

INTERCEDE

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Our Mandate: Let Every Muslim Know the Truth About Jesus

By Mark Brink

Television screens regularly bombard us with pictures and commentary of radical Islamic terrorists killing and maiming innocent people. The growing impact of terror and war has far-reaching effects. Huge numbers of refugees are seeking shelter in Europe and beyond, internally displaced people in war-torn countries are desperate for security, and increasing persecution and death haunt Christian communities, especially in the Middle East. From a purely natural point of view, the situation presents itself as hopeless – and almost beyond cure.

On the other hand, the spiritual view tells a different story. We continually receive reports from Muslim lands of how the Holy Spirit is opening the hearts of Muslims to the

gospel. Muslims are receiving dreams and visions that lead them to the knowledge of Christ. Miracles are happening in Muslims' lives, and many Muslims are intersecting with the Scriptures through the internet, social media, and contact with Christians. Informed leaders agree that more Muslims have come to Christ in the last few decades than in all the centuries since the birth of Islam.

God's marvelous work among Muslim peoples sometimes even baffles modern-day missiologists. For example, no one predicted that in the post-Khomeini era the country of Iran would see a huge harvest of Muslims coming to Christ. In the natural, Iran received no 'missionaries' and few resources were available. In fact, Iran seemed closed to the

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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

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A pastor recently related to me that a group of Muslim Amen came to his church office, introduced themselves, and then informed him that they were establishing a mosque next door to the church. He explained that the men acted kindly and expressed their intention to be good neighbors to the church. The pastor then asked me a very pointed question: “How should I interact with these new neighbors?” From the tenor of the conversation, it was clear this pastor views the arrival of his new neighbors as an opportunity. He is asking the Holy Spirit to reveal creative ways for the church to convey the truth about Jesus.

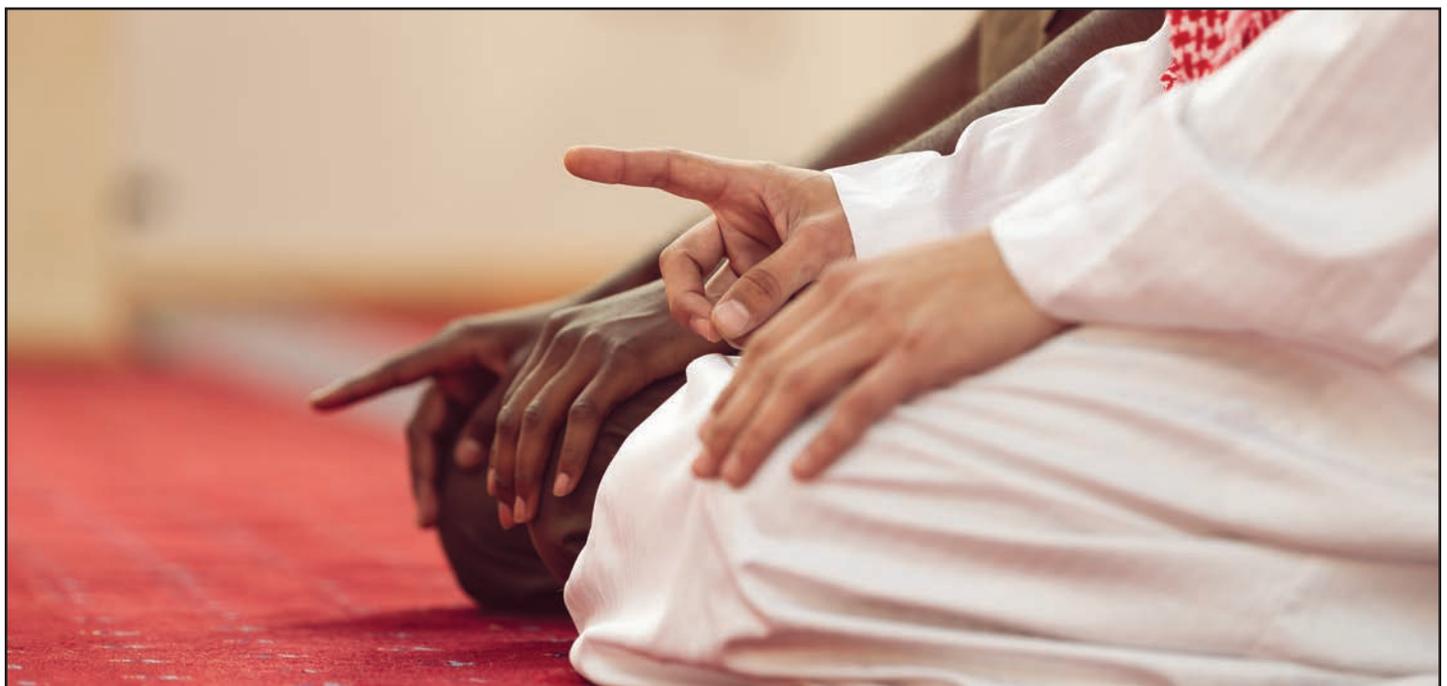
To many Christians, interaction with Muslims in their neighborhoods seems impossible. This pastor, however, was looking past the obvious stereotypes – and thinking of their eternal souls. He wants them to know the truth about Jesus.

In His first appearance after the resurrection, Jesus called Mary by name. He assured her and affirmed for her the truth of the resurrection. Each of us has been uniquely called from darkness to light. Muslims especially need to know that Jesus loves them and desires to call them to the truth. It is not

simply ‘intellectual knowledge’ – but truth found only in the person of Jesus. I am reminded of the words of Christ in John 14:6 where He states, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

Most Muslims have never had the chance to hear the truth about Jesus Christ. They desperately need a personal encounter with the risen Lord. The risen Christ spoke face to face with two men on the road to Emmaus. Their eventual response was “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” (Luke 24:32). Muslims who encounter the truth about Jesus can never be the same! Their hearts will “burn within them” and they will want to know Him as Savior.

In this edition of the *Intercede*, you will learn about three different facets of this ministry: *Jumaa* Prayer Fellowship, the Jonah Initiative and Say Hello: Reaching Muslim Women. You will be encouraged to see that Muslims can be reached – and that the Holy Spirit can use you to reach them. Be like the pastor and ask the Lord: “How should I interact with these new Muslim neighbors who need Christ?”





Muslim World News

Escaping 100 Lashes and Death for Apostasy

Sudan

Three years back, a young Sudanese mother was freed from prison after narrowly escaping death by hanging, first having been sentenced to be lashed 100 times for adultery. The delay on carrying out Mariam Ibrahim's double sentence was due only to the fact that she was heavily pregnant: Islamic law (sharia) required that she first give birth (to her daughter Maya) – while shackled to a prison bed.

Ibrahim's crime? She had held firm to the faith in which her Christian mother had brought her up – after divorce from her Muslim father when Mariam was six. But under Sudan's interpretation of sharia, a daughter's religion is defined as that of her father: even if he's largely absent from her life.

In 2011, Ibrahim married a Christian, Daniel Wani. They were accused of 'adultery', though they'd been married in church. After this false charge was dropped against Wani, Ibrahim was found guilty of 'apostasy' for turning her back on the faith of her father.

Her brutal fate brought her to global attention, helped by the fact that she was a woman, a doctor and that – again under Sudan's sharia – her toddler son Martin had to stay in prison with her. It also helped that her husband had dual U.S. and South Sudanese citizenship.

Exactly six months after she was first detained – on Christmas Eve 2013 – Ibrahim was freed, on 23 June 2014. She is now living in the U.S. – *World Watch Monitor*

10 Years Sentence for “Missionary Activities”

Iran

One Iranian and three Azerbaijani Christians have been

found guilty of “missionary activities” and “actions against national security” in Iran and sentenced to 10 years in prison.

World Watch Monitor understands that the three Azerbaijanis – Eldar Gurbanov, Yusif Farhadov and Bahram Nasibov – are unlikely to serve their sentences because they were allowed to leave Iran in November last year and will not be forced to return. However, the Iranian – Naser Navard Gol-Tapeh, a convert from a Muslim background – remains in Iran and will have to serve his sentence unless successful with his appeal.

The four men were arrested in June last year after security agents raided a wedding party in Tehran. They spent four months in prison, but were released on bail in October, after which the Azerbaijanis travelled home.

They were finally sentenced in May 2017, but their verdict was not communicated to them until mid-June and only now is it being reported.

The charges against the men were described as “unwarranted and unjustifiable” by Mervyn Thomas, chief executive of Christian Solidarity Worldwide. “We are deeply concerned for Mr. Gol-Tapeh in particular, who [being in Iran] is likely to bear the brunt of a sentence that was clearly issued on a punitive rather than on a legal basis,” he added.

News of their sentencing comes during the same week that three other Iranian Christians received lengthy jail terms for offences relating to evangelism and acting “against national security”. Victor Bet-Tamraz, who led the Tehran Pentecostal Assyrian Church until its closure by Iran's Interior Ministry in 2009, was sentenced to 10 years in prison, as was convert to Christianity, Hadi Asgari. Fellow convert Amin Afshar Naderi was given 15 years. – *World Watch Monitor*

Our Mandate: Let Every Muslim

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gospel. But in the face of what appeared to be inevitable defeat, the Spirit of the Lord has precipitated an unprecedented harvest in Iran.

At Global Initiative: Reaching Muslim Peoples our vision is that every Muslim must know the truth about Jesus Christ. Is it possible that over 1.6 billion Muslims can hear the truth about Jesus? We believe it is possible and that it will be done. We are convinced that an essential part of the answer is an equipped global Church moving in the power of the Holy Spirit. I will highlight three ‘arms’ of our ministry, each of which involves equipping the global Church.

Intercession: *Jumaa* Prayer Fellowships

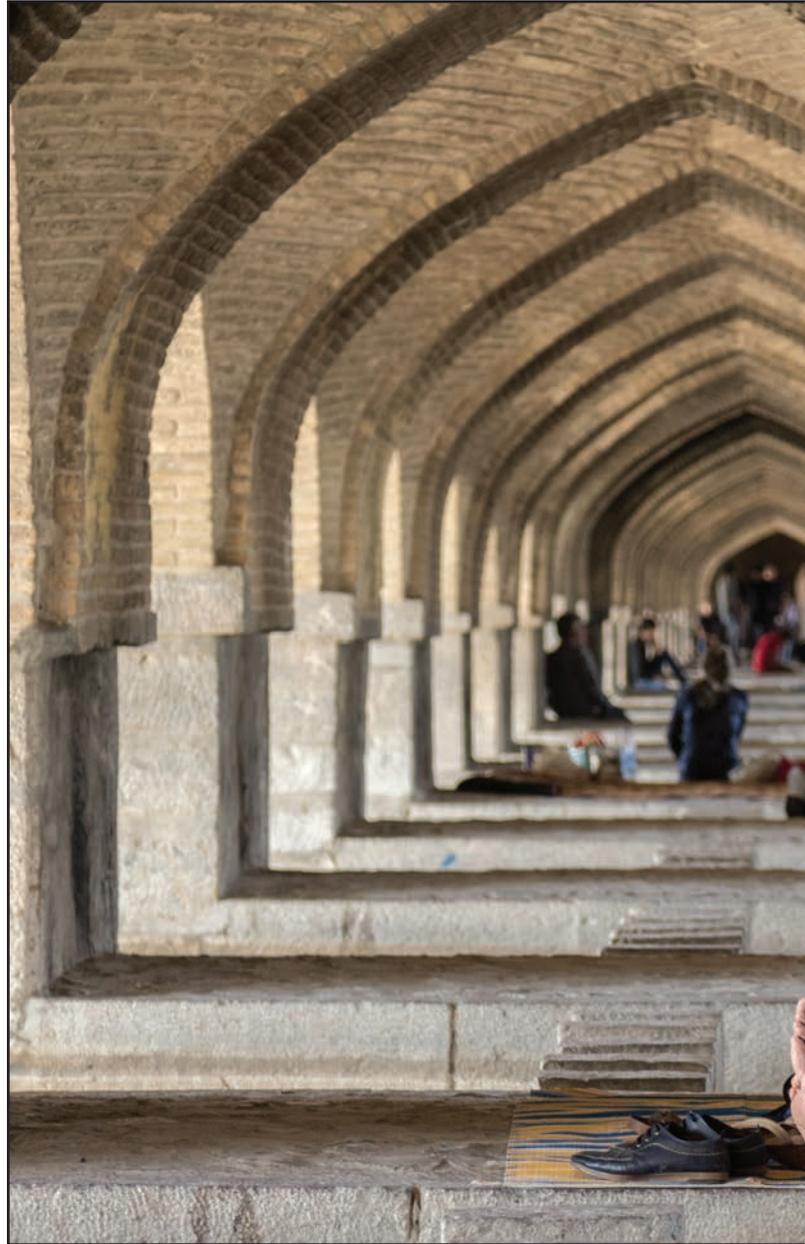
I believe the first reason we are seeing an increased gathering of Muslim people into the kingdom of God is focused intercession. Churches and individuals have embraced the fact that there is no substitute for the hard work of intercessory prayer. The late David Irwin, who founded this ministry over 35 years ago, placed a premium on what he called ‘Up-side Down Prayer’. He said:

“Intercessory prayer is a different kind of prayer. It does not originate with the person praying. It does not begin with his need for a car payment or healing for his children. It isn’t a prayer begging God to raise his salary. Intercessory prayer is an unselfish prayer. The intercessor asks nothing except to be a channel through which the Spirit of God can flow as oil flows through golden pipes.”

Irwin went on to state that intercessory prayer requires no particular expertise, but only a heart that will say:

“Lord, let me be a channel through which the Holy Spirit moves so that my heart will be broken with the things that are on your heart.”

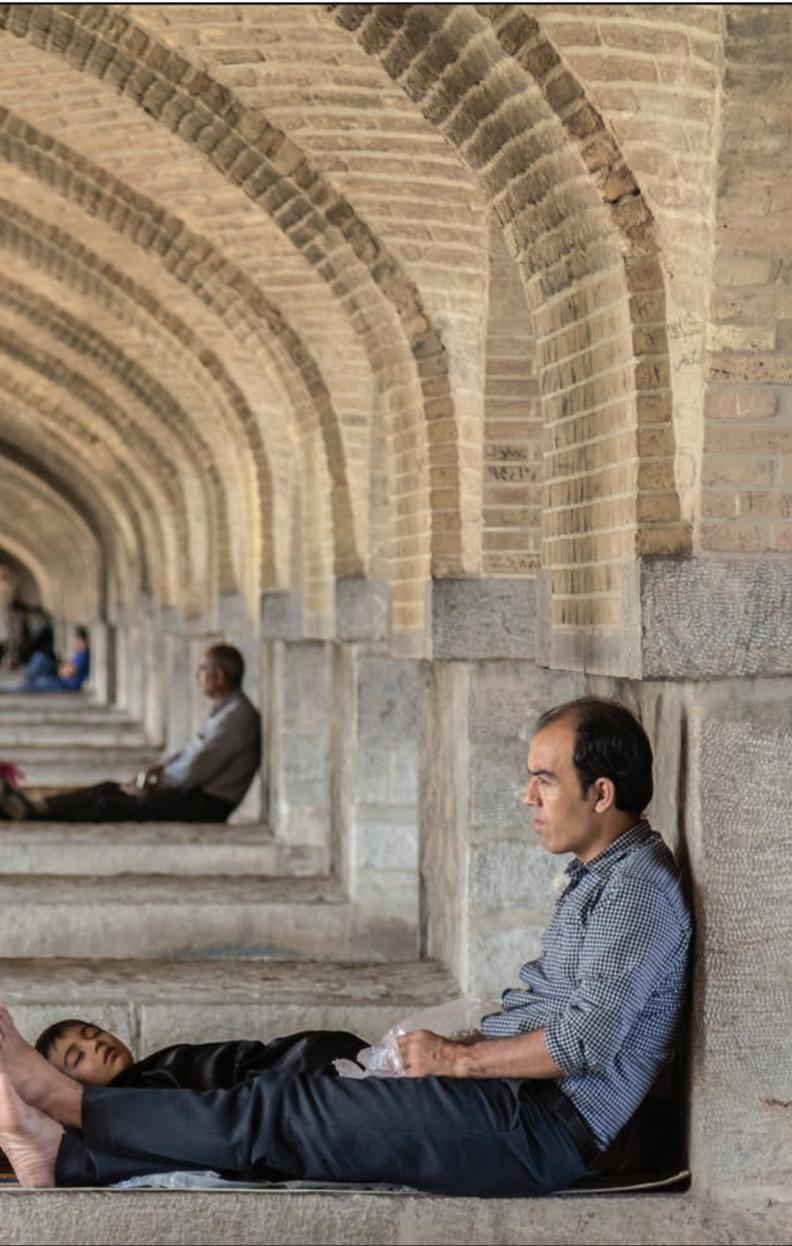
This is the kind of intercession that has opened the hearts of many Muslims to want the truth about Jesus. Out of Irwin’s heart of intercession the idea for *Jumaa* Prayer Fellowship was birthed. Irwin had served as a missionary in Egypt and was very familiar with the Arabic word *Jumaa*, meaning Friday, the weekday when Muslims gather just after noon for community prayer. Not one Friday in over 35 years has gone by without strong intercession for unreached Muslim peoples.



Jumaa intercessors are requested to take Friday at noon as a time of concentrated prayer; and if possible fast the noon meal in helping bring down spiritual strongholds. Some intercessors choose other days or times, but still commit to pray regularly for the salvation of Muslims. The worldwide network of *Jumaa* Prayer Fellowships now numbers over 60,000 prayer warriors. Whether in small groups at a church or individually in their homes or offices, these prayer partners are the foundation of our ministry. While intercessors are encouraged to pray as they feel led, most use the spe-

Don't Know the Truth About Jesus

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cific prayer requests for each Friday, as listed in *Intercede* magazine. If you do not already participate in the *Jumaa* Prayer Fellowship network, please note the contact information elsewhere in this magazine and consider joining us. We believe intercession is the primary building block to bring down the barriers of Islam and give seeking Muslims an opportunity to know the truth about Jesus.

The Jonah Initiative: Training Evangelists

Jonah was a reluctant evangelist, ironically preferring

to run from the presence of God rather than see the nemesis of his people be converted. Nineveh had more than 120,000 people who were unwarned of coming judgment. God asked Jonah if he should not be concerned for Nineveh. While initially acting in disobedience, Jonah eventually obeyed the Lord and saw the city repent. God showed mercy to Nineveh and spared their lives.

Similarly, in some ways the Muslim world is our present day Nineveh. Barriers, like fear, anger and indifference keep the global Church from adequately conveying the gospel to 'our Nineveh'. The Jonah Initiative is a bold training approach that challenges and prepares evangelists and church planters to proclaim Christ to the Ninevehs of our world. Year after year our team members take the Jonah Initiative to Christians in many countries, equipping them to more effectively reach Muslims. Attendees learn what Muslims believe, examine how Muslims live, and then discuss best approaches in presenting the truth about Jesus to them.

Just since 2012 our team and network of trainers have equipped over 7,500 workers from many nations to be evangelists and church planters in the Muslim world. The majority of these 'Jonahs' are from nations where Islam dominates or is spreading rapidly. By providing training for those who are culturally near to Muslims, we at Global Initiative are greatly encouraged. We see that the Jonah Initiative programs are multiplying our effectiveness in fulfilling the Great Commission. National believers and churches have the wonderful advantage of not being limited by language, visas and cultural barriers. Yes, in order for every Muslim to hear the truth about Jesus, we believe the task requires a mobilized and equipped global Church.

*Maria attended a Jonah Initiative training program in a Southern Asia country. God broke her heart for the spiritually lost Muslim world. She asked the Lord to send her to unreached Muslims. Leaving behind her family, security and the comforts of all she had known, she packed her bags and traveled to Northern Asia to bear the gospel to a Muslim unreached people group. Being Asian, she was able to enter a sensitive country as a teacher, and has spent the last seven years there sharing the love of Christ with unreached Muslims. Evangelists like Maria, trained and equipped at Jonah Initiatives, are serving in multiple Muslim contexts around the world.

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Saying Hello to Muslim Women

Cultural and religious norms prevent large segments of Muslim women from any effective access to the truth about Jesus Christ. Say Hello: Serving Muslim Women believes Christian ladies hold the key to reaching unreached Muslim women. The premise is – it begins by saying hello!

Say Hello: Serving Muslim Women was launched by Global Initiative to help Christian women see past the physical and spiritual veil that restricts Muslim women from hearing the truth about Jesus. Through seminars, resources and outreaches, Say Hello endeavors to inspire Christian women for outreach to their Muslim neighbors.

*Fatima was raised as a Muslim. Her parents passed away when she was a small child. Her grandparents adopted her and raised her as their own. Fatima, who was ethnically a Muslim Uighur, had a best friend and classmate who was a Mongolian Christian. Whenever possible, Fatima was lovingly told by her Christian friend, “I know you are a Muslim, but if you want, I will take you to church and you can hear the truth about Jesus Christ.”

One day, Fatima unexpectedly requested to attend church. She left the meeting with a sense of peace, but did not open her heart to receive Christ. Fatima then developed a medical issue, but lived far from any treatment facility. Her Christian friend invited Fatima to live with her so she could be close to a treatment facility. Within a short time, Fatima visited a Christian camp. While there she truly opened her heart to Jesus and was born again – and healed! Fatima felt she should return to the home of her grandparents. Upon hearing of her conversion and healing, the grandparents beat her, told her to return to Islam, and forced her to leave their home. Again, her Christian friend extended a welcome.

Something amazing was happening in Fatima’s journey with Jesus. She entered Bible college to learn more about God’s word. While there, the Lord called her to be a missionary to Muslim peoples. Recently she attended a Jonah Initiative training program and will soon serve as a missionary to the Muslim Uighurs of Northern Asia. Fatima declared, “It was the patience and love of a Christian friend that brought me to the feet of Christ.” This is the vision of Say Hello: Serving Muslim Women – that Christian women will let the love of Jesus shine through their lives to Muslim women. Sometimes the beginning is as simple as saying hello.

How Can You Be A Part of What God is Doing Among Muslim Peoples?

The best way to participate in what God is doing is first and foremost to pray. All spiritual victories are ultimately won in prayer. In deep intercessory prayer we wrestle against the forces of darkness that hold people in bondage. If possible, please join with tens of thousands of intercessors by praying every Friday at noon.

Second, access tools that can help you understand Muslims and the ‘spiritual’ world in which they live. I encourage you to visit our website (reachingmuslimpeoples.com) where you will find booklets, podcasts and blogs that will help you to better understand how to engage Muslims with the truth about Jesus.

Third, ask the Lord to burden your heart for Muslims living in your own neighborhood or city. Consider ways to begin relationships and then seek for prudent opportunities to share Christ with them. *Jane is an excellent example of how this can happen. While shopping one day Jane observed a Muslim lady who was having problems communicating with a store clerk. Jane offered assistance and then agreed to teach English to the Muslim lady. From a simple act of kindness a friendship blossomed and Jane has now shared the gospel with her new friend. The Muslim woman now has a Bible of her own. It all started with Jane saying, “Hello, can I help you?”

Last, we ask you to partner with us in taking the gospel to Muslim peoples. We need prayer and financial support to offer this training and ministry globally. Your investment helps to multiply workers for Muslim harvest fields. We simply cannot do it without your help. Again, I encourage you to visit our website (reachingmuslimpeoples.com) to see how you can partner with us in presenting the truth about Jesus to Muslims everywhere.

Sometimes the negative news from the world of Islam can be overwhelming. My plea is that as committed followers of Jesus we would carefully listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to our hearts – and to what He wants to do through us. The bottom line is that God is drawing many Muslims into the Kingdom of God in these days. Let each of us ask “Lord, what would you have me do?”

**All pseudonyms*



JUMAA PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

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

Friday, September 1, 2017. Please pray for

*...encouragement for the Christian community in Egypt that makes up 12.7% of the country's population of 90 million.
...believers in Eritrea. The Eritrean government allows certain denominations to function, but brutally represses others.
...Kuwait, a country of 4.1 million. Over half the population is immigrant-based, with a significant number of Christians.*

Friday, September 8, 2017. Please pray for

*...workers in the country of Brazil who will attend equipping seminars conducted by a Global Initiative team member in two locations Sept. 13-23.
...Hamza, a Muslim in Chad, Africa, who has accessed an audio Bible and is greatly attracted to the words of Jesus.
...Iranian church planters Farhad and Abbas, both converts from Islam, who have been jailed for using house churches as a means of proselytization. 98.5% of Iran's population of 81 million is Muslim.*

Friday, September 15, 2017. Please pray for

*...an Institute of Islamic Studies conducted by Global Initiative team members Sept. 18-29 in a major city in Colombia.
...the repeal of Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Abuse is tolerated by the government; innocent victims continue to suffer.
...Farhani, a Christian from a Muslim background in Azerbaijan. Her husband also became a Christ follower, but due to family pressure reverted to Islam. He refuses to allow Farhani to meet with other believers.*

Friday, September 22, 2017. Please pray for

*...Romanian missionaries who will attend Institute of Islamic Studies classes taught by a Global Initiative team member in a key Romanian city Sept. 25 to Oct. 6.
...17-year old Samia in Tajikistan, who was badly beaten by her brother when her faith in Jesus was discovered.
...distribution efforts for the new Sorani Kurdish Bible. The 6 million Kurds in Iraqi Kurdistan are predominantly Muslim.*

Friday, September 29, 2017. Please pray for

*...protection for Saudis who have become followers of Jesus. Groups meet secretly in several Saudi cities.
...Joshua, a convert from Islam on the island of Comoros. "Pray that I may find the right time to tell my family and that they will also come to know Jesus," he says.
...literacy and orality ministries focused on Muslim people groups. Alarming high numbers of the world's 1.6 billion Muslims struggle to read with comprehension.*

**All personal names used herein are pseudonyms.*

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



JUMAA PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

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

Friday, October 6, 2017. Please pray for

...*Muslim women and girls.* Of the 28 countries scoring the worst literacy rates for women, 20 are Muslim. The top 7 countries with the biggest gaps between the number of boys and girls who receive a primary school education are Muslim.
...*the 1.6 million Soninkes in Mali, Africa.* 99.9% of Soninkes in Mali are Muslim.
...*the country of Yemen.* Yemenis have seen political turmoil and war since 2012. More than half the population is food insecure. 99.9% of Yemen's population of 6.7 million are Muslim.

Friday, October 13, 2017. Please pray for

...*equipping seminars* to be conducted by a Global Initiative team member Oct.19 – Nov. 3 in Papua New Guinea.
...*Afghan Muslims encountering the gospel* at English classes in their homeland of Afghanistan. When the teacher used Bible verses during the lessons, it was the first time for most of the students to 'hear or read the Word of God.'
...*the city of Kardzhali, Bulgaria.* It is the center of the Turkish community and has the largest mosque in the country.

Friday, October 20, 2017. Please pray for

...*believers in Syria* who have not fled the country; that they will be used as strong witnesses of Christ's love.
...*Rania in a North Caucasus Muslim country.* Rania came to the Lord from a Muslim background by listening to a radio program. Local Muslims demanded her death and burned her Bible. Rania kept her faith and won to the Lord her husband and children. They worship together at home secretly.
...*Hamida in Uganda.* Upon her decision to leave Islam and follow Christ, Hamida's father cursed her and said she was no longer his daughter.

Friday, October 27, 2017. Please pray for

...*the approximately 20,000 Christians* (not including secret believers from Muslim backgrounds) in Libya, a country mired in anarchy since Gaddafi was toppled in 2011. Libya's population of 6.5 million is predominantly Muslim.
...*European churches and ministries* who continue to faithfully engage in reaching Muslims, especially Muslim refugees.
...*Indonesia's 263 million people.* Radical Islamic groups continue to pose challenges, especially when connected to international movements. Indonesia has the largest Muslim population on earth. Christians have grown to 32 million.
**All personal names used herein are pseudonyms.*

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