

# INTERCEDE

VOL. XIV, NO. 3

MAY/JUNE, 1998

## Who Jesus Is

by **Richard P. Bailey**

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**W**e believe in Jesus more than you do!" was a shocking statement made to me by a zealous Muslim some years ago.

As I questioned him as to his meaning, I found that what he was actually saying was, "We Muslims believe in all the prophets, and we especially respect Jesus as one of the greatest. You Christians, however, blaspheme by saying He is 'the Son of God' and dishonor Him by saying He was crucified by evil men!"

I'm afraid I did not really appreciate what then seemed to me to be an ignorant and outrageous statement! I now know that the viewpoint is simply the result of what Muslims have been taught all their lives about Jesus. Unfortunately, Islam's teaching about Christ, in many ways, is both ignorant of and a deliberate rejection of the Bible's message. Although there are many similarities, the "Messiah Isa, Son of Mary" of Islam is far different

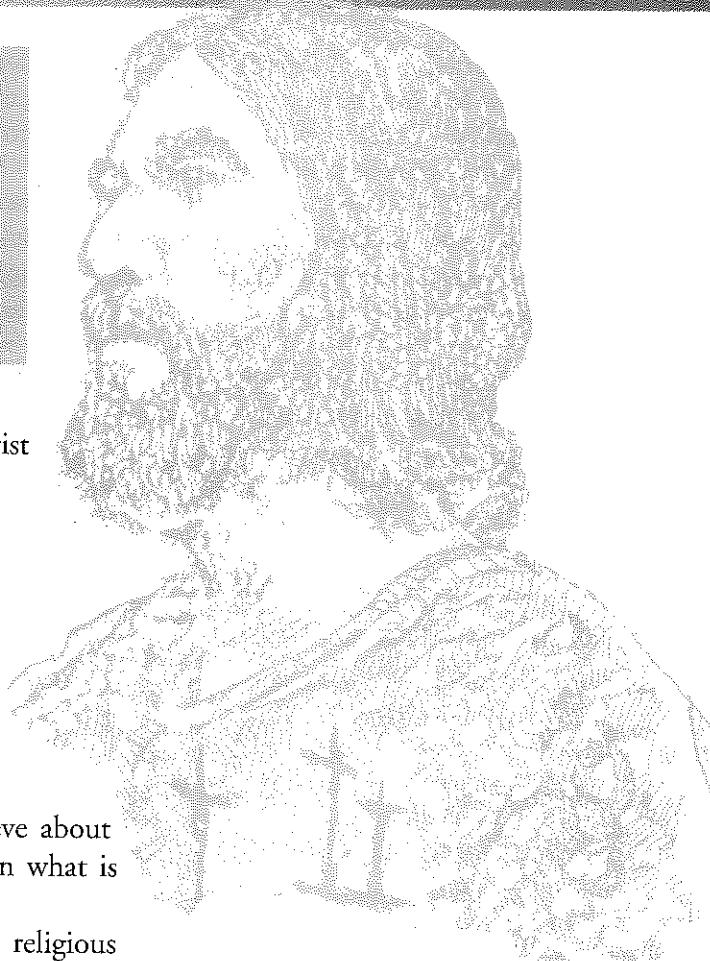
than the Lord Jesus Christ of the Bible.

If we are going to be able to help Muslims truly see Jesus as He really is, it is important to look through their eyes and seek to understand what they have been taught about Jesus.

What Muslims believe about Jesus is based initially on what is written in the Qur'an.

However, Islam is a religious system built not only on the Qur'an, but on other sources as well. Thus, we also need to look at the traditions (*Hadith*), as well as commentaries of highly-respected Muslim scholars. As we study these three major sources, we discover that the Qur'an itself gives only a limited amount of information, that the traditions add further detail but also introduce some seeming contradictions, and that the commentaries introduce more information about Jesus, including fragmented and distorted accounts taken from the Gospels or New Testament apocryphal books.

According to the Qur'an, before



*The Islamic Jesus is not the Son of David who will rule the world in righteousness... but a Muslim Caliph who will return to rule the world with Qur'anic law and complete the establishment of Islam.*

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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



It is often difficult for Christians to fully understand how Muslims think and feel. Because our customs and beliefs are so different, clear lines of communication between us generally do not exist.

Though the majority of Christians view Islam as the religion of Muslims—much as we look at Hinduism as the religion of Hindus or Buddhism as the religion of Buddhists—that is not the case at all. Islam is far more than religious beliefs and practices. Islam is a way of life that touches everything in the life of an individual, a family, and a community.

*What is missing in Islam?  
There is no savior.*

Individuals who are sincere followers of Islam are devoted to its religious practices. Daily they confess their belief in God and they faithfully say their ritual prayers. They are also faithful in giving alms to the poor, as well as in keeping the fasts that their religion prescribes.

On a community level, devoted Muslims are also faithful to follow rules that have been instituted. Muslim women adhere to strict codes of modesty both inside and outside their homes. And in many Muslim communities, the Islamic form of banking without interest is practiced religiously.

Severe punishment for wrong-doing is part of those communities that have instituted *Sharia* (Islamic Law). A thief will often have a hand amputated as a penalty for his crime. And in the situation of adultery, a person may actually be stoned to death. Sounds pretty harsh, doesn't it? It's very much like the Old Testament Jewish teaching of "an eye for an eye."

Many community values that are part of Islam are to be greatly admired. Faithful Muslims are opposed to the use of drugs and alcohol, and they have no tolerance for pornography and homosexuality. They are also against the aborting of unborn babies.

You might possibly be thinking that with all of these admirable religious practices that seem to produce fine,

law-abiding, moral individuals, "What is missing in Islam?" To that I must reply, "There is no savior." And without a Savior, there is no hope. Without hope, their searching hearts are always empty.


True followers of Jesus can introduce Muslims to our Savior. We can help them understand that Jesus Christ came to this world to save sinners. We can reach out to them in love and show them that without a personal relationship with Jesus, there is no salvation or hope.

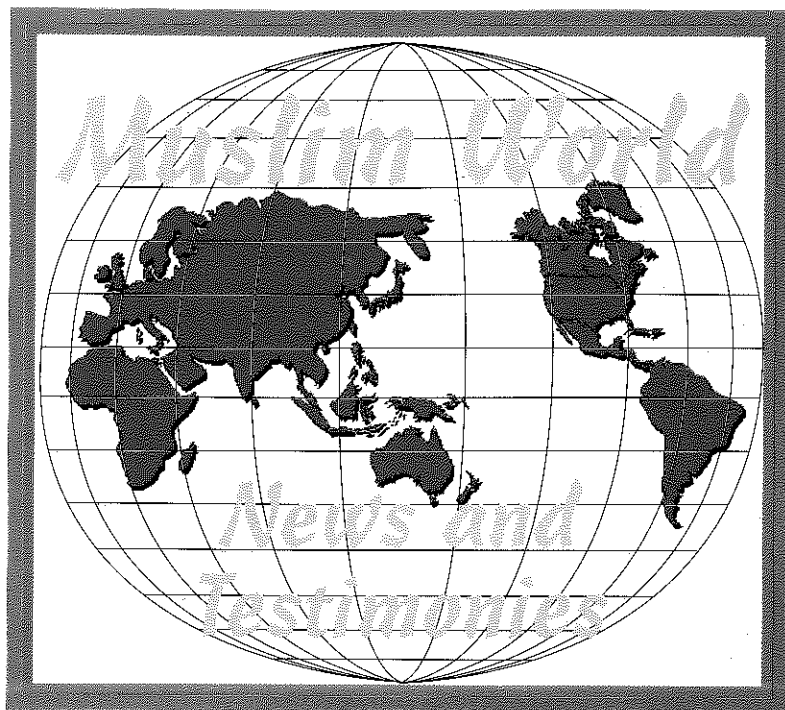
Religion alone will never provide what the heart of man is searching for. It didn't for the Jews in the time of Christ, and it doesn't for Muslims today. In Galatians 4:4, Paul says, "When the time had fully come, God sent His Son, ...to redeem those under the law..." Though most would say Paul was speaking about the Jews, without doubt the broader spiritual application of this verse reaches all those under systems of religious law even today!

*Religion alone will never  
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man is searching for.*

God's eternal purpose has always been redemption. Almost 2,000 years ago—when the time was right—He sent His Son to redeem us from our sins. Christ came as a Savior on a mission of eternal redemption.

Today God has again determined that the time is right! This "fullness of time" from God's perspective is a unique and special opportunity for you and me to obey His mandate to proclaim the good news of the gospel throughout the world. Today is the day He has ordained for Muslims to meet their Savior.

We must recognize the lateness of the hour in which we live and deepen our commitment to proclaim the good news to those who have yet to receive a clear witness of God's plan of redemption. God's Word is clear. He is not willing that *any* should perish...including the 1.2 billion Muslims scattered around the globe! 



## Belarus

Another CMM team member Harry Morin, recently taught two courses at the Theological Institute of Belarus, located in the capital city of Minsk. Sixty-nine students studied *Introduction to Islam* and *Cross Cultural Communications*.

In his evaluation, one student stated, "Everything I have learned in this course was absolutely new and very fascinating to me. My view of the world of Islam has been changed tremendously. The course helped me to be drenched with love and understanding for Muslims."

There are more than 50 million Muslims in the former Soviet Union. There is a great need there for trained workers to reach them with the gospel.

—CMM News


## Uzbekistan

The Uzbek leader of an indigenous Protestant congregation in the city of Nukus has been sentenced to 2 years' hard labor on criminal charges of leading illegal church services. Pastor Rashid Turibayev was found guilty in late October of violating article 217 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which outlaws unsanctioned assemblies, meetings, parades, and demonstrations. According to Open Doors, the court also sentenced Turibayev to internal exile, in an apparent effort to isolate him from contact with relatives or other Christian believers.

—Compass Direct

## Somalia

Flooding has killed more than 1,500 people, and displaced 230,000 in Somalia. The disaster could get worse quickly. The muddy waters threaten to bring on famine over the next 6 months, since many crops have been wiped out. Malaria is said to be rampant, with cholera expected soon. While the European Union and the United States have pledged aid, it is not nearly enough. Many potential donors are holding back because of the continuing clan violence.

—Pulse 

## United States

Two personnel from the Center for Ministry to Muslims served as guest lecturers for the David Irwin Chair of Islamics at North Central Bible College, Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Building Bridges" was the theme for this year's annual 3-day event, named after Dr. David Irwin, founder of CMM, whose life tragically ended in a car accident in 1984.

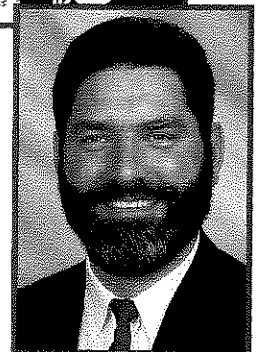
CMM's Dale Fagerland and Tommy Hodum preached in three chapel services and lectured in several Cross-Cultural Ministries (or "missions") classes. The 2 1/2 hour workshops, held each afternoon, were attended by nearly 50 students who were highly motivated by missions. These sessions offered unique opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of and love for Muslim peoples. They also served to promote CMM's vision for ministry to Muslims and to encourage the development of skills for effective witness.

—CMM News



Tommy Hodum (far left, above) and Dale Fagerland (far right) ministered to students at NCBC.

Tommy Hodum, a nationally-appointed home missionary, has joined CMM's ministry team. Hodum will be involved with Muslim Awareness Seminars here in the States.



The Jesus of Islam is neither God nor a man like us, but a kind of fictional Hercules, somewhere in between. He does not say, 'I am the way,' but rather, 'Islam is the straight path.' He is not 'The Word of God,' but simply 'A word' (decree) of God causing Mary's body to miraculously conceive a son. He is not the man of authority, saying, 'I say to you' and 'I AM,' rather, He is 'no more than a slave' of Allah.

# Who Jesus Is

Continued from page 1

Mary conceived Jesus she was told by the angel Gabriel, "God giveth thee glad tidings of a word from Him. His name will be Messiah Jesus, the son of Mary" (3:45). Jesus is also called, "His Word, which he bestowed on Mary" (4:171).

To Christians, this might seem like a clear admission of who Jesus is; but this word of Allah is not the "logos" of John 1. The "kun" of the Qur'an is merely one decree or command from God causing Mary's body to conceive miraculously without the normal human means: "God createth what He willeth. When he hath decreed a plan, He but saith to it, 'Be!' and it is!" (3:47). "The similitude of Jesus before God is as that of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, 'Be!' and he was" (3:59).

Islam does not teach that Jesus' birth reveals anything unique about Him. Rather it simply reveals the power of God to do another miracle in the life of another prophet!

Without anything like Matthew's or Luke's genealogies of Mary and Joseph, showing Jesus' descendance from the tribe of Judah, the Jesus of Islam knows nothing of the promised Messiah's claim to the throne of His father David.

Not only is there no genealogy of Jesus in the Qur'an, but it says instead that, "The similitude of Jesus before God is as that of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, 'Be!' and he was" (3:59). Thus without realizing it, and perhaps in an attempt to show the limitless power of Almighty God, Islam seems to have presented a Jesus who miraculously came into being on the spot without any link to Adam and the human race.

There is no appreciation of Jesus being the "Son of Man" who "shared our humanity," or the "Seed of the Woman" who came to deliver us from Satan's power. The only

reason Jesus was born of the virgin Mary was because Allah chose to do it that way.

The Qur'an calls Jesus the "son of Mary" 25 times. This is the only name that has some obvious meaning. He is called "Isa" 26 times, without any explanation of that name. The derivation and meaning of the name "Isa" is uncertain, although there are several theories which exist. The Hebrew meaning of Jesus, *YHWH is Salvation*, is not to be found in Islam. Jesus is also called "Messiah" eight times in the Qur'an, but that term likewise is never explained. So He is simply "Messiah Isa, son of Mary," not "God's Anointed One" or "God's Salvation."

According to the Qur'an, God protected Jesus from the Israelites who tried to harm Him (5:113). In fact, God raised Him up to himself in heaven to deliver Him from their attempt to crucify Him.

"They [the Jews] said (in boast), 'We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Apostle of God'—but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them. And those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge but only conjecture to follow. For of a surety they killed him not. Nay, God raised him up unto Himself..." (4:157, 158). Most Muslims believe the phrase "but so it was made to appear to them" means that God caused Judas to look like Jesus, so the Jews mistakenly crucified him instead. **There is no savior in Islam!**

Although Islam presents Jesus as the only prophet who went to heaven alive, nevertheless, the Hadith describes Him as being among, but in no way different from, the deceased prophets that Muhammad saw there on his night journey (Bukhari; Vol. IV; 640; Muslim; Vol. I; 313, 314)!

The Hadith gives considerable detail about Jesus' return at the end of the age. It says God will cause Him to descend from

heaven on Damascus' white minaret to rule and judge the world with Qur'anic law, break all the crosses, kill all the pigs, and stop the *jizya* tax on non-Muslims (Bukhari; Vol. I; 657, 658; Muslim; Vol. I; 287-292). He will also find and kill the Anti-Christ, "*Dajjal*" (Muslim; Vol. IV: 6924, 7015, 7023), all by the will and power of God.

So in conclusion, we find the Jesus of Islam to be neither God nor man like us, but a kind of fictional Hercules, somewhere in between. He does not say, "*I am the way,*" but rather, "*Islam is the straight path.*" He is not *The Word of God*, but simply *a word* (decree) of God causing Mary's body to miraculously conceive a son. He is not the man of authority, saying, "*I say to you*" and "*I AM,*" rather, He is "no more than a slave" of Allah.

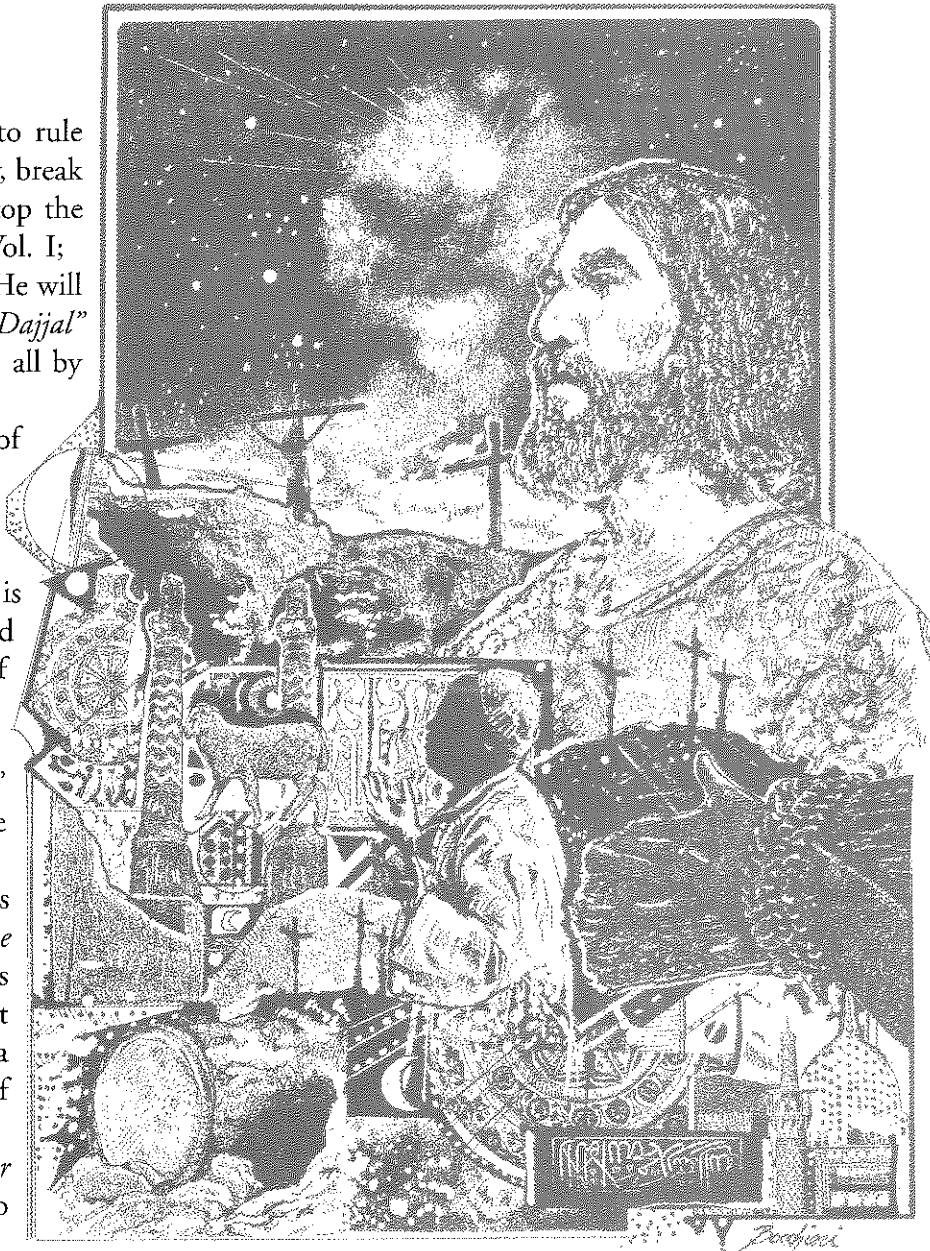
The Islamic Jesus is not God's unique *One and Only*, but *only one* among several special apostles of less stature than Muhammad. He is not God's *Anointed One*, but merely a prophet with the *unknown title* of "Messiah."

He did not lay down His life in *our place*, but was secretly carried away to heaven, forcing Judas to lay down his life *in Jesus' place*. He did not *conquer* death for us, but simply *escaped* it.

He is not *the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world*, but just *a prophet of God taken away from the sin of the world*. The Jesus of Islam is not the *Lord*, empowering all who will believe, but merely a *messenger*, telling people to follow the path of Islam.


He is not our *High Priest effectively interceding* before the Father on our behalf, but *one unable to intercede* for anyone and urging people to go to Muhammad instead. He is not "*the Seed of the Woman*" come to crush the head of Satan, but *a man without a genealogy*, come to point people to "Ahmed."

The Islamic Jesus is not the "*Son of David*" who will rule the world in righteousness on David's throne in Jerusalem, but a *Muslim Caliph* who will return to



rule the world with Qur'anic law and complete the establishment of Islam.

Jesus is not presented as the object of one's faith. According to Islam, He is to be recognized and revered as one of the great prophets of history, but He is not someone we can know personally today. He cannot help anyone.

Our faith is to be placed in Allah, who alone has power to forgive our sins or to punish us in hell. Islam says we can only hope that we have done enough good deeds to merit Allah's mercy, but there are no guarantees! 

This article is condensed from a chapter in a new book by CMM called "*Through Muslim Eyes*." You can receive a copy of this book, by sending \$3 to CMM, 2032 E. Kearney, #205, Springfield, MO 65803.

# A Muslim Woman Finds Jesus

*Editorial Comment: The following unedited testimony was written by a young woman who has recently been granted asylum in the States. She has learned British English as a second language. Her identity is not revealed because of sensitivity issues.*

life. He made God's love a reality in my life. His house was a house of prayers.

Jesus gave meaning to my life. He met my spiritual needs and filled that emptiness which was mine for over 20 years while I was a Muslim. I had been looking

for a personal relationship with God. Now as a follower of

Jesus, I have found it. I now have the privilege to call God, Father, and to approach Him as a child with confidence and trust. Muhammad did not die for anyone, it is only Jesus who made provision for our salvation through His crucifixion. He died for our sins and rose from the dead on the third day, and is now sitting at the right hand of God interceding for us.


A few months after my conversion to Christianity, I started witnessing to my immediate family. They were hostile to the gospel. My father was particularly upset with me. He ordered me to choose between giving up my faith in Jesus or leaving the house. I still remember the face of my mother, crying and begging me to save her marriage, the honour of the family by repenting from my apostasy, and going back to Islam, the religion of

my ancestors.

There is no doubt in my mind that my loved ones have been deceived. None of them has given his life to Jesus yet, but I believe they will because it is not God's will for anyone to perish.

My lifestyle may be the only Bible that my loved ones in particular, and unbelievers in general, will ever read. As a follower of Jesus, I need to keep in mind that it is the honour of Christ which is at stake in my life, not my honour. I must keep my light shining for the glory of the Lord.

[At the time I left,] 19 Christians had their heads cut off in my country. The Lord spared my life. I managed to flee and to obtain asylum in the United States. My faith in Jesus caused me to lose my family, my home, my job, my culture, my friends and to come to a foreign land where I have no relatives.

I thank God for this situation because he is teaching me to look up to Him and to Him alone to watch over me. We, Christians, like to identify with the resurrection of Jesus, but not with his crucifixion. I am glad I'm having my share of suffering and persecution because of my faith in Jesus. I'm standing in the gap on a daily basis for a breakthrough in my country and my family. I claim the salvation of the Muslim world in the mighty name of Jesus. 

I come from an Arab Muslim country where apostasy is punishable by death. I grew up amidst a very devoted Muslim family. I saw a Bible for the first time 3 years ago. It was given to me by my boss, a born-again Christian.

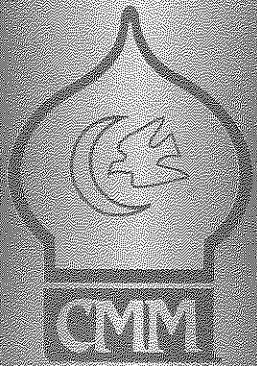
My boss witnessed to me the very first day I met him. The constitution of my country does not allow evangelization. He witnessed to me, knowing that he may lose his job, even his life for that. His boldness to speak about Jesus highly impressed me. My boss started sharing with me the Bible on a daily basis. It took me about a year to decide to give Jesus a try.

My decision had nothing to do with the scriptural knowledge of my boss, or how often he was quoting the Bible for me. What first attracted me to Christianity was the lifestyle of my spiritual father. The fruit of the Spirit were evident in his

# Jumaa Prayer Fellowship...



## Praying for Muslims Around the World!



Friday, May 1, 1998. Please pray

...for the Farsi-speaking students studying at Elam College in London. They are preparing to reach 100 million Farsi speakers.

...for the ongoing Institute of Muslim Studies at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary. These studies continue until June 12. Pray that the participants may continue alert and actively involved in learning that will make their outreach to Muslims more effective.

...for Suliman, a recent Muslim convert who has been rejected by his family in the Middle East. He is so eager for the Word and is determined he will not succumb to the pressure of his family.

Friday, May 8, 1998. Please pray

...that the Egyptian government will be effective not just in dealing with known terrorists, but will deal with the injustices which are politically motivated.

...for Christian students on two university campuses in England, as they face active Islamic student organizations that vigorously attack Christianity. They are determined to bring the Christian faith into public disrepute.

...for the health of a leader in the Turkish congregation in Ankara. He holds a key position in the entire Turkish fellowship and is currently suffering from a liver problem.

Friday, May 15, 1998. Please pray

...for the formation of a church among the Muslim peoples in several sections of Brussels. About 150,000 Muslims, mainly from North Africa, Turkey, and the Middle East, reside there.

...for the CMM team that will be holding training seminars in Brazil for the next two weeks. Pray for safety in travel and for God's enablement as they share in these seminars.

...for the protection of Somali converts from Islam to Christianity. Many are under duress and several have been martyred in recent years.

Friday, May 22, 1998. Please pray

...that many Azeris will be saved by reading John's Gospel which has recently been printed in their language. A trial edition of Psalms is also being distributed.

...for the four Christians who are currently in prison in Punjab province in Pakistan, accused of blasphemy. Continue to pray for the abolition of this law.

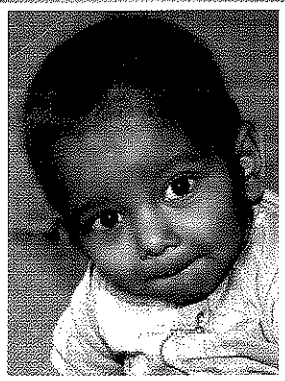
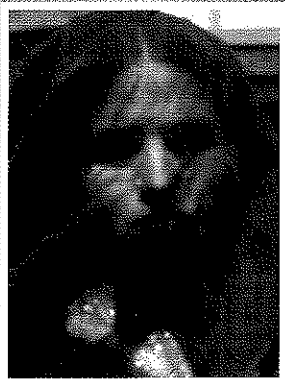
...for the salvation of Bedouin people. Until now they have never responded to the gospel in a significant manner.

Friday, May 29, 1998. Please pray

...that God will sustain the Christians in the town of Shiraz, Iran, who have been faithful throughout years of hardship.

...for the outreach of the new Arabic Media Center which has been opened in Amman to produce new programs and handle much of FEBA's listener follow-up for the area.

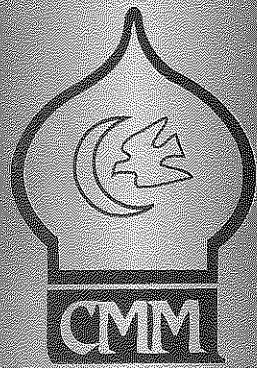
...for the growing, but very young, indigenous Church in Turkmenistan, with at least 500 Turkmen believers. Authorities have closed the churches and are interrogating and threatening people.



Urge, then, first of all that 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 5, 1998. Please pray

...for the completion and distribution of a Billy Graham film recently dubbed into the Rifi Berber language of Morocco. Three million people in northern Morocco could benefit from this film.

...for peace in Sudan. Peace talks in Nairobi between the government and the SPLA ended in failure last November. The Church has not lost its hope and faith. Pray that its present difficulties will not hinder it from being a Church of love.

...for local and foreign Christian fellowships in Azerbaijan that are the object of an ongoing slander campaign in the media. Pray that Christians will not be affected by this, but will continue their outreach.

Friday, June 12, 1998. Please pray

...for the end of the violence in Algeria. Political maneuvering is of little interest to most Algerians, who are longing for peace by whatever means.

...for Fulani believers in Burkina Faso as they face many pressures from religious leaders, family, and friends. Some have professed Christ for many years and shown great potential for the Lord's service.

...for an African man who has been well educated from his youth by Islamic teachers. Exiled from his country, he recently received a New Testament. Pray that the gospel will penetrate his heart and mind.



Friday, June 19, 1998. Please pray

...for Christians from a Muslim background living in the West. Although they may face less difficulty than converts in Muslim countries, they still experience persecution and rejection by their families and carry a heavy burden for their Muslim family members.

...for ways of developing gospel radio programs in Beja and Afar, local languages spoken by people living along the Red Sea.

...for Ahmed Deedat, the South African Muslim opponent of the Christian faith. He suffered a severe stroke last year, but he is not beyond God's grace. Pray for his staff and associates who are involved in bitter conflict and whose organization has large debts which have lowered their credibility.



Friday, June 26, 1998. Please pray

...for Afghan Christians who are at great risk of being executed for apostasy under the rigid Islamic rule of the Taliban.

...for the Hui who can be found in nearly every city, province, and region of China. Though numbering more than 9 million, there are less than 20 known believers.

...for several Iranian Christian fellowships who seek to reach out to Muslims. Many are disillusioned with radical Islam in Iran and are thus open to the gospel.

...for a university professor who is in prison for his new-found faith. He quickly led seven fellow prisoners to Christ.

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—(1 Timothy 2:1, NIV)