

# How to Pray

## **Understanding Prayer in Islam**

Prayer stands at the very heart of what it means to be a Muslim. Not only Muslims have to pray five times a day, but their places of worship, mosques, take their name from a root which means "place of prostration".

Muslims use the word prayer to refer to their ritual prayer which includes a special purification washing and bowing down before God in a prescribed manner.

There is another type of prayer that Muslims refer to as "du'a" or supplication. This is closer to the conversational prayer we are familiar with. Du'a is practiced while standing or sitting, by placing the palms of both hands up (see picture above). The purpose is to seek God's blessings or guidance.

## **What do Muslims say?**

Seventeen times a day, Muslims recite the first chapter of the Qur'an while declaring that there is none but God, and that Mohammad is God's messenger:

"In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Master of the Day of Judgment. Thee (alone) we worship and Thee (alone) we ask for help. Show us the straight path. The path of those whom Thou hast favoured; Not the (path) of those who earn Thine anger nor of those who go astray." (1:1-1:7) "Say: He is Allah, the One! Allah is He on Whom all depend. He begetteth not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him." (112:1-112:4)

Other than glorifying God, it is also a moment to ask God for His forgiveness, mercy, blessings and bounties.

## **Engaging Muslims in Prayer**

Muslims are often surprised to discover that prayer is also important in the Bible and in our lives. This is because they never see us praying in public, so they assume that we do not pray.

So, use every opportunity to invite God in prayer: before a meal in a public place, at a Muslim home ask. If a Muslim co-worker is going through a time of crisis, instead of trying to "fix the problem", invite her in prayer to bring her needs before God.

## **How to Pray with Muslims**

Ask your friend if it will appropriate to have a du'a (supplication together). You can say something like this...

"Fatima. you have been very gracious to invite me to your home today, I feel honored by your hospitality. To show my gratitude I would love to ask our God to bless you, and bless your home and family. I need to explain to you that as followers of Jesus, he taught us to direct our requests to God in his powerful name. Will that be okay?..."

Ask then if there is anything else that she wishes to bring before God. At that point, stand up, lift up your hands up and say something like...

Dear Heavenly Father, my heart is full of gratitude towards Fatima's kindness, and I ask that you stay in her home... I ask these things in the name of Isa al Masih (Jesus, the Messiah), amen.

(Upon finishing, wipe your hands over your face, this is a symbol of receiving God's blessings on you)

# How to Pray Continued...

## Tips for Praying with Muslims

- 1- Do not pray to Jesus, but follow Jesus' example Matthew 6:9-13 to address our prayers to God, in the name of Jesus.
- 2- If Muslims ask you why do you pray in the name of Jesus, simply say that this is how he taught us (John 14:13), you can add that Jesus has received great power and authority, that he was the only one raised back to life and exalted to the right hand of God in a place of great honor.
- 3- If Muslims ask you why do Christians lock their hands in prayer, you can explain that is a sign of submission.
- 4- Be bold, ask and it will be given to you. Muslims can sense when we pray with doubts, and that closes the doors for the Holy Spirit to act with power.

