million. Basrah is a significant port. It is estimated that at least 90% of the city is built on oil fields. The gas and petrol fumes are part of the daily life of Basrah's residents. About 20% of the population are Sunni Muslim but the vast majority are Shiites. A very small number are believers. *Pray that God would raise up officials and community leaders who seek the well-being of their people more than their own prosperity and self-indulgence. The people of the city are suffering greatly. Pray for breakthroughs in the field of education and jobs. Many people see no future. Pray that many of Basrah's Muslims would encounter the Messiah, the Giver of hope, through television, radio and personal witness.*

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT MUSLIMS

There are probably about 1.5 billion Muslims around the world. All the figures are approximate. Muslim Population Worldwide: Africa 400 million, Middle East 250 million, Asia 800 million, Europe (Russia Included) 38 million, Americas 5 million.

Day 12: Iran

Of Iran's population of 71.2 million, only 0.35% is Christian. Iran has overtaken Saudi Arabia and now holds the second position on the *World Watch List (WWL)* of countries that persecute Christians. Many released Christians are being monitored and threatened. As a result of the arrests, there is great fear among Christians. Iranian authorities closed some churches during 2009. The primary reason for the church closures is the fact that their services were being attended by many newly converted Muslims. *Give thanks to the Lord for Muslims that are turning to Christ in this nation. Please pray for many more workers to this difficult harvest field, especially with so*

many missionaries returning to their countries because of fear and threats. Also pray for those seeking to provide Bibles, training and encouragement to around 125,000 believers from a Muslim background and new Muslim background believers.

(Website: http://members.opendoorsusa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=World_Watch_List_2010).

Day 13: Khadijah

While Muhammad was married to Khadijah, he took no other wives because of his love for her. She was equally devoted to him. When he received his first revelations, she played an important role in convincing him that he was becoming a prophet. She even used her wealth to help promote Islam, to the point of being persecuted for her support of her husband. *Around the world literally hundreds of thousands and even possibly well over a million Muslim women are named Khadijah. Many of them know very little about the wife of Muhammad or her positive example in many aspects of life. Pray for the living Khadijahs that they find the Lord Jesus through friends, radio, literature, television and other media. Pray for the salvation of Muslim women and that they will influence their husbands to accept Jesus as the Saviour.*

Day 14: Luo people of Kenya

The Luo are the second largest ethnic group in Kenya adding up to about 5 million people (the biggest being the Kikuyu amounting to about 7.5 million). Traditionally they live in the area near Lake Victoria, but are also found scattered throughout the country, particularly in the urban centres. There are about 39 million people in total in Kenya. There is hardly any information available about Muslims among the Luo, Luhya, Kikuyu, Kalenjin or Kamba in Kenya – ethnic groups which have a tribal majority of Christians. *Lift up in prayer the 5 million Luo people of Kenya, and ask for labourers to this harvest. Also lift up in prayer the body of believers in East Africa; that they do not avoid Muslims around them, but make contact with them in love and share Jesus with them with boldness.*

Day 15: What is happening in Dubai?

In recent years the city has become a world-class city of gleaming towers and walled villas. About 85% of the inhabitants are non-Emiratis. A majority of the foreign workers come from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other Arab countries. The United Arab Emirates has a population of 5 million: Muslim 65%, Hindu 17%, Christian 9%, Buddhist 4%, other or unknown 5%. The city definitely has its dark side. The large amount of money in Dubai's financial and real estate markets attracts all kinds of legal and illegal activities. Many of the foreign workers who consider themselves Christian are actually fairly nominal in their faith. *Pray that these believers may really provide an example to Muslims and non-Muslims of what it means to walk in God's ways (Matt.4:16, John 8:12). Pray for the salvation of many among the Emiratis, other Arabs, the Pakistanis and the Bangladeshis. The Emirati society is exclusively closed to outsiders. The actual contact between Emiratis and non-Emiratis is fairly limited. Pray for opportunities for all those living specifically in Dubai to encounter the Lord Jesus.*

Day 16: Muslims in Toronto

Greater Toronto, probably the most multicultural city on earth, is now possibly home to more than 300,000 Muslims from many nations (statistics vary). Three of the city's most densely populated high-rise apartment clusters, Thorncliffe Park, Crescent Town and Dixon Park, are mostly Muslim. Comprised of people from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Somalia, each square kilometre of these neighbourhoods has as many as 20,000 people stacked on each other. In recent years, some believers have been able to proclaim to their friends the hope that they have in Christ. In many cases Muslims are invited to enter a Christian home for the first time in

their lives. As Muslims start to see Jesus, some turn away, others are strongly attracted to Him! *Pray that Jesus would be honoured both in the lives of believers and those who hear about Him for the first time. Pray that Canada's Muslims find jobs, peace and a sense of belonging in their new country. Pray for their salvation.*

Day 17: The Friday Sermon

Today in the big cities of Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well as hundreds of villages and towns in between those cities, thousands of largely illiterate Pashtun men will hear sermons preached over loudspeakers. Pashtun women generally work physically hard at daily chores. Knowing that they need help with many practical aspects of life, they involve themselves in occult practices, hoping to survive and prosper in a world of unknowns. It is possible that many of them would respond positively to the parables of Jesus if they could hear them. *Pray for the leaders of mosques who are preaching sermons today. May their zeal for their god/Allah become rooted in real knowledge of the Living God (Romans 10:1-4). Also pray for the Pashtun people for divine intervention so that they may taste salvation in every Pashtun community.*

IS GOD CALLING YOU TO GO AND PRAY IN A MUSLIM NATION?

Praying 'on site' can give many new insights and open doors about the people and their country as you are experiencing it first-hand. The following websites will give you information about different nations, and info on unreached people groups: www.30-days.net; www.joshuaproject.net, www.win1040.com. You will find information on prayer journeys and prayer-walking on www.waymakers.org or you can connect with *Project Macedonia* if you want more info on prayer journeys: *The Macedonian Project*. Private bag X07, Lynnwood Ridge, 0040. Tel.: 012 997 3195 or fax: 086 630 3193. Website: www.macedonian.org.za or e-mail: macsa@mweb.co.za

Day 18: Morocco

Muhammad VI, who became king in 1999, is the highest political, military and religious authority in Morocco. In spite of his efforts to change things in the country, a large proportion of the population is very poor, and often rich and powerful people employ poorer people with promises to pay them, but which often do not materialise. *Pray for the king to have a personal revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that he will lead his country in a wise and godly way. Some authorities have persecuted Moroccan believers, many have been threatened and some jailed. Pray for the persecuted church to grow and be fearless amidst these difficult circumstances. Ask for many new opportunities to provide a proper income for poor people.*

WHAT MUSLIMS BELIEVE ABOUT JESUS

- Jesus was conceived miraculously by God in the womb of the Virgin Mary.
- Jesus is only a prophet, He is not divine (not the Son of God, not God in the flesh).
- 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. Judas had his face transformed and died in the place of Jesus as a judgment from God.
- Jesus will come again one day, He will marry, He will have children. He will correct the errors which Christians have spread about him. He will die, He will be buried in Medina and be judged like all men at the Last Judgment.

Day 19: Saudi Arabia

King Abdullah is the leader of Saudi Arabia. This country has a population of 24.7 million of which only 2.2% is Christian, and is listed third on the *World Watch List (WWL)* of countries that persecute Christians. Public non-Muslim worship is forbidden, at the risk of arrest, imprisonment, flogging, deportation, and sometimes torture. Most Christians are expatriates; they are generally allowed to worship privately but some have been arrested, issued with death threats and forced into hiding. Saudi believers must keep their faith secret. *Pray that those who find Jesus through satellite TV programmes and the Internet will find fellowship and spiritual encouragement. Ask for expatriate and Saudi church leaders to be kept safe and have courage and wisdom to remain standing. Continue to ask that God will reveal Himself in visions and dreams to the millions who have never heard His Name in Saudi Arabia.* (Website: http://members.opendoorsusa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=World_Watch_List_2010).

Day 20: Muhammad's wives

Commonly referred to as Muhammad's favourite wife, Aisha bint Abu Bakr was formally engaged to the Prophet at the age of six. (This practice was not unknown in Arabia at the time). Aisha was Muhammad's only virgin bride, which some have seen as a divine indication that she should have a role in designating Muhammad's successor as leader of the Islamic community. Aisha herself did not bear any children. Sunni Muslims hold her in very high esteem as they consider her to have been Muhammad's favourite wife and one of the foremost women of her time. She is reputed to be the source of many sacred traditions concerning Muhammad (Hadith). When Muhammad was approaching death, he spent his last moments in the company of the 18-year-old Aisha and died with his head in her lap. Muhammad's death left Aisha an unmarried widow for the rest of her life because of the Qur'an statement that no man is to marry a wife of the Prophet (Qur'an 33:53). Aisha died at the age of 65 during the month of Ramadan. As with the Khadijahs, many parents call their daughters Aisha. Worldwide they certainly number hundreds of thousands. *Ask God to open doors of opportunity for the Aishas to hear the stories about the life of Jesus and believe in Him. Pray for all Muslim girls to have opportunities to hear about Jesus as they grow up. Pray for healthy marriage relationships and the restoration of women's dignity.*

What is really different about what Christians and Muslims believe?

This year Ramadan, the month when Muslims fast and pray is from 11 August – 9 September. Many Christians are uncertain of the differences in the central beliefs of Christianity and Islam. It is very important to understand that there are definite differences, otherwise we would not be able to effectively witness Christ to a Muslim person, or we may even become confused if they ask us questions about our own beliefs. The following article aims to serve the purpose of giving an introduction to some of the key differences; what they are, and how to pray for Muslims. It is by no means a complete document, but will provide a simple guideline to be used in Bible study and or prayer groups in your congregation, as the Holy Spirit leads you.

(1) Some of the central beliefs of Islam

Muslims accept six basic beliefs, or articles of Islamic faith. The first is *Faith in Allah*. Muslims believe there is only one god. His will is supreme and they call him Allah. The second basic belief of Muslims is *Angels*. They believe in angels such as Gabriel, who supposedly brought the message of the Qur'an to Muhammad. The third basic belief of Muslims is *The Holy Books*. They believe that Allah gave revelations, including the Old and New Testaments, especially the Torah, Psalms and Gospels. But these revelations end with the Qur'an, which for all intents and purposes, supersede the others. Christians believe in a triune God who is One God; that God the Father sent His only Son to redeem us from sin and reconcile us with God. God speaks to us primarily through His Holy Spirit and the Holy Bible and has a personal relationship with each of His children.

**Pray that Muslims may have understanding, and faith in the triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Ask that they will start to enquire and search for answers about Jesus Christ.*

(2) Some of the central beliefs of Islam

Muslims accept six basic beliefs, or articles of Islamic faith. The fourth belief of Muslims is *The Prophets*. They believe that Allah sent numerous prophets to mankind e.g. Adam (Allah's chosen), Noah (Allah's speaker), Moses (Allah's speaker), Jesus (Allah's word), Muhammad (Allah's apostle/prophet). Muhammad's revelation is considered the greatest of all. They believe he is the *Seal of the Prophets* and *Peace of the World*. The fifth belief of Muslims is *Predestination*. They believe that everything that happens, both good and evil, is predestined by Allah's will and is his final decision. The sixth belief of Muslims is *The Day of Judgement*. They believe that the good and evil deeds of men are placed on a scale. With sufficient personal merit and righteousness and the favour of Allah, they will go to eternal heaven. All others are believed to go to eternal hell.

Christians know that Scripture as a whole is inspired by God, and that God spoke His promises through the prophets, but that the testimony of Jesus Christ is the spirit of prophecy (**Rev.19:10**). We are saved through grace and God listens and heeds the prayers of believers. It is the will of our heavenly Father that even the wicked be saved and not die (**Ezek.18:23-24**). Salvation is not from works, but because of what Christ did for us on the cross.

**Pray that Muslims will have a supernatural revelation of the grace and love of Christ. That they will not fear Judgment Day, but rather look forward to Christ's return. Ask for a hunger and thirst to come into the hearts of Muslims, so that they will seek to read the Bible and come to know Jesus Christ as Saviour.*

(3) Some of the central beliefs of Islam

Every Muslim must practise at least five fundamental religious duties known as the 'Pillars of Religion'. They must recite prescribed prayers five times a day.

Once again, Christians believe in a triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the three in one. Therefore the god of Islam and that of Christianity can never be the same god. They do not believe that Allah has a son and for them it is unthinkable that he does. For Christians, Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He is the only way to the heavenly Father. They who reject Jesus Christ, reject the Father who sent Him (**1 John 5:10-11**).

**Pray that Muslims will have a growing longing in their hearts to find out more about the God of the Christians. Pray even that those who spend more time in prayer calling out to Allah, will suddenly have a longing to find out about Christ. Ask that God will answer many Muslims who are sincerely seeking for meaning in life, and reveal Jesus Christ to them.*

(4) Some of the central beliefs of Islam

The third fundamental religious duty of Muslims is observing the month of fasting known as *Ramadan*, where they are to fast during the day. The fourth pillar of Islam is giving to the poor. The fifth fundamental religious duty of Muslims is that of a pilgrimage to Mecca (where Muhammad was born). A last religious duty often associated with the five pillars of Islam, is *jihad*. When the situation warrants it, this duty requires Muslims to go to war and defend Islam. *Jihad* can be interpreted as internal (as spiritual struggle) or external (physically defending Islam).

Christians are under no obligation to fast, although it is a wonderful discipline. Giving to the poor is also Biblical, yet it is done as an act of love. Christians believe that they are saved by grace and do not have to do works to gain salvation. Good works follow as a natural result after a Christian's salvation and testify about the supernatural work God had done in one's life (**1 Pet.2:12**).

***Pray that many Muslims worldwide will start to consider and question some of the pillars and duties of their faith. Ask that at the right time, many will have a supernatural encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ in a way that will turn their hearts to choose and serve Him alone.**

Day 21: Bahrain

The half-million Bahrainis are descended from a mixture of indigenous peoples and settlers from the Arabian Peninsula and Iran. Some tensions exist between the poorer Shia Islamic majority, and the politically-dominant Sunni minority, and between the Arab and Persian background inhabitants. Christians may be more restricted in the future as competition occurs between Saudi-inspired government ministers and Shia parliamentarians to show which of them is the most 'Islamic'. *Lift up in prayer these tensions, and ask the Lord to supernaturally intervene in the lives of Bahrainis. Bahrainis sometimes have opportunities to hear the gospel through foreign believers and to observe their example; please pray that these will be good and godly examples which may draw them out of darkness into His kingdom.*

Day 22: India

Please pray with us by name for the 25 Indian Muslim people groups comprising 100,000 people who have no known gospel witness. Not only have these peoples not heard the gospel, they have no known Christian witness among them. One example is the Kunjra people living in the Indian state of Bihar, which is one of the most caste-conscious states among Sunni Muslims. Religiously, the Sunni caste system (different from the Hindu caste system) not only assigns social status based on birth, it also generally restricts a person to a traditional occupation or role. Consequently, the Kunjra are a lower caste and have historically been fruit and vegetable sellers or farmers. They have not rejected the gospel; they have simply never heard it. *Pray for more information to be learned about the Kunjra and the other people on the list. Ask God for committed workers to live among the Kunjra and the other groups and to share the love of Christ with them. Ask the Lord to raise up prayer teams for these peoples. Lift up in prayer before the throne of grace the different peoples groups, speaking their names: Kunjra 822,140 - Turk 530,187 - Makhmi 469,871 - Sudhan 446,757 - Rawther 682,072 - Bhatara 259,188 - Mahur 243,687 - Yashkun 235,511 - Bhatia 190,957 - Jhojha 175,779 - Nikari 147,684 - Baloch 129,950 - Molesalam 128,738 - Shaikh (Marathi) 2,429,481 - Shaikh (Marwadi) 1,541,534 - Shaikh (Gujarati) 1,057,975 - Shaikh (Maithili) 774,017 - Shaikh (Magadi) 322,135 - Shaikh (Oriya) 235,524 - Shaikh (Mewari) 151,368 - Shaikh (Konkani) 116,051 - Pathan (Marwadi) 215,895 - Shaikh (Dhundari) 404,463 - Shaikh (Nimadi) 110,046 - Shaikh (Shekhwati) 222,665.*

Day 23: The Jola People of West Africa

Most Jola have never heard any of the stories about Jesus and the Kingdom of God from the Bible, but many of them are willing to listen. About 560,000 Jola people live across three countries in West Africa (Senegal, the Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau). Most people – both Muslims and Catholics – maintain various degrees of the traditional animistic beliefs and practices, including the fear of witchcraft, evil spirits, and curses. At present 90% of Jolas claim to be Muslim, with only about 2% Christian. *Pray that the light of Christ will shine into the Jola villages and towns. Ask that every person may have dreams and visions of Jesus and put their trust in Him. Ask especially for the salvation of chiefs, religious leaders, and elders. Pray that local and non-native believers will be able to get the Word of God to all the Jola by various means, and for the remainder of the New Testament to be available to them soon. Ask for the Jola to be open and receptive to hear the Word in their language, to understand it and believe.*

Day 24: Kho People of Pakistan

In Islam normal daily prayer is a focused ritual exercise which is an expression of worship and honour toward Allah. Muslims do not expect to personally know Allah or hear his voice. Personal requests are possible in Islam, but the formal ritual prayers are definitely the most important prayer activity for Muslims. Toward noon today, thousands of Kho in Pakistan will be praying in their local mosques. Many will think that their prayers earn them merit before Allah. This people group numbers about 320,000 people. There are no known believers in this people group. No one is seeking specifically to reach them at the present time. The Kho appear to be very resistant to the gospel. Most of them live in the upper valleys, where farming is very difficult due to the dry, rugged mountain terrain. The heart language of the Kho is Khowar.

Prayer: *Ask the Lord specifically for breakthroughs among the Kho people, and that they will ponder questions like 'Can God speak to me personally?' Also ask God to send labourers to this difficult harvest for long-term ministry among the tribes of northern Pakistan. Pray for open doors to the Kho and that the workers going there will find favour with the leaders of the Kho so that they will allow the workers to share the gospel.*

Day 25: Rajshahi, Bangladesh

Bangladesh became independent in 1971. Rajshahi city itself became prominent during the British invasion, and although once predominantly Hindu, the city is now 90% Muslim. Rajshahi is the educational hub of the country, with over ten large universities, colleges and medical schools. Rajshahi University alone has over 25,000 students. Rajshahi is also the medical hub of the country, and boasts a Christian Mission Hospital as well. As a result, there are now three house fellowships in the city, with more fellowships in the surrounding villages.

Prayer: *Praise God for these breakthroughs. Continue to pray for the small house fellowships of believers to grow in maturity, obedience and knowledge of God's Word, also for godly elders to be appointed who are committed to care for the flock. Some people in the city have begun to sell Bibles in the Bengali dialect used by Muslims. Pray that seekers would buy, read and understand God's Word. In the larger Rajshahi district, there are many seekers and young believers who meet together sporadically. Pray that believers would see the need for regular weekly worship. Pray that God will give believers the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit that the church will need to do the work.*

Day 26: Finding a bride in Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan has a very real social problem regarding marriage. About 40% of the brides in Kyrgyzstan are simply kidnapped and married by force. This has been a tribal custom for many generations. In most cases the young girls do not consent to the kidnapping. Some give their consent to avoid difficulties, others genuinely decide to simply accept their 'destiny', their families are invited and a marriage takes place. Many girls stay with their new husband but others seek to escape; and few of them even commit suicide.

Prayer: *Ask that God will reveal Himself as a trustworthy Father to these young girls, and for the Kyrgyz people to come to a real change of heart regarding this custom. Pray for healing for those who have suffered trauma and physical abuse. Pray that both young men and women will find Jesus Christ as Saviour and surrender their lives to Him. Pray for emotional healing and for the restoration of the dignity of women.*

Focus on the Night of Power (Lailat Ul Qadr)

Muslims believe that the Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad this night. Because it is such a special night, Muslims who want to gain extra credits of righteousness spend the night commemorating Allah either in privacy or in a mosque with other Muslims. There are also some Muslims who retreat to a mosque during the last ten days of Ramadan to take further advantage of Allah's blessings and increase their faith of submission. Many Muslims have come to salvation having open visions and dreams of the Lord Jesus visiting them. *Let us pray especially*

tonight, that many will have a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus. Pray that God our Father will reveal Himself as Father to the Muslims. "Father" is not one of the 99 names of Allah.

Day 27: Muslims in Korea

The UN sent troops to Korea to fight against the North Korean communists during the 1950 Korean War. As part of the war effort, the nation of Turkey sent a battalion of soldiers to Korea. This was the beginning of modern contact between Koreans and Muslims. Two Turkish imams came and began propagating Islam to war-weary Koreans. It is said that there are now more than 35,000 ethnic-Korean Muslims since the first two Koreans became Muslims in 1955. Today there are more than 10 mosques and 40 prayer centres throughout the country.

Prayer: *Because of the negative impact of various incidents involving Koreans in Afghanistan and elsewhere, animosity and fear toward Muslims and Islam have crept into the hearts of some Korean believers. Pray for Christians to overcome their fears, to find ways to share the gospel with Muslims and to build lasting relationships with other local believers. Ask for Korean believers to have a renewal of vision and desire to reach out to Muslims.*

Day 28: The Sabah and Sarawak of East Malaysia

The Sabah numbers about 3,387,880 people. The larger population of Muslims (of various ethnic groups) is due to the influx of illegal immigrants and refugees from Indonesia and the southern Philippines. Although the Malays are a minority in Sarawak (2,176,800 people), Melanau (one of Sarawak's larger minority groups), has many serving in high positions in the State government. Among the majority of the Muslim population there exists one of the more vibrant and growing communities of believers in Southeast Asia. In the 2000 census in Sarawak, 43% of the population indicated they were Christians with large numbers of indigenous tribal peoples embracing faith in Christ. Breakthroughs among the Malays could have a significant impact on the larger Malay population on the Malaysian Peninsula.

Prayer: *Pray for more believers to become more intentional in reaching out to their Muslim neighbours and fellow workers. Ask for the establishment of culturally-relevant, indigenous communities of faith in each Muslim community. Ask for breakthroughs among the Malays, that they will be open and receptive to the testimony of Jesus Christ and grow spiritually.*

Day 29: Britain

There are roughly 2.4 million Muslims living in Britain today. Events of recent years have made it difficult for many Christians to build relationships with Muslims in their neighbourhoods. Cultural misunderstandings and the isolation of Muslim communities have made it challenging for many British Christians to know where to start reaching out to Muslims.

Prayer: *Pray against the fear which many British people have for Muslims. Pray for genuine friendships to develop across the cultural barriers and for real love to characterise the relationships between Muslims and Christians. Ask that the church would be a hospitable place for new Muslim immigrants and other alienated Muslims, and that programs to assist them would demonstrate the love of Christ. Pray for open doors and new creative ways to reach Muslims.*

Testimony: Papa, Stop!

A pastor of a local church told his assistant to go to an old section of the city (which is all Muslim) and preach the gospel. As soon as the first man he spoke to heard about Jesus, he got upset and told the evangelist to leave his house. The pastor later told the young man to go back to the same house and preach again. So he went back and started to talk to the man about Jesus. This time, the man started shouting and cursing, threatening to beat him if he ever came back. When the pastor heard what had happened, he told the evangelist to go back to the same house one more time. The evangelist began to refuse, saying that the man would certainly beat him, and maybe even kill him. But the pastor was stern and sent him out again. The evangelist obeyed and prayed along the way. The previous two times he had prayed for God to open the hearts of the people he'd meet; this time, he prayed for God to protect him. He was fearful for his life, but he went obediently.

When he got to the same house, he saw a five-year-old girl playing at the front gate. He began to tell her about God, about creation, and about Jesus Christ being the Saviour. After a while, the father discovered what was happening, and came out with a large stick to beat the evangelist. As he was about to strike, the girl shouted, "Papa, stop. Don't hit him. You must listen to what he says and start going to church every Sunday from now on." The father dropped the stick and started crying. His girl had been deaf and mute all her life, and Jesus Christ had miraculously healed her. The evangelist had not known her condition. He was simply being obedient to the command to preach the gospel to the lost, even if it meant that he would be beaten and possibly killed. The entire family of seven came to faith in Christ.

(Website: <http://www.pioneers.org/Connect/Media/MediaArchive/tabid/149/PostID/107/Papa-Stop.aspx>).

Day 30: Workers in the field

Ramadan ends today. Many missionaries were deported or sent home the past months as persecution in different Muslim nations increased. In some cases missionaries had to leave behind orphanages they had been ministering to for more than 10 years, leaving children without refuge and with no guarantee that they will ever see them again. Now more than ever, indigenous believers will have to spread the gospel among their own people as it becomes more difficult to live and work in these countries as a foreigner.

Prayer: *Lift up in prayer those missionaries that have been expelled, deported or asked to leave Islamic countries where they have been ministering. Ask for them to hear God's voice on how to continue their work, when and how to return to these countries and how to help those left behind now that they are not with them any longer. Also pray for those who prepared the prayer material for initiatives, like this booklet, with a heart to see Muslims come to Christ. Pray continuously for the protection of all missionaries, that they will be strengthened, and for God's encouragement to rest on them, so that they will be able to persevere and finish the task God gave them. Pray for new doors to open in other nations so that they can continue their work. Pray that God Himself will be the Father of these orphans.*