

Aleppo

The second-largest city in Syria



Sept. 18, 2008

Day 18

The second-largest city in Syria, Aleppo is one of the oldest continually inhabited cities in the world, along with the capital, Damascus. With populations of around 4 million and 6 million respectively, about half the country's population lives in these two cities.

Aleppo takes its name (Halab in Arabic) from the word for milk. The legend is told that Abraham and his flocks camped near the city during a time of great need, and he fed the city's inhabitants with the abundant milk that God caused to flow from his livestock. Today, the Muslims of Aleppo still live in great need for pure spiritual milk and God's miraculous provision through his servants.

Muslims in Aleppo: The people of Aleppo are predominantly Sunni Muslim and have a reputation for being conservative and devout. This is both a challenge and an opportunity; many are content and complacent in their religion, yet some are earnestly seeking God. Some Muslims, especially the young and educated, are growing dissatisfied with Islam but are drawn towards materialism, secularism and even atheism as the only alternatives they know. Very few Muslims in the city have ever heard a clear presentation of the Good News.

The local believers: Alongside the Muslims lives one of the most diverse Christian populations in the Middle

East. Many different flavors of Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant are represented within Aleppo's Christian minority. Although there are peaceful relations between Christians and Muslims, it is largely a peace based on living separately and avoiding the topic of religion. Praise God that some believers are actively explaining their faith with anyone who will listen, including Muslims. Unfortunately, for centuries, the Muslims of Aleppo have largely been neglected in the proclamation of the Good New.



PRAYER REQUESTS

- ▶ *Pray for peace and stability between conservative and less religious Muslims.*
- ▶ *Pray for Muslims dissatisfied with Islam to be drawn toward the Messiah, the King of all the earth.*
- ▶ *Pray for the different Syrian believers, for love, unity and a passion to explain their faith in Jesus to all.*
- ▶ *Pray for at least one extended family of Muslims in Aleppo to follow Jesus and share the Good News with their Muslim relatives, friends and neighbors.*

PHOTOS FROM ALEPPO

