

INTERCEDE

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Training 'Jonahs' to Reach Modern Nineveh

By Global Initiative Director of Training

The very heart of Global Initiative's mission is to train and equip Spirit-empowered evangelists and church planters among Muslims. Experience has shown us that an untrained Christian is sometimes overwhelmed when dealing with a well-trained Muslim.

Many Christians seem paralyzed and unable to go to Muslims with the gospel. Others focus on Islamic extremism and believe Muslims cannot, or should not, be reached. We are often like Jonah, unwilling or afraid to preach salvation or even express the love of Jesus to people we perceive as dangerous or our enemies. A Greek gentleman succinctly described this form of spiritual paralysis when he said, "We hate people we don't even know, and we don't get to know them because we hate them."

This vicious cycle reminds me of the attitude Jonah had toward the people of Nineveh. But God said, "Nineveh has more than 120,000 people who cannot tell their right hand

from their left ... Should I not be concerned about that great city?" (Jonah 4:11)

Jonah's prejudice and self-centeredness blinded him to the lostness of the Ninevites and God's love for them. The Muslim world is our present day Nineveh. Muslims don't know Jesus as Savior and Lord. Should we not be concerned for them? We should! The Jonah Initiative is the inclusive term we use to represent the various training ministries of Global Initiative: Institutes of Islamic Studies, Muslim Awareness Seminars, Muslim Evangelism Training Schools, Bible School courses, etc. This article will focus on Institutes of Islamic Studies (IIS), the most in-depth of the training and equipping opportunities we conduct in strategic locations around the world.

The monumental task of reaching 1.5 billion Muslims with the gospel of Jesus can only be accomplished as God scatters in the hearts of Christians throughout the world a

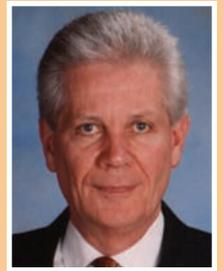
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Until All Have Heard

How then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? – Romans 10:14

Jim Bennett
Global Initiative:
Reaching Muslim Peoples



Global Initiative's purpose statement is "To equip and mobilize the Church to reach Muslims everywhere." We partner with great national constituencies in providing a multi-track delivery system to equip their missionaries, church planters, and leaders for ministry in Muslim contexts. The Jonah Initiative is the umbrella term we use to represent the various training programs of Global Initiative. Those programs include Institutes of Islamic Studies, Muslim Awareness Seminars, Muslim Evangelism Training Schools, and Bible School courses.

Our lead *Intercede* article is written by the director of training for Global Initiative, and focuses on Institutes of Islamic Studies (IIS) — the most in-depth of Global Initiative's training programs. While Institute of Islamic Studies may sound a little "academic" — the thrust and content is strongly evangelistic. In some countries it is necessary to use the name Institute of Islamic Studies, since it is seen as less threatening to governments and fundamentalist Muslims.

The geographic scope of Global Initiative's purpose statement is simply "everywhere!" The world's 1.5 billion Muslims are scattered across the globe. Here is a partial list of locations where Global Initiative partners to provide Institutes of Islamic Studies: India, Romania, Argentina, the Philippines, El Salvador, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Ukraine, Hong Kong, Holland, Singapore, Cuba, Brazil, Italy, and the U.S.

An IIS program is typically held at a seminary or Bible school campus, or a local church — and normally lasts for two to six weeks. Global Initiative provides or recruits the best teachers and practitioners available. Courses range from Introduction to Islam to Church Planting in the Muslim Context.

The fruit of these programs never ceases to amaze us. Yusuf (pseudonym) was born and raised as a Muslim in a large Islamic nation, and trained to become an Islamic spiritual leader. He was led to Jesus by the patient witness of an IIS graduate. Yusuf was faithfully discipled and was soon ready for water baptism. However, the spiritual



progress of Yusuf's wife, also from a Muslim background, was not as rapid. Yusuf patiently waited until his wife was ready — so they could be baptized together. Miraculously, Yusuf and his wife agreed to attend the annual IIS in his country. On the first day of classes, the Holy Spirit confirmed the biblical teaching they had been receiving. That night the couple began a discussion about spiritual matters that lasted until 3 a.m. the following morning. At 3 a.m. the cautious spouse decided she was ready to surrender completely to Jesus and follow Him in water baptism. Yusuf immediately called his friend and mentor — and the happy couple were baptized at 4 a.m. This couple is now actively engaged in a church planting effort!

Please pray for these vital training programs. IIS students are the cream of the crop. They are doing the most challenging work in the world; providing an adequate witness of Jesus Christ in Muslim countries. Thanks for your prayers and support. 

Muslim World News



Sudan

Convert loses wife, children

A year ago Mohammed Khidir Khalil was glad his family had obtained refugee status in Egypt after fleeing Islamic hostilities in Sudan. The 38-year-old Christian was also heartened that his formerly unbelieving wife was attending church.

Today the convert from Islam is back in Sudan fighting to recover his family after his in-laws compelled his wife to claim she was Muslim and divorce him. A Sudanese court automatically granted her custody of their two sons and forbade him to see them, he said. He fears that if he persists in his legal battle, he faces the threat of being accused of "apostasy," or leaving Islam.

It was last August that his Muslim mother-in-law visited them in Egypt. "Without my knowledge, she took my wife and children back to Sudan," Khalil said. Hearing nothing from his family after his mother-in-law took his wife and two sons back to Sudan, on Christmas Day Khalil decided to return to an undisclosed town in Sudan to search for them. He was

shocked to discover that his wife, Manal Hassan, had filed for divorce on grounds that she was a Muslim and he a Christian.

Last February, Khalil decided to appeal the divorce ruling. His wife had presented a copy of the UNHCR certificate showing Khalil's testimony as a Christian, however, and that was proof enough for a judge to rule in March that the marriage be annulled and the children automatically handed over to the spouse professing "the popular religion" – Islam, the supposed faith of Hassan.

In spite of the court's ruling that Khalil did not have a right to even visit the children, in April he decided to try to see them. His former wife's family threatened to call police if he persisted. "I am very upset with courts like this that bar one from seeing one's children," he said. "I have to appeal against this."

Asked what risks he might incur by appealing, Khalil said it could lead to a case against him for apostasy – punishable by death in Sudan, where sharia is established as a primary source of legislation. — *Compass*

Pakistan

Quran defilement sentence dismissed

A court acquitted a Christian couple of "blasphemy" charges, overturning their life sentences.

Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi accepted the couple's appeal because prosecutors failed to prove allegations that 32-year-old Munir Masih and his wife Ruqayya defiled the Quran or insulted Muhammad on Dec. 8, 2008.

The allegations by Muhammad Nawaz in Mustafabad, came under sections 295-B and 295-C of Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Shakir said that the First Information Report indicated Nawaz initially accused Ruqayya Masih of using the Quran for exorcism. He accused her of touching the Quran without ablution and said that her husband was equally culpable since he remained a silent spectator. Nawaz also claimed the couple insulted Muhammad.

A trial court had exonerated them from charges of blasphemy against Muhammad in 2010 but sentenced them to life imprisonment (25 years in Pakistan) for allegedly defiling the Quran. — *Compass*

Training 'Jonahs' to Re

Continued



burden to evangelize and plant churches among Muslims. From all parts of the globe national leaders and missionaries are asking Global Initiative to help train and equip workers for effective service. Through the ministry of Institutes of Islamic Studies in strategic locations, hundreds of present day “Jonahs” are being transformed into trained, equipped and empowered evangelists and church planters to our modern day Nineveh.

Emmanuel* lost his uncle and nephew when Muslim rebels killed them in their southern Philippine village. With hatred in his heart Emmanuel joined the military so he could fight the Muslims. He found Jesus in the military, and the Lord led him to IIS Philippines. There Emmanuel experienced a deep spiritual transformation, and he received a vision to do evangelism in Mindanao. Today he and his wife have a school and a feeding program for Muslim children. IIS Philippines has trained over 500 evangelists and church planters over the past 16 years from 40 nations representing over 20 different church and missions organizations.

Carla, a dentist in her Latin American nation with relatively few Muslims, attended an IIS taught by a Global Initiative team member and was called of God to the Muslims of Indonesia. She gave up her dental practice and was sent to the land of her calling by churches in her native country. She loved the people and lived with and among Muslims, learned their language and is ministering effectively to them. Carla twice attended IIS in Indonesia, put her training into practice for several years and has now become one of the most effective instructors in the IIS training program. Global Initiative now conducts an IIS in seven cities on seven different islands across this vast archipelago nation. To date over 1,700 Indonesian workers over the past dozen years have been trained in Muslim evangelism and church planting.

Agus and Salim are IIS graduates called of God to reach the Sundanese of Indonesia numbering 32 million. They are the largest Muslim unreached people group in the world. An essential component of IIS training is to seek culturally sensitive and relevant ways to present the clear and complete message of the gospel of Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to Muslim people. In order to establish their value in the community and gain favor with the people, Agus and Salim set up a makeshift clinic – primarily to help distribute much needed vitamins.

A mother brought her sick child to them, but they knew the baby's illness was beyond what vitamins could cure. They spotted a leather pouch around the baby's neck. It contained verses of the Quran intended to ward off evil spirits and heal diseases. Agus and Salim told the mother her baby would be healed through prayer in the name of Jesus, but she must first cut loose the fetish.

Because it was a “holy man,” the mother reasoned, who wrote the Quranic verses and put the scrap of paper in the pouch and placed it around the baby's neck; therefore it must be a “holy man” who removes it. Considering Agus and Salim to be holy men, she granted them permission to cut loose the amulet and pray.

News of the child's almost instant healing spread among family and friends, and soon other desperate parents brought their sick family members for prayer. Many individuals – even entire families – have repented of their sins and accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord. Agus and Salim are now discipling these new believers in small groups scattered throughout numerous villages.

Philip, one of the leaders of IIS Indonesia stated, “IIS is THE most significant tool we have for opening up eyes and hearts to the reality of how to impact our Muslim

Reach Modern Nineveh

from Page 1



world here in Indonesia. If every pastor and leader could attend and be impacted like we were this year, the results would be staggering. As it is, we are seeing advances every year in ministries that are effectively reaching their target audiences.”

IIS training programs are taught by outstanding Islamic scholars and missionaries with extensive experience in ministry to Muslims in various parts of the world, offering unique opportunities to deepen the understanding of, and love for, Muslim peoples. Although an IIS may be held in an academic environment, the IIS experience is much more than an intellectual exercise. In addition to lectures, reading and writing assignments, group studies and discussions, formal and informal interaction with the instructors, etc., an IIS involves regular devotional times, worship services with a message from God's Word, and student-led intercessory prayer for nations and Muslim unreached people groups.

Millions of Muslim immigrants are flooding into Europe. The IIS in Amsterdam is raising up and training dozens of Spirit-anointed workers. Romania may seem an unlikely location for an IIS, but God revealed to Romanian pastor Grigore* that believers in this poor country have, for too long, had their hands out to the West (to receive). Now God was calling them to extend their hands to the East (to go in missionary service). For 12 years Global initiative has partnered with pastor Grigore to train several hundred Romanian workers at the missionary training school he established. Romanians perceive their mission field to be Europe as well as Turkey, Central Eurasia and beyond. The majority of their targeted groups are Muslim.

The IIS programs in El Salvador and Argentina are in response to the Lord of the Harvest calling hundreds of

Latin American pastors and workers to go as missionaries to Muslims. Other Global Initiative IIS programs are in Ethiopia, India, Singapore, Ukraine, England, Belgium, Hong Kong and the United States.**

IIS is designed to serve field worker candidates, students sensing God's call to Muslim people groups, workers on home leave, professional tentmakers in Islamic countries, as well as pastors and Christians serving where there are growing numbers of Muslims. Amazingly, many IIS attendees have grown up among Muslims assuming that Muslims could not be saved! Therefore they have never studied Islam or given a thought to Muslim evangelism. They often come to IIS with a Jonah attitude full of prejudice, stereotypes, bitterness and anger toward Muslims. Repeatedly we witness the strong conviction of the Holy Spirit that leads to godly repentance. Hatred is replaced by love, indifference is replaced by compassion. ignorance is replaced by knowledge on fire — and a “Jonah attitude” is replaced by a biblical perspective.

Chris, an American “Jonah,” wrote to an IIS instructor, “I can't express how much your teachings meant to me. I learned so much! Your presentation and teaching style is so impactful. I now have an understanding of Islam as a religion and the Muslim as a person. This will result in the development of a relationship with Muslims, allowing the Holy Spirit to intercede and allowing my witness to take root. Understanding Islam also helps me better understand the uniqueness of our Christian faith and the unique and abiding relationship with the triune God.”

Ong, a student from Singapore, was sent by his home church as a missionary to Muslims in Kazakhstan. He wrote, “The training in IIS was an eventful one for me. I began not knowing any clue concerning ministry to

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Muslims. The IIS not only provided me with the necessary factual knowledge, but also fueled me with the passion and burden.”

IIS instructor Rob wrote, “I cannot tell you how excited and moved I was by the experience! It was a treasured opportunity to share insights from our own research and experience in ministry to Muslims with such a receptive group of Asian students and colleagues. There are few things more strategic I could do to help our movement. IIS is practical as well as academically advanced. IIS is spiritually potent and is a world-changing injection of 'knowledge on fire' to emerging pioneer missionaries and leaders.”

The ministry of IIS has served to train and equip nearly 3,000 evangelists and church planters. With sufficient prayer support and financial resources, Global Initiative will continue to partner with missionaries and national leaders strengthening existing training programs and launching additional Institutes of Islamic Studies.

Please pray for us as we train hundreds of present day “Jonahs” to reach our modern day Nineveh.

** This and all other names herein are pseudonyms.*

*** For information on the Summer Institute of Islamic Studies in the U.S. go to www.agts.edu and search SIIS.*





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Friday, July 5, 2013. Please pray

...for the world's 1.5 billion Muslims as they begin their fasting month of Ramadan. Ramadan starts near July 8 and concludes near Aug. 7.

...for Druze Muslims in Lebanon seeking to know more about God.

...for Muslim children living in Turkey. Turkey is home to 19 million kids under the age of 14 — and 97 percent are Muslims.

Friday, July 12, 2013. Please pray

...for Muslims in the Maldives. Despite hostility toward Christianity, pray that Muslims in the Maldives would come to know Jesus Christ.

...for India's 178 million Muslims to freely hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

...for Christians engaged in prison ministry to Muslims in the U.S. prison system.

Friday, July 19, 2013. Please pray

...for refugees across the globe. Approximately 80 percent of the world's refugees are Muslim.

...for national churches across the Muslim world as they continue training Christian leaders.

...for God to fill the hearts of Muslims in Egypt with a strong desire for progress and liberty, so that the present trend towards Islamization might be reversed.

Friday, July 26, 2013. Please pray

...for an end to deadly clashes in Myanmar between Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims.

...for the Underground Church in Iran. Persecution of Christians remains rampant in the Shia nation of 75 million Muslims.

...for Christian believers in Morocco to be filled with wisdom and the vision to share Jesus Christ with 33 million Muslims.



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Friday, Aug. 2, 2013. Please pray

...for Muslims in Libya where despite calls for freedom, *sharia* may be adopted as principal law.

...for Christian pastors across the Muslim world. Pray that through divine intervention, windows of opportunity would open allowing indigenous pastors to openly preach about the love of Jesus Christ.

...for Muslim students in American universities to receive witness of Jesus Christ.

Friday, Aug. 9, 2013. Please pray

...for Muslims in Syria. The country remains on edge with protests, arrests, imprisonment and many deaths. Also, if the Assad regime falls, Syrian Christians could face waves of persecution.

...that Muslims in Turkey will hear witness of Jesus Christ, despite hardline Islam threatening the political balance.

...for millions of Muslims attending mosques today in Iran. Pray that the Lord would reveal His love to them in miraculous ways.

Friday, Aug. 16, 2013. Please pray

...for Somali's Muslims to be free from the yoke of the devastating al Shabaab Islamic militia.

...for Sufi Muslims across the Islamic world seeking to know more about God.

...for God to fill the hearts of Malaysian Muslims with a strong desire for progress and liberty, so that the present trend towards Islamization might be reversed.

Friday, Aug. 23, 2013. Please pray

...for MBBs (Muslim Background Believers) in Chechnya. Muslim Chechens cannot change their religion publicly.

...for God to protect and sustain the persecuted Church in Bangladesh.

...for Muslims living in the West. Pray that through their conversions and testimonies, the gospel of Jesus Christ will be spread into the Islamic world.

Friday, Aug. 30, 2013. Please pray

...for Chinese Kazakh Muslims to have opportunity to learn about Jesus.

...for expatriate Christian workers in Qatar to gain opportunities to witness about Jesus. A large percentage of Qatar's population is made up of foreign workers.

...for Muslims in Turkmenistan, which is currently the most closed country in Central Asia.

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