

# RAMADAN 2017 PRAYER FOCUS

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27 May – 25 June

*Let us show our love for Muslims  
by praying for them!*

*Ramadan is an annual Muslim observance period of 30 days. During this time Muslims fast, perform certain religious duties and do personal reflection. It is a period of intense spiritual awareness. As Christians we desire for all Muslims to come into a relationship with God as their Father, who has shown His love for them through the sacrificial work of our Lord Jesus on the cross. Use the daily focus areas and prayer points provided to pray for Muslims during Ramadan.*

## **27 May 2017 - Day 1: Christian workers in Muslim majority nations**

Many Christian workers in Muslim majority nations are finding it increasingly difficult to stay in the countries where they have worked for years. Missionaries are oftentimes not granted permission to start new work, and Christian NGOs are also being told they cannot continue existing work in some countries. Whilst there are some breakthroughs, there is also an increase in jihadist activity in many nations.

### *Prayer points:*

Pray for pastors, missionaries and NGOs to be able to continue their work. Ask for them to have favour with the local people, even jihadist groups. Pray for more Spirit-filled workers to do their work in the power of God. Ask for new doors to open for the gospel. For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries. (1 Corinthians 16:9). ...*meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ...* (Colossians 4:3).

## **28 May 2017 - Day 2: Worshipping Jesus**

*"But the hour is coming and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."* (John 4:23-25). North Africa, West Africa, Central Asia, the Middle East and the Horn of Africa: In the midst of all the violence, turmoil, death, horror and displacement of people, people are coming to Christ and many are coming back to Jesus! The ultimate goal of our lives is to worship and glorify Jesus and the Father.

*Prayer points:* Pray for true worshippers among Muslim Background Believers (MBB) and amongst non-MBB believers who have come back into relationship with Jesus. Pray for newly established churches in these regions. Ask that God would give them new songs to sing through the Holy Spirit.

### **29 May 2017 - Day 3: Resources necessary**

With the extraordinary number of Muslim converts amongst refugees from Iraq, Syria, Eritrea and many other nations, there is huge demand on the resources of the church. Bibles, literature, food, clothes, counsellors, translators, doctors, dentists, optometrists, and buildings that can be used to make services available to refugees are needed.

#### *Prayer points:*

Ask for breakthroughs and provision in all these areas. Pray for Christian workers across the Muslim world – many are worn out, especially workers in countries that are plagued by war and workers who minister amongst the refugees. Above all, there is a need for loving and caring Christians - people with compassion, willing to listen to the traumatized refugees. Please pray for Christian workers who feel stretched beyond their limits. Ask for them to have the resources necessary to do their work effectively.

### **30 May 2017 - Day 4: Fastest growing church in the world**

The church is growing fastest in Iran – an Islamic state – a fact pretty surprising to most Christians! The church in Iran is growing at an astonishing 19.6% per annum! Conversion is illegal and 'above ground' churches have almost all been closed down. Iran is run by the Mullahs, the government of which proclaims, "We're doing everything according to Islamic principles."

#### *Prayer points:*

Please pray for perseverance for the church in Iran. Ask for pastors to have endurance – many have landed in prison, and they are not being treated well. Their families also suffer. A new, more modern, Farsi translation of the Iranian New Testament is in progress. Pray for this to be completed soon, as there is a great hunger for Bibles in Iran.

### **31 May 2017 - Day 5: Peace negotiations**

To have peace in Iraq, Syria and Yemen, peace negotiations need to be successful. There is no alternative. Right now, it seems as if peace is the least likely achievement. Syria, Iraq and Yemen have become part of an international power play. Many groups profit financially through keeping wars going.

#### *Prayer points:*

Pray for hidden agendas to be revealed and nullified, secret negotiations to be unsuccessful, and for weapons smuggling to cease. Ask for leaders to have a change of heart and resolve to sit down and work out lasting peaceful settlements.

### **1 June 2017 - Day 6: Divine intervention**

*For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.* (Psalm 86:5). More and more Muslims are becoming curious about Jesus, and many have become Jesus-followers! However, in some places, there is a growing hostility towards Christianity due to the number of Muslims who have turned to Christ. Some of this hostility is in part due to intervention from the West in conflicts taking place in the Middle East and North Africa. In general, Westerners are seen as 'Christian', so when Muslims are dissatisfied with the West's intervention, 'Christians' are blamed.

#### *Prayer points:*

Please pray for such misunderstandings to be addressed, and for Muslims to meet true Christians that will rectify their misconceptions. Ask for divine intervention that shows Muslims God's love for them. Pray for the Holy Spirit to create a deep hunger for the truth in Muslims and a thirst for the assurance of salvation.

### **2 June 2017 - Day 7: Many new believers**

*...And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:47).* Countless reports of new believers in Christ who have converted from Islam are flooding in from Europe, Africa, Indonesia, the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, Syria, Iran, the Horn of Africa, the United States and many more places!

#### *Prayer points:*

Thank the Lord for answering the prayers of those who intercede for the lost! Pray for the safety of new believers, and for them to be welcomed into existing churches without any resistance. Intercede for the salvation of entire families, as this makes life easier for new believers and reduces their chances of returning to Islam. Pray for the newly emerging Muslim Background Believer (MBB) Church to be a missionary church that shares the gospel boldly with Muslims.

### **3 June 2017 - Day 8: SAT-7 TÜRK**

*And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO PREACH THE GOSPEL OF PEACE, WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!" (Romans 10:15).* SAT-7's channel for Turkish-speaking viewers is now available to 4-5 million people via a private subscription television service! That SAT-7 continues to broadcast is a miracle, as recent developments in Turkey may mean that the channel will have to stop broadcasting.

#### *Prayer points:*

Pray for Christians in Turkey to stand firm in the Lord. Intercede for SAT-7 TÜRK to be able to continue broadcasting and for its broadcasts to bear much fruit.

### **4 June 2017 - Day 9: Kindness towards extremist groups**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is (...) kindness... (Galatians 5:22).* There are more than a dozen extremist groups operating in Syria and Iraq that kill, destroy and create havoc in these countries.

#### *Prayer points:*

Pray for forgiveness for any lack of kindness in your own heart towards ISIS, extremist groups, and Iraqi and Syrian citizens who have not yet experienced the mercy of Jesus Christ. Ask for the rich mercy of God to be known amongst ISIS members and other extremist groups. Pray for them to learn of God's heavenly kindness in sending His Son. Intercede for ISIS, and other extremist groups, to become advocates for the oppressed – the widows, fatherless, sojourners, and the poor – rather than advocates of violence and religious fanaticism. Pray for them to cease plotting evil against other people.

### **5 June 2017 - Day 10: Christian Organizations in Iraq**

*And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19).*

#### *Prayer points:*

Pray for brothers and sisters in Christ who feel overwhelmed by the needs of refugees. Ask for them to experience Christ's refreshing and encouragement, and pray for His provision of resources to do this work of love and mercy. Pray particularly for those working with displaced women, youth and children. One couple reports that they meet with over 700 women weekly in 3 different locations, talking through their needs, insecurities, fears, low self-esteem and trauma, and praying with them at the end of the meeting, so that they give these feelings to Jesus. Pray for every refugee to meet Jesus before they return to their home country.

**6 June 2017 - Day 11: Converting to Christianity in Pakistan can lead to your death**

*...and if children, then heirs - heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.* (Romans 8:17). According to a report on religious conversion in Pakistan, orthodox Islamic bylaws consider converting from the Muslim faith a capital crime. Family members or neighbours often feel honour-bound to kill those who have converted to another faith, such as Christianity. Nonetheless, people are still coming to Christ!

*Prayer points:*

Pray for Christians in persecuted countries, who find it difficult to find safe places to stay and work to support their families. Praise the Lord for the constant stream of Pakistani's coming to Christ! Ask for their protection and provision, and pray for them to persevere in the midst of hardship. Pray for the existing church in Pakistan to reach out to them.

**7 June 2017 - Day 12: Islamist attacks on Copts in Egypt**

*For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.* (Philippians 1:29). Although reports of attacks on Coptic Christians in Egypt do not make news headlines, it is the daily reality for 12-15 million Coptic Christians in Egypt.

*Prayer points:*

Please pray for them to have the grace to forgive when they are not treated fairly or are persecuted. Ask for them to keep their faith, despite such severe persecution. Pray for the police to act in accordance with the law to protect Christians, and for perpetrators to be prosecuted. Never stop praying for the salvation of those who plan and execute such attacks on Christians.

**8 June 2017 - Day 13: Impact of Internet media**

*Salvation belongs to the LORD...* (Psalm 3:8). Many groups use a wide variety of Internet media to spread the gospel. One person, with a small radio station and a Facebook page, reaches 1.2 million people (mainly Muslim) per month! Two other similar networks reach similar numbers! One website has +30 million visits per year! Many hundreds of websites reach out to Muslims.

*Prayer points:*

Pray for more Muslims to be reached via the Internet. Intercede for those who answer questions posted on the websites. Ask for them to be patient, and work with wisdom, love and sensitivity, despite any hostile response. Pray for further creative ways to reach Muslims with the gospel.

**9 June 2017 - Day 14: Jesus cleanses from all sin**

*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence...* (Ephesians 1:7-8). In Europe an Arabic-speaking Christian asked young Muslim men along the 'refugee road' if he could pray for them. Many said, "No, I am not clean. I have not washed, I sinned yesterday; I am not clean." However, the man explained that we can speak to God and come to Jesus as we are in simple prayer, like a conversation. This shocked and amazed the men he encountered. When he started talking about Jesus or praying, the Muslim men flocked to him in order to hear more! Refugees are often startled by the simplicity and intimacy of prayer to God, who hears them as they are.

*Prayer points:*

Pray for refugees to find Jesus as they seek the truth. Ask for them to understand the concept of personal forgiveness of sin due to the blood Jesus shed and not their works.

**10 June 2017 - Day 15: For the salvation of families and friends**

...*"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."* Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. (Acts 16:31-32). When individual Muslims get saved, it is normally very difficult for them to live peacefully. The same is true for Buddhists, Hindus and Jews that become Christian. When whole families come to the Lord, it is much easier, and the influence amongst their communities is also much stronger.

*Prayer points:*

Praise the Lord for more and more entire families who are turning to the Lord! Pray for them to grow spiritually and to testify boldly to others in their communities.

**11 June 2017 - Day 16: Revival in the European church**

[Love] *bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.* (1 Corinthians 13:7). The awakening of the European church right now is so important, especially with millions of Muslims fleeing their countries to find refuge in Europe. Pray for a great awakening in the churches in Europe so that they have compassion and share Christ with the millions of Muslims living in the Middle East, North Africa, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Refugees from at least 40 nations are trying to get to Europe. Currently, the church in Europe has the biggest mission opportunity ever, with hundreds of thousands of refugees and immigrants flooding their nations!

*Prayer points:*

Pray for every Christian and leader to be passionate and filled with the Holy Spirit. Ask for each Christian to have a deep desire to reach out to refugees and migrants.

**12 June 2017 - Day 17: Refugee children and "Jesus sightings"**

*But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.* (Matthew 19:14-15). One female Youth With A Mission (YWAM) worker aiding traumatized refugee children uses painting to help the children tell their stories: "Paint your family and house in Syria. Draw a painting of the night when you came by boat to Greece, etc." In many of the paintings there is an unknown figure surrounded by light. Sometimes He is with them on the sea, sometimes on the shore, sometimes even in the boat. The children do not know His name, but His presence is very real to them. They know they are safe with Him.

*Prayer points:*

Pray for more work to be done amongst traumatized refugee children. Ask for more teachers, psychologists, teaching material, schools, effective feeding schemes and other resources to be provided. Pray for the protection of refugee children (both girls and boys) against sexual abuse.

**13 June 2017 - Day 18: Audio Bibles**

*"Is not My word like a fire?" says the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?* (Jeremiah 23:29). Audio Bibles are available in many languages spoken in the Middle East, North Africa, West Africa and the Horn of Africa. They are one of the most effective tools in preaching the gospel.

*Prayer points:*

Please pray for sponsorship for more audio Bibles to reach the illiterate. Pray for the translation of more Bibles into audio format, and for their effective distribution amongst refugees in Europe. Ask for many

refugees to come to faith in Jesus Christ, despite their circumstances.

#### **14 June 2017 - Day 19: Azerbaijan**

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:17, 20).* Conflict between predominantly Christian Armenians and Muslim Azeri's began in the early 1990's. Already 30,000 people have died, and one million people have been displaced, as a result of this conflict. The only solution to this conflict is reconciliation, which must originate from Christians. Reconciliation between political leaders must also take place.

#### *Prayer points:*

Pray for God's intervention in this complicated situation. Intercede for parents and children who have lost loved ones as a result of this long war. Pray for everyone to have the capacity to forgive their enemies.

#### **15 June 2017 - Day 20: God as a Father**

*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18).* Nowhere in the Quran is God mentioned as 'Father'. Yet, the concept of God as Father is one of Christianity's most basic concepts. For a Muslim to think of God as a Father is very difficult. The Trinity is also a big obstacle for Muslims, for they believe God does not share His deity with anyone, so it is hard for them to accept Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Muslims also struggle with Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. They reason that if Christ truly was God, He would never have had to die, let alone die on a Cross, a death reserved for criminals! Muslims believe that no one dies for the sins of another; each person must make restitution for his/her own wrongs.

#### *Prayer points:*

Please pray for the Father to reveal Jesus' sacrifice to Muslims, through the Holy Spirit.

#### **16 June 2017 - Day 21: Reaching the devastated**

*"O you afflicted one, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay your stones with colourful gems, and lay your foundations with sapphires. (Isaiah 54:11).* Since the outbreak of war in the Middle East after 2010, families have scattered to different countries and now rely on the help of various Christian ministries and organizations. Local churches and ministries are reaching out in several countries, visiting believers, mentoring and encouraging them, and developing new local leaders.

#### *Prayer points:*

Please pray for men to allow women to go to Christian meetings also, so they too can share their pain and difficulties. Ask for Kurdish men to be converted and for some to become strong church leaders. Pray for open doors to mission organizations so that they may help people in need and share the One who can truly make a difference in their lives.

#### **17 June 2017 - Day 22: Syria - Food as a weapon of war**

*But the former governors who were before me laid burdens on the people, and took from them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver. Yes, even their servants bore rule over the people, but I did not do so, because of the fear of God. (Nehemiah 5:15).* The humanitarian catastrophe continues to worsen in war-torn Syria, as food is increasingly used as a weapon of war on all sides of the conflict.

Despite international law prohibiting the use of starvation against civilians, forces on all sides of the conflict prevent aid from reaching blockaded towns in Syria. The United Nations estimates that more than 400,000 people are besieged in 15 communities across Syria, roughly half of them in areas controlled by the Islamic State.

*Prayer points:*

Please pray for ways to move civilians out of blockaded regions, where they have no access to food and other necessities. Ask for more funding from international sources to help with food aid. Pray for peace negotiations to succeed. The media in the West also negatively complicates the situation in Syria and the surrounding nations, so please intercede for this destructive influence to end. Ask for the provision of basics like food and water for those in need.

#### **18 June 2017 - Day 23: Boko Haram – Nigeria**

*Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.* (Psalm 37:1-2). Boko Haram, led by Abubakar Shekau, aims to impose hard line Islamic law in Nigeria. 'Boko Haram' means 'Western education is sinful'. Thus, the group forbids Muslims from engaging in any activity related to Western society, including voting in elections, wearing shirts or trousers, and receiving a secular education. In 2015/2016, this group topped the list of terrorist groups that have killed people in terrorist attacks and suicide bombings.

*Prayer points:*

Pray for the salvation of militants and their captives. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict them of the love of Christ. Pray for all earthly and human wisdom to be exposed and eliminated, its power to be dispersed, and its darkness to be cast away. Boko Haram has burnt entire villages to the ground, killing villagers execution-style or burning them alive. Cry out to the Lord to have mercy on militants!

#### **19 June 2017 - Day 24: Folk Islam: Witchcraft and ancestor worship**

*He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.* (1 John 3:8). About 70% of Muslims are involved in folk Islam - a mixture of Islam, witchcraft, Spiritism and ancestral worship. Orthodox Islam forbids magic of any kind, but even when 'pure' Islam is practiced, a lot of witchcraft is involved. Those who practise magic do so in the hope of various results, such as falling pregnant, harming someone of whom the person is jealous, seeking favour for children, etc. Magic is employed to harm others or to prosper or protect one's self. Witchcraft is also used to harm Christians.

*Prayer points:*

Please pray especially that no harm would come to Muslim-background believers, and that they would be a strong witness for Jesus Christ. Pray that the Son of God would destroy the works of the devil, and that people involved in witchcraft would be set free by Him.

#### **20 June 2017 - Day 25: Somalia: Al-Shabaab, Islamic extremism and tribal antagonism**

*The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.* (Matthew 11:5-6). The militant Islamist group, al-Shabaab, has publicly declared that it "wants Somalia free of any Christians". Those suspected of being Christian are frequently killed on the spot. Believers are isolated and have to meet secretly in small groups. They cannot own Bibles, as this could put them

in danger.

*Prayer points:*

Praise the Lord for definite efforts to reach the Somali people with the gospel, and praise Him that they can study the Bible safely on the Internet! Praise God also for the number of Christians daily being added to the church, despite the many who are being killed! Pray for the safety of Somali Christians, and ask for their spiritual growth. Pray for those who are seeking to meet people who can share the gospel with them.

#### **21 June 2017 - Day 26: Hope amidst death and persecution**

*Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them...* (2 Timothy 3:12-14). It is amazing that many Christians persecuted in nations, such as Nigeria, South Sudan and Somalia etc., choose to stay there and continue to be light and salt in these nations. Whilst it is NOT wrong to flee, some people feel convicted to stay. Scripture makes it very clear that those who want to live godly lives and follow Christ unashamedly will be persecuted.

*Prayer points:*

Pray for fellow Christians in other nations who are suffering for their faith. Ask that they will continue to live godly lives, without shame, and have the courage to continue to be true witnesses to Christ.

#### **22 June 2017 - Day 27: Holy Spirit outpouring on the Church in Muslim majority nations**

*...I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.* (Joel 2:28). More than 50% of all Christians in the Middle East and North Africa live in Egypt.

*Prayer points:*

Pray for an awakening in the church in this region. In Acts 4:23-31; Acts 8:15-16; Acts 10:44; and Acts 11:15, we read that the Holy Spirit was poured out again and again on the church. In all these instances, there was salvation of people and a strong move forward for the church. Please pray for an increase of prophesy, dreams and visions. Ask that entire families, neighbourhoods, mosques, towns, villages and cities would experience visions and dreams of Jesus, the one and only Living God!

#### **23 June 2017 - Day 28: An increase in prayer**

*And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced...* (Zechariah 12:10a). Prayer is the most essential way to work with God for salvation of the lost. There is no higher work than the work of prayer. It is impossible to make a serious study of the life of the apostle Paul and fail to see that prayer was more important than anything else in his life. Even Jesus' life was saturated with extended times of prayer and seeking God's face.

*Prayer points:*

Pray for existing and new prayer initiatives for the Muslim world to increase in the church globally. Give thanks to the Lord for every soul that has turned to Jesus.

#### **24 June 2017 - Day 29: Exalt the name of the Lord**

One simple way of praying for impossible situations is to pray the names of God.

*Prayer points:*

Pray for Muslims globally to have a revelation of who God is: Jesus, the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6). The LORD Almighty (2 Corinthians 6:18; Revelation 1:8; 19:6). The Alpha and Omega; the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End (Revelation 1:8, 11; 21:16; 22:13). The All Sufficient One (2 Corinthians 9:8). The author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:1-2). The Prince (author) of life (Acts 3:15). The author of peace (1 Corinthians 14:33). Everlasting Father/Eternal Father (Isaiah 9:6). A very present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1). The Bright and Morning Star (Revelation 22:16). Chosen of God (Luke 23:35). Christ Jesus, our Lord (Romans 8:38-39).

**25 June 2017 - Day 30: Evil is not "almighty"**

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (Romans 8:35).* The IS movement has even started to kill its own followers for fleeing to the enemy and in one report for "beheading too many people." Tension over differences in pay etc. exists between indigenous ISIS soldiers and foreigners who came to help the cause. It is important for us to understand that Muslims, ISIS or Boko Haram and other radical groups are not the real problem, and thus our real fight is not against them. The real problem is the "god of this world" that darkens and veils the minds of people.

*Prayer points:*

Therefore, resist the evil one, and pray for God to remove the veil over people's minds so that they see Jesus as the Prince of Peace, the One who gives peace in this life and the life to come. Pray very specifically that God will break all unholy covenants and alliances that stand against the kingdom of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit and the victory of Jesus on the Cross.



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