

Monday 12th October

Dhaka – capital city of Bangladesh

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you” Isaiah 60:1-2.

We recently prayed for Bangladesh. Today we are praying for its capital city.

<https://www.prayercast.com/dhaka.html>

Dhaka is one of the world’s largest and most densely populated cities - 20 million people live there. Many believe that Dhaka has the world’s worst traffic, worst pollution, worst infrastructure, and is



the most stressful and crowded city on the planet. Yet, Dhaka’s residents are among the most optimistic and hospitable people. As the economic, political, and cultural centre of Bangladesh, Dhaka is full of amazing markets, great street food, and friendly people. Even those who hate living there, love the city. Once known as the Venice of the East, there are thousands of boats crossing its three rivers and many lakes. There are many charming old palaces, old city neighbourhoods and parks.

Dhaka is known as a city of mosques. About 90% of the inhabitants are Muslim. Islam is increasingly influential throughout the country and the city is becoming a haven for radicalised Muslims seeking to rule the country in accordance with Islamic law.

The few Christians in Dhaka tend to live together in communities. Since 2000, when the Bible was translated into Muslim Bengali, ministry among Muslims has started bearing significant fruit. Even so, there are thought to be fewer than a thousand Muslim background believers among Dhaka’s population. There have been efforts to share the gospel through media, but with very little success.

- Pray for opportunities and courage for the small body of believers to share their faith.
- Pray for the gospel to reach every Muslim people group in Dhaka, even those who feel most alienated.
- Pray for more workers to go to this city and for Muslims to be drawn to them as they bring a message of hope and peace.

Tuesday 13th October

Jerusalem – capital city of Israel

“I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth” Isaiah 62:6-7.

<https://www.prayercast.com/jerusalem.html>

Since King David's conquest in 1000 BC, numerous empires have fought over this sacred, strategic city. It is a bustling city of just under one million people; about 64% of whom are Jewish, 34% Muslim and 2% Christian. The city is divided into three sections: the walled-off Old City (including separate quarters for Jews, Armenians, Christians, and Muslims), West Jerusalem (mostly Jewish), and East Jerusalem (mostly Arab).



The city is significant to Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike. It is Islam's third holiest city, after Mecca and Medina. In fact, it was towards Jerusalem that Muhammad first instructed his followers to pray (this later changed to Mecca). The al-Aqsa mosque sits on the Temple Mount along with the iconic Dome of the

Rock, a golden-domed shrine built by Muslims in the 7th century to mark the rock from where Muhammad took his famous 'night journey' to heaven (Quran 17:1).

Arab Christians can sometimes feel caught in the middle of the conflict between Jews and Muslims in Israel, but many have a powerful witness through their humble service and ministries of reconciliation. The Bible Society's goal is to share "life and hope with people from all around the world, from Jerusalem on outward."

Christians not only reach out to Muslims in Jerusalem, but also to Muslims in the West Bank and Gaza, where millions of people are destitute. Delivery of food and basic necessities accompany the gospel message among Muslims in need. God uses dreams and visions to draw people to himself in miraculous ways.

- Pray for pilgrims to the Dome of the Rock to know Jesus as the Rock of their salvation.
- Pray for the love of Christ to soften hearts hardened by hatred, prejudice, and division.
- Pray for bold witnesses to courageously share the Gospel with Muslims across the city.
- Pray for Jerusalem to be a light and beacon for the world, especially the Muslim world.

Wednesday 14th October

Tehran – capital city of Iran

'Should I not be concerned about that great city?' Jonah 4:11

<https://www.prayercast.com/tehran.html>

Metropolitan Tehran is a bustling megacity of some 16 million people, making it one of the largest capitals in the world. A sprawling city at the foot of the beautiful Alborz mountain range, its citizens are warm and hospitable. Though most people speak Persian, Tehran is ethnically very diverse.

It is a beautiful modern city and home to 50 major colleges and universities, a third of the country's government employees, and nearly half of its industry. There are more than 60 modern shopping



centres as well as several historic bazaars. However, because of the rapid increase in Tehran's population, high unemployment and housing shortages have led to serious social ills such as drugs, crime and a surprisingly high level of prostitution. Tehran is also one of the most polluted cities in the world and is nearly always covered with a black layer of smog.

Tehran is a key city to Shia Muslims, as Iran's leaders see themselves as the leaders of the world's Shia Muslims and aim to spread their teachings across the globe. Since Iran's leaders

believe that their brand of Shia Islam is the answer to all of the world's problems, they do everything they can to extend Tehran's influence across the globe and spend billions to achieve this. Since the removal of Saddam Hussein from power in neighbouring Iraq, Iran's influence among Iraq's majority Shia population has continued to grow.

Iran is also home to the fastest growing church in the world. It has great significance across the Muslim world. One prominent satellite TV ministry located outside the country receives 10,000 phone calls every month from inside Iran. There are hundreds of thousands of underground believers, many of whom meet in house churches. As a result, persecution by government authorities is unrelenting. Yet, God is at work in amazing ways across the country!

- Pray for those who are disillusioned with Islam to find hope and fulfilment in Jesus.
- Pray for gospel transformation among those caught in poverty, addiction and prostitution.
- Pray for God's power to expand the already unprecedented growth in the church.

Sources: prayforiran.org/Sites/English/Tehran/tabid/270/Default.aspx
<https://prayercast.com/tehran.html>

Thursday 15th October

Cairo – capital city of Egypt

“Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” Jer 29:7

<https://www.prayercast.com/cairo.html>

Cairo has been the capital of Muslim Egypt for over a thousand years. The city is the administrative, economic, industrial, educational, religious and cultural centre of the country. With over 20 million people in greater Cairo, 90% of them Muslim, this vast, overcrowded city continues to spread on both sides of the wide and beautiful Nile river that winds through its heart.

As the biggest city in the Middle East, Cairo is the political and economic hub of the Arab world. Since Egypt has by far the largest number of Christians of any Arab country (25 million), Egyptian Christians, and especially churches in Cairo, exercise enormous influence. Sunni Islam's most prestigious university, Al-Azhar University, was founded in Cairo in 970 AD and itself has worldwide

influence. It shapes the thinking and the devotion of hundreds of millions of Muslims. It serves as the global authority on Sunni Muslim theology and law. Future imams (prayer leaders in mosques) from nearly every Sunni Muslim-majority country in the world are trained there. Also, the Cairo-birthered Muslim Brotherhood, which has close ties with Al-Azhar, exerts a radicalising influence among Muslims around the world.



President Mubarak, the leader of Egypt at the time of the Arab Spring was overthrown in 2011. This was a key year in Cairo. Later that same year, 71,000 Christians of all denominations joined together in an all-night prayer gathering in the city.

It was the largest assembly of Christians in Egypt for more than a thousand years. Since then, there seems to be much greater openness to the gospel, with a notable shift in the spiritual atmosphere. One network of underground believers in and around Cairo now numbers in the hundreds of thousands. Though there continues to be much opposition and persecution, God is at work in Cairo – and Egypt in general – in unprecedented ways.

- Pray for those disillusioned with Islamic extremism to find the truth in Jesus.
- Pray for the Body of Christ to open their doors and hearts to their Muslim neighbours.
- Pray for a spiritual revival in Cairo that would impact Egypt and the entire Middle East.

Friday 16th October

Kabul – capital city of Afghanistan

“Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy.” Romans 13:13

<https://www.prayercast.com/kabul.html>

Squeezed into a narrow valley between mountains, Kabul is one of the highest capital cities in the world. Since the Taliban were removed from power in 2001, the city has expanded rapidly. The population more than doubled between 2001 and 2014, making Kabul one of the fastest-growing cities in the world. The city is ethnically very diverse, with people from all local tribes represented. Roughly 75% are Sunni and 25% are Shia Muslims. The economy is built on commerce, industry, administration, and tourism. Kabul is known for its gardens, bazaars and palaces.



For over 3,500 years, Kabul has played a central role in the region. Since 2001, it been the centre of the new, democratically elected government in Afghanistan. Soldiers from dozens of nations have sought to stabilise the region and Kabul is an important city in the ongoing battle against Islamist militants. However, the security situation has deteriorated so much that few Westerners want to live in the city. Both criminal activity and

Islamist militants make Kabul an increasingly dangerous place to live, especially for foreigners.

Following the removal of the Taliban, dozens of NGOs were based in Kabul. Today most of those groups have left, with a few relocating to other cities. Now there has been a steady decline in Christian witness in the capital. Today there are probably only a few hundred believers, but God is still at work. In one minority group, there are thought to be a few hundred who have responded to the gospel. Among other ethnic groups in the city, there is a some interest . Over the past decade, media outreach has multiplied in the major languages in the country. This gives unprecedented access to the Scriptures in a variety of local languages on mobile devices.

- Pray for the leaders and governors to rule with wisdom and integrity over this city.
- Pray for workers who have a heart to live in this challenging city to come and share the love and hope of Jesus.
- Pray for a great advancement of the gospel through dreams, visions and the courageous outreach of Muslim background believers and followers of Jesus.

Saturday 17th October

Istanbul in Turkey

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our saviour." 1 Timothy 2:1-3

<https://www.prayercast.com/istanbul.html>

Straddling Europe and Asia, Istanbul is a bustling, cosmopolitan city boasting a mix of European and Asian influences. It is made up of a large number of residential neighbourhoods, commercial districts, industrial zones and tourist areas. Its palaces, churches, and mosques draw millions of



visitors each year. In the centre of Istanbul is the historic Byzantine city of Constantinople. This great city has been the capital of both Christian and Muslim empires. Hagia Sophia, the Christian Cathedral built in 537 AD, was the world's largest cathedral for a thousand years! Today it is a museum. The sprawling, 500-year-old, covered Grand Bazaar is a labyrinth of thousands of shops where you can buy anything from spices, rugs, and pottery, to mobile phones and computers.

Although it is not the capital of the country, Istanbul is its economic, industrial, educational, religious and cultural centre. With two-thirds of its 15 million people living on the European side, Istanbul is one of the largest cities in Europe. Turkish Airlines, based in Istanbul, serves more countries than any other airline in the world.

Believers experience persecution; they suffer from personal attacks as well as Islamist attacks on their church buildings and official confiscation of church properties. A small evangelical seminary in

Istanbul trains lay people and pastors across the country. A few evangelical churches of Turkish believers have been officially registered. More than 500,000 of the 3.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey are in Istanbul. This presents great ministry opportunities since Syrian Muslim refugees are often open to the gospel.

- Pray for a hunger for Truth to lead people to study the Injil (New Testament) as families and communities.
- Pray for the city's small body of believers to courageously share the love of Jesus.
- Pray for an unprecedented movement of Turks to Christ in Istanbul that spreads to the entire nation.
- Pray that churches in Istanbul will be transformed as they minister to Syrian refugees in their midst.