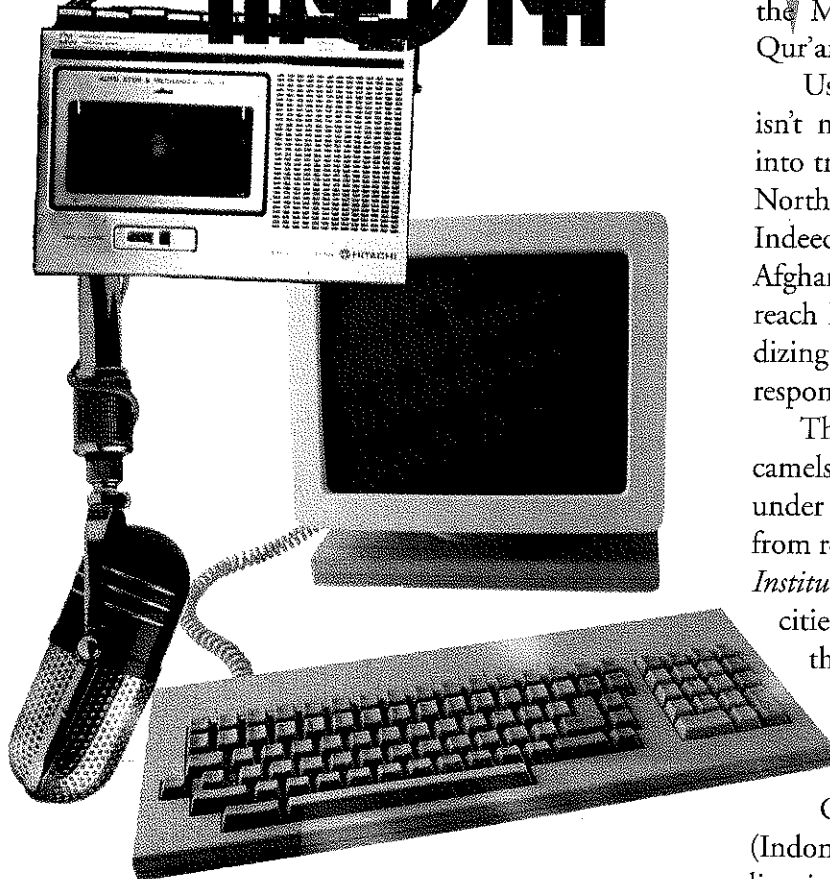


INTERCEDE

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USING MEDIA



TO REACH MUSLIMS

by * Jonathan Russell

When 14-year-old Judy McGinnis (not her real name) sits down at the computer and logs into her favorite AOL chat room, the other participants may be in for a real surprise. Judy's site-of-choice is an on-line "room" where Muslims (nearly always men) discuss spiritual questions. Hearing from an American teenager in the Midwest that *Jesus is the answer* is far from the Qur'anic verses and Islamic advice they usually get.

Using media to reach Muslims with the good news isn't new. Short-wave radio has broadcast for decades into traditional Muslim strongholds in the Middle East, North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and Central Asia. Indeed, for such technologically-challenged lands as Afghanistan, radio is often the only tool available to reach hundreds of listeners at one time without jeopardizing the lives of those bearing witness...or those responding to it.

The caricature of Muslims as people of tents and camels—presumably listening to shortwave broadcasts under a desert sky filled with stars—could not be farther from reality. A recently-released report by *The Population Institute* states that half of the world's people now live in cities, and more will join them in the next 20 years as the search for better education, health care, jobs and financial stability lures them from rural areas.

Many of the world's largest cities are Muslim. Karachi (Pakistan), Istanbul (Turkey), Cairo (Egypt), Tehran (Iran) and Jakarta (Indonesia) bulge at the seams with more than 10 million inhabitants each. And with urban life comes access to the media.

A lower-class apartment building in Casablanca (Morocco) bristles with satellite TV antennas, one for each of the 25 tiny balconies. Each \$100 antenna is a window on the world, bringing movies, news, music and children's programs from India, Japan, the Arab Gulf, Europe and America.

The appetite for media throughout the Muslim world seems insatiable. Cairo's movie industry churns out hundreds of potboiler films every year from the cen-

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Until All Have Heard



Jim Bennett, Director
Center for
Ministry to Muslims

*How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?
(Romans 10:14)*

The lead article for this issue of *Intercede* is written by a missionary who has served in the Middle East for more than 25 years. You will enjoy the insights he shares regarding the impact of media on the Muslim world, particularly the good news about the television ministry of SAT-7. On many occasions I too have had the pleasure of hearing Muslims speak of the positive impact of SAT-7 on their lives.

Here are a few reminders of how information technology is being harnessed to share the good news about Jesus with the world, especially the Muslim world.

- ◆ SAT-7 television beams two hours of gospel programming each day into the entire Arabic-speaking world. Our guest author elaborates on this incredible tool of evangelism.

- ◆ Trans World Radio now broadcasts 1,490 hours of programs each week in 155 languages. Arabic and other languages spoken by major Muslim people groups are a regular part of TWR broadcasts. The January 26, 2001, edition of PrayerNet Newsletter states, "Christian radio stations reach 99 percent of the world's population."

- ◆ The internet offers many opportunities geared specifically for Muslim inquirers. CMM's website, www.CMMequip.org, provides materials and information about Muslims.

- ◆ Distance education, evangelism and discipleship efforts may involve full web-based courses, real-time audio/video conferencing, streaming audio/video, text-based email courses, on-line conferencing, Power Point presentations, digital libraries and electronic books.


- ◆ Other possible "missions applications" of internet-based information technology are: basic email, full Internet connection with graphic capabilities, electronic networking, desktop learning, contact with remote areas via wireless communication and invaluable resource links.

- ◆ The list of media missions tools grows almost daily. For example, entire courses of various kinds are now being distributed via CD-ROM. Courses and/or the Scripture can be placed on CD-ROM and hand carried into restricted-access countries.

- ◆ Recently the Jesus Film Project celebrated the 20th anniversary of the "Jesus" film. This superb evangelistic tool has even been shown on public television in several restricted-access nations. It has been seen by 2.6 billion people speaking 547 languages. Many of these languages are spoken by major Muslim people groups.

One remarkable report comes from a North African nation with a large Muslim population. Here the "Jesus" film has been shown to an estimated 25 million people. In a nine-month period, film teams showed the film 1,420 times to nearly 5 million people. Average attendance was over 3,400 per showing! Two million people indicated decisions for Christ—a response rate of 40 percent. To follow up these believers, there are 3,218 Bible study groups, many of which will become churches.

I can personally attest to the powerful effect of the "Jesus" film on Muslim audiences. Several times I have seen Muslims stand and applaud upon viewing the resurrection of Christ.

Please pray with us that: (1) CMM will be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit as we engage in the use of technology to take the gospel to Muslims, and (2) God's mighty hand will guide all these possible uses of media and information technology to produce the greatest harvest among Muslims ever seen. 

*Information
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about Jesus
with the
world...
especially the
Muslim world!*



Azerbaijan

An Azeri Christian, jailed for 10 days for allegedly "disobeying police orders" in the town of Ismailly, has been forced to resign from his accounting job at a local hospital. On April 7, several members of Ismailly's house church were arrested during a picnic and held for seven hours. Local police and government officials have subjected Ismailly's two-dozen-member house church to growing harassment for the past two years.

—Compass

Malaysia

Malaysia's High Court in Kuala Lumpur has rejected the application of Lina Joy, a Muslim convert to Christianity, who was seeking to remove the word "Islam" from her identity card. The judge ruled that, as a Malay, she cannot renounce Islam. Joy was seeking a declaration stating she could practice the religion of her choice. She had applied with the National Registration Department to legally change her name, but the application was approved on the condition that it did not mention change of religion as the reason. She became a Christian in 1998.

—Compass

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan's President Saparmurat Niyazov—who calls himself "Turkmenbashi" or "The Great Turkman"—has published a book titled "The Rukhname," which is a moral/ethical code for his country's citizens. *Religion Today* reports that the Turkmenbashi aims for his Koran-based book to be a "great book," comparable to the Qur'an

and the Bible, that will answer all of life's questions, says an official with Turkmenistan's council on religion. The book works on the premise that Turkmenistanis are mostly Muslim, the Turkmenbashi says.

—Pulse

Brunei

Recent detentions of Christians in Brunei point to a growing government concern that "cults" in this predominately-Muslim nation could lead to political and religious instability. Seven Christians were arrested last December because of their suspected participation in a well-organized prayer program. Yunus Murang has been sentenced to two years in prison for illegally importing and possessing Indonesian Bibles. Malai Taufick and Mohammed Fredie Chong Abdullah, both converts from Islam, are believed to still be under detention.

—Compass

Iran

Twenty-four Iranians, all from a non-Christian background, were baptized on March 25. This is probably the largest number of Iranians baptized in one meeting for centuries.

The pastor is an Elam graduate. When he arrived a year ago, the church had been going through a difficult time, but the pastor's gentle and sacrificial life attracted many to Jesus Christ. Those he led to Christ, he then disciplined and prepared for baptism.

—Elam News

Chad

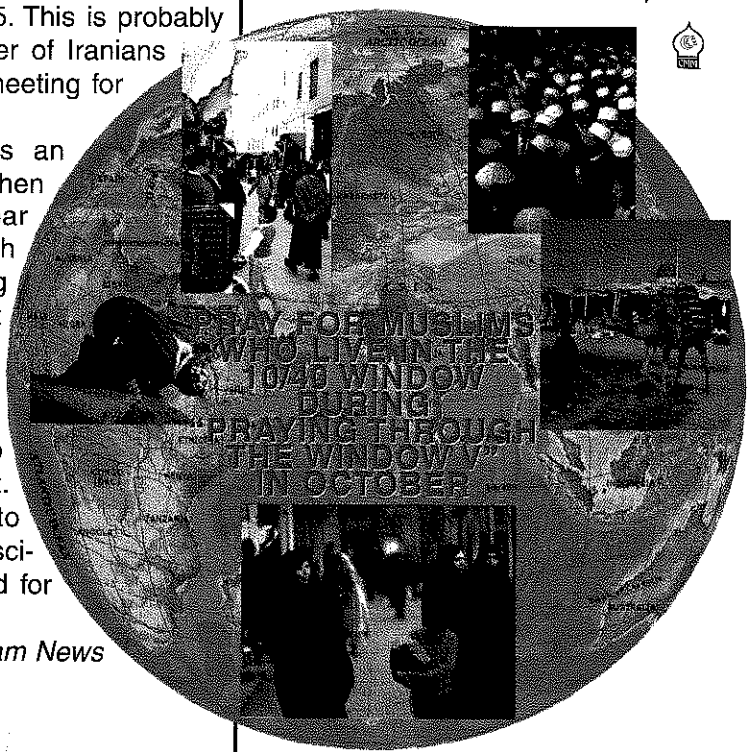
Chad is strategically placed to have a major influence upon its neighbors. "Chadians travel to all these (neighboring countries) and some of them are Christians taking the gospel message," said a local church leader. To impact the region effectively, however, Christians in Chad must impact the northern part of their own country, which is predominately Muslim. Fear is a constant concern for church members and new converts in northern Chad.

—Compass

Sudan

While civil war rages in the south, Christians who flee the fighting to refugee camps around Sudan's capital city, Khartoum, find they have not been able to leave difficulty and oppression behind. Authorities can destroy churches or schools without any notice, and government funds are being used to build and run Qur'anic schools and mosques in the camps. Officials have also forcibly taken church buildings for other uses without compensation.

—Compass



USING MEDIA TO REACH MUSLIMS

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**DESPITE THE
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ter of Arabic media creativity. In 1999, sixty directors of international film festivals declared four Iranian films to be among the ten best of the 1990s, while Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami made nearly everyone's list of the ten most influential filmmakers.

Turkey, on the other hand, "boasts" its own home-grown porno film industry—almost certainly a "first" for Muslim countries where family solidarity is a closely-held value. Urbanized Muslims are in-creasingly online in chat

This is not surprising, as access to the "worst" on the Internet by Muslim teenage boys is acted out and then excused by mothers whose traditional roles do not include confronting their men. The attitude "Boys will be boys; they will outgrow it," only sweeps under the carpet a growing problem that threatens the very foundations of the Muslim family value system.

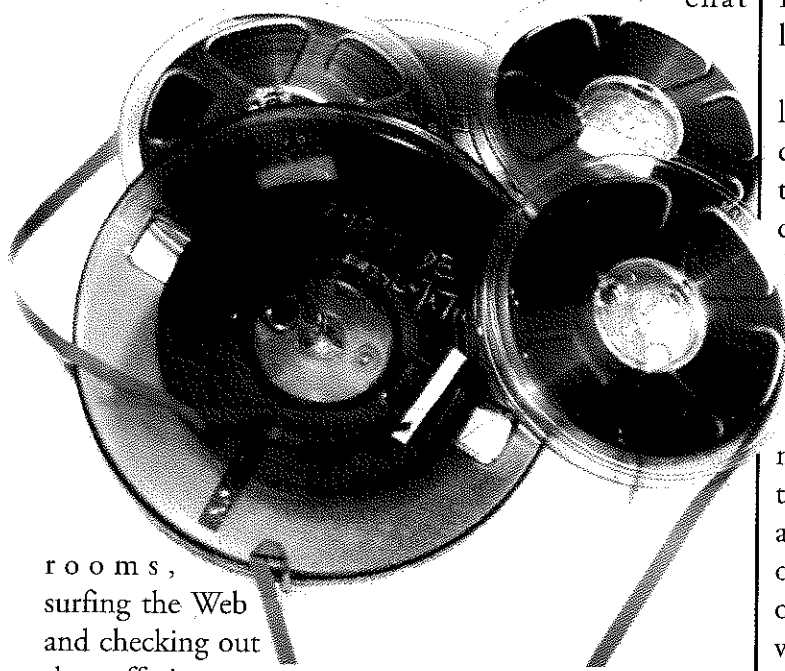
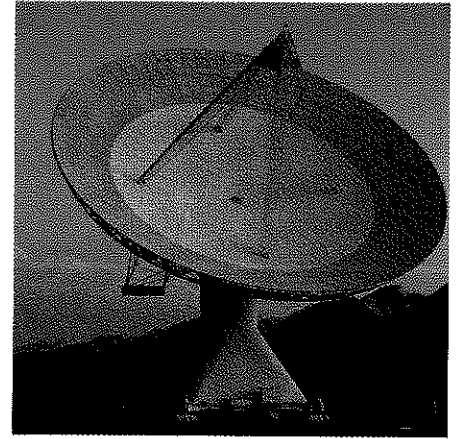
Despite the potential of using media for evil, media also opens unprecedented avenues to the Muslim heart. Judy McGinnis loves Muslims and has carefully studied what they believe. When she logs into her chat

room, she knows it may be a divine appointment for a Muslim man or woman halfway around the world in Beirut or Bahrain (or perhaps Boston) to "meet" a real live Christian for the first time in his/her life.

As Judy types away in her bedroom, a HotBird satellite, miles high above the earth's atmosphere, beams down the latest program from SAT-7. Launched in 1996, this Christian television venture now provides two-hour, daily programming for every country from Iceland to India. Its aim: *to minister to Christians in the Arabic-speaking world with a fortifying diet of spiritually nourishing films, talk shows, children's and teens programs and world news.*

Muslims too, however, watch SAT-7. They love its morally-uplifting content, and respect its clear presentation of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Most of all, they appreciate its refusal to attack someone else's religion in order to exalt Jesus and the Bible. Reading the hundreds of letters a month from all over the Arabic-speaking world—many of them from Muslim viewers—it's obvious that SAT-7 is changing the perception of Christians and Christian faith.

"I ran from the darkness into the wounded hands of Jesus," wrote one viewer. Soon others, living in a world where entering a Christian church carries great risks, may write of finding Christ at their computer screens. Not only in chat rooms, where dedicated Christians like Judy



rooms, surfing the Web and checking out the offerings at their local cinema and the satellite listings for the evening. And just as in the West, the toll on Muslim families is beginning to show. A Muslim woman in Morocco recently shared with a Christian friend that she was not aware of one woman friend who had not been sexually molested.

in the States and Tom in Beirut share their faith, but also by reading God's Word on CD-ROM.

At a recent regional conference, I was approached by a young man from another missions agency. He knew of a fresh translation of the Bible into Islamic Arabic, prepared by Assemblies of God missionaries, and wanted to put it on CD-ROM.

"Why?" I asked.

"Because having a Bible in the home is too risky for

many Muslims," he responded. "But slap a picture of the rock singer Madonna on the cover of a CD-ROM and nobody pays attention to it. Anytime you boot up your computer, you've got the Word of God at your fingertips."

Media will never replace hearing the gospel message from a flesh-and-blood follower of Jesus Christ. But it can often go where flesh-and-blood can't.

**Jonathan Russell is the pseudonym of an Assemblies of God missionary leader with 25 years experience in the Muslim world.*

MEDIA REACHES RESTRICTED-ACCESS NATIONS

How do you share the gospel with people in restricted-access countries?

Airwaves are one means to reach people where other means of communication are impossible, a fact Christian broadcasters well know. Radio broadcasts travel around the globe, into remote regions and into areas that are otherwise closed to the gospel message. These broadcasts are sharing the message of Christ's love, peace and hope with millions of people throughout the world.

In the chaotic and devastated country of Indonesia, one program in particular has been effectively ministering to the youth. *Key for Today* has been airing for many years, and countless numbers of Muslims have come to Christ as a result of these programs. However, these programs have become even more effective since the killings began many months ago.

Key for Today programs introduce subjects that are relevant to young people today. The gospel is presented in a careful, respectful manner. Consequently the follow-up phone lines are jammed for several hours after a program airs due to the number of callers who want to know more.

These programs are also the basis for follow-up rallies that are held in various locations. At these rallies the radio speakers and Indonesian believers have wonderful opportunities to meet with listeners and to more directly share the gospel. They establish relationships that lead to ongoing contacts for discipleship.

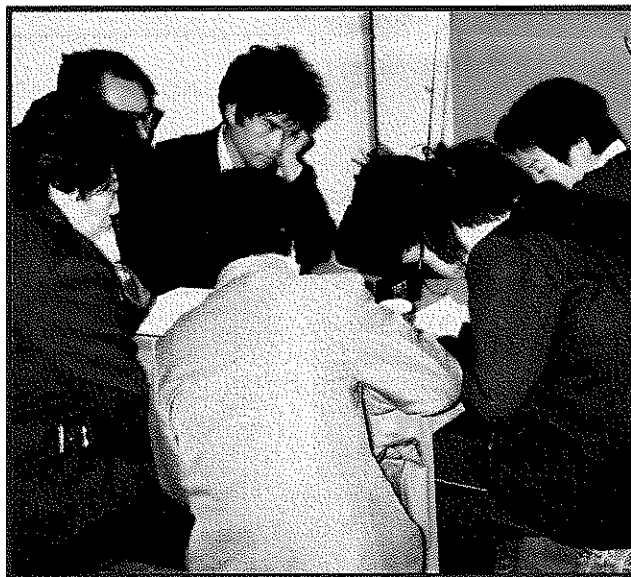
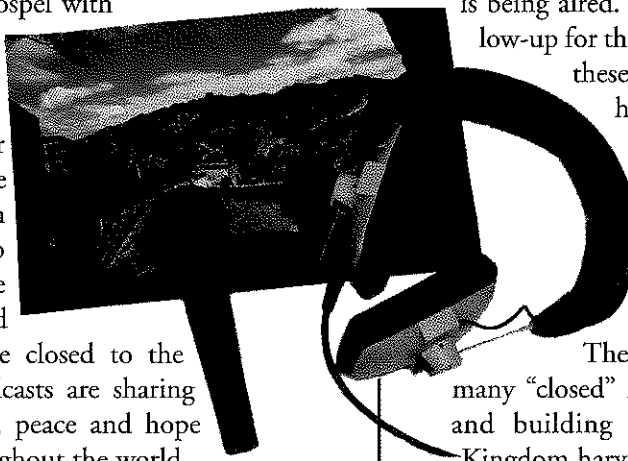
In China, the Uygur people—most of whom are Muslim—are being targeted by radio programs that are being produced by Uygur believers who live outside the nation. As far as we know, this is the only Uygur-language broadcast that

is being aired. Though it is difficult to do effective follow-up for these broadcasts, it is clear that God is using these programs to touch many hearts as they hear the gospel, many for the first time.

Broadcast media is also being used to target Mindanao, a predominantly-Muslim area of the Philippines. Over the years many positive responses have been received and churches have been planted as a result of these broadcasts.

There is no doubt that media works, and in many "closed" nations of the world it is opening doors and building relationships that are resulting in a Kingdom harvest.

Psalm 104:4 says, "He makes winds his messengers..." And truly, the winds that blow across the nations of this world are His messengers, carrying the gospel by way of radio into the homes and hearts of men, women, and children from every race, tribe and tongue.



COUNTRY PROFILE: KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

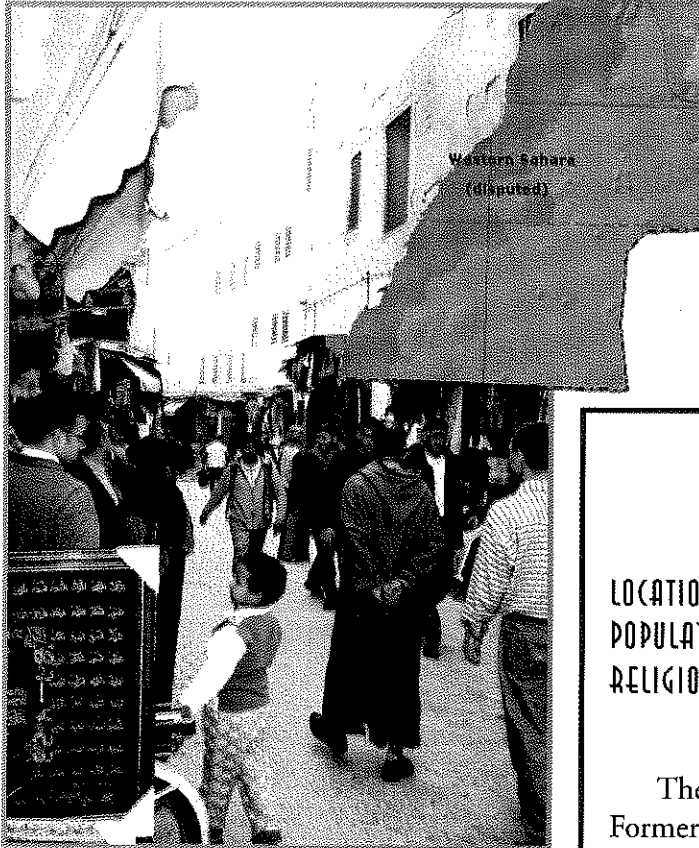
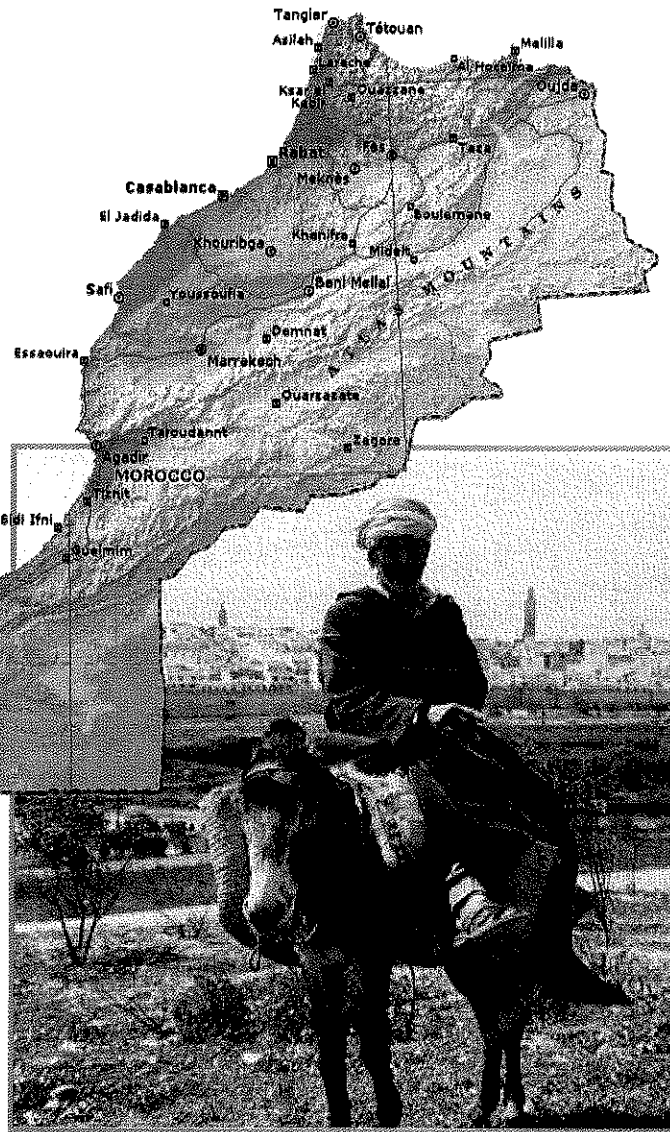
POPULATION: 30,122,350

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Arabic

ETHNIC GROUPS: Arab-Berber, 99.1%; Other, .7%; Jewish

RELIGIONS: Muslim, 98.7%; Christian, 1.1%; Jewish

The Kingdom of Morocco obtained independence from France on March 2, 1956. The country is governed through a constitutional monarchy that is based on Islamic law and French and Spanish civil codes. The constitution, which guarantees religious freedom, was amended in September 1996 in order to create a bicameral legislature.



UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP THE SAHARAWI

LOCATION: The desert of southern Morocco

POPULATION: 200,000

RELIGION: Muslim, 99.9%; Christian/other church members, less than 1%

The Saharawi are an ethnic mix of Berber, Arab and black African. Formerly a nomadic people, most Saharawi are either herdsmen, traders or warriors. Much of their lifestyle reflects a strong Arabic influence, including their language, which is an Arabic dialect called *Hassaniya*. The vast majority of Saharawi consider themselves devout Muslims, although many continue to observe some of the pagan practices of their ancestors. Currently, many Saharawi are involved in an ongoing political conflict with the Moroccan government that calls for independence of the Western Sahara region to be controlled by the Saharawi.

PRAY THAT...

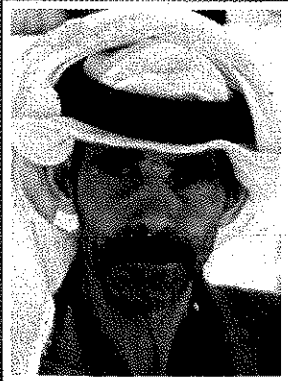
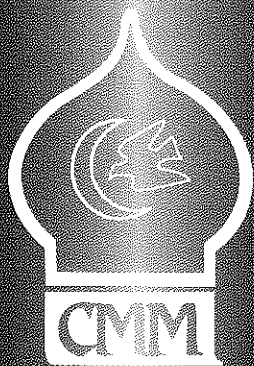
- The Lord will bring a lasting peace in the Western Sahara region of Morocco.*
- Effective evangelism tools will be translated into the Hassaniya dialect.*
- The Holy Spirit will reveal Jesus Christ as the way to true peace in a supernatural way.*

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all statistics come from the *CIA World Factbook 2000*, *US Department of State 2000 Annual Report on International Religious Freedom: Morocco*, and Bethany World Prayer Center's "The Unreached Peoples Prayer Profiles."



Jumaa Prayer Fellowship...

Praying for Muslims
Around the World!



Friday, September 7, 2001. Please pray

...for the students who are taking the Approaches to Muslims class being taught by a CMM team member at Evangel University in Springfield, MO. Pray throughout the month that their hearts will be open to learn how to understand Muslims and reach out to them with the gospel.

...for those who are preparing special programs to reach out to select groups of people at Christmas. May God provide them guidance to develop meaningful, culturally-sensitive programs to share the good news about Jesus.

...for a young mother who delivered twins last Spring. Many complications brought her near death. Pray that God will continue to strengthen her so that she can raise these babies and support her husband in planting an Iranian church on the East Coast.

Friday, September 14, 2001. Please pray

...that God will continue to draw men and women to himself by providing them with the assurance of forgiveness and eternal life, both of which are lacking in Islam.

...for Pastor Mohammed and the fledgling congregation of a church recently planted in the heart of a restricted-access country. Pray that the opposition to their presence will be contained and that the Lord may continue to build His church in this needy place.

...that the Somali gospel radio programs will have an impact on many Somalis and that many more will access the programs and come to the Savior. Pray for the follow-up.

...that God will use the small business ventures being established among Muslims in India and other places to bring the gospel to many families.

Friday, September 21, 2001. Please pray

...for the CMM team member who is teaching an Islamic course at a Bible school in Finland, along with a training session on Islamics for missionary candidates and a Muslim Awareness seminar for pastors during these next two weeks. Pray for physical health and safety in travel for him, as well as responsive students among all these groups.

...for secret believers in Saudi Arabia. They face serious consequences if detected and are being denied access to the Christian website "Answering Islam."

...for the CMM team member who will be in Colombia for the next two weeks training Latin workers to minister to Muslims. Pray for a mighty endowment of power on these new workers.

...that God will intervene and grant peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia, that workers may not be drafted into service but will be able to remain in Bible schools, preparing for spiritual ministry.

Friday, September 28, 2001. Please pray

... that God will give guidance to the CMM team members who will be conducting Muslim Awareness Seminars in a difficult-to-access country during the next two weeks.

...for the thousands of south Lebanese refugees who have found refuge in Israel by the sea of Galilee. Pray that they will find a semblance of peace in this war-torn country.

...for an outreach in Kazakhstan that has come under intense government pressure. Many workers feel harassed by bugged phones and prolonged interrogation. Pray for God's sustaining hand to be felt.

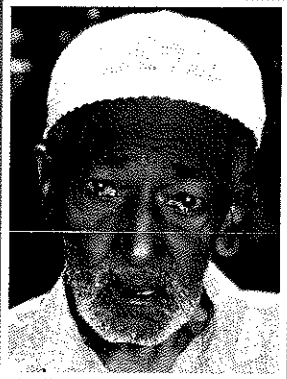
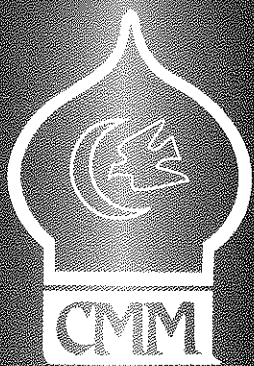
...for God's protection of Christians in Afghanistan. It has become more difficult for them to just survive, and they are at much greater risk when sharing the gospel. There is a death penalty for a convert or anyone trying to win converts.

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

—(1 Timothy 2:1, NIV)

Jumaa Prayer Fellowship...

Praying for Muslims
Around the World!



Friday, October 5, 2001. Please pray

...for the church leaders in the Ukraine who will be participating in an Islamics class being taught by a CMM team member next week. Pray the Lord will inspire them to reach out to Muslims in the area.
...for the protection and encouragement of Christians in El Kosbeh, Egypt, who grieve the loss of their loved ones in a Muslim massacre, and face government discrimination and continuing violence.
...for Christians in Pakistan who have been arrested for showing the Jesus film. Pray the Lord will encourage and deliver them, bringing glory to God and salvation to Muslims.
...for the many American young people who gave themselves to overseas ministry among Muslims this summer. Pray that the Lord will call and equip many of them for full-time ministry.

Friday, October 12, 2001. Please pray

...for Algerians who continue to be hard hit by radical elements who murder in the name of Islam. Pray that Christian broadcasts will impact this country, where the majority of an estimated 40,000 Christians live without the benefit of a Bible.
...for the 100 Muslim Serers in Senegal who followed their village chief and became disciples of Christ. Pray for their follow-up and for careful, thorough teaching.
...for the Christians in Brunei who were detained for allegedly attempting to start and recruit others into a religious "cult." Pray for their release, and that the Church will continue to grow in spite of persecution.
...for the many children traumatized by war experiences. Not only are they suffering from physical deprivation, but emotional turmoil has become a way of life for many. Pray God will bring relief in this situation.

Friday, October 19, 2001. Please pray

...for the pastors and workers who will participate in Muslim Awareness and Training Seminars in Bangladesh next week. Thank the Lord for the many who are feeling God's call to reach out to Muslims in their communities.
...that the Fulani believers who are scattered throughout Mali will grow spiritually in spite of their isolation. Pray that they will evangelize their family and friends and grow a strong church.
...for the continuing production of Arabic literature, correspondence courses and Bibles being made available in several Muslim communities. Pray God will use the literature to reach many with the gospel.
...that God will help the translators and checkers who are working on the revision of the Urdu New Testament due to be released in February 2003. Pray that the work may be done quickly without further hindrance.

Friday, October 26, 2001. Please pray

...that God will give guidance to the CMM team members who will be conducting Muslim Awareness Seminars in a difficult-to-access country during the next two weeks.
...for the increasing coverage in the Middle East by Christian programs by satellite television. Pray that programs will continue to be seen, heard and appreciated by Arabs.
...for Uygur Turks in the Xinjiang Province of China. Hundreds have been executed within the past three years. Pray that the Lord will intervene and that His hand of mercy will rest upon the few believers.
...for Christians in Turkmenistan who experience the least freedom of all 15 former Soviet republics.

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