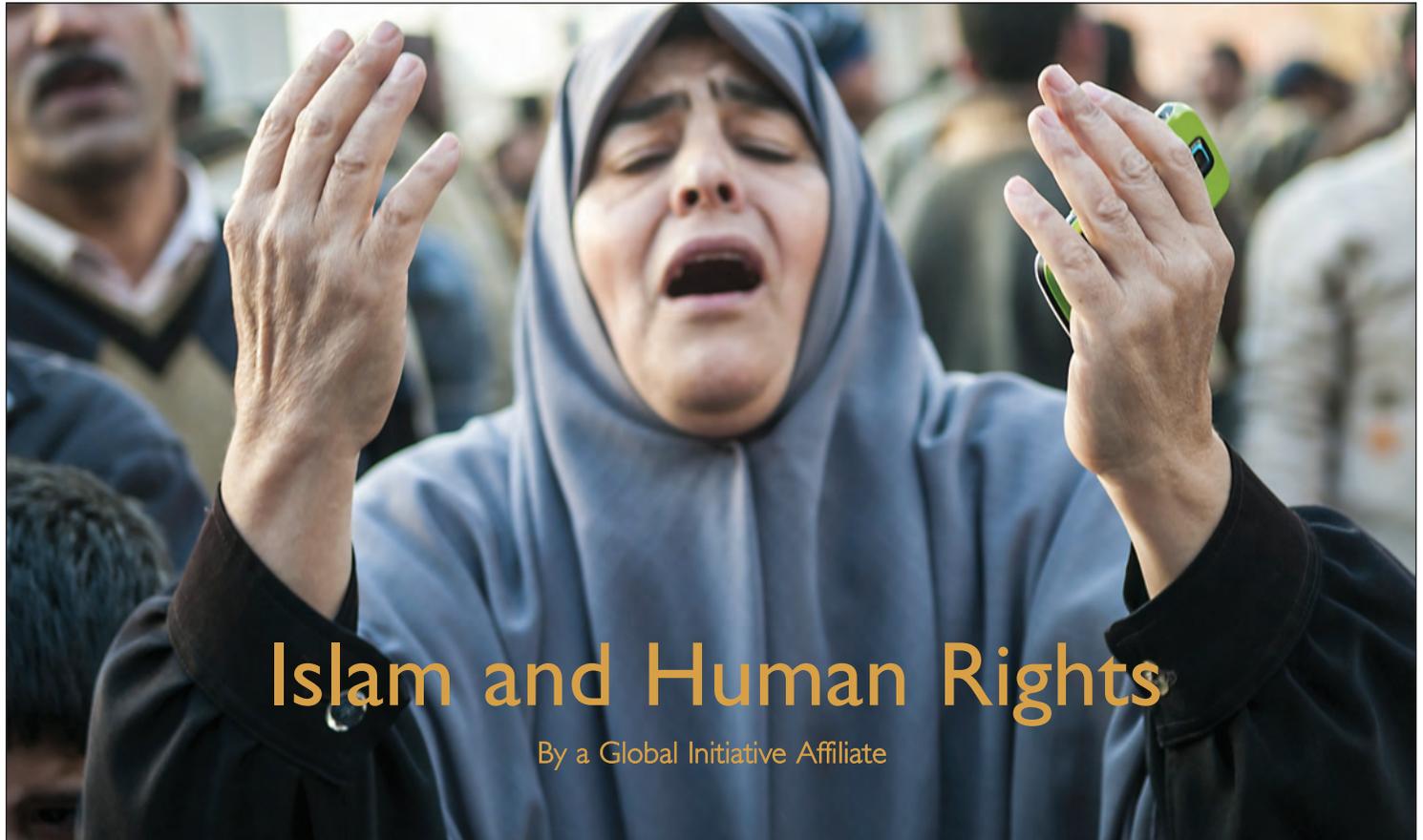


# INTERCEDE

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## Islam and Human Rights

By a Global Initiative Affiliate

The world is witnessing unprecedented numbers of Muslim refugees fleeing Islamic nations, all heading to the West for a better way of life and in anticipation of full human rights. At the same time, some Muslim lawyers, scholars and religious leaders attempt to silence any criticism of Islam by raising accusations of Islamophobia while working to infuse western legal, educational and banking systems with Islamic Sharia law.

This article examines the relationship of human rights and Islamic Sharia law in light of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) agreed upon by 48 nations in December 1948, after the Second World War, when the international community vowed never to let such atrocities happen again. To date there are 193 nations who have agreed to adopt this Declaration. (<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>.)

**UDHR Articles of Human Rights.** Article 1 states “All

human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” Article 2 says that “no distinction can be made based on race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.” Articles 3-21 provide detailed descriptions of civil and political rights, while Articles 22-27 describe economic, social and cultural rights.

The concluding Articles 28 to 30 recognize everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which human rights and fundamental freedoms set forth in the Declaration may be fully realized, and stress the duties and responsibilities which each individual owes to his community.

“The Universal Declaration has, since its adoption by the UN General Assembly, achieved great international renown as an authoritative statement of the modern standards of human rights protections and is the single most influential international human rights document” (*Islam and Human*

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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



security and human rights. They have fears – just as we do – about safety and protecting oneself and family. But they have found the value of the cross and obedience to the call of proclaiming the gospel of Christ.

What is truly valuable in your world? Is it your possessions or is it the objects that Christ values? The Word of God has much to say on this topic about what is of true value in this life. In Matthew 6:33 Christ tells us to “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.” He asks us in Matthew 6:20 to “Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven...” putting value on what is eternal and not the temporal. Jesus asks the crowd the eternal question; “For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?” (Matt. 16:26). What is the most valuable commodity on planet earth? It is the souls of mankind!

During a recent trip to the Middle East I came into contact with new believers in Jesus Christ who had come out of Islam. They shared stories of the blessings and struggles of serving Jesus Christ in a predominately Islamic context. As I sat with one of them over coffee the joy in his heart was so evident as he recounted his conversion experience. After recently being released from police detention, he expressed the determination and boldness of Christ to continue his walk of faith in Christ – despite the opposition. He is leading a small group of believers from Muslim backgrounds who are valuing Christ over all else. The Apostle Paul calls it the surpassing value in Phil. 3:8:

“More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ.”

As you read this article on Islam and human rights, may the Holy Spirit speak into your heart the surpassing value of the souls of lost Muslims around the world. May we never forget the surpassing value of knowing Christ and the value He places on the souls of the lost Muslim world. Every Muslim must know the truth about Jesus Christ. 

“There is unprecedented opportunity and unprecedented danger concerning Muslims.” This statement in an email reflected the insight from a worker in a city that had just suffered a major terror attack with many deaths. How true this statement explains the work as we help to equip the church to reach Muslims. Is the cost worth it? Yes! Does this reality of opposition deter our ministry and missionaries from the task before us? Definitely not.

Another worker in a Muslim context states, “More than I value our safety, or even our lives, I value obedience to God. I value the Gospel. I value what Christ did for us on the cross. I value the call to take that message to those who have never heard it.” This worker, just as the Apostle Paul, found that there are things of higher value than personal



# Muslim World News

## **Pastor Remains Jailed Since 2004**

*Eritrea*

Although the tiny East African nation of Eritrea has a population of just 6 million, Eritrea is one of the leading sources of refugees in Europe. There are many reasons for this, but chief among them is a lack of religious freedom.

The Eritrean government outlawed worship outside of Islam and the Orthodox, Evangelical Lutheran and Roman Catholic Church in 2002, driving all other Christian churches underground as they faced varying degrees of restrictions and attacks. Since then, thousands of Christians have been arrested and incarcerated without benefitting from a legal process. Among them are a number of prominent church leaders arrested in 2004, who remain incarcerated today, almost 12 years later. *World Watch Monitor* spoke with the family of one of these prisoners.

Haile Naigzhi, leader of Eritrea's Full Gospel Church, was arrested during the early hours of 23 May, 2004. He was taken from his home to Police Station #1 in Asmara, then moved to Wongel Mermera – a dungeon-like prison in Asmara, where he still resides, alongside at least five other prominent church leaders. They have little hope of release any time soon.

For years following Naigzhi's arrest, his wife and three children (names withheld to protect their identity) waited for his release. In 2013, his wife received credible information that the government wanted to arrest her and the children, so she decided to flee. Naigzhi's wife says: "I miss my husband dearly. It is very lonely for me." – *World Watch Monitor*

## **Religious Police Loosen Grip?**

*Saudi Arabia*

Saudi Arabia's official religious police were ordered to conduct their affairs with "gentleness and lenience" in a new directive issued in Riyadh. Its religious police, or 'Haia,' known as the Commission responsible for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (CPVPV), is named from a direct quotation from the Qur'an. It requires all living under Saudi jurisdiction to abide by its interpretation of Islam's rules and its prophet's directives. Religious officers will no longer be allowed to detain anyone. – *World Watch Monitor*

## **Message to the Faithful**

*Iran*

In the face of a crackdown that has crippled Iran's house-church leadership, an imprisoned convert from Islam has managed to sneak a message of encouragement to Christians. Ebrahim Firouzi, held in Rajai Shahr Prison, exhorted Iranian Christians to continue proclaiming Christ. "If you are courageous in God's way, God's grace will be with you," 31-year-old Ebrahim Firouzi stated. "Do not fear what you are doing, and raise the banner of Jesus in the name of God." The message comes at a particularly dark time for Christians in Iran, where the government has left only a few if any Farsi-language churches open, according to advocacy group Middle East Concern (MEC), which confirmed the authenticity of the message. Christians have no other option but to hold meetings in homes, which are illegal and heavily persecuted. – *Morning Star News*

*Rights: Tradition and Politics*. Westview Press, Boulder, Colo., A. E. Mayer 2007).

**Universal Human Rights.** “Human rights”, as defined by the UDHR, are rights inherent to all human beings, by virtue of our humanity, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible and cannot be granted or taken away. Universal human rights are often expressed and guaranteed by law, in the forms of treaties, customary international law, general principles and other sources of international law.

**Islam and Human Rights.** According to Ann Elizabeth Mayer, author of *Islam and Human Rights: Tradition and Politics*, “Muslims have espoused a wide range of opinions on rights – from the assertion that international human rights replicate values already inherent in Islamic teachings and are fully compatible with Islam to the claim that international human rights law is the product of alien, Western culture and represents values that are repugnant to Islam. In between these extremes, one finds a range of compromise positions that in effect maintain that Islam accepts many but not all aspects of international human rights law or that it endorses human rights with certain reservations and qualifications.”

Anglican Bishop Michael Nazir Ali notes “Most Muslims countries have subscribed to international treaties, such as the UN Declaration of Human Rights, but they subordinate such agreements to the provisions of Sharia, which in many cases negates the effects of these documents” (*Intercede*, Jan./Feb. 2013).

**The Role of Sharia Law.** “Islamic law, or Sharia is a complex legal system derived from the Islamic source texts Quran and Hadith (traditions of Muhammad’s words and deeds) through interpretation, commentary, and case law. Sharia tries to describe in detail all possible human acts, dividing them into permitted (halal) and prohibited (haram). It divides them into various degrees of good and evil such as obligatory, recommended, neutral, objectionable and forbidden. It is a vast compendium of rules regulating in detail all matters of devotional life, worship, ritual purity, marriage and inheritance, criminal offenses commerce and personal conduct” (*Barnabas Aid Journal*,

Jan./Feb. 2007). Four Sunni schools of law and one Shia were codified by the 10th century. However, there is not one agreed upon Sharia law that all Muslims follow.

**Incompatibility of Sharia Law and Universal Human Rights as Defined by the UDHR.** Islamic Sharia law particularly discriminates against and restricts the human rights of women, non-Muslims, and Muslims who choose to convert to another faith, referred to as apostates.

**Women’s Human Rights.** Mayer describes the situation of women governed by Sharia law: “The pre-modern jurists generally treated women as needing male tutelage and control, imposing many disabilities on women, putting them in a distinctly subordinate role vis-à-vis men within the family, and largely relegating them to secluded domesticity. Jurists condoned the marriage of young girls, which in practice meant that girls could be married off against their will by male marriage guardians. According to the jurists, women were required to be monogamous, whereas men could have up to four wives at a time. Wives owed obedience to their husbands, who were entitled to keep them at home and to beat them and to withhold maintenance for disobedience. Husbands could terminate marriages at their discretion simply by uttering a divorce formula, whereas wives, according to many jurists, needed to overcome difficult hurdles to obtain a divorce over their husbands’ objections. Men enjoyed great power as the guardians of minors, and after a divorce, men got custody of children once they passed the stage of infancy. In the scheme of succession, women got one-half the share of males who inherited in a similar capacity (meaning that they stood in the same relationship to the deceased)” (Mayer 2007, 115). These rules apply in Islamic countries ruled by Sharia law today and are incompatible with UDHR Articles 1, 2, 7 and 16.

The UDHR supports equal rights for women and recently adopted a new campaign aimed at ending violence against women. In response, the Muslim Brotherhood issued a statement condemning this declaration for violating Sharia principles.

**Rights of Non-Muslims.** Muslims in Sharia-based countries consider themselves as having superior rights to non-Muslims. In Muslim majority countries, Jews and Christians are considered *dhimmis*, a class of people “protected” from death on the condition that they do not bear

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arms, treat Muslims with respect, pay a special tax called *jizya*, and do not behave arrogantly. *Dhimmis* cannot testify against a Muslim in court or hold any office of authority above a Muslim. *Dhimmis* can practice their faith in their churches and synagogues, but not in public. In Sharia dominated countries church bells cannot be rung, no new church buildings can be built, and existing churches cannot be repaired. When ISIS attacked the city of Mosul (Iraq) Christians were given the choice to convert to Islam, be killed or to become *dhimmis*. Again, all these conditions are incompatible with UDHR Article 18.

**The Right to Convert.** All of the schools of Sharia agree that adult Muslim males who change their religion (apostates) should be killed. Even if these apostates are not killed, they face disinheritance, beatings, threats, torture and prison which is in direct conflict with UDHR Articles 2 and 18 which grant everyone the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and also include the right to change religion.

The corporal punishments in Sharia (*hudud ordinances*) for offences seen as against God himself, include the death penalty for apostates, stoning or lashes for adultery; amputation of limbs for theft; lashes for drinking alcohol; and imprisonment, amputation or death for highway robbery. Since most Muslims believe that Sharia is God's revealed system of law, Muslim members of the United Nations have systematically tried to introduce elements of Sharia into the UDHR.

## Modern-Era Islamic Declarations of Human Rights

**1981 Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights.** One of the first attempts was the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights (UIDHR) written by the London-based Islamic Council, a private organization affiliated with the conservative Muslim World League. It masked many of its overt religious references in its English translation. For example, Sharia Law was referred to throughout the English version of the document as simply "the law" – easily misleading readers. The UIDHR was widely rejected by international jurists.

**1990 Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam.** Sa'id Rajai Khorasani, an Iranian official and representative to the UN claimed in 1982 that the UDHR was a "secular understanding of the Judeo-Christian tradition" and

that it is impossible for Muslims to implement it without contravening Islamic law.



In accordance with this criticism, the then 45-member states of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) adopted the more secularly worded Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam (CDHRI) which, despite its claim to be a general guidance for member states of the OIC and complement the UDHR, undermines many of the rights the UDHR is supposed to guarantee. When implemented, the CDHRI would essentially remove the universality that underpins the UDHR, providing the 45 signatories and all of their citizens with a set of human rights based on an undefined interpretation of Sharia law (*Midstream*. Littman, David. New York, February/March 1999).

Bishop Nazir Ali says, "It is interesting to compare the UN Declaration of Human Rights with the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam. In the latter there is no equivalent to Article 18 (on freedom of thought, conscience and religion) of the former and all provisions are ultimately subject to Sharia. This approach has resulted again and again in important rights under the Article 18 of the UN Declaration being denied in Islamic countries on the ground that they contravene Sharia. This situation has caused much frustration to human rights activists, constitutional lawyers, and even progressive regimes as any provision in the law can always be trumped by Sharia" (*Intercede*, Jan./Feb. 2013).

**2011 Defamation of Religions Resolutions.** From 1999-2010 the OIC introduced resolutions originally known as "Defamation of Islam," and changed in later versions to "Defamation of Religions", that sought to

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restrict freedom of expression as a way to combat defamation of Islam. After repeated rejections, the OIC shifted their approach in 2011 from protecting religious beliefs to the protection of believers. That resulted in the unanimous adoption without a vote of UN Resolution 16/18 introduced by Pakistan and co-sponsored by the United States. Resolution 16/18 seeks to limit speech that is viewed as "discriminatory" or which involves the "defamation of religion" – specifically that which can be viewed as "incitement to imminent violence."

Not only in the UN, but also in some Western and non-Muslim states the seemingly moderate Islamic establishment is skillfully maneuvering within the legal systems to enforce "hate speech" and libel laws. Large funds are set aside for hiring skillful lawyers to sue critics in the courts and silence them. Free speech is thus being attacked by Islamic organizations. This widespread use of Islamic "lawfare" is beginning to limit and control public discussion of Islam, as well as of the threat posed by Islamic terrorism. It presents a real threat to both civil rights and national security in Western States (*Barnabas Aid Journal*, July-August 2012).

In December 2015, Resolution 569 was introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives after an ISIS inspired attack in California left 14 dead and 23 injured. The Resolution states, "the victims of anti-Muslim hate crimes and rhetoric have faced physical, verbal, and emotional abuse because they were Muslim or believed to be Muslim," and the House of Representatives "expresses its condolences for the victims of anti-Muslim hate crimes." The House Resolution singles out Muslims in the United States as an especially vulnerable religious group that needs special protection to the extent that the Resolution "urges local and Federal law enforcement authorities to work to prevent hate crimes; and to prosecute to the fullest extent of the law those perpetrators of hate crimes."

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, of all 1,149 anti-religious hate crimes reported in the United States in 2014, only 16.1% were directed against Muslims. Notably, no similar House Resolution has appeared condemning the much higher percentage of hate crimes against Jews – over three times as many as against Muslims. The House Resolution is unsettlingly similar to the UN Human Rights Commission's Resolution 16/18,

which is an attempt to establish Islamic "blasphemy laws," making criticism of religion a criminal offense. As of now, HR 569 has been referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.

**The 2015 Muslim Reform Movement.** In 2015 moderate Muslims moved to counter what they describe as the "hijacking of Islam" by extremist groups. Under the title "Muslim Reform Movement" disparate groups promote "a respectful, merciful, and inclusive interpretation of Islam." In their "Declaration for Muslim Reform" the stated goal is to seek to reclaim the progressive spirit with which they maintain that Islam was born in the 7th century – and to "fast forward it into the 21st century." The Muslim Reform Movement prides itself in "fully supporting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations in 1948."

**The 2016 Marrakesh Declaration.** The Marrakesh Declaration (January 2016) signed in Morocco by more than 250 Muslim religious leaders, heads of states and scholars, promotes defending the rights of religious minorities in Muslim countries in an attempt to distance themselves from the ISIS atrocities committed against Christians and Yazidis. An important caveat in their conclusion is that the final arbiter of human rights will be the Islamic document "The Charter of Medina." Additionally, since the human rights of religious minorities are not protected in many of their own countries, there is concern from the international community that there will be no follow through on these sentiments.

**Conclusion.** The UDHR is established on the principle that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and they should be granted to people without discrimination. Most attempts by Islamic organizations to address and embrace the UDHR have been derailed by the insistence that human rights are finally determined through the lens of Islamic Sharia law – but not because humans are created in the image of God. The fact is Muslims do not believe man is/was created in the image of God. For Christians, the concept of man created in the image of God is the fundamental basis for human rights. It is of utmost importance that ministries concerned about the eternal destination of Muslims – also be willing to raise their voices on behalf of all human beings who live under the sway of Islam. 



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Facebook. Please join today:  
[Facebook.com/JumaaPrayer](https://www.facebook.com/JumaaPrayer)*



**Friday, July 1, 2016. Please pray for**

*...Muslims worldwide, who in the next few days will complete the obligatory fasting month of Ramadan.  
...Institute of Islamic Studies classes at a Midwest seminary in the U.S. during July 5-9 and July 11-15.  
...European churches and ministries who are engaged in reaching Muslims, especially Muslim refugees.*

**Friday, July 8, 2016. Please pray for**

*...a church in the Kabyle, Algeria area which is threatened with closure. In recent years thousands of Kabyle Berbers have left Islam to follow Jesus.  
...true repentance for members of ISIS, that they may come to treasure Christ as Lord, above all.  
...expatriate business workers in Sudan and Chad; that Muslims will encounter Jesus through their integrity and witness.*

**Friday, July 15, 2016. Please pray for**

*...the growing number of international churches being planted in the predominately Muslim countries of the Arabian Gulf region.  
...over 1,000 imprisoned Sudanese Christian women, mainly arrested for “breaking Islamic shariah law.”  
...former Muslim Twen (pseudonym), a 32-year-old Eritrean Christian woman, imprisoned since 2005 for “witnessing unlawfully.”*

**Friday, July 22, 2016. Please pray for**

*...Global Initiative team members who are conducting “Reaching Muslims” sessions with leadership personnel in the U.S. state of New York on July 27.  
...Christians in northern Cameroon, being targeted by Boko Haram militants.  
...New Life Center in a strategic city of Spain. Fifty new visitors (mostly Muslims) per week come to their various outreaches and hear the gospel for the first time.*

**Friday, July 29, 2016. Please pray for**

*...former Muslim Hamid (pseudonym) in Saudi Arabia, who is increasingly excluded from family gatherings due to his faith as a follower of Jesus Christ.  
...Filipino missionaries who are training for outreach to the 13 Muslim tribes in the south.  
...20 Iranians from Muslim backgrounds who have recently come to Christ in Vienna, Austria.*

***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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Facebook.com/JumaaPrayer*



**Friday, August 5, 2016. Please pray for**

*...a small group of Muslim women in Australia who have requested help from Christians in understanding Jesus' "sayings" in the Bible.*

*...six Muslim background Bangladeshi Christians who faithfully go into the crowded streets of a major city and distribute Bibles and literature.*

*...former Muslim Khamis (pseudonym) in Zanzibar. He is recovering after a knife attack by his three brothers.*

**Friday, August 12, 2016. Please pray for**

*...the many ministries working to produce Islam-specific materials to be accessed online or by TV or radio.*

*...hundreds of underground house cell groups meeting in Iran. 99% of attendees come from Muslim backgrounds.*

*...Indonesian believers from Muslim backgrounds, who desire wisdom in expressing their faith to Muslim family and neighbors.*

**Friday, August 19, 2016. Please pray for**

*...former Muslim Iklas (pseudonym) and his family in Kazakhstan. Iklas was recently jailed for passing out New Testaments on the street.*

*...more laborers around the world who will love Muslims and share Christ with them.*

*...Christian humanitarian workers in Afghanistan. 99.8% of Afghanistan's population of 33.4 million are Muslims.*

**Friday, August 26, 2016. Please pray for**

*...Institute of Islamic Studies classes in Romania during Aug. 29 – Sept. 2.*

*...Christians workers who are sharing the gospel with Muslim Kurds in different parts of the United Kingdom.*

*...Ali (pseudonym), a Uyghur convert from Islam, who continues to serve a 15-year prison sentence in China.*

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