

Front Cover

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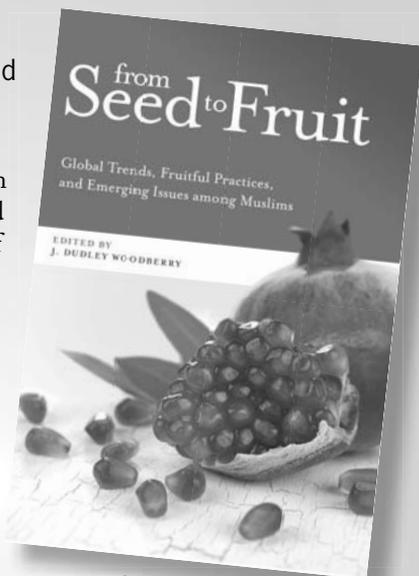
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FEATURED BOOK

## From Seed To Fruit

Global Trends, Fruitful Practices, and Emerging Issues among Muslims

The revised and enlarged second edition of J. Dudley Woodberry's *From Seed to Fruit* expands on the next stage of the ongoing collaborative research and reflections of many people from many organizations desiring to bless Muslims. Seven additional chapters survey major trends in global Islam today and explore themes that prove to have considerable influence on fruitfulness, including a new chapter on building Christlike relationships with Muslims.



The Global Trends Research Group has continued to update the demographic materials on Muslim people groups, their access to Christian witness, and when and how Christian groups covenant to provide meaningful access. This is included in the updated CD-ROM that accompanies the new edition.

*From Seed to Fruit* presents the most recent worldwide research on witness to Christ among Muslim peoples, using biblical images from nature to show the interaction between God's activity and human responsibility in blessing these peoples. From mission history, explore liturgy as an appropriate vehicle for teaching, discuss appropriate means of communication, and point to both the need and contextually appropriate possibilities of greater involvement of women in training and ministry.

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Marvin Newell

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## What is the Global Prayer Digest?

The *Global Prayer Digest* is a unique devotional booklet. Each day it gives a glimpse of what God is doing around the world and what still remains to be done. Daily prayer for that still-unfinished task is at the heart of the Adopt-A-People movement. Condensed missionary stories, biblical challenges, urgent reports, and exciting descriptions of unreached peoples provide a digest of rich fuel for your own times of prayer for the world.

## Become a Daily World Christian

The *Global Prayer Digest* is a key tool in a movement to help fulfill Christ's commission to make disciples of all the peoples of the earth. This movement involves a daily discipline of learning, praying, and giving to help reach the world's nearly 10,000 unreached people groups. Unreached peoples are those groups which do not yet have a strong church in their own cultural and social setting.

## Myanmar, Mothers and the Frontier Fellowship Movement

The Frontier Fellowship Movement is an adaptation of a custom among tribal Christians in Burma (now called Myanmar) and elsewhere. As the mother in each family prepares meals for her family, she sets aside a handful of rice in a special container, and prays for their church's missionaries to unreached people groups. Rice from families in the church is sold to support their frontier missionaries.

## Loose Change Adds Up!

In adapting the Burma Plan to our culture, we have simply substituted loose change for rice and have added this educational and inspirational *Global Prayer Digest*. One person's loose change will average about \$100 per year exclusively for frontier missions! When the national goal of one million Adopt-A-People Prayer Partners is reached, that will mean \$100 million more per year for the frontiers!

## Devotional Ideas

How can you make the most of this prayer digest:

- Some people use it as a supplement to their regular devotional time.
- Others enjoy reading and praying around the dinner table with the entire family.
- We encourage you to gather monthly with other Christ friends who are involved in this movement.
- Join the "Frontier Fellowship movement" (left), a version of the Burma Plan, to financially support frontier missions.

Every day at the top of the page you'll find the name of an unreached people group for which to pray. The small maps will help you locate the day's feature.



Dear Praying Friends,

I am of English, Irish, and Swedish descent. Eighteen hundred years ago my Irish ancestors were headhunters who drank blood from the skulls of their victims. A thousand years ago my Viking ancestors were so cruel when they raided and destroyed unprotected villages that they

made the Dark Ages much darker. Eventually the light of the gospel turned many in these people groups to Christ, the One who alone is the Light of the World. Their culture changed, and they began to live more by the teachings of Jesus and less by the ways of the world.

Human history teaches us that without Christ people can be unbelievably cruel to one other.

This month we will be praying for the Pashtuns. It might seem like we are judging these Afghan and Pakistani tribes. But we must remember that without the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, we would be no different than they are.

The Pashtuns have a cultural code of honor called *pashtunwali*, which puts a certain amount of restraint on their behavior, but also spurs them to greater acts of violence and vengeance. For this reason, we will not only pray for specific Pashtun tribes, but also for aspects of the *pashtunwali* code of honor and other cultural dynamics that can keep Pashtuns from doing what God wants them to do. We will pray, not against certain behavior, but for the Holy Spirit to lead the people to ways that will honor God and save them from destructive behavior.

In Christ,

Keith Carey, editor, *GPD*

We still need volunteers with web design, app, and computer skills. Let me know if you or someone you know can help us strengthen this prayer movement.  
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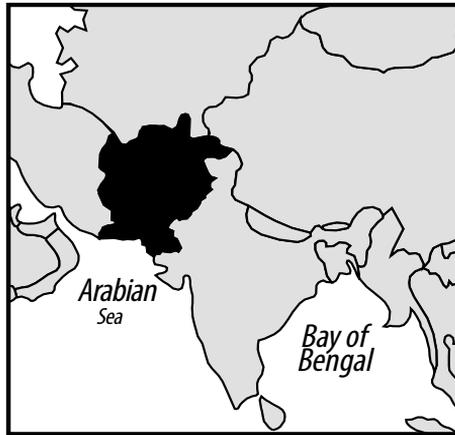
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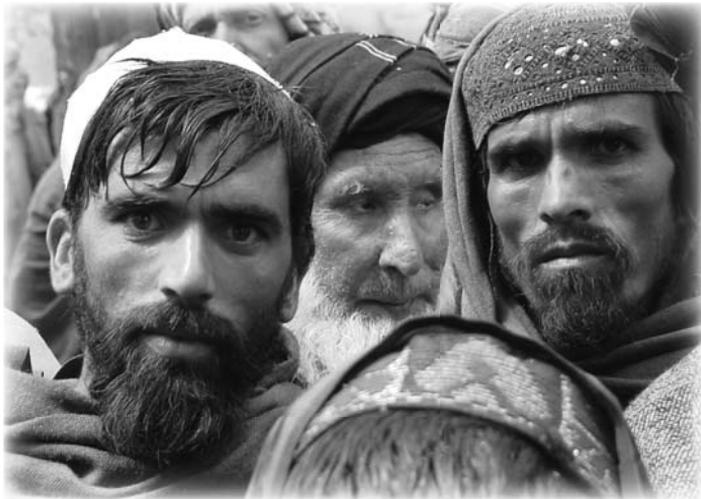
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# Pray for a Discipleship-Making Movement in Every Pashtun Community



## *Will the Unconquerable Pashtuns Be Conquered By the Love of Christ?*

— by Keith Carey



Warriors, poets, and Bollywood actors. The Pashtun peoples have excelled in all three of these roles. It is easy to put them in a simplistic box. For example, the violent and cruel Taliban are noted for being dominated by Pashtun individuals. Yet, as you will see on day 20, there are entire Pashtun tribes that adamantly oppose the Taliban. Most of the Pashtun people are very traditional and conservative, but those who are in the movie industry are most likely going to adhere to a liberal worldview.

There are many contradictions when someone tries to describe these 50 million people. Even the definition of what makes up a Pashtun depends on who is defining them. Most would agree that speaking one of the related Pashto dialects is a key qualification. Others would stress issues of lineage. To be a Pashtun you need to have a father who is Pashtun.

There are cultural issues as well. A key ingredient to being Pashtun is adhering to pashtunwali, the Pashtun code of honor. Pashtunwali is so central to the Pashtun peoples that many of this month's prayer entries will focus on various aspects of this cultural way of life. Pashtunwali keeps some semblance of order in their communities, but it also allows the "might makes right" ethic to dominate their communities.

Some would say that you must be a Sunni Muslim to be Pashtun. This idea, however, is controversial; while most Pashtuns are Sunni, there are a few Shi'ite Pashtuns. Some of them are embracing Christ as we approach the day of His return, yet currently this number is only a trickle.

### **Independence as a Way of Life**

Many countries have tried to conquer the Pashtuns. Some have succeeded... for a season. Then the inevitable backlash comes, and the invaders must leave. At the height of the British Empire in the 19th Century, the Pashtuns caused so many casualties that the Brits eventually made deals with them and learned to settle for less than they wanted in South Asia. After the British had to give independence to their South Asian colonies in 1947, India was divided along religious lines. A good percentage of the Pashtuns lived in part of the new Muslim nation of Pakistan. The Pashtuns proved to be ungovernable, so the Pakistanis simply called their land the "Northwest Frontier Province," and granted them a large degree of autonomy. To this day the government in Islamabad has little control over this province, which has since been re-named Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after the famous Khyber Pass.

By the late 1970s, the Russian-dominated Soviet Union was becoming increasingly aggressive in their foreign policy. They established a friendly communist government in neighboring Afghanistan. When that regime showed signs of toppling, the Soviet military intervened. At first it seemed that the Russians were successfully extending their influence. But during their 10-year stay in Afghanistan, local Pashtun-dominated fighting units kept the Russians on the defense. Russian tanks were easily ambushed in ravines by armed "mujahideen" freedom fighters. The United States sent stinger missiles to the mujahideen. The Soviets withdrew 10 years after they entered Afghanistan. The Soviet Union dissolved 12 years almost to the day after they invaded Afghanistan.

The mujahideen were feeling victorious. Unfortunately for them, there were many factions within their ranks. Civil war broke out, and they could not form a viable government. By 1996, the Taliban took power in Afghanistan. Pashtuns dominated this Islamic militant group, though some Pashtuns were violently opposed to the Taliban. Afghanistan became a haven for Islamic militant groups such as Al Qaeda, led by Saudi Arabia's Osama Bin Laden. Flushed with a feeling of power, Al Qaeda planned and successfully implemented a terrorist attack on United States soil on September 11, 2001. American forces and their anti-Taliban Afghan allies soon drove the Taliban out of power. Although non-Pashtuns had a degree of power with the new government, Pashtuns retained positions of influence, including the presidency. The U.S. is scheduled to end almost all of its military involvement in Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

At the height of their power, the British, the Russians, and the Americans have had to settle for less than they wanted. One newspaper reporter noted that it's easy to get a military force into Afghanistan, but almost impossible to get out with a semblance of victory. The Pashtuns are a strong people who know how to fight others... and one another. They know how to protect themselves, but at what cost?

### **Spiritual Strongholds**

Though we will pray for many Pashtun tribes in this issue, pashtunwali, the Pashtun code of honor, will take up some of the daily prayer entries. It is very unusual for us to deviate from our efforts to cover specific unreached people groups, but the people we know who are most familiar with the Pashtuns recommended that we do it this way.

Why is this? Pashtunwali affects the Pashtun way of thinking and their daily lives even more than Islam. When pashtunwali conflicts with Islamic principles, a Pashtun will usually go with pashtunwali.

Though pashtunwali involves certain noble virtues, it is riddled with things that conflict with biblical principles. Here are some key spiritual strongholds that are part of pashtunwali:

### **Oppression of the weak**

Women and children are at the mercy of the men. Weaker clans are at the mercy of stronger ones. Mercy is in short supply among the Pashtuns. Such a situation prevents justice from flourishing.

### **Pride**

The Bible speaks very strongly about giving God the glory in victory and against personal pride. In pashtunwali code, pride is the foundation of honor and is based on your exploits on behalf of your family and your tribe, which can lead to pride in your own strength.



### **Lack of forgiveness**

“For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matthew 6:14-15, ESV). Forgiveness is at the heart of the gospel. Jesus came that we can be reconciled with the One True God whom we have offended by our sins. Simply put, without forgiveness of one another, we cannot be forgiven.

According to pashtunwali, revenge rather than reconciliation or forgiveness is the first response to an offense. To make matters worse, revenge can take place generations after infractions. At a young age children are taught that revenge brings honor. And without honor, life is not worth living for a Pashtun. Such a life includes a constant dread of retaliation, for everyone has someone who will take revenge against them at any time.

### **Pray for these spiritual strongholds to be broken among the Pashtun peoples!**

- Where there is pride, pray that there will be godly humility.
- Where there is oppression, pray that there will be justice and mercy.
- Where there is revenge and unforgiveness, pray that there will be reconciliation and forgiveness.

# Day 1

Psalms 16:11, ESV

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

These are among the wonderful blessings of the Lord! He shows us the path of life, His presence gives us joy, and His guidance leads us ultimately to pleasures. What great reasons to be eternally grateful to Him! These are things that Zia learned and put his trust in as he listened to Christ-honoring radio broadcasts. These same blessings are available to everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord.

*Pray for the peoples of Afghanistan to experience these blessings when they seek and find Him. Pray that thousands will become as Zia did, red-hot coals, disseminating light and warmth!*

## Missionary Biography—Zia

At age 14 Zia already had memorized the entire Qur'an, even though he was blind. In Western terms that would be like an English speaker memorizing the complete New Testament in Greek! In 1964 he enrolled in the NOOR Institute for the Blind in Kabul, Afghanistan. He completed the six primary grades of the Institute in only three years.

While attending classes, this brilliant youth also mastered English. He did this by listening and repeating what he heard on radio programs coming into Afghanistan. He also listened to Christian radio broadcasts, which led him to accept salvation in Christ.

He eventually shared with a few people that he had received Jesus as Savior. Zia's father said that before he entered the Institute for the Blind, he had been like a cold and unlit piece of charcoal. After his experience of accepting Christ, he had become like a red hot, brightly burning coal!

Zia wanted to study Islamic Law so that he could defend fellow believers who might be persecuted for their faith. He therefore entered the University of Kabul, from which he graduated with his law degree. Zia also translated the New Testament from Iranian Persian into his own Afghanistan Dari dialect.

*Pray for God to raise up fearless believers from among every Pashtun people group we will pray for this month.*  
—J. Christy Wilson

## Missionary Biography, Continued

Day 2

Psalms 83:16, ESV

Because other blind students like Zia had become followers of Christ, in 1973 the Muslim government of Afghanistan sent a written order to close the two Institutes for the Blind. All expatriate teachers of the blind were ordered to leave Afghanistan.

This government then destroyed the church building in Kabul. When troops arrived and started knocking down the wall between the street and the church property preparatory to destroying it, a German Christian businessman went to the mayor of Kabul who had given the order and said, “If your government touches that house of God, God will overthrow your government.”

Police, workmen, and bulldozers proceeded to destroy the church. Instead of opposing them, the congregation offered them tea and cookies! In July 1973 the destruction of the church building was complete. That very night the Afghanistan government responsible for the destruction was overthrown by a coup!

Five years later under a communist regime, the Institute for the Blind in Kabul was reopened. Zia was put in charge, and he did a fine job of reorganizing it. Then pressure was brought on him to join the Communist Party. He refused. One official warned him, “If you do not join, you might be killed.” Zia replied, “I am not afraid to be killed for my faith. Are you ready to die for yours?”

*Pray for the people of Afghanistan to learn from their own history and recognize that their only way forward is to embrace Christ.—J. Christy Wilson*

**Fill their faces with shame,  
that they may seek Your  
Name, O LORD.**

Pride is a relentless taskmaster that can consume and destroy those who are addicted to it. There is no room for pride before the God who created the cosmos. Though He alone has cause for pride, He sent His Son to humbly die on the cross to save us from our sins. Once we realize that our sin is a source of shame, we can have the humility to seek Him.

*Pray for thousands  
of Pashtun people to  
understand and respond  
to this.*

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints.

Something changes in the spiritual climate of a nation when one person dies for the sake of Christ. The line is drawn, but the die is not cast. The wicked sometimes become more wicked just as they did when Stephen was stoned in Acts chapter 7. But others will stand up and see the stark contrast between darkness and light.

*Pray that the memory of Zia's death will turn many Pashtun people to the light throughout the 21st century.*

## Missionary Biography, Continue

Eventually Zia was arrested on false charges and put in a political prison where tens of thousands were executed. In prison the communists gave Zia shock treatments to try to brainwash him; yet he did not give in. When offered the opportunity to learn Russian in prison, he mastered this language. The communists freed him in 1985.

In 1988, Zia was kidnapped by a fanatical Muslim group, Hisbe Islami (the Party of Islam). He was accused of being a CIA agent because he knew English, a KGB agent because he knew Russian, and an apostate from Islam because he followed Christ. He was beaten for hours with rods. A sighted person can brace and flinch when the blow comes, but a blind person cannot see the club coming, and thus gets the full force. Most likely Zia was murdered by the Hisbe Islami.

Jesus prophesied, "A time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering service to God (John 16:2). After His resurrection, He commanded His followers, "Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).

*Pray that believers in Afghanistan today will pick up their crosses as Zia did and follow Christ wherever He leads them. Pray for an unstoppable movement to Christ throughout Afghanistan.—J. Christy Wilson*

*(From More to be Desired than Gold, by J. Christy Wilson. [www.amazon.com/More-Desired-than-Gold-Collection/dp/096409102X](http://www.amazon.com/More-Desired-than-Gold-Collection/dp/096409102X))*

## The Ishakzai Pashtun Tribe

“Allah, I want to keep you in my heart forever. You keep my soul completely together, you are my light wherever I may be, even in the darkest part of me.” Mohammad, a Muslim Ishakzai Pashtun, was reading these words and reflecting on how important it is to worship Allah, the creator of the world. To him *imandari* (righteousness) is one of the most important pillars of his Muslim faith. This causes him to strive for goodness in his thinking and makes him respectful of others. He feels that *imandari* is the heartbeat of God’s desire for mankind.

Sadly, among his people he knows there is anger, pain, suffering, and hypocrisy. He wants so much for this to be different. He prays that Allah would help him live righteously, even though he and others often are not being faithful.

The Ishakzai is a sub-tribe of the large Pashtun Durrani federation of tribes. They live mainly in southern Afghanistan, particularly in the provinces of Kandahar and Helmand. Like other Pashtuns, they are Sunni Muslims who follow the Pashtun honor code (*pushtawali*) where *imandari* (righteousness) is acknowledged, but often not faithfully acted upon.

*Pray that the Ishakzais and other members of the Durrani federation will see the stark difference between false righteousness and true righteousness. Pray that they will be eager for the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, the one who can make them truly righteous. Pray that they will soon know how to act and live as God has commanded in His Word.—PD*

The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.

The Lord is holy and 100 percent righteous. He especially hates the evil of pride and arrogance. Of course all of us have the same problem with pride unless we allow the Holy Spirit of God to transform us. The Ishakzai Pashtuns will be able to experience true humility and righteousness, if they will only allow Christ to enter their lives.

*Pray that God will prepare the Pashtun hearts so that they will be willing to learn about the true and living God who loves them. Pray that followers of Christ among them will be so consumed with goodness, humility, and love that it will set a good example for the entire Pashtun community.*

Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your Name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!

We are not to try to make a name for ourselves. If we are honored, the honor goes to God, who gave us all of our talents. There is no room for pride and prestige when we are faced with the One who directs the affairs of all.

*Pray for the Tareen Pashtun peoples to understand that they must give all honor and glory to the Lord who created them and loves them.*

## The Tareen Pashtun Tribe

“Welcome my friend! It has been too long!” Naseer, a Tareen tribal leader, welcomed his friend, Kazak to his home. “Come, rest and enjoy the feast that is waiting for us. I will have your bags taken to your room while we eat.”

Naseer led his friend to his garden where a large cloth was spread on the ground covered with wonderful Afghan dishes, including meat dumplings, lamb kabobs, stuffed grape leaves, naan (bread), rice, and his favorite Afghan cake with fruit. Kazak’s eyes opened wide when he said, “Praise Allah!” Naseer responded, “My friend, my home is your home. You honor me with your presence, and I pray you will stay a long time.”

The Tareen are a prominent Pashtun tribe that resides in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India. *Melmastia* (hospitality) is one of the requirements of the Pashtun code of honor. If seriously carried out, it requires hospitality and profound respect to be shown to all visitors, regardless of distinctions of race, religion, national affiliation or economic status. They must practice hospitality without any hope of reciprocation. The majority of Tareen are devoted Muslims who have experienced little or no Christian outreach.

*Pray that God will open the doors for the Tareen people to hear God’s word. May they come to know Jesus through His teaching as given in John 14:2, ESV: “In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?”—PD*

## The Afridi Pashtun Tribe



“**W**ith continued support from the international community I believe Afghanistan can take its rightful place in the world. I want to see true *Nang* (honor) and *Namoos* (protection) given to our women.”

The Afghan woman boldly spoke at a public conference. “I will never forget a visit I made to Tirah where I talked to a young, pregnant Afridi girl who was very ill. She said, ‘the only way for me to have medical help is if my husband sells a cow. He cannot do this because the others in the family will not have milk.’ Countless stories of women such as this continue in my country. The majority of Afghan men believe they must protect their honor and protect women by dominating them, making them dress all covered up and not allowing them any rights. Thank God this is starting to change, but we have a long way to go.”

Approximately 350,000 members of the Afridi tribe inhabit about 1000 miles of rough hilly area in the Tirah Region of northern Afghanistan. Like other Pashtuns, they follow *pashtunwali*, the unwritten code of honor. This is particularly true in reference to *nang* (honor) and *namoos* (protection of women) in order to avoid *sharam* (shame).

*Pray that Pashtun women will come to know God’s love and comfort. Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to transform Pashtun men so that they will understand God’s ways of protecting and honoring women.—PD*

How long, O Lord, will you look on? Rescue me from their destruction, my precious life from the lions!

Throughout the long history of the Pashtun peoples, there have been tragic killings. Injustice has reigned. The weak have been subject to the strong, and there is no true justice. Without the God of the Bible included in their lives, the situation continues unbroken.

*Pray for God to rescue Pashtun women who face abuse and injustice.*

## Swara

Like a muddied spring or a polluted fountain is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked.

Given the heavy price the Pashtun people must pay for standing up to the wicked, it is easy to see how many of them would just let evil prevail. When that happens, the innocent are likely to be oppressed, and the Pashtun communities will continue to live with cruelty and sin as they have for many centuries.

*Pray for the Lord to give courage to Pashtun people who have heard the Word of God and have stood up for righteousness in their communities. Pray that He will allow the Word of God to be given out to hungry hearts, perhaps through the radio or the Internet.*

Condit



**S**wara is the Pashtun practice of giving a girl in marriage to a family where a member has been killed by a male member of the girl's family. This is often a virtual death penalty for these girls. They may not physically die, but the humiliation and

misery they face, sometimes for an entire lifetime, is terrible. Most of them are abused and rejected by the families they are sent to. It is made all the worse by the fact that the girls and women concerned are innocent of any crime. Lately, many of them have been found murdered.

The root cause for most of the blood feuds among Pashtuns is land. To resolve conflicts, the *jerga*, or village council (see day 11), dictates sending a bride from the assailant's family to the aggrieved family to put an end to all further killings. Sometimes girls are just a few months old when they are given as "blood money." They are married off once they have reach adulthood. At times when there are no women in the assailant's family, girls are purchased from another family.

*Pray that members of the jergas will find better ways to end revenge killings than the practice of swara. Pray that the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan will enforce laws against this practice. The majority of girls victimized by swara are Muslim and have never had the chance to hear about the Living Lord, His love for them, and the comfort He wants to give them. Pray these women will come to the Savior!—PD*

## Pashtunwali Code—*Nanawatay*

What do Pashtuns in Pakistan and Afghanistan have in common with Russia, ancient Sodom, and Polynesia? If you reply *nawatay* (sanctuary and hospitality) you answer correctly. In Sodom, Lot gave sanctuary to three men, taking them into his home for protection. Polynesia, like Israel, had cities of refuge; and Russia has provided sanctuary to a former US intelligence expert. A notable example of *nawatay* in action is the experience of a U.S. Navy Seal who was ambushed in Afghanistan by Taliban fighters behind enemy lines. He was wounded, but evaded the enemy and was aided, protected, and given sanctuary by local Pashtuns. They took him to their village where his wounds were treated by the community. Then they fought valiantly to protect their guest until he was rescued by U. S. forces. A wonderful movie was made of this unique adventure which illustrates *nawatay* in action.

Through this code of hospitality, sanctuary is provided while reconciliation can be effected. The accused is rendered safe and out of harm's way. It is a means of saving face. Our wonderful God offers everyone *nawatay* (sanctuary and reconciliation), if we turn our lives over to Jesus, thus resolving our sin-induced feud with God.

*Pray that the Pashtuns and other peoples of Central Asia will get to hear the good word of God, repent, and seek sanctuary in Jesus. Pray that believers will become knowledgeable of Afghan culture and can communicate God's wali to Pashtuns.—TP*

**You are a hiding place for me; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with shouts of deliverance.**

Even the boldest Pashtun knows that they need deliverance and sanctuary in the violent world they live in. Currently they are seeking deliverance through their own power. Meanwhile, Jesus offers the Pashtun an abundant life free from fear.

*Pray that the Lord will deliver the Pashtun people from their violent world. Pray that they will become tired of striving and turn to Jesus, the only One who can provide the sanctuary they all need.*

## Day 9

Psalms 25:3, ESV

Indeed, none who wait for  
You shall be put to shame;  
they shall be ashamed who  
are wantonly treacherous.

The greatest fear of every Pashtun is being put to shame. Though it's obvious that no one can stand against those more powerful than themselves, they do their best to maintain their honor against great odds. This has made them unconquerable, but it has also provided a thick wall between themselves and the Lord.

*Pray that the Pashtun peoples will soon understand that the only way to maintain honor is to surrender to the loving wonderful God who is the King of Heaven and died an unjust death on the cross for our sins.*

## Pashtunwali Code—*Badal* (Justice and Retaliation)



**T**it for tat, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth: these sayings have been an important part of most of the world's codes of law since Hammurabi's famous law code (c. 1750 BC).

Among the Pashtuns, *badal*—justice and retaliation—is obligatory in order to erase shame and restore one's family, tribe or nation's self-respect, honor, and social standing. It is a key element of what the Pashtun people consider true justice. The guilty may pay a fine, suffer the same offense as the offended, or even lose their life to restore social stability or family honor. For a family member to fail to do *badal* brings shame and dishonor on themselves, their family or nation. These practices are not part of sharia Islamic religious law, but a cultural tradition of the Pashtuns. It is one of the main reasons for instability in the Pashtun-dominated areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

*Pray that all Pashtun tribes will come to recognize that "vengeance is mine, says the Lord," and turn to the God of the Bible to enact justice. Pray that local governments will be truly righteous in dispensing the law, and that local believers and Christian relief workers will demonstrate the meaning of mercy in the name of Jesus who suffered unjustly in order to pay for our salvation.—TP*



What constitutes manliness (*ghairat*) in Pashtun culture? According to one Pashtun expert, the core value of Pashtun male culture is *ghairat*. “It combines notions of honor, courage, bravery,

manliness, zeal, self-determination, self-definition, and at root refers to a sense of male autonomy. It is the ethos, spirit and set of stereotypical behaviors associated with what it means to be Pashtun. To be called *be-ghairat*—without *ghairat*—is the worst of insults.”

Failure to defend one’s self, laziness, mistreating one’s parents, fighting with women, inhospitality, and going back on one’s word lessens *ghairat*; and without *ghairat* there is no honor and one is not a man.

Unfortunately, if one’s daughter becomes too Western, a father might be expected to kill her or he will lose *ghairat*. If she continued on the same path, it would mean that her family would lose face and have less respect, which would be intolerable for the Pashtuns.

*Pray that Pashtun men will live out the positive virtues and values of ghairat, especially in their relation to women. Pray that believers, foreign and national, will exhibit biblical ghairat, especially in the way to relate to women. Pray that Jesus’ ghairat will be attractive to Pashtuns in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pray that there will soon come a day when Pashtun men who follow Christ will receive more ghairat for risking their lives to extend the kingdom of God.—TP*

It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife, but every fool will be quarreling.

Honor and shame are very subjective. The “shame” of the cross has led to eternal life for millions through the centuries. In Pashtun cultures, honor is valued above all else, but it is not the kind of honor described here in God’s Word. In their culture there is honor in winning fights, which only leads to shame for others, and ongoing strife.

*Pray for Pashtun men to understand that honor comes from avoiding needless strife rather than winning fights. Pray for Pashtun men to use their courage and boldness to defend the powerless. Pray that they will see that the true and living Lord in His mercy sent His Son to die an unjust death so that powerless humanity could be saved.*

## Jergas

The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.

One of the ways that the Pashtun peoples can protect themselves from endless strife is through communication with one another. It's way too easy to believe that someone else has bad intentions and act accordingly. The results can be endless strife and family feuds.

*Pray for the Lord to grant wisdom and understanding to the local jergas so that they will allow Christ to be preached and bring the people together in such a way that conflicts are resolved.*



Fifteen white-bearded men sit on mats in a circle in the shade in southeastern Afghanistan. A mullah prays a blessing on their discussions and the council begins.

Ahmed's daughter was seen speaking with a Christian girl. The community's honor hangs in the balance. This jerga meets to decide how to respond. If they ignore this offense, they fear the moral fiber of their clan will deteriorate.

No one chairs the meeting. No vote is taken. They think and discuss how to respond. Finally, they come to a consensus, and the mullah prays to bless the decision. This is how the jerga works: talk, discuss, consider, find a consensus. Always the goal remains to protect the honor and morality of their clan. The jerga represents the entire clan. Depending on the issue, it can draw from multiple clans, and the jerga decides for the group.

This practice presents special challenges for followers of Christ who wish to present the good news to Pashtun people. A Pashtun who listens to a Christian's witness risks being ousted from their clan or worse. To see measurable response to the gospel would require a consensus from the jerga. That presents an impossibility that only God can surmount.

*Pray for bold evangelists to faithfully and sensitively witness to Pashtun jergas. Pray for members of jergas to seek His truth and use their position of authority to open doors for Christ in Pashtun communities.—GEC*

# Pashtun Taliban Members

Day 12

Psalms 33: 16, ESV



A lone man trudges the rugged mountain trail. He keeps his beard bushy and long. His head hair is close shaven. He travels into the Taliban region along the border of

Afghanistan and Pakistan. Yet he is not a Taliban. In fact he is no longer a Muslim, though he was born to that faith. He is a Muslim-background believer. God has called him to evangelize the Taliban. He knows it can cost him his life. Still, he makes his regular rounds—carrying a few New Testaments and other materials. He follows the promptings of the Holy Spirit in deciding when to witness and when to give a New Testament. While he has suffered, he has not yet been killed.

This man seeks to penetrate the immense spiritual barrier to Christ formed by the Taliban. The Taliban is an organization that immediately brings to mind pictures in the media of suicide bombs, rockets landing in markets, and rigid defiance of any effort to modify its extreme version of Islam. In the early 1990s, Mullah Mohammed Omar started the Taliban with 50 madrassa students. He still serves as the sole authority, dictating all decisions.

*Pray that God will soon humble Mullah Omar as he did Nebuchadnezzar centuries ago. Pray for the brave evangelist who treks the Taliban region, that God will protect him and use him to lead Taliban members to faith in Christ. Pray that the Holy Spirit will penetrate the hearts of Taliban members.—GEC*

The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.

No matter how strong a military force is, there will be no deliverance at some point in time. One can depend on their might for a season, but there will come a day when man's might will fail. Though the Taliban has taken the law into their own hands and twisted the lives of many Pashtun people, their efforts will not go unpunished by the Sovereign Lord.

*Pray that members of the Taliban will understand that their power will fail, and they cannot be delivered from God by their own strength. Pray that they will seek and find the true Deliverer.*

Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the Name of the LORD our God.

The Pashtun peoples are noted for trusting in their own power. Everyone carries weapons, and if they don't, they risk being robbed or killed by those who do. One thing is certain. There will always be someone who has a more powerful and better weapon. Everyone is at risk, and few will live out their lives to a ripe old age.

*Pray that the Pashtun peoples will gain the wisdom to understand that the doctrine that "might makes right" is false and leaves all without the power to be delivered on the day of judgment. Pray that the Mehsud tribe will trade in their weapons for a dependence on the power of the true and living God who loves them.*

## The Mehsud Pashtun Tribe

Imagine preferring to live in a tent or a cave rather than a solid structure. Now imagine also preferring lawlessness and brutality over peace and stability. The tribal Mehsud people take pride in the fact that historically they have lived with lawlessness. Early in the British colonial period the Mehsuds nearly overran India's capital. But they never completed their conquest because they became distracted with raping and pillaging.

Baitullah Mehsud was prominent in uniting many militant groups to form the Pakistani Taliban (TTP) in December 2007. His cousin, Hakimullah Mehsud, has led the TTP since Baitullah was presumed dead following a drone strike in 2009. Hakimullah continues the campaign of terror across the region. The TTP is believed to be responsible for 25,000 deaths. Favoring conservative Islamic political parties, they brutally target presumed "secular" parties. Maintaining their violent reputation, the Mehsuds comprise the majority of the Taliban. They also control the lucrative drug and arms trafficking in the region.

The Mehsuds are a Pashtun tribe found in semi-autonomous regions of Pakistan and certain provinces of Afghanistan. These fiercely independent people keep family compounds high in the mountains in the summer, and move to the valleys in the winter. Their violent behavior prevents the Pakistani government from providing them with much needed services and infrastructure improvements. This situation has left the Mehsud tribe feeling alienated and ready to listen to Taliban recruiters.

*Pray that the Mehsud tribe will soon turn away from violence and find the true path to peace. Pray for strength for the believers working among them.—LR*

# The Safi Pashtun Tribe

Day 14

Psalms 10:2, ESV

**Q**ais, a young Safi Pashtun man, bowed to his visiting Afghan friends and gave them the traditional greeting. After fleeing Taliban control, Qais has been living in the West for several years. After they had eaten, the friends told Qais of their recent military exploits.

To their surprise, Qais was not impressed. He shook his head and replied, “Brothers, this will only ruin our tribe and our nation. I am using the money I am earning here to help build a hospital in our homeland.”

The Safi is a Pashtun sub-tribe that descended from the seventh-century leader Gharghasht, son of one of the prophet Mohammad’s converts. With a population of 2.5 million, the Safi are a major branch of the greater Gharghasht Pashtun tribe.

For 35 years civil war is all the Safi tribe has experienced. They have played a key role in the various armed conflicts in Afghanistan. They are noted for being rebels in this country torn by constant rebellion. Because of their size and their influence, the Muslim Safis stand out as a strategic tribe to reach for the gospel. Nearly 50 percent of Afghanistan’s population speaks Pashtu, the mother language of the Safis and other Pashtun tribes. There are Christian materials in this language.

*Pray that more Christian media will reach the Safi tribe. Pray that they will put their faith in the One who came in peace from God Himself.—LR*

**In arrogance the wicked  
hotly pursue the poor;  
let them be caught in  
the schemes that they  
have devised.**

Because of the fall of man, we live in a might-makes-right world. Those that have the power can oppress the poor and the powerless. But God can and will turn this around! The oppressor will be caught in his own schemes, either in this life or the life to come.

*Pray that the wicked among the Safi Pashtun tribe will repent before they are caught in their own schemes. Pray for spiritual transformation within their entire communities.*

If you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

Imagine living in a world where at any time raiders can come and kill you and your family members. Would you sleep well? Probably not. The only way that you could find true rest would be to put your faith in the All-Powerful One.

*Pray for many from the Pashtun tribes to put their faith in the Lord who loves them enough to die on the cross to save them from their sins. Pray that their new faith will give them true rest and safety.*

## The Hotaki Pashtun Tribe

The truck bounced on the rough mountain road as Ahmad rode in the back with a group of other men. He was a member of the Hotaki tribe. Unlike most members of this tribe, he was fed up with the Taliban. Ahmed was leaving Afghanistan for Pakistan. He was going home, back to his safe construction job. He was feeling like he'd wasted a year of his life. The Taliban only wanted to impose cruel burdens on the people they "liberated." Ahmed found that Islamic law made no sense in the modern era. Such laws may have been practical a thousand years ago, but were outdated in modern times.

The Hotaki live in Pakistan and Afghanistan. They are one of the tribes of the Gilhazi Coalition, which is pro-Taliban. The Hotaki tribe has a warrior tradition, and they once ruled an empire. Between the years 1709-38 the Hotakis ruled Persia. The Hotaki tribe supported the communists during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s.

The Hotaki are Muslims. They know much about Mohammad, but very little about Jesus Christ.

*Ask God to break the hold that Sunni Islam has on this people group. Pray that God will send the Word of God to the Hotaki by radio or through strong believers to tell them that Jesus Christ is the true source of salvation. May the Lord soon open doors to make outreach to this people group possible.—WK*

## The Suleimankhel Pashtun Tribe

**M**ohammad sat near the still waters of the Gomel River in Pakistan. He set his rifle aside, glad to be away from the crazy fighting in nearby Afghanistan. The Suleimankhel tribe had been fighting for too long. They supported the Taliban, and they have often taken heavy losses. Some members of his people group, sick of the fighting, had settled in the Gomel Valley across the border in Pakistan. Mohammad felt no peace, even though he was a devout Muslim and thought that he was fighting for Allah. Allah seemed distant, no matter how many times he prayed toward Mecca.

The Suleimankhel are another member of the Gilhazi Coalition, just like the Hotaki tribe we prayed for yesterday. They are Sunni Muslims and have close ties with other Afghan Sunni tribes. Because of their hostility toward the current Afghan government, very few of them have access to doctors or teachers. Medical care is for those who are on good terms with the government. The Suleimankhel see Jesus Christ as a prophet and not the Son of God who can save their souls.

*Pray for peace in the Suleimankhel homeland. Only then will it be safe for faithful workers to reach out to this people group. The coming of peace will open the door for Christian doctors and teachers to work among them. Ask God to create a hunger for true peace and true salvation among the Suleimankhel tribe.—WK*

**Better is a dry morsel with quiet than a house full of feasting with strife.**

This is a proverb that the Suleimankhel people should understand. When people live in a situation where strife and revenge killing are a daily part of life, there is no peace or joy. One can not enjoy their victory when they face retaliation at an unexpected time.

*Pray that the Suleimankhel people will have a chance to hear that there is a Lord who loves them and wants them to enjoy His peace and joy through Jesus Christ.*

When a man's folly brings his way to ruin, his heart rages against the Lord.

The Book of Proverbs tells us numerous times that our fleshly foolishness leads us on a destructive path. But in this verse, it's clear that such foolishness leads us to strive against the Lord Himself. The end results are tragic and eternal.

*Pray for any Ahmadzai individual who is striving against the Lord. Pray that they will learn of His ways and turn to Him with all their hearts.*

## The Ahmadzai Tribe

The shepherd boy searched the barren mountains of Afghanistan for his sheep. Silently he prayed to Allah for help and safety. He was from the Ahmadzai tribe and knew he was in dangerous territory. This region was claimed by some tribes of the Gilhazi Coalition, enemies of his people. As the shepherd boy searched for his sheep, he felt lost himself. His tribe supported the Afghan government, a corrupt bunch that seemed just as evil as the Taliban. He wondered if there was a third option.

The Ahmadzai tribe belongs to the Durrani Coalition which supports the government in Kabul; but that hasn't stopped some members of this tribe from joining the Taliban. Divided loyalties are a problem among some tribes of the Durrani Coalition such as the Ahmadzai.

Like all other Pashtun tribes, the Ahmadzai are Muslims. There are few, if any, followers of Jesus Christ among them. There is also no peace in their homeland because they don't know the Prince of Peace.

*Ask God to create a hunger for true peace among this people group. May the Ahmadzai come to see Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace, one who is the true source of salvation from sin and death. Ask God to lead a mission agency to send believers to this tribe with prayer and outreach.—WK*

## The Barakzai Pashtun Tribe

It is always dangerous and unfair to place a broad, negative label on a person or people group simply because of an association with something negative. The Barakzai people have, indeed, experienced this kind of false judgment in their history. At one point they were intentionally split up by a ruler of Afghanistan because he feared their power and influence.

The term “Barakzai” is related to the personal name “Barak” which, according to Wikipedia, means “lightning” or “shine.” One story that is handed down is that the name is derived from Barak, the son of Abinoam, in the book of Judges. He was the commander of the army of Deborah, who defeated the Canaanite armies.

The Barakzai Pashtun tribe produced almost all of Afghanistan’s leaders from 1826 to 1973. Recently in 2014 two prominent Barakzai leaders ran for the office of President of Afghanistan; however, they did not remain in the race.

Sunni Islam has been the religion of the Barakzai for hundreds of years. To be a true Barakzai has meant to be a Muslim. There are very few followers of Christ among them.

*Pray that the Barakzai will begin to soften their hearts and humbly seek spiritual truth. Pray that God will send believers to the Barakzai to tell them about Christ. Pray that significant Barakzai leaders will come to faith in Jesus and influence others to come to Him.—JR*

**Trample underfoot those who lust after tribute; scatter the peoples who delight in war.**

We know from other scriptures that God hears the prayers of the oppressed, and that those who delight in war and destruction will eventually pay dearly. There are many people in Afghanistan today who are at the mercy of those who delight in war. But they can call upon the Lord, and He will answer them.

*Pray for many who are oppressed in Afghanistan today to turn their prayers to the God who scatters oppressors.*

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

Human reasoning leads to death and destruction. How many of the Pashtun people understand that? They have their traditions and their way of doing things; but like all other cultures, their ways are insufficient.

*Pray that the Holy Spirit will impress on many of the Papalzai Pashtuns that His ways are the only ways that lead to life.*

## The Papalzai Pashtun Tribe

Anyone who rises to the position of president of his country has certainly achieved an amazing and rare accomplishment. The former president of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, is a part of the Papalzai tribe, and they have grounds to be very proud of this achievement. They, along with the Barakzai tribe, are the two most powerful tribes in the Kandahar Province of Afghanistan.

In many ways Karzai did not have a typical Papalzai childhood and schooling. His father was the deputy speaker of the parliament during the 1960s. His grandfather served in Afghanistan's 1919 War of Independence and as the deputy speaker of the senate. These family achievements definitely influenced him to pursue politics.

The history of the Papalzai involves much warfare and struggle. Currently, the Papalzai are the largest tribe in Kandahar Province. The Durrani and the Ghilzai tribal confederations are also in the region and have been in a fight with the Papalzai for power and dominance since the 18th century. In more recent times there have been large amounts of money flowing to the Durrani, and this has multiplied the complexities that are troubling Afghanistan.

*Pray that the Papalzai will see the futility of seeking political power and earthly achievements if they don't have a personal relationship with the wonderful God who loves them. Pray that the Lord will soften their hearts toward Himself, and that the Church would discover strategies for reaching this people group with the gospel.—JR*

# The Shinwari Pashtun Tribe

Day 20

Psalms 141:5b, ESV

India Gospel Outreach



**T**errorism is an ongoing issue that must always be actively dealt with. In January of 2010 the Shinwari people pledged themselves to helping in the fight

against terrorism by committing at least one military aged male from each family to the Afghan army or police. The Shinwari number about 400,000, so this promise carried much significance. Their pact appears to be the first in Afghan history in which an entire Pashtun tribe has declared war on the Taliban insurgents. The agreement also states that anyone who supports the Taliban would be punished with fines and expulsion.

But at the same time the pact is fragile because of the nature of any agreement made in Afghanistan. Tribal loyalties can be very fluid, and in the past the government has been unable to prevent Taliban retaliation.

In 1885, a British author wrote of the Shinwari "...They are brave, hospitable, stalwart, and hardworking. They are well-educated people." These things are still true of the Shinwari tribe.

There is, unfortunately, no known church planting movement going on among the Shinwari. They are 100 per cent Muslim.

*Praise God that the Shinwari are actively opposing terrorism. Pray that they will continue in their efforts against it. Pray that the Church will step up with an equally great effort to bring the good news of Jesus to the Shinwari tribe. Pray that active church planting will soon begin among them.—JR*

Yet my prayer is continually against their evil deeds.

Notice that the prayer is not against the people, but against their deeds. Are you able to pray against deeds, but not people? It is very easy to pray against people who do wicked deeds and forget that God wants to bring them to repentance and salvation.

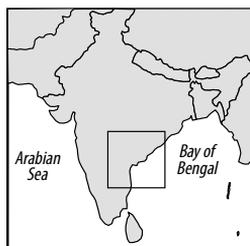
*Pray for repentant hearts among members of the Shinwari Pashtun people group. Pray that this people group will turn to Him and be living testimonies of His mercy, grace, and love.*

Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.

Have you ever been so angry that it has become an obsession? That is what entire cultures embrace: get angry, stay angry, and take revenge. It eats up the one who is angry, and it also keeps the person who knows that revenge is coming in a state where inner peace is not possible.

*Pray that many from the Yousafzai Pashtun people will understand that anger and wrath lead to a downward path of destruction and evil. Pray that they will come to a point where they will do anything to get out of this spiritual snare. Prepare their hearts to receive the gospel.*

## The Yousafzai Pashtun Tribe



**A**wakened by the muezzin's high pitched nasal call to worship, Yusuf—a young Yousafzai man—rubbed his eyes and peered out the small window of his tiny room overlooking the crowded street below. There was a sea of multicolored umbrellas. He saw a boy selling potatoes and was glad that he didn't have to earn a living in this way. Yusuf had better plans for his future.

Yusuf took out the prayer mat that his mother had rolled up and put in the corner of the room near his table. As a good Muslim, he knelt facing west and prayed. Rising from prayer, he began to get dressed for the day. Then he skipped down the narrow flight of stairs, gobbled up his breakfast and was out the door.

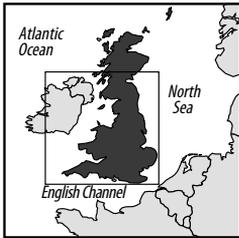
Yusuf is a Yousafzai Pashtun whose ancestors migrated to Hyderabad, India, in the 10th century. Through the process of indigenization, most Pashtuns in India today are now indistinguishable from other Indian Muslim communities in this region. Like many other modern Indian boys, Yusuf had wanted to be a cricketer. But his parents insisted that he get a sensible education. His parents won the day, and he now works in a software start-up in Hyderabad.

*Pray that the Pashtuns in India will hear the gospel of Jesus Christ from believers with whom they come in contact daily.—EJD*

# The Tarkani Pashtun Tribe

Day 22

Proverbs 28:13, ESV



A wave of heat surged from an oven in a small bakery in Birmingham, England. Abbas, a member of the Tarkani Pashtun tribe, had just opened the door of the large stone oven and placed the freshly kneaded dough on a metal spatula with a long wooden handle. After having put a dozen more loaves of bread into the oven, he closed the door, and for the first time that day, he sat down on a small bench.

As the fragrance of freshly baking bread wafted through the room, he reminisced about his life as a child in the Swat Valley in Pakistan near the Afghan border. He remembered the simple games he played with other children in the village. When he was nine years old, his parents had told him that they were leaving the valley to live with an uncle in Birmingham, England. They spent their first few years in England with their uncle and his large family in a tiny one bedroom flat. After several years of waiting tables at a Pakistani restaurant, his father was able to put away enough money to buy a small bakery. Abbas inherited the bakery, and now it is his livelihood.

The Tarkani people are among the Pashtuns most likely to move to far-away places. There might be some of them living in your part of the world.

*Pray for followers of Christ in England to reach out in love to the Tarkani people.—EJD*

Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

For members of any culture, people need to confess and forsake their sin to be in good standing with the Lord. This requires humility, something that is in short supply with “martial” peoples like the Pashtuns.

*Pray for many Tarkani Pashtun people to humbly come to God with repentant hearts.*

I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

Have you ever considered how wonderful it will be in the presence of the Lord? We will not be shaken by life's frequent upheavals. Not so for the Mohmand people; they do not have a personal relationship with God, although some of them like the poet we quoted understand more than others. Yet all of us would be far less likely to be shaken if we would set the Lord before us in our thoughts and prayers.

*Pray that the Mohmand people will embrace Him so they can eventually be in His presence. Then they will have the faith and peace that will keep them from being shaken.*

## The Mohmand Pashtun Tribe of Afghanistan

One member of the Mohmand tribe, Rahman Baba, is a poet known as the “Nightingale of Peshawar.” He wrote, “I start in the name of God, among whose many names is ‘The Greatest.’ The work that is hard for everyone else is easy for Him. Who else can lift the sun into the sky? ... Or color the flowers? Every tree is standing in prayer before Him. Every blade of grass recites His greatness. Every fish sings His praise in the river. Every bird exalts Him in the fields.” His words echo Psalm 19, ESV: “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.”

About 600,000 Mohmand people live along the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The area is mostly hilly and mountainous with very little flat land available for agriculture. Rainfall is rare. Many of this people group have re-located to the city of Peshawar, Pakistan, seeking jobs and a better standard of living.

*Pray that the Mohmand people will learn about the true and living God by accepting the witness of God's creation so that they will have no excuse (Romans 1:20). Pray they will hear about the Lord Jesus Christ in the cities and take their new faith back to their friends and relatives still living in the mountainous areas.—JWS*

# The Dancing Boys of Afghanistan



Vulnerable to an evil practice

“**S**hara!” Shara’s neighbor ran toward her in the marketplace. “I just saw your son with other dancing boys! He was going off with a wealthy older man.” Shara’s eyes filled with

tears. Her son was only 12. “Yes, I know, but there are thousands of shoe-shine boys, fruit-selling boys, and water boys. He could get no work, and we have no food since my husband died. What else are we to do?”

The evil practice of *Bacha Bazi*, literally “playing with boys” is the practice of older, rich men paying a boy a monthly sum; in return the boy must satisfy any wishes of the older man whenever he asks. Since Afghan women are not allowed to dance, the boys are forced to dress as women and dance before groups of leering men for hours. At the end of the party they are taken away and sexually abused for two dollars. The main voice against this practice comes from the Taliban.

*Pray for a hedge of protection around these boys. Pray that compassionate followers of Christ will come forward to introduce them to the Savior who promises abundant life in Him. Pray that Jesus will reveal himself to the Afghan people and awaken their hearts and minds to the goodness of the One True God who loves them and wants to save them from oppressive sin.—PE*

This is the way of an adulteress: she eats and wipes her mouth and says, “I have done no wrong.”

This is how all mankind acts: we naturally claim that we have done no wrong. In our fallen ways we are very adept at making excuses for ourselves. What will it take to change that? Only a work of the Holy Spirit can change our stubborn hearts!

*Pray for the Holy Spirit to soften Pashtun hearts so that they will become pliable in the Lord’s hands.*

Do not envy a man of violence and do not choose any of his ways, for the devious person is an abomination to the LORD, but the upright are in His confidence.

It is very easy to envy those who manage to gain wealth by extortion and violence. It seems that such people live and die in ease. But the Bible tells us that they are an abomination to the Lord. After they have ruined many lives through their violence, where will they spend eternity?

*Pray that men of violence among the Pashtuns will soon find their way to the Prince of Peace, so that they can change their ways. Pray that Pashtun youths will not learn the ways of the violent.*

## Pashtun Youth

In Afghanistan the population is heavily weighted towards youth with 60 percent of the people being under 25 years of age. These children were born during wars and strife. They have been raised under governments where change happens so fast that the country's structure and provision cannot keep up with the needs.

Therefore, this huge group of young people is the group most in need of education, jobs, and constructive outlets. They are under severe pressure to pass the university test when they graduate from high school. But many fail and are looked down upon by their families as being lazy. Those who pass the exams are much greater in number than the spots available at the universities.

As can be expected, there are reactions and repercussions from the youth who live with this hopelessness. They are vulnerable to violent, extremist groups who want to recruit them. Recently two Christian youths were beaten with rods by a group of young men when they wouldn't recite the Islamic creed, return to Islam, and renounce Christianity.

However, some youth are working with the KP youth conference to work out youth problems and give advice and input to the government. They passionately want to retain the freedoms that were restored when the Taliban fell from power.

*Pray that Jesus will be revealed to the Pashtun youth, and that they will be protected from violent influences.—PE*

# The Opium Trade and Drug Addiction in Afghanistan

Day 26

Proverbs 1:19, ESV

Mansour rolls over on his pallet in his one-room shack and reaches for the opium pipe. It is eight o'clock in the morning, and the family is just awakening. Mansour's 85-year-old father, wife, and grown daughter recline in a circle around the pipe to begin their day of heroin-filled nothingness. Mansour's one-year-old grandson toddles to the pipe, inhales and curls up by his sleeping mother. There is no one in the family able to care for him, so they allow him to smoke to keep him quiet. Mansour used to own 50 sheep and a large plot of land that fed his family well. It is now gone, sold to buy opium.

It is estimated that 150,000 people in Afghanistan are addicted to opiates. This is not surprising since their country is the biggest producer of opium and heroin in the world. Ninety percent of the opiate drugs used throughout the earth come from Afghanistan. Then we can ask this question, "How do you convince farmers to grow grain when the return on grain is less than the cost of the tractor fuel used to cultivate it?" What a mess!

*Pray that God will convince the farmers in Afghanistan who are taking part in the huge, well-run operation of growing, smuggling, trafficking, and selling drugs that they are doing terrible harm to their land; many lives are being ruined by their activities. Pray that the hold that the evil one has on this country will be broken, and corrupt people will no longer benefit from the drug trade. Pray that Jesus will touch, heal, and lead drug addicts to fruitful, useful lives in Christ.—PE*

Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain; it takes away the life of its possessors.

In a might-makes-right society like you find among the Pashtuns, power and possessions often come from the barrel of a gun. These people not only cause misery for others, but they also destroy their own souls.

*Pray that the Lord will convict the Pashtun people who are involved with the drug trade that their business is ruining the lives of many people. Pray that they will soon seek the God who loves them and while we were yet sinners, died on the cross for our sins.*

In God we have boasted continually, and we will give thanks to Your Name forever.

No matter how intelligent, competent or skilled one may be, we cannot boast. God can humble us in a moment if He chooses to do so. All we can do is thank Him for what He has given us. Think of the reasons you should thank the Lord. Make it a practice to thank Him throughout the day. Make this truly a day of thanksgiving!

*Pray that the Pawinda people will boast in the true God and thank Him continually for saving and loving them.*

## The Pawinda People

“Keep going, gypsies!” the man yelled. “Take your goats away from here!” another man shouted, shooing them away with his arm.

Young Aqeel looked at his father with tears in his eyes. “Why do they hate us?” His father who was already moving the flock of goats further up the road shook his head and tried to smile. “They don’t hate us. We are just not important to them.” “Why?” “Because we are Pawinda. We are nomads.” “What does that mean, father—nomads?” “It means... well... son, you know that we spend summers in Afghanistan and winters in the Punjab?” The boy nodded and replied, “We are always moving.” The father said, “That’s what it means to be a nomad; our home is wherever we put up our tents.”

The Pawinda of Afghanistan and Pakistan are viewed as gypsies and considered unimportant by many people in this region. They have no rights of settlement and must move through the area, staying only three days in one place at a time.

Because of their location and nomadic lifestyle, the Pawinda are very difficult to reach with the gospel message. It will take people willing to live an uncertain life, moving from place to place to reach them for Christ.

*Pray for workers to use radio, Internet, the JESUS Film and other creative methods to share the good news with the Pawinda people. Pray for believers to find ways to demonstrate Christ’s love to the Pawindas and let them know they are very important to God.—CL*

## The Kakar Pashtun Tribe

The Kakar are a large Pashtun tribe with members living in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. The Kakar are also found in present-day Balochistan, a province in southwestern Pakistan where they make up the majority of indigenous Pashtuns. Dani, the originator of the tribe, had 18 natural sons and six adopted sons. This family line formed the foundation for the Kakars.

At one time most of the Kakar people migrated from various parts of what is now Pakistan, and they established an empire in Afghanistan. It seems that during the rule of an emerging Punjabi Sikh emperor, Maharaja Ranjeet Singh, many Kakar artisans, soldiers, noblemen, and businessmen converted to Sikhism to be in good standing with him. This might explain why the early Kakars were Sikhs. Though some remain Sikh today, most Kakars are now Muslim.

There is much we do not know about this large Pashtun tribe, but what we do know is that they are precious in God's sight, and He has commanded us to take the gospel message to the uttermost parts of the earth. He wants the Kakar people to hear of Jesus, accept Him, and become co-heirs with Him!

*Give thanks for the Kakar men of peace in a number of villages, and ask God to open their hearts to the gospel. Let us also pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send out many ambassadors for Christ to show the Kakars the way to the only Savior.—JS*

The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.

A beautiful inheritance! That is what you have if you follow Christ. This inheritance includes eternal life with Him and eternal joy. What more could you possibly want? By contrast, the Kakar people have nothing but memories of their long-gone empire as an inheritance. The Lord offers them so much more if they will only believe and accept Him!

*Pray that many from the Kakar people group will share in this beautiful inheritance. Pray that they will receive the gift of faith in the One who loves them.*

## Oral Evangelism

The LORD is good to all, and His mercy is over all that He has made.

The Lord gives us life! That alone tells us that He is good to all. No matter what circumstance someone is in, they can find something to thank Him for. All that we have ultimately comes from Him.

*Today, meditate on the things the Lord has given to you. Thank Him! Pray that His bountiful blessings will be known to the peoples of Afghanistan through the many oral means available.*

“The tongue is a fortress and a calamity,” Shameem confided to her neighbor, Tanya. After talking with her for some time, she had made a slip of the tongue. She now wished she could take back her words. Smiling Tanya replied, “In the mouth is the creed, but in the heart is wickedness.” She then shared with Shameem how we all need to have God’s help in order to have kind thoughts in our hearts and not just nice words in our mouths.

Pashtun people like these two women love proverbs, poetry, and other oral forms of communication. Many are able to read, but may have trouble comprehending and using the information they do read. They love very much to hear important knowledge in oral forms such as a story, song or proverb in order to remember it.

The challenge for workers among the Pashtuns is to package and deliver important truths in forms that they can appreciate and remember. Twenty years ago Pashtuns listened to short wave radio for news and information, but now they have radio, TV, the Internet, and other information sources to choose from. There are many opportunities for delivering the gospel. One possibility that offers privacy is the Internet which reaches even into small villages.

*Pray that God will provide creative and anointed people to develop new radio programs and new media strategies for reaching Pashtuns for Christ. Pray that believers will produce and oversee interesting Web sites for Pashtuns at the curious, seeker, and believer levels.—JS*

# Breakthroughs From Your Prayers!

Day 30

Psalms 145:3, ESV

Here is encouragement from the April 2014 GPD issue on global cities. Within one of the Muslim cities we prayed for, there has been good fruit. One of the field workers there had planned to send out extra evangelism teams looking for people of peace during the time that you were praying for the people in that city. He reported that they had sent out short-term teams to make what are called shema statements--simply a way of talking that lets folks know that they are spiritual people and helps to identify people who are seeking truth (also known as people of peace). Their team ran across several Muslim background folks who were not only seeking but insisting on committing their lives to become followers of Christ immediately! They had gone to a hospital and the first fellow saw open vision of Jesus and was healed in his shoulder. The next fellow also saw an open vision of Jesus and felt fire all over his body.

God responds to our prayers in very amazing ways! This leader is one of the team who will be working with us to develop the list and then plan on the ground efforts for future issues on the Middle East.

*Thank the Lord for those who became subjects of the Kingdom of God a couple of months ago. Pray that they will have perseverance, boldness, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit so they can continue their walk with Him.*

—Liz Adleta

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.

Think of the word “unsearchable” for a minute. We know that the Lord is great, but we won’t know how great He is until we see Him face-to-face. Typically, Central Asian Muslims know that “God is great,” but they have twisted His character until His greatness is diminished beyond recognition.

*Pray for many from Central Asia to understand from the heart that God is far greater than they can ever imagine. Pray that they will be joyful as they wait to see Him and experience His loving-kindness. Pray that thousands more Central Asian Muslims will receive His Word with gladness as it becomes more available in the coming years.*

# Take the challenge to pray for one of these Pashtun tribes each week in 2015!

1. Afridi (see day 6 for more information)
2. Shinwari (see day 20 for more information)
3. Hotaki (see day 15 for more information)
4. Ghilzai
5. Achakzai
6. Tarin
7. Kakar (see day 28 for more information)
8. Kasi
9. Mehsud (see day 13 for more information)
10. Wazir
11. Safi/Laghman (see day 14 for more information)
12. Marwat
13. Yousafzai (see day 21 for more information)
14. Mangal
15. Niazi
16. Alkozai
17. Popalzai (see day 19 for more information)
18. Barakzai (see day 18 for more information)
19. Noorzai
20. Alizai
21. Badozai
22. Ishakzai
23. Sakzai
24. Khogyani
25. Maku
26. Banusi
27. Bangash
28. Dawari
29. Dilazak
30. Khattak
31. Orakzai
32. Wardak
33. Zadran
34. Zazi
35. Urmar
36. Shilmani
37. Sherani
38. Mohmand (see day 23 for more information)
39. Miani
40. Khalil
41. Babar
42. Taraki
43. Kharoti
44. Suleimankhel
45. Andar
46. Ahmadzai
47. Ibrahimzai
48. Nasar
49. Tokhi
50. Tarkani/Bajaur (see day 22 for more information)
51. Swati
52. Dawar

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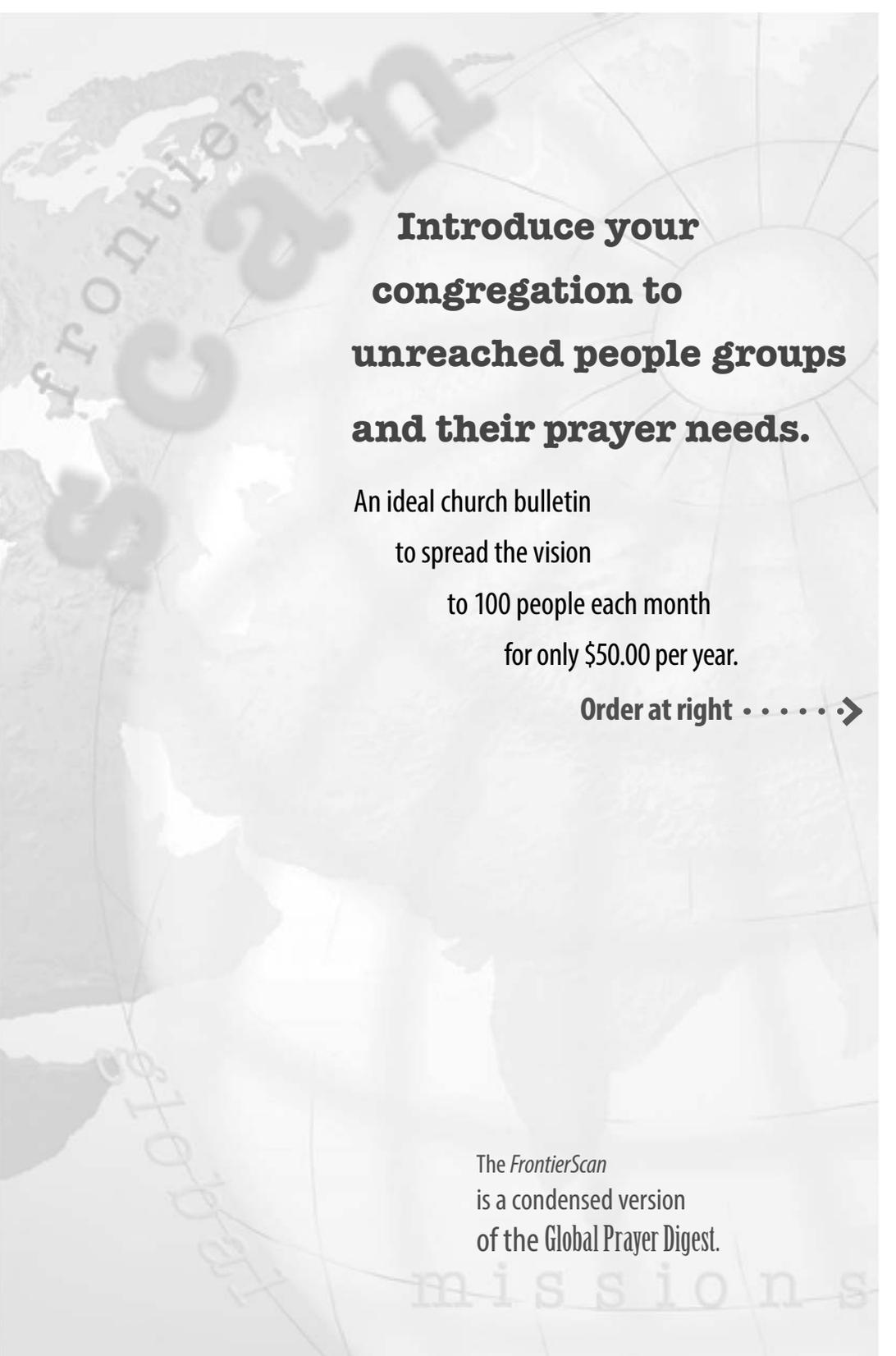
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Dear Praying Friends,

A couple of years ago I struck up a conversation with a woman who lived in Normandy, France, during the D-Day Invasion. I told her that it must have been horrible to have lived in a war zone, and her response surprised me. She said, "It was nowhere near as bad as living under enemy occupation." Since the Fall of Man, we have all lived under enemy occupation, and Earth has been a war zone. People have found destructive ways to cope with this grim situation. Some worship unclean spirit beings in an attempt to get them to take care of them rather than our wonderful loving Lord. Others believe any or all of the following lies: we do not have a sin nature, so sin is a non-issue; we can earn our salvation by doing the right things; God is fickle and uncaring.

In the Arab World, Islam has provided the framework for many forms of religious deception and, in some forms, for an unhealthy love of death. As a result, warfare rages throughout the Arab World today. Islamic militants from groups like ISIS truly believe that what they are doing will make the world a better place. Their worldview involves a love for killing and a love for death.

A shroud can represent two things. It can be a simple piece of cloth used to cover the dead; thus it represents death. It can also represent darkness, since it blocks out all light. But the Light of the World, who came to earth, can break through to the Arab Muslim World despite the efforts of the enemy of mankind to shroud the truth. That will be the theme of our prayers this month: that the unreached peoples in the Arab World will "cope" with the shroud of death and darkness by embracing the Light of the World, Jesus, who came to give life to the fullest!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Keith Carey". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Keith Carey, editor, *GPD*

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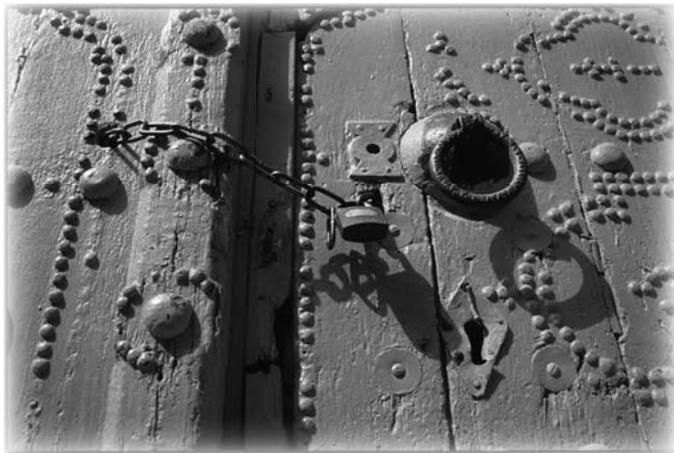
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# Pray for the Shroud of Death and Darkness to be Lifted in the Arab World!



## *Destroy the Shroud!*

—by a field worker in  
the Arab World



A shroud can be two things. It can be a covering used for the dead or sometimes it can be something like a mist that keeps us from seeing the mountains. When something is shrouded, it is obscured from our vision. We only see in part right now. If we know Jesus, however, He can part those clouds to give us a view of the true nature of God and His plan for us. It's exciting to know that there is something to look forward to. It may be painful that we cannot fully see and understand everything yet. But we know that our Savior wishes that no one should perish, and so it is wonderful to belong to Him.

Hope. It is a beautiful word. It conjures up the dreams in our hearts and it can be a word filled with love. We cling to hope in times of trial. It's what makes us different from other forms of life. We are expectant. We are hopeful. We know that our bodies and the shrouded world we live in are temporary. We know there is something more. We believe. We wait. We hope.

## A Shroud Covers the Muslim Arab World

In the predominantly Muslim nations in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), you can literally feel the shroud that covers the land. The shroud has effectively obscured hope. Walk outside and a lot of times there will be a misty haze of dust that clings and shrouds everything in sight. The women that walk by dressed in their gauzy, black veils and cloaks that billow in the wind are shrouded from the world. You can feel it in your spirit. It's oppressive. You can hear it as you talk with locals; many minds are shrouded and unable to think beyond the steady drone of their prayers and teachings. There are ancient customs and beliefs that they stubbornly cling to, simply because the shroud makes it impossible for them to consider another way. The enemy has used false doctrines to carefully shroud this land.

To the foolish these lands are perishing in poverty and backward customs. However, we believe that there is hope for this part of the world. Slowly, the shroud of Islam is beginning to be pierced with tiny holes and tears. For many generations believers have come to this land to share the gospel. They usually returned home “empty-handed” or worse. Yet they keep coming back. We keep holding onto that little seed of hope. Now, after so many years, it is happening. It's a trickle of belief. It's a few here and there. Those that are here and believing can feel the ground trembling. We know the Lord is rallying his faithful to bring a large harvest in. He promises in Isaiah 25, that:

*“On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare  
a feast of rich food for all peoples,  
a banquet of aged wine—  
the best of meats and the finest of wines.*

*7 On this mountain he will destroy  
the shroud that enfolds all peoples,  
the sheet that covers all nations;  
8 he will swallow up death forever.*

*The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears  
from all faces;  
he will remove his people's disgrace  
from all the earth.*

*The Lord has spoken.”*

## **A Shroud Removed**

Perwin's mind was shrouded for many years. She grew up a Muslim. Perwin lived in a small village and did all that was expected of her. She did not attend school. She was told if girls study they will become blind. People told her women's brains are not capable of learning. She didn't even resent this; she believed it to be a fact. She eventually got married to a man her family picked out for her. Perwin was trained from an early age to not show emotion because doing so would be shameful to her and her family. She allowed all decisions to be made for her, and she took good care of her household responsibilities. In return her physical needs were taken care of and provided for. Perwin was doing what she was supposed to do. She was expected to show her gratitude by submission.

Perwin's husband was angry, feisty, and erratic. He saw no value in the Islamic religion, and eventually he abandoned it. Then he met Jesus. He didn't know anything about Jesus, but he was ready to enlist immediately. He was just as much outspoken for Jesus as he had been against Islam. It cost him a great deal; he faced rejection and persecution. He still knew very little about Jesus.

Perwin continued to be a good wife and followed her husband obediently even in this. Then one day seated on the bare concrete floor of their home with nothing but a dusty fan beating off the heat, her husband read aloud about Noah from the Word of God. For the first time she was hearing truth taught to her. Her head tipped up and her eyes lit up. She became excited and exclaimed, "I never thought I could learn, but I understand this!"

The shroud was torn back for Perwin on that day! She had believed that she was unable to learn. In reality, it was just a shroud, but the truth penetrated through that shroud. It tore a hole in it for her to see out for the first time. She was amazed by her own ability. All in an instant, simply through the story of Noah, her mind was exposed to Light. She did not go blind. Now she too bears the mark of hope. She can hope for her three girls and one boy to learn what she never learned before. She will never be the same!

## **Shrouds Obscure True Identity**

At age six, Kojan woke up one day to find his family murdered and their bodies scattered around him. The shroud around his heart was heavy with passion for revenge. Kojan became a fierce soldier. His name meant, “to add pain.” He roamed through the mountains with his militia group for years. Of the 120 men he enlisted with, only two were still alive after 11 months. In his wanderings, he came upon the Gospel of Luke. He read it and re-read it. He recognized truth in it, but he identified himself as a Muslim. He believed what he had always been told: If you are born a Muslim, you will always remain a Muslim. He loved the truth in the gospel, and he let go of his hate and desire to avenge his family. He forgave. He shared the gospel wherever he went. He would get into discussions and talk to others about Jesus and how He had changed him.

One day he overheard another man telling others of the truth, and he revealed that although he grew up a Muslim, his identity is now in Christ. Kojan was amazed; he immediately switched his personal identity to that of a follower of Jesus. He changed his name to Kojin, which means “to add life.” The shroud had been removed! The pain had also been removed and in its place was life. His allegiance has changed, and his hope now is in Jesus. He now “fights” for Jesus by teaching His truth as a pastor.

The shroud won't be completely removed for any of us until Jesus prepares that final feast when he returns. We each have to struggle against the shrouds that our own culture tries to impose on us. We look forward to that day when he will destroy the shroud forever. Until then, we must hope expectantly. We must pray for others to have the glimpse we have been given. We must pray for others to understand the gospel like Perwin and Kojin. The inheritance is rich. The feast that we will share will be extravagant. Who will you be seated next to? Maybe you will hear the story on that day of how your prayers helped pierce the shroud for another!

*Pray for the spiritual shroud to be removed from every people group we are highlighting in this issue.*

## Missionary Biography—Greg Livingstone

In love He predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.

This verse gives us a glimpse into one of the most powerful ideas in scripture. Because He loves us, He adopted us! Imagine how this message would affect a boy who had been abandoned numerous times throughout his life. Perhaps Livingstone's background made him all the more eager to find the One who is eager to love and adopt unlovable sinners!

*Pray for the Lord to impress on the hearts of the fatherless, un-adopted Arab Muslims that they need a Heavenly Father.*

Greg Livingstone was born out of wedlock in 1940 and shuffled from one foster home to another. But despite his background, he became a key missionary statesman in helping to spread the gospel throughout the world. God uses humble people to do His work. He was born from an affair between a nightclub dancer and a Jewish Harvard graduate. When his mother became pregnant, it was clear that no one wanted the baby, and abortions were hard to get at that time. But there was One who wanted this baby, the One who declared, "Before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5).

Greg lived with several different foster families and relatives: first in Boston, then in San Diego, and then in Aspen, Colorado, where he spent a good part of his youth.

At 16 he asked Judy Ringle to go to a movie with him; she declined, but agreed to go to a theater with him Sunday morning instead. It turned out to be an evangelistic Christian service! Judy's parents invited him to dinner where they gave him a Gospel of John challenging him to ask God to show him if it was true. In the next couple of weeks, "A feeling had come over me with which I was totally unacquainted with.... Jesus .... was still alive and had taken up residence in me."

*Pray for the Lord to take those from humble beginnings and use them for His purposes.—KC*

## Missionary Biography, Continued

Greg went to Wheaton College where he met Sally, a pre-med student preparing to serve in Pakistan or Egypt. They married soon after graduating.

Greg sheepishly admits he had neither awareness nor concern for people living outside of the U.S. until his second year at Wheaton. At that time he was coerced to attend an all-night prayer meeting about foreign missions led by 20-year-old George Verwer. “What country are you claiming?” demanded Verwer. “What’s left?” Greg responded. “You’ve got Libya!” Verwer thundered. That night Greg accepted the call to join God’s worldwide team.

Together with other students, Livingstone and Verwer founded Operation Mobilization (OM) in 1961. Years later Greg facilitated 70 “tentmakers” to get into Libya. For several years Livingstone joined Verwer in O.M.’s evangelistic efforts in Europe. When he finally got to his calling in Lebanon as the team leader, he clashed with that country’s organization leader. Verwer decided Greg was more useful as a recruiter of missionaries so he sent the Livingstones to Toronto to birth OM in Canada.

“Over the years, I gradually realized that the great Shepherd has chosen to utilize me most often as a sheepdog... I’ve been a recruiter, one who keeps God’s sheep moving in the direction of His not-yet-harvested fields.” Thus Livingstone summarizes his 52 years of ministry helping place about 1900 adults into long term residential church planting among Muslims.

*Pray for the Lord to raise up many others who will “sheepdog” workers into doing what the Lord has for them to do.—KC*

**For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

Our works do not have anything to do with earning our salvation; but they do have everything to do with God’s purpose for us in life. In today’s entry, it becomes clear that some people such as Greg Livingstone have the task of “shepherding” God’s people to go where He wants them to go and to do what He wants them to do. Do you know anyone who exhorts you to do good works? Do you listen to them?

*Pray that each of us will listen to those whom God has placed in our lives to nudge us in the right direction. Pray that we will do the works God has for us, not just out of obedience, but also because it pleases Him.*

## Missionary Biography, Continued

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control; against such things there is no law.

It is very difficult to walk in the fruit of the Holy Spirit, but it demonstrates the truth of Christ's kingdom. When missionaries are able to love and forgive even those who are abusive, it demonstrates better than any carefully written pamphlet or theological argument why transformation in Christ is so essential.

*Pray for today's workers in the Arab World to walk in the fruit of the Holy Spirit so they can show the reality of the kingdom of God to Muslims.*

A couple of years later Greg, the recruiter, was manning OM's booth at a meeting in Urbana, Illinois when, to his surprise, he got recruited to become the North American Director of North Africa Mission (NAM, now called Arab World Ministries). This time it took Greg five years to recruit 95 new missionaries to serve in Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and France; but when he wanted to expand NAM to the Middle East, the leadership felt he was pushing them too fast. After much deliberation, in good spirit and without broken relationships, NAM and Ralph Winter (founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission) recommended that Greg launch a new 'sister' agency to the Muslims. Hence Frontiers was birthed in 1982, specifically for people who were willing to go as tentmaker missionaries to Muslim countries that would not allow traditional missionaries. Today Frontiers has 1900 workers.

Greg stepped down as General Director of Frontiers at age 60, and he and Sally went to Southeast Asia to do what they had been recruiting others to do: church planting among Muslims. After five years there, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church's mission agency World Outreach utilized Greg to raise up 10 Presbyterian teams to work with unreached Muslims. Greg sees no biblical basis for retirement; thus at age 74 he continues to write, teach, inspire, and recruit new ambassadors for Christ for the remaining unreached Muslim peoples in the world.

*Thank the Lord for those who are called to pioneer agencies that reach beyond the scope of ordinary mission efforts.—KC*

*(The book, You've Got Libya, is available from Kregel Publishing or Amazon, (paper or kindle) or Frontiers: Bob.blincoe@gracetogo.org)*

## Palestinian Muslim Arabs in Jordan

“**E** hab, where are you from?” The Chinese visitor asked a male waiter in the Jordanian Hotel. “I’m Palestinian and my family came to Jordan as refugees from the West Bank. Life has been good to us here; yet many of my people are homesick and want to return to their own country.”

The term Palestine originates with the Philistines. In order to bait the Jews whom the Romans had conquered, the Romans named the land after Israel’s arch enemies. The Romans wanted to erase any association of Israel and their God to the land.

Some of the Arabs living in the land of Jordan originally came from Arabia. Others, mostly Palestinian Arabs from the Palestinian enclaves in the West Bank and Gaza, used to live in Israel proper. Many of these Arabs migrated to the country of Jordan where they have found opportunities for a better life. Sadly, Islamic terrorist groups like the Hamas have dominated some of these Palestinian Arabs. This has brought about major conflicts between them and the Jewish people and resulted in much suffering, pain, and rage. A Christian Jordanian stated, “Islam is a strong part of the Palestinian identity, but the pain of war has left them searching for something beyond what they have. More are coming to Christ at this time than ever before, but it is still only a trickle.”

*Pray that Palestinian Arabs in Jordan would be moved to forgive those who have hurt them, and thus open their hearts to accepting the forgiveness of Christ. Pray that they will receive Christ which will give them an identity and an eternal homeland in heaven.—PD*

We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.

This verse makes it abundantly clear that Christ has complete control over death and life. He cannot die, nor will He ever die. We can share in His eternal life.

*Pray that Palestinian Muslims will desire eternal life enough to embrace the Master of life, Jesus Christ.*

Even when we were dead in our trespasses, (God) made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. . . .

Right now the Jordanian Muslims are indeed dead in their trespasses. But they can become alive with Christ! Their eyes must be opened to what He has to offer them and to His guidance.

*Pray for the Jordanian Muslims to open their spiritual eyes to becoming alive with Christ so that they can be raised with Him and seated with Him in the heavenlies.*

## Jordanian Arabs in Jordan and the UAE



Sammy, the director of a Summer Christian Youth Camp in Jordan, gave a report on the successful 2014 summer camp program. “This summer we saw a new sense of awareness. Campers were asking us questions about why

God allows pain, suffering, and sickness. They wanted to know where God is in all this. Many thought there is a creator, but that the creator has abandoned the world. Some even wanted to talk about atheism.” Sammy reported that over 600 children attended. Many of their parents also became involved. “Many of the kids personally knew Syrian refugees and the pain they have gone through. It was hard for the kids to understand, but having these discussions about God and His Word have strengthened their belief in Christ. They left with a deeper relationship with God and a desire to reach out to those suffering, especially the Muslims.”

Jordanian Arabs are known for their warmth, giving, and hospitality. Jordanians have welcomed so many refugees from the Arab-Israeli, Iraqi, and Syrian conflicts that refugees and former refugees make up more than two thirds of the country’s population. About 250,000 live in the UAE where they are highly regarded. Older Jordanians are traditional Muslims, but the young people seem to be more open to new ideas. Consequently, more young Jordanians are coming to Christ.

*Pray that followers of Christ in Jordan and the UAE will lead many of the Muslims Arabs to accepting Jesus as their Savior, the Prince of Peace.—PD*

## Sunni Muslim Palestinians in Lebanon

“Lebanon is a small country with limited resources. When the Palestinians originally sought sanctuary there, it was intended to be for a short time.” The Christian Lebanese man was answering questions from a group of concerned visitors about the Palestinian refugees. “We have limited job opportunities, so they must obtain work permits and are restricted to low paying jobs with no benefits. If they become citizens, they could shift the spiritual and political balance of Lebanon in favor of Islam. Only a few are citizens. We are trying to discourage them from remaining, but they do not want to leave.”

Recently some of the 500,000 Lebanese Muslim Palestinians have found answers to their problematic lives. That new hope is found in God’s Word and in Jesus. A missionary working with them reports, “Over the last few years some bold public sharing opportunities have resulted in the formation of 16 Discovery Bible Studies (DBS) in four different areas. There is a growing core of believers who have the vision for every one of their Palestinian brothers and sisters in Lebanon and beyond to know Jesus.

*Pray for the forming of DBS groups in the other 18 camps and the numerous settlements where the Palestinian refugees live. Pray for wisdom as this core set of leaders develops elders and other leaders to guide this fledgling movement into glorious growth and maturity. Pray that they will grasp deeply the reality that the kingdom of God is their homeland and inheritance. Pray they will have Peace in God.—PD*

*To read further about Sunni Muslim Palestinians in Lebanon, visit: [www.meforum.org/68/the-palestinian-predicament-in-lebanon](http://www.meforum.org/68/the-palestinian-predicament-in-lebanon)*

**For the death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives He lives to God.**

In the Old Testament, there is a clear connection between sin and death. When Adam and Eve sinned, God told them they would die. Cain and Abel were both required to make a blood offering for sin. Death was to be the only way for sin to be forgiven.

*Pray that Palestinian Muslims will recognize that sin and death are inseparable. Pray that they will respond by gratefully giving their lives to the Savior.*

Therefore do not become partners with them; for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. . .

Christ has taken us from darkness to the light. He has taken us from death to life. We do not want to go back to the ways of darkness and death!

*Pray that members of the Alawite communities will crave light and life so much that they will no longer be partners with those who embrace death and destruction.*

## Lebanese Alawites

“**W**here is our fee, Omran? Pay or you know what will happen.” The Sunni militant sneered as he threatened the Alawite shopkeeper in Tripoli, Lebanon.

The population of Alawites in Lebanon is around 120,000, and about half of them live in Tripoli. The militant Sunni group known as Lebanon’s Salafi Movement was also founded in Tripoli. Violence between these two groups has been ongoing for decades, and it has escalated in the last few years. Ongoing demonstrations, fighting and killings frequently take place. Regardless of their political and spiritual differences, Alawites and Sunnis both face problems that include poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, drug addiction, and poor medical facilities.

The Alawite branch of Islam follows the teaching of Ibn Nusair who died in 716. He started this new sect by splitting off from the Shi’ites. Astonishingly, Alawites do not have mosques, only devotional rooms. They disapprove of some Islamic religious duties such as praying five times daily and fasting during Ramadan. However, under persecution they sometimes practice these rituals to protect themselves from traditional Muslims. There has been almost no Christian outreach to the Alawites in Lebanon.

*A Christian worker in the region requested that we pray for foreign workers and Lebanese believers who are attempting to reach out to the Alawites there. Pray for such a personal and meaningful encounter with Jesus through these workers that the Alawites will receive Him fully into their lives and make Him known throughout Lebanon and Syria.—PD*

## Syrian Refugees in Jordan

“It is over; we can’t get back what we lost!” The Syrian refugee told the Christian worker. “I had a good business. The terrorists said I had to pay them \$5,000 in fees or they would destroy all I had. I paid them and then they said I had to pay the same amount every month. We escaped at night, leaving everything. I hate those filthy dogs!”

A missionary wrote in a letter to his church, “This is only one of thousands of heartbreaking stories we have heard. There are currently around 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Jordan. The Syrian families have seen their houses destroyed, lost loved ones, have friends or family in prison, and have no hope of ever going back. Anger and bitterness have taken deep root, and most are saying they will never forgive. The Syrian refugees are marred by a spirit of hopelessness and rejection. Yet God is using this crisis to bring about a greater openness and a willingness to hear His gospel. Our prayer for them is that God will restore hope where there is none and that He shows them His plans and His love for them.”

*Pray for the power of the gospel to take root and break the chains of bitterness and unforgiveness among the Syrian refugees. Pray God will bring His servants in contact with a key leader/person of peace in the Syrian community who will lead these people to the truth and freedom found in Christ.—PD*

**Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.**

What would happen throughout the Arab Muslim World if people exposed the works of darkness? Imagine what would happen if the common people who want to live peaceful lives reported terrorist cells. This might not happen for two reasons. First of all, people are intimidated by violent men. Secondly, many of them are taken in by the false beliefs that come with violent behavior disguised as spirituality.

*Pray for Syrian refugees to have the courage to expose those who are making their nation a place of horror.*

They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

When someone loses sensibility regarding God's will, they often continue in a continual quest for more of what takes them further from Him. The downward cycle leads to spiritual death.

*Pray for the Holy Spirit to bring sensibility to those in the Arab World who are lost in the darkness of their thinking. Pray for members of ISIS to recognize that they are acting as Satan's tools, and that they must turn or face eternal consequences.*

## Sorani Kurds

Crucifixions. Beheadings. Ethnic cleansing. Tens of thousands of people trapped atop a mountain with bloodthirsty militants surrounding them. This is what the Sorani Kurds, as well as Iraqi Christians, faced in August 2014 as the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIS) militants advanced through northern Iraq and up Mount Sinjar.

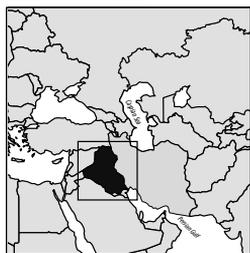
Many times throughout their history Sorani Kurds have fled to the mountains from oppressors. Until last summer, 10-12 million Sorani Kurds lived in northern Iraq and western Iran. Meanwhile, 35-40 million Kurds live in Turkey, Syria, Iran, and other areas of Iraq.

The Kurds are the largest people group in the world that does not have a land of their own. Though landless, their mark is made through language. Sorani Kurdish is the most developed and universally understood Kurdish dialect in Iran and Iraq.

Nearly all Sorani speaking Kurds are Muslim; less than .05 percent are Christian. However, Christian workers have established schools, medical clinics, media centers and churches, all with the blessing of the regional, Kurdish-based government. A final revision of the Bible in the Sorani Kurdish language is expected to be completed this month.

*Pray for this Bible translation to be read, embraced, and obeyed by Sorani speakers. Pray for the development of leaders to plant Sorani speaking house churches throughout the Middle East. Pray that the Kurds would replace their pursuit of establishing their own nation with the goal of establishing the kingdom of God in their hearts.—LR*

## Kurds in Kirkuk, Iraq



Gunshots rang out in Kirkuk, a city in northern Iraq, causing women and their children to duck for cover once again. Tension in their bodies matched the tension felt so commonly in the city.

Shootings and indiscriminate bombings are normal in Kirkuk. Kidnappings are a part of every day life, too. Kirkuk has one of the largest oil reserves in the world, and there are many factions that want to take this wealth by force.

Last summer, the castle-like walls of the citadel surrounding Kirkuk could not keep the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIS) militants from swiftly conquering the city. In June 2014 the city of over one million Kurdish, Turkish, Sunni Arab and Shi'ite Arab inhabitants could not defend their beloved ancient home from being littered with bodies. Each group had a reason to fight, for each claimed the city as their own original homeland. But the 5,000-year-old city with its many memories and historical accounts was brutally conquered by this new vicious terrorist group.

Almost every resident of Kirkuk is Muslim, and before the ISIS takeover, only a few Christians lived there. Those who did belonged to underground churches. Extreme persecution of believers existed even before the ISIS takeover.

*Pray that God will protect the Christians and ethnic Kurds who have suffered in Kirkuk. Pray that He will give the Kurds a willingness to question Islamic teachings that make such slaughter possible. May they seek answers in God's Word, the Bible. —LR*

**And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death.**

Persecution of believers in the Arab World is no surprise. Jesus told us that this would happen all over the world, wherever people would follow Him. The spirit of death and destruction is strong wherever the kingdom of God has not penetrated hearts.

*Pray for the plague of death to be removed from Kirkuk!*

## Iraqi Arabs

**“In your anger do not sin.”  
Do not let the sun go down  
while you are still angry.**

We all get angry. But what happens when anger lingers? It degenerates into bitterness and rage, and that can easily result in violent outbursts. In the flesh, we are at the mercy of such emotions, but in the Spirit, we can overcome them.

*Pray that the Sunni Muslims in Iraq, Kuwait, and Syria will be willing to follow Christ and allow His Spirit to indwell in them so that they can live by the fruit of the Spirit rather than by the fruit of the flesh.*

Alan, a Western visitor, sat with his Iraqi friend Rashid in a coffee house in central Iraq. They heard popping sounds coming from the distance. “Fireworks!” said Alan as he rose from his seat. Rashid grabbed his arm and pulled him back down. “That’s rifle fire. You’ll get killed if you go out there!”

Almost all Iraqi Arabs are Muslim. But they are divided mostly into two religious factions, the Sunni and the Shi’ite. The latter group, the Shi’ites, have been in control of the government and ruling the Iraqi Sunnis from Baghdad in an arbitrary manner for several years. This fact has angered many Sunnis. As a result, some Sunnis in Syria and Iraq have joined together to form the new terrorist group, ISIS. This cruel Sunni Muslim group is bent on slaughtering those who do not submit to their rule. They hope to form a Sunni-based caliphate (Islamic government) in what is now Iraq and Syria. After successful campaigns in Syria in the winter and spring of 2014, ISIS began taking over one city after another in northern and central Iraq. The Shi’ite ruled government of Iraq in Baghdad was on the verge of collapse and many Sunni in the Iraqi Army units (equipped with American weapons) refused to fight against the Sunni ISIS.

*The treatment of Iraqi Christians has been terrible in the ISIS controlled part of Iraq. Many Christians in Iraq have been forced to flee for their lives. Pray for the protection for Christians and Shi’ite Muslims in Iraq. Pray that all Iraqi Arabs will open their eyes to the evils brought on by state-run religion and flee to the One who gives freedom from sin and death.—WK*



Thomas and Akku walked through a shopping mall talking about the ordeal Kuwait went through when they were overrun by Iraqi forces in 1990-91. Akku, a Kuwaiti Arab commented, “The Iraqis set fire to oil rigs, and I thought I was watching

the fires of hell!” Thomas replied. “At that time I was in school in India, studying to be a petroleum engineer. It took me a couple of years before I could work in Kuwait.” Ali asked, “What did you come here for? To earn money and just go home?” Thomas swallowed hard and replied, “To make sure people like you delight in the character of God.” Akku had fire in his eyes when he hissed, “But I worship Allah and follow the teachings of Mohammed!” Thomas asked, “Has Allah given you the assurance of going to heaven?” Ali thought for a moment and replied, “No. I’m in constant fear of not having done enough good works.” Thomas said, “Then let me tell you about Jesus Christ. He has given me the assurance of going to heaven.”

Though this is only a story, it illustrates something about the Kuwaiti Arabs. They are almost 100 percent Muslim, and their trust is not in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

*Pray that Christ followers among the many foreign workers in Kuwait will be effective ambassadors for Christ.—WK*

They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

Hardening of hearts leads to a darkened understanding of God’s will and a separation from Him. There are many Kuwaiti Arabs who fit this description. Getting back to what was said in this month’s editorial, it is easy for people to believe the lie that our salvation depends on works. It is very easy for us as Christ’s followers to curse the darkness, when we should be praying in the light.

*Pray that the light of the gospel will penetrate hearts darkened by misunderstanding of God’s will. Pray that hard hearts will be softened by the work of the Holy Spirit.*

# Day 13

Ephesians 2:8-9, ESV

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

This is an area where Saudi Muslims are likely to stumble. Like most of humanity, they do not understand that salvation comes by faith in the Living Christ rather than by works. If salvation could be earned by works, then Jesus would not have needed to pay for our sins with His life. Instead, the Saudis have placed works such as going on the Hajj as a means towards salvation.

*Pray for the Saudi Arabs to understand the meaning of Christ's work on the cross in their hearts and minds.*

## Hijazi Saudi Arabs



The Hajj is required of all Muslims who are physically and economically capable. It is a requirement that every Muslim go on the Hajj who is physically and economically capable. This highly scripted pilgrimage is filled with Islamic rituals and prayers. It takes three days to complete all that is required. Last year over two million devout Muslims went on the Hajj according to Wikipedia.

For centuries Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia have been the locations of the world's biggest pilgrimage called the Hajj. It is a requirement that every Muslim go on the Hajj who is physically and economically capable. This highly scripted pilgrimage is filled with Islamic rituals and prayers. It takes three days to complete all that is required. Last year over two million devout Muslims went on the Hajj according to Wikipedia.

Muslims who return to their homeland from the Hajj are given greater status among their friends, neighbors, and relatives. They believe that going on the Hajj will give them a better chance of going to heaven after they die.

*Ask the Lord to create a hunger for truth among the Hijazi Saudi Arabs. May the Hijazi Saudi Arabs understand that we cannot earn our way to heaven. Pray that efforts to reach the Saudis through the Internet will find hearts open to truth.—WK*

## Persians in the Gulf Countries

As the ferry rocked back and forth over the choppy waters, Arman, a young Iranian, stared out the window peering intently at the horizon for signs of the port.

Eighteen months ago while his family waved goodbye to him, Arman boarded the ferry to the Island of Dalma in the Persian Gulf. He was going to apprentice as a bricklayer at a construction site there. On the island of Dalma, he boarded with other migrant Iranian workers. After a long day's work under the punishing sun, he would go to his room. As the evening progressed, others would arrive. They would cook and eat their simple meals. Sitting crouched in their tiny rooms up the narrow alley, they would speak of the wide-open spaces where they had previously laughed, played, and studied.

Every month Arman set aside just enough money for utilities and sent the remaining money to his family with a neatly penned letter informing them of his well-being. Finally, he had made enough money to buy a ferry ticket back home. He knew they would be waiting for him, and he knew for the next two weeks he would be showered with all the love and attention that a family gives.

The Persian diaspora in the gulf countries is made up of poor and middle class individuals. They endure immense hardship in order to eke out a living.

*Pray that these migrant Persians will come to know that the love of Christ surpasses even that which they have experienced from their loving families.—EJD*

And He put all things under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

The nations need to understand that all things are under the feet of Jesus. It is way too easy for people to believe that since He was “weak” enough to be nailed to a cross, that Jesus has no power. But this idea can't be further from the truth!

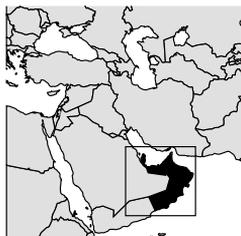
*Pray that Persians everywhere will understand that Jesus is the head of the universe. Pray that they will understand that they will present themselves to Him on the final day.*

But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Instead of death, there is life! Why is this? It is because God loves us so much that He showers us, sinful humanity, with grace and mercy! How could knowledge of God's great love for us transform the Muslim world if they understood this from the heart? Do you think there would be less self-righteousness and violence?

*Pray that the Urdu speakers around the world will understand from the heart that God's love for us means life, grace, and salvation for all who believe in Him. Pray that in His mercy, God will give many Urdu speakers the gift of faith.*

## Urdu Speakers on the Arab Peninsula



As the morning sun sent rays of harsh, bright light into his east-facing bedroom, Abbas woke up. He sat upright, rubbed his eyes, and looked at the small clock on his nightstand. Nine o'clock. He slowly got dressed and went downstairs.

Abbas picked up the newspaper and began to skim its contents. An advertisement caught his eye. "Looking for strong motivated young men to join the armed forces in Bahrain." Scanning quickly through the half page,

he learned that he could be earning up to 100,000 Pakistani rupees annually along with other perks. Here he was, out of college, a strong young man without a job. This could be his perfect answer!

"Ma," he hollered to his mother in the adjacent room, "Isn't Uncle Rahim working on the police force in Manama?" (the capital of Bahrain) "Yes, his family moved there nearly two decades ago," she replied emerging from her room. Her brother and his young family relocated to Bahrain in the 1990s. His children had attended the Urdu School there. "I was wondering if I should apply for this position," Abbas said pointing to the advertisement. Putting on her spectacles, she took a closer look at it and said, "Why not?"

The Arabian Peninsula is home to several thousand Urdu speakers from Pakistan and India. Many of them are educated, intelligent individuals.

*Pray that these Urdu speakers will come in contact with followers of Christ who will share the gospel with them.—EJD*

# Arabs of Qatar

Day 16  
Ephesians 5:8, NKJV



Create International

Qatari women

every need, dressing her hair, freshening her manicure, slipping her silver-threaded garments over her head. She was now ready to join her family for breakfast and whatever diversions the day might hold.

Jehan is one of 250,000 Qatari citizens in a small country protruding into the sea like a thumb off the coast of Saudi Arabia. It is among the wealthiest countries per capita in the world. One and a half million foreign workers live in Qatar to do the common work. Qatar has been ruled by a family monarchy since the mid-1800s, and it abides by strict Sharia law. It is the most conservative Muslim Arab nation in the world next to Saudi Arabia, and most Qataris follow the fundamentalist Wahhabi beliefs. While Qatar is quiet within its borders, it is known to be a major funder of terrorist organizations.

*Since Sharia law prohibits the spread of the gospel, pray that the Internet, radio and TV broadcasts, and other avenues of evangelization will be open wide to the Qataris. Pray that their great wealth doesn't immunize them to their tremendous need for Jesus, who loves and calls them to Himself. Pray that strongholds and principalities will be broken and cast down, and the Spirit of the Living God will sweep Qatar with His presence and His message of salvation through Jesus.—PE*

Jehan stepped from her oyster-shaped bath tub into the huge fragrant towel held by two servants. They wrapped her, dried her, and applied sweet-smelling lotion. They silently tended to her

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

Has it ever occurred to you how severe this statement is? Without Christ we are darkness! But with Him, we are light. What a contrast! Our very being is affected by our willingness to allow His light to shine through us.

*Pray that Qatari Muslims will turn from their position of being in darkness to being in light. Pray that they will shine forth as His ambassadors to a dying world.*

Do not present yourselves to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

All the Muslim peoples need to do in order to move from death to life is repent of their sins and accept Christ. Where there is repentance, there is life. By contrast there is nothing but death and destruction when there is fighting and self-righteousness. But fighting has been the way of life in Yemen for hundreds of years. It will take a miracle of the Holy Spirit to change this situation.

*Pray for repentance to come to the Arab Yemeni people.*

## Arabs of Yemen



Create International

Yemeni men

Abasi awoke with the first rays of the hot, Yemeni sun. Today was the day he showed the world he was becoming a man. His mother had already laid out his new headgear, which he placed proudly upon his thick, black curls. He donned his usual patched and worn clothing, hitching his belt another notch smaller on his growling stomach. Then the moment Abasi had been longing for arrived; he carefully placed the traditional Yemeni dagger in his belt. Being of the Zadis sect he was now ready for his destiny. He had become a warrior—ready for jihad!

Abasi's world is a difficult and treacherous one. There are about 1700 tribes in Yemen, ruled by sheiks who frequently go to war with one other. Yemen is one of the poorest countries in the world with half the population going hungry every day. Struggling with poverty, political unrest and influxes of huge numbers of refugees, they are vulnerable to the siren song of terrorist organizations that promise food and care.

*Pray for the desperate Yemeni people who suffer under physical trials and find little comfort in their Muslim faith. Pray that the estimated 5,000 believers in Yemen will shine like the sun in a dark land. Pray that the people of Yemen will receive Christ and be able to transform their nation for the better.—PE*

## Dhofari Arabs in Oman

Saleem skillfully sliced the trunk of one olibanum tree after another. In two weeks he would return to collect the milky sap that has congealed on the trunks of the trees and make frankincense with it. For thousands of years the Dhofari Arabs in Oman have exported precious frankincense throughout the world.

Nestled in the coastal mountains along a sliver of the central coast of Oman, the 95,000 Dhofari people remain unique. They speak a variation of Arabic and adhere to a sect of Islam called Ibadhism. Their customs, including wearing a traditional dagger, are similar to their western neighbors, the Yemenis. In the whole of Oman it is believed that there are only 10 Dhofari followers of Christ.

In recent years oil and gas production have radically changed the economic landscape of the country. New leaders have emerged who are amenable to modern ideas such as new roads and education for girls.

However, the generous and hospitable nature of the Omani people draws the line at the mention of the gospel. Suspicion and fear make contacting the people with the Word of God very difficult.

*Pray that God will provide wisdom, guidance, and grace for any workers among the Omani Dhofari. Pray that Christian radio and TV programming will provide an avenue of contact acceptable to the Arabs of Oman. Pray for spiritual strengthening of the 10 Dhofani people dedicated to Jesus. Pray for their protection and that their culturally relevant testimony will be like fishes and loaves in the Master's hands.—PE*

This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in Him.

Boldness, access, and confidence; these are some of the fruits of faith. We can be bold because He is true. We have access to the Father through our prayers, and we have confidence that He hears our prayers.

*Pray that the people of Oman will have a spiritual craving for this kind of relationship with the Lord of Creation. Pray that this craving will lead them to Jesus Christ.*

Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

The Bereans were eager to find truth, and they knew that God's Word is truth. This is part of our theme this month. The shroud represents death, but it also represents blinding to the truth. Unlike most of humanity, the Bereans were so eager for truth that they spent hours searching the Scriptures to find it out.

*Pray for God to move among the peoples in the UAE to be "Bereans" in the sense that they will eagerly search the Scriptures and find truth.*

## Other Emirates in UAE



When Abishek's alarm went off, he rolled over and hit the snooze button. It was still dark and he had no desire to get up yet. When the alarm went off again in just five minutes, he groaned and crawled out of bed.

The good thing about living in Sharjah is that it is a little more affordable than Dubai. However, Abishek's job is in Dubai which means braving daily traffic jams in his nearly hour-long commute each way. As he slowly began to get dressed, Abishek wondered every day if it had been worth it to leave his home and family in India for this.

Sharjah, Ajman, Ras Al Kaimah, Umm Al Quwain, and Fujairah are the "other Emirates" of the UAE. Lesser known than Dubai or Abu Dhabi, they are home to many expatriates who practice Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam.

*Pray that Christ's followers will reach both expatriates and locals living in the "other Emirates" of the UAE. Pray for God to establish His Church in each of these five emirates. Pray for mission organizations to train expatriate believers to be effective witnesses. Pray that there will soon be a discipleship making movement among each people group in the UAE.—CL*

# Emirati Tribal Families of Dubai

Day 20

Ephesians 4:14, ESV



“Dad, has our family always lived in Dubai?” The man shook his head. “No, son, our people are originally from Africa.”

The 14-year-old boy thought about this for a moment before asking, “How did we get to Dubai?” This time the

father sat down and motioned for his son to do the same. After a long pause, he launched into the story of how their family had been captured in Africa and brought to Dubai as slaves. “We have come a long way since then,” he told the boy.

The “tribal” families of Dubai come from many different places and heritages. Some, like the man and his son above, were brought from Africa. Others came from Iran. Others were Bedouins who migrated through the nearby deserts. Today, all of these different people groups are mixed together as citizens of Dubai. What the families of Dubai have in common, aside from where they live, is that they have not encountered Christ. However, many are now searching for meaning and significance.

*Pray that those who are searching will find the One who is holy, righteous, and sovereign. Pray for members of the Emirati tribal families of Dubai to hear and respond to the gospel. Ask God to establish His Church among these people and for it to grow rapidly.—CL*

... so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

It is way too easy for people from any nation to be tossed back and forth by false teachings. Doctrines can be twisted and crafted by lies and half-truths to keep us away from the true Savior.

*Pray for the Emirati tribal families to have the spiritual discernment to see through false doctrines and embrace the One who is the Truth.*

And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

The shepherds heard and responded to the message of the angel. The birth of Jesus was cause for great joy. Why? Because He is the One who would save the world from sin and death. Do the nations understand this today? Or do they view Him as only a prophet or a great teacher?

*Pray that the Muslim Egyptian Arabs will have their hearts penetrated with the good news that Jesus is indeed the Savior, and there is no other like Him.*

## Egyptian Arabs of the Nile Delta

The ancient Egyptians called their land the Black Land. And it looks black when seen from a satellite. In the middle of the land lies the Nile River that empties itself into the Mediterranean Sea at the Delta. As in the days of Joseph and Moses, the Nile Delta is the breadbasket of Egypt. Over the years the Delta has been “host” to invaders: Sea peoples, Canaanites, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Turks, French, British, and Germans. Today it is occupied by Muslim Arabs caught between those who would impose Sharia law on them and the Egyptian Army that does not want Sharia.

In the midst of the “Arab Spring” is Sat-7, a Christian broadcaster. Sat-7’s even-handed coverage of the “Arab Spring” revolution has earned it high marks and an increased audience among the Egyptian Arabs.

*Pray that Sat-7 will maintain its Arabic-language evangelistic programs with creativity. Pray that more Delta Arabs will tune into it. Pray also for revival and vision in Delta churches. The church in Egypt needs more training, experience, funds, and boldness of vision and witness to grow amid the current chaos. Pray for better Christian-Muslim relations and improved relations with the government as the “Arab Spring” opens Egypt’s Delta to the world and the gospel.—TP*

## Nubians in Sudan and Egypt

The Bible calls them Cushites; today they are called Nubians. This is a people who once controlled ancient Egypt. The name Nubia comes from the Nuba Mountains. Today they consist of seven non-Arab peoples between the Aswan High Dam in Egypt and Dongola in Sudan. In the 1960s, the dam flooded their lands and they were resettled. Since then, they have become increasingly Arabized in culture and language, while retaining much of their agricultural economy. However, today the men, not the women, work the fields. Women work at home, in schools, public service, etc. Some men are self-employed. Unlike most Arabs, the Nubians have a high literacy rate.

Although they once were Christians, the Nubians have been Muslims since the 1600s. However, they practice a folk Islam in which the spirit of the Nile River is important; this is like pre-Christian Egypt. Their world is a world of angels, religious leaders, and powerful beings associated with the Nile River. Ancestors are also important. (Animism may have colored their Christianity in the past, too). According to the Joshua Project, there are no known followers of Christ among the Nubians in Sudan and Egypt.

*Because Sudan is basically closed to missionaries, pray for creative access to them. Bible translations, radio and humanitarian aid workers are needed by the Nubians. Pray that African churches will adopt Nubians for evangelism and church planting efforts.—TP*

“... the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.”

This month we are praying for people shrouded in darkness. But when Christ came to Earth, the light came for all to see! He came so that all the nations could go from darkness to light. That is something to celebrate this Christmas season!

*Pray that the Nubians will see the light of Christ and give their hearts to the One who came with the truth.*

## Arabized Shakia in Sudan and Egypt

“...to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Jesus is the Light of the world. Without Him, the nations walk in darkness. With Him, there is light and truth. Can you imagine the darkness that engulfs the nation of Sudan, one that violently opposes those who profess Christ?

*Pray that the Holy Spirit will touch the hearts of many from the Shakia people. Pray also that those who have brought so much darkness to the land of Sudan will turn to Christ.*

**H**ow do you reach a people whose government executes those who believe in Jesus? Through creativity! The country is Sudan and the people are the Shakia, one of a number of Arabized groups there.

Claiming descent from one of the Muslim conquerors of the Upper Nile River in the 7th century, the Shakia live on both sides of the Nile where they engage in agricultural pursuits. Their name may derive from the conqueror, a sheik. They are divided into 12 tribes descended from his sons. They speak a distinct Sudanese dialect of Arabic. Shakia children attend Qur’anic instruction before entering public schools.

Statistics on the Shakia are conflicting. According to one web site, their population is about 941,000; according to another, 874,000. The inhabitants are between one and three percent Christian. All web sites agree that the Arabic Bible, JESUS Film, and gospel recordings are available in a language that they can understand. But apparently there is no access to Christian radio. All agree there are no churches among the Shakia.

*Pray that there will be creative outreach to the Shakia in Sudan and Egypt. Pray that the JESUS Film will be shown, and that the people will download scripture portions to phones and computers. Pray that through their lives, the few Christian Shakias will attract their neighbors to God’s grace and love. Pray for rainfall and adequate crops. Pray that God will reveal Himself in the person of Jesus to key people in each of the 12 subdivisions of the Shakia people, and that they will open their hearts to the gospel.—TP*

## Cyrenaican Arabs of Libya

**F**reedom versus security; this is an ongoing debate that takes place among families, communities, and whole nations. Typically, to acquire more of the one means giving up some of the other.

Cyrenaican Arabs are no exception when it comes to this conversation. Their lives are currently in a state of upheaval since the death of Muammar Gaddafi. Many of them desire greater freedom and Western-style openness, while many others seek Sharia Law for Libya, believing that it will provide greater security.

Cyrenaica makes up the eastern third of the landmass of Libya and borders Egypt. Cyrene was an important port city both before and during the lifetime of Jesus. According to tradition, the gospel writer Mark was born in Cyrenaica, and the good news of Jesus went from Egypt to Cyrenaica very early in Church history.

But today, one would never know or believe that Christianity was ever followed in this region that has only 75 known believers in Jesus among a population of over 1.6 million. Cyrenaican Arabs are Sunni Muslim. Aside from some Bible translations, there are very few materials being used to reach the people of Cyrenaica with the gospel.

*Pray that the Church will send believers to this part of Libya to minister to the Cyrenaican Arabs. Pray that this population will not choose security with Islam over the spiritual freedom that is available in Christ. Pray for stability to come to Libya.—JR*

And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John."

The name John refers to both the grace and the mercy of the Lord. There was one thing that God wanted the world to hear from this prophet; it was that He is gracious. Though the Muslims of the Arab World know this in theory, few of them understand that this is the truth in every day life, where they expect God to be a hard taskmaster.

*Pray that during this Christmas season, the remaining followers of Christ in the Arab World will exemplify the graciousness of God as a testimony to their Muslim neighbors. Pray for the Arab Muslims of Libya to experience and embrace His grace and mercy.*

## Libyan Berbers

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Why were they glorifying and praising God? It was because the shepherds had heard the angels' explanation of why the birth of this baby was both earth-shaking and life-changing. They had just gone to see for themselves what the angels proclaimed. They saw an ordinary-looking baby in a manger, but they knew that life would never be the same.

*Pray that the Libyan Berbers will understand that an encounter with the Lord will change their lives. Pray that they, like these simple shepherds, will understand that life cannot be the same after they submit to the Savior born in Bethlehem.*

The Berbers of Libya have a centuries-old tradition of singing songs in the Tamazight language; these songs distinguish them from their Arab neighbors. They have lived in North Africa since before recorded history. Until the death of Muammar Gaddafi, singing was a tradition that was severely suppressed, and it was dangerous to even attempt to use this language.

The divide between the Berbers and Arabs is nothing new. In the 1920s, Dr. Alberto Denti Di Pirajno wrote that the two people groups “cordially disdained each other. The Berbers find the Arabs obtuse, thieving, and treacherous, while the Arabs say that the Berbers have the greed of the Jews, the venom of the asp, and the honesty of a prostitute.”

Berber women are involved in domestic tasks such as weaving and pottery. Men do most of the farming, woodworking, and metalworking. These roles have seen little change over the centuries.

Immediately following Gaddafi's death, the Berbers started to use their traditional language, as well as teach it in schools. In 2012, Amazigh town councils began funding training, salaries, and textbooks. In their eyes, this is the beginning of a new, freer life for themselves.

*Pray that along with greater political freedom, the Berbers of Libya will begin experiencing spiritual freedom in Christ. Pray that the Church will return to this area where it has so many of its earliest roots. Pray that God will bring about reconciliation between the Berbers and the Arabs.—JR*

# Tunisian Arabs

Day 26

Luke 2:29-32, ESV

Create International



Tunisia is a country of contrasts: most farmers employ out-dated farming methods; at the same time cell phones, Internet, and Facebook are changing the ways its citizens

interact with the world. Tunisia is North Africa's smallest, but most literate country. Women in Tunisia are the best educated females in North Africa, and they enjoy the most freedom. Once considered the breadbasket of the Roman Empire, it still produces lush fruits and vegetables. Today, Tunisia is at a crossroads. The Arab Spring of 2011 freed its people from an oppressive government, but opened the door to various Islamic factions still vying for control of the country.

In the first centuries after Christ, Christianity spread rapidly throughout North Africa; however when Arab invaders arrived in the 7th century, all that existed was an empty shell of the church. Islam spread rapidly, and today almost all Tunisian Arabs consider themselves to be Muslim. But many do not practice Islam.

Websites, TV, and radio programs have generated a great interest in Christ in Tunisia. Nevertheless, there are only a few hundred known believers in the country; most are widely separated from each other with little opportunity for fellowship and discipleship. They often may experience significant persecution from family and friends.

*Pray for strength and holy boldness for believers as they witness for Christ and seek to obey Him. Pray that whole families will come to faith in Jesus. Pray for a strong Holy Spirit led church planting movement to spread throughout Tunisia.—JS*

“Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel.”

Simeon had waited all his life to see the Christ child. God had revealed to him that the Christ would come within his lifetime. By contrast, most Tunisian Arabs view Jesus as one of the prophets, but they do not look to Him with this kind of expectation.

*Pray that during this Christmas season the Tunisian Arab Muslims will have their eyes opened to the fact that Jesus is the Savior of all peoples, not just a prophet.*

## Jerba Berbers of Tunisia

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word. . . .

Those who follow Christ must love their wives and show kindness to them. This is a command. But the kindness is not an end in itself; it is a way to demonstrate how Christ nurtures His bride, the Church.

*Pray for the Lord to raise up obedient husbands to go to the Jerba Berbers and demonstrate the ways of Christ. Pray that both husbands and wives among the Jerba Berbers will see that this is a better way than they have ever experienced.*

“Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them” (John 7:38, NIV). The Berbers of Jerba Island off the coast of Tunisia need this living spiritual water; but they also need physical water. Their small island has no natural source of water except for that which can be collected from rainwater. With little water, there are also limited opportunities for growing crops. By necessity, most men in families spend a great part of the year on the mainland, working and sending money and goods back to their families on Jerba.

Life is very different for the Jerba Berbers than other Tunisians. Because of its location, Jerba has been invaded countless times throughout its history. The Jerba soon learned to live in scattered homesteads across the island as opposed to living in villages, supposedly making it harder for the conquerors to control them. However, this lack of community contributes to their isolation. This isolation from mainstream Tunisian society, along with the island’s economic depression, creates a very difficult physical living situation.

Nearly all Jerba Berbers are Muslims living under a strict belief in a religion of works which is based on essential duties. There are no known followers of Christ among them.

*Ask God to raise up prayer teams who will begin to soften hearts through worship and intercession for the Jerba. Ask God to bless the Jerba spiritually, economically, and in their families, easing their burdens. —JS*

## SAT-7 “Forbidden” Program for Arabs

Day 28

Ephesians 1:16b-17

Are there things that you are very reluctant to talk about? Everyone and every culture has them. In Arab cultures, there are practices that are so well-ingrained that people seldom want to challenge them. For example, many of the Arab people have been in a state of war or near war so long that people seldom question it. Likewise, when a female member of a family commits an immoral act, family members often feel compelled to kill her to restore their honor.

“Forbidden” is the name of a satellite-TV program that tackles difficult issues, and it dares to ask hard questions. For example, is there a better way to settle differences than to take up arms? Why does it hurt a family’s honor if a girl commits an immoral act, but not if a boy does the same thing?

When SAT-7 raises questions like these, they provide answers from the Bible. Throughout the Arab World, there are people who want to throw off the shroud that blinds them and binds them to ways that lead to death and destruction. The Bible has answers, and it will take people with the courage to stand up against their culture to change the way they do things.

*Pray that 2015 will be a year when thousands throughout the Arab World will listen to and learn from “Forbidden.” Pray that they will rise above the cultural norms and do what pleases Christ so that His Name will be glorified, and His Kingdom extended into the hearts of many.—KC*

... remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him...

The peoples of the Arab Muslim World desperately need the Spirit of wisdom, the Holy Spirit, to give true revelation to them. They understand the value of worshiping the Creator, but they do not know that this same Creator is with us, can indwell us, and reveal truth to us through the Holy Spirit.

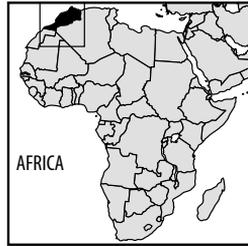
*Pray that the unreached Arabs in the Middle East and North Africa will have a hunger and longing to know the true and living God who loves them and died on the cross for their sins. Pray for encounters with the Holy Spirit among Arab Muslims this coming year.*

Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness. . . .

The belt of truth protects us much like it protected the vital organs of the soldiers that Paul was describing in this passage. Knowing truth and acting on truth keeps us from wandering into situations that would harm us physically and spiritually.

*Pray for the Moroccan Arabs to seek truth so that they can be set free from the ways of the Evil One who came to kill, steal, and destroy.*

## Moroccan Arabs



**B**orders can be either natural ones, such as rivers or mountain ranges, or political ones, decided arbitrarily by men and governments. The border between Morocco and Algeria has remained closed for some time due to various reasons, but God does not recognize man's borders. His Spirit moves freely across the lands to accomplish His purposes. The same move of the Spirit that is affecting

Algeria is also affecting Morocco!

There are two cities in Morocco that have become a breeding ground for developing Christian disciple-making movements. In the past five years, approximately 28 groups of people have emerged country-wide, fellowshipping and studying the Word with the purpose of discovering what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. These groups are developing through the media, which enable people to find others who are spiritually hungry. The media can break down barriers of mistrust and deception that have been built into this society over many years. Missionaries report that these small groups are in the infancy stages now. But they are growing and developing into a true church planting movement. They are currently growing from 1st generation to 4th generation groups to be sustainable (generations are equivalent to one group starting another, etc.).

*Pray for these groups to develop into strong discipleship making movements that will change the spiritual climate throughout North Africa.—JS*

# Domari Gypsies in the Middle East

Day 30

Ephesians 1:18, ESV

The Domari gypsies of the Middle East have been discriminated against throughout history. Their traditional nomadic lifestyle and clannishness keep them on the fringes of society, locked in poverty and illiteracy. Some of them make a living repairing things or making jewelry, scarves, and other craft items. Some work as musicians and dancers at weddings and other events. Others resort to begging, prostitution or crime.

Amoun Sleem, a Domari woman living in Jerusalem, has formed the Domari Society of Gypsies in Jerusalem, where some Gypsies have abandoned their nomadic lifestyle and settled down. This organization seeks to enhance the status of Gypsy women and children through education. At the “Gypsy Community Center” they learn to read and write, how to use a computer, and the basic skills needed to run a business. Women bring their children to the educational center and bring their crafts to sell. Thus empowered, women and young people can rise above the cycle of poverty, discrimination, and hopelessness to become productive members of society. Very few Domari people are known to follow Christ.

*Pray that the Gypsies will learn their true worth as children of God and understand that Jesus died to pay for their sins. Pray that they will join the family of believers and turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Pray that they will ask for forgiveness of their sins and open their hearts to Christ (Acts 26:18).—JWS*

*To watch a video about The Domari Society of Gypsies, visit: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-WbXNoZk3s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-WbXNoZk3s)*

... having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints...

Do you understand the “glorious inheritance” that you have in Christ? It is almost unfathomable! Yet that is what we are praying that the Domari Gypsy people will discover. The eyes of their hearts must be enlightened so they can put their hope in Him. And as of now, they are scorned and looked down upon, unaware of what God has for them. What a glorious inheritance they have in Christ, if they will only bow their knees to Him!

*Pray that the Holy Spirit will enlighten the hearts of the Domari Gypsies to the glorious inheritance He offers those who willingly become part of His Kingdom.*

## Breakthroughs in Algeria!

And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God.

Zechariah had been put in a place where he could not speak because of his unbelief. But after the miraculous birth of his son, He could speak again. All he could do is praise the living God for who He is and what He would do! Have you ever been in a place where the Lord has had to set you aside for a season because of your unbelief?

*Pray that weary followers of Christ in the Middle East will be refreshed by a renewal of faith in the Lord this coming year. Pray that they will remember what God has done and be emboldened to tell others of His graciousness.*

CHARISMANEWS, an online Christian publication, recently reported, “Revival Breaks Out in Land Once Hostile to Christianity.” (<http://www.charismanews.com/world/43406-revival-breaks-out-in-land-once-hostile-to-christianity>) That country is Algeria. It, along with all of North Africa from Casablanca in Morocco to Tripoli, Libya, is experiencing an unprecedented explosion of Christian growth. Some believe that the arrival of satellite TV and the Internet have dramatically changed people’s perception of Christianity. TV shows Arab Christians discussing their faith and exchanging points of view with one another.

One Christian filmmaker documenting this phenomenon reports that he has recorded testimonies of men and women of all ages telling him of their experiences of sitting in a room and seeing the presence and reality of God appear to them like a vision. A leading Algerian pastor says, “God has given to us many opportunities to witness at the police stations. Once they gave me 45 minutes to speak about Jesus, as they said, “Tell us about Jesus.” God has put it upon Algerian hearts to send 1000 missionaries by the year 2025. In fact this pastor envisions missionaries going to America to reach Muslims there!

*Thank the Lord for answering GPD reader’s prayers for Algeria when we prayed for that country two years ago this month. Ask God to continue to pour out His Holy Spirit on Algeria. Pray that many will be drawn to Christ as they see the changed lives of their Christian neighbors. Pray that God will embolden these believers to carry out the Great Commission wherever He directs them.—JS*

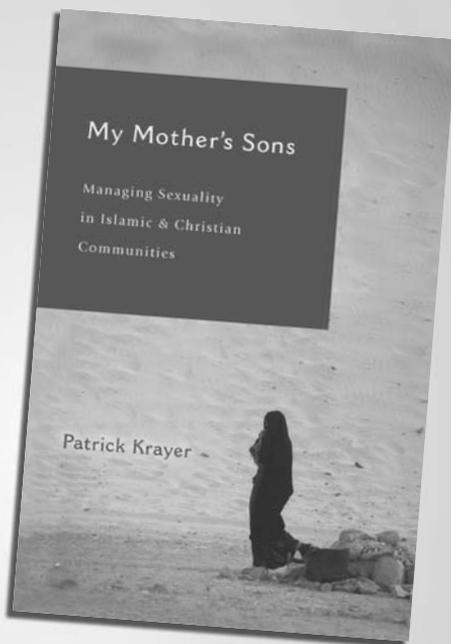
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