

INTERCEDE

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J I H A D

by Ken Ferguson

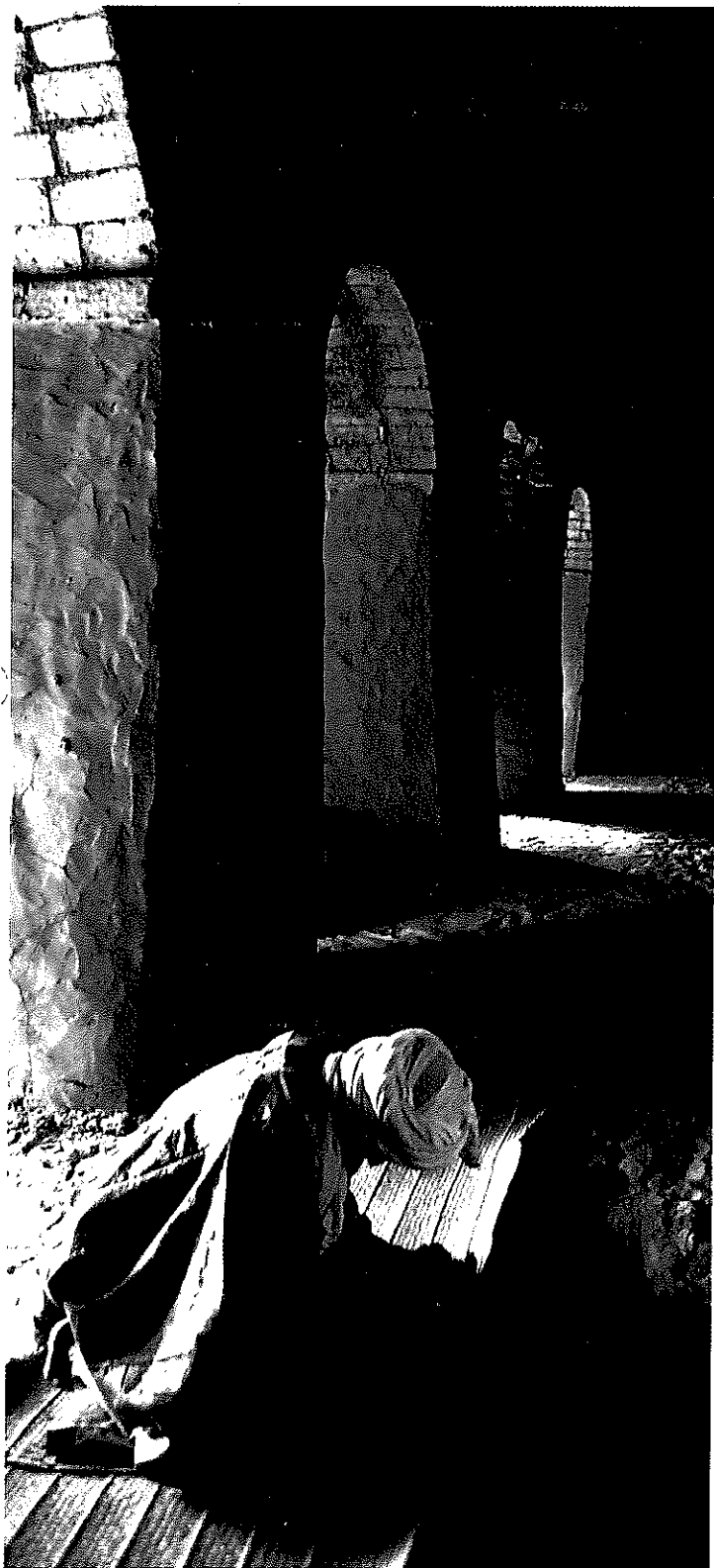
For millions of Americans the word jihad elicits images of Iranians seizing the American Embassy in Tehran, Israeli buses destroyed by bombs, and hijacked airliners crashing into the World Trade Towers. We are left bewildered as to why anyone would perpetrate such acts against a "Christian" nation that feeds much of the world and sends millions of aid dollars to the very ones who despise us.

While most Muslims would not engage in actual holy war activities, it is important to understand why some radical Islamists would willingly participate in such violent behavior. How do we understand Muslims and their concept of jihad? What is holy war?

The Origin of Holy War. The term holy war is a European invention that actually predates Islam. In A.D. 317, Constantine went forth to conquer under the symbol of the cross. In the year of Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina (622), the Byzantine emperor Heraclius launched a seven-year holy war against the Persians, and the Church joined the war effort.

Muhammed and his successors often engaged in spreading their faith by the sword. It was only a short step to the Islamic concept of jihad or holy war. Barely a hundred years after the prophet's death in 632, Muslims had captured large areas of previously "Christian" territories. In response, the Crusades (1095-1291) were fought in the name of the Church.

Most Muslims say the colonial period only reinforced the idea of Christian triumphalism. Christianity advanced as Spain and Portugal led the way with their warrior-missionary adventures. The French, English, Dutch and other European powers colonized across the globe, and their missionary efforts followed. Muslims perceived the arrival of missionaries as part of the military incursions. During the height of the colonial period 90 percent of the Muslim world was under some type of colonial occupation by Christian nations.



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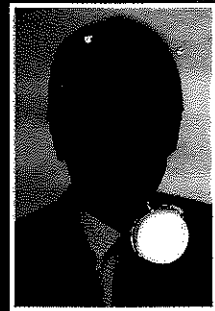


Until All Have Heard

How then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?

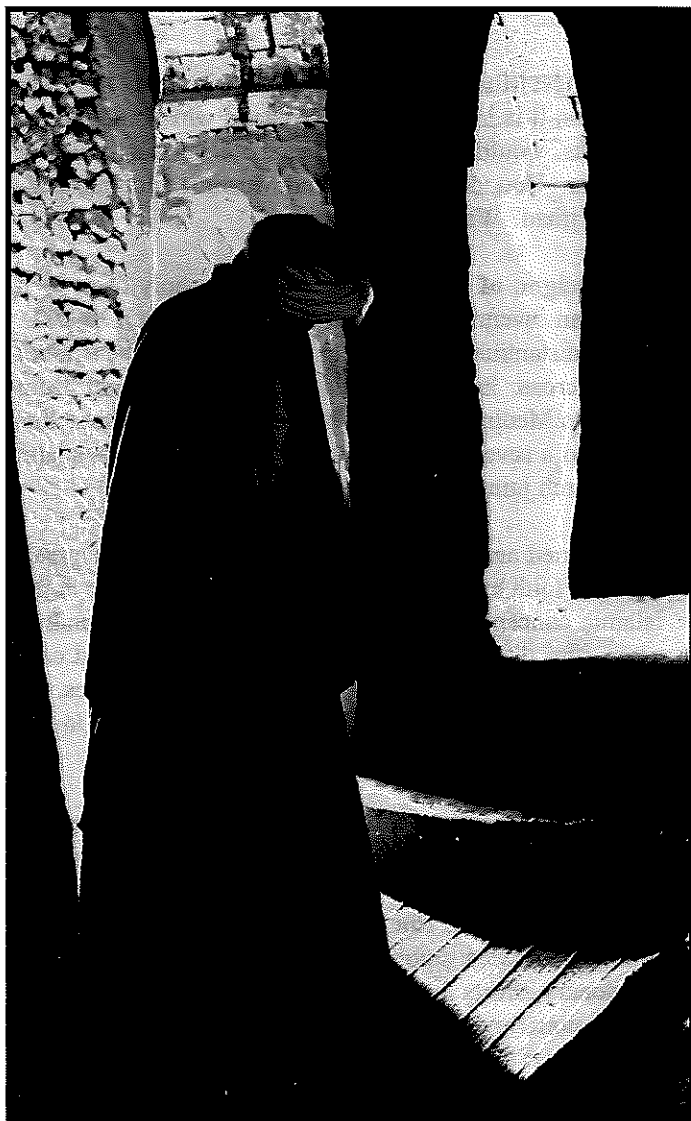
Romans 10:14

Jim Bennett, Director
Center for
Ministry to Muslims



A distinguished missionary friend of CMM recently participated in a Muslim evangelism consultation attended by prominent evangelical representatives. In a letter, he wrote to me:

We agreed that if present trends remain unchecked, the Muslim world would likely achieve its stated goal of Islamizing America and the West. To this end, Muslims have developed effective propaganda tools to sway American public opinion in their favor and shape public policy. Clearly, this campaign has intensified since 9/11.



Expanding the House of Islam is an important concept to most Muslims. While we may not hear of it as jihad activity, developing effective propaganda tools to sway public opinion is an essential ingredient of Islamic expansion efforts. I often read Muslim publications that include advice and counsel on ways to change Western opinion about Islam in order to more effectively spread their message. While it would be a serious stretch to say that the majority of Western orthodox Muslims would participate in an outright holy war, significant numbers would eagerly promote jihad activity via the media, the political processes and particularly via educational institutions.

Although orthodox Islam idealizes peace, it has historically been the peace that follows some form of jihad activity that leads non-Islamic peoples to agree to Islamic rule, accept exclusion from the political process and be prohibited from speaking of their faith to Muslims.


My appeal would be that the understandable and laudable desire to treat Muslims fairly and without bias should not obscure the long tradition of both their implicit and explicit jihad activities. It is not right and not wise to create a fictionalized Islam.

How should the Christian respond to *jihad*? I repeat edited thoughts shared via this column in March '02:

- ***We need to affirm*** the power of the gospel and the Holy Spirit to break the strongholds of Islamic darkness.

- ***We need to commit*** ourselves to a protracted engagement with the Holy Spirit to provide an adequate witness of Jesus to the world's 1.2 billion Muslims.

- ***We need to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves."*** Start today to learn about Islam. Be aware of the goals of fundamentalist Islam, and find appropriate ways to expose them. Host a seminar in your church. Begin praying for Muslims. Earn the right to share your testimony.

- ***We need to love Muslims.*** We can do this by offering friendship that will speak of Christ's love. Muslims are loved by God as He loves all people. 

Muslim World News



Maldives

Ruling since 1978, President Gayoom has placed the highest authority behind the distribution of Islamic teachings. Gayoom's policies have no tolerance for any religion other than Islam. No churches are allowed in the country. Of the 286,000 inhabitants of the Maldives, approximately 600 are believed to be Christians.—*Pulse*

Nigeria

Freedom House in Washington, D.C. has released a report documenting violations of human rights and religious freedom in Nigeria. The report warns that if Islamic law (*sharia*) is allowed to spread, religious war could break out and Nigeria could become a haven for Islamic radicals. The imposition of *sharia* in 12 of Nigeria's 36 states has sparked political and religious debate. Some Muslim politicians have conceded that *sharia* is undemocratic. As long as *sharia* was limited to land and family disputes, people did not seem to mind. However, punishments of flogging, amputation and stoning brought things to a boiling point. In the three years since *sharia* was introduced some 100,000 Nigerians have been displaced and more than 3,000 have died in riots. The electoral commission has suspended voter registration in parts of four states because of ethnic and religious fighting. Tensions have been high since the election in 1999 of President Obasanjo, a Christian, after decades of military rule by Muslims from the north. The religious and political climate remains tense with little sign of abatement.—*Pulse*

Lebanon

In an apparent backlash by extremist Muslims, an American woman in southern Lebanon was shot and killed last November. An unknown assassin gunned down Bonnie Penner Witherall, 31, with three pistol shots to her head shortly after she began her morning shift at the Unity Center, a prenatal clinic that provides care to women in Sidon and the Ein al-Helweh Palestinian refugee camp. Lebanese investigators have declined to comment on possible motives for the murder, but militant Muslims had expressed opposition to the evangelical church's presence in the port city for more than a year. Outspoken Muslim cleric Sheikh Maher Hammoud publicly accused Witherall's congregation of "trying to exploit the poverty (of Muslim children) to get them to change their religion." The day after her death, Witherall's husband Gary told the press he had forgiven her killers, just as she would have herself. "God led us to Lebanon, and we knew that we might die," he said.—*Compass*

Malaysia

Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad declared that math and science would be taught in English beginning from first grade. He argued that Malaysians need English to succeed. Nationalistic leaders express fear that the move will lead to the erosion of the Malay language and culture. Believers hope the decision will open channels for numerous expatriate English-speaking teachers with a heart for Malaysia to enter the country. Implementation is not expected to face delays.—*Pulse*

Turkey

Relatives and church representatives made up a joyful airport welcoming committee for the Mahmoud Erfani family, three-and-one-half years after the former Muslims fled persecution in Iran. "The Erfanis arrived safely in Toronto amid smiles, tears and wonderment," said Gail Holland, refugee coordinator for their sponsoring church in Canada. The family was reportedly exhausted from 48 hours of continuous travel from central Turkey to Istanbul and then to Toronto via Amsterdam. As "apostates" who had left Islam to become Christians, the Erfanis had been evicted from their home on a former church compound in Mashhad and faced growing harassment by secret police in the months before they fled to Turkey. After months of petitioning the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Canadian Embassy granted them residence last August. Those welcoming the family to Canada were relatives and many friends from Iran who are also converts from Islam to Christianity.—*Compass*

Middle East and North Africa

A satellite broadcaster's new 66-episode TV series, *Understanding God's Word*, aims to "teach Arab believers...how to nourish themselves by studying the Bible." An Egyptian pastor will host the program, discussing Bible study techniques and answering viewers' questions. A great number of Christians in the Middle East and North Africa often lack Christian leadership and discipling.—*Pulse*



Throughout history Muslims have equated the “West” with Christianity. Thus, the more recent involvement of the United States in the Philippines and in the Iran-Iraq war, disputes with Lebanon and other Middle Eastern countries, and interest in Middle Eastern oil have served to fuel anti-Christian sentiment. Muslims perceive western cultural imperialism as an extension of the Crusades and colonialism. Additionally, America’s seemingly unconditional support of the modern state of Israel further confirms to Muslims that their ultimate enemy is the United States. In short, Muslims often see the West (Christians) as being politically, religiously and militarily anti-Muslim.

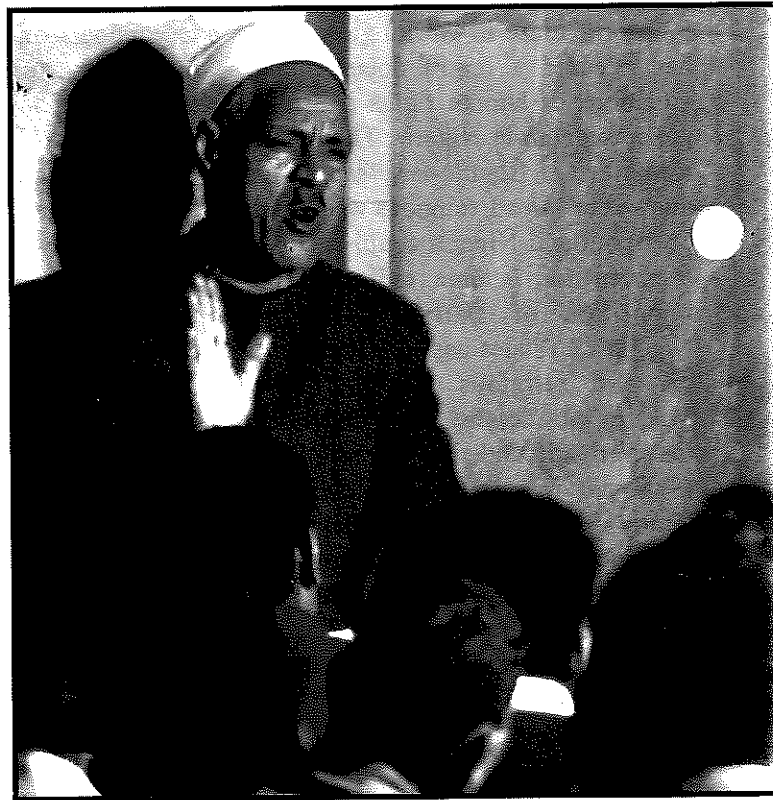
Greater Jihad. The word jihad has as its root the Arabic letters, JHD. The dictionary defines this root as, “exertion, endeavor, attempt, effort, trouble, pains.” With the appropriate preposition, it can mean to struggle or exert oneself “on behalf of,” or “for the sake of.” Muslims use the word jihad with another Arabic term, *taqwa*. *Taqwa* is piety or doing good; jihad is overcoming evil. Together they emphasize morality and ethics. The concept of jihad used in Islam might be understood as “striving to overcome evil.” Therefore, jihad is often defined in Islam as “striving in the way of God.” A *mujahid* is one who struggles. Muslims refer to this ethical and moral struggle as the “greater jihad.”

Lesser Jihad. The defense of one’s religion or territory is known as the “lesser jihad.” This lesser jihad or holy war has often been waged against enemies. Saudi Arabia lives in a perpetual state of holy war with Israel. Muslims may declare holy war against fellow Muslims. Iran declared jihad against Iraq, and Iraq insisted that its war against Kuwait and its allies was a jihad. Often, jihad may seek to promote Islam rather than merely defend Islam. In the early centuries of Islam, some Muslims extended the principle of jihad to include expansionist military campaigns.

Jihad in the Qur’an. Since the chapters (suras) in the Qur’an are not in chronological order, and the Qur’an is not a historical narrative, it is difficult to correlate jihad passages with historical events. Consequently there are differences of opinion among scholars as to how and when the concept of jihad evolved from passive resistance, to persuasion, to military defense of Islam, to aggression and expansion. Early Muslims were a persecuted minority who became a conquering empire involved in subjugating its enemies. The ideas

reflected during these times offer a wide range of interpretations on jihad.

The following passages reflect at least three evolutionary stages of the community of Islam: The first group of passages talks about striving for God. There is a striving for personal salvation. *And if any strive..., they do so for their own souls... (29:6)*. Muslims are to strive for moral perfection in order to show the light of Islam in their lives and be examples to others. *And strive in His cause as ye ought to strive...,*



It is He Who has named you Muslims..., that ye be witnesses for mankind! (22:78). These are understood as “higher jihad” passages. In early years relations were to be cordial between Muslims and other monotheistic religions. *Let there be no compulsion in religion (2:25)*.

Following the persecution of the Muslim community, the Qur’an taught that God allows persecution, but He judges the persecutors: *And how many cities, with more power than thy city which has driven thee out, have We destroyed (for their*



sins) (47:13). Persecution may be resisted by force: *It is permissible to use violence to resist the persecutors: Sanction is given unto those who fight because they have been wronged; and Allah is indeed able to give them victory;* (22:39). *How should ye not fight for the cause of Allah and of the feeble among men, and of women and children who are crying... O give us from Thy presence some defender!* (4:75).

The Qur'an not only permits but encourages and even commands the use of force. *Warfare is ordained for you, though*



it is hateful unto you; but it may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knoweth, ye know not (2:216). Muslims are told to be ready to *fight in the way of Allah* (2:244). These are only a few passages of at least 50 references in the Qur'an to righteous war. Jihad has sometimes been referred to as the sixth pillar of Islam.


Jihad in the Hadith and Practiced by Muhammad. *Hadith* are written traditions concerning what Muhammad

said and did. While the Qur'an reveals God's will to man, the *Hadith* show how Muhammad lived out the will of God. As mentioned earlier, the Qur'an leaves room for different interpretations of the Islamic concept of jihad. The *Hadith* leave little room for maneuvering. The traditions emphasize lesser jihad much more than they do greater jihad.

The prophet himself engaged in many military battles. His original accommodating attitude toward Christians and Jews as People of the Book gave way to a harsher treatment when they did not accept Islam. On one occasion Muhammad allowed the decapitation of hundreds of Jewish males who did not join with him in battle. Muhammad set the pattern for the military excursions of his early successors (caliphs). He is quoted by al-Bukhari as saying, *The sword is the key of heaven and hell; a drop of blood shed in the cause of Allah, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting or prayer: whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven, and at the day of judgment his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubim.*

Early Muslims believed that political and military superiority was necessary to fulfill their universal mission to establish Islam in the world. The world was divided into two camps: the house of Islam and the house of war. People were either Muslims or the enemies of Muslims. Professor Fazlur Rahman suggests that, "Jihad is an absolute necessity. How can such an ideological world-order be brought into existence without such a means?" Other Muslims echo this sentiment, refusing to apologize for militant attempts to spread Islam, and quoting the Qur'an in support of their position.

Modern Understanding of Jihad. Embarrassed by Islamic radicals, most Muslims in the West stress the non-violent promotion of Islam. They say that Islam is a religion of peace, radicals are the minority, and do not represent true Islam. These contemporary Muslims emphasize the idea of spiritual struggle in higher jihad. For them, jihad is internal rather than external. They understand that these medieval ways conflict with modern society. Most would accept lesser jihad as the right to defend life, property and religion. However, many Muslims believe the Qur'an and Hadith leave ample room for a militaristic interpretation of jihad.

*For suggestions on how a Christian should respond to modern jihad, please refer to page two. 

S

Population: 10 million
Religions: Muslim 92%, Christian 4.76%
Official Language: French
Peoples: Wolof 42.5%, Fulbe 24.3%,
 Serer 14.8%, Mande 8.4%, Bak 5.3%



Senegal is a republic on the Atlantic coast of West Africa. The majority of the 50 ethnic groups live on the coast and around Dakar, the capital and chief port. The economy is agricultural and dependent on groundnut cultivation and foreign aid. The nation became independent from France in 1960 as a multi-party democracy.

Senegal is a secular state with freedom of religion. Three Muslim Sufi brotherhoods are influential in political and economic life, but tolerance for other religions is a point of pride. As Muslims make up over 90 percent of the population, many peoples have never heard the gospel.

E

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Unreached People Group . . .

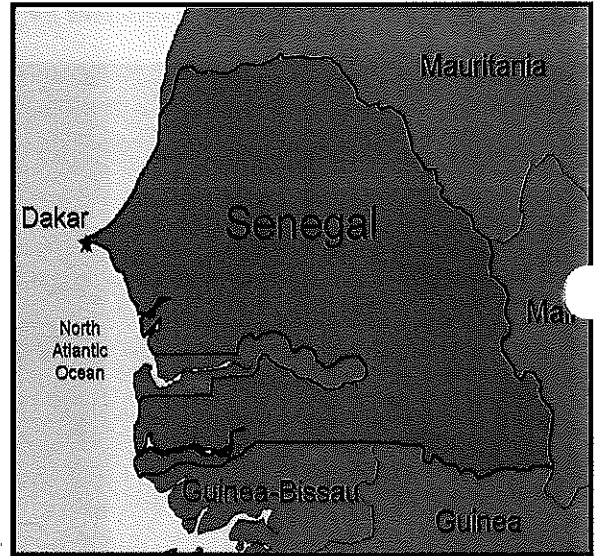
The Wolof

Location: Senegal, Gambia, Mali and Ivory Coast
Population: 1,400,000
Religion: Muslim 100%
Language: Wolof

The Wolof can be divided into three classes: the freeborn, those born into slavery and the artisans. The freeborn class ranges from noblemen to peasant farmers. The slave class is made up of the Wolof whose parents were slaves. They were born into slavery and continue serving their parent's masters. Finally, the artisans are considered a low class. This group includes blacksmiths, leather workers and musicians. Intermarriage among the three classes is a rare occurrence.

Although the Wolof are almost entirely Muslim, some pre-Islamic beliefs are still held. They believe that both good and evil spirits, as well as witches exist in each village. The bad spirits are thought to live in the bush or in tall trees in the center of the village. Protective amulets are worn to ward off the evil forces.

Most of the Wolof groups have a number of Christian resources available to them and mission agencies have targeted each of the groups. Sadly, very few of them have become Christians. There is a great need for laborers to work among the Wolof.



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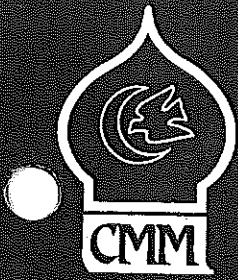
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L

Pray that . . .

- ... God will grant wisdom to the missions agencies that are targeting the Wolof
- ... the traditional Muslim culture will soften, opening doors for the gospel to be preached among them.
- ... God will reveal himself to the Wolof
- ... God will raise up prayer teams to break up the soil through worship and intercession.
- ... the Lord will give the Wolof believers opportunities to share Christ with their own people.

Information from *Operation World*, 2001 edition and Bethany World Prayer Center's "Unreached Peoples Prayer Profiles."



Jumaa Prayer Fellowship

Praying for Muslims
Around the World!

Friday, May 2, 2003. Please pray

...that at least 100 Filipino workers will be called and sent to Sumatra, Indonesia, to spearhead church planting efforts.

...for the ordinary people of Iraq, especially the Christian minority, who will suffer in the present situation, especially if there is war.

...for political stability for the country of Cote D'Ivoire. The conflict is not only devastating this country but neighboring countries, such as Mali and Burkina Faso, that depend on the wages of migrant workers living there.

Friday, May 9, 2003. Please pray

...for the relief workers and others who have gone back to Afghanistan to help rebuild that country. Pray that God will protect them and bring healing from the trauma of the destruction and devastation they have seen in the last months, especially the children.

...for Armenia and the outreach among the Kurds there. Despite their abject poverty, many are reaching out to God and desire to see a revival in this area.

...for the husband of the American woman who was killed in Sidon, Lebanon, last year as she was opening a free clinic for the people. Pray for God's comfort and hand on his life.

Friday, May 16, 2003. Please pray

...for the Islamics bloc session being taught by a CMM team member at Zion Bible Institute next week. Pray that many students will become involved among Muslims.

...for political and social stability in Turkey. The party thought to be most influenced by Islamism has taken power. Pray for the churches and that the economy might improve.

...for Sumatra, which is the fifth largest island and the largest unevangelized island in the world. Pray for a breakthrough among the 52 unreached people groups.

Friday, May 23, 2003. Please pray

...for the students at Sofia Bible College in Bulgaria as they take an Islamics course taught by a CMM team member. Pray that this course will encourage the students to reach out in friendship to Muslims in their community.

...that God will intervene in Kenya and stop the exodus from the churches. Muslims are jostling for political power to help achieve religious supremacy.

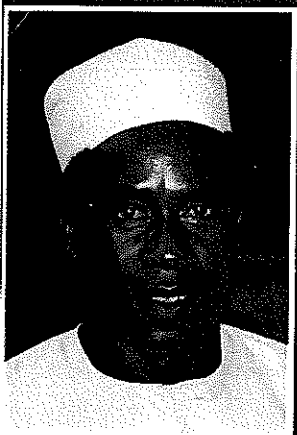
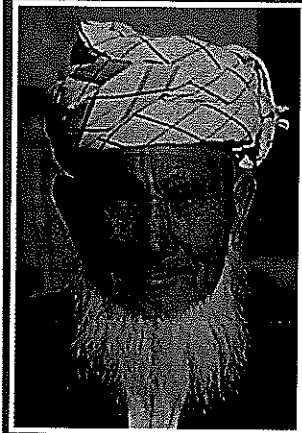
...for believers as they organize trips to Sfax in Tunisia. Pray that they will see fruit in this city that in the past has been renowned for being hardened to the gospel.

Friday, May 30, 2003. Please pray

...for the Pentecostal European Conference that is being held in Berlin from June 5 through 9. Pray that the CMM team member who will participate in this conference will be used to motivate our European brethren to reach out to the Muslims living among them.

...for a cessation of violence between the Muslim and Hindu communities in India.

...that more people will become aware of the one million Nile-Nubians in Egypt and Sudan and this awareness will result in earnest prayer for their salvation. Pray that God will create a spiritual hunger among these formerly Christian peoples.

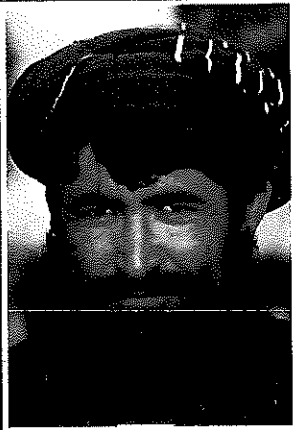


Urge, then, first of all requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone.
(1 Timothy 2:1, NIV)



Jumaa Prayer Fellowship

Praying for Muslims
Around the World!



Friday, June 6, 2003. Please pray

...for **Rafik Aliev, the powerful chairman of the State Committee for Work with Religious Associations (SCWRA) in Azerbaijan, who has declared his commitment to religious freedom**, which is guaranteed in the constitution. Pray that he will rein in rogue local authority figures and lift restrictions.

...for **a new church that has been born in a restricted access country where there was no Christian church**. Pray for the 15 new believers and for the few who are giving oversight.

...for **revival in churches in countries in or near the Muslim world** and for a growing desire by them to reach their neighbors with the gospel.



Friday, June 13, 2003. Please pray

...for **the World Harvest Institute in Australia which provides training for missions workers**. Pray for the CMM team member who will be teaching a bloc session in Islamics and Cross-cultural Communications next week. Pray for the Lord's anointing and direction in presenting useful material.

...for **Christians who are being tortured for their faith in Tanzania**. They are faced with confiscation of their property and closure of their churches.

...for **an end to the conflict between Pakistan and India over Kashmir**. Pray that the threat and intimidation will only fuel their zeal to spread the gospel.

...that **the interim government in Afghanistan may be able to bring a sense of stability to that land and the people may be brought to a place of physical and spiritual hope**.



Friday, June 20, 2003. Please pray

...for **the island of Zanzibar, populated by three people groups which are largely Muslim**. Pray that more Tanzanian Christians will reach out to these needy people.

...for **God's protection on M. who works with nomadic cattle people in Chad**. Pray that those who have trusted in Jesus will grow in their faith and witness in spite of difficulties.

...for **all those who are working in France and other European countries among Arab Muslims**. Pray that they will know God's help in touching the lives of these people who have come from different countries and backgrounds.

Friday, June 27, 2003. Please pray

...for **the Muslim population in India, which is the second largest in the world**. This group has been neglected by both missionaries and the Indian churches. Pray that more Indian Christians will dedicate themselves to Muslims.

...for **the Rohingya of Myanmar, who are Muslims living in this strongly Buddhist country**. Many have been driven from their homes and forced to become refugees in Bangladesh. Pray that somehow they may be reached with the gospel.

...for **the establishment of infrastructure that would facilitate hundreds of expatriate English speakers and teachers being able to enter Malaysia to serve**. The Prime Minister has announced his intent that English be taught in the schools beginning with 1st grade.

I urge, then, first of all that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone. (1 Timothy 2:1, NIV)