

A Prayer Guide for Ramadan 2023

22 March - 21 April



What can I pray for Muslims this Ramadan?





Why pray for Muslims during Ramadan?



For the millions of Muslim people in East and Southeast Asia, the fasting month of Ramadan marks the time Muslims believe the Qur'an was first revealed to Muhammad.

It's a great time to pray for God to bless these Muslims and to pray that they would learn more about Jesus.

We also hope you'll find the questions and answers helpful as you get to know and bless your Muslim neighbors.

We invite you to pray with us through Ramadan with these daily prayer points.

Day 1: Wednesday 22 March

 When does Ramadan start?



Ramadan, the Muslim fasting month, starts today. A Muslim day starts at sunset, not midnight. This practice follows the biblical tradition found in Genesis: “And there was evening and there was morning, one day.”

For the next month Muslims around the world will be actively seeking to be holy before Allah as they fast during daylight hours. Pray for followers of Jesus living in Muslim communities to be wise in how they bless them at this time.

Day 2: Thursday 23 March



What does Ramadan mean to Muslims?



It is a time of practicing living a life of purity so that they can grow spiritually and get closer to Allah. Ramadan also helps them practice patience and compassion.

Give thanks for the many Muslim people living on the Silk Road who long to live pure lives. Pray that our heavenly Father will honor their desire.

Day 3: Friday 24 March

Q How is Ramadan practiced?



Every day from sunrise to sunset Muslims abstain from eating or drinking. At the Equator the fast lasts for 12 hours. In summer, north or south of the Equator a Ramadan day is much longer.

Pray for your Muslim neighbors who are abstaining from food and drink during the day. Pray for them to learn more about Jesus and how he can provide for all their needs.

Day 4: Saturday 25 March

Q How does Ramadan connect Muslims?



Ramadan is a worldwide fast. Imagine if all your friends and family decided to fast together. Think of the sense of unity that would bring. Imagine if everyone in your community did the same. Ramadan reinforces the strong sense of identity of Muslims as followers of Islam together.

Pray for Muslim people living away from their home country who may feel isolated and alone. Pray that followers of Jesus would understand better how to build relationships with the Muslim people in their communities.

Day 5: Sunday 26 March



Why is Ramadan a special month for Muslims?



It was during the month of Ramadan that Muhammad retreated to seek solitude in a cave where Allah revealed the Qur'an to him through an angel. The Qur'an prescribes fasting so that followers of Islam become mindful of Allah.

Many Muslims on the Silk Road take time to read through the Qur'an during Ramadan, often in the original Arabic. Children also learn to recite parts of the Qur'an in Arabic. Pray they will learn more about Jesus, who is mentioned in the Qur'an.

Day 6: Monday 27 March



What does a day in Ramadan look like?



It starts long before sunrise with a substantial breakfast *suhoor* before dawn prayers, during the day many will go to the mosque for lunchtime prayers. At sunset Muslims will break their fast with water and a snack of dates before *maghrib* prayers after which they eat *iftar* the main evening meal. In late evening men will go to the mosque for special *tarawih* Ramadan evening prayers.

Fasting throughout daylight hours is very challenging. Pray that East Asia's Muslims who struggle with fasting will recognize their need for God's help.

Day 7: Tuesday 28 March

Q Where do most Muslims live?



You might be surprised to know that most of the world's Muslims live in East and Southeast Asia. Indonesia is the country with the world's largest Muslim population.

Pray for more Christians to become aware of the large populations of Muslim people in Southeast Asia so that they can learn how to bless them with faithful prayer.

Day 8: Wednesday 29 March

Q What are the five pillars of Islam?



The five pillars are the basic practices that a Muslim person needs to complete as a follower of Islam. They are: 1. The Muslim creed 2. Prayer 3. Charity 4. Fasting during the month of Ramadan 5. Going on a pilgrimage to Mecca for those who are able.

Pray for opportunities for Christians to have respectful conversations with their Muslim neighbors so that they can be sensitive to their needs and beliefs as they seek to bless them.

Day 9: Thursday 30 March



Can Muslims drink water during Ramadan?



During Ramadan nothing is eaten or drunk between sun up and sun set. So Muslim people eat a meal before dawn and drink plenty of water to last them through the long daylight hours.

As Ramadan progresses, tempers can become frayed by lack of food and sleep. Pray for friends on the Silk Road to speak with patience and gentleness, even when tempers are short.

Day 10: Friday 31 March



At what time of day do Muslims start to eat again?



A Muslim breaks their fast after sunset, usually with a snack of dates and water before prayers. After prayers they sit down together to a family meal called iftar.

Pray for your Muslim neighbors who are fasting during the longer summer days. May they have patience with each other, and those around them, when they start to feel hungry and thirsty.

Day 11 Saturday 1 April

Q Can a Muslim lie during Ramadan?



A Muslim person is supposed to keep away from all bad actions during their fast. It is meant to be a time of purification of their thoughts, so that they become a person of good deeds and intentions.

Pray that Muslims who have moved overseas as refugees can settle well into their new countries. Pray that Christians in their new communities will be the first to reach out to welcome and support them.

Day 12: Sunday 2 April



How does a Muslim keep going during the day without any food or drink?



Muslims get up before sunrise to make sure that they have plenty to eat and drink before they start the day's fast. This meal sustains them through the day. When they feel hungry and thirsty during the day this reminds them to show compassion to poorer Muslims who do not have enough to eat.

Long portions of the Qur'an are recited in Tarawih, the extra Ramadan evening prayers at the mosque. Isa, the Arabic name of Jesus, is honored in the Qur'an. Pray that those who hear about him will want to want to learn more.

Day 13: Monday 3 April



How can I better understand what a Muslim believes?



The best place to start to learn about Islam is to ask a Muslim person about their faith, they are usually keen share what they believe. You could ask them about their spiritual practices and what they mean for them in their daily lives.

Ask God to help us think of all people as he does. 'Through him all things were made, without him nothing was made that has been made' (John 1:3). Pray for more followers of Jesus to pray God's blessing over Muslims this Ramadan.

Day 14: Tuesday 4 April



What do Muslim people like to do in their spare time?



Muslim people are like everyone else, they care about their friends, their family and community and they like to do the things that everyone else does, e.g. follow sport or do hobbies, meet for coffee or offer hospitality.

Pray for Christians to find ways to connect with their Muslim neighbors over shared hobbies and interests.

Day 15 Wednesday 5 April



Is it ok to talk to a Muslim about their faith?



Many Muslim people like to talk about what they believe and how they practice their religion. Many will welcome sensitive and thoughtful questions about their faith.

As the Easter weekend is coming up many Christians will be coming to the end of Lent, may they take time to consider their Muslim neighbors at what is traditionally a time for religious devotion and pure living. Pray that Christians will have opportunities to share about Jesus' teachings on purity and devotion with their Muslim neighbors.

Day 16: Thursday 6 April



Is Ramadan the only time Muslims fast?



Muslims can fast at other times of the year - and this is treated as an extra fast following the example of Muhammed. Also, those who are unable to fast during Ramadan, for example because they are sick, may choose to fast at another time.

Pray for Christians to be compassionate toward those who are unable to fast and may feel left out during Ramadan.

Day 17: Friday 7 April

Q Is Jesus mentioned in the Qu'ran?



Yes, he is mentioned in the Qu'ran and known by the Arabic name Isa. He is respected in Islam as the penultimate prophet before Muhammed.

On Good Friday, pray for Muslims to have good conversations with Christian friends or neighbours about what Easter means.

Day 18: Saturday 8 April



If I invite a Muslim to my home do I need to be careful about what I cook?



Find out what food and drinks are permissible for your Muslim friends and then invite them over and share. Doing this after Ramadan may be easiest for your friend.

Send an email or write a card, and pray for God's blessings on your Muslim friend today.

Day 19: Sunday 9 April



Do Muslims and Christians have any scriptures in common?



Yes - Muslims believe the Torah, Pentateuch, the Psalms and the gospels are divine books, as they are mentioned in the Qur'an.

Today as Christians around the world celebrate the Easter message, pray for Muslims to be open to reading the Torah, Pentateuch, Psalms and gospels.

Day 20: Monday 10 April



How can Christians be praying during Ramadan?



Let's be praying for Christians to be thinking creatively about how they can love and bless Muslims as people made in God's image.

Pray today for Christians around the world to be burdened to bless Muslim people, praying regularly for them and their needs.

Day 21: Tuesday 11 April

Q Do Muslims ever get persecuted?



Muslim people may be persecuted for their faith when they are the minority community in a country, e.g. the Rohingya in Myanmar. Pray for authorities to seek flourishing and justice for all their citizens.

The Uyghur are China's second largest Muslim people group, with a population of over 10 million. Pray for good relationships between them and China's majority Han people. Pray for peace and stability in the regions they live in.

Day 22: Wednesday 12 April



How many Muslim refugees are there?



There are over 21 million externally displaced refugees, that is more than the population of Cambodia, the Netherlands or Chile. Refugees from Muslim majority nations Syria and Afghanistan with the Rohingya of Myanmar make up nearly half of this total. These refugees mostly stay in neighboring countries.

Pray for the Rohingya refugees in Southeast Asia and further afield that God would provide them with a safe refugee, justice and a peaceful solution to their problems.

Day 23: Thursday 13 April



People talk about the Muslim diaspora, what is it?



Muslim people who have left their own country to settle in another for social, economic or political reasons are known as diaspora peoples. If you live in a country where diaspora peoples have settled, look out for ways to make them feel welcome in your community. Your local OMF center or other Christian groups may have an initiative you could join to help them feel welcome.

Pray for opportunities for Christians to extend a warm welcome to their Muslim neighbors.

Day 24: Friday 14 April

Q Who looks after poor Muslim people? 

In Islam, Muslims are expected to take care of the poorer people in their communities. Christians are often able to live among and bless these communities as well.

Pray today for Muslims in Southeast Asia who are living on the margins of their communities because of their poverty. May they receive compassion from their neighbors and be helped to flourish. Pray for Christian workers among them to be the loving hands and feet of Jesus to these communities.

Day 25: Saturday 15 April



Why are the last 10 days of Ramadan especially significant?



One of the last 10 nights of Ramadan is known as Lailat al Qadr, or the Night of Power. It marks the time Muslims believe the first chapters of the Qu'ran were revealed to Muhammed. The Qu'ran promises double spiritual rewards and for worship and prayer on the Night of Power.

Many Muslim people will spend the last 10 nights of Ramadan in intense prayer and worship to Allah for revealing the Qu'ran. Pray for Muslims in East and Southeast Asian regions to have opportunities to learn more about Isa (Jesus) who is honoured in the Qu'ran.

Day 26: Sunday 16 April



How can I be sensitive to a Muslim person's beliefs?



Muslims love to talk about Allah and they respect Jesus as the penultimate prophet before Muhammad. They know Jesus by his Arabic name Isa al Massih. Asking questions and listening curiously will help you understand more about Islam and enable you to be respectful.

“You are the God who sees me,” was the name Hagar gave to God, when she fled from Sarai to the desert. (Genesis 16:13). Hagar, Ishmael's mother is the only woman in the Bible who addresses God by a new name. Pray that as East and Southeast Asian Muslims will learn more of the God who sees them.

Day 27: Monday 17 April



Where can I find out more about praying for and serving Muslims?



It's great to keep praying for Muslims beyond Ramadan. You can find further resources and prayer materials online at websites like Prayercast.com, HowtoPrayforMuslims.org, pray30days.org as well as omf.org/blessingmuslims

Over 23 million Muslims live in China and over 250 million live in Southeast Asia. Pray for Christians to have a deep and abiding concern for these people to see God's glory and experience his love.

Day 28: Tuesday 28 April



Could I be a person who goes to live among Muslim people?



A great way to bless Muslim people is to go and live among them using your skills to serve and build their communities. This includes things like community development, teaching English, medical, engineering and other professional skills are all valuable.

Pray for followers of Jesus exploring how to use their skills to bless the Muslims of East and Southeast Asia, for God to lead and guide them.

Day 29: Wednesday 19 April



How can I support those who bless Muslim people?



If you know someone who is in a role that is actively blessing Muslims ask them how you can pray for them on a regular basis.

Pray for those seeking to bless the Muslim people of East and Southeast Asia. Pray for them to have good opportunities to build friendships and be part of the community during the fasting month.

Day 30: Thursday 20 April



How can we encourage each other to better love our Muslim neighbors?



One of the biggest ways we can encourage one another in this area is by our example. If we are able to show how we have been getting to know our Muslim neighbors and break down cultural barriers, often this will help others do the same.

Muslims in Southeast Asia love to talk about what they believe, pray for more Christians to come and live amongst them who are comfortable with talking about spiritual things with their friends.

Day 31: Friday 21 April



What happens at the end of Ramadan?



On the day that the month of Ramadan ends, Muslims express their joy and happiness by offering a congregational prayer all together out in the open (if possible). The day is generally a holiday in Muslim countries and families and communities gather together for a great feast, where special dishes are prepared and presents are given to children. This feast is known as Eid-al-Fitr - 'the festival of the breaking of the fast' - and lasts up to three days.

After Ramadan ends many Muslims will try and keep up habits formed over the month. Ask God to help you keep praying his blessing on East and Southeast Asia's Muslims beyond Ramadan.



Now that Ramadan is over,
what's next for me?



Many Muslims will try and keep the good habits formed during Ramadan going once the fasting month is over.

At OMF, we want to be a community that blesses our Muslim neighbors. Not just during Ramadan, but throughout the year. Perhaps you could now extend an invitation to meet a Muslim friend or neighbor or have dinner with them?

You can explore more ideas and resources at omf.org/blessingmuslims.