

A Call to Pray for Muslims to Encounter Jesus While on the Hajj

(the pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia) November 25 - 28, 2009

Day 1 – November 25, 2009

Saudi Arabia is the host of the two most important mosques in all of Islam. For many Saudis it is a great honor to have such world fame for Islam. This gives them spiritual pride almost like Saul (Paul) had in the New Testament. On the first official day of the pilgrimage (Hajj), the millions of pilgrims from around the Muslim world travel from Mecca (Makkah) to Mina, a desert location just east of the Islamic city of Mecca. Tents provide temporary accommodation to the millions of visiting pilgrims. Here they spend the day and night in an enormous tent cities, praying, reading the Qur'an.

Psalm 84:5, 7

Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage. They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.

As Muslim pilgrims set out on their journey to Mecca, we want to be praying that the God of gods helps them find the One True God. He is the God that appears in Zion.

Pray for the Saudis and other pilgrims to have revelations of Jesus.

Pray for them to have an experience like Paul did in Acts 9:3-4 "as he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me [Jesus]?"



Day 2 – November 26, 2009

On the second day of the pilgrimage, the pilgrims leave Mina just after dawn to travel to the Plain of Arafat. Here the pilgrims spend the entire day standing (or sitting) near the Mount of Mercy, asking Allah for forgiveness and making supplications. Muslims around the world who are not at the pilgrimage join them in spirit by fasting for the day. After sunset on the Day of Arafat, the pilgrims leave and travel to a nearby open plain called Muzdalifah. There they spend the night praying, and collecting small stone pebbles to be used the following day.

One of the most powerful teachings of Jesus is found in Luke 18:13-14, in talking about those with spiritual pride and those truly seeking forgiveness. "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' 'I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.'"

Today the pilgrims from Saudi and others lands are seeking God for mercy and forgiveness. Pray that Ephesians 2:4-5 would be true in their lives. "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." It is in Christ alone they will be saved.





Day 3 – November 27, 2009

On the third day, the pilgrims move before sunrise, back to Mina. Here they throw stone pebbles at pillars that represent the temptations of Satan. When throwing the stones, the pilgrims recall the story of Satan's attempt to dissuade Abraham from following God's command to sacrifice his son (there is nothing in Genesis 22 that talks about Satan in the event). The stones represent Abraham's rejection of Satan and the firmness of his faith. After casting the pebbles, most pilgrims slaughter an animal. This is a symbolic act that shows their willingness to part with something that is precious to them, just as the Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his son at God's command.

In Genesis 22:8, Abraham makes a powerful statement - a prophetic statement that would be fulfilled in Jesus: Abraham said, *"God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."* In Revelation 5:12 we learn that Jesus is the Lamb, *"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"*

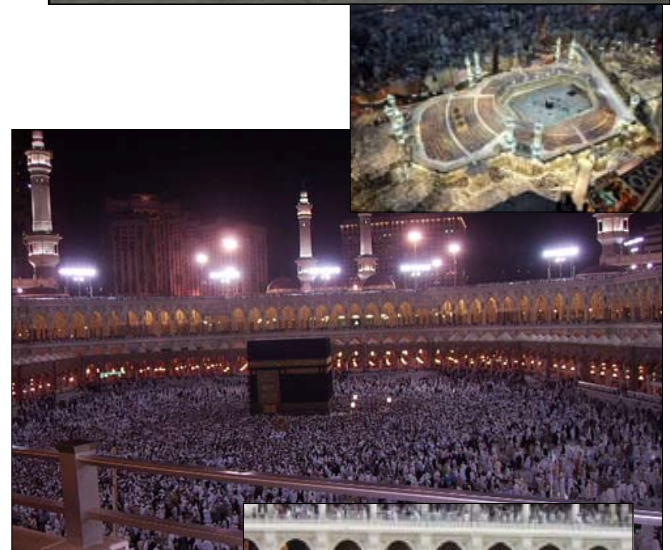
Today in Saudi Arabia and around the Muslim world sheep and goats will be slaughtered. Muslims reject the slain Lamb of God. Pray that Muslims will understand that Jesus is the promised Lamb that takes away the sins of the world.



Day 4 – November 28, 2009

Today the pilgrims go to Grand Mosque in Mecca and seven times circle around the Ka'aba (they believe this was built by Abraham and his son). The pilgrims also walk seven times between two small hills near the Grand Mosque. This is done in remembrance of the plight of Abraham's wife Hajar, who desperately searched in the area for water for herself and her son, before a spring welled up in the desert for her.

As Saudis and other pilgrims circle the Ka'aba and search for water, we know they will continue to thirst unless they know the Son of God, the Lord Jesus. Lord we ask that they would get more and more thirsty, longing in their hearts to know the truth. As Jesus talks with the Samaritan woman in John 4, Jesus says to her, *"If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."* Jesus declares that *"I who speak to you am he,"* the one who has living water. Today, we ask that the Saudis and other Muslims would really thirst and find the living water of Jesus.



Day 5 – November 29, 2009

Today the pilgrimage is almost over. They wound down the day with most pilgrims completing their final ritual, stoning Satan again. All that remained was to pack up and head towards Mecca, which they had to reach before sunset, many walk this because of the roads are so crowded. As we have prayed - we want to continue to pray that what God has done over the last few days would continue. We have asked that God would continue to reveal his Son to Saudis and other Muslims - may they be on a pilgrimage into Jesus. From John 14:6 we know that Jesus says, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* Please continue to pray for Muslims around the world to come to the Father through Jesus.

