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**PRAYER**

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*Join us in praying for Central Asia,  
the Middle East and North Africa*

**SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2023**



# Lament Leading to Hope



Dear friends,

As summer gives way to fall, we are turning our attention to the region of Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. As you read through the prayer requests and articles in this prayer calendar, you will see a theme of searching for hope. Women are sharing their stories of feeling hopeless and how TWR Women of Hope has introduced them to the hope found in Jesus. The prayer requests point us to the many ways we can pray for God's intervention and hope for these women.

It's not just women in this region of the world who find themselves needing hope. Perhaps you are currently experiencing feelings of hopelessness. Know that in the midst of what feels like hopeless circumstances, you can cry out to God in lament, pouring out your heart and stating what you know to be true of him, and he will hear you and respond.

Lamentations 3 models lament and verses 55-58 remind us of who our God is: *"I called on your name, O Lord, from the depths of the pit; you heard my plea, 'Do not close your ear to my cry for help!' You came near when I called on you; you said, 'Do not fear!' You have taken up my cause, O Lord; you have redeemed my life."*

Our God is a God who hears our cries and comes near to us. He redeems us! What a beautiful and freeing feeling it is to experience God's redemption from what feels like a hopeless place.

While the hopeless situations we face here in Canada may at times be different from those experienced by women in Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, those feelings and the solution are the same. And may knowing that help us to relate to these women as we pray for them through September and October.

But may you be reminded today, too, that you are not alone in your feelings of despair. You are not the only one who feels this way, and you have a God who loves you and comes near to save you. Call out to him in lament, acknowledging your pain and declaring the truth of who God is. And as you do this, may you be inspired to pray this over the women of Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, as well.

Together in Prayer,

The TWR Canada Women's Ministry Team

## SEPTEMBER

1. Lord, may the new *Women of Hope* episodes that our Farsi team create bring the hope of Jesus to women in Iran and to those living among the diaspora in other countries, including Türkiye. (Ps. 130:7)
2. Father, may women in Karakalpakstan who suffer from depression and fear due to divorce, difficult family relationships, unemployment, low self-esteem or lack of education find their hope and identity in you. (Ps. 143:7-8)
3. God, may the churches in North Africa that have been forced to close in recent years be reopened to provide spiritual nourishment and Christian fellowship. (Matt. 4:4)
4. Prostitution in Israel, with Tel Aviv as the centre, has been dominated by immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Lord, provide a way out for these women. (Ps. 107:28)
5. We praise you, God, for the *Arabic Women of Hope* program and pray for the follow-up teams as they provide counselling and discipleship to the listeners. (Rom. 10:14)
6. God, we pray for the people of Türkiye, where the inflation rate in the past year has reached as high as 85 per cent. People are unable to pay their rent and feel hopeless. (Rom. 15:13)
7. Lord God, please help the women in Northern Cyprus who suffer from trauma. May they find hope and healing in Jesus. (Ps. 107:13-16)
8. Heavenly Father, we lift up the women in Egypt and pray for their safety and protection. Guard them against harm and grant them peace. (Ps. 91:11-12)
9. Lord, we pray for the women of Yemen and Sudan who are experiencing war. Protect the mothers who are trying to provide for their children. (Ps. 46:1)
10. Father, bring protection and healing to women in Uzbekistan who suffer domestic violence. May the hearts of abusers be transformed by you. (Isa. 41:10)
11. Lord, may husbands in Tajikistan find employment in their country so they don't have to travel to Russia for work. Many have been jailed for being there illegally. (Ps. 90:17)
12. God, protect female victims of human trafficking who end up in casinos and brothels in Northern Cyprus. Help them find a way out of forced prostitution. (Ps. 82:3)





# From the Hearts of Those Across the Region

13. Father, make yourself known to those who were affected by the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria. May they come to know and accept Jesus and find hope in him. (Isa. 54:10)
14. Lord, we ask for increased educational opportunities for women in Jordan. Help them to pursue knowledge and skills that enable them to contribute to society. (Prov. 1:5)
15. As they risk their lives bringing the gospel to the people in North Africa, Father, provide protection for our brave team and to those who receive their message of hope. (Ps. 23:4)
16. God, open the eyes and hearts of women in Israel to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. (Mark 14:61-62)
17. Lord, open up opportunities for women in Central Asia to start their own businesses that would benefit them and their families. (Prov. 31:18)
18. God, we pray for freedom and protection of human rights for women in Syria. May your truth shared through Christian media bring healing and restoration to their lives. (Isa. 61:1)
19. Father, give strength and courage to women in Iraq to overcome difficulties and be a source of hope for others. (Josh. 1:9)
20. The poor in Kyrgyzstan are suffering from an economic crisis and unemployment. Lord, may the government reach out with food and medical services to support them. (James 2:15-16)
21. Lord, give our North African teams wisdom and make them ready and available to prepare programs that minister to people with diverse life scenarios. (James 3:17)
22. Father, strengthen the fellowship of the Kurdish small group that recently began in the Middle East. Grant the group leader wisdom and courage to discuss challenging topics. (James 1:5)
23. God, we pray for the women and families in North Africa who struggle with financial and societal difficulties. Give them wisdom for their lives. (Prov. 21:5)
24. God, may Christian families in Uzbekistan open their hearts and homes to orphans and to children from dysfunctional families who cannot care for them. (Job 29:12)

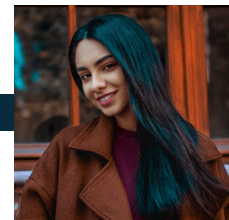


**From a listener in North Africa:** "Listening to your program helped me to look at things differently. I do not believe in Jesus as the Son of God. We are taught he is a prophet, but it seems we are not taught everything about him. I need help, I need to understand Jesus, so I can get help from him. Would you help me know him?"

**From a listener in the Middle East:** "My husband and I have a little restaurant. We listen to the radio in the kitchen while we do our work, and that's how we have found your programs. Your programs are interesting. Most of the radio stations are only playing music, but you speak about life, truth and worth. We were not religious people; we never thought about God or religion. But in your programs, there was something different and we started to listen regularly. Your programs helped us to find Jesus, the real aim of our life. Thanks much for changing our life, may the Lord bless you. Please pray for us."

**From a listener in Central Asia:** "My mother-in-law has been listening to your programs on the radio for a long time. This is very good for her spiritual growth. She is retired, and radios are just right for people like her. She loves to listen to programs in the morning, as she gets up early. We often listen to the programs together during breakfast. When our neighbours come in, she tells them what she learns through the programs. She herself is strongly inspired through the programs and through the worship that is sung there, and she herself inspires others. Thank you for your great work."

**From a listener in North Africa:** "I've been following your program, and started wondering about who Jesus is. And how is he going to give me life, a good life? I am scared to give myself the chance to think that my religion is not the right way, but I would like to know Jesus as you say he is in Christianity."



# Heart-Changing Media

by Miia da Silva, TWR Women of Hope regional coordinator for Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa

The Kurdish people are one of the largest ethnic groups in the world who don't have their own state. Globally, there are 30 million to 40 million Kurds, most of whom live in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Those are also the countries that are part of an area referred to as Kurdistan. The area hosts a Kurdish majority population and could be considered the historical home of the Kurds' national identity and of their cultural and linguistic development.

The Kurdish people have more than one language. The most widely spoken Kurdish languages, or dialects, are Kurmanji and Sorani. Kurmanji is written in Latin script and spoken mostly in southeastern Turkey, northern Syria, northern Iraq, northwest Iran and northeast Iran. Sorani is spoken most in Iraq and written in the Arabic script. Years ago, *Women of Hope* programs were translated and produced in Sorani. Today, those programs are being broadcast into the northern part of Iraq, and we hope and pray that the

ministry can be developed further in the coming years.

When it comes to reaching Kurmanji-speaking women, a lot is happening! In July 2022, our first broadcast in the Kurmanji language went on the air in southeast Turkey. It is the first time that women in that region could hear the message of the gospel in their heart language on local FM radio. A new program with the aim of reaching women from different life situations is broadcast twice a week. It airs once during weekdays with the hope that stay-at-home mothers can tune in and another time over the weekend to reach working women, too.

In addition to media, this ministry is fulfilling another important part of the TWR Women of Hope mission - small-group activities. Our local leader is gathering with women for fellowship, prayer and discussion of various relevant topics. Some of the topics are challenging and even considered taboo to discuss. Yet it is important



to shine the light of Christ into women's lives, even when the matters are difficult.

Many Kurdish women are living in challenging circumstances. They need our prayers and to hear about the hope they can have in

Jesus. Please join us in prayer for Kurdish women and for our brave TWR Women of Hope team who are working hard to create heart-changing media and are walking with Kurdish women through their joys and challenges.



25. Father, we pray for the health and well-being of women in Morocco. Grant them access to quality health care and give them strength and vitality. (3 John 1:2)
26. Lord, we pray for the spiritual, mental, and physical protection of young women in Middle Eastern churches. May they remain steadfast in their faith. (2 Thess. 3:3)
27. Women in Turkmenistan face many written and unwritten prohibitions unfairly restricting their actions. Lord, work in the hearts of leaders to value women and desire to give them more freedom. (Luke 4:18)
28. God, as the moral fabric decays among young people in North Africa, may your truth help women see the value in faithful, godly relationships. (Prov. 3:3)
29. Lord, bless and protect the new coordinator and TWR Women of Hope team in Northern Cyprus as they seek to minister to young, nonbelieving women there. (Num. 6:24-26)
30. Father, comfort and strengthen the lonely women of Türkiye who remain at home caring for their children and families. (Deut. 31:6)



## STORY OF HOPE Solace and Strength



*"Your ministry has played an instrumental role in my spiritual journey, even without your being aware of it. Through your unwavering support, my faith has been restored and continues to grow stronger. Inspired by my own experience, I have taken it upon myself to share your uplifting posts with other women in need. Many from my extensive list of contacts now follow the Women of Hope radio program, finding solace and hope in the gospel-filled content you provide.*

*"I want to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you for being there for me, for being the beacon of hope that lifts our souls to the Lord. Your ministry is touching the lives of countless women, bringing light to their darkest moments and providing a glimmer of hope amid the hardships they face. Your work is invaluable, as it reaches the needy hearts and souls of women throughout the Middle East.*

*"May you be abundantly blessed for your unwavering dedication and commitment. I pray that Jesus' love continues to spread through the Arabic TWR Women of Hope ministry, bringing transformation and hope to those who need it most.*

*"With heartfelt gratitude and prayers,  
Amal"*

*- A listener of Women of Hope in Arabic*

*"I wanted to take a moment to express my deep gratitude for the profound impact your ministry has had on my life. As a Lebanese woman living in a country engulfed in despair and need, your Arabic Women of Hope Christian radio program has been a source of solace and strength for me.*

*"I diligently follow all your social media posts and tune in to the Women of Hope program regularly. During a particularly challenging season in my life, I found myself connecting with the messages on a deeply personal level. It felt as if Jesus Christ himself was speaking directly to my heart, becoming my constant companion and refuge. His presence has given me unwavering assurance that I can turn to him at any time, and he will always be there for me.*

## EMBRACING HOPE

# The Battle for our Minds

TWR Women of Hope  
Global Director Susie Pek



Whenever someone says, “A penny for your thoughts,” I usually “bargain” by replying, “How about a million?” Of course, I mean it as a joke and usually go on to share what’s on my mind. It doesn’t change the fact, though, that I really do believe our thoughts are worth a lot more than a penny!

It’s intriguing how something so abstract can also be concrete. In our minds we do math, plan the day, create content, remember special moments and so much more. In a matter of seconds – or even nanoseconds – we go from one topic to a completely unrelated one. We may be planning our day and suddenly find ourselves smiling over a sweet memory from years ago! Thoughts are complex, run free, and have immense power over our emotions and behaviour!

Have you ever pondered on the power your thoughts have over your emotions? Whatever we believe about a situation will have a direct influence on our feelings about it. The problem is that many times we listen to lies and end up believing and dwelling on them. The result is poor thoughts that lead to negative feelings, and, before we know it, they distance us from people and even from the Lord.

Our thoughts also guide our actions and reactions. We respond to people and circumstances based on what we think to be true. Our beliefs about love, ethics, relationships, and life in general, are deeply rooted in our minds, and they are responsible for determining our response to every situation and people we encounter.

Another interesting aspect about our thoughts is that nobody has the power to read them. I suppose most of us, if not all of us, are incredibly grateful for that. However, there’s an unfavourable side to this fact. We can become lonely prisoners of our own thoughts. We may buy into lies and accusations that have no place in our lives, but because they are “so real” and strong, they keep torturing us. Every time we try to move on, another imprisoning thought comes up in our minds and hinders us from being free. We feel defeated and powerless.

Our thoughts are complex and extremely important. Everything starts in our minds. That is why this secret place requires special attention

and care. Our Designer knows how important it is to care for our minds, and he gives us some beautiful recommendations: *“I appeal to you therefore, brothers [and sisters], by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect”* (Rom. 12:1-2, author’s emphasis).

The battle for our minds starts with renewing them. We need to understand what our frames of reference are. Are they solid? Do they reflect truth? Are they uplifting? If what we believe does not reflect truth, then what we *feel* does not reflect reality. If lies have darkened our view of the world, ourselves and the Lord, we find hope in knowing that every lie is destroyed when exposed to the light. Once we’ve identified our patterns and the changes that need to take place, we move on to finding new references. And the Word of God is filled with wonderful references. For example, *“Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light to my path”* (Ps. 119:105).

In addition, the battle for our minds is a lifelong process. Our thoughts will always need special attention on our part. I love it that we find a great checklist for a sound mind in Philippians 4:8: *“Finally, brothers [and sisters], whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”*

Every day, thousands of thoughts will knock at the doors of our minds. May I encourage you to submit them to a quality inspection before entertaining them? Are they true? Are they noble? Are they correct? Pure or kind? If they pass the inspection, then they deserve our attention. If they fail any of these steps, they are not worth entertaining.

We can fill our minds with some wonderful things: good books, all kinds of different courses, deep conversations with dear friends, great projects and so forth. But nothing compares with letting the Word of Christ dwell richly in our minds and hearts.

In our Saviour’s love,

Susie





# OCTOBER

1. Lord, we ask you to bless those Christians in Türkiye and Syria who lost loved ones, jobs and homes during the earthquakes this year. May they be a light to others. (Matt. 5:16)
2. Father, use the *Women of Hope* Kabyle program to spiritually feed the women of North Africa suffering from persecution and church closures. (John 15:4-5)
3. Lord, please protect the workers and organizations in Israel that are bringing freedom to victims of sexual exploitation. May more partnerships be developed that use our *Hidden Treasures* program. (2 Tim. 4:18)
4. God, please protect the young people in Türkiye who need to travel abroad to study due to high university costs in their homeland. (2 Sam. 22:3-4)
5. As poverty in North Africa grows, give wisdom to our TWR Women of Hope team as they seek to meet the humanitarian and spiritual needs of the people. (Prov. 19:17)
6. Lord, provide for mothers in Tajikistan who have been abandoned by their husbands. Many collect plastic bottles and sell them to feed their children. May the government help these women. (Deut. 31:8)
7. Father, from the first small group in Northern Cyprus, grow many more prayer groups and deepen them spiritually. Holy Spirit, lead this movement of prayer. (Rom. 8:26)
8. Many in North Africa have lost hope, meaning and a sense of value in anything, including themselves. May women find their true purpose and value in Jesus! (Matt. 6:33)
9. God, we pray the women in Saudi Arabia would have equal opportunities to fulfill their potential. May they find strength in God through the *Women of Hope* programs. (Gal. 3:28)
10. Father, we pray for the Kurdish women who suffer abuse. May they find people to help them and receive healing in Christ. (Jer. 33:6)
11. Witchcraft is still practiced in Karakalpakstan. Lord, may those involved in these practices find salvation and healing in Jesus Christ. (Acts 19:18-20)
12. We praise you, God, for our teams ministering to women in the Amazigh region of North Africa. Bless the teams as they provide emotional and spiritual support while helping women gain a spiritual perspective in their lives. (Rom. 12:1-2)
13. May the *Women of Hope* programs and social media ministry in Kyrgyzstan strengthen the faith of Christian women so they will be spiritual light for unbelieving family members. (Eph. 5:8)
14. God, we pray for those who interact with listeners of the Kurdish *Women of Hope* program. Give them wisdom in how to respond and courage to share the gospel. (Rom. 1:16)
15. May the *Women of Hope* Arabic programs encourage the women of Lebanon who are going through economic and political crises and help them become change agents in their communities. (Esther 4:14)
16. Bring unity and harmony to families in Turkmenistan, Lord. Labour migration and divorce are common, causing children to grow up without both parents. (Ps. 133:1)
17. We pray for women in Iran who continue to risk their lives in the fight for more freedom and rights. God, please protect these brave women and answer their cries for justice. (Ps. 121:7-8)
18. Lord, may women in Palestine who long for peace and reconciliation with God be comforted and find hope by listening to the *Women of Hope* Arabic programs. (Rom. 5:11)
19. Be the protector, Father, of young girls in Uzbekistan who are being forced into marriage. (Jer. 1:8)
20. Divorce rates are high in Northern Cyprus. Lord, may married couples there reject the popular “no strings attached” thinking and instead embrace faithfulness and selflessness. (Matt. 19:6)
21. Lord, we pray for the translation, contextualization and production of the Kurdish *Women of Hope* programs. May these broadcasts transform listeners’ hearts. (Col. 3:16)
22. God, bind the spirits of suicide and hopelessness that have captured the hearts of many Muslim women in Uzbekistan. Free them to find hope in you. (Jer. 29:11)



23. Heavenly Father, please end the gender-based violence in Bahrain. Heal and restore the women affected by violence. (Ps. 147:3)
24. God, we pray that families in Central Asia would not be separated or broken as many fathers move abroad for work, leaving mothers alone to care for the children. (Mal. 2:16)
25. Lord, bring protection and healing to the women and families in North Africa who suffer physical and emotional abuse. (Ps. 10:17-18)
26. Father, bring healing and restoration to Israeli women ensnared in prostitution as the result of drug addiction. (Prov. 24:11-12)
27. Lord, we pray for justice and women's rights in Tunisia. May the women there have equality and fairness in all aspects of life. (Mic. 6:8)
28. God, may increased opportunities for employment and education be given to women in Algeria. May they make positive impacts in their society as they pursue their dreams. (Prov. 18:15)
29. Father, draw the relatives of believing women in South Kazakhstan to yourself. May they come to believe in the true God and find salvation in Jesus. (Acts 2:39)

30. Lord, be the protector of female students emigrating from the Middle East to Northern Cyprus. As many experience their first taste of freedom from cultural norms restricting women, may they find Jesus and true freedom in him. (Gal. 5:1)
31. Father, we ask for peace in Türkiye between the people of the two opposing parties of the last election, as the results were very close. May they learn to work together. (Rom. 12:16)



## Spiritual Warfare, Part 1

A Word of Hope from Lisa Hall,  
International Prayer Coordinator

“What is true?” and “How, then, should I live?” may be the two most important questions in life, for the answers will determine not only your life here on earth but also your eternity. Truth is not an abstract concept but rather a person. God is truth, John 3:33 says. As the Word who became flesh, Jesus took on human form and proclaimed, “I am the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6).

In sharp contrast, the Bible calls Satan a murderer, the Father of Lies, the deceiver and the accuser. God and Satan are at war, and we are right in the middle of the battle. The spiritual warfare that we face and the enemies we must defeat in God's power are our fleshly desires, our worldly culture, and Satan and his kingdom. Because of our sinful nature, we are all born into Satan's kingdom. But because Jesus' death and resurrection paid the penalty for our sin, all who believe and receive Jesus can be transferred into God's kingdom of life and truth.

Satan knows that once you believe and receive Jesus, the Evil One cannot snatch you back into his kingdom, so his plan is to deceive your mind with lies. He wants you to doubt God and put your trust in something or someone else. But the truth is that our God is the only God. He is sovereign over all and has defeated Satan. We are assured of the power and position of Jesus

because God raised him from the dead and “seated him at [God's] right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name” (Eph. 1:20-21).

Our true identity is in Christ. Because of our position in Christ, we have victory over Satan as well. God has raised us up and seated us in Christ Jesus in the heavenly realms at the right hand of the Father. (Eph. 2:6). God has chosen us, adopted us, redeemed us, forgiven our sins and sealed us with the Holy Spirit. This is what is true of you as a Christ follower! Believe this news and stand on it. We act and live according to what we believe is true, so establishing truth is essential in our lives.

What a person believes in her mind affects her emotions, perceptions, will and actions. Our view of ourselves is often affected by what others say about us, by our performance and by what the world says is desirable. Do you feel like you don't measure up to others' standards? Believing what God says about your identity will protect you from the lies of the Enemy and the hurtful words of others.

Paul tells us in Ephesians to get rid of the attitudes and desires of our old sinful life and to embrace a godly life in Christ. It is like taking off old dirty clothes and putting on new clean

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# Spiritual Warfare, cont'd

clothes. We are to put off things like lying, bitterness, sexual immorality and greed. We are to put on truth, encouraging words, compassion and forgiveness. It is obvious we can't do that in our power alone. So how do we change?

*"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (Eph. 4:22-24, NIV).*

Renewing our minds is the key that God gives us for certain success. We must begin thinking like Jesus for our lives and actions to be like Jesus'. That means embracing the truth in God's Word and confronting our sin. Where in your life do you

feel defeated? What are the things that bring you back again and again to pray about and ask for God's forgiveness?

The Bible calls these "strongholds." As Ed Silvoso writes in *That None Should Perish*, "A spiritual stronghold is a mind-set impregnated with hopelessness that causes us to accept as unchangeable situations that we know are contrary to the will of God."

Let's start by being truthful about our sin, breaking its power by bringing it into the open and sharing it with someone who is trustworthy. The solution always involves renewing our minds with God's Word of truth and standing in the armour of God. We will talk about these in Part 2 of this article in the next prayer calendar.



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stay in touch



@twrcanada

TWR Canada  
PO Box 25324  
London, ON N6C 6B1

womenofhope@twr.ca  
(888) 672-6510  
[www.twr.ca/women](http://www.twr.ca/women)