

The Operation Reveille Shofar

"I WILL CALL THEM MY PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT MY PEOPLE." (ROMANS 9:25)

Religious Conquest: Will It Happen Again?

by Bruce Sidebotham

Current events are creating a context for colossal spiritual changes in the Muslim world.

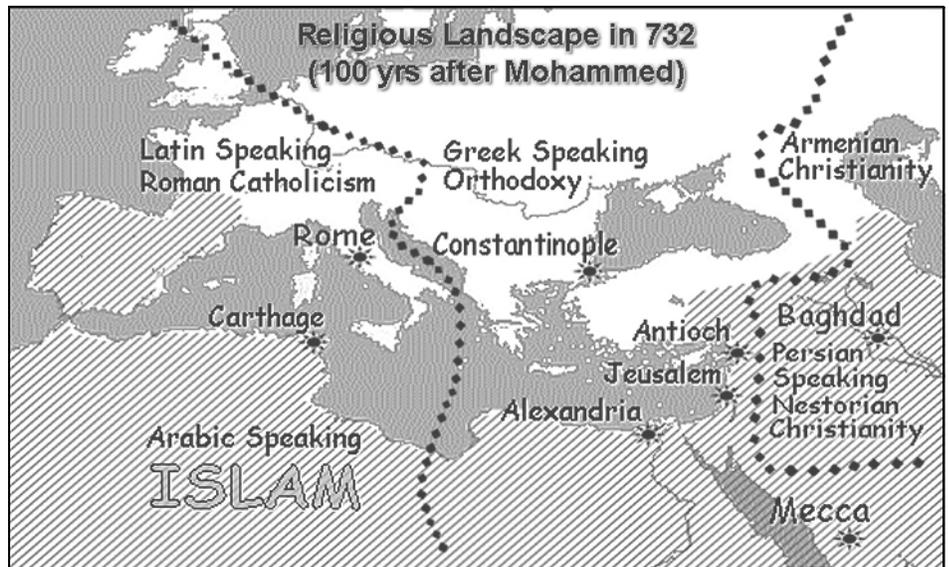
Mohammed died in 632. By 732, Islam had replaced the Christian foundation for government, law, and education in nearly all of the Middle East and North Africa. Could the same rapid changes happen again in reverse?

Hoover Dam that creates Lake Mead took eight years to build. It will last for generations, but if it springs a leak, how long will it take to collapse?

Many Muslims themselves are wondering. Even though Muslim populations are growing nearly twice as fast as Christian ones, Islam has known for centuries that it is the "leaks" which will bring catastrophe. That is one reason why Muslim law mandates that those who leave Islam should be killed.

Br. Abul Walid Al-Hamawi and Br. Ibrahim Abu Khalid betray these concerns at www.islam.org.au. They write,

Muslims are looking back at the events that shaped the 20th Century and are reflecting on this humiliating and devastating period in the history of Islam. The fall of the Khilafah [Ottoman Empire] and consequently the disappearance of the Shari'ah [Muslim Law], the division of Muslim land into



minute powerless countries, the rise of secular theories on all intellectual fronts, are only some of the major crises that inflicted the Muslim Ummah [brotherhood]. (sic)

Once upon a time and for nearly a thousand years, Muslim law undergirded government and education in the world's most prosperous empire. Muslim civilization monopolized international relations, borders, and trade. That is why explorers like Columbus began sailing west.

Today, the thoroughly non-Muslim United Nations monopolizes those relations, borders, and international law. Golden arches and satellite dishes rule skylines once dominated by minarets.

To such change, Muslims are reacting the way people of faith have always reacted. They are forming denominations.

Some denominations embrace change and even alter their traditional beliefs and rituals to accommodate the new context. Others resist change. They either withdraw into isolated

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What Is an Unreached People Group?

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communities or fight against the prevailing institutions.

Internal dissension grows and spills out upon the whole world not only because these denominations must contend with pressure from outside to change, but also because they inevitably fight each other.

The mostly symbolic 9-11 attacks on America were never intended to destroy America. Their primary strategic purpose was to affect the struggle within Islam. They were a public relations ploy to bolster fundamentalism by humiliating the ally of its enemies.

And so, the Muslim world is not only divided up into minute, powerless, and frequently warring countries, it is also divided up into moderates, extremists, fundamentalists, liberals, progressives, traditionalists, Islamicists, and

secularists. Gone is the once monolithic, impregnable, and easily defined world of Islam. Furthermore, every attempt to restore homogeneity is backfiring.

More Bibles were sold in Iran following the Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution in 1979 than before, in spite of the difficulties caused by strictly enforced Shari'a law.

Bible sales and correspondence course enrollment grew in Pakistan even as Shari'a law intensified after General Zia-ul-Haq seized power in 1977.

Attempts to place Southern Sudan under Shari'a law throughout the 80s and 90s caused many uncommitted black African tribes to embrace Christianity.

Afghans celebrated in the streets when the repressive Taliban yoke of Shari'a law got thrown off.

Though absolute numbers remain small, annual growth of church members (underground) in Saudi Arabia exceeds 3.4% (birthrate is 2.97%). Church growth in Jordan, Oman, and Kuwait exceeds 4%. Annual membership growth of 0.88% in American churches barely matches population growth. That means church membership in Saudi Arabia is *growing* four times faster than it is in the United States!

Contemporary Islam is in crisis. Muslims around the world are disillusioned and fighting with one another as they cope with changes in information, trade, technology, and values. Even under the most repressive conditions for freedom of conscience and expression, many Muslims are embracing non-Muslim ideologies. The trickle will become a flood.

AGENCY PROFILE

Army Chaplaincy Impacts World

Since God is orchestrating current events to spread the gospel to places it has never gone and since the military is on the leading edge of conflict with people in those areas, the behavior of United States soldiers affects growth of the gospel worldwide. By ministering to these soldiers, chaplains become part of God's plan to be glorified among all peoples.

When soldiers go to places like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, they not only represent the United States, they represent the Judeo-Christian heritage upon which this nation was founded. Most people in these places have never seen a Christian lifestyle and can't tell the difference between Christians and Americans.

Like it or not, in this foreign context, everyone in battle dress (from a heavy-drinking, foul-mouthed NCO to a sweet, new-age-oriented PFC) becomes a representative of Christ.

Therefore, as a church and as a nation, we must do everything possible to facilitate the moral and ethical behavior of our soldiers.

Unfortunately, in this day of widespread family breakdown and moral relativism, when even well educated CEOs lie and steal, most Army recruits

have little sense of ethics and integrity.

Historically, armies have always tended to rape, pillage, and burn. So what prevents American soldiers from disgracing the God of their heritage by targeting civilians, executing prisoners, taking advantage of orphaned girls, and supplementing incomes with the personal belongings of enemy dead and wounded?

The answer may be found in spiritual accountability provided by Army chaplains.

Chaplains train soldiers and advise commanders in ethical and moral matters. For example, chaplains are trained on the theory and principles of "Just War." These principles call for such things as humane treatment of prisoners, respect for the lives and property of non-combatants, and avoidance of excessive force. Chaplains help commanders and soldiers understand and apply these principles in real world situations.

Chaplains perform religious services according to their own convictions and give soldiers with different faith traditions what they need for their own worship. Therefore, in their duties, American



soldiers are less likely to forget about God and his moral expectations.

Chaplains also provide religious education and distribute devotional materials. By enabling soldiers to stay spiritually fit, chaplains help them to behave in ways that bring credit

to the Christianity upon which our civilization was founded.

Militaries have always been at the leading edge of inter-cultural relations and they have always been susceptible to perpetrating human rights abuses. Afghans receive Americans as liberators, while Chechnyans resist Russians as abusive oppressors, largely because US forces behave more respectfully.

As long as they can supply chaplains, Christians in American will be accountable to God for the taste American soldiers leave in the mouths of unreached peoples. Few ministries are as crucial, demanding, and far reaching. Pray to the Lord of the harvest for these unique laborers, and consider a calling to the Army chaplaincy.

For more information:

1-800-872-2769 ext. 186
<http://chaplain.goarmy.com>

Ancient Beliefs Run Silent and Deep

Populations who embrace new religions in order to appease technologically dominant civilizing foreigners often appear converted when they adopt the imported rituals, but many remain inwardly unchanged. Such is the Philippine fate of both Christianity and Islam. Because these religions were propagated coercively or manipulatively, they were embraced superficially. The calendars, holidays, symbols, worship centers and celebrations of Filipino Christianity and Islam are often just a veneer over folk superstitions around which lives really revolve.

When the Spanish arrived in the 1500s, Sultanates on Mindanao and the Sulu islands were extending their rule and state religion northwards. With military might, formal education, improved agriculture and infrastructure, Spain reversed Islam's advance and conformed most Filipinos to Catholicism. In the 20th century, Americans took over and introduced church-state separation and Protestantism.

Before Arabs and Spaniards arrived, the nearly 170 sometimes warring tribes on 700 islands practiced Animism – a belief system which considers everything in the natural world to be “animated” by forces in the spiritual world that can be used, appeased, and manipulated in traditional and superstitious ways.

As a result, three major religious systems mingle, conflict, and shape the Philippine spiritual landscape. These are Animism, Christianity, and Islam. Around a dozen small and remote tribes totaling about 500,000 people (0.7%) remain in pure Animism. Another dozen or so tribes totaling over 4.7 million (5%) follow Islam. The vast majority of the 71 million people in the remaining ethnic groups are Christians, and the majority of these are Catholic.

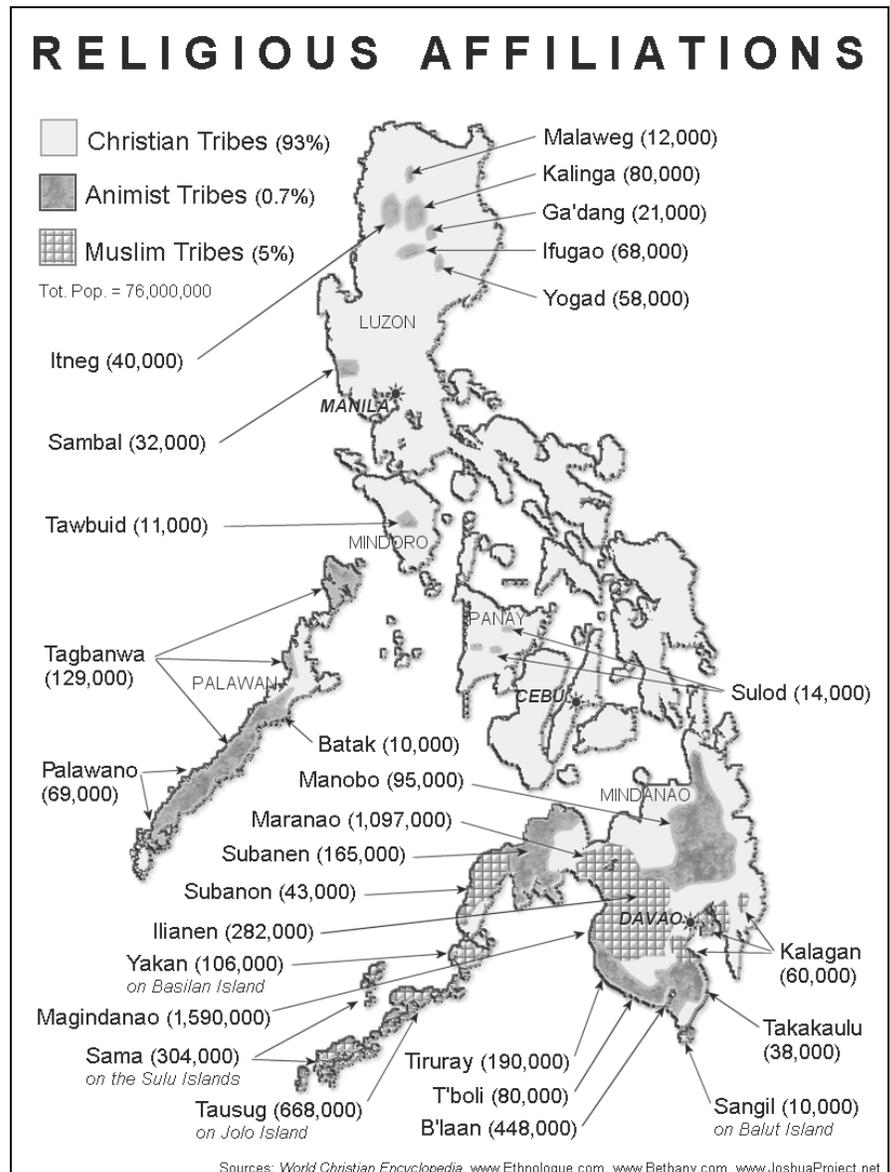
Animistic beliefs, like the notion that environmental spirits cause sickness or good fortune, pervade life for Filipino Muslims and Christians. In the Muslim Bajau tribe, people assemble annually for a public seance and trance dancing. Most Muslim communities have “witch doctors” who can exorcize evil spirits causing illness or community strife. Many Filipinos believe spirits of the dead hang around their graves, some of which become centers for miraculous power. Many Christian symbols and rituals receive more interest for their impact on unseen spirits than for their connection to Christian theology.

For this reason, Catholics and main-line Protestants have become a primary target for Pentecostal and Evangelical missionaries. The Wahabi renewal movement within Islam, which

inspires groups like AlQaida, targets mystically leaning Muslims. Both are finding fertile soil for their ideologies.

Because they have long felt oppressed by the Christian majority, many in the tribes with Muslim majorities are joining Islamic fundamentalism and agitating violently for more political autonomy, Muslim law, and even independence. Some are terrorists and part of the international Muslim terrorist network.

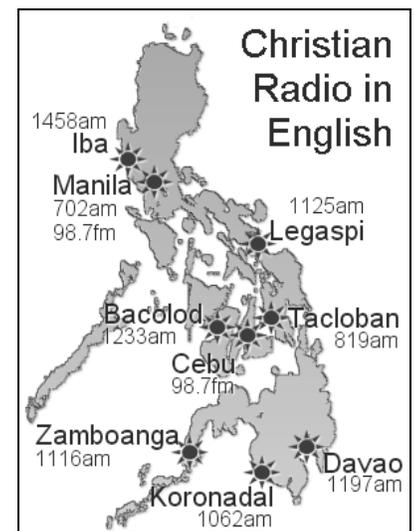
From 1900 to 1970, Philippine Pentecostals and Evangelicals planted about 3,000 churches. From 1970 to 1980 their churches grew to 10,000. In 1990 there were 23,000 churches. Today, nearly 3,000 Filipino missionaries go to other countries. Many Filipino Christians work and witness in Saudi Arabia and other oil producing states.



Facts to Consider about the Philippine Spiritual Landscape:

- **Cross-cultural male-female relationships:** Marriage to an American elevates family status and provides immigration opportunities. Muslim men often practice evangelistic marriage and dating. Muslim women can be killed for relating to non-Muslim men.
- **Militant Islam:** Separatist group terrorism includes bombing and kidnapping. Concentrations of US citizens could be tempting targets.
- **Holidays:** Muslim and Christian holiday celebrations with feasts, parades, and religious services may go 24/7 for days at a time. Levels of piety increase. Urban and highway congestion along with closed businesses and government offices constrain movement and productivity.
- **Holy Sites and Symbols:** Defiling Muslim prayer houses, tombs of holy men, churches, or basilicas can antagonize devout communities. Handling holy books and religious symbols carelessly can start violent riots.
- **Personal Appearance:** Casual hot weather clothes like shorts and sandals show a lack of respect for local standards of decency and modesty. In sacred places, schools, government offices, and anywhere in public among Muslims they are scorned. Women must be especially careful not to show bare shoulders, arms, and legs among devout Muslim.
- **Honor:** Muslims value honor more than truth. They fear shame more than death. What people do reveals the truth better than what they say. Losing face is bad. Causing someone else to lose face is deplorable. Mediators settle most conflicts. Implying any inferiority in Islam or criticizing Mohammed inspires violence.
- **Religious Restrictions:** Flaunting Christian and secular freedom from Muslim restrictions on diet, behavior, and personal appearance will offend Muslims.
 - i.e. Snacking in public during the fast month
 - Showing physical affection in public between the sexes
 - Serving or consuming pork or alcohol among Muslims
- **Five Pillars of Islam:** The “good works” which prove one is a “good Muslim” are . . .
 - 1) reciting the creed, “There is no God but God and Mohammed is his prophet.”
 - 2) giving alms
 - 3) making a once in a lifetime pilgrimage to Mecca (if able),
 - 4) ritually praying five times daily
 - 5) fasting during Ramadan
 Commitment to these rituals reveals the piety of individuals, families, and communities.
- **Diversity:** Philippine Islam varies widely. It includes fanatic, devoted, pious, and nominal followers of everything from puritanical fundamentalism to forms that are blended with traditional animistic beliefs. Pious Muslims may or may not be extreme, and extremist Muslims may or may not be pious.
- **Christian Broadcasting:** Ten stations in nine cities broadcast Christian programs in English language at various hours throughout the day interspersed with programming in Tagalog and other languages.

MINISTRY CONTACT INFORMATION		
Agency	Telephone	Web Site
Christian & Missionary Alliance	1-719-599-5999	www.cmalliance.org
Christar	1-800-755-7955	www.christar.org
DAWN 2000	1-719-548-7460	www.dawnministries.org
Every Home for Christ	1-800-423-5054	www.ehc.org
Far East Broadcasting Company	1-562-947-4651	www.febc.org
Gospel Recordings, Inc.	1-888-444-7872	www.gospelrecordings.com
Medical Ambassadors International	1-888-403-0600	www.med-amb.org
Overseas Missionary Fellowship	1-800-422-5330	www.omf.org
Partners International	1-800-966-5515	www.partnersintl.org



Your donation helps provide this free information to military Christians.

Who are Unreached Peoples?

Adapted from an article by Keith Hook in the Summer 2002 *Unreached Peoples' Advocate*, a publication of Mission to Unreached Peoples

Operation Reville is a branch ministry of Mission to Unreached Peoples. Some of you may be wondering, "Who in the world are unreached peoples?"

Contrary to the most common understanding, "unreached peoples" are not your neighbors down the street who, though they don't know Christ, could hear the gospel in their mother tongue on any one of several radio stations or in any one of several churches in town.

The phrase "unreached peoples" refers to people groups. A people group is "the largest group within which the gospel can flow along natural lines without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance due to things like culture, language, religion, and geography."

People groups are different than nations. In over 200 nations throughout in the world are thousands of people groups. For example, residents of the Philippines speak 169 different languages.

A. People groups can be identified according to the following criteria put forth by Caleb Project.

1) Social Identity: To what degree does the group see itself as distinct within society? Do they think of themselves as similar to each other and different from other people?

2) Group Allegiance: To what degree are group members connected to each other by relationships through which they influence each other's behavior?

B. You can test a people group's identity and allegiance with the following guidelines.

1) Boundary maintenance: How big are the separating "walls" between members of the group and people who aren't members? Do members of the group keep others out by placing limits on who group members can marry or socialize with?

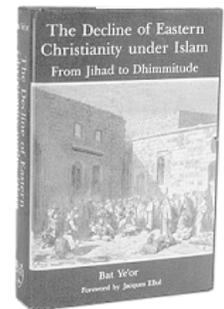
2) Durability: A group's identity and allegiance must remain over time. University students are, therefore, not a people group. We would not envision a special cluster of churches of, by and for university students because within a five-year period, they would no longer share that identity. Groups of people in which grandparents and their grandchildren share the fundamental identity are more likely to be a people group.

Likewise, a people group's identity should remain intact after repentance. Therefore, we would not see "prostitutes of San Francisco" as a people group for pioneer church planting because the gospel would dissolve the distinctive feature of their association. Such groups may require specialized evangelistic



approaches, but not their own church planting movement.

Keep all this in mind and reflect on the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20. Note that the word "nations" (*ethne* in Greek from which we get the word ethnic) actually refers to ethnolinguistically determined "people groups" as opposed to politically defined countries.



The Decline of Eastern Christianity under Islam: from Jihad to Dhimmitude

Read this book and be amazed at how the church's loss of influence and relevance to public life today under secular governments parallels the same loss of influence and relevance under Muslim ones over a thousand years ago.

OPPORTUNITY

Join Praying Through the Window VI this October 2002

Praying Through the Window is a worldwide prayer initiative focusing strategic prayer on the spiritually impoverished area of the world known as the 10/40 Window.

This rectangle extends from 10 to 40 degrees north latitude and spans from western Africa to eastern Asia.

While people in the rest of the world have probable opportunity to hear the gospel many times, those in the 10/40 Window have almost no chance of ever hearing the gospel even once.

The 10/40 Window is the greatest remaining geographic frontier for the church to penetrate. It contains 4 billion people, 90% of all the world's poverty, and strongholds of all the world's great non-Christian religions.

Obtain Prayer Guides from:

Window International Network

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<www.win1040.com>

e-mail: win@win1040.com

tel. 1-719-522-1040, fax 1-719-277-7148

RESOURCE

NEWS **Peace Seems Possible in Sudan**

After 19 years of blood shed, atrocities, and government sanctioned chattel slavery, post 9-11 circumstances have produced an opportunity for peace in Sudan.

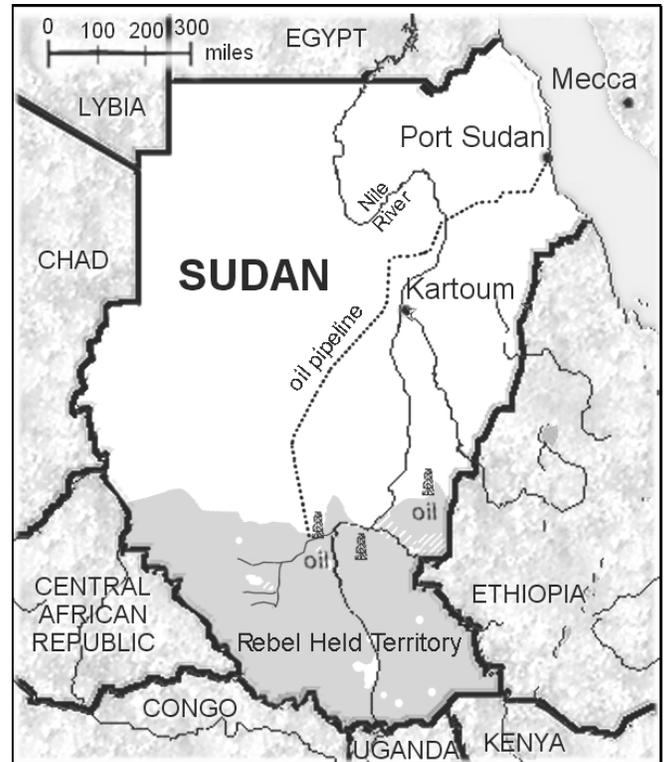
On July 20 at peace talks in Nairobi, the government of Sudan conceded to demands from the Southern People's Liberation Army for religious freedom and a referendum on self-determination.

In an amazing reversal, the government that since 1989 has vowed to create an Islamic state agreed that state and religion should be separate. It also agreed that after six years of peace, the predominantly Christian and animist people in the south would be able to vote whether to remain part of Sudan.

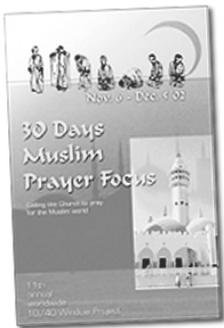
The agreement is being called the "Machakos Protocol," because negotiations were held in the Kenyan town of Machakos.

Talks resumed on August 12 over issues of power sharing, oil revenue distribution, human rights, and a cease fire.

Much remains to be worked out and many followers on both sides need to be convinced to bring these agreements and signed papers into reality.



OPPORTUNITY **30 Days muslim prayer focus**
6 nov. - 5 dec. 2002



"This has really opened my eyes to the Muslim world. The guide is on our breakfast table; we remember every day to pray for Muslims. It has been the most interesting prayer program we have ever done ."

Coinciding with the annual Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, the 30 Days Muslim Prayer Focus is an international movement calling Christians everywhere to learn about Islam and to pray for Muslims, so that we may all live peaceably and respectfully side-by-side and that they may come to know God's grace.

Get guides from:

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 PO Box 26479, Colorado Springs, CO 80936
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Training and equipping military Christians for cross-cultural ministry



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