

Monday 19th July

Dreams and Visions

There is a growing phenomenon in the Muslim world of Jesus appearing to people supernaturally through dreams and visions. You can hear more about this in this 5-minute video clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6E076Nia7bM&t=20s>.

In the video, we hear from Ali. He explains how he went on the Hajj and one night he had a dream. He saw Jesus, who touched him on the forehead with his finger and told Ali that he belonged to Him. Then Jesus touched him just above his heart and told him he had been saved and to follow Him. The dream impacted him so much that Ali didn't finish the Hajj, but decided to do whatever it took to follow Jesus.

Another lady reported how one night she had a nightmare. She woke up and turned on the TV. She found she had tuned in to a Christian TV programme. When she heard the speaker, peace filled her and she fell back asleep. She had a dream where she saw the Lord in a bright white robe. He was pointing to a man she recognised as Abraham. He was sacrificing Isaac. She knew that Jesus was the sacrifice. He was the Son of God.

A lady in a Central Asian church said 80% of people there came to faith after seeing Jesus in a dream.

Tom Doyle who takes the gospel to the Muslims in the Middle East shares in the video that "people are seeking, they don't know where to go, they don't have a Bible, there isn't a gospel worker or believer nearby, but God can reach them through dreams and visions. He also said that "hearts are open, people are desperate, governments are changing, and people's foundations have cracks in them. Jesus is the answer to fill their need... Not everyone can go to the Middle East, but everyone can pray. No government or leader can block intercession. We need to pray as believers that God will push the gospel out to the end of the earth."

Many Muslims come to faith through dreams and visions. This is just the start of their journey. They need to hear more either through TV programmes, social media or from other believers.

- Ask God to reveal Himself through dreams and visions to Muslims participating in the Hajj. Ask that those who are genuinely seeking an encounter with God will find Jesus.
- Pray that the spiritual focus of the Hajj will cause many Muslims to think about what they believe. Let's ask God to bring believers into the lives of those taking part in the Hajj.
- Pray that Muslims who come to faith through dreams and visions will hear more to build their faith through TV programmes, social media and other believers.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6E076Nia7bM&t=20s>

Tuesday 20th July

Eid al-Adha

Today, millions of Muslims around the world celebrate Eid al-Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice. This is in remembrance of Abraham and his son Isaac when Allah provided a lamb to take his son's place.



Frontiers USA President Emeritus, Bob Blincoe, wrote in an article for Mission Network News that an interesting aspect of the Hajj is that it happens at the same time as Eid al-Adha. The story of Abraham's sacrifice is taken directly from the Bible and changed in important ways by Islam. The story of Abraham's sacrifice is found in Genesis 22:1–18. The Quran records a version of the story in Surah As-Saffat 37:100–112.

Bob Blincoe lived for seven years in the Middle East and says that Eid al-

Adha was a great conversation starter with his Muslim neighbours.

“This time every year the [Muslim] family would sacrifice a lamb and they would re-enact the story of Abraham and his near sacrifice of his son. And every year, the child would come to our house and knock on the door and give us choice pieces of the lamb. And you know, that's an opportunity for a Christian to say, 'Thank you! This reminds me of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.' And that child would go back to the family and dad would be interested to know what the Christians said in response to getting this lamb.”

Bob said, “The story can be used by Christians because of the great person of Christ who Himself was the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.”

Bob Blincoe encourages us to pray for Muslims who are longing to go on the Hajj and think that is the way the Lord has left for them to follow him. Let's pray for those who had planned to go on the hajj for the past two years but were unable to because of restrictions.

- Pray that Muslims will understand the meaning behind the sacrifice and cross of Jesus; that Jesus is the Lamb of God, who died in our place so that our sins could be forgiven.
- As Muslims complete or think about the Hajj, pray that many will understand that works and rituals cannot save them, only the atoning work of Jesus Christ.
- Pray for opportunities for followers of Christ, just like Bob, to point Muslims from Abraham's sacrifice to the atoning work of Jesus Christ.

Source of some content: <https://www.mnnonline.org/news/muslim-hajj-matter-christians/>

Wednesday 21st July

Zira's story

"I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days." Joel 2:28-29

Read Zira's story of her encounter with Jesus through a dream:

"Zira was born into a very devout Muslim family. Her mother taught her to pray toward Mecca five times every day. She learned to submit to her father and brothers, knowing that by doing so she was honouring her family. When she was of age, she began covering her hair with a hijab, believing that modesty brought honour to her and her family. She fasted during Ramadan. She gave to the poor. By all accounts she was a good Muslim.

But she couldn't shake the feeling that there was more. With every bow of her head to the ground, she questioned if this was what God truly wanted. She watched her family as they worked hard to fulfil the requirements set by their religion. She wondered why it was so important to please this God who seemingly didn't want to know her. She continued in her devotions but silently questioned the emptiness in her heart.

Those questions continued to plague her, until one night she was wakened by someone saying her name. It wasn't a voice she recognised. From the safety of her bed, she frantically searched for the source of the voice. Her eyes settled on a man standing at the foot of her bed. Startled, she froze, knowing that if her family found this man in her room she would be punished. As she summoned her courage to look at the man, she first noticed that light seemed to emanate from within Him. As He said her name again, she was overcome with a depth of love she had never known before. When this man revealed himself to be Jesus, she knew she would never be the same. She knew she would do anything to continue following Him."

- Jesus is calling Muslims to himself. Let us pray for the hearts of Muslims to be open to the truth in these dreams and visions.
- Pray for Muslims who believe false things about Jesus to have dreams and visions that reveal who He really is.
- Praise God that Zira had the truth revealed to her and accepted Jesus. Pray for millions of Muslims to be willing to recognise the lies they have believed and to change their minds to receive the truth and accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

Thursday 22nd July

Paving the way for God encounters

On Monday, we read that Muslims who have had a dream or vision, need to hear more either through TV programmes, social media or from other believers. This is borne out through the following account from a Frontiers worker in North Africa:

"Over the past few years, I've conducted a study on the impact of power encounters amongst Muslim background believers (MBBs) in the country where I work. My research indicates that

supernatural encounters with God often play an important role in a Muslim's journey to accepting Jesus.

In my study, I asked 75 MBBs if any of the following had been significant in their decision to follow Jesus:

- Dreams and visions
- Healings
- Answered prayers and miracles
- Feeling the presence of God
- Deliverance from demonic oppression

Of the 75 respondents, most stated that one of those had been decisive for them and dreams and visions were an important part.

My research revealed two other significant findings. First, these supernatural encounters with God are never enough to bring Muslims into the kingdom. Whilst they are often a major factor in a Muslim's decision, they work in conjunction with a multitude of other factors. These include social action, social media, believing family members, reading scripture, and interaction with expat workers.

Secondly, the research showed that a kingdom servant always played a part in these supernatural encounters. This doesn't mean that God always uses his servants in a sensational public display of his power. Sometimes he does that. But the Father also used his servants through conversations, giving out literature, explaining a dream from God, producing media, or demonstrations of love and kindness. Sometimes the dramatic supernatural encounter opened the door for these smaller, quieter truth encounters; sometimes the kingdom servant explained the good news and then the supernatural encounter confirmed it.

It's important to realise that God can use you in numerous ways to pave the way for supernatural encounters, often using your own giftings. Whether you're more inclined to preach or silently demonstrate God's love through social action, whether you're delighted or terrified at the thought of addressing a stranger on the street, God can use you."

Tomorrow we will read the truth of this as we see how God used a dream to prepare the way for Frontiers workers to share the gospel.

- Pray for Frontiers workers to be in the communities and lives where God is giving dreams and visions.
- Pray for workers to be available and ready to cooperate with what God is already doing in people's lives through supernatural encounters.
- You might want to pray for an opportunity for God to use you where He is moving and working in the lives of Muslims that you know or who you live close by.

Friday 23rd July

A Hard-Hearted Brother Dreams of Jesus

Shuhul and Asad were two brothers who very close when they were growing up. Asad loved learning and at 18, Asad left for university in the capital city university. He lived with a distant cousin, but he felt terribly lonely being away from his immediate family for the first time.

Then he met Mark, a Frontiers worker who taught Asad's English class at the university. Mark and his wife Becky invited groups of students into their home every week. The first time Asad visited their house, he felt overwhelmed by the couple's kindness and hospitality.



Something about Mark and Becky's home brought comfort to his homesick heart. So Asad began inviting himself over more often. Each time, he heard them share stories about Jesus. Mark suggested they start studying the Bible together. Eager to read a book he'd never had access to, Asad agreed. Some weeks later, he surrendered his life to Christ. Asad called his brother to share the good news with him, but Shuhul was angry that he had rejected Islam and told him the family wanted nothing more to do with him unless he denied Jesus.

Then Mark and Becky told Asad they were planning a trip that would take them past his hometown. They asked him if they could stop and visit his family. Asad agreed and prayed for Mark and Becky and asked God to open the door for his family to hear the gospel.

Meanwhile, God gave Shuhul an extraordinary dream in which Jesus appeared. He told Shuhul that two people would come in the morning to share a message of truth with his family—a message that would change their lives forever. Shuhul woke up before dawn feeling unsettled by the dream.

Mark and Becky arrived early in the morning, unaware that Jesus had set the stage for their arrival.

"Are you here to tell us about the truth?" Shuhul asked as he opened the door to the two guests sent by Jesus.

Mark and Becky nodded mutely, shocked into silence. Shuhul welcomed them in. Then he announced to his family, "Jesus came to me in a dream last night telling me that two people would come and share His truth with us."

Everyone stared expectantly at the guests and Mark and Becky began sharing from God's Word. By the end of the day, Shuhul and the entire family committed to following Christ. They were baptised the next day. When Shuhul called Asad to share the good news, the two brothers wept together.

After returning to the city, Mark and Becky started coaching Asad in ways to encourage his family's new faith, help them grow in the Word, and learn to share the gospel with boldness. Shuhul has started several Bible studies, which have multiplied into even more groups. Hundreds of Muslims in the region have begun following Jesus through these studies.

You can read another account from Frontiers workers of a Muslim man's encounter with Jesus through a dream: <https://frontiersusa.org/blog/about-a-dream-of-jesus/>

- Praise God for placing Mark and Becky in just the right place and at just the right time to share Christ with Asad and his family.
- Pray for new believers like Asad to be bold witnesses as they share how the Father has drawn them to faith in Jesus.
- Ask the Lord to raise up more Frontiers workers who will bring the Word of God to Muslims in the least-reached places.

Source: <https://frontiersusa.org/blog/hard-hearted-brother/>

Saturday 24th July

Dreams and Visions

There are many stories in the Bible of God leading people through dreams and visions.

In Job 33:14-18 we read, *“For God does speak—now one way, now another—though no one perceives it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on people as they slumber in their beds, he may speak in their ears and terrify them with warnings, to turn them from wrongdoing and keep them from pride, to preserve them from the pit, their lives from perishing by the sword.”*

Abimelech had a dream in which God warned him that taking Abraham’s wife Sarah as his own wife was wrong. Abimelech listened to God and gave Sarah back to Abraham. (Genesis 20)

Nebuchadnezzar had a dream in which God warned him about being proud. Daniel explained the dream to him, but Nebuchadnezzar refused to listen and so the terrible things that he’d seen in his dream happened to him. (Daniel 4)

Pray for:

- Muslims who are open to hearing from God to have dreams and visions.
- Dreams to break through false teaching and preconceived ideas about who Jesus is.

Not all dreams come from God:

- Pray that Muslims would not automatically believe anything they have dreamt is from God.
- Peter needed a dream 3 times to be clear that God was sending him to the Gentiles. Pray that God would speak clearly to those He is calling.

Dreams from God do not conflict with Scripture. Pray for God’s word to become available through:

- Translation work
- Technology and social media
- Workers who are living alongside Muslims being God’s word ‘lived out’

Dreams are pointless if not obeyed, as with Nebuchadnezzar.

Pray:

- That Muslims God has spoken with will take the dream seriously and seek more of him.

- That the Holy Spirit will reveal more truth of Jesus
- That Muslims will repent and submit to God, making Him Lord of their lives.
- For Muslims to be courageous and wise in responding to Jesus.

You may want to finish this week of prayer listening to this worship song, Be Thou My Vision, praising God for who He is and for what He is doing in the Muslim world in miraculous ways:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Optrm7lF16s>