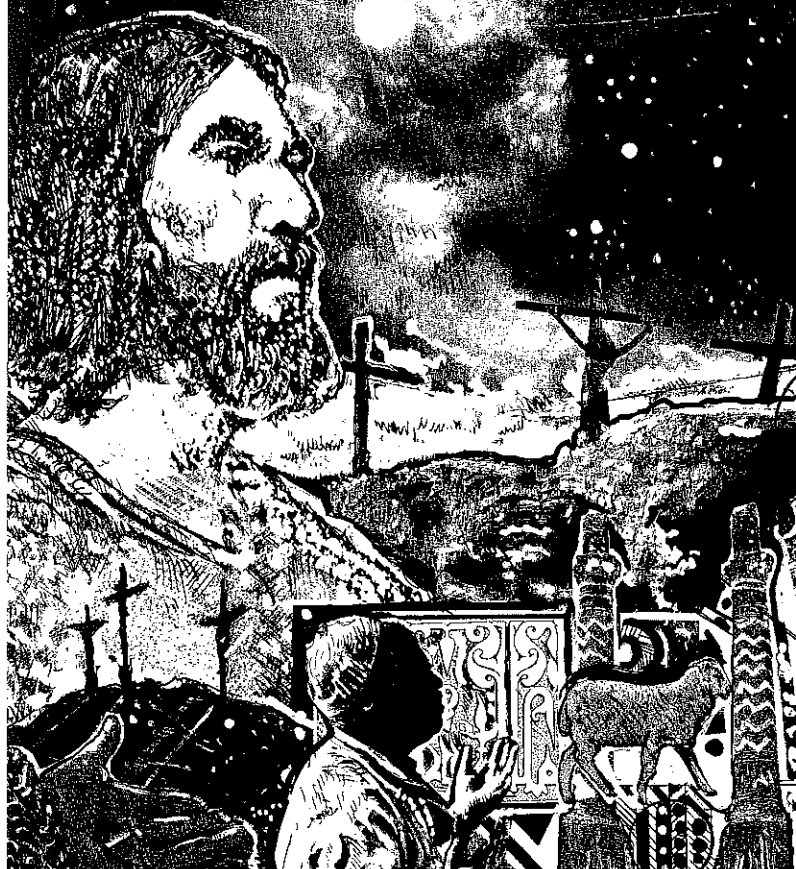


INTERCEDE

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ENCOUNTERS



EVANGELISM

Sheikh M. F. was the top religious leader in his populous Muslim country. All of a sudden his daughter became sick. She was taken to the doctor. But the doctor's report was bleak. Blood analysis, X-rays and other close investigation showed cancer. The family was informed that the medical science in that country could not help. They advised the family to take the daughter to France.

In France the young lady was taken to one of the most advanced hospitals in Paris and put under the care of a team of specialists. But that did not help either. The reports were getting worse. Her health rapidly deteriorated, and she became unable to tend to her basic needs.

One night while things in that hospital room were quiet and she was asleep, Jesus came to the room. She woke up and asked what was happening. Jesus spoke with compassion and love. He said to her: "I'm Jesus, I have come to heal you and make you live. But I want also to be your Lord and Savior."

He touched her, and she felt power go through her body. The girl immediately worshiped Jesus.

In the morning the father came to visit his daughter. He saw the great change in her health but did not want to believe the story about Jesus. The following night, Jesus came to the father and confirmed what the daughter said.

Stories of supernatural intervention like this abound in Muslim settings because traditional Muslims accept the reality of what is not seen as well as what is seen. The average Muslim not only believes in the supernatural but also is involved, to a greater or lesser extent, with spiritual forces and phenomena.

We refer to these kinds of supernatural interventions as power encounters. The term "power encounter" has a narrow as well as a broad sense. In its narrow sense, a power encounter is a debate in the mind and heart of a person whether to accept Christ or to remain loyal to his own religion. The Holy Spirit confronts and woos the person. But he in turn resists, opposes and often rejects the Word of God, unaware that what he is being offered is eternal life. In its broad sense, a power encounter refers to visible demonstrations that prove the superiority of Christ over old lords.

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Speaking on Behalf of Muslims



*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)*

Ron Peck, Director

**Center for
Ministry to Muslims**

For the past seven years, it has been my privilege and responsibility to edit this INTERCEDE prayer bulletin. I am regularly blessed by the testimonies that come to me from sincere and faithful people who are praying regularly for the Muslim people of our world. It is a special fraternity of people who care enough to both pray and fast for the salvation of those who are so religious and yet without a Savior.

On January 1, 2001, I am turning the leadership of our ministry to Dr. Jim Bennett. As a part of his duties as director of CMM, he will also become the editor of Intercede. Jim is not new to the Center for Ministry to Muslims. He has served as our associate director since he joined our team in June 1998. He is fully aware of all phases of our work and has already contributed significantly to our outreach around the world. He is well qualified for this strategic leadership role.

Jim and his wife Theda have served as missionaries in Jordan for 16 years. Jim is well versed in Arabic and has completed a Doctor of Missiology degree at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He also served as president of Continental Theological Seminary in Brussels, Belgium, for 5 years. Jim and Theda have three sons: David, Chris and Ben.

I have accepted a newly created position as director of development for the Center for Ministry to Muslims.

At the request of Dr. Bennett and the missionary leadership of our Church, I have accepted a newly created position as director of development for the Center for Ministry to Muslims. In this assignment I will be able to continue some of my overseas teaching and preaching. Already in 2001, I have trips scheduled to China, the Philippines, El Salvador and Guatemala. It's clear that I am going to continue to be quite active.

For several years my highest priority and most important goal has been to assemble a team of capable and committed people with competent leadership to ensure a fruitful future for this ministry. I am eternally thankful to God

for the wonderful people He has called to serve with me in this work.

Recently, I was reading a book on leadership written by John Maxwell. He made a statement that challenged and blessed me.

It was, "There is no success without a successor."


When I came to direct this ministry, I was keenly

aware that I was building on the accomplishments of David Irwin and Del Kingsriter who had served this ministry before me. Now as I turn the leadership of CMM to Jim Bennett, it is with great confidence. Confidence that he is God's choice for the task. And confidence that he will guide the CMM team to the greatest achievement we have ever seen.

*There is no success without a successor.
--John Maxwell*



Please pray for Jim and Theda, their family and the CMM team.

Thank you so much for your part in our work. 



Somalia

The long-term peace prospects for Somalia are improving after the election of a government led by President Abdiqasim Salad Hassan, despite continuing attacks on militia and the threat of secession by Somaliland, regional observers say.

Hassan, elected last August by a new parliament-in-exile, has appointed a national security committee to rebuild the armed forces and supervise the disarming of the population left to defend itself during a decade without a government and ruled by warlords. Observers say a trained military is needed. Seven militia members were killed in one attack, and three more died in a separate attack, raising fears that the warlords might be preparing another offensive.

"There is every possibility that the government in Somalia will work," said Abdalla Ibrahim, chief editor of Sniffer Magazine, a publication that serves Somalia, Djibouti and Ethiopia. "The people of Somalia are tired of the war and want a government at all costs."

—Newsroom

Tajikistan

Ten people died and as many as 70 were injured by two bombs that exploded during a Sunday service at Sonmin Grace Church in the capital Dushanbe last October, according to news reports. Tajik authorities say they have no suspects, but leaders of the church have been detained and interrogated.

While Tajik authorities would not speculate on who might be responsible, Russian newspapers blamed Muslim fundamentalists. The bombing came two days after the U.S. Embassy warned of a

"confirmed threat against foreigners" and evacuated its personnel from Tajikistan.

According to local church leaders, the total number of regular worshippers in Tajikistan exceeds 3,000, compared to approximately 1,500 Orthodox. The Protestants have sought members from all ethnic groups, while the Orthodox have confined themselves to traditionally Orthodox populations.

Compared with statistics for 1989, only 10 percent of the Russian-speaking population remains in Tajikistan.

—Pulse/Newsroom

Sudan

International relief agencies are finding it harder to supply food, clothing and medical supplies to war-stricken southern Sudan amid continued government bombing raids on distribution centers. Khartoum has installed Chinese-made radar stations to track incoming aircraft.

While relief was being prevented from reaching the people, Sudan had committed itself to fighting tooth and nail to get a seat on the United Nations Security Council and had drummed up regional support to accomplish it, said Nina Shea, director of the Center for Religious Freedom at Freedom House, a non-partisan, nonprofit organization that promotes liberty and democracy throughout the world.

Under intense lobbying from the United States and numerous human rights and religious groups, the United Nations General Assembly rejected Sudan's bid to win a seat. Mauritius, which had the backing of the U.S. and several south African nations, won the two-year seat on the fourth round of balloting, 113-55. Also elected to two-year rotating seats on the 15-member council were Colombia,

Ireland, Norway, and Singapore. They replace outgoing council members Argentina, Canada, Malaysia, Namibia, and the Netherlands, whose terms ended in December.

Sudan's loss "is a huge victory" for activists who have lobbied Washington for years to make the treatment of Christians and other non-Muslims in the North African country's 17-year civil war a higher priority. "It shows that when the U.S. has a policy and weighs in, it can turn the debate around," noted Shea.

—Newsroom

Sierra Leone

More than 11,500 people—reportedly thousands of Muslims among them—made public decisions for Christ last April when an evangelistic campaign was conducted in war-ravaged Sierra Leone.

A team of 27 evangelists from International Crusades and the International Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, joined churches of the Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone for evangelism in Freetown.

Since 1991, rebels of the Revolutionary United Front have been attacking civilians in order to gain control of the country's diamond mining regions. "A simultaneous outpouring of God's Spirit was reported by evangelism teams in every location where visitation and crusade meetings were being held."

—Pulse



POWER ENCOUNTERS

SOCIOLOGICAL REASONS

There are two main cultural factors within Islam that point to the necessity of the power encounter. These are a) folk Islam, and b) the Islamic concept of power.

Folk Islam

Muslims are involved with the supernatural, the transempirical, and the underworld to different degrees and in various forms. Muslims have needs that are not answered or fulfilled by orthodox beliefs. That is why people resort to folk practices such as having an amulet so that their baby will live, visiting the sheik's tomb so that a suitor will come to their daughter or going to the fortune-teller to know which neighbor stole the silver necklace. In such a context, presenting Christ as loving and all-powerful will meet receptive hearts. It will create favorable attitudes and positive responses.

The Islamic Concept of Power

The Islamic concept of power also shows the need for this kind of spiritual confrontation. This concept includes the following ideas.

The factor of triumphalism. Victory over one's foes and a subsequent triumphalism were major themes in Muhammad's wars and have been for Muslims ever since. Islamic conquests during its first century of existence included areas known today as Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, southern Egypt, northern Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Iran, part of Pakistan and Spain.

These successes apparently instilled into Muslim minds the indelible impression that such triumphalism is God's only way. Therefore in evangelizing Muslims, bringing about a power encounter is an appropriate means to show the might of Christ over all others and that His strength far exceeds Satan's.

The duty of jihad. Another facet of the Islamic perspective of power is the concept of jihad, or holy war. Jihad is the religious duty commanded in Sura 9:5 which demands that all adult Muslims answer any summons to war being waged against unbelievers. Warfare is viewed as a legitimate means for ridding the world of pagans and spreading the faith of Islam. Paradise is believed to be the automatic reward for any Muslim who dies fighting for Allah.

These strong factors all reinforce the Muslims' desire for triumph. Indeed, Muslims respect power. Weakness is not a virtue; rather it is despicable. The signs of God's approval are

unity, power and victory. Their view is that God favors people with power. They regarded the tremendous expansion of Islam as the supreme proof that their religion was chosen by God.

What does this concept of power mean for the missionary? Although Muslims know that Jesus Christ never carried a sword or fought a war, they have deep, though mostly unexpressed, veneration for Him. They respect His superiority of character and His sacredness. But above all, they respect His outstanding miraculous power, a quality on which the Qur'an and the Hadith both elaborate.

Islam's respect for power forms a bridge for witness that opens a door for ministry to Muslims. That Christ is mightier than the jinn and spirits, that sickness and disease can be cured in His name, and that spiritual victories are available through His eternal victory on the cross will arrest and command their attention.

BIBLICAL REASONS

There are also some strong biblical reasons why power encounters must be employed, focusing on these three areas in which they confirm the truth: God's love, the claims of Christ and the kingdom of God.

A Witness to God's Love

Power encounters demonstrate God's love. He comes to meet people's needs—to cast out fear, heal the sick, deliver a demonized person, supply a job, send rain, give someone a wife or a husband and help in other ways. They show that He is a God who is concerned about and interested in His people.

A Confirmation of the Claims of Christ

Power encounters confirm the claims of Christ. In a heated debate the Jews had with Jesus, He told them that His works were a clear confirmation of who He claimed to be (John 10:36-38). He cited His works as a witness to His divinity, for they showed that He was exercising supernatural power. His ability to command the winds and the waves, to heal the sick, and to raise the dead all proved that His claims were divinely supported.

A Manifestation of the Kingdom in Power

Power encounters show that the kingdom of God has come among men. The Bible and the experience of the Church demonstrate that the advance of the kingdom of God has always provoked a confrontation of forces. Spiritual

power is an important manifestation of the kingdom of God. The apostle Paul identifies the kingdom as more than mere talk; it is a matter of power (1 Corinthians 4:20). In fact, divine power is a hallmark of it.

THE VALUE OF POWER ENCOUNTERS

In Muslim evangelism the church faces spiritual warfare of a magnitude unknown in encountering any other religion or faith. This warfare is against spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms and against the rulers of this dark world. Nothing less than the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God will be able to defeat these forces.

The gospel is God's power for salvation (Romans 1:16). However, if it is offered to Muslims without the confirmation of signs, wonders, and miracles, as is the biblical pattern (Acts 14:3; Hebrews 2:3-4), it often appears superficial, limp, and unattractive. In most cases they reject it.

On the other hand, the gospel that brings with it healing for the sick, deliverance for the demonized and oppressed, and victory in the name of Jesus is more appealing. It makes sense to Muslims. Indeed, it is the gospel Christ commissioned His disciples to preach (Matthew 10:). We will advance triumphantly, unchecked by satanic opposition, when our work follows the pattern shown in the ministry of Jesus and the apostles.

Power encounters have value for Muslim converts as well. As a result of seeing God defeat the forces of evil, they are convinced that the Christian message is true. They also learn about the spiritual resources that are available for them to live for Jesus and testify of His love to others.

The church of Jesus Christ in Muslim communities, more than anywhere else, faces a difficult task. It must preserve its faith in the absence of external supports, symbols and institutions. It must be able to survive and practice biblical ethics in the midst of an ocean of humanity that at best does not understand those ethics and at worst is set against them. To do these things, the church must know that God is alive.

Like other born-again Christians, Muslim converts realize that they are under divine orders to propagate their faith. But the hard reality they face is discovering how to do so in a society that vehemently opposes them. To succeed, they must have the power of the Holy Spirit. They must know that in an actual showdown of forces, God can and will give victory. This knowledge will enable them to carry out the commission of Jesus to spread the gospel throughout the world.



Excerpted with permission from *"Islam: Introduction and Approach."*

Another Source of Power

by Dale Fagerland

Bokoum was born in Mali, West Africa, perhaps 40 or 50 years ago—no one knows for sure. Through a revelation or a dream, they had apparently been told that their son would grow up to be a very evil man. Thus, when he was a baby, his Muslim parents put out one of his eyes.

"If he were handicapped," they reasoned, surely he won't become too wicked."

The parents' fear must have led them to treat their child horribly, and Bokoum did indeed grow up to be evil. He was big, strong and violent.

Eventually he went to Djibo, Burkina Faso. There he would stake out a path leading to the market and lie in wait for his victims. Attacking several people at a time, he would beat them, rob them and leave them for dead. He was the most feared outlaw in the region.

Whenever Bokoum went on a rampage, the police tried to arrest him. At least 10 or 12 men were needed to capture and confine him. They drained blood from his veins to weaken him; then they put him in jail. But when Bokoum's blood replenished itself and his strength returned, he broke out of jail and planned his next attack.

Bokoum trusted amulets and fetishes for his power. He collected a pebble from 97 different hills and had a Muslim spiritual leader bless them. This act, he believed, gave him power over all the land among the hills.

However, as time went on Bokoum gradually became aware of another Source of power.

My wife and I were working with a small group of Christians in Djibo. When Bokoum heard that we were building a church, he was curious. He went to the work site and talked to the Christians who were volunteering their labor. God had already begun to deal with his heart, and he was not as violent with the church people as he was with others. In fact, he began to warm up to them.

To construct the building, we had to mix the cement by hand and make every block individually from a mold. Bokoum wanted to help, so we gladly hired him. He could do the work of four men. As they worked, the Christians talked to Bokoum about his soul.

Later missionary Jim Bryant and his family joined us in the work at Djibo. Because I had lived there for several years, Jim asked if I knew anyone who would serve as a night guard for his family.

"Yes," I replied. "I know someone who is better than a German shepherd, a doberman pinscher, or a pit bull terrier."

Jim hired Bokoum to be his night guard, and the Bryant family continued to talk to him about salvation. They explained that God wanted to change his life.

Little by little Bokoum came to realize that he needed this change, and finally the Bryants led him to the Lord.

Immediately Bokoum's life began to change dramatically and he burned his fetishes.

Today one would never know that he was once a feared criminal. He now has a wife and family and he tells everyone, even Muslim leaders, what God has done in his life. He knows that true power does not come from fetishes or fists, but from the Spirit of God.



COUNTRY PROFILE: ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN



The Islamic Republic of Iran was proclaimed on April 1, 1979, following a coup d'état led by the Ayatollah Khomeini. Upon his death in 1989, Khomeini was succeeded as Islamic Revolution Leader by Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei. The revolution created a theocratic republic in which Islamic law, known as Shari'a, is strictly enforced.

Population: 65,619,636
Official Language: Farsi
Ethnic Groups: Persian 51%, Azeri 24%, Gilaki and Mazandarani 8%, Kurd 7%, Arab 3%, Luri 2%, Baluch (Baloch) 2%, Turkmen 2%, other 1%
Religions: Shi'a Muslim 89%, Sunni Muslim 10%, Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian and Baha'i 1%

Note: While Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Christianity are constitutionally recognized minority religions, the Iranian government does not recognize Baha'i as a religion, but rather as a counterrevolutionary political movement.

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP: MAZANDARANI

The Mazandarani are an ethnic mix of Turkic tribes, Armenians, and Russian immigrants. Located on the Caspian Sea, the Mazandaran province survives on agricultural, fishing, and horse breeding industries. The Mazandarani language, called Palari, remains unwritten, but is verbally similar to Farsi. Currently, only one missionary agency is reaching out to the Mazandarani.

Location: Northern Iran, along the Caspian Sea
Population: 3,198,500
Religion: Ithna-Asharis Muslim, 100%
Christian/Church members: 0
Number having heard the Gospel: 490,100 (15%)
Number yet to hear the Gospel: 2,708,400

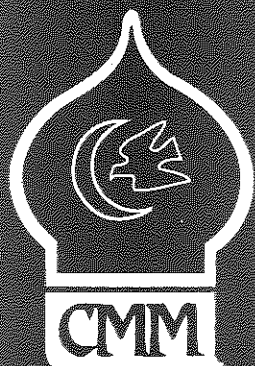
PRAY THAT...

- Key Mazandarani leaders will be saved and proclaim the gospel of Christ to their countrymen.
- A form of script will be devised for the Palari language, making it possible to translate the Bible for these people in their own language.
- More people will go to Iran to share the gospel with the Mazandarani people.

Unless otherwise noted, all information was taken from the CIA World Factbook 2000, US Department of State Annual Report on International Religious Freedom for 1999, Iran, and Bethany World Prayer Center's - The Unreached peoples Prayer Profiles.

Jumma Prayer Fellowship...

Praying for Muslims
Around the World!



*I urge, then, first of all
that requests, prayers,
intercession and
thanksgiving be
made for everyone.*

—(1 Timothy 2:1, NIV)

Friday, January 5, 2001. Please pray

...that the Christian minority in northern Ghana will not be intimidated by the strong Muslim and animistic populations in that region but will reach out with love in spite of the threats and persecution being leveled against them.

...for the CMM team member who is teaching overseas contract workers in the Philippines the next two weeks. Pray that the workers who participate will be challenged and gain insights in sharing the good news in Middle East countries.

...for Christians in the eight states in northern Nigeria who have or are in the process of implementing sharia law. Religious conflict linked to the sharia issue has resulted in hundreds of deaths.

...for a Christian worker who is ministering in a limited-access country, using mobile health clinics. Pray that he will have many opportunities to share the gospel as he ministers to the physical needs of the people.

Friday, January 12, 2001. Please pray

...for the secret believers in Mauritania. The oppression by the authorities on the believers and their families is serious in this Muslim society.

...for more Christian radio broadcasts geared to the needs of Muslim women, many of whom live very secluded lives.

...that the U.S. government will not just issue a report on International Religious Freedom but will commit itself to encourage reform in these countries who are the worst offenders, namely Myanmar, China, Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Serbia and Afghanistan.

...for "A," a Muslim car mechanic who recently accepted Christ. Pray that his wife will come to salvation as well and that they will be used of the Lord in sharing His Word with other Muslims.

Friday, January 19, 2001. Please pray

...for those who are responding to the Jesus film as it is being shown daily to many Muslim audiences throughout the world. Pray that there will be adequate follow-up to help them grow in their new-found faith.

...for the CMM team member who is teaching a course on Islamics at the Addis Ababa Bible College in Ethiopia next week. Pray that each student will be challenged concerning his involvement in outreach to Muslims.

...for a Turkish convert who was dismissed from the Turkish armed forces in 1997. He has received numerous threats since he appealed to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg and has been interrogated, beaten, tortured and ridiculed for his Christian faith.

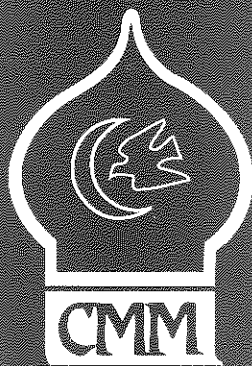
Friday, January 26, 2001. Please pray

...for a greater outreach among the 12 to 14 million people crowded into Karachi, Pakistan—a sprawling desert megacity.

...for all the participants at the Vienna Bible Training Institute who will be studying Islamics with a CMM team member next week. Pray that they will gain greater insights into effectively reaching out to Muslims.

...that God will raise up many more believers to become involved in ministering to Canada's neglected Muslims. Pray for the small fellowships that are being planted.

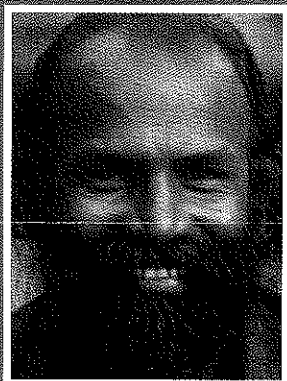
...for government leaders of Muslim countries. Pray that God will bring them to salvation and ease the affliction of believers. God is ultimately in control!



Jumaa Prayer Follows Up...



Praying for Muslims Around the World!



Friday, February 2, 2001. Please pray

...for the CMM team member who is teaching a bloc session on Islamics at Evangel Theological Seminary in Nigeria for three weeks beginning next week. Pray that some of the participants will become full-time workers among Muslims as the Lord challenges them.

...that God will raise up Christians in Germany to share the gospel with the Kurds who have been a part of the German landscape for 30 years since they arrived to meet a labor shortage.

...for members of the Ahmadiyya sect of Islam. Today there are reportedly over 500,000 members in different parts of the world. A few hundred live in Australia and several Christians are reaching out to them.

...that God will intervene in the Arab/Israeli conflict and bring a measure of peace to end open hostilities.

Friday, February 9, 2001. Please pray

...that the Mexicans who have become disillusioned with Catholicism will come in contact with genuine Christians who will share with them the truth of Jesus Christ. Pray they will not be swayed by Islamic teachings.

...that God will overrule the situation in Turkey that has not allowed any new church building to be built since 1923. Pray that the Turkish Christians will know they are not alone.

...for the thousands who have been won for Christ in Ethiopia. Pray that God will establish these new Christians in the faith and continue the growth through their faithful witness.

...for Christians in Kazakhstan as they face increasing opposition from the Muslim community and the police. Pray that the Lord will give them new boldness and protection.

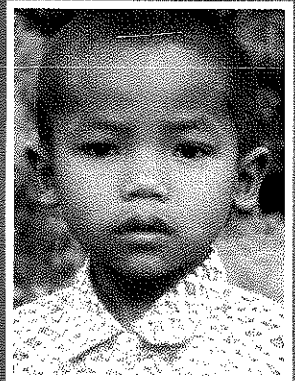


Friday, February 16, 2001. Please pray

...that international relief agencies will be able to continue supplying food, clothing and medical supplies to war-stricken southern Sudan in spite of the harassment by the Khartoum government. Thank the Lord that Sudanese Christians are finally getting their message across in the United States and Sudan did not gain a seat on the UN Security Council.

...that God will bring an end to the "ethnic cleansing" that is taking place on the Molucca Islands and that the violence won't spread to other areas of Indonesia.

...for the many Muslims who feel trapped in Islam because of fear of persecution by governments and families. Pray that God will embolden them and give them the courage to become His disciples.



Friday, February 23, 2001. Please pray

...that Christians in Tajikistan will look to the Lord to provide peace in the midst of the devastating bombings that took place during a church service in Dushanbe's Sonmin Grace Church last October. Pray that the families and friends of the victims will find spiritual healing after this devastation.

...that God will strengthen the Saudi Church and cause the government to allow them more freedom to worship.

...for Haji, a former Muslim, and his family who have been resettled in New Zealand after receiving a death sentence for apostasy in Yemen. Pray that God will heal them emotionally and give them a place of ministry.

...for Muslim students in Kenya who are participating in a Bible study. Pray that the truths of God's Word will illuminate their lives and cause them to receive Christ as Savior.

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