



THE GLORY OF THE NATIONS

Daily Prayers for the Muslim Peoples of
Southeast Asia during Ramadan

10 March - 10 April 2024



Many of the 275 million Muslims who live in Southeast Asia will feel excitement and anticipation as they prepare to fast from sunrise to sundown for the next 30 days. Muslims believe that during this month the Prophet Muhammad received the first verses of their holy book, the Qur'an, in which they are instructed to observe the five main "pillars" of Islam: the declaration of faith, prayer, charitable giving, the pilgrimage to Mecca and fasting.

For Muslim people, the month of Ramadan is about much more than just not eating and drinking during daylight hours. It is, for many, a month in which they are to pursue faith, holiness, purity, and spiritual merit. As they spend more time in prayer and reflection, it is a time when Southeast Asian Muslims become more open to dreams and visions from God.

We invite you to spend this month in prayer for these precious people using one of the visions that Jesus revealed to John, recorded in Revelation 21:22-27. These verses give a beautiful picture of an eternal city full of the glory of God and the glory of the nations.

Whether you use this guide to pray once a week or every day, on your own or in a group, our hope is that you will grasp how God's glory can be seen within these Southeast Asian Muslim people groups, and will be moved to pray that they will come to know the greatest glory – Jesus Christ.



**I did not see a temple in the city,
because the Lord God Almighty
and the Lamb are its temple.**

**The city does not need
the sun or the moon to shine on it,
for the glory of God gives it light,
and the Lamb is its lamp.
The nations will walk by its light,
and the kings of the earth
will bring their splendour into it.**

**On no day will its gates ever be shut,
for there will be no night there.**

**The glory and honour of the
nations will be brought into it.**

**Nothing impure will ever enter it,
nor will anyone who does
what is shameful or deceitful,
but only those whose names are
written in the Lamb's book of life.**

Revelation 21:22-27 NIV

The Glory of the Nations

The Temple

**I did not see a temple in the city,
because the Lord God Almighty
and the Lamb are its temple.**

Revelation 21:22 NIV

In the Old Testament, the temple was a sacred place where God dwelt. Today, Southeast Asian Muslims seek God under the colorful domed roofs of their local mosques. On the steps of these mosques are signs marking the 'holy limits' where worshippers must remove their dusty shoes before stepping further. Revelation shows us an eternal city where there are no longer holy limits. The whole city is a sacred space, filled with the very presence of God.

As Ramadan begins in his small Cambodian village, Usman expects a busy month. Together with his wife, he takes care of the local mosque building. During Ramadan, the mosque will become a school for local children, and a place for late-night prayer and Qur'anic recitation. It will also become home to a special guest from the Middle East, a Da'wah – a Muslim missionary who has come to Usman's village to teach the Western Cham more about orthodox Islam. Usman deeply respects men like him, educated and dedicated to promoting the truth of Islam. Surely, he is a man who is close to God.

While Usman replaces a light bulb, his wife beats the mosque's prayer mats outside, dust rising with each strike. He is happy to do the practical tasks that need to be done but feels less capable when it comes to spiritual tasks. Usman feels uneducated and ordinary next to the Da'wah. As the fasting month begins, Usman will do what a simple man like him can do to cross into the holy presence of God in Heaven – keep the five pillars of Islam and hope for mercy.



Sunday 10 March

(Ramadan expected to start around the world)

The expected start date for Ramadan can vary around the world. As Muslims across Southeast Asia wait to begin the fast, pray that they will open their hearts to God.

Monday 11 March

(Alternative start date for some in Southeast Asia)

As many people travel to their hometowns to begin the fast with family, pray that the gospel will touch entire families this month.

Tuesday 12 March

(Alternative start date for some in Southeast Asia)

As Ramadan begins at sundown today across Southeast Asia, pray that the Lord will make its Muslim peoples hungry for spiritual truth.

Wednesday 13 March

(Last likely start date in Southeast Asia)

Ask God to show Muslim people like Usman, who try their best to keep religious obligations, what his mercy looks like in Jesus.

Thursday 14 March

Pray for more gospel workers to take the Good News of God-with-us to the Western Cham of Cambodia.

Friday 15 March

As Southeast Asian Muslims spend more time praying to God in their local mosque this month, ask God to show them the true Way into His presence, without limits.

Saturday 16 March

Ask God to strengthen, encourage, and protect the few known Western Cham Christians.

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Light

The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

Revelation 21:23 NIV

Islam has ninety-nine names for Allah, one being *An-Nur*, The Light. During Ramadan, fireworks light up the night skies, and paper lanterns decorate public spaces in the run-up to Eid celebrations. Light is an important symbol for Muslims and signifies God's guidance. In the book of Revelation, we see an eternal city whose light comes from Jesus, its lamp. Today, this light is breaking through into the lives of Southeast Asian Muslims, revealing new things.

Hamza woke with a start, his heart racing as he switched on the bedside lamp. Tonight's dream felt like a message from God, and Hamza did not want to forget what he saw. In the dream, a group of foreigners from a far-off country came to his Thai village to bring peace and light to his community. Hamza wasn't sure what that meant for him or the devout Islamic community that he led.

Six months later, a group of foreigners turned up in Hamza's village and he immediately remembered his dream. They introduced themselves as followers of Jesus and Hamza invited them into his home to meet with members of his religious community. They listened as the foreigners talked about the gospel of peace and light, something that deeply touched the hearts of Hamza and his friends. Their part of Thailand had experienced frequent conflict for decades as the large Muslim population sought independence. The light of the gospel of peace is beginning to shine into the hearts of Muslims in this part of Southeast Asia.

Sunday 17 March

Thank God for sending us the Light of the World, and his continual guidance in our lives. Pray He would shine his light into Southeast Asian Muslim communities more and more.

Monday 18 March

As Muslims across Southeast Asia spend more time fervently seeking God this month, ask Him to speak to them through dreams and visions.

Tuesday 19 March

Pray that God would reveal Jesus, the Light of the World, to Islamic religious leaders and their followers.

Wednesday 20 March

Pray for more gospel workers to take the message of Jesus to Muslim communities in Thailand.

Thursday 21 March

Ask God to give Muslims who have had visions of Jesus, like Hamza, courage to follow the truth in the face of any persecution.

Friday 22 March

Pray Southeast Asian Muslims will experience God's true light and guidance when they seek it this Ramadan.

Saturday 23 March

Ask God to restrain the violence and political instability that affects the daily lives and interactions of people living in Southern Thailand.



The Glory of the Nations

Splendor

...the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.

Revelation 21:24-26 NIV

What a breath-taking glimpse of the Holy City! The natural wonders of creation and the cultural wealth of humanity are present - to the glory of the Lord God Almighty.

Brunei is a small country of many splendors, both natural and man-made: there are tropical rain forests, large reserves of oil and gas, beautiful architecture, and Bruneian Muslims enjoy a very high standard of living.

Nur is very proud to work at the Royal Regalia Museum of Brunei, where visitors come to admire the Sultan's crown jewels. Bruneian Muslims love their king and their Melayu Islam Beraja (Malay Islamic Monarchy). Every day Nur shows people the spectacular royal chariot, ceremonial swords, various crowns, artworks, and gifts from overseas decorated with precious gemstones.

After work, Nur comes home to her large, air-conditioned house. She takes off her uniform and rests for a moment on a gold-threaded sofa (typical in many homes). She browses her smartphone and thinks about where her family will eat out tonight to break the fast. Her husband is still at work and her children will soon arrive with the family's personal driver from their ugama (religion) class. From her upstairs living-room window, Nur can see many gold-colored mosque domes glistening across the city's horizon. She loves this view and looks forward to the sunset call to prayer - a familiar and soothing sound to her ears.

Sunday 24 March

Pray for the leaders of countries across Southeast Asia, that they will not rely on their nation's achievements and glory, but on God.

Monday 25 March

Ask God to reveal himself to the Brunei Malay, so that their cultural glories would seem insignificant compared to the glory of God seen in Jesus.

Tuesday 26 March

Pray for Muslims who have received Jesus as Lord to remain faithful in the face of great pressure.

Wednesday 27 March

Local churches in Brunei are closely monitored. Pray for them, and those in other Muslim-majority countries, for their relationships with local authorities.

Thursday 28 March

Pray for the witness of expatriate Christians who live and work alongside the Bruneian Muslims.

Friday 29 March

Pray for Bruneian Muslims who are travelling overseas to have opportunities to hear the gospel and respond to it.

Saturday 30 March

Ask the Lord of the harvest to raise up faithful laborers willing to live and work amidst the Bruneian Muslim people.



The Glory of the Nations

Gates

**On no day will its gates ever be shut,
for there will be no night there.**

Revelation 21:25 NIV

In ancient times, city gates were closed at night to prevent strangers from entering. Today, a nation's border controls provide similar protection. The Rohingya, a persecuted Muslim people from Myanmar who are denied official citizenship, are a people for whom borders and gates seem constantly shut. Revelation shows us a glimpse of an eternal home whose gates are open to every people group and culture. A place where trust in Jesus, rather than correct paperwork, is the condition of entry.

Sominara is spending Ramadan in a refugee camp, far from home. Seven months pregnant, she is not required by Islam to observe the fast, but she wakes at 3 a.m. to cook suhoor for her husband, who is fasting. Ramadan in the camp's makeshift housing during the hot season can feel unbearable, with not enough electricity to power fans and little shade. As she prepares the food provided through charitable donations, Sominara worries about their future. Her husband, Hassan, believes his only choice is to slip unseen across borders and work illegally in a neighbouring country.

Every evening Hassan attends Tawarih (late-night prayers held during Ramadan) at the camp's makeshift mosque. He is spending more time in prayer this week in preparation for Laylat-al-Qadr, the Night of Power. Believed to be the night when the Angel Jibril (Gabriel) revealed the first verses of the Qur'an to their Prophet, it falls sometime within the last ten days of Ramadan. Laylat-al-Qadr is thought to be the holiest night of the year, when prayers are answered. Hassan will be asking God for open gates and a place his family can call home, where they can come and go as they please.

In Indonesia, national television shows films like *The Passion of the Christ* on Easter Day. Pray Muslim households will watch and for the Lord to speak!

Easter Sunday 31 March

Ask God to reveal to the Rohingya the one in whom they can find eternal security and Kingdom citizenship – Jesus.

Monday 1 April

Ask God to give Christians living alongside Rohingya, and other Muslim peoples, wisdom and boldness in declaring the open gates to the Kingdom of God.

Tuesday 2 April

Ask God to keep those Rohingya who follow Jesus strong in their relationship with Him. Pray for many more to believe.

Wednesday 3 April

Pray for families facing separation as husbands leave for work. Ask for healthy relationships and that they come to know the Lord of all comfort.

Thursday 4 April

Pray for Gospel materials to be produced in the Rohingya language and distributed widely through print, audio-visual recordings and social media. .

Friday 5 April

Pray for just and merciful political leaders who will enable fair repatriation to become a reality for the Rohingya.

Saturday 6 April

As the Night of Power approaches and religious fervour increases, pray God would speak to the hearts of the Rohingya people through dreams, visions and other means.



The Glory of the Nations

Purity

**Nothing impure will ever enter it,
nor will anyone who does what
is shameful or deceitful ...**

Revelation 21:27 NIV

Southeast Asia's Muslims are busy preparing for Eid Al-Fitr celebrations, marking the end of Ramadan. Some will repaint their houses, covering over cracks and dirty marks on walls. Many will buy new clothes to look clean and well-presented. These are outward signs of what Muslims hope has happened deep within over Ramadan – a return to purity. Revelation reveals a new creation without impurities or shame, yet which is welcoming to sinners who know that no amount of paint could ever cover the imperfections of human hearts.

Salima is five hours old, and already things are looking better for her than in the months before her birth. When Siska, Salima's fifteen-year-old mother, found she was pregnant, the wider family were horrified and outraged. Having children outside of marriage is seen as impure and shameful in Indonesian culture.

Then her family heard about a centre that supports women through unwanted pregnancies. The centre is run by local followers of Jesus, inspired by the Bible's teaching that all lives are precious to God. Siska arrived feeling the shame of becoming an unmarried mother, yet she has found acceptance and love in that community.

Rocking Salima to sleep, Siska thinks of her family preparing for Eid Al-Fitr and longs to be with them. For Siska, this Ramadan has not been the return to purity that Muslims hope, but it is the beginning of a new life for her and her daughter. She is thankful for the supportive staff who say they are following the example of Jesus – who is pure but never afraid to step into the mess of people's lives and offer a new start.

Sunday 7 April

Pray for Muslims across Southeast Asia who feel impure and ashamed this Ramadan. Ask that these feelings would open their hearts to the gospel of grace.

Monday 8 April

Pray for Southeast Asian Muslims who have successfully completed their daily fasts during Ramadan to know full forgiveness for their sin available through Jesus.

Tuesday 9 April

Pray for Christian centres in Indonesia ministering to vulnerable Muslim women and children. Ask that God would protect them and provide materially for their ministry.

Wednesday 10 April

Pray that local Christians would show Muslims who are struggling with shame, like prisoners and the urban poor, how precious they are in Jesus.

Thursday 11 April

Pray for the church in Indonesia, and across Southeast Asia, that it will boldly follow Christ in loving others across cultural and religious divides.

Friday 12 April

Ask the Lord of the harvest to raise up more Christians to pray for and to go and serve the 230 million Muslims living in Indonesia.



Now that Ramadan is over...

Please keep learning about and praying for Muslim peoples in Southeast Asia! Here are ideas about how you could do that over the coming year...

Start or connect with a local prayer group that meets to pray for Muslims, especially those in Southeast Asia. For more information about online prayer groups praying for Muslims in Southeast Asia email: mailbox@howtoprayformuslims.org

The fasting doesn't end with Eid al-Fitr. Many Muslims fast on Mondays and Thursdays. Why not choose a day of the week when you regularly fast a meal, and instead pray for Southeast Asia's Muslims?

Spice up your dinner plans! Once a month, investigate your nearest Asian supermarket and cook something you've never tried before!

Watch information and prayer videos about Southeast Asia and Muslims on the Prayericast website: www.prayericast.com

Invite friends to join you in praying through the 'How to Pray for Muslims' prayer guide, available for download at www.howtoprayformuslims.org

Visit the www.apeopleloved.com for more prayer information about the different Muslim peoples living in Southeast Asia.

Recycle this prayer guide – keep using the prayers for Muslim peoples in it throughout the year