

My Neighbour wears a Burkha.

20 days of prayer for Muslims in Perth.

*'The worldwide missionary endeavour
to reach more than one billion Muslims
rises or falls on prayer.
Nothing of eternal significance has
ever come from God without the
fervent and prevailing prayer of believers.'*

(Caner, Voices behind the Veil).



1. Introduction

It is early in the morning at the markets and veiled Muslim ladies weave their way through the stalls to get the best bargains. The proud Muslim husbands talk loudly while their many children run among the stalls. Their crates are laden with masses of seafood, vegetables and fruit.

It is a market scene which could be from so many Muslim countries. Only this is the Canning Vale Markets on a Saturday morning in Perth.

Around 25,000 Muslims now live in Western Australia. They come from countries like Iran, Afghanistan, Sudan, Bosnia and Indonesia. They come from countries where it can be very difficult or even illegal to share the gospel. They come from countries where people have had no chance to hear the truth about Jesus Christ. They come from countries isolated by their government, mountains or war.

And God is doing something amazing. In His grace and wisdom, God is bringing the harvest field to the church in Perth.

Through your prayers you have the opportunity to make an eternal difference in the lives of Muslims in Perth. Please join us in uplifting our Muslim brothers and sisters to Christ for the next 20 days.

PRAYER

Please pray that God will remove the distrust and fear that so many Christians have of Muslims. Muslims are first and foremost people who are made in God's image- and they are potentially brothers and sisters in Christ!

Please pray that there will be a Christ-inspired and united expression of love towards Muslims in Perth. Please pray that this love will be expressed in practical ways that Muslims can appreciate and that it will point them to Jesus.

2. So many barriers!

Islam has been called the most spiritually resistant religion to the Gospel. Muslims have been taught in so many ways to refute the claims of Jesus and the Bible.

Is the Bible God's word? 'No, it has been corrupted', claim Muslims.

Did Jesus die on a cross? 'No, it was Judas', Muslims believe.

Is Jesus God's Son? 'Never!' yell Muslims. 'How could God have sex with Mary to produce a son? How could the infinite God come to earth?'

Is the Trinity real? 'No', explain Muslims, 'God is one! You Christians believe in three gods!'

Is Jesus more than a prophet? 'No,' says the Muslim, 'Jesus is only a prophet.

In fact, he is not even the greatest prophet- that is Muhammad.'

PRAYER

Pray that Christians in Perth will be raised up who will sensitively and wisely answer the objections that Muslims have to Jesus. If Jesus is going to be seriously considered these hurdles must be removed.

Pray that Muslims will come to believe that God's Word is authentic and stands forever. Pray that their hearts will be open to reading the Bible.

Pray that God would show Muslims the truth about Jesus' death and resurrection.

Would you like to know how to answer these questions? 'More than a Prophet' by Caner and Caner has excellent answers to many of the false beliefs that Muslims have about Jesus and the Bible.

3. An 'immoral' religion

Muslims equate Western television, movies and songs with Christianity. It is not surprising then that Muslims are appalled at 'this immoral religion' which allows such nudity and drug abuse. For Muslims there is no separation between the religious and secular aspects of society.

The depraved nature of our Western media is a huge barrier to Muslims considering the claims of Jesus.

Please pray that true followers of Jesus will enter into the lives of Muslims and present an example radically different from the one Muslims expect.

Pray that Christians in Perth will be an example to Muslims of purity and holiness.

Please pray that Muslims will realise that to follow Jesus does not mean to accept the immorality of the Western society. Pray that they will realise that Christ demands of them a holiness which is far in excess of what they can ever achieve in their own strength.

PRAYER

4. Contextual barriers

Hamed* received the Persian Bible and was clearly impressed. He kissed the cover and opened it with reverence. He was amazed at the clear and eloquent way in which the Gospel message was translated into his language.

Hamed had received English Bibles before, but they had remained on the bookshelf unopened. But this Bible, written in Persian, was clearly impacting him. This Bible was written in his heart language and presented in a culturally sensitive way. God's truth was alive to Hamed!

There are so many cultural barriers to Muslims accepting Jesus. Western churches with their loud music, differences in clothing and confusing language all present barriers to Muslims actually understanding the Good News. The challenge is to provide the Gospel message in a culturally sensitive way so that Muslims can appreciate this Truth.

PRAYER

Please pray that Christians and churches in Perth will take steps to present the Gospel in a culturally sensitive way. Pray that churches would start contextualised outreach teams for Muslims.

Please pray that Muslims throughout Perth will receive copies of the Bible in their heart language. Pray that they will be deeply impacted by God's truth and not blinded by the enemy.

Muslims are usually happy to receive a copy of the New Testament if it is offered politely. The Bible Society of W.A is able to provide copies in many different languages. If you would like to be involved in giving Bibles to Muslims please contact John at johnbardsley@iinet.net.au

*All names in this booklet have been changed.

5. The spiritual barrier

A massive spiritual barrier stands in the way of Muslims coming to Christ. 2 Corinthians 4 says that the god of this world has blinded the minds of people all over the world and has hardened their hearts to the Good News.

Research has shown that a key ingredient in seeing large number of Muslims come to Christ is persistent and passionate prayer. Our prayers make a difference! As Paul says in Ephesians 6, 'Our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against... the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm.'

Please pray that God would move in a mighty way to release Muslims in Perth from their spiritual bondage.

Pray that the Spirit would bring revival amongst Muslims and that the soil of their hearts would be soft to the Gospel (Luke 8:5-12).

Please ask God to give Christians around Perth a burden to passionately intercede for Muslims in our city and beyond.

Prayer meetings for Muslims exist both north and south of Perth. To join with BALM (Believer's All Loving Muslims) in the north contact Bill at balm.perth@gmail.com or contact John at johnbardsley@iinet.net.au if you live south of Perth. Or why not start your own prayer group?

PRAYER

6. People to join the work

We believe that God is preparing Muslim families all over Perth to hear the Good News about Jesus Christ.

But as Paul said, 'How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?' (Romans 10:14). So far, few Christians are making the effort to go and tell Muslims in Perth about Jesus. Despite living in our midst, the vast majority of Muslims living in Perth have had no meaningful conversation with a Christian.

Those who do share their faith with Muslims can sometimes find it hard and frustrating work. 'You are fools for being Christians! You are deceived and stupid!' This was the response of one Muslim man in Langford when two followers of Jesus shared their testimony with his family. But this man's son, a university student, accepted a New Testament in his own language that day.

Please pray for God to raise up more people to reach Muslims in Perth. As Jesus said, 'The harvest is vast but the workers are few. So ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers...' (Matthew 9:37-38)

Please pray that God would encourage those believers who are sharing their faith with Muslims. Please pray that they would be empowered by the Spirit to be an effective witness.

PRAYER

7. Taking the Gospel back to the world!

It is our dream that as Muslims in Perth start to see the truth about Jesus, that they will take this Good News back to the people in their home country. Muslim Background Believers (MMBs) have the potential to be a much more effective witness to their families and friends than Western missionaries. But there is also the potential for much greater persecution for MBBs.

Already this powerful witness amongst the nations is starting to happen! Mohsen, who was a Muslim in Afghanistan, is now a follower of Jesus living in Perth. He helps prepare Christian radio and television programs which are broadcast back into Afghanistan. His program recently included a powerful testimony from an ex-Taliban member who shared how Jesus has changed his life. Praise God for this miracle!

Pray that followers of Jesus from a Muslim background will have the courage and the vision to take the Gospel back to their home country.

Please also pray that the church in Australia will support and encourage these new believers as they take these very courageous steps.

Pray that God will protect Mohsen - even in Australia he is threatened and persecuted. Please also pray that God will bless his television ministry.

PRAYER

8. Muslim Students

Mohamed has been studying in Perth for 2 years to complete an Engineering degree at Curtin University. Like thousands of Muslim students this is his first time in a Western country.

He is shocked at the amount of alcohol that people drink, the 'naked' women at the University and the rude shows on T.V. But for the first time in his life, Mohamed is also able to ask real questions about Islam and find out about Jesus without being persecuted.

Most Muslims do not separate Christianity from Western culture, hence they are appalled at what they believe is such an immoral religion. Will students like Mohamed leave Australia with a disdain for Christianity based on the immorality they see in the West, or will they meet the true Saviour Jesus Christ who offers real life?

PRAYER

Please pray that students like Mohamed who come to Australia will meet Christian students and families who will show them what it means to be a follower of Christ. Please pray that deep relationships will form.

Pray that the Spirit will move powerfully in the lives of Muslim students while they are in Australia so that their lives are transformed.

Pray for Christian groups on campus to have the resources and the gifts to reach Muslims.

There are great opportunities to be involved in outreach to Muslim students. If you would like some ideas to get you started please contact us.

9. Afghanistan Refugees

Farima was very pregnant and worried about who would help her during her labour. She had no family in Perth to help during her labour, so she asked her Christian neighbour Mary to help during the birth of her son- something that a Muslim would never do in Afghanistan. Mary agreed and it was the beginning of a friendship that has lasted many years between Farima and Mary.

Research has suggested that Muslims are most open to the gospel when they first move into a new culture. Pray that during this time of settling in Australia Muslims would encounter Jesus.

Many Muslims come to Perth as refugees from countries like Afghanistan or Bosnia. They are often traumatised and have witnessed horrible sights. Many come with no money and no understanding of English.

Please pray that God would burden Christians to help Muslim refugees.

There are a number of Christian families who have significant interaction with Afghani families. Pray for these families that they will have wisdom on how to share the gospel and make a great impact. Pray that through practical expressions of love, that Christ would be preached.

PRAYER

There is tremendous opportunity to bless Muslim families who arrive here as refugees. For example, teaching them English, showing them where to shop, how to live in a Western home, how to drive in Australia. Contact John if you would like more details.

10. Iranian Muslims

Ahmed, his wife and two sons have spent the last 8 years in Australia. While they miss Iran, they are determined to settle into Australia and Ahmed desires that his sons succeed at University.

Most Muslim families, like Ahmed's, are warm and welcoming. They are proud of their culture, and in the face of an Australian society which is so secular they hold strongly to their Muslim faith.

Like many Muslims Ahmed is happy to talk about religion. He believes that all faithful people whether Jew, Christian or Muslim will go to heaven. Ahmed unfortunately believes that Jesus is just a prophet.

There are many exciting reports coming from Iran about how God is moving in powerful ways. They are deeply unsatisfied with the political and religious leaders. Iranian Muslims around the world, including those in Perth, are asking many questions about Jesus.

PRAYER

Please pray that Ahmed and other Iranian families will be convicted of their need for a Saviour. Pray that Ahmed will realise that Jesus is much more than just a prophet.

Pray especially for Muslim fathers that they will follow Jesus and so lead their whole family to Christ. The father is very important in Muslim households.

Please pray that there will be a great harvest of Iranian Muslims around the world- including Perth. One Iranian couple recently visited a church in Perth to find out more about Jesus.

If you would like more information about praying for Iran, visit www.elam.com

11. Christian teachers in Islamic schools!

Did you know that there are a number of Christian teachers who are working in Islamic schools? These teachers obviously do not promote Islam, but see a tremendous opportunity to be a sensitive witness to their Muslim students.

The number of Islamic schools is growing across Perth. In the south of Perth alone two new Islamic schools have opened in the last 2 years. These schools are an attractive option to Muslim families who have recently moved to Australia. They want their children to retain their Muslim religion and values.

Please pray for Christian teachers in Muslim schools- that they would have the opportunity to sensitively share their faith with their students. Pray that they would have wisdom and courage. It is quite acceptable for these teachers to suggest Christian websites where students with questions about Christ can find answers.

Please pray that these teachers and students in Islamic schools would be impacted by Christ.

Why not prayer walk around one of these schools? The Australian Islamic College is on President Street in Kewdale. The adjacent park (Tomato Lake) is a great place to pray for this school. The Australian Islamic College in Dianella (81 Cleveland Street) is a second option.

PRAYER

12. A person of peace

In the 1990s nearly 90,000 Muslims turned to Christ in Bangladesh. This amazing movement to Christ started in a small village when a missionary was prompted by God to share his faith with a Muslim boy. It highlighted a powerful, but very simple strategy that Jesus used- finding a 'person of peace' (Luke 10:1-20).

The person of peace is someone who is receptive to the gospel and then acts as a bridge to others in the community so they might also hear about Jesus. As the person of peace comes to faith so they bring others with them and they go on to influence their wider family and community. An example in the Bible is the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4)

One possible person of peace has been identified in Thornlie. Please pray that this Muslim man will fully give his life to Christ and be a bold witness to many in his community.

PRAYER

Please pray that God would provide many more divine appointments for those who are reaching Muslims. Please pray that believers will be sensitive to the direction given by God's voice.

Pray that God would raise up many people of peace amongst Muslims in Perth.

Read more about great movements of Muslims to Christ in 'Church Planting Movements' by David Garrison.

Last year a Christian in Perth started sharing his faith with the leader of a mosque (called an Imam) through English lessons. The Christian offered the Imam a copy of the Jesus movie which he gladly received. The Imam was so amazed by the movie that he showed it to his entire congregation!

Although they may not be formally trained Imams have tremendous impact and influence among the Muslim community in Perth.

Please pray that these religious leaders would be impacted by Christ and that they would surrender to Him. Like Paul they have the potential to be great evangelists for Jesus!

Please pray for the Imam who has so welcomed the Jesus movie that he would continue to be challenged by the story of Jesus. Pray for those in his congregation who also viewed the Jesus movie.

PRAYER

The Jesus movie is a powerful tool in Muslim evangelism. If you would like to be involved in giving these movies to Muslims speak to John at john.wesley@bigpond.com.

14. Muslim women

It is incredible to realise that one out of ten people in the world is a Muslim woman!

Entering into Australian society is especially hard for Muslim women. Separated from the support network of aunts and sisters, they struggle to learn a new language when they are so busy raising their children.

Several Christian women in Perth have had great opportunities to share with Muslim women through English lessons. This service is greatly appreciated and a great bridge to sharing the gospel. If you would like to be involved in this ministry please contact us.

Debora Brunson suggests that 'Hopelessness pervades Islamic culture but especially the lives of women... For Muslim women the future is one of despair because they have even less to look forward to than men'.

PRAYER

Please pray that Muslim women will learn that knowing Christ brings a hope for our future and a joy in our present unlike anything they have experienced!

Many Muslim women are oppressed by Islam. Please pray that they will see the difference in the way that Jesus treated women. Pray that the Spirit might show them how deeply loved and how valuable they are to God.

Please pray that God would surround Muslim women with godly Christians who will love them and reach out to them.

Christine Mallouhi has written a fantastic book about reaching Muslim women in 'Miniskirts, Mothers & Muslims'. 'Voices behind the veil' by Caner is another insightful book.

15. Indonesian Muslims

Indonesia is our closest neighbour and the world's largest Muslim nation. There are literally thousands of villages and towns throughout Indonesia that are 100% Muslim with no Christian witness.

Islamic belief in Indonesia is generally a mixture of animistic or superstitious belief and teaching from the Quran. There is a strong movement within Indonesia encouraging Muslims to pursue a stricter Arabic version of Islam. While Christians are present in Indonesia there are often large cultural and political barriers stopping Muslims from receiving their message.

Many Indonesian students come to Perth to study, and many other Indonesians come to Australia for work opportunities.

PRAYER

Pray for the Indonesian churches in Perth to be well equipped for reaching Muslim immigrants. Pray that they will have endurance in the face of persecution. Pray for effective training in evangelism.

The Indonesian churches in Perth contain many Indonesian Chinese who have suffered at the hands of Muslims. Pray for forgiveness and willingness to reach out to the lost from their own country.

Pray that Muslim students from Indonesia will encounter the true Jesus while living in Australia. Pray that they would take the opportunity to understand more about Australian culture and what it means to be a believer.

16. Dreams and visions

'I had received a dream about Khalil. He was in a Muslim city and trying desperately to escape from the police who were watching him. In the dream I told Khalil that God did not want him to leave the Muslim city but to stay and be salt and light to the people and tell them about Jesus.

As I shared parts of this dream with Khalil he listened intently. As a Muslim he takes dreams very seriously. He told me that in his home country whole books are written about what different dreams mean. There is great power in dreams for Muslims!'

Around the world God is using both dreams and visions to reveal the truth about Jesus Christ to Muslims. There are many exciting testimonies of people who have seen Jesus in a dream. For example, a survey of 600 Muslims who came to faith in Christ showed that one quarter was greatly influenced by a dream about Jesus (Woodberry, 2004).

Please pray that many Muslims in Perth will have dreams and visions about Jesus.

Please also pray that Muslims would have Christians in their lives that would be able to explain who Jesus is and what these dreams mean.

Lastly pray that Muslims would respond with openness to their dreams about Jesus.

PRAYER

Greeson suggest starting a 'Muslim Dream Team' to intercede for Muslims. You can read more about this and engaging with Muslims in 'The Camel'.

17. Ramadan

Each year Muslims around the world will take a month to fast from food and drink during daylight hours. The month of Ramadan starts with the crescent moon and finishes with the sighting of the new moon 30 days later. For 2010 the dates for Ramadan are August 11th until September 9.

Fasting is one of the Five Pillars of the religion of Islam and one of the highest forms of Islamic worship. According to one author:

'Ramadan brings out a special feeling of emotional excitement and religious zeal among Muslims of all ages. Though fasting is mandatory only for adults, children as young as eight willingly observe fasting with their elders. Children look forward to the excitement of sighting the moon and eating special meals with their families. Adults appreciate the opportunity to double their rewards from God and seek forgiveness for past sins. As Ramadan emphasizes Muslim brotherhood and community all feel a particular closeness.'

The month of Ramadan is a time of greater spiritual awareness for Muslims. Please pray that during this time God would move in a very powerful way to reveal the truth about Jesus Christ.

Muslim fasting is very legalistic - it is a way to earn merit from Allah. Pray that they will learn about the grace that comes from being in a relationship with Christ.

Ramadan is also a source of great pride for Muslims. They see no similar commitment to seeking God in the lives of Christians. Please pray that in Perth the church will present a witness of people who radically desire God - not to earn his merit, but in thankfulness for what he has done!

PRAYER

A great prayer booklet, and more information on Ramadan, can be obtained from www.30-days.net

18. Muslim Background Believers

A new believer in Riverton, one in South Perth and one in Thornlie - we are receiving more reports of Muslims coming to Christ in Perth. The Lord of the harvest is doing a great work amongst Muslims in Perth!

These new believers are often very lonely as they are separated from their family overseas and also the Muslim community in Perth. Muslims come from cultures which are much more community orientated than the West so this is a real concern for Muslims background believers.

Although persecution is a real possibility these new believers are usually eager to share their new faith in Christ with Muslims.

PRAYER

Pray for these new believers to have a sense of belonging in the community of Christians in Perth.

Pray that they will have wisdom in sharing their faith with their Muslim friends.

Pray that these Muslim background believers will grow in wisdom and understanding. Pray that they will have endurance and courage.

Pray for those Christians who help to disciple new believers from a Muslim background

The reality of persecution is very real for Muslim Background Believers. In Somalia, a Christian is shot dead at a wedding for being an apostate from Islam, in Iran two Muslim women are jailed for confessing Christ as Lord, in Indonesia homes and churches are destroyed.

Even in Western countries like Australia and England MBBs may be rejected, threatened and beaten. Barnabas Fund recently shared: 'The daughter of a British imam who converted to Christianity had to move house 45 times to escape detection by her family.'

PRAYER

Pray for Muslim women and men in Australia to have the courage to search for God's truth and the strength to receive it. Pray for God's protection over those who are seeking.

Pray that MBB will respond with great boldness and courage in the face of persecution. Pray that they will have an attitude of love and they will persevere under fire.

Pray for Christians in Australia to remember their brothers and sisters who are suffering.

Brother Andrew has written a novel called 'Secret Believers' which outlines the reality for believers in the Muslim world.

20. Entering into their world

To enter into the life of a Muslim means travelling from one culture to another and from one religion to another. While you might not be moving countries to go on this mission trip, you will be moving through different cultures. Just as you would prepare for a trip overseas, a successful trip into the life of a Muslim takes some preparation. Here are some basic steps to enter into the mission field:

1. Pray that God would bless the meeting, that God would bless your words and that His Truth might be expressed.
2. Dress conservatively. Women should wear modest clothes and ensure that their arms and chest are covered. It is normal for men to wear long pants and a collared shirt.
3. Don't offer alcohol, pork or non-halal meat. Morning or afternoon tea is an easier time to share with your Muslim friend as there is less chance of offending.
4. Don't criticise Mohammed or the Koran. It is far better to present the truth of Jesus than criticise Islam.
5. Take an attitude of love with you!

Pray that God would bless those Christians who enter into the lives of Muslims with sensitivity and wisdom.

Pray for those taking their first steps into Muslim evangelism- that they would have endurance and persistence in the task.

PRAYER

Phil Parshall has written an excellent book called, 'Muslim Evangelism' which has more information about crossing cultural barriers in reaching Muslims

There are many ways to be involved with Muslim evangelism.

1. Prayer walk the streets where Muslims make up a large percentage of the population. Or pray walk at Carousel or Mirrabooka shopping centres.
2. Offer a free New Testament or Jesus DVD in the language of their heart. The Jesus DVD can be ordered at john.wesley@bigpond.com
3. Build friendships with Muslims through sport, picnics, mothers' groups and playgroups.
4. Help new Muslims arrivals when they first come to Perth
5. Have a picnic at Tomato Lake where many Muslims visit.
6. Be involved in English lessons.

And lastly, please keep praying that there will be a great awakening of the church in Perth to the tremendous opportunities on our doorstep.

PRAYER

'God has brought the world to our doorstep. Muslims... live and work in our neighbourhood- perhaps even next door. Do we care enough about these people to move outside of our comfort zones, conquer our fears and bring the love of Christ to them in genuine friendship? It is the love of Christ that transforms lives and it is the love of Christ that can transform the Muslim world.'

(Wood, 2010, Missions Frontiers).

This brochure is sensitive. Please do not leave it in a public place and please do not give to a Muslim.

Please pass this booklet on after you have used it!
If you would like more copies please email johnbardsley@inet.net.au