

Day 7 To Raise A Child

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. Proverbs 22: 6

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19: 14

Family is important to the Riau Melayu. Communities are close-knit and people often refer to each other as Abang (brother) and Kakak (sister). Neighbors know each others' business, and homes are always open for unexpected visitors.

Children are taught to pray from an early age, and also attend classes where they learn to read the Qur'an in Arabic. It is not unusual to see children as young as two and three years old wearing the traditional head covering for boys and girls.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that these children will know the love of Jesus and that they will be shining lights for Jesus in their homes and communities.
- Pray that they will be knit together into the family of God and know each other as brothers and sisters in Jesus.



The Riau Malay

SEVEN-DAY PRAYER GUIDE Week Two



The Riau Malay are a Muslim unreached people group of Indonesia. There are now believed to be around 100 believers among the population of 2.2 million. They are simple, hospitable people who earn their livelihood from the land, sea, and rivers where they live. Please join in praying for their salvation!

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Day 1 Lancang Kuning

"From one man He made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us." --Acts 17:26-27



The former Siak kingdom is located in central Riau, along the Siak River. The sultans ruled for twelve generations until WWII; the last king disappeared into anonymity after he declined the responsibility of the throne. The people are very proud of their heritage: ornate gravesites honor the twelve sultans, the castle sits in a prominent place for visitors to see and traditional stories of the kingdom's colorful history are passed down orally. One famous story is the "Lancang Kuning (Yellow Sailboat)."

Once there was a child who was very poor, but he became a fisherman and saved his money. Then he went far away to a foreign land and became king. His mother went to search for him to ask his forgiveness. He pretended not to know her so she returned to her village weeping and prayed a curse on him. The king still went fishing, and the next time he took out his yellow sailboat a storm caused him to drown. Because of the curse, when his body washed up on an island, it became a stone.

God carefully and lovingly crafted this culture and placed His image in the Riau people.

PRAYER POINTS

- Please pray their society would be purified and brought back to God's original plan and purpose.
- Pray their stories and traditions would be filled with God's blessing and heroes of faith honoring His commandments.

Day 2 Wedding Customs

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband." --Revelations 21:1-2

Traditional Melayu weddings are extravagant in cost and filled with elaborate rituals. In the first stage, the family of the boy comes with a group of friends to the house of the girl to present her father with a "tepak." This is a very important ornamental blue wooden box filled with sirih leaves. The two fathers partake of one another's "tepak" as a sign of willingness to negotiate the engagement. Two months later the second stage takes place as the father of the groom brings the bridal dowry, then the wedding date is set. Finally, the day before the wedding ceremony a civil service takes place to obtain a marriage license from the religious authority. The actual ceremony is a huge and lavish event. Bright, decorative rolls of fabric cover the walls of the bride's home and elaborate costumes and head-dresses turn the newlyweds into royalty. Parents apply flower water to their faces, sprinkle white and yellow rice on them as a sign of blessing and anoint their hands and feet.

God deeply loves the Riau people and longs to dress them in righteousness, peace and rest on every side.

PRAYER POINT

- Pray that the Riau Melayu would have spiritual eyes to see the need to put on NEW wedding dresses and know that only faith in Jesus can wash away sin.



Day 3 Spirits

“There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.” --I John 4:18

The spirit world is an everyday reality for the Riau Melayu. Spirits are blamed if something bad happens and anything unknown is full of ghosts. Illnesses are often attributed to curses and black magic cast by a witchdoctor. Fear reigns in the hearts of the people of a small village. A young father suddenly and inexplicably falls ill and the entire family is left without any source of income. He is sent to two hospitals but no one can help him. He can barely move or speak and his eyes are distant. He somehow manages to communicate that he doesn't know where he is, although he is at home with his worried family. The family and the people of the village are convinced the spirits have hurt him and possess his mind; a hospital cannot help the young man because it is a spiritual problem that no medicine can heal.

In a world where there is so much to fear, Jesus can give peace to our hearts that surpasses all understanding.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray the Riau Melayu would be released from their shackles of fear and led into the glorious kingdom of light which has no darkness.
- Pray they would see and believe in the mighty power of Jesus to protect them from all harm and lead them into eternal rest.



Day 4 True Light

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” --John 8:12



The Riau Melayu are a fishing people. For those who live on the islands just off Sumatra, this is often their only form of livelihood. When the sun sets and the tide drops, the islanders take to the water. Swing-net fishing is a family business; a person stands on shore to hold one side of the net while another wades into the water holding the other side. The net is scooped through the water in semi-circles before being brought back to the shore. Small lanterns line the beach as markers for where the nets are to be brought in. Once the nets are dragged in, other family members sort through the catch, picking out prawns, crabs, squid and other edible fish to take home. Blowfish, baby tiger sharks, octopi, eel and other undesirable fish are left on the shore.

For many of the Riau Melayu, life is hard and sometimes it seems impossible to make ends meet. Despite this, they are cheerful and hospitable people, and are proud of being Muslim.

It often seems that darkness is stronger, denser and deeper than light, and at times the task of bringing the gospel to this people seems like too great a charge. Yet just one candle brings light to the darkest night. How much greater then is the light of Jesus?

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that just as the lanterns bring light, the Riau Melayu will find the true light to bring them out of the darkness - the light of Isa Almasih (Jesus the Messiah).
- Pray that as Jesus commanded Peter to put aside his nets and follow him, the Riau Melayu will become fishers of men.

Day 5 East of Eden

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. --Genesis 1:1, 31

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. --Psalm 19:1

When God created the world, he entrusted the care of his creation to Adam and Eve. In the West there has been a growing realization that we have been neglecting this awesome responsibility. Sumatra, quite easily one of the most beautiful places on earth, has been just as neglected.

There is a beach where the sand was once white and as fine as grains of salt. The water was the clearest blue imaginable, and palm trees lined the shore. Now, the sand is covered with black oil so thick that it resembles a bog more than a tropical paradise and the water is a muddy brown. Over the years the salt water has damaged the coconut plantation so badly that it has had to be abandoned, and many people have been forced to move elsewhere to look for work.

Unfortunately conservation is not treated as important. Every year, smoke fills the air as forests are burned. In the cities, the streets are littered with rubbish. People bathe in the same rivers they use to dispose of their waste.



PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that the people of Riau will begin to see the beauty of God's creation and that they will respect and take better care of their world.
- Pray that they will see their own value as children of God, that they are made in his image, and that they will worship him in spirit and truth.

Day 6 Syekh's Gravesite

“You shall have no other gods before me.” --Deuteronomy 5:7

As Islam spread across Indonesia in the 1300s, animistic beliefs did not disappear but instead were integrated into the framework of the new faith. Folk Islam includes belief in spirits and ghosts, use of charms and amulets, witchdoctors and relic adulation. While orthodox Islam strictly adheres to worshipping one God, folk Islam hides idol worship behind a thin guise of honoring relics or remains of famous men.

On a small island down a long path a crowd of people gather around an old man wearing a traditional peci hat. He is the grandson of a famous religious teacher, whose remains lie buried on the island. He is here to welcome all the visitors who come seeking prayers and blessing.



He sits down and explains that his grandfather was a religious genius trained in Mecca. He guides the travelers to a small domed building with shiny white tile covering the inside. A typical stone grave marker is painted silver and is surrounded by metal bars covered reverently by sheer curtains. Many women come here to ask for successful pregnancies or help becoming pregnant. Others seek the blessing being in the presence of this great man and making the pilgrimage to the hidden memorial.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that all Muslims would freely worship the one true God without the hindrances of idolatry and animistic practices.
- Pray that as they recognize their idolatry, Muslims would understand Jesus and the Holy Spirit are not separate gods but rather one with God.