

PRAYER LETTER

15 FEB 2009

2ND IRAQI ARMY DIVISION MILITARY TRANSITION TEAM RELIGIOUS SUPPORT TEAM

This Week's High Value Prayer Focus: **TEN-YEAR DROUGHT**



Fall and winter rains in northern Iraq create ideal farming conditions on the plains of Nineveh and downstream along the rivers. For the past ten years, however, seasonal rain has been slight or absent resulting in population movement to cities and ripe conditions for unrest.

Ask God to restore the cycle of seasonal rain so that agriculture can flourish and people will return to the countryside helping to stabilize the cities.

Prayer Requests from Mosul, Iraq:

SITUATION: This past week suicide car bombers have been attacking coalition and Iraqi security force targets all around Mosul, Iraq. Many soldiers and civilian bystanders have been killed and injured.

REQUEST: Ask God to interdict suicide bomber recruiting and car bomb preparation. Ask that suicide bomber recruiters will be brought to justice or humiliated and forced to end their activities.

SITUATION: The season of pilgrimage to Mecca (corresponding with this past December) is the season of Muslim charitable giving. A lot of the money collected in Saudi Arabia is now finding its way into the hands of terrorist organizations in Iraq resulting in an upsurge of violence.

REQUEST: Ask God to interdict the flow of funds from Saudi Arabian charitable organizations to terrorist groups in Iraq. Ask that financier activities will end. Ask that money launderers will be exposed, discredited, and forced to quit.

SITUATION: Forensic evidence, like fingerprints and explosive residue, doesn't count for much in the legal system in Iraq. Instead, what gets people caught and thrown in jail is personal testimony. Judges are afraid to issue arrest warrants or make convictions without it. Dozens who are caught "red handed" get released to terrorize again because witnesses are afraid to testify.

REQUEST: Ask God to give witnesses courage to come forward and testify. Ask him to give judges courage to accept forensic evidence.

Cultural and Devotional Observation on Reconciliation

From the Iraqi perspective, sincerity of apology corresponds to proportionality of restitution. Without the proverbial payment of an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth, justice is not done, and forgiveness is not possible. Saying "I am sorry" admits guilt. It is not a way to avoid retribution or reparations. Without submission to justice, apologies are taken to be insincere examples of duplicity. If one can't accept punishment or make a payment, then it's better not to apologize.

Jesus forgives without demanding justice. He accepts apologies and suffers sin's consequences without demanding payment or exacting retribution. Saying "sorry" to Jesus also admits guilt, but it *is* a way to avoid retribution and reparations. For Jesus, just the admission of guilt and the promise to try and change (repentance) restores relationships.