

30-Day Prayer Guide for Yemen



All those from Sheba will come... they will bear good news of the praises of the Lord.

Isaiah 60:6

Day 1

Topic: History

Scripture:

Isaiah 60:6 Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD.

Information:

Yemen has a very long and rich history as one of the oldest civilizations in the world. According to tradition, Noah's son Shem founded a city in Yemen. The Queen of Sheba who visited Solomon was from an area in Yemen. Beginning in the twelfth century BC Yemen was part of different kingdoms which controlled the ancient spice trade. The Romans called Yemen *Arabia Felix* or Happy Arabia, impressed by its wealth from spices. The Roman Empire attempted to conquer Yemen at one time, without success. It was, however, conquered by Ethiopians and then Persians both in the 6th century AD.

Muhammad and his followers brought Islam to Yemen around 630 AD, and the country became a province of the Islamic Empire. It was ruled by various Imams (religious leaders) over the next several hundred years. The Ottoman Empire captured Yemen in 1517 but had been run out of the majority of the country by 1630. At that time the Ottomans controlled only isolated coastal areas, and Imams ruled over the highlands. In the 1830s the Ottoman Empire again conquered the whole of Yemen including Sana'a. England took over the port city of Aden in the south in 1839, and Aden and its surrounding areas comprised a British protectorate. North Yemen rebelled against the Ottomans and became independent in 1918. North Yemen later became a republic in 1962. England withdrew from South Yemen in 1967, and South Yemen adopted a Communist government in 1970. Though North and South Yemen remained friendly, tensions surfaced. The two governments initially agreed to move toward unification in 1972, but the unified Republic of Yemen was not declared until May of 1990. Although there was a short civil war in 1994, Yemen has otherwise remained peaceful since reunification.

Prayer points:

- Pray that Yemen's longstanding history with Islam would come to an end as nationals begin to accept Jesus Christ as Savior.
- Pray that Yemenis would come to understand that true inner peace is only attained through Christ, the Prince of Peace.
- Pray for both religious leaders and government leaders to come to Christ and guide their people in a direction pleasing to Him.

Day 2

Topic: Sana'a

Scripture:

Isaiah 54:11-13 O afflicted city, lashed by storms and not comforted, I will build you with stones of turquoise, your foundations with sapphires. I will make your battlements of rubies, your gates of sparkling jewels, and all your walls of precious stones. All your sons will be taught by the LORD, and great will be your children's peace.

Information:

Sana'a is the bustling capital city of Yemen. Six days out of the week you will find families buying and selling goods in the markets. Shop owners beckon to people from the streets to come in and see their merchandise, and buyers and sellers bargain over a fair price. Sana'a is one of the oldest cities, not only in Yemen but in the world, and the old city has been inhabited for at least 2,500 years. It is even believed by some that the city of Sana'a was founded by Shem, the son of Noah. Many of the buildings in Sana'a are hundreds of years old, and Bab Al Yemen (The Yemen Gate) – which serves as the entry way through the 20 to 30ft high ancient clay walls of the old city – is 300 or 400 years old.

The houses in Sana'a are made of mud and stone. They are brown with white trim around the doors and windows. They have flat roofs and are elaborately decorated with beautiful friezes, intricately carved frames, and stained glass windows, which are found in almost every building in Yemen. The old city boasts over 6,500 houses and 100 mosques.

Sana'a is, in many ways, somewhat of an enigma – a curious blend of the peoples' past and their progress. It is home to one of the biggest marketplaces in Yemen, yet it teems with people who live in severe poverty as well as wealthy families. It holds to tradition, is often not open to change, yet satellite dishes are beginning to frequent the roofs of new and old houses alike, bringing television programs from all over the world into the homes of the people of Sana'a. New department stores, internet cafes, and five-star hotels sit alongside tiny shops, ancient buildings, and one-room guesthouses.

Prayer points:

- Pray that the people of Sana'a would come to know the God of Noah.
- Pray that the people's hearts would be open to receiving the gospel.
- Pray that there will be Christian programs broadcast through the televisions in Sana'a.
- Pray that God will help those who are in poverty.

Day 3

Topic: Who is Allah?

Scripture:

Exodus 15: 11, 13a Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you – majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders? In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed.

Information:

Allah is simply the Arabic word for God. While many people know that this is the word used by Muslims for God, it may not be commonly known that Arab Christians use the same name. In Arabic Bibles, also, God is translated Allah. What Muslims believe about God, however, is somewhat different from the beliefs of Christians.

Muslims believe there is only one true God who is the Creator. They also believe Allah to be all-powerful, all-knowing, just, merciful, sovereign, everlasting, and the only entity worthy of worship. Differing from Christians, however, Muslims believe Allah to be exactly as Muhammad described him in the Qur'an, having no humanlike qualities or attributes. Muslims believe Allah has no partner, meaning they deny the Trinity and the deity of Jesus Christ. Muslims have no hope of understanding their God, since he is nothing like humans. Muslims also have no personal relationship with Allah and no assurance of spending eternal life in "paradise." They spend their life trying to attain Allah's favor by doing good works and hoping that he will be merciful to them if they try earnestly to obey the teachings of the Qur'an.

The religion of Islam literally means "submission to God." Muslims are those who submit their lives to the will of Allah. One result of Muslim beliefs about God is that they often dismiss Western ideas of personal initiative and sometimes personal responsibility; they simply accept whatever happens as the will of Allah. This belief applies both to advantageous and adverse circumstances. They often add the phrase "God willing" to the end of any plan, hope, or speculation about the future.

Prayer points:

- Pray that Yemenis would be open to accepting ideas of Christ and the Holy Spirit as divine.
- Pray that people of Yemen will attain true freedom in Christ and no longer depend on works to please God.
- Pray for Christians in Yemen who are often misunderstood by Muslim neighbors, friends, and co-workers. Pray that the Holy Spirit would enlighten them in the best ways to explain their faith.

Day 4

Topic: Yemeni People

Scripture:

2 Thessalonians 2:4-6 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or worshipped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. Don't you remember when I was with you I used to tell you these things? And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time.

Information:

Almost all of the Yemeni people are Muslim. Because of their lifestyle, medical care, diet, and the widespread use of qat, they have a shortened life expectancy. They are very friendly and warm. They try very hard to be helpful to visitors to their country. Even if they don't speak the foreigner's language, they will try to help and have an amazing ability to communicate with their gestures. The people are extremely generous and hospitable, showcasing their version of overwhelming Arab hospitality.

The men on the street have a variety of ways to dress. Some dress in pants and shirts much like Western men. Some wear the large pieces of fabric that wrap around and form a skirt, and some – especially tribesmen – wear a long white robe. Most of the men will have a jambia (a large curved knife) in a holster attached to an ornate belt around the waist.

The women and adolescent girls must cover their heads and elbows and wear long robe like garments that cover their ankles. These are called baltos and are usually black. Many of the ladies cover their faces with only the eyes showing. These requirements are relaxed as women age, but on the whole they continue to cover up.

The younger children dress very much as Western children, except the boys will often wear a jambia. In the city they roam the streets and many are hungry for attention. In small villages they will follow visitors around and beg.

Prayer points:

- Pray that these people will be exposed to the truth and will be safe if they accept it.
- Pray for people to go live among them and, though witnessing is very limited, that their countenance will exude the love of the true God.
- Pray for the children of Yemen that they may learn about Jesus.

Day 5

Topic: Aden

Scripture:

Job 36:15-16 But those who suffer He delivers in their suffering; He speaks to them in their affliction. He is wooing you from the jaws of distress to a spacious place free from restriction, to the comfort of your table laden with choice food.

Information:

The city of Aden lies in and around an extinct volcano. The city is made of several distinct sub-centers. The old harbor and the original port city, known as Little Aden, lie in the crater of the extinct volcano. Ma'alla, the modern port, lies on the opposite side of Front Bay. Khormaksar is located on the peninsula that connects Aden proper with the mainland; it includes the city's diplomatic missions, the main offices of Aden University, and Aden International Airport. On the mainland are the sub-centers of Sheikh Othman, a former oasis area, Al-Mansura, a town planned by the British, and Madinat ash-Sha'b, the site designated as the capital of the South Arabian Federation and now home to a large power and desalination facility as well as additional facilities of Aden University.

Aden encloses the eastern side of a vast, natural harbor that comprises the modern port. The volcanic peninsula of Little Aden forms a near-mirror image, enclosing the harbor and port on the western side. Little Aden became the site of an oil refinery and tanker port, which were both established and run by British Petroleum until they were turned over to Yemeni government ownership and control in 1977.

Aden was part of British India until 1937, when it became the Colony of Aden. Aden remained under British control until 1967 when it gained independence and became part of the Peoples Republic of Yemen. However, it still bears marks of its time under the British including the style of many buildings which are very British in appearance and design. Another layover from British time is the clothing style. Women particularly dress less traditionally than in other parts of Yemen, and some wear colored head scarves instead of a black head scarf or veil. This has changed somewhat over the past few years since reunification of North and South Yemen, and more and more women are wearing veils in Aden.

The shipping in and out of the port had always played a big role in the economy of Aden and the number of jobs available. However, due to the bombing of the U.S.S. Cole tanker in 2000 and the attack on a French oil tanker in 2002, shipping has decreased. Unofficial estimates have unemployment rates at forty plus percent, which has put severe financial hardship on the people of Aden.

Prayer points:

- Pray for jobs and other sources of income for families affected by the high unemployment rate.
- Pray that God will bring an economic turn around to Aden and that the people would recognize that it is from God.
- Pray that the people of Aden will seek out the true God and that He will be found by them.
- Pray for the women of this city, that in the future they would have freedom in dress as well as freedom in Christ.

Day 6

Topic: Prophet Muhammad

Scripture:

Acts 4:10,12 It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

Information:

Although Islam reveres many prophets, Muhammad is considered God's final and greatest messenger to mankind. Muhammad is not considered divine, but is believed to be the man closest to perfection. Muhammad recorded the words of the Qur'an, which are believed to have been given him directly from God through the archangel Gabriel.

Muhammad is in many ways the founder of Islam, at least as a historical movement and a religion distinct from Judeo-Christian belief. Muslims recognize many prophets from the Bible but believe that their message contained in the Bible has become corrupted over time.

Muhammad began preaching Islam in Mecca, the city of his birth, encouraging the people to abandon polytheism which was prevalent in his day. Although he gained some converts, he and his followers were persecuted by authorities there in Mecca. Muhammad and his group then moved to Medina, where he first established both religious and political authority. Muhammad fought and preached to spread Islam, eventually gained control of Mecca some seven years after he had left, and by the time of his death ruled over much of the Arabian Peninsula. The prophet Muhammad is greatly respected today, and his example as recorded in the Hadith is to be followed in addition to the teachings of the Qur'an.

Prayer points:

- Pray that Yemenis will see the Light of the World and recognize the falsehood of Islam.
- Pray that Yemenis will come to know the true Son of God, Jesus, the only name under heaven by which men can be saved.
- Pray that God would reveal Himself and His truth to people who are following other traditions.

Day 7

Topic: Markets

Scripture:

Genesis 41:56-57 When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt. And all the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the world.

Information:

Every city and village in Yemen has a market. Canned goods, fresh produce, and newly butchered meats can be found. A colorful shop of ready-made clothes and bolts of material is nearby.

Larger cities boast larger markets with a variety of merchandise. The market is an array of narrow cobblestone alleyways with vendor shops lining both sides. In spite of the lack of width of the alleyways, vehicles will drive down through the market. One can purchase clothing, jewelry, grains, some food items, frankincense and myrrh, and souvenirs. In one stall a camel is blind folded and harnessed so that it walks round and round to grind the grain. Even with months between visits some of the smaller vendors will remember a customer.

In smaller cities and villages, there is very little if any downtown area, so some markets are simply trucks on the side of the road. These mostly sell fruits and vegetables. Others are small metal enclosures next to the highway, and they sell dry goods as well as produce.

More rural areas have one day a week designated for market. In one mountainous area Monday is market day. Vendors and customers from nearby villages converge. It is as much a social event as it is to sell and buy. This market has all the necessities available for sale – there is even a gas station there.

In some desert areas one person will load whatever vegetables or fruits he has and put them out on the side of the highway. He will usually stop near a water source and wait for potential customers.

Prayer points:

- Pray for the vendors in all the markets that they will be exposed to the true way to heaven – that it does not come through works.
- Pray that the customers to the markets will realize that they need the love of Christ.
- Pray that the country will render good crops for the markets so these people can survive.

Day 8

Topic: Taiz

Scripture:

Psalm 72:2-4 He will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice. The mountains will bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness. He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; he will crush the oppressor.

Information:

The beautiful city of Taiz rests at the foot of the 9,862 foot tall Saber Mountain in Central Yemen, where the weather is fair and beautiful most of the time. The people boast of having a better education than most Yemenis and take pride in their dialect of Arabic which they consider to be closer to Modern Standard Arabic than what is spoken in other parts of the country. Taiz is considered the cultural capital of Yemen, and the people are generally open and hospitable to outsiders and eager to know more about the world outside of Yemen.

Taiz has many old and beautiful quarters; the houses in Taiz are typically built with brown bricks, and mosques are usually white. The city is considered the center of Islamic learning in Yemen and has a Muslim religious school that has the status of a university.

Taiz is the largest industrial base in Yemen, thanks to a large investment of the Hayel Saeed Anam group, a company that sells things like food and cigarettes and represents a number of multinational companies in Yemen including Kraft and Nestle. Among the city's own industries are cotton weaving, tanning and the production of jewelry. Some of the foods made in Taiz, especially Taiz cheese, are renowned throughout Yemen. Many Taizis are business owners throughout Yemen and in other countries as well.

Even though the people of Taiz are more open to the outside world than those in other parts of the country, they cling to their traditions and cultural heritage, which includes their belief in Islam, and the message of the gospel is widely unaccepted. However, there is great hope for Taizis to come to know the Lord. Some of the people of Taiz are having visions and dreams of Jesus appearing to them. They are seeking out Christians in the country and asking questions, longing to know more about this Jesus who came to them. We pray it is only a matter of time before the people of Taiz begin coming to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Because of the natural movements of Taizi merchants and the common understanding of the dialect, these people have the potential to spread the gospel throughout the country.

Prayer points:

- Pray for healing for the many disabled people in Taiz.
- Pray that God will continue to reveal Himself to the people of Taiz through visions and dreams.
- Pray that the people of Taiz will be open to hearing the gospel message.
- Pray for strength and assurance for the few believers in Taiz.

Day 9

Topic: Holy Books

Scripture:

John 8:31-32 Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching...you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Information:

The Qur'an is the most holy book in Islam, believed to be divine revelation for all mankind given directly from God to Muhammad through the archangel Gabriel. The Qur'an is well known as Yemeni children memorize it as an important requirement in school. Sections of the Qur'an are recited during prayer. The Qur'an is always treated with great reverence; it is never to touch the floor or be discarded if old, and some will not handle a copy before cleansing with water. Muslims also read and follow the Hadith, which records traditions of Muhammad's life and example, almost as strictly as the Qur'an itself. Although the Qur'an points readers to earlier holy books, referring to books of the Old and New Testament which Muhammad consulted and endorsed, Muslims today believe the Bible has been changed and corrupted. Therefore they do not believe the clear message of the Bible that Jesus is God's Son, the only Savior for mankind.

Prayer points:

- Pray that Muslims would follow the clear direction of the Qur'an to find and read the Old and New Testaments and discover the truth contained therein.
- Pray that translators would work diligently to translate the Bible into Yemeni dialects of Arabic, many of which do not have a complete Bible as of yet.
- Pray that the illiterate would have access to God's Word through oral methods such as gospel radio broadcasts.

Day 10

Topic: Tribal Society

Scripture:

Numbers 1:4,16 One man from each tribe, each the head of his family, is to help you. These were the men appointed from the community, the leaders of their ancestral tribes. They were the heads of the clans of Israel.

Information:

People of Yemen, especially in the North, are still tied to ancestral tribes which are centuries old. These strong tribal alliances supersede allegiance to the central government and go far beyond political commonalities. Their loyalty to family and tribe is rooted in Islam. Change comes slowly in these areas steeped in years and years of tradition. Leaders of tribes are called sheikhs, who bear the responsibilities of their entire tribe's livelihood, safety, and honor. Sheikhs are respected as men of authority and great power. The sheikh sees that his people's needs are met, and he must weigh the demands of his tribe against those of the central government.

The tribes contribute to a culture of honor and revenge. Often tribal leaders choose to take judicial or criminal matters into their own hands to preserve honor. Conflict is common among tribes who disagree about any number of things. Yemeni men are taught that dying with honor is better than living with shame and will not question those in a position of authority.

Prayer points:

- Pray that sheikhs will come to know the Lord and lead whole tribes to Jesus.
- Pray that the conflict and violence among tribes will cease as they come to know peace that passes all understanding.
- Pray that acceptance of the gospel will one day bring honor rather than shame in the eyes of the Yemeni people.

Day 11

Topic: Hodeidah

Scripture:

Isaiah 65:1 I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me.

Information:

Hodeidah lies in the center of the Al Hodeidah Governorate. It is the fourth largest city in Yemen and boasts a population of approximately a half million residents. Hodeidah lies on the west coast of Yemen on the Red Sea, and port activities are central to the economy of the city. Hodeidah's port is important in Yemen, second only to Aden's. Many goods are exported from this port, primarily coffee, cotton, dates, and animal hides. Hodeidah is also a trade center for its region, offering industries for ginning cotton and producing soft drinks for the Yemeni domestic market.

Developed by the Turks in the mid 19th century, Hodeidah's port was rebuilt with Soviet aid after the port and much of the city were destroyed by a fire in 1961. The port was enlarged and improved when it was rebuilt and, after aiding in the rebuilding process, the Soviets used the port as a naval base in the 1970s and 1980s.

In 1961 a highway between Hodeidah and the capital city of Sanaa, just northeast of Hodeidah, was completed and is still in use today. Hodeidah province has a large number of historical sights and more than 100 old mosques, particularly in Zabid, which is one of the oldest towns in Yemen and is regarded as one of the most important Islamic towns in the world. Hodeidah also has a picturesque old town surrounded by a thick wall and featuring many of the typical layercake-like multistory houses.

Though Hodeidah is such an important port city, approximately one fourth of the inhabitants of the city live in rundown shanty towns. The majority of the people are also illiterate. Fishing in the Red Sea is the main source of income.

Prayer points:

- Pray that the gospel would reach the illiterate majority in unique, God-inspired ways.
- Pray for better education in Hodeidah so that the men can get better jobs and provide for their families.
- Pray for better housing for the families living in the shanty towns.
- Pray that someday the mosques will be outnumbered by churches.

Day 12

Topic: Daily Prayers

Scripture:

1 Peter 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer.

Information:

Central to Yemeni life are the five daily prayers, which constitute one of the five pillars or basic duties of Islam. In Yemen, the call to prayer goes out from the mosques at dawn, noon, late afternoon, sunset, and later in the evening. Muslims perform a cleansing, a physical washing of their body, before each time of prayer. Although Muslims may pray wherever they are, many Yemeni men head to the mosque to pray while the women (who rarely go to the mosque) pray at home. Prayers are often done on a prayer rug to avoid contact with a dirty floor, as the place of prayer must be cleansed as well. According to the command of the Qur'an, prayers are performed facing Mecca, the site of the Kaaba which is considered the holiest place in Islam. The prayers consist of prescribed words which are recited from memory in Arabic regardless of native language. Also associated with the prayers are certain hand gestures and body positions, including standing, bowing, kneeling, and prostrate. The prayers are simply rituals and often an outward showing of adherence to their religion.

Prayer points:

- Pray that prayer would become more than routine or ritual to those in Yemen, that they would come to know prayer as a means to personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
- Pray that Yemenis would realize no amount of prayer or any other good deed is enough to reconcile them to God but that only through the acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice is this possible.

Day 13

Topic: The Curse of Qat

Scripture:

John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Information:

Qat is a stimulant class three narcotic, a social drug chewed in Yemen. In the afternoon men, some women, and even children are seen on the street, in shops, and in markets with a large bulge in one cheek. A recent study found that in Yemen 60% of the male population and 35% of the female population chew qat everyday for extended periods of their life. Most of them feel they are in control and not really addicted to this narcotic leaf.

Along the highways there are fields that resemble tree nurseries. These are qat fields and are very prevalent. On each field there is a small square building, usually two stories high. Each owner pays people to stay in the building and guard his field. Often there are two buildings fairly close together. These are for two different owners – they do not trust each other.

Owners load up the back of pickup trucks, drive to the town or market, and park. A crowd gathers around to buy the qat. Some will chew it right then; others take it home for a qat party. On asking some Yemenis about it, those who chew qat said it made them relax and think better. In reality, however, its devastating affects include decreased liver function, permanent tooth damage, susceptibility to ulcers, sleeplessness, nervousness, constipation, dizziness, rapid heartbeat, and loss of appetite which often results in malnutrition. Perhaps its greatest detriment is to the economy as it decreases the people's work ethic and ultimately the amount of work accomplished. The major part of some qat chewers' salaries goes towards this drug, and families suffer from the lack of income.

Prayer points:

- Pray for those who chew qat to recognize their addiction and seek true freedom.
- Pray that owners of qat fields will become aware of the devastation caused by this product and turn to other methods of making a living.
- Pray that Yemeni people who now find temporary satisfaction from chewing qat will exchange it for the lasting joy and abundant life found in Christ!

Day 14

Topic: Ibb

Scripture:

Acts 14:16-17 In the past, he let all nations go their own way. Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.

Information:

Ibb, the capital city of Ibb governorate, is situated on a mountain ridge and surrounded by fertile land. The Ibb governorate is known as “the fertile governorate,” not only because of its rich volcanic soil, but also because it gathers most of the rains brought to Yemen by the southern winds. It is so fertile, in fact, that it has earned names such as “the Green Land of Arabia,” which is no exaggeration. The slopes of the mountains are terraced from the valley floors to the mountain tops, and most were completed thousands of years ago. Since water is available throughout the year in Ibb, crops are harvested three to four times a year, and everything from dates and grain to coffee and qat are grown here.

The city of Ibb lies near to the highway that connects Taiz (62 miles south) and Sana’a (124 miles north). During the last few years the town has extended all the way down the hill and into the valley, covering arable land with streets and buildings. This is becoming a common occurrence in growing Yemen cities and towns, and Ibb is definitely growing. Since 1981 Ibb’s population had gone from about 35,000 to approximately 160,000 today.

Ibb is a picturesque town, surrounded by a wall that encloses many four to five story houses. Buildings in Ibb are traditionally made from the local grey or pink-toned stone, but after the revolution construction has favored the more easily cut orange lava rock, which is transported about 50 miles from the north. Most of the houses are unpainted, with the exception of the occasional lime plastering in the footings and window openings. Decoration is sparse but effective with friezes and tiny, round, alabaster-paned windows grouped in twos, threes, or fives in arched openings. Ibb is a very well-preserved example of the traditional rock architecture of the Yemeni highlands.

There are no less than 60 mosques in Ibb, including the Al-Jalaliya Mosque in the center of the old city, which was built by an Ottoman viceroy in 1773 during the first Ottoman occupation. It was considered one of the most important mosques at the time, but has since fallen into disrepair due to neglect.

Prayer points:

- Pray for the people of Ibb to know the God who blesses their land and begin to thank Him for their food and provisions.
- Pray that Ibb would be not only a city on a hilltop, but that someday it would shine the light of Jesus Christ from the hilltop for the world to see.
- Pray that the Lord would draw the people of Ibb to Himself so that someday the many mosques in Ibb will no longer be used.

Day 15

Topic: Islamic Law

Scripture:

Psalm 19:7-9 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous.

Information:

Islamic law, called sharia, governs the land of Yemen. This law is based largely on the Qur'an and the Hadith (reports of Muhammad's example). Islamic law covers all aspects of life from politics, economics, business, and social issues to family, sexuality, and hygiene. The law has two sections, law relating to worship and law pertaining to human interactions. Since the requirements of worship are listed elsewhere, the second part of the law will be emphasized here. Laws of human interaction include financial transactions, endowments, inheritance, marriage and divorce, childcare, food and drink, punishment for crime, warfare, and judicial matters.

There is a dress code for both men and women. Men should be covered from knee to waist, and women should be completely covered except for hands and face. The law also includes customs such as proper greeting, eating and drinking with only the right hand, and certain rituals involving newborns and burial of the dead. There are prescribed penalties for adultery and for theft. There are diet restrictions which prohibit pig products, blood, meat of dead animals, and alcohol. Permissible food, known as halal, includes meat only from herbivorous animals slaughtered in the name of Allah.

Prayer points:

- Pray for the government leaders in Yemen – for the president, prime minister, members of the legislature, and judges.
- Pray that many Yemenis would learn that the Bible, rather than Islamic law, should govern all aspects of life.
- Pray that Yemenis will realize God's grace and His provision for grace in Jesus Christ.

Day 16

Topic: The Yemeni Family

Scripture:

Ephesians 6:1-4 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" – which is the first commandment and a promise – "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Information:

The family is very important to the Yemeni people, yet their family unit is very different than some. Generally, marriages are arranged by the parties' families and it is common for girls to marry at age fourteen or fifteen. The men are totally in control, but raising the children and running the household is left up to the woman within the desires of her husband. Very few married women in Yemen work outside the home. A man can have as many as four wives, provided he can support them. All the wives and subsequent families often live in the same house. Frequently the older woman is required to take care of the younger wives, particularly during pregnancy, childbirth, and tending to the babies. When a girl marries a man, young or old, she must go and live in the man's parental home. Any children they have stay with the man's parents. Even if the husband passes away and the girl remarries, she must leave the children behind often with very limited visitation.

When one visits in the home, the ladies and the men have separate rooms for entertaining guests. They do not entertain together. The ladies offer hot tea, served in glasses rather than cups, or a sweet fruity drink along with a snack such as raisins, dried figs, or sweet bread. The room the men use for entertaining is much more elaborate and generally has a sheet of plastic covering the floor to keep qat from staining the carpet. The roof of the home is flat and can be a gathering place for the children and the ladies after they have had their tea.

Prayer points:

- Pray that God will make His presence known to Yemeni families and provide them with someone to reinforce this new belief.
- Pray that whole families will come to know Christ together as this provides unity and protection as persecution is not uncommon.
- Pray for the Yemeni men that they will respect their wives.
- Pray that both parents will set a good example for the children.

Day 17

Topic: Mukulla

Scripture:

Matthew 4:19 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed Him.

Information:

The port city of Mukulla is located on the Gulf of Aden on the southeast side of Yemen. It is the capital city of the Hadramaut coastal region and is the most important port in the governate of Hadramaut, which is the largest governorate in Yemen. Historically it was the main destination for trade between India and Africa. Today the port itself is undergoing extensive renovation to increase the potential of import products in Yemen, not just from India and Africa, but from the rest of the world as well.

With the port opening its doors wider to the rest of the world, there is hope that not only will the city become more modern and accepting of outsiders, but that there will also be more opportunities for the gospel to come into Yemen.

The economy of Mukulla is based on the fishing industry, and it has its own fish-canning plant and fish meal factory. Fish, tobacco and other products are exported from the port. Boatbuilding is also important to Mukulla's economy because boats are needed to bring in the fish that are so vital to the city.

Many of the buildings in Mukulla are built according to patterns that represent a mixture between Arabic, Yemeni and Indian patterns and decorations. Most are white on the outside, which creates a beautifully strong effect when seen towards the brown mountains or the dark blue sea. About 190,000 people call Mukulla home, and very few of them know Jesus.

Prayer points:

- Pray that God will send Christian businessmen to Mukulla to work and to minister there.
- Pray that God would prepare the hearts and minds of the people to receive the gospel.
- Pray that God will open the eyes of the people to the love he has for them.
- Pray that as Mukulla becomes more modern and accepting of western ways they will not accept the immorality and materialism that is so prevalent in many western cultures but rather the peace and love of Christ.

Day 18

Topic: Giving to the Poor

Scripture:

Mark 10: 21 Jesus said, "Go, sell everything you have and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

Information:

One of the five pillars of Islam is alms-giving. All Muslims who are able are required to give charitably to benefit the poor or needy, based on their accumulated wealth. There is a whole class of society in Yemen who are beggars. They are born into this role, believed to be God's will for their lives, and to do anything otherwise would not be proper submission to Allah. The required amount of alms-giving is generally considered two and a half percent of one's savings and/or valuables. This money is not to go to the mosque or religious leaders, but only to those less fortunate. This religious obligation is also considered a main principle of any Muslim economy, and that of Yemen is no exception. The beggars have even been known to strike when not receiving enough to live on, which is a problem for good Muslims searching for someone to help.

Prayer points:

- Pray that Yemenis would come to understand the way to God is not through good works but they must also follow Jesus.
- Pray that beggars would learn God has a plan for their life to give hope.
- Pray that Yemenis would come to know Jesus and lay up treasure in heaven.

Day 19

Topic: Government and Politics

Scripture:

Judges 9:1-3 Abimelech son of Jerub-Baal went to his mother's brothers in Shechem and said to them and to all his mother's clan, "Ask all the citizens of Shechem, 'Which is better for you: to have all seventy of Jerub-Baal's sons rule over you, or just one man?' Remember, I am your flesh and blood." When the brothers repeated all this to the citizens of Shechem, they were inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, "He is our brother."

Information:

Yemen operates on the premise of being a democratic republic, represented by a president that is both head of state and head of government. The country claims to have a multi-party system, when in reality it is completely dominated by one party, the General People's Congress, and has been since the unification of North and South Yemen in 1990.

Under the constitution the president and a 301-seat Parliament are elected by popular vote. At least two candidates for president are required to be endorsed by Parliament. The elected president then appoints a vice president, prime minister, deputy prime minister and a 111-member council with advice from the prime minister. In 1997 the president also created a consultative council, often referred to as the Upper House of Parliament. Its 59 members are all appointed by the president.

Executive power is executed by the government, and legislative power is vested in both the government and parliament. In actuality the president is head of state and the prime minister is head of government.

In 2006 the current president was challenged by a coalition of five opposition parties but still received over 77% of the votes. Bear in mind that the political opposition in Yemen has little access to the media since most outlets are owned or controlled by the government.

Anyone over the age of eighteen is eligible to vote; however, they do have problems with underage voting. Other such problems include confiscation of ballot boxes, voter intimidation, and election-related violence.

The constitution calls for an independent judiciary, but it is prone to interference from the executive branch. The Qur'an is the basis for all laws. No law may contradict it. Many court cases are debated on interpretations of the Qur'an. For this reason many judges are religious scholars as well as legal authorities.

Prayer points:

- Pray for political leaders to have opportunities to hear and respond to the gospel.
- Pray that future laws would not be based on the Qur'an but rather on the Bible.
- Pray that Yemenis would not be persecuted by their government for becoming believers.

Day 20

Topic: Sa'ada

Scripture:

Psalm 72:9a The desert tribes will bow before Him.

Information:

Sa'ada is the capital city of Sa'ada governorate in northwestern Yemen. Sa'ada is one of the oldest and most important cities in Yemen. It is also among the most historical and troublesome. Most locals still adhere to the Zaydi sect of Islam, and most are fiercely independent and distrustful of the central government. Because of this, Sa'ada was the last to agree to join the present Republic. The Bedouins tribes who populate Sa'ada and the surrounding area are guarded, but friendly to foreigners for the most part.

Sa'ada was founded centuries ago as a remote stopover for the frankincense caravan route. It was once a walled city fortress in the middle of green fields and pastures. The wall still remains, but the city's sprawl has moved outside to the surrounding land. Most residents live in the mountainous region to the west of Sa'ada and make the city proper look deceptively uninhabited. Sa'ada is still in very good condition compared to other historic cities in Yemen. It still preserves its unique architectural pattern and historic mud buildings and monuments.

Sa'ada is surrounded by desert and is home to many Bedouins; some have dual nationalities with Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Sa'ada is one of the closest cities to the Saudi Arabian border, which gives it significant strategic importance. Soldiers are stationed on the roads leading to and from the town, and armed escorts are required for any wishing to travel on the roads from Sa'ada to Sana'a.

Because of its close proximity to Saudi Arabia, Sa'ada could be a doorway of sorts to reaching not only the Yemenis living in Saudi Arabia with the Gospel, but also the Saudis themselves. However, the city is also very difficult to travel to and from because of the high security around it.

Prayer points:

- Pray for doors to be open for Christians to minister to the Bedouin tribes in Sa'ada and into Saudi Arabia.
- Pray for the Lord to soften the hearts of the people and that they would be receptive when presented with the gospel.
- Pray that the fiery spirit of the people of Sa'ada would be turned to Jesus, and they would be on fire for Him.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would come down like rain in the desert of Sa'ada.

Day 21

Topic: Folk Islam

Scripture:

Micah 5:12-13 I will destroy your witchcraft and you will no longer cast spells. I will destroy your carved images and your sacred stones from among you; you will no longer bow down to the work of your hands.

Information:

Across many Islamic nations including Yemen, there are Muslims who practice folk Islam, a blend of monotheistic Islam and animism. This often involves superstitious beliefs in spirits, demons, fairies, charms, spells, and omens. Some even incorporate witchcraft, sorcery, or astrology into their belief system. Witches are consulted on how to avoid evil spirits to whom almost any misfortune can be attributed. Some communicate with spirits through dreams, visions, or divinations. Those who practice folk Islam live in constant fear of curses and harmful spirits.

These Muslims are still very loyal to Islam, but the practices are woven in with the five pillars of Islam and other duties of Muslims. Witch doctors will sometimes prescribe treatments that involve the Qur'an; wearing a pouch containing its verses is one example. Folk Islam is also evidenced through belief in black and white magic or even ancestor worship. Although these obviously contradict formal, orthodox Islam, they become a regular part of everyday life for many in Yemen and across the Islamic world.

Prayer points:

- Pray that Yemenis would abandon superstition and Islam for the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Pray for children and families who are taught to fear evil spirits and wear charms or amulets for protection.
- Pray that Yemenis seeking advice will not consult witch doctors or other spiritists but that they will consult God's Word the Bible or Christians living among them.
- Pray that Yemenis will abandon the fear associated with folk Islam for the peace that comes only through Christ.

Day 22

Topic: University Students

Scripture:

Psalm 78:5-7 He decreed statues for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds, but would keep his commands.

Information:

The students at the university are separated by gender. In an English lab the female students are allowed to use a small room at the entrance to the lab room. A large number of girls crowd into this room; however, they do not pass the area where the male students are taught. Even though these girls are better educated, most of them cover their faces except for their eyes and conform to the required dress. Very few wear only the head covering and none are bare headed. Most of them allow their picture to be taken, but there are those who still feel this is a bad omen.

The male students outnumber the girls by a wide margin and are in a larger room. There are computers with English assistance software lining the walls. They dress in what one might consider street clothes. They are almost anxious to have their picture taken and like to have it taken with visitors.

The students are very friendly and open to conversations with foreigners. These young people are hungry for information about other places from those who have actually been. They are interested in jobs, the work situations, availability of jobs, and particularly the salaries certain jobs earn. Conversation with these students will eventually come around to politics and religion, and there is usually opportunity to witness, provided the group is small.

Prayer points:

- Pray that these faith conversations will be allowed to continue.
- Pray that students will open the opportunity to witness and that the witness is given openly and sincerely.
- Pray that the students hear and know the truth and will be willing to share this wonderful news so it can be passed on through future generations.

Day 23

Topic: Say'un

Scripture:

Revelation 7:9-10 After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

Information:

Say'un (also spelled Seiyun) is the largest town in the Wadi Hadramawt valley and has a population of 30,000 people. It is an ancient marketplace on a major caravan route and is also the entry point for most tourists visiting the area because it is in the middle of the Wadi Hadramawt. Say'un lies at the foot of a mountain wall in the midst of many palm trees, so many that it is often referred to as 'the town of a million palm trees.'

In 1490 AD Say'un had a major economy boost when some 10,000 members of the Kathiris, a northern Yemeni tribe, moved into the town and made it their capital which they ruled until the revolution in 1967. Some of the greatest buildings of Say'un were built by the Kathiris, most notably the sultan's palace and the turquoise tomb of Habshi, as well as mosques and minarets which are some of the most beautiful and ornate in all of Yemen. The sultan's palace is widely known in Yemen, and likenesses of it are sold throughout the country. It is a multi-story white-plastered colossus with light-blue decoration and sits as the highest point in the city, right above the town's market, so that it is very visible. After the revolution in 1967 it was emptied and turned into an archeological museum, in which inscribed slabs and figurines, bronze statuettes and pieces of pottery from recently excavated local sites are displayed. This museum can be visited by locals and tourists alike, Muslim or not. However, the mosques, as well as the tombs and graveyard nearby in the valley of Wadi Hadramawt are strictly off limits to non-Muslims.

The Wadi Hadramawt is named after Hazarmaveth, the great-great-grandson of Shem (Genesis 10:26). The Hadramis believe they are direct descendants of Joktan, one of Noah's close descendants. The Hadramawt played a significant role in the trade of the sixth century BC up through the end of the first century AD. It was famous for its spices and perfumes, especially since it lay along the famous Frankincense Road, which linked Yemen to Israel. The Hadramawt is quickly becoming more popular in the tourism industry, because of its rich history and hospitality. This has the potential to help the economy of the Wadi Hadramawt as a whole, including Say'un.

Prayer points:

- Pray that the people of Say'un and those throughout the Wadi Hadramawt would come to know the God of Shem and Noah.
- Pray that Christians would come into Say'un and Wadi Hadramawt as tourists, and be able to share the love of Christ with people there.
- Pray that God will prepare the hearts of the people of Say'un and Wadi Hadramawt to receive the gospel message when it reaches them.

Day 24

Topic: Pilgrimage to Mecca

Scripture:

Genesis 12:1-2 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing."

Information:

The pilgrimage or hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam, to be performed at least once in a lifetime by all Muslims who are able and can afford it. The pilgrimage to Mecca is seen as a demonstration of devotion to God and should strengthen one's faith in Islam. The "greater hajj" is performed only on five specific days of the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar, and there are prescribed rituals which must be done. Men are to wear only a garment consisting of two white sheets and sandals. This dress is to symbolize purity, simplicity, and the equality of all pilgrims in the sight of God. There is no required dress for women other than the usual head covering. As many have seen in pictures, pilgrims circle the Kaaba in Mecca seven times. The Kaaba is thought to be the original site of an altar built by Abraham and is considered the most holy place in Islam; it is also the direction to which all Muslims pray daily. Next the pilgrim journeys seven times back and forth between two hills, re-enacting Hagar's frantic search for water in the desert for her son Ishmael. Though not required, most Muslims drink from the well Hagar found at the completion of this task. Many Muslims, while it is not part of the hajj, will travel at this time to Medina to visit the Mosque of the Prophet and Muhammad's tomb. Upon returning to Mecca, their next trip is to Mina, a small nearby town, where they spend the night. The next day is spent in a defined area on the plain of Mount Arafat. There are no specific rituals for this time, but many use it for prayer and reflection. Some believe all prayers offered from this location will be answered. After sunset the pilgrim goes to yet another area in the desert to gather forty-nine pebbles. The next morning the symbolic stoning of the devil begins when they throw seven stones at the largest of three specific walls in Mina; after this an animal sacrifice is offered. The pilgrim goes to Mecca, circles the Kaaba seven times again, and returns to Mina. The following day seven stones are thrown at each of the three walls, and this is repeated the next day if the pilgrim has not yet returned to Mecca. There is a final circling of the Kaaba (seven times), and the pilgrimage is complete.

Prayer points:

- Pray that Yemenis will come to understand that these rituals are meaningless in obtaining true salvation.
- Pray that God would send Christians to Yemen to explain the true way to Himself.
- Pray for the pilgrims to see the futility in performing rituals and come to God through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Day 25

Topic: The Economy

Scripture:

John 4:14b Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

Information:

Yemen is the poorest country in the Arabian Peninsula, but tremendous progress has been made toward Westernization in the last fifty years. Traditionally men were either farmers and fishermen or merchants and traders. With the improvement of transportation and the discovery of oil, many have moved to the cities. Thousands of Yemeni men work abroad, in places as diverse as Saudi Arabia and the United States, as laborers. The educated are becoming doctors, teachers, and computer specialists. Also, many work in government offices or for the military. Some who come to the city are poverty stricken, live in slums, and beg on the streets. The few wealthy drive BMW and Mercedes cars with pride.

Lack of water is an ongoing problem in several areas of Yemen. Much water is used to grow qat, the major cash crop of Yemen and a huge factor in the economy of the country. Due to population growth, adequate electricity is also a challenge.

Prayer points:

- Pray that the people will learn that only living water will satisfy the thirst of the soul.
- Pray that a low economy would not cause any hindrance to the spread and acceptance of the gospel message.

Day 26

Topic: Dhamar

Scripture:

Psalm 32:8-10 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding, but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you. Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.

Information:

The ancient city of Dhamar is in the center of the Dhamar basin in the Yemen Highlands. It has a population of approximately 140,000 inhabitants and lies in a valley between two volcanic peaks. Founded by the legendary Himyarite king Dhamar Ali, who was also known for restoring the great dam of Ma'rib, it is the only town in northern Yemen that is just a settlement on the plains and not surrounded by any structural or natural defense such as a wall or mountains.

Because of its positioning it has good connections with nearby governorates and acts as a trade and administrative center for the surrounding regions. Dhamar agriculture is centered around their grain industry. There are also some small and mid-sized handicraft industries, as well as the raising of thoroughbred horses, which is very important in Dhamar and has given the city much fame. However, Dhamar's primary claim to fame is that it is the center of the Zaydi Shi'i Islam orientation, which has been the leading religious orientation in Yemen for centuries, and is also home to a famous school of Islamic theology.

The city of Dhamar is divided into two sections, which are marked by a zone of irrigated market gardens. The city has some typical Yemeni multi-story stone tower houses, but most people live in one-story mud-brick homes. Although decorations are not as elaborate as those in places like Sana'a, the walls often have inlaid arches and fanlights of brick. Brick walls may be plastered with mud, inside and out, which gives them a smoother appearance.

Local historians claim that the history of Dhamar goes back to the first millennium BC, but the first mention of it in historical documents comes around 1200 AD, so its actual age is perhaps unknown. In any case, Dhamar was praised at that time for its good architecture and rich agriculture, and it is still known today for the same reasons.

Prayer points:

- Pray for God to make Himself known to the people of Dhamar in visions and dreams.
- Pray that the people of Dhamar would seek out the Lord and those who will teach them about Him.
- Pray that the city of Dhamar would someday be known as a place where truth is taught rather than Islamic doctrine and theology.

Day 27

Topic: Fasting during Ramadan

Scripture:

Joel 1:14 Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD.

Information:

Another of Islam's "five pillars" is the fast during the holy month of Ramadan. Muslims are required to fast from food, drink, and sexual relations from dawn until dusk. Exceptions, however, are made for young children, pregnant or nursing women, the elderly, or those with a medical condition preventing the fast. The purpose of the fast is to allow Muslims to focus on devoting themselves to God and to help them remember the needy who go without on a regular basis. Muslims fast from sun up to sun down but then usually have a feast in the evening for the whole family. Many women, while fasting, cook and make preparations for this time throughout the day.

In addition to the fast, Muslims are also to eliminate irreligious sights and sounds during the month of Ramadan. Some refuse to listen to any music that is not expressly religious in nature. During this time, all good Muslims are expected to put more effort into all of the teachings of Islam – pray more, give more charity, and avoid cursing, among others. Ramadan is considered the most holy, spiritually significant month in the Islamic lunar calendar because it is during this month that the Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad. Remembering this, some Muslims will read and/or recite the entire Qur'an within the month of Ramadan.

Prayer points:

- Pray that Yemeni Muslims would not fast needlessly (as is described in Isaiah 58) but that they would come to know the true God through Christ and develop a relationship with Him through prayer and fasting.
- Pray that Yemenis would abandon the belief that works such as these will attain salvation and rather depend on Jesus.
- Pray that Yemenis will have dreams and visions during the month of Ramadan that would point to Christ.

Day 28

Topic: A Family Meal

Scripture:

Matthew 14:19-21 And He directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, He gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Information:

In Yemen every member of the family eats together – men, women and children, except for children that cannot chew the food. This is true even if there is more than one wife, but if there are more than fifteen people in the family they split into two groups. The males older than seven eat together first; then the females and all the children seven and younger eat together. When guests who are not family members are invited to share a meal with the family, the men and women eat separately.

If there is an infant or child that cannot yet chew food, they are fed separately with help from the father, mother, or an older sister or brother. This feeding often requires the other family member to chew the food and then place it in the child's mouth.

In the Yemeni home the food is served in the room that would equate to a living room or great room. There is a flat cushion on the floor around the walls where one sits to eat. The food is placed on a plastic sheet or cover in the middle of the floor. Each person serves himself and eats from a plate on the floor or on a small low table if one is provided.

All the women participate in cooking and serving the food. The bread served with almost every meal looks like a large pizza crust but is soft. To bake it the cook rolls dough out until it is round and flat. It is then thrown up against the inside of a large cylinder oven that resembles the inside of a washing machine. These breads are served whole along with various vegetable dishes and hummus. To eat the food one tears off pieces of the bread and pinches the food up in it.

Prayer points:

- Pray that just as families eat together they will come to Christ together as a family.
- Pray that Christian workers will be invited to eat in Yemeni homes in order to share the gospel.
- Pray for Yemeni children brought up in Islam to have opportunities to learn of Jesus and His love for them.

Day 29

Topic: Mocha

Scripture:

Haggai 2:9 “The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,” says the Lord Almighty. “And in this place I will grant peace,” declares the Lord Almighty.

Information:

Mocha (also spelled Mukha) is a city on the southern tip of Yemen, near the entrance to the Red Sea. It has a population of about 15,000 people. Mocha is known for its historical past. It is believed that the sheikh who founded the city is also responsible for introducing coffee drinking to Arabia. The port of Mocha was once the only port that shipped coffee to Europe. In the mid-1600s coffee prices went up so high that the merchants of Mocha became very rich. This continued for over a century, and grand palaces were erected throughout the city.

Eventually the demand for coffee and high prices encouraged the smuggling of the beans to Ceylon, Indonesia and South America where they grew well. Once this happened and the coffee plant was growing in other places, the prices began going down. While there was still a demand for top of the line coffee grown only in Yemen, called mocha, it was not as strong as it had been before, and the great wealth of the city began to diminish.

Today Mocha has been surpassed in importance by other port cities of Yemen, like Aden and Hodeidah, as well as other coffee exporting countries. Mocha is now a small fishing village with little economic importance, and most of the grand buildings of its former days of glory have fallen into decay, only brief reminders of a grand past.

Prayer points:

- Pray for an economic boost in the city of Mocha.
- Pray that the city would be greater than it was in the past and that people would give God the glory for it.
- Pray that the people of Mocha would turn to Jesus for answers and hope for a better future.
- Pray that the gospel might permeate the city of Mocha and become its next major export – all over Yemen and throughout the world.

Day 30

Topic: “Who do you say I am?”

Scripture:

Matthew 16:13-16 [Jesus] asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” “But what about you?” He asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Information:

It is interesting that Muslims give a similar answer to those of Jesus’ day to this eternally significant question the Lord posed to His disciples. Muslims believe that Jesus was a prophet, a holy man sent by God to teach people His ways, able to do miracles with God’s anointing and blessing. According to the Qur’an, Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, was righteous, was sent by Allah, and is even recognized as the Messiah. However, Muslims differ on the meaning of Messiah from Christians or Jews. Islam honors Jesus as a prophet, equal with many other prophets, but not as God or the Son of God.

One important distinction from the Christian faith is that Muslims do not believe Jesus died on the cross. They do not see a need for this death because they do not acknowledge sin the way a Christian would. However, primarily, Muslims do not believe Allah would allow his prophet to endure such a shameful and unworthy death as that on the cross. Muslims do accept that Jesus ascended into heaven – they believe He never died at all – and that He will return to earth and die a natural death just as any other man.

Prayer points:

- Pray that many Yemenis will learn, as Peter declared, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God!
- Pray that those who read of Jesus in the Qur’an would be drawn to reading more about Him in the Bible.
- Pray that God would open their hearts to the truth of Jesus’ death on the cross and its personal significance for each of them.
- Pray that the people of Yemen would learn the true meaning of Isa Al-Masih (Jesus the Messiah) and embrace Him wholeheartedly.