

## **PRAYER LETTER SUNDAY, 28 SEP 2008**

Religious Support Team, 2<sup>nd</sup> Iraqi Army Division Military Transition Teams

### **High Value Prayer Focus:**

#### **Ayman al-Zawahiri**

Osama Bin-Laden's Deputy and Al-Qaida's Chief of Operations.

*From Defense Intelligence Agency Web Site (2006)*

[www.dia.mil/site6\\_images/cards/index.htm](http://www.dia.mil/site6_images/cards/index.htm)

Ask God to protect people from Ayman's vicious schemes, to change his heart, and to bring him to justice.



### **Prayer Requests/Answers from 2-IA Area of Operations:**

- Praise God that the “nights of power” near the end of Ramadan did not see an increase of violence. Continue asking for increasing peace and security.
- With winter approaching primitive conditions for Iraqi soldiers on Iraqi Army outposts are challenging. Leaders in the Iraqi Army siphon off portions of funds and resources as these make their way down to lower ranking soldiers. Most Iraqis in leadership positions want to be served rather than to serve. Ask God to inspire the Iraqi Army leadership to take care of the lower ranking soldiers and to use resources responsibly for preparing outposts for winter.

### **Corinthians 9:20,22**

<sup>20</sup>To the Jews I became a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law . . . so as to win those under the law. . . . <sup>22</sup>To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.

### **Devotional Thought on Cross-Cultural Communication**

We can understand culture through forms. Forms are words, symbols, and rituals. Forms have dual content of function and meaning. Meaning comes from beliefs and values. Functions come from social conventions. Americans and Arabs accomplish the function of greeting with different words: “hello” and “salam.” These words function the same but have different intrinsic meanings. Christians and Muslims accomplish the function of representing their religions with different symbols: cross and crescent. These symbols share function but have different meanings. Pentecostals and Muslims accomplish the function of praising God with different rituals. One group stands and lifts their hands; the other stands and then bows to the ground. One underscores freedom, the other submission. Paul communicated a transcendent message to different cultures. He had three available methods: extraction, conquest, and incarnation. In extraction, converts reject their own forms to embrace the message in the forms of the messenger's culture. Extraction facilitates intercultural resentment and hostility. Extracted converts become like trophies to the gaining culture and casualties to the losing one. In conquest, large numbers in the audience embrace the forms of the messenger but not the message. They appear converted, but the meanings of the forms got changed when they were imported. Conquest facilitates syncretism – a veneer of new faith with no change in underlying beliefs and values. Paul chose incarnation. He communicated in the language, symbols and rituals of his target audience. Incarnation facilitates transformation. Existing cultural forms become tools for communicating new beliefs and values.