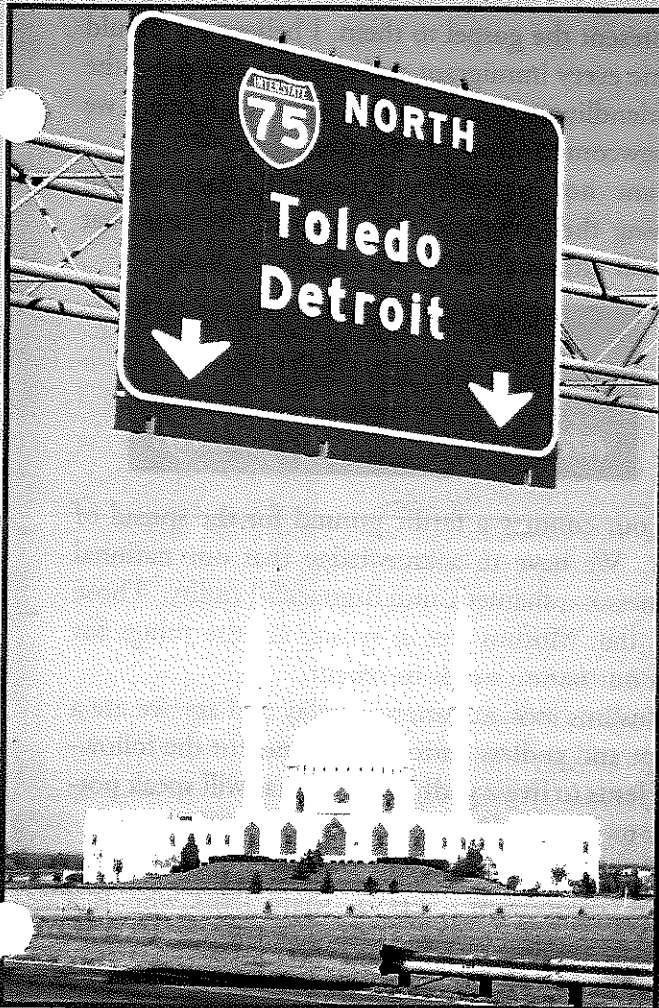
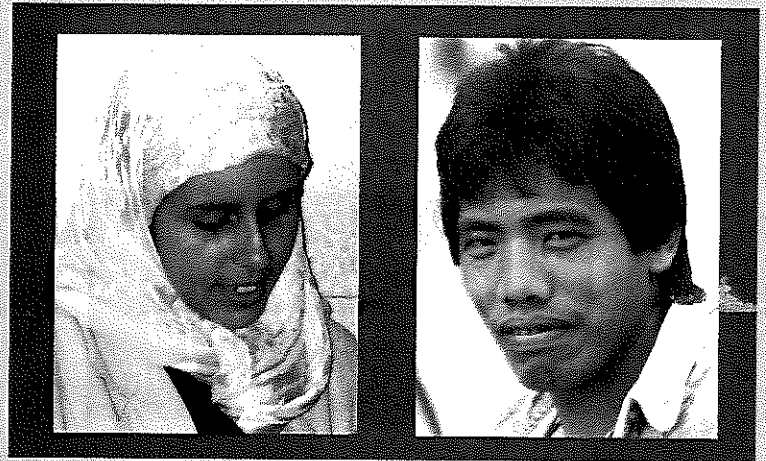


# INTERCEDE

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## THE FACE OF ISLAM IN THE UNITED STATES



by Ron Peck

### MUSLIM GROWTH

The number of adherents to Islam in the United States began to increase dramatically in the 1960s when immigration requirements were relaxed by the Johnson administration. This opened the door for large numbers of Muslims from Islamic nations to legally enter the United States. Since that decade Muslims have continued to enter the United States at a rate of about 100,000 a year.

It is estimated that between 5 and 7 million Muslims now live here. This figure is projected to double by 2018.

The growth of Islam in our nation, while most affected by the number of immigrants that come to our shores each year, can also be attributed to three other factors.

Because so many immigrants come from third world nations, their birth rate patterns are much higher. It is not uncommon for Muslim families to have four or more children...well above the average of most families in North America.

Another factor that affects Islamic growth is marriages between American women and Muslim men. There are as many as 7,000 American women who marry Muslims each year; many of these women will convert to Islam.

Finally, the growth of Islam is on the rise in the United States due to the number of converts to this religious system. Most statisticians agree that there are about 25,000 converts to Islam every year.

*continued on page 4*

# 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



There is a large and growing Muslim community in the United States today. Though it's difficult to know exactly how large it really is, my best estimate would be between five and seven million.

***Muslim missionaries see the United States as a fertile field for their Islamic message.***

The Muslim community in our nation is not one large united group as they would have us believe. They come from many national and ethnic backgrounds. They speak many different languages, and they represent different religious groups, much like the various Protestant denominations.

Some have come with their families, planning to stay in the West. They are looking for success in business and security for their children.

Some come as students, seeking an education. Though many will return to their homelands, some will become so attracted to the West, they will decide to remain here.

Muslims believe that "any Muslim living in a non-Islamic society must accept responsibility to spread the faith of Islam." For this reason, Muslims in America tend to "share their faith."

Muslims also have "professional" missionaries working in America. Their responsibility is two-fold. They are to see that their Muslim people do not forsake their faith and they are to "invite" all non-Muslims to join the household of Islam.

Muslims see the West, in general, and the United States, in particular, as a fertile field for their Islamic message. Many elements of our American lifestyle make them feel this way. They see sexual immorality, flagrant greed and materialism, divorce, child abuse, feminine nudity and the use of drugs and alcohol as symptoms of a society that is out of control—

a society that is totally lacking in faith in God and spiritual discipline.

How should Christians respond to this? What should be our attitude toward the influx of Muslims from abroad? How should we look at their "missionary efforts?" What about their organized and well-financed efforts to gain recognition and privilege in our national politics and government?

These are questions few Christians have even thought about. Yet the present situation demands that we give them some well-deserved attention.

I believe that the growing number of Muslims in this country is a God-given opportunity for us to lovingly present the gospel to them. I believe we should welcome every immigrant and show these people the same friendliness that we would want to receive if we were newcomers in another nation.

I am not personally concerned about them preaching their message here because I believe that truth will ultimately triumph over falsehood.

***...our national sinfulness is a shameful and disgraceful reality.***

Is our country a fertile ground for the spread of Islam? We have to acknowledge that our national sinfulness is a shameful and disgraceful reality. Those things that Muslims see as wrong are the things for which our nation needs to repent.

Muslims look at America today and say we are a corrupt and godless nation. It is time for the followers of Jesus to live a godly lifestyle that will speak positively to all who observe our lives.

Then let us reach out in love and humility to the Muslim community. Let us share Jesus who is a Friend of sinners. A Friend who *can* and *does* forgive sin and brings His followers into personal fellowship with God.



### **Kurdistan**

Local Christians claim that the persecution of Christians in Kurdistan has resulted in more freedom for Christians than ever before. A high government representative had been coerced by Muslims to limit all outreach activities of a Protestant pastor in Kurdistan. After several meetings with Kurdish leaders in Washington, all of these obstructing limitations were lifted.

Christians in Kurdistan agree that the result is a blessing for the Church. International outreach workers and local Christians have recently baptized 19 Kurdish people in the city of Suleymaniya. Nearly all of these were from Muslim background. Seventeen others have indicated their desire to be baptized as well.

The indigenous church is growing, especially in the cities of Dohuk, Zakho, Arbil, Koysinya and Suleymaniya, where Christian bookshops are active. Local Christians stress that active defense of pastors results in greater freedom to preach the gospel.

—*Islam Development Brief*

### **Indonesia**

Thirty Christians were massacred by Indonesian soldiers on the island of Ambon in the Yabok Protestant Church on August 11. On August 12, Catholic and Protestant leaders, representing the 200,000 Christians on the island, continued to claim that the armed forces sent to keep the Christians and Muslims apart were, in fact, fomenting the strife and openly siding with the Muslims.

"Security personnel have taken sides in allowing the massing of people and attacks by Muslims crowds. They even used violence, shooting at Christians huddled in churches and burning the bodies

of Christians who died at the hands of other security personnel and Muslim crowds," they reported.

In late August more atrocities were carried out in the villages in northern Ambon. Earlier, mid-July clashes between Muslims and Christians caused 150 deaths and 300 injuries. More than 300 died in clashes last January and February. Christians have maintained they are the victims of a holy war that has been carefully orchestrated by Muslim extremists. In the past, relations between the two communities on the island have been traditionally very peaceful.

—*Compass Direct*

### **Philippines**

A prayer meeting in one of Zamboanga's Christian churches ended in a bloodbath. While believers in this southern Filipino city were gathering for prayer, a hand grenade was thrown into the crowd. One person was killed and nine were injured in the explosion. The police believe that one of the extremist Muslim groups is responsible for the attack. They suspect that the attack was in retaliation for the deaths of two extremists who were killed when the army was hunting for the kidnapers of two Belgian civilians.

—*Islam Development Brief*

### **Nigeria**

Nigeria's northern Zamfara state has become the first to declare itself an Islamic state in this West African country, and implementation of Islamic law is currently underway. State governor Alhaji Ahmed Sani said on August 25 that the decision to Islamize the state was necessary

because, "Sharia (Islamic) law is the way of life of a Muslim."

The Committee for the Islamization of Zamfara State has been formed to prepare a bill implementing Islamic law, which will be sent to the state assembly for ratification. Archbishop of Nigeria's Roman Catholic Church, Rev. Dr. Anthony Olubunmi Okogie, said the introduction of *sharia* would set the country on a path to destruction.

Nigeria's population of approximately 120 million is almost evenly divided between Christians and Muslims. Muslims are predominant in the north, while Christians make up the majority of those living in the south.

—*Compass Direct*

### **Turkey**

Turkish police, accompanied by the crew from a private television channel, disrupted the worship services of an established Protestant church in Izmir on September 12, arresting 40 adults who were worshipping in what officials claimed was an "illegal" church. Thirty-five of those arrested were Turks and five were foreigners.

The Izmir public prosecutor's office threw out the allegations, declaring that the church was meeting legally under Turkish laws. However, the church has remained sealed. Columnists from several Turkish newspapers spoke out sharply this week against the police action, including one with the conservative Muslim daily *Zaman*, who termed the behavior as "unbecoming to our government."

—*Compass Direct*



We have published several booklets to help Christians better understand the teachings of Islam and how to witness to Muslims. To obtain an order form for these materials, please write

**Center For Ministry to Muslims**  
2032 E. Kearney, Ste. 205  
Springfield, MO 65803

# THE FACE OF ISLAM IN THE UNITED STATES

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## THE ETHNICITY OF "AMERICAN" MUSLIMS

Muslims in the United States are ethnically a highly diverse population. The greatest number of Muslims—almost 33 percent—are of Arab descent. Muslims of African American origin follow close behind at almost 30 percent.

About 29 percent of Muslims in our country come from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Maldives Islands. Just over 5 percent are Turks, and a little less than 3 percent are Iranians. Those having Albanian, Bosnian, West Indian, Latin American and Kurd backgrounds total only about .5 percent. However, recent statistics show that there is a growing number of Latinos embracing Islam.

Immigrants in these groups bring to the United States their cultures and their customs... often holding onto both with great tenacity.

## WHERE MUSLIMS LIVE

Today the largest concentrations of Muslims live in California, New York, Illinois, Texas, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Michigan.

Because of ease of assimilation, most Islamic adherents tend to settle in our nation's larger cities—New York, Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Houston, Austin, Dallas, Miami, Atlanta, Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia. However, because of their professions, many are beginning to move into non-urban communities.

## MUSLIM EXPANSION IN THE WEST

*"In the next 50 years, we will capture the Western world for Islam. We have the men to do it, we have the money to do it, and above all, we are already doing it."*

—Dedication Ceremony Islamic Center in Stockholm, Sweden, 1983

*"As the human civilization is entering a critical phase in its history, Muslim presence on the American soil has assumed equally critical importance. America now stands at the zenith of its economic and military power. Its political, economic and cultural influences extend to almost all human beings on earth. The so-called globalization process, which has a direct bearing on value systems, is forcing many to merge into one dominant culture, which, in many respects is deviant from the universally recognized norm. The situation, made more serious by the abdication of moral authority by the traditional Judeo-Christian religious institutions is touching the consciousness of many decent human beings who are looking for deliverance and leadership. Muslims now find themselves on the center stage, with a unique opportunity to complete their historic mission of moral leadership, as ordained in the Qur'an. The North American Islamic Movement is launched to organize and lead the Muslims of America in this mission."*

—Preface  
*Manifesto of North American Islamic Movement, 1998*

*"Muslim victories are coming as a result of involvement in public*

*affairs...democracy only works for those who participate. To make a difference, you must vote and let your elected representatives know where you stand. [A] new AMC [American Muslim Council] web site is designed to help keep Muslims abreast of the issues facing policy and decision makers, and keep Muslims in touch with those who serve them at the national and state level. In the November 1998 elections, the Muslim presence and Muslim support led to several House and Senate victories, such as the hotly-contested Senate seat in New York."*

—January/February 1999  
*Islamic Horizons*

It was in 1983 that Islamic nations in the Middle East began seriously targeting the West for Islamic expansion. Since that time those nations have spent a great deal of time and millions of dollars to "capture the Western world for Islam." As the above statements indicate, Muslims have gained ground in the United States in the past 16 years, and they are determined to work hard and attain their goal.

What is most alarming is the fact that Muslim "evangelism" strategies are working!

As Christians sleep...many Muslims are taking seriously the Qur'anic teaching: "We sent you not, but as a mercy for the worlds" (21:107). This verse commands that they "illumine the human mind, reshape human behavior and materialize in peace and tranquility for all on this earth." In the minds of some Muslims, this means that they are to take control and govern every nation on earth.

## WILL THE CRESCENT REPLACE THE CROSS?

The answer to this question depends on whether American Christians remain complacent and allow it to happen.

For too long American Christians have stood by and watched our nation fall into deep moral decay...which creates a fertile soil for the Islamic message to take root.

For too long American Christians have chosen to remain ignorant about the ultimate goals of Islam and accept it as "just another religious practice."

For too long American Christians have ignored the persecution of their fellow believers—especially the persecution of converts from Islam to Christianity—by leadership in some Islamic nations.

For too long American Christians have ignored the adverse treatment of many women who live under Islamic laws.

It is time for Christians in the United States to wake up and realize that Islam is becoming a dominant "religious" force in our society that must be reckoned with NOW! If we don't, there is very definitely the possibility that at some point in the not so distant future Christianity's cross—and even our Stars and Stripes—could be overshadowed by Islam's crescent.

## WHAT SHOULD CHRISTIANS DO?

First, Christians need to understand Islam...not as just a "religious

force," but also its all-encompassing governing laws. Christians need to pay attention to what is happening in nations of the world that are ruled by Islamic laws...as well as to occurrences in nations where Muslims are endeavoring to take control of governments and destroy all Christian witness. It is only as Christians become educated about the ultimate goals of Islam that we will begin to understand the expansionist tactics Muslims are using in our own nation.

Second, Christians need to accept their roles as Christ's ambassadors...realizing that Muslims in America are reachable. In the United States, Christians are free to share their faith with Muslims, and Muslims can listen without the fears they might have in other nations. Ours is one of few nations where large numbers of Muslims live that this can take place.

Although the growth of Islam in America is somewhat alarming, the important fact Christians need to consider is not whether Muslims are converts or immigrants. Neither should Christians be concerned about the race or gender of Muslims... white, black, Asian, Arab...male or female.

No, the most important thing Christians need to be concerned about is the eternal lostness of these people...good people who are so often morally correct, yet people who are spiritually lost.

Jesus commanded His followers to preach the gospel to all nations...every people group on earth. And His Mandate certainly extends to the searching Muslim hearts that have not received an adequate witness of the love of Jesus.

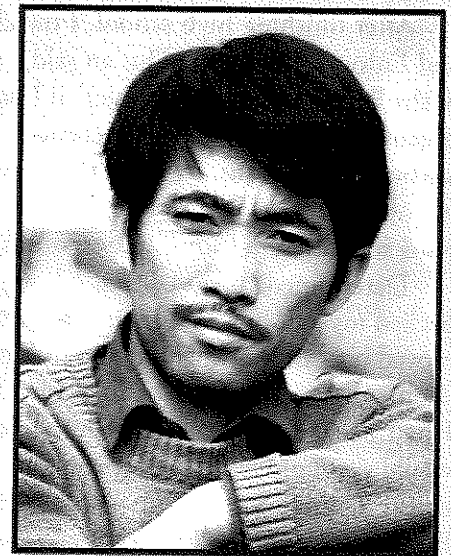
For many years, thousands of believers have prayed that Muslims would have an opportunity to hear the good news. I believe that those prayers are being answered as God brings to our shores hundreds of thousands of immigrants...many whose lives have been torn apart by war and other dramatic happenings in their nations of origin.

If we will reach out with a loving witness of the gospel, God's plan of mercy will be understood and accepted, and many Muslims will be added to His family.

Are we willing to accept our responsibility to share His gospel with those Muslims who have become our neighbors?

Will we reach out in love to those whose roots are in Islam, seeking to become their friend...introducing them to the one true Friend who can make an eternal difference in their lives?

God is not willing that any should perish. And that any, my friend, certainly includes the Muslim family who lives next door to you...or just down the street. May God give us a new boldness to share His love and mercy with them.



# IS JESUS STILL ALIVE?

by Hakim\*

The Qur'an contains stories about Jesus' virgin birth, His miracles and His teachings. These became the basis for the teaching my Islamics teacher gave me during my high school years. He taught me that Jesus was a great prophet, but that the Jews became angry with Him because they didn't want to give up their sin. Though they tried to kill Him, God miraculously had Judas crucified instead of Jesus.

I couldn't help asking the teacher, "What happened to Jesus?"

He said that Jesus hadn't died—that He is still alive until today.

I thought much about that. Since 1,900 years have passed, and Jesus is still alive...who could He be? No person lives that long. He must not be human like us, or God must really think highly of Him to keep Him alive so long! Though I was taught that Jesus came only for the Jews, somehow I knew that He had come for me, even though I was a Muslim. The teacher told us that Jesus was coming back to save the Muslims.

I was born into a wealthy Muslim family in Jerusalem. As my father's first-born son, I held a position of importance in Arab culture. I was given the best of everything as I was growing up. I attended a private Catholic high school where Muslim and Catholic students received separate religious instruction.

However, the question, "Is Jesus still alive?" continued to haunt me. I desperately wanted to learn more about this Jesus, but I knew that if I asked too many questions, someone might think I wanted to become a Christian. That could be punishable by death.

After finishing high school, I traveled in the Middle East and Europe. I knew the Qur'an said I should "ask the people of the Book (which is the Bible)" if I had questions. However, because of my Islamic-Arabic culture, I was too proud to ask anybody about Jesus. I wished that someone would sit next to me on a plane or in a restaurant and bring up the subject of Jesus so I could get some answers. But no one did.

Determined to find Jesus, I bought a ticket, got a visa, packed my suitcases and set out for Texas. Upon my arrival, I moved into an apartment and found that I was surrounded by people that were immersed in alcohol, drugs and immorality. I had been warned about people like this, but I thought I would certainly find some "people of the Book" (Christians) in the United States. But where were these "people of the Book" who would tell me about Jesus? They certainly weren't

my neighbors.

Depressed that my quest for Jesus was so unfruitful, I spent many hours sitting in church parking lots thinking about the people inside the buildings and wondering if they had answers. But I just couldn't make myself get out of the car and go inside to ask.

One Sunday morning I found myself in front of a large brick building. A man who stood outside was dressed like the priests at the Catholic school I had graduated from, so I knew he must be a Christian. Quickly I parked my car and walked up to him. When he asked if he could help me, I looked him straight in the eye and asked him to tell me about Jesus. He handed me his card and told me to call his secretary the next week to make an appointment. Here I had finally drummed up the courage to ask and the man didn't have time to talk with me. I threw the card on the ground and drove home.

The following week I was so depressed I rarely left my room. But on a Friday morning of that week in November 1981, I woke up with a sense of urgent anticipation and got ready as though I had an appointment somewhere. Something inside was telling me, "This is the day your questions about Jesus will be answered."

I parked in front of a large, white stucco building in Irving, Texas. Unknown to me it was Calvary Temple, an Assemblies of God church pastored by J. Don George. In the hallway a tall, distinguished-looking gentleman walked up to me as I entered, shook my hand and introduced himself: "I'm Pastor Bailey. What can I do for you?"

I told him I wanted to know about Jesus and he responded to my need. Because of my limited English, all I understood of what he said was that Jesus had died on the cross to forgive my sins, had risen from the dead and was alive today.

Yes, Jesus is still alive! Today He lives in my heart.

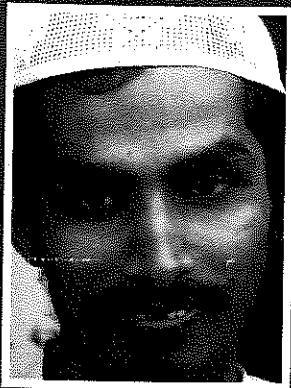
Much has happened in my life since that day in 1981 when I learned the truth about Jesus and accepted Him as my Savior. The church nurtured and protected me. I married and now have three children. God has directed me to reach out to other Muslims who have come to the United States, seeking out those who are as I was, desperately hungry for Jesus. They are people loved by God and we must bring them back to Him.



*\*This is the pseudonym of a missionary who is being processed as an Assemblies of God missionary to Muslims in the United States.*

# Jumaa Prayer Fellowship...

Praying for Muslims  
Around the World!



**Friday, January 7, 2000. Please pray**

...for the suffering Church in Chechnya. Most members are older women in difficult circumstances. The border between Russia and Chechnya is sealed off because of renewed fighting between Russian army forces and Muslim rebels. This makes it even more difficult for church members.

...for the CMM team that 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 with Muslims as they go to work in Middle East countries.

...for the fledgling indigenous Moroccan Church. Many converts are having a difficult time finding jobs and marriage partners. Pray that these circumstances will not hinder them from staying in their nation and helping to form the core of an indigenous Moroccan Church.

**Friday, January 14, 2000. Please pray**

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

...for Shagildy Atakov, who has been sentenced to four years of imprisonment in Turkmenistan. He is married with five children. The fraudulent charges have been designed to halt his preaching. He has reportedly been beaten severely.

...that the Sultan of Brunei, Sir Hassanal Bolkiyah, the absolute ruler, and his household might be impacted and humbled by an overwhelming flow of the grace of God. May this cause him to move more favorably on behalf of the small number of believers in that nation.

**Friday, January 21, 2000. Please pray**

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

...for Rudy Martin who has been released from prison in Saudi Arabia. Pray that he and his family may be encouraged and that his suffering will continue to produce fruit.

...for a missionary who is helping women who want to escape from prostitution. She asks for courage, discipline and adequate words to share the gospel.

**Friday, January 28, 2000. Please pray**

...for the first National Congress on Missions in Brazil. A CMM staff member will be challenging the participants concerning the need for missionaries to the Muslim world. Pray that there will be many potential workers for this needy mission field.

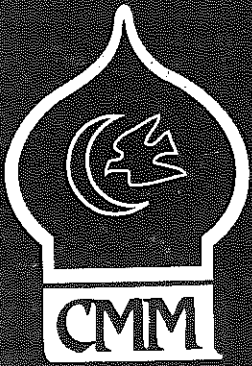
...for income-generating projects for displaced women in the camps around Khartoum, Sudan. Due to the severe economic situation and the lack of education of the women involved, many are struggling to make their projects a success.

...that God will raise up elders for the Kosovar churches that are forming as teams of Americans and Albanians help the refugees resettle and rebuild their lives in Kosovo.

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

# Jumaa Prayer Fellowship...

Praying for Muslims  
Around the World!



Friday, February 4, 2000. Please pray

...for the CMM team member who is teaching a bloc session on Islamics at the Bible school in Kyrgyzstan for the coming three weeks. Pray that some of the participants will become full-time workers among Muslims as the Lord challenges them.

...that isolated secret believers who have converted from Islam will be sustained by the Holy Spirit and that they will find places to study God's Word and have fellowship with other believers.

...for wisdom concerning an opportunity to make television programming available to Bengali-speaking people at a nominal cost.

Friday, February 11, 2000. Please pray

...for Tunisian Christians who are afraid to meet together and are reluctant to trust each other because of intimidation by authorities. Pray that they will be united in Christ and grow together in Him.

...for God's grace to surround a young believer who has recently been conditionally accepted back into his family after being rejected for his faith.

...that the Church in Indonesia will be spiritually fortified during this time of inter-religious conflict that has reigned for so long. Especially remember the island of Ambon where Muslims and Christians are fighting. East Timor also needs prayer following their contested elections held last September.

Friday, February 18, 2000. Please pray

...that the necessary funding and personnel will be available to increase the satellite television programs beamed into homes across North Africa. These programs are providing encouragement for believers and a low-key witness to others.

...that the churches that have adopted unreached people groups will be diligent in their efforts to see a church established among their adopted group. Fifty-seven churches in Singapore have already adopted an unreached people group.

...that God will over-rule a Malaysia government proposal that gives an Islamic council the right to veto permission to build churches. The proposal forbids the building of churches in Muslim areas, but allows the construction of mosques in Christian areas.

Friday, February 25, 2000. Please pray

...that Christians in Ethiopia will continue to be alert to the aggressive Muslim missionary activity in their country. Pray that Islamics courses conducted there will be well attended and useful in helping Christians understand Islam and counter its influence.

...that the government of Uzbekistan will do an about-face and make religious liberty more than a seasonal issue to gain the support of the U.S. State Department. Thank God for the prisoners released; pray for their complete restoration.

...for the ministry to displaced and homeless children in Bangladesh. The life-long impact on these children can be enormous, both physically and spiritually.



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

—(1 Timothy 2:1, NIV)