

Preparing for Prayer in Beirut

Imagine a young Muslim man looking down on his shattered neighborhood from his apartment in Beirut, Lebanon. The Israelis certainly left their mark on the city. Life has not been easy since the shop where he worked was obliterated by a bomb. Just the thought of his present

financial situation irritates him. He is frustrated, lacking peace of mind.

Outside, the muezzin finishes his call to prayer. Instead of going to the mosque, the young man decides to pray in his apartment on his own prayer rug. He starts with the ritual cleansing. In his cramped bathroom he begins by declaring his intention to cleanse himself and pray by saying “Bismillah” (In the name of God). He then washes himself three times, starting with his hands up to the wrists. He rinses out his mouth with water and cleans his nostrils by sniffing water into them. He proceeds to wash his whole face, and finally washes his arms up to the elbow and ends by washing his ears and both feet.

Then the young man remembers the previous night. He was near the bars in an eastern Beirut “Christian” neighborhood. The young Muslim had really desired to enter a bar, however he had no money for much of anything these days. His anger rose as he thought of the conflict with Israel and conflicts with Christians. No job, little money. No peace. Then he unrolled his prayer rug.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- ▶ *Beirut’s Muslims cleanse themselves outwardly but many find that injustices, hurts, and temptations fill their minds. Pray that they will discover the God who truly forgives and cleanses (Mt 18:23-35, Romans 5:1-5).*
- ▶ *Pray that the church in Lebanon will be “salt and light” in the city, and that God will be glorified in all that is said and done (Mt. 5:14-16; Romans 12:1-2).*
- ▶ *For Lebanon’s Muslims (and often Christians) it is very hard to understand how to love or appreciate Israel. Pray that the God who loves both Arabs and Jews will be fully revealed (Eph. 3:6).*



Beirut 1.5 million people (perhaps 50% Muslim)



Pray for regional needs as well ...

- ▶ *Pray for Iraqi orphans. Thousands have lost their parents during the last four and a half years of armed struggle in Iraq. Let us not be hardened to the pain on others. God remembers the widows and orphans (James 1:27).*