

BUT GOD

Dear Intercessor

The Soccer Cup is upon us, tourists are streaming into the country, everyone is suffering from soccer fever and the roads and guest houses are packed. My heart is filled with the expectation that God will do powerful things during this time. When we pray now, it is important to pray in faith and with expectation. God is the God of the impossible, which means that anything is possible for Him.

To see God

We would all so much like to see the Lord, talk to Him and we wish that He would speak to us. However, a problem arises when He reveals Himself to us in such a way that we can see Him, and that we are able to hear Him when He speaks. May I explain in the words of C.S. Lewis: "There comes a moment when the children who have been playing at burglars suddenly become quiet: was that a *real* footstep in the hall? There comes a moment when people who have been dabbling in religion suddenly draw back. Suppose we really find Him? We never meant it to come to *that!* Worse still, suppose He had found *us?*" So we see the problem is not seeking God, but what to do when we find Him!! When God reveals Himself, it's all about God and not about us anymore. Over and over in the Scriptures we read that people saw God. Look what Isaiah experienced when he saw God in the temple (**Isa.6**). What did the apostle John see on the island of Patmos? (**Rev.1:9-20**). Read about Paul's encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus (**Acts 9**). According to the descriptions in the Bible of occasions where people met God, it is clear that seeing God can often be a most frightening experience. God is our Father, but He is also the sovereign God. Jesus is the Saviour, but He is also the Lord. His words are as the balm of Gilead, but also like a double-edged sword, ripping open and laying everything bare. These past months I read the stories of revivals in history again. There are accounts of people who experienced a genuine revival, who say this was a terrifying experience for many – even for devoted Christians. There are those who say they hope they never experience a revival again – especially not the first phase of revival when God's holiness starts burning among people. Let us draw near to God and ask Him to be merciful when He Himself approaches us.

Human Trafficking

The *Soccer World Cup* has placed a renewed focus on the whole aspect of human trafficking. This is the fastest-growing industry in the world. Billions of dollars are at stake. It is difficult to say what the most evil practices in our community are, but this one definitely falls under the top five. May God touch our hearts about this matter and may tens of thousands of Christians stand up and do something practical about this issue. More information is given about this in our prayer guide. Please encourage others to pray with you about it.

Ramadan

Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting, is also the month that millions of Christians all over the world call on God to reveal Himself to Muslims and that they will see Jesus as the Son of God. The Muslims find the concept of God having a Son slanderous. It is through signs, wonders and direct revelations (dreams and visions) of Jesus Himself that great numbers of Muslims are currently being converted. There are millions of converts from Islam annually. A mighty movement of the Holy Spirit among the Kabyle Berbers is reported in Algeria. They live in 2,000 villages and cities in the mountains. The first conversions occurred in 1990. Today there are Christians, and in many cases also churches in literally all 2,000 towns. Every year thousands are converted. The same tendency is seen in other countries. In Indonesia there were only 2 million Christians in 1965; today there are more than 45 million, almost 20% of the population. The same is being reported about countries like Egypt and Sudan. Let us continue praying. God hears and answers prayer. This massive increase in converts started in 1992 when various

new prayer initiatives were launched worldwide and millions of Christians started focusing their prayers on the conversion of Muslims.

Think what you are doing when you pray

When we pray we stand before the Most High God, the One who made everything. The One who made flowers and insects and trillions and trillions of galaxies. Too often we limit God and reduce Him to the size of our own problems. We then measure our problems against the greatness of God. Then it is as if there is a wrestling match between God and our problems and the best we can do is hope that God wins. To really pray, we must be able to 'see' God with eyes of faith. We get to know God from His actions and conduct in the Bible. Let us discover God anew in the Bible and appeal to that God who is the same today as the God in the time of the Bible. Call on the blood and the cross of Jesus. Call on the Holy Spirit that the Father gave His church.

We are never ashamed when we stand before God. We stand before a Father who has invited us to come and speak with Him. As somebody once said: Prayer is not something we do to overcome God's unwillingness, but to enable us to call in faith upon God's willingness to help us. May His peace be in our hearts and let us rejoice in the Lord.

Eph.3:20

Bennie Mostert

Managing Director: *Jericho Walls International Prayer Network*

Quotes

Prayer is self-discipline. The effort to realize the presence and power of God stretches the sinews of the soul and hardens its muscles. To pray is to grow in grace. To tarry in the presence of the King leads to new loyalty and devotion on the part of the faithful subjects. Christian character grows in the secret place of prayer. - Samuel M. Zwemer

Beware in your prayers, above everything else, of limiting God, not only by unbelief, but by fancying that you know what He can do. Expect unexpected things, 'above all that we ask or think'. Each time, before you intercede, be quiet first, and worship God in His glory. Think of what He can do, and how He delights to hear the prayers of His redeemed people. Think of your place and privilege in Christ, and expect great things! - Andrew Murray

The power of prayer has never been tried to its full capacity in any church. If we want to see mighty wonders of divine grace and power wrought in the place of weakness, failure and disappointment, let the whole Church answer God's standing challenge: "Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knows not." - James Hudson Taylor

When God is about to give His people the expected good, He pours out a spirit of prayer, and it is a good sign that He is coming towards them in mercy. 'Then when you see the expected end approaching, then you shall call upon Me.' Note, promises are given not to supersede, but to quicken and encourage prayer: and when deliverance is coming we must by prayer go forth to meet it. When Daniel understood the 70 years were near expiring, then he set his face with more fervency than ever to seek the Lord (**Dan.9:2, 3**). - Matthew Henry

There is no power like that of prevailing prayer, of Abraham pleading for Sodom, Jacob wrestling in the stillness of the night, Moses standing in the breach, Hannah intoxicated with sorrow, David heartbroken with remorse and grief, Jesus in a sweat of blood. Add to this list from the records of the church your personal observation and experience, and always there is the cost of passion unto blood. Such prayer prevails. It turns ordinary mortals into men of power. It brings power. It brings fire. It brings rain. It brings life. It brings God. - Samuel Chadwick

All great soul-winners have been men of much and mighty prayer, and all great revivals have been preceded and carried out by persevering, prevailing knee-work in the closet. - Samuel Logan Brengle

If I will give myself up to the inspiration of the Spirit of God, who commands me to pray, the details and the petitions of that praying will all fall into harmony with the will of Him who wills that I should pray. - E. M. Bounds

The reason why many fail in battle is because they wait until the hour of battle. The reason why others succeed is because they have gained their victory on their knees long before the battle came. Anticipate your battles; fight them on your knees before temptation comes, and you will always have victory. - R. A. Torrey

I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had absolutely no other place to go. - Abraham Lincoln

What, where and when

National

8-9 September 2010: Christian Networks Prayer Summit

The annual prayer summit for leaders of different *Christian Networks* to prayerfully seek God's will for South Africa. Contact Anneke Hanekom at *Jericho Walls International Prayer Network* at tel.: 012 365 3213 or e-mail: info@global24-7.org to register as soon as possible.

27 September – 1 October 2010: 9th Watchman's School of Prayer

This is your personal invitation to join us for the annual *Watchman's School of Prayer* in Cape Town, South Africa! The past ten years have shown an exponential growth in the 24/7 prayer movement around the world. The purpose of this school is to train individuals who want to start or have already started establishing a 24/7 house of prayer, to build cross-cultural relationships and to learn from each other's experiences. During this full-time school of five days, you will be invited to take a deeper personal walk with God. Time will be spent in worship and seeking His face, while practical sessions will focus on equipping participants with regard to 24/7 prayer. This will include topics such as setting up a creative prayer room, how to mobilise people for a 24/7 prayer watch, how to reach out with prayer into your community, and how to sustain continuous prayer. We can accommodate 150 people and registration is R980 per person (including all meals and accommodation for the whole week). Please register by paying your deposit of R500 as soon as possible to reserve your place. Contact Lizette van Rooyen at tel.: 021 919 7988 or fax: 021 919 3954, website: www.jwipn.com or e-mail: cape@jwipn.com.

What, where and when

International

24-26 September 2010: Hindu Ministry Training

The *Rethinking Forum* will host a *Perspectives* follow-up course in Pasadena, California, USA. *The Hindu-Christian Interface* is a 15-hour course with two major components: understanding the interface between Hinduism and Christianity and the exploration of culturally relevant ways to make Christ known among upper caste Hindus. The five lessons are: The diversity of India and Hinduism, understanding Hinduism, the Hindu Christian interface, contextualisation and practical responses. Website: <http://www.rethinkingforum.com/> or to learn more contact them at email: info@rethinkingforum.com

Did you know?

Billy Graham's ministry turns 60 – Biblical man walking today

The modern world has never known a more revered or influential spiritual leader than Billy Graham. He has been called the World's Preacher because, for the past 60 years, he has preached the gospel to more people in live audiences than anyone else in history; over 210 million people in more than 185 countries and territories. Hundreds of millions more have been reached through his television, video, film and web cast ministries. He has been a confidant and counsellor to every U.S. president in the past 40 years as well as to kings, prime ministers and leaders throughout the world. His face and distinctive voice are recognised around the globe, and he is regularly listed as one of the 'Ten Most Admired Men in the World'. Although he has graced the covers of magazines the world over, he has always preferred that the spotlight focus on the Master he so faithfully serves, Jesus Christ. (Website: http://www.prayerfoundation.org/movies/movie_review_billy_graham_gods_ambassador.htm).

Military BibleSticks a hit in the military!

Faith Comes By Hearing, an Audio Bible ministry, has designed and deployed nearly 22,000 *Military BibleSticks* to chaplains in Iraq, Kuwait, Kosovo, and Afghanistan and requests for more are coming in. The *Military BibleStick* is a small, digital audio player that is pre-loaded with the *Audio Drama New Testament*. This Audio Bible fits easily into uniform pockets and is rugged enough to withstand unpredictable weather. (Website: <http://www.faithcomesbyhearing.com/audio-bibles-designed-and-deployed-us-troops>).

What's online?

Website: Information on Islam and Muslims

<http://www.answering-islam.org> / <http://www.morethan dreams.tv> / <http://www.isaalmasih.net> / <http://www.kalimatullah.com>

Website: www.WorldBibles.org

This website lists an amazing 14,000 web locations where Bibles can be found in over 4,000 world languages. Many Bibles are free downloads.

Website: www.pray-ap.info

If you would like to pray for the nations of the *Arabian Peninsula (AP)* you will find helpful information on this website.

Website: <http://www.resource-international.info>

Free resources for those ministering to Muslims can be found here. This website was created for expatriate and national believers who are ministering to Muslims in the Arab world and seeks to provide a comprehensive on-line database of information and critique of print and audio-visual resources for church planting ministry use.

Website: www.Easybibles.Com

EasyBibles is printing and posting, free of charge, gospel booklets to the world's poorest nations, particularly in Africa, for field-testing and feedback before printing larger quantities to post. These booklets will be sold to the poor at very low prices. Recent languages include Broa from Cambodia and Kelabit from Borneo, Malaysia.

Website: <http://www.go2southasia.org/resource/evangelism/>

Free downloadable *Hindu Evangelism Resources* are now available in English, Bengali, French and Hindi Languages. These free print-ready tracts are designed for tri-fold use to print at your church or on your home computer. The tract is designed to make witnessing to Hindus simple. The *Vedic Bridge* and *Truth that Triumphs* are contextual gospel tracts ready for you to download and print in PDF format.

Monthly prayer focuses: June – September 2010

The prayer focuses are to encourage those involved in a 24/7 house of prayer to focus on the same things at the same time in prayer. These are only guidelines and watch coordinators may add their own focuses as the Holy Spirit leads them. Will you not consider **putting up these prayer pointers in your prayer room** in creative ways, or use them in your quiet time? Also inform others and encourage them to pray for these issues during each of the monthly focuses. More information on these issues is available free of charge from our website: www.jwipn.com. Remember to subscribe to our weekly *Global Prayer Alert*, which covers current issues in prayer, by sending an e-mail to cape@jwipn.com

June: Youth and Soccer

Children and young people are severely pressurised by the world to conform to the world. There are direct physical attacks on their lives and exploitation of children by adults to enrich themselves. Human trafficking destroys especially the lives of children. The sex industry destroys millions of young girls before they are twenty. Drugs, unemployment, domestic violence and child labour are some of the enormous challenges that young people face. Let us pray with deep compassion for the children and youth of our nation especially in view of the upcoming *World Soccer Cup*.

June/July: World Soccer Cup

As Christians we have a responsibility to cover the nation in prayer before, during and after the *World Soccer Cup*. Evil forces stand ready to destroy the lives of people through this event, but it is also an opportunity for the church to reach out to people visiting our country and also the millions of unsaved and 'unreached' people in the country. Let us ask the Lord to have mercy on our nation and make us a blessing to the nations of the world. There are many prayer initiatives around the Soccer Cup. Get your own prayer group and local church to participate in intensive prayer during that time. The country will face many challenges in that period and we need to ask God to help us.

August/September: Ramadan

Ramadan is the month of fasting for Muslims worldwide. Hundreds of millions of Muslims will fast during the day for the full month, but eat during the nights. In doing this, they fulfil one of the five pillars of Islam. Over the last 18 years, millions of Christians united in a special prayer effort to pray for Muslims to experience the love of God as He reveals it in Jesus Christ. Over the past 20 years an astonishing number of Muslims were converted to Christianity, accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. There is a definite escalation in the number of Muslims coming to Christ. Very encouraging stories are told of what God is doing in Algeria, Indonesia, Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula to mention just a few. Let us join hands to pray for all Muslims.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2009, some 224 children in Kisumu Kenya joined to pray together for other children at risk. For most of them it was the first time they prayed and many cried as they did so. In El Salvador a boy with a hearing impairment conducted a prayer at a gathering and as the interpreter communicated his prayer, 69 children gave their lives to Christ.

DID YOU KNOW?

One lady brought her seriously ill son into the place where Christians were praying in Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria, asking them to pray for him. As they prayed for the boy he was completely healed. The news circulated quickly as this boy had been seen as a 'hopeless case'!

DID YOU KNOW?

A spiritual breakthrough came during our prayer time in June when a little boy who was adopted from Haiti came forward to pray. He was deaf and walked with leg braces on both legs. His mother interpreted his prayer for them and everyone in the room was deeply touched. *Little did they know what would happen just six months later in the nation of Haiti. Let us not be silent and slack in crying out to an Almighty God!*

Act-Up Prayer Network for those caught up in drug addiction and the occult

Leah's story starts when her youngest son became addicted to heroin and involved in Satanism. "The reality of my faith and whether I really believed when I prayed was suddenly challenged. In July 2000 I clearly experienced that God was going to set drug and Satanism captives free. In September that year, five families started praying over weekends for each other's children. Parents began to contact us and asked if they could also become part of this prayer chain. Within one month, more than 200 people signed up. All was so new to me and I went to see Bennie Mostert to ask for counsel and wisdom on what to do next. God really strengthened my faith and brought more clarity for us on how to continue to invite people to pray. I was so worried about my son; was he guilty of the unforgivable sin? Then God answered me through a picture where I saw my son on his knees in a ploughed field and a bright light shining down on him. I then knew that God's favour was towards him and that he would be saved.

In June 2003, my son's girlfriend, with whom he was living then, phoned to say that they could not wake him up. They tried everything to resuscitate him, but finally the doctor wanted to certify him dead. I knew he was still involved in Satanism and definitely not saved. That was not the promise I had received from God. So I sat down at his bedside and prayed, reminding God of His promise to me. Tests showed that my son had already had a heart attack 8 hours before they found him. But my God raised my son from the dead. During the next week in hospital, his organs were all restored 100% and today there is nothing wrong with him at all. He surrendered His life to Christ completely, and today he serves the Lord."

What is Act-Up?

Act-Up consists of families who have problems with substance abuse, dependency of any form, problems with gender-identity, or anything that hinders them in their relationship with the Lord. The purpose of *Act-Up* is to support the family members and friends who are praying for those who struggle.

How can you become involved in Act-Up?

The main focus is prayer. Therefore supporters of this initiative will commit themselves to pray at least one hour per week according to our prayer list. There is also a ten module course available for supporters of those who are addicted, laying a foundation for them on inner healing and prayer support. Once a year we gather to share testimonies and diaries that were put together during the year. We also help parents in crisis situations e.g. when children become aggressive and out of control, are reported missing etc.

There are currently more than 20,000 people who take time to pray for victims of substance abuse either on a daily or regular basis. You can become involved by submitting your details to us, and committing to a prayer slot of one hour per day or at least twice a week. You will be praying with many others at the same time. Contact Leah

Men-2-Pray: When my wife and I misunderstand each other!

This must be one of the most sensitive topics a person could broach! Yet it is such a fundamental reality in many marriages. Sometimes two people are almost constantly at cross purposes, so much so that they don't even want to talk to each other, let alone pray together; they don't know what to pray anymore! How do I pray when my wife and I have reached this point? The following guidelines might help you disentangle yourself from this mare's nest.

- 1. Don't defend yourself!** One thing that never works is hurling arguments, 'proof' and 'logical reasoning' at each other. Keep quiet and wait, but remember there's a vast difference between a brooding silence and simply saying nothing and waiting. This is most probably the most difficult of all – not defending yourself and not pointing out your partner's faults to her all the time. Arguments don't work; they simply rehash old patterns that you are both only too familiar with. Pray and ask the Lord to help you keep quiet – long enough for you to hear your wife's heart and emotions through everything, and not only the words that come from her mouth. Only the Holy Spirit can show you this. Don't decide for yourself what is in her heart and what she should be experiencing emotionally. Allow her to express herself in her own way and ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand her.
- 2. Learn to say you're sorry sooner!** One of a man's greatest challenges is to say we're sorry. We normally think once we do that our wives are going to start ruling over us. Actually just the opposite happens if we do it the right way. If your wife experiences the way you behave towards her in a certain way, your intention is not important. If you want to do things the right way, you must focus on how she experiences your behaviour. It is in cases like these that you should explain very clearly to her that you are sorry she experienced it in such a way. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you specifically what it is you do that make her misunderstand your intentions. Make sure your intentions are pure.
- 3. Allow her to lean on you.** Don't try to change your wife into someone you want her to be. God made her unique. Don't begrudge her the privilege of being her own person. Ask the Lord to show you how to support her. Support her in the things she dreams about, and become involved in a practical way to help her achieve what is important to her. Ask the Lord what things you should pay attention to and what things are important to her.
- 4. Crucify the 'self' in you.** A big stumbling block in a marriage is our so-called 'rights'. We men readily argue that we also have the right to do this or that – golf, rugby, watching the news and other things we enjoy doing. Often however this is at the expense of our wives and the rest of the family. Ask the Holy Spirit to point out to you the things in your life that are so important to you that you see them as a 'right' and won't budge an inch, no matter what the consequences on the relationships in your family. If you can't first die to yourself, how can you expect your wife to do it?
- 5. Bless her.** When there is conflict between the two of you, don't ask God to show your wife everything she does wrong. Simply start blessing your wife. It sounds like a hopeless task and something that can't really change anything. But simply start praying and say, "Lord I bless my wife." And keep it up. Go and pray it there where you are alone. Pray over and over again until you can pray it with all your heart. Allow the Holy Spirit to work in you.

6. **Don't complain to God about her.** When the sins of our wives are very obvious, we can tend to 'bring charges' against them to God. We tell Him everything they do wrong, or rather what we think they do wrong. As priests it is not our task to blame and accuse our wives, but to plead with God for grace and mercy for them. If we do this only to make life easier for us, our motives are wrong. Pray for your wife for the sake of your wife.
7. **First put your own house in order.** In times of conflict it is best to first of all ask God to show you, through His Holy Spirit, any sin and any thoughtless act from your side. You will find (almost) without exception that there are also a number of things in your own heart that you will have to put right.
8. **Ask for God's love for you and your wife!** Ask the Holy Spirit to pour the love of God into your heart so that you may love your wife with God's love. God's love is love that loves in spite of what the other one has done, love at your own expense and to the other person's advantage.
9. **Set your judgment aside.** Don't appoint yourself as judge. God is the judge. Do not condemn. The judgment is God's. Your task as husband is firstly to love unconditionally, as priest to kneel in supplication before God for your wife, to bless her and to call out the Name of the Lord over her (**Num.6:24-26**).
10. **Patience!** Read **1 Pet.3:7**: Be patient with your wife. Very patient!

Only when we worked through all these issues in prayer, we are ready to enter into a meaningful discussion with our wife.

Women-2-pray: I am the stepmom, what now?

An estimated one-third of children will live in a stepparent home before the age of 18. About 50% of all people will have a stepparent at some point in their lifetime and about 75% of those who get divorced, will eventually remarry. If it was a case of divorce, we are reminded of what Scripture says about it: that God hates divorce, because of the violence involved. Violence bears long term consequences, after a divorce children may carry scars for a lifetime. If you are saying today: 'I am the stepmom', remember there was a child that was hurt and without being involved in the divorce, also have to say: 'I am the stepchild'.

What can you as a Christian stepmom do for your stepchild? You can pray. You should pray. Here are a few thoughts and guidelines.

1. **Stepfamilies are formed because of loss** and therefore nearly always carry pain, rejection and resentment into the newly formed family. It is of the utmost importance that each family member needs to deal with his/her loss, pain, rejection, bitterness, resentment, etc. Much prayer is needed. When a parent dies or gets divorced, it is likely to cause insecurity and fear in a child's life. Many Christians falsely assume that a stepfamily formed due to the death of a parent is easier on the children than remarriage after a divorce. The pain and loss is the same, however. There is mourning in both cases. Kids who are grieving often display frustration, depression, or rebellion. *Pray for God's grace for stepmoms and to have patience to embrace the children in the throes of their frustration, depression or rebellion. Ask for her to have favour with the children and the ability to ease any anxiety by showing them love and acceptance.*
2. **Children need Dad!** It is wise to encourage your husband to spend time alone with his kids. When Dad remarries, a child may automatically feel scared and unsafe and therefore view the new relationship as a threat and might not want to share him with the new wife. *Pray for stepmoms to initiate and support activities between Dad and his kids and gradually integrate activities that they can take part in together as*

a stepfamily. Also pray for wisdom for stepfathers to reach out to your children. Ask for wisdom for both parents in cases where there are children from two families in one new home.

3. **The marriage relationship is important.** About 30% of people remarry within a year after a divorce. If a marriage is to survive, the relationship between husband and wife must be nurtured. *Pray for you as the parents not to neglect one another; to give priority to your marriage, but never at the expense of the children. Ask for wisdom to know how to address difficult situations as a team, so children will not take advantage of situations. Also ask that any division that may come between you as husband and wife as a result of a misunderstanding due to children, be resolved quickly.*
4. **Love unconditionally.** Many stepmoms face step-kids who are difficult, even aggressive. It is important to remember that people who are hurting, hurt others. Remember **Mal.2:16**. Make sure you lay the house rules down, but always exercise discipline with love and compassion. *Pray for stepmoms to have God's grace to learn to love her husband's children even if they do not return that love. Ask that God will grant stepmoms the gift of sacrificial love necessary for any family to survive.*
5. **Be patient.** One of the most common misconceptions about stepfamilies is that everyone will (hopefully) bond quickly and smoothly. The average stepfamily, however, can take up to seven years to integrate. And some never does. Rushing or forcing relationships in a new family will create tension and put unnecessary stress on the marriage. *Pray for stepparents on both sides to be patient and consistently address difficult issues until their families settle in their new environment. Ask for children to adapt quickly and feel safe and secure within their new family and settle in new relationships.*
6. **Mistakes are unavoidable.** The only way to deal with mistakes is to acknowledge them to your spouse and the children that have been hurt in the process. *Pray for every root of bitterness, resentment, pain and rejection to come into the light, and for a way to deal with this in your own life and that of your family and/or your stepchildren. Jesus is the Healer and also heals emotional pain. Pray for each person in the stepfamily to understand God's healing power and the importance of forgiveness (to extend and receive forgiveness). Ask that you as parents, who need to take the lead, will at all times persevere and not give up on any of the children, and to treat all of them equally, with fairness and compassion.*

Teens-2-pray: Prayer is made easy when you write it down!

Why start a prayer journal? To journal is not a new law or commandment, but only a practical way in helping you to concentrate and to keep record of answers to prayer, even to be kept for future generations! Believers who choose to keep a prayer journal today are taking part in a cherished Christian tradition while also creating a record of their faith for the next generation. George Müller, a famous English evangelist who lived in the 1800s, is well known for his prayer journal. Müller recorded his prayers in a book and never stopped praying for his requests. He simply continued until he could record an answer. Prayer journaling is a way to remember what God has done, is doing and will do for us. It is helpful to journal. To journal may help you. Try it for at least some time.

Focus that wandering mind! It is easy to spend more time worrying than praying. A prayer journal is a simple and meaningful way to simply 'start praying' on paper as you write out those issues troubling your heart and mind. It helps you to focus so your thoughts will not wander into worrying again!

Keep a record! The longer you keep a prayer journal, the more answered prayers you'll record. Over time, you will have a book filled with the evidence of God's faithfulness in your life. Many believers find that during times of stress or discouragement, reading through an old prayer journal can provide renewed hope and peace.

See how God works! Believers who keep a prayer journal often come to see how God is guiding their lives. Because they are able to track both their prayers and God's answers, they can sometimes see how God's plans are different to, but better than their own. Part of prayer is listening. When you study Scripture regarding God's ways in a specific situation or about a problem you prayed about, it will be easier for you to discern how God wants you to live.

Give it time! It will take some discipline to get into the habit of keeping a prayer journal, but do not give up too quickly. Soon you will be completely rid of the frustration of wandering thoughts when you want to pray and read your Bible!

How to keep a Prayer Journal

Prepare your journal: **Step 1:** Get together all you'll need: A journal (it can be a simple school manuscript), writing stuff of your choice and your Bible. **Step 2:** Date your entries. You can divide the entry into two sections: 'Requests' and 'Praises/Thanksgiving'. Under the 'Requests' heading, write down your prayer requests, whether personal requests or requests on behalf of others. **Step 3:** Under the 'Praises/Thanksgiving' heading, record items you are thankful for and prayers that have been answered. You can pray for each item as you list it and each section as you finish it, or you can wait until you have finished recording the entire entry and use it as an outline as you pray. **Step 4:** Leave some space at the bottom or on the reverse side of every page. This is where you will record answers to prayers, observations, and Scripture quotes that seem relevant to situations you are praying for, notes from daily devotions. Review the journal pages every few days or weeks and record any answers or observations.

Find a quiet space where you can reflect and hear God's voice. It can be as simple as your favourite chair, restaurant, beach or park. You just need to be where there are minimal distractions and you are relaxed.

Begin with a humble heart. Do not just start writing in your journal. Before you write one word or date, take your Bible and read a few verses to quiet your heart before God. Let Him direct the prayers you will write down. Let Him first speak to you.

Make a list: After you have spent time with God, start writing. Do not rush through this step by simply making a list. You can start by writing out your prayers to God and making a list of things you want to pray about as you continue elsewhere on the page. (Website: <http://www.go-journal.com>).

Reflect on what you have written. Is there anything else He wants you to pray for? Listen again, quietly. Write down any other thoughts.

Testify: Ask the Holy Spirit to prompt you when there are opportunities to share with others something from your time with God. Do so carefully that you may encourage them, without giving offense.

Children-2-pray: Who is God really?

It is difficult to imagine what God looks like, because we cannot see Him! One of the reasons is because God is a Spirit. We are made in God's image, that is why we think of Him in 'human' terms. But God is Spirit and no man

had ever seen Him. You can't see Him like you can see your parents or friends. How then can we know He is real or what He is like? The answer is simple. It lies in what we call God's character, as He explains it to us in the Bible. He has special names that help us understand what He is like. An important word to remember when you're praying according to God's character is the word 'always'. 'Always' means 'eternal'. God has always existed and always will. With this in mind, take note of these 6 important reminders of God's character.

1. God is **always** present. This means God is everywhere, all the time. *Thank you God that I can pray anywhere, any time. Especially when I feel lonely, help me to remember You are with me, closer than my mom and dad, or my friends.*
2. God is **always** powerful. God can do anything, nothing is impossible for Him. *Thank you God that You always answer my prayers, even though You sometimes say 'no'. Your will is best for me. Please come and do the things that I cannot do.*
3. God **always** knows. God knows everything, even before it happens. *Thank you God that I can have peace and confidence when I pray because You are in control of all things that will happen in my life.*
4. God is **always** fair. God does only what is right and just. *Thank you God that I can turn to You to help me out when I do not know what the right thing is to do. Please do in my life what is best in Your eyes.*
5. God is **always** holy. 'Holy' means 'perfect'. God can never sin. *Thank you God that You never make a mistake in the way You hear or answer my prayers. I also want to be holy. Make me holy as You are holy.*
6. God is **always** good. His plans for your life are for your own good. *Thank you God that in every situation, You work out all things for my own good. Help me to see circumstances like You do.*

Can you think of other parts of God's character that are not on this list? Make your own list. But most of all, remember to give thanks to God every day for being with you always, even now!

National focus: Human trafficking

Human trafficking is the fastest-growing criminal industry in the world, and also one of the main concerns in South Africa right now, especially with the upcoming event of the *Soccer World Cup*. What is all the commotion about? **Human trafficking** is the practice of people being tricked, lured, coerced or otherwise removed from their home or country, and then compelled to work with no or low payment. (Their passports are often taken from them). Victims of human trafficking are used in a variety of situations, including prostitution, bonded labour or debt bondage and other forms of involuntary servitude. The trade and sale of babies and children for adoption or other purposes is also considered to be trafficking in children.

Human trafficking and the *Soccer World Cup*

The most common form of human trafficking in South Africa will be prostitution and the activities of 'sex workers' in the following months. Girls as young as 10-11 and older, are usually used as sex workers, and can have anything from 10-20 clients every 24 hours. Many of them are made drug addicts by force so that their owners can control them. Often young girls and even boys are sold by their family for a small amount of money. It is estimated that during the *Soccer World Cup* in 2006 in Germany, 40,000 sex workers were imported from other nations. We are facing the same giant this year. Already young girls of 2-4 years are sold for very little for the coming soccer event. Many young ladies are being contracted by syndicates for the World Cup to serve as sex workers.

This type of human trafficking destroys millions of lives every year. One reporter said: *During a three-week investigation into human-trafficking syndicates operating near two stadiums, I found a lucrative trade in child sex. The children, sold for as little as \$45, can earn more than \$600 per night for their captors. "I'm really looking forward to doing more business during the World Cup," said a trafficker. We were speaking at his base overlooking Port Elizabeth's new Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium. Already, he had done brisk business among the stadium's construction workers.* Despite more than a dozen international conventions banning slavery in the past 150 years, there are more slaves today than at any point in human history. Slaves are those forced to perform services for no pay beyond subsistence and for the profit of others who hold them captive through fraud and violence. While South Africa invests billions to prepare its infrastructure for the half-million visitors expected to attend, tens of thousands of children have become ensnared in sexual slavery, and those who profit from their abuse are also preparing for the tournament.

Will prayer change anything?

One feels sick after reading these things, but we can pray. God can and wants to intervene!

- ✚ There are some encouraging testimonies. In Athens, Georgia, USA, God moved as this community prayed 24/7. An Asian massage parlour, which was believed to be a front for human trafficking closed down unexpectedly and a Mexican man was indicted and pled guilty to trafficking young girls from Mexico to Atlanta for prostitution.
- ✚ In Kansas City, Missouri, USA, for five years, a bright red brick building right next door to the Kansas City Boiler Room housed a porn shop called 'Naughty But Nice'. While it has been out of business for some time, the building itself was razed to the ground the week after they prayed. To them this destruction felt symbolic of God's heart.
- ✚ Another story comes from a prayer network in the USA. The week after these communities prayed, national news reported that 52 children were rescued in a nationwide Sex Trafficking raid.
- ✚ Whilst the 24/7 Reading community prayed in Reading, UK, a man from their area was arrested on suspicion of human trafficking, for sexual exploitation and controlling prostitution for gain. The headlines read: Arrests follow sex trafficking probe. God answered their prayers.
- ✚ Last year in one of the townships in South Africa, the police reported an upsurge in prostitution, domestic violence and other types of sex-related violence against young girls and women (in the specific township). A bishop in the community guided some 2,000 kids to pray for a week, 2 hours a day for 5 days. By the beginning of the next week, the police reported a 70% drop in cases being reported.

How do I pray?

- ✚ Pray for more people to join in prayer and if possible, to reach out to those involved in human trafficking, both the sex workers and syndicate leaders.
- ✚ Pray for detailed legislation that will give the police a legal right to deal with this type of violence against women and also against young boys.
- ✚ Pray for human trafficking to be exposed so that it is brought to the attention of the public and public awareness of what is happening is increased. Pray that people will raise a standard of prayer about this issue in our country.
- ✚ Pray for the church to reach out to victims of human trafficking with sensitivity and great compassion.
- ✚ Pray for community-based projects to address the problem of human trafficking in areas where there is a lot of activity – especially in the vicinity of the ten *Soccer World Cup* stadiums.
- ✚ Resource materials for the local churches are available and major projects of churches, in cooperation with taskforce members facilitating, are currently taking place in Eastern Europe, India, Canada, and Australia. Pray for a wider awareness in churches about this matter and for the distribution of these materials.
- ✚ Human trafficking across international borders requires cooperation and collaboration between countries if it is to be tackled effectively. Pray for such structures to be raised to combat crime.

✚ Let us pray according to **Lam.2:18-19**: *Their heart cried out to the Lord, "O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night; give yourself no relief; give your eyes no rest. Arise, cry out in the night at the beginning of the watches; pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord. Lift your hands toward Him for the life of your young children, who faint from hunger at the head of every street."*

How can you become involved or help?

Start praying, with others if possible. Make a point of finding out what is happening in our country and do the necessary research before submitting your children to organisations, e.g. modelling agencies, au pair agencies etc. Become involved in projects at your church and 'donate' some of your time and expertise to those in need. Visit these websites for more information: www.justiceacts.org / www.anexcdw.org.za / www.straatwerk.org.za / www.avoicethevoiceless.co.za

(Conclusions and prayer pointers in this article displays the opinion of the writer and not necessarily that of the resource companies. Resource websites: (<http://www.reuters.com/article/pressRelease/idUS265569+29-Oct-2009+PRN20091029> and http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-child-prostitution27-2009oct27_0,2692854.story and <http://www.readingchronicle.co.uk/news/roundup/articles/2009/10/29/42564-arrests-follow-sex-trafficking-probe/>).

Join the *Citywide Watch* in Pretoria for regular prayer meetings

We want to invite you to join and come to pray with us if you live in or are planning to visit Pretoria at any time. There is a 24/7 prayer room in Lynnwood Manor in Pretoria at the offices of *Jericho Walls International Prayer Network*. Join us as individual, family, church or other group in prayer for the church and city, our country and also the nations of the world. Prayer times are scheduled in different time slots that are available and suit those who come to pray. There is a lot of prayer information available to use in the prayer room. Every month we focus on different issues. Different 'prayer stations' are also set up where you can pause for prayer e.g. worship, reading the Word and prayer, thanksgiving, a world map to pray for international issues. Prayerfully consider a regular prayer slot to stand before God's throne of grace every week for those things He puts on your heart. For more information or to book a slot, please contact Lana Botha at tel.: 012 365 3213 or 072 379 3842 or e-mail: pretoriawatch@jwipn.com. You are also welcome to join us for a monthly prayer meeting for our city, usually held on a Thursday, 08:30 – 12:00. Watch our website www.jwipn.com for the coming dates for these events or contact Anneke at 012 365 3213 or e-mail: info@global24-7.org

Ramadan 11 August – 9 September 2010

This call to prayer for Muslims originally came during a meeting of several Christian leaders in the Middle East in 1992. Several believers strongly sensed God's desire to call as many Christians as possible to pray for the Muslim world. A prayer movement was planned to coincide with the Islamic month of Ramadan which follows a lunar calendar. (In 2010 this is from 11 August through 9 September). It was intended that these "30 Days" should be during the month of Ramadan for at least two reasons: (1) As a means for Christians to identify themselves with Muslims during a fixed period of the year, and (2) to call upon God's sovereign intervention in the lives of Muslims during a time of the year when they are particularly religious. Please note that praying during the month of Ramadan does not mean that we conform ourselves to the Muslim practices of fasting and prayer. As believers in Jesus we disagree with Islamic ideas, theology and practice in several areas. However, the "30 Days" movement emphasises God's love for Muslims. We encourage all believers to cultivate a spirit of humility, love, respect and service toward Muslims. For more information please visit: *The 30-Days Prayer Network*. Website: <http://www.30-days.net>

HOW CAN I PRAY DURING RAMADAN?

Over the coming weeks, you may pray and fast in a variety of ways, as God leads you. Some days five minutes may be all that God will ask from some in this prayer effort. However, participants will sometimes be guided to pray for much longer periods. You can use this booklet to pray during your own prayer times, or join others to pray together. Jesus gave special promises of blessing for Christians who pray and agree as a group (**Matt.18:20**). *Please use the Bible as much as possible in prayer. We have included various Bible references throughout the booklet. It would be good to meditate on these texts and speak them in prayer. Proclaim them before God; ask Him to inspire you. This will build your faith and God can give you new insights for prayer based on His Word.*

We would encourage you to find creative ways to involve as many people as possible in this prayer focus. You could organise some weekly or twice-weekly meetings over the 30-day period with your church, your youth group, cell groups or children's groups. Have others join you in a special meal using the prayer topic for that day as theme. Do a bit of research on a particular Muslim culture, including food and dress, music, etc.

Guidelines: It is helpful if one person is chosen as the leader/facilitator of the group for that time of prayer. (This person can give direction and cohesion to the group). It is helpful if the group focuses its prayers on one subject area at a time, rather than constantly changing focus. Each person should wait before moving on to a different topic, allowing each one to pray their prayers over the current subject area (**1 Cor.14:40**).

God is creative, and has made us in His image, so we can expect creative ideas and prayers as we seek Him. The Holy Spirit will lead you (**Rom.8:26**).

Jesus says, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." Are my ideas and attitudes toward Muslims shaped by this commandment? (The 30-Days Prayer Network. Website: <http://www.30-days.net/>).

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT MUSLIMS

Initial Revelations: According to Muslims, it was at the age of 40, in AD 610, that Muhammad supposedly began to receive revelations and instruction that he believed were from the archangel Gabriel (Gibrail in Arabic). These 'revelations' form the basis of the Qur'an. Muhammad proclaimed that his revelations were the final and superior message from the One Supreme God, although at the beginning even Muhammad doubted that he was a prophet. He banned the worship of idols and established civil and religious order in Medina and eventually Mecca. Muhammad died of natural causes in AD 632 in Medina, Saudi Arabia.

DID YOU KNOW ABOUT A PEOPLE GROUP?

A people group can be defined as: The largest group of those who perceive themselves to have a common affinity with each other, and within which the gospel can spread without encountering significant barriers of understanding and acceptance. The barriers could be (1) Religious (2) Language (3) Social Interaction and (4) Geography (e.g. Sudan is the biggest country in Africa).

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT THE QUR'AN

Muslims around the world look to the Qur'an for direction in both faith and life. The Qur'an is made up of 114 chapters, called *suras*, arranged approximately in order of length from the longest chapter (*sura 2*) through the shortest (only a single line for *sura 108*). Acting as a short introduction to the scripture is the first chapter, called "The Opening", *al-Fatiha*, which is a prayer-like segment used within the Muslim *salat* (prayer) ritual. Each chapter is divided into verses, *ayas*, the total number being reckoned somewhere between 6204 and 6236, differing

according to various schemes of counting. The Qur'an is roughly the same length as the New Testament. (Visit: www.quran.com). The Qur'anic 'Jesus' is emphatically not God, not the Son of God, not to be 'associated' with God, and not the "third of three".

The Qur'an shares with the Bible a common belief in a Creator God that humans are accountable to. In Islam, there is little indication to show what God is like. The god of the Muslims is not the same one Christians worship. The Qur'an describes the love of god/Allah for humans as conditional, and contains no command for humans to love either god/Allah or each other.

PILLARS OF ISLAM

The Islamic religion is lived according to five main "pillars" which are obligatory religious practices for all adult Muslims:

1. *Reciting the Creed (shahada) "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet."*
2. *Prayer (salat) - Five times each day.*
3. *Almsgiving (zakat) - Both obligatory and voluntary giving to the poor.*
4. *Fasting (saum) - Especially during the 'holy' month of Ramadan.*
5. *Pilgrimage (hajj) - At least once in a lifetime to Mecca, known as the Hajj.*

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT MUSLIMS

There are probably about 1.5 billion Muslims around the world. All the figures are approximate. Muslim Population Worldwide: Africa 400 million, Middle East 250 million, Asia 800 million, Europe (Russia Included) 38 million, Americas 5 million.

IS GOD CALLING YOU TO GO AND PRAY IN A MUSLIM NATION?

Praying 'on site' can give many new insights and open doors about the people and their country as you are experiencing it first-hand. The following websites will give you information about different nations, and info on unreached people groups: www.30-days.net; www.joshuaproject.net, www.win1040.com. You will find information on prayer journeys and prayer-walking on www.waymakers.org or you can connect with *Project Macedonia* if you want more info on prayer journeys: *The Macedonian Project*. Private bag X07, Lynnwood Ridge, 0040. Tel.: 012 997 3195 or fax: 086 630 3193. Website: www.macedonian.org.za or e-mail: macsa@mweb.co.za

WHAT MUSLIMS BELIEVE ABOUT JESUS

- Jesus was conceived miraculously by God in the womb of the Virgin Mary.
- Jesus is only a prophet, He is not divine (not the Son of God, not God in the flesh).
- Jesus was actually a good Muslim and He taught an earlier form of Islam to the Jewish people.
- Jesus did not die on the cross. He went directly to heaven. Judas had his face transformed and died in the place of Jesus as a judgment from God.
- Jesus will come again one day, He will marry, He will have children. He will correct the errors which Christians have spread about him. He will die, He will be buried in Medina and be judged like all men at the Last Judgment.

What is really different about what Christians and Muslims believe?

This year Ramadan, the month when Muslims fast and pray is from 11 August – 9 September. Many Christians are uncertain of the differences in the central beliefs of Christianity and Islam. It is very important to understand that there are definite differences, otherwise we would not be able to effectively witness Christ to a Muslim person, or we may even become confused if they ask us questions about our own beliefs. The following article aims to

serve the purpose of giving an introduction to some of the key differences; what they are, and how to pray for Muslims. It is by no means a complete document, but will provide a simple guideline to be used in Bible study and or prayer groups in your congregation, as the Holy Spirit leads you.

(1) Some of the central beliefs of Islam

Muslims accept six basic beliefs, or articles of Islamic faith. The first is *Faith in Allah*. Muslims believe there is only one god. His will is supreme and they call him Allah. The second basic belief of Muslims is *Angels*. They believe in angels such as Gabriel, who supposedly brought the message of the Qur'an to Muhammad. The third basic belief of Muslims is *The Holy Books*. They believe that Allah gave revelations, including the Old and New Testaments, especially the Torah, Psalms and Gospels. But these revelations end with the Qur'an, which for all intents and purposes, supersede the others. Christians believe in a triune God who is One God; that God the Father sent His only Son to redeem us from sin and reconcile us with God. God speaks to us primarily through His Holy Spirit and the Holy Bible and has a personal relationship with each of His children.

**Pray that Muslims may have understanding, and faith in the triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Ask that they will start to enquire and search for answers about Jesus Christ.*

(2) Some of the central beliefs of Islam

Muslims accept six basic beliefs, or articles of Islamic faith. The fourth belief of Muslims is *The Prophets*. They believe that Allah sent numerous prophets to mankind e.g. Adam (Allah's chosen), Noah (Allah's speaker), Moses (Allah's speaker), Jesus (Allah's word), Muhammad (Allah's apostle/prophet). Muhammad's revelation is considered the greatest of all. They believe he is the *Seal of the Prophets* and *Peace of the World*. The fifth belief of Muslims is *Predestination*. They believe that everything that happens, both good and evil, is predestined by Allah's will and is his final decision. The sixth belief of Muslims is *The Day of Judgement*. They believe that the good and evil deeds of men are placed on a scale. With sufficient personal merit and righteousness and the favour of Allah, they will go to eternal heaven. All others are believed to go to eternal hell.

Christians know that Scripture as a whole is inspired by God, and that God spoke His promises through the prophets, but that the testimony of Jesus Christ is the spirit of prophecy (**Rev.19:10**). We are saved through grace and God listens and heeds the prayers of believers. It is the will of our heavenly Father that even the wicked be saved and not die (**Ezek.18:23-24**). Salvation is not from works, but because of what Christ did for us on the cross.

**Pray that Muslims will have a supernatural revelation of the grace and love of Christ. That they will not fear Judgment Day, but rather look forward to Christ's return. Ask for a hunger and thirst to come into the hearts of Muslims, so that they will seek to read the Bible and come to know Jesus Christ as Saviour.*

(3) Some of the central beliefs of Islam

Every Muslim must practise at least five fundamental religious duties known as the 'Pillars of Religion'. They must recite prescribed prayers five times a day.

Once again, Christians believe in a triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the three in one. Therefore the god of Islam and that of Christianity can never be the same god. They do not believe that Allah has a son and for them it is unthinkable that he does. For Christians, Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He is the only way to the heavenly Father. They who reject Jesus Christ, reject the Father who sent Him (**1 John 5:10-11**).

**Pray that Muslims will have a growing longing in their hearts to find out more about the God of the Christians. Pray even that those who spend more time in prayer calling out to Allah, will suddenly have a longing to find out about Christ. Ask that God will answer many Muslims who are sincerely seeking for meaning in life, and reveal Jesus Christ to them.*

(4) Some of the central beliefs of Islam

The third fundamental religious duty of Muslims is observing the month of fasting known as *Ramadan*, where they are to fast during the day. The fourth pillar of Islam is giving to the poor. The fifth fundamental religious duty of

Muslims is that of a pilgrimage to Mecca (where Muhammad was born). A last religious duty often associated with the five pillars of Islam, is *jihad*. When the situation warrants it, this duty requires Muslims to go to war and defend Islam. *Jihad* can be interpreted as internal (as spiritual struggle) or external (physically defending Islam).

Christians are under no obligation to fast, although it is a wonderful discipline. Giving to the poor is also Biblical, yet it is done as an act of love. Christians believe that they are saved by grace and do not have to do works to gain salvation. Good works follow as a natural result after a Christian's salvation and testify about the supernatural work God had done in one's life (**1 Pet.2:12**).

***Pray** *that many Muslims worldwide will start to consider and question some of the pillars and duties of their faith. Ask that at the right time, many will have a supernatural encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ in a way that will turn their hearts to choose and serve Him alone.*