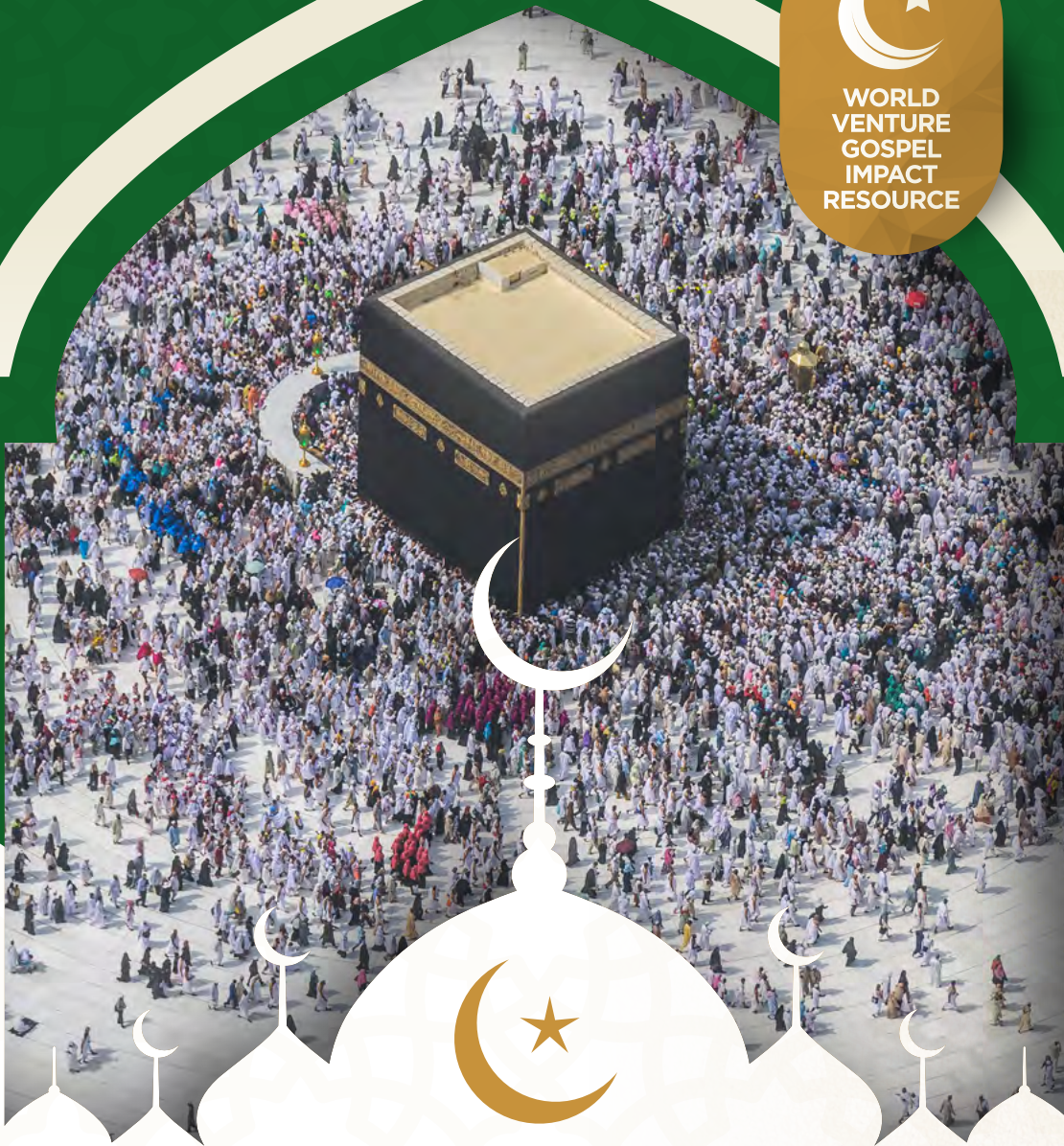




WORLD  
VENTURE  
GOSPEL  
IMPACT  
RESOURCE



# RAMADAN NOW IS THE TIME

**BLESSING OUR MUSLIM  
FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS**



# A TIME TO PRAY

Imagine for a moment what it would be like if we dedicated an entire month to celebrating Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving all at once. Although significant and sacred for different reasons, that's how important the month of Ramadan is for the nearly two billion Muslims worldwide. It is essentially three holidays wrapped into one: **Ramadan, The Night of Power, and Eid.**

The word **Islam** in Arabic means "submission," and Muslims, or "submitters," are those who adhere to the Islamic faith and are submitted to God. For someone to convert to Islam, they must sincerely believe and confess that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is his messenger (or prophet). This is called the **shahada** and is the first of the **Five Pillars of Islam**. This succinct confession highlights God's oneness (**tawhid**), which Muslims claim is contrary to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

**Our world is now closer** and more interconnected than at any other time in human history. This reality poses tremendous challenges due to cultural and religious differences. However, it also introduces tremendous opportunities for Gospel impact like never before. According to Joshua Project, more than fourteen million people representing ninety-seven **unreached/least-reached people groups are living right here in the United States**

**While many** of these are from Jewish and Hindu faiths, the primary religion of fifty-four of these ninety-seven people groups (55.6%) is Islam. A study by the Pew Research Center predicts that the Muslim population in the U.S. will swell from about 4.45 million to 8.1 million by 2050, making Islam the second-largest religion in the country.

**With that said**, one can't help but wonder in what ways the Holy Spirit is preparing and empowering Christians to be his witnesses among these least reached peoples and communities who have moved from "the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8) to nearby cities and towns. With Ramadan approaching, consider these insights about this special Muslim holiday and some suggestions on how this occasion can create opportunities for **sharing the Good News of Jesus** by building understanding, trust, and favor with Muslim friends and neighbors.





# A TIME TO FOCUS

**Ramadan** is the name of the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and refers to the Islamic holiday itself. Marked by fasting, prayer, reflection, and community, this observance holds profound significance to Muslims. They believe that the first verses of the **Qur'an**, their holy book, were revealed during Ramadan.

The focal point of Ramadan is the daily fast, where Muslims abstain from food, drink, smoking, and other physical needs from dawn until sunset. However, this practice goes beyond mere abstinence; it involves deep spiritual introspection, increased acts of worship, and heightened compassion for others. **Fasting (sawm)** is accompanied by **ritual prayers (salat)** and **almsgiving (zakat)**, all of which are fundamental tenets of the faith and three of the five core obligations (i.e., pillars) of Islam. Each day begins with **suhour**, a pre-dawn meal before the fast commences, and concludes with **iftar**, the evening meal at sunset. The initial breaking of the fast is typically just a date and a glass of water or some other type of drink, such as fruit juice or milk. Then, after additional prayers, a more substantial meal is shared with friends and family. The communal aspect of the worship and daily routine fosters a sense of unity with other Muslims throughout the month.

The last ten days of Ramadan are crucial, including the holiest night of the year: **The Night of Power (Laylat-al-Qadr)**. Muslims believe that on this night, Muhammad received his first revelation from God through the angel Gabriel while meditating in a cave on Mt. Hira near Mecca. Muslims believe this night is better than a thousand months in that God's blessings, forgiveness, and rewards for fasting and other good deeds multiply exponentially. For this reason, many choose not to sleep on this night, preferring instead to **strive (jihad)** for God's forgiveness of their sins. Ultimately, the hope is that the scales of justice might be tipped in their favor in anticipation of the coming **Day of Judgement**. While the exact date is unknown, many Muslims believe that the Night of Power falls on one of the odd-numbered dates of the last ten days of Ramadan. Some believe it is on the 23rd night, others on the 27th.

**Eid al-Fitr** concludes the month-long journey of fasting, prayer, and reflection. A festive day involving communal prayers, expressions of gratitude, charitable giving, and the sharing of meals, **the celebration of Eid al-Fitr marks the culmination of Ramadan.**

# A TIME TO BLESS

In light of God's heart for Muslims and His desire that they experience His amazing grace, forgiveness, and adoption as sons and daughters into His family, how might we use this time of heightened spiritual sensitivity and interest to meaningfully engage and bless Muslims during Ramadan?

## EXTEND GREETINGS

Offer your Muslim friends and neighbors a friendly "Salaam!" (meaning "Peace") with a smile. Or wish them a blessed Ramadan. A simple greeting like "Ramadan Mubarak" (meaning "Blessed Ramadan") expresses goodwill and acknowledges the significance of the month to them. On the final day of Ramadan, during Eid al-Fitr, you can say "Eid Mubarak" (meaning "Blessed feast/festival"). These have become universal greetings for Muslims worldwide – even among non-Arabic speakers.

## ASK QUESTIONS

Take the time to understand the significance of Ramadan, its rituals, the spiritual practices involved, and what this holiday means to our Muslim friends. But rather than learning from books or the internet, the best way to learn is from Muslims themselves. Extending greetings often opens the door naturally to such questions, demonstrating your respect for them as a person, as you take an interest in their culture and traditions, providing a foundation for future meaningful conversations.

## SHARE THE IFTAR

The communal nature of the daily iftar meal provides a perfect opportunity for you to join your Muslim friends in breaking their fast at sunset. Believe it or not, this is a time when it is culturally acceptable to invite yourself. The sunset meal can be an excellent opportunity to learn more about their traditions and build connections on a personal level. Some Mosques and Islamic Centers even host interfaith iftar dinners, discussions, or cultural events, allowing non-Muslims to learn, share experiences, and build relationships.





# SHOW SOLIDARITY



Show solidarity with your Muslim neighbors while they fast. Simple gestures like refraining from eating in front of fasting individuals during daylight hours demonstrate respect. Understand that fasting can be physically demanding. You can offer support by checking in on your Muslim friends, especially during the last ten days of Ramadan when Laylat al-Qadr is observed. Share your willingness to assist with any practical needs they may have.

# GIVE TO CHARITY

Ramadan strongly emphasizes charity. Consider supporting charitable initiatives that align with values shared by Muslims and Christians - like giving to those in need - or organizing collaborative community projects that can meet needs while creating opportunities for relationship-building. Charity can be a basis for lasting relationships and Gospel impact in our communities. Or you can simply give a donation to an organization that is making a gospel impact among Muslim peoples.

# TALK ABOUT FAITH

Engage in open and respectful conversations about faith. Listening to the beliefs of others and sharing your faith in return can foster understanding, promote a culture of mutual respect, and open doors for gospel impact. Ask your Muslim friend to read their favorite passage from the Qur'an and offer to read your favorite passage from the Bible. Talk about why the passages are your favorites. Approach every conversation with "gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:13-16) and trust God to guide you. Need advice about Bible passages that are meaningful to Muslims? Contact us!

# PRAY FERVENTLY

Pray each day of Ramadan! Understanding the spiritual forces working behind the scenes should drive us to our knees to cry out to God on behalf of our Muslim friends. How do we partner with the Holy Spirit to make Jesus known? Prayer is the vital ministry that often precedes a move of God.



# NOW IS THE TIME

## TO LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

Remember that building relationships will take time and genuine interest. Approach interactions with an open heart, a willingness to learn, and a commitment to love your Muslim neighbor as yourself. Relax, smile, and see what God might accomplish through you as you submit to Him in humility, prayer, and love for your Muslim friends and neighbors during Ramadan and beyond.

## TO LEARN MORE

Want to learn more about reaching out to Muslim neighbors and friends? Looking for learning resources you can share with your small group or church? Sensing a call to Muslim ministries but don't know where to start? Reach out! We can help.

**WorldVenture's Global Muslim Initiatives**

720.283.2000 | [info@worldventure.com](mailto:info@worldventure.com)

## TO BE CHARITABLE

WorldVenture sends and sustains global workers who share the good news of Jesus with unreached people groups and least-reached communities. We need your help now more than ever! If you found this resource encouraging or helpful in any way, please make a meaningful, generous gift to the [Global Mission Fund](#) so that we can continue to share the good news of Jesus around the world. Together, we are engaging the world for gospel impact.

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