

PRAYING FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

DAILY PRAYER GUIDE

FEBRUARY 2018

Don't worry about the wicked
or envy those who do wrong.

Psalm 37:1, New Living Translation

On the leader's desk, facing his guests, was the slogan: "Why pray when you can worry?" There's plenty to worry about, in our region as elsewhere. He wanted everyone to know what he'd learned, that when we worry we put ourselves in charge, but when we pray we recognise God is.

Psalm 37 is an acrostic, an A to Z Psalm that calls us to faithful resilience. The first step to building that confidence is the decision not to worry, clear that the Lord is present and at work, and that God's big picture is securely in place. We may be sure those who oppose him will fade and wither as his purposes for his people and his world are revealed, supremely through Christ and now through his church.

1 THURSDAY MIDDLE EAST

Praise God we have many enquiries from people interested in working in the region. As **Andrea** talks with mobilisers to answer questions and **team leaders** continue to welcome visitors, pray for some of the enquiries to result in long term arrivals and placements.

2 FRIDAY LEBANON

Audio players containing the bible and worship songs continue to go out to shut-in domestic workers across Beirut. May the Lord protect those involved; and may each audio player be welcomed and change a life as its recipient listens and responds.

3 SATURDAY EGYPT

TJ* wants to focus more on discipleship, and recently gave up one night teaching English to be available to women interested in the Word. She's helping with a Christianity Explored course running this month and next and it has already led to new fresh conversations.

4 SUNDAY LEBANON

"The Bread of Life Society was founded to strengthen the unity of the churches in the north of Lebanon, and to encourage them in their Gospel witness. Pray that in our busy days we will not lose sight of these goals nor lose hope as we long to see them realised."

5 MONDAY JORDAN

Becky H asks for open doors for God-honoring friendships with Arab women, in church communities and among neighbours. "Ask for God's grace to learn Arabic well, with a pleasing accent, at school and as I meet them; and may I be given perseverance, discipline, humility, creativity, joy and gratitude in the learning journey."

6 TUESDAY EGYPT

TJ* teaches art to children of people working cross-culturally. "The school is helping me apply for residence through a local church. The school has waited a very long time for this to be possible, and if it becomes a reality this new route will open doors for others."

7 WEDNESDAY LEBANON

The Baptist Seminary (ABTS) have some strategic conferences over the coming months, aiming to empower creative ministry in the region. Uphold those preparing, especially for the Middle East Consultation (18-22 June) which will wrestle with 'a theology of religions' and its implications. **Karen** is one of the presenters.

8 THURSDAY MIDDLE EAST

Pray for Palestinians in this region who are hurt by the present focus on Jerusalem. Ask the God of peace to bring them to know true comfort in Christ, keep this region in peace, and pour out His Spirit upon the many who still walk in darkness.

9 FRIDAY ARABIAN PENINSULA

A Yemeni prays: "Lord, help us. We're tired of this senseless war, the blood and the anxiety the people live under. We pray for the Kingdom of God to be established. Help us to meditate on Your Word, day & night. And give us songs of deliverance in our hearts."

10 SATURDAY IRAQI KURDISTAN

Displaced communities often move, so programmes we support through people and finance have to adjust and find resources. Give thanks that funding for one 'Child Friendly Space' has come, enabling it to resume quickly after it was suspended in January.

11 SUNDAY JORDAN

A local church that two of our workers attend is under pressure. It has been closed for the time being, because the pastor was unable to sign a paper asking him not to share faith outside. He and his family are seeking to move to a place in the West.

12 MONDAY MIDDLE EAST

This week, **S*** will spend time with leaders from a partner network serving in the region. As he gives advice, training & encouragement on security-related issues, pray for all who minister under opposition to know the Lord's wisdom, protection and freedom from fear.

13 TUESDAY EGYPT

"Our team is investing time writing our vision, strategy, training curriculum and other key resources to help acquaint members, partners and friends with the opportunities, obstacles and good news for the Kingdom here. Ask for fruit in growing opportunities and new members with effective, enduring ministries here."

14 WEDNESDAY LEBANON

SC* leads weekly 'Mainly Music' groups for Syrian mums & kids; may they feel secure and loved, with fun, laughter and people coming to know Jesus. **M & V*** have a volunteer applying for next year and others interested; "Keep asking for long-term partners to join us where there are currently no other foreign workers."

15 THURSDAY JORDAN

Pray for students to understand the need to know Arabic in its written form (hard work as it is), to be able to be faithful ministers of the Word. **B & C*** are learning with a different group and ask, "Pray we can grasp this difficult language during our next year of studies."

16 FRIDAY INTERNATIONAL

The SIM family prepares to celebrate 125 years of ministry at its Global Assembly (25 February - 2 March). **S***, **BK***, **MikeP**, **Andrea** and **George & Sara** will present Middle East realities, strategy and opportunities. May our conversations, relationships and sessions result in greater interest & understanding of the context for witness.

17 SATURDAY LEBANON

Mike & Vicky give thanks for Christmas events, new families coming and kids now enjoying the youth group. "We're grateful to God for ongoing gifts & funding but would love to see local churches benefit from being bigger stakeholders in the Bread of Life partnership. We long to see them growing in desire to grow and not just survive."

This week's special focus is on Iraqi Kurdistan

18 SUNDAY

A local Kurdish church welcomed several new families displaced by violence after the Kurdish referendum last September. Praise God for placing people according to His sovereign purposes (Acts 17:26); several have come to know and love our Lord Jesus. Pray their discipleship and witness bear much fruit.

19 MONDAY

Scripture calendars have gone out, with God's righteousness and justice the theme. February's verse pictures Mt Hailgurd and says, 'Your righteousness is like the highest mountains, your justice like the great deep' (Psalm 36:6). May many be convicted of their lack of righteousness and want to hear what Christ alone can bring.

20 TUESDAY

Papers to release Sorani Bibles in the south are still not complete and yet more senior official signatures are required. Praise God that His Word is not bound as many access the translation on-line; we long to see hard copies available at April's international book fair.

21 WEDNESDAY

Give thanks for the team of nationals working at the Biblica office. Ask for them to continue to serve with joy, and that each will grow in their abilities, confidence and competence. Pray especially for the relatively new staff member responsible for leading distribution.

22 THURSDAY

Work among displaced children includes support for disabled and children from the host community. May staff experienced in Down's syndrome, autism and visual impairment work well together and help children integrate with others and the local community. May God's love continue to encourage and flow through the team.

23 FRIDAY

The Kurdish church is using a Bible storying programme throughout the week, sharing the Good News with men, women and children. May these seekers, many of whom are illiterate, come to know the best story and the Best Storyteller, and may His words be shared with their wider families.

24 SATURDAY JORDAN

"We have about 50 Iraqi men coming to study the Word in our Bible study. Pray the Holy Spirit will open their eyes to know the gospel and understand what it means for their lives and future hopes."

25 SUNDAY MIDDLE EAST

Pray for churches to know grace, to abide in Christ; to love God with all our heart, soul, mind; and to love one another and neighbors well (John 15 & 13:34-35; Matthew 22:37-39). May God teach us the mystery of Christ in us, and the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27).

26 MONDAY LEBANON

Daily at 7.20am staff come to pray before school begins. On Wednesday, **Ruth** begins a series of four chapels - a serial story for 260 eight to eleven year-olds. Pray for her preparation and delivery, and for the Holy Spirit to apply the lessons to their lives.

27 TUESDAY INTERNATIONAL

The Global Assembly continues in South Africa. Pray for all who are attending to be encouraged, envisioned, and given insight and wisdom about their part in God's global purposes. Ask for clarity as they share with teams, colleagues and churches they work with.

28 WEDNESDAY LEBANON

A number of ABTS students do not yet know what their next step will be after they graduate this year. As they prepare to return to their home countries pray for God to enable them to put their learning into practice, and direct and use them in ministry.

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** Some names are only shown as initials for security.*

MECO Australia is an interdenominational group of evangelical Christians working alongside SIM Middle East, encouraging national churches as they engage in effective witness to Christ.

This update comes to you from MECO Australia.

Please contact us for changes of address, postal address or for further information:

PO Box 136, Kerrimuir, Victoria 3129

Tel: (03) 9898 0077

E: office@meco.org.au W: mecoglobal.org