

INTERCEDE

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Welcome, MBBs, to the Kingdom of God



By Fred Farrokh

This is what we have been interceding for. Slowly but surely, they are coming. Men, women and children are leaving behind Islam for the Lord Jesus Christ and His eternal kingdom. At Global Initiative, we believe God is positioning the Church to receive a great harvest of Muslim souls.

As a Muslim-background believer in Christ (MBB) myself, and team member of Global Initiative, I would like to thank *Intercede* readers for praying for Muslims. Your prayers are being answered. In this article, I want to shed some light on this growing movement of Muslims to Christ.

Where We've Come From: It may be helpful to take a look back before looking forward. The world of Islam has stood entrenched as a challenging mission field for the Church. There are several reasons for this. First, Islam originated after Christianity and therefore includes teachings

against Christianity within its central doctrines. Second, Islamic Law prescribes the death penalty for apostates who leave Islam. Third, for many centuries the Church conducted limited ministry among Muslims. Some valiant men and women did go forth to preach Christ among Muslims. Thankfully, this number has increased in the past century.

Given the missional challenge presented by Islam, Global Initiative (then known as “Center for Ministry to Muslims”) launched the Jumaa Prayer Fellowship in 1984. Jumaa encourages Christians to pray for Muslims, especially on Fridays, which is the Muslim day of congregational worship. Global Initiative also provides specific prayer requests so Christians can pray more precisely for Muslims.

At the time Jumaa Prayer Fellowship was initiated, there were still a number of Muslim countries with *zero*

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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

Mark Brink
International Director
Global Initiative:
Reaching Muslim Peoples



It is a great honor to introduce ourselves to the *Intercede* family. My name is Mark Brink. My wife, Daniela and I were installed as the new directors of Global Initiative: Reaching Muslim Peoples on July 1. We have two sons, Andrew (18) and Luke (13). We were privileged to serve with the former directors Dr. Mark and Lynda Hausfeld in Pakistan, and have accepted the call to follow their great leadership at Global Initiative. We believe that this ministry is vital and strategic. Every week we hear reports from around the world of how God is bringing Muslims into the Kingdom of God. It is our desire to serve and expand the reach of this ministry so our mission statement can be realized: Every Muslim must know the truth about Jesus.

starting point and sustaining power to fulfill this task of evangelization. Thank you so much for partnering with us in prayer and finances as we take this training to the Church worldwide.

In 1994, I was first introduced to the *Intercede* publication and joined the Jumaa Prayer Fellowship. Little did we know that it would change the direction of our lives. It was this burden to pray for Muslims that eventually led our young family to move to Pakistan and begin our ministry to Muslims. Our story is just one of many of how joining the Jumaa Prayer Fellowship has propelled people into intercession for and friendship with Muslims.



This issue of *Intercede* discusses the increasing numbers of Muslims that are coming to Christ and how the church should respond. Reports are coming in from across the globe of how God is drawing many Muslims to the cross of Jesus Christ. Why is this? I believe it is in direct proportion to the many prayer movements interceding for Muslims to come to faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. You too have a part in this task of world evangelization of Muslims through intercession.

The team of missionaries serving at Global Initiative are traveling the globe to equip the Church to reach Muslims with the truth of Jesus. As end time events unfold before our eyes, we are faced with the urgency of our task: Every effort must be made to preach this Gospel to every tribe, tongue and people. Prayer and intercession are the

In this issue we will learn from an MBB that our job of intercession is not over when the person accepts Christ. We must continue to lift these brothers and sisters in prayer as they face many obstacles in their new walk with Christ.

May we boldly use our great weapon of intercession as we reach Muslims with the Gospel of Jesus Christ!



Muslim World News



23 Unreported Blasphemy Cases In Two Years

Pakistan

Since 2013, the All Pakistan Ulema Council (APUC) has intervened in 23 incidents involving Christians accused of blasphemy, preventing them from becoming major incidents, according to Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, the APUC chairman. (The APUC, a representative group of senior Muslim clerics, is very influential in Pakistani public life.)

It is widely acknowledged that Pakistani Christians suffer disproportionately from abuse of the implementation of the blasphemy laws, but this figure shows that many suffer, even if their blasphemy accusations are never publicly recorded, or indeed ever reported.

After the violence in Joseph Colony, a Christian enclave in Lahore, in 2013, during which about 112 houses were ransacked and set on fire by a mob of about 2,000 protestors, a large meeting of Christian and Muslim leaders was convened and Christians were assured that misuse of blasphemy laws would not continue.

“After that, we arranged training workshops with about 7,000 Muslim clerics who were exposed to how the blasphemy laws could be misused,” Ashrafi described to *World Watch Monitor*.

After a Christian couple was killed in mob violence last November in Kot Radha Kishan, there was another plan to incite 'blasphemy' charges, which Ashrafi says his council defeated. A Quran with torn pages was placed outside a local mosque to incite the crowd, so that the police could be prevented from arresting those suspected of burning and killing the couple.

“Similarly, in the Sheikhpura incident [in June 2015,

when a Christian couple was falsely accused of defaming Islam], one group of clerics said that a police case was to be registered, but our clerics stood up and opposed that,” Ashrafi said. — *World Watch Monitor*

Six churches torched in span of week

Tanzania

Six churches were burnt down in northwest Tanzania within the span of a single week in September.

First, on Sept. 23, three churches were torched – the Living Waters International Church, Buyekera Pentecostal Assemblies of God, and Evangelical Assemblies of God Tanzania churches.

Then, during the night of Sept. 26, three more churches were torched: the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Kitundu Roman Catholic Church and Katoro Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church.

“The people woke up on Sept. 27 to find their sanctuaries burnt down,” an anonymous source told *World Watch Monitor*. “The scenarios are the same; unknown people broke in, piled things onto the altar, poured petrol over it and set it alight. They fled before anyone could respond and so remain unknown.”

In early 2013, the church of Rev. Innocent Mzinduki was torched; in July 2013, a pastor identified as Joyce lost her church; in September 2013, the Maruku Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church was burned down. In early 2015, Lutheran churches in Rubale, Kyaka Mushasha and Kagondo Muleba were torched; in February, the Calvary Assemblies of God, Itawa Baptist Church, Redeemed Church, Kagondo and TMRC Kyabitembe were burned. — *World Watch Monitor*

known believers in Christ! In 1991, George Otis published a book titled *The Last of the Giants*, noting that the last major mission field for the Church was the Muslim world.ⁱ Even as Goliath “bit the dust” after David felled him with one stone, so shall the Spirit of Islam fall and million of Muslim captives be released. Indeed, the devil has no defense against the prayers of the saints.

Dramatic Changes in the Muslim World are Opening Hearts to the Gospel. Most of the Muslim world has been in a tumult the past several decades. In 1979, the Islamic Revolution in Iran replaced 2,500 years of monarchy. Iranians then got to see Islamic militancy and sharia law implemented.

Sunni militancy came to the fore about the same time with a militant movement that became known as al-Qaeda. Then, in 2010, The Arab Spring began – exactly 1,400 years after Muhammad initiated the religion of Islam in A.D. 610. The Arab Spring resulted in long-standing dictators being toppled in the Middle East. Islamic militant groups took advantage of the chaos to wreak havoc and destruction, and even re-establish the caliphate through ISIS.

This upheaval has caused many Muslims to re-evaluate Islam. The Jihadists’ claim to represent the teachings and example of Muhammad, resulting in further internal debates among Muslims.

In the heartache, anguish and wars that have engulfed the Middle East, the Prince of Peace is moving to bind up the brokenhearted. Many Muslims are now in desperate need of the peace, healing, hope and salvation that only Jesus can bring.

Dramatic Answers to Prayer. In 1994, an Assemblies of God pastor, Haik Hovsepian Mehr was martyred in Iran. Pastor Haik actively reached out to Muslims, even though he was not from a Muslim background. This marked a time period in which other noted Iranian pastors were martyred, including several of Muslim family background. These martyrdoms coincided with a tipping point in the spiritual openness of Iranians. In the two decades that have followed, Iranians have become increasingly disappointed with Islam and increasingly open to the Gospel. Though no exact numbers are



available, it is possible that Iran has the most Muslim background believers in Christ (MBBs) of any nation.

In North Africa, where the indigenous church had long since been extinguished by Islam, thousands of Muslims have now left Islam for Jesus Christ. In Algeria, they call themselves “New Christians” (*al-Masihiyeen al-Jodod*).ⁱⁱ Christian satellite TV programs in Arabic are now widely watched in the Middle East. Regarding one significant show, an Arab pastor told me a few years ago, “When one particular show is on the air, traffic stops in North Africa!” So, clearly Muslims are searching for truth in difficult times.

This April, while in Southeast Asia, I talked to an Indonesian pastor who told me, “We are continually seeing Muslims come to church, and getting saved and baptized – and we aren't even intentionally trying to reach them.” He asked if we could help equip **them to respond to the harvest in his nation – home to the most Muslims of any country.**

the Kingdom of God

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No Place to Call Home? As of this writing, there is not one agreed-upon term for these Christians of Muslim background. Perhaps the most frequently used abbreviation is MBB. One thing is certain: Life has not been a bed of roses for these newcomers to the Kingdom of God. A Turkish MBB named Ziya Meral did research on apostates from Islam and titled his work *No Place to Call Home*. He states:

“Apostates are subject to wide-ranging human rights abuses including extra-judicial killings by state-related agents or mobs; honor killings by family members; detention, imprisonment, torture, physical and psychological intimidation by security forces; the denial of access to judicial services and social services; the denial of equal employment or education opportunities; social pressure resulting in loss of housing and employment; and day-to-day discrimination and ostracism in education, finance and social activities.”ⁱⁱⁱ

For Muslim apostates who have left all for Christ, there remains the dilemma of finding a new spiritual home. The Islamic mosque is no longer an option, since the mosque exists to affirm the prophethood of Muhammad, who denied that Jesus was Lord, God, or Savior. In some places, there are no churches to attend. In other places, established churches are concerned the new converts may be imposters or informers in disguise. Nevertheless, many established churches have opened their doors and their arms to their new brothers and sisters who have left Islam. In other contexts, most of the MBBs are meeting in homes or cell groups.

Interceding for MBBS. MBBs are one of the keys to reaching the Muslim world for Jesus. Former Muslims become excellent missionaries to Muslims, once they become established in Christ. Here are some of the key prayer requests of MBBs:

1. Dealing with “Reverse Prosperity.”

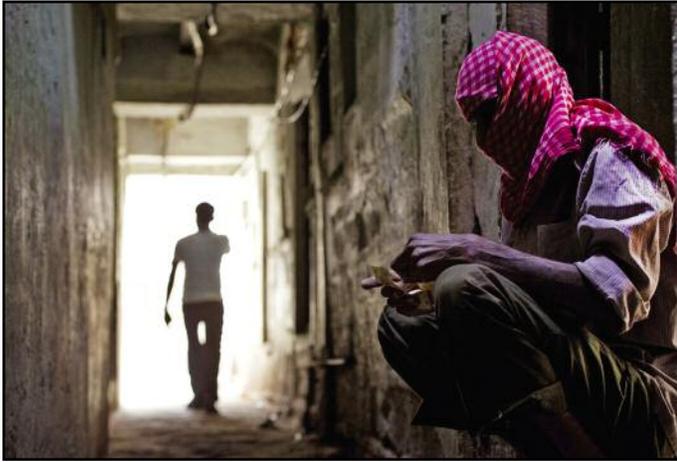
Sometimes we MBBs joke about “reverse prosperity.” One receives Christ and things fall apart – in the natural. Ziya Meral has described this above. But in the spiritual realm there is the joy of knowing Christ. As Paul stated in Philippians 3:8 that everything of this world is “rubbish” compared to gaining Christ. This is the joy of our new MBB brothers and sisters. Yet persecution remains a very real challenge in most Muslim contexts. Pray that God will give MBBs supernatural courage – like Daniel in the lions' den.

2. The “Time to Mourn.” Nabeel Qureishi is an MBB who recently wrote his testimony *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*.^{iv} If you want to get a book that describes the bittersweet journey to Christ for an MBB, this is the book for you! The sweetness is Christ, of course, and knowing one's sins are forgiven. The bitterness and the mourning come from knowing your family members are lost, and those whom you love the most have been deceived about the most important question of all: “Who is Jesus Christ?” Nabeel even asks the Christians who are witnessing to him to give him time to mourn this heartbreaking realization.

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Welcome, MBBs, to the Kingdom of God

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Prayer Profile: *Tukolor of West Africa*



There are approximately 1.1 million Tukolor living in West Africa. While most of them live in Senegal, they also comprise 7% of Mauritania's population of 4 million. The Tukolor are primarily rural and are thought to have descended from the Fulani, Wolof, or Serer tribes. They have retained their respective languages and many are fluent in Arabic. Pray that:

1. The Holy Spirit will anoint the Gospel as it is shared via radio.
2. Key national churches will have opportunities to reach the Tukolor.
3. The Tukolor people will experience “dreams and visions” from the Lord.

3. Finding New Identity in Christ. Muslim identity is centered in Muhammad. Anyone who wants to become a Muslim has to affirm the *shahada* which states Muhammad is the prophet of Allah. Likewise, when a Muslim wants to leave Islam, he or she will ultimately have to break free of Muhammad's covenant. The only power strong enough to break this covenant is the New Covenant Jesus initiated with His own blood. A missionary to Muslims named Mark Durie has written a helpful manual on this, titled *Liberty to the Captives*,^v for those who want more information on this. For MBBs, our new identity is in Jesus Christ Himself.

4. Finding a New Spiritual Home in the Body of Christ. For MBBs, our new collective identity is part of the global Church. Won't it be amazing at the Wedding Feast of the Lamb to meet all our brothers and sisters from Muslim backgrounds – Arabs, Turks, Iranians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Indonesians, Uzbeks, Malays and on and on!

MBBs like me want to thank you for praying for Muslims all these many years. Now is the time of spiritual harvest in the Muslim world. Let's keep praying and keep on witnessing! 

ⁱ Otis, George. 1991. *The Last of the Giants*. Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books.

ⁱⁱ Madany, Bassam. N.d, “Learning from the 'New' Maghrebi Christians.”

www.answerislam.org/authors/madany/maghrebi_Christians.html (accessed Aug. 2, 2015)

ⁱⁱⁱ Meral, Ziya. 2008. *No Place to Call Home: Experiences of Apostates from Islam, Failures of the International Community*. New Malden, Surrey, UK: Christian Solidarity Worldwide, p.6.

^{iv} Qureishi, Nabeel. 2014. *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus: A Devout Muslim Encounters Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

^v Durie, Mark. 2010. *Liberty to the Captives: Freedom from Islam and Dhimmitude through the Cross*. Australia: Deror Books.



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*Jumaa Prayer is now on
Facebook. Please join today:
[Facebook.com/JumaaPrayer](https://www.facebook.com/JumaaPrayer)*



Friday, Nov. 6, 2015. Please pray

- ...for European churches who are connecting with newly-arrived Muslim refugees.*
- ...for Institutes of Islamic Studies classes in Indonesia during Nov. 9-13.*
- ...for strong participation during the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church on Nov. 8.*

Friday, Nov. 13, 2015. Please pray

- ...for an Institute of Islamic Studies class in the Philippines during Nov. 16-20.*
- ...for protection for Christian minorities in Iraq and Syria.*
- ...for Engaging Islam classes at a Texas university during Nov. 19-23.*

Friday, Nov. 20, 2015. Please pray

- ...for protection for converts in Afghanistan, who have left Islam to follow Jesus.*
- ...for thousands of displaced Yezidi families – gathered near Dohuk, Iraq.*
- ...for ministries in London engaged in outreach to Iranian Muslims.*

Friday, Nov. 27, 2015. Please pray

- ...for Fatima, an Arab Muslim student who is attending Chi Alpha meetings on a U.S. university campus.*
- ...for more workers at the Oasis Center – a ministry to Muslims in a major European city.*
- ...for outreach ministries among the 800,000 Muslim Turks in Bulgaria.*

***I URGE, THEN, FIRST OF ALL THAT REQUESTS, PRAYERS, INTERCESSION AND
THANKSGIVING BE MADE FOR EVERYONE. – 1 TIMOTHY 2:1, NIV***



JUMAA PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

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Friday, Dec. 4, 2015. Please pray

...for former Muslims in Algeria who have come to the Lord in recent years. 99.7% of Algeria's 40 million people are Muslim.

...for new church planting efforts in the Muslim areas of Mindanao, Philippines.

...for Turkish pastors and congregations who have been raised up in recent years. 99% of the Turkish population of 75 million is Muslim.

Friday, Dec. 11, 2015. Please pray

...for Muslim background believers in Malaysia, where having fellowship with Christians is very risky. 95% of Malaysia's 50 million people are Muslim.

...for Muslim-focused Live/Dead church planting teams in the Middle East.

...for ministries to homeless Muslim children in Bangladesh.

Friday, Dec. 18, 2015. Please pray

...for Romanian missionaries who serve in Muslim countries.

...for the 1 million "reachable" Muslims living in New Delhi, India's capital city.

...for Korean missionaries, many of whom are strategically placed throughout the Muslim world.

Friday, Dec. 25, 2015. Please pray

...for Christmas outreaches to many of the 1 million Muslims in greater New York City.

...for Chechen Christians, who suffer greatly from the ongoing conflict between Russia and Islamic rebels.

...for the successful transportation of Bibles into Islamic areas of Central Asia.

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