

Global Prayer

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Digest



Less Than One in 1,000 Call Upon Christ Among These Muslims in India

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Dear Praying Friends,

Last month we prayed for Pakistan's Muslims; this month we will pray for many of the same communities on the Indian side of the border. We will pray for people practicing the same religion in a different country, but often speaking a different language. You will notice some "repeats" from last month, but these are people who really need continual prayer. Others, like the Bohras and the Memons, are only on the Indian side of the border. Like the other Frontier People Groups we are praying for during this 13-month time of prayer, these have very little movement towards Christ among them, and less than one in 1,000 has embraced Christ. Therefore there is good reason to pray for spiritual openness in these groups!

In Christ,

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Pray for

*A Disciple Making Movement Among Every
Muslim Frontier People Group in India*



Indian Muslims: Dangerous Then, In Danger Now

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—by Wesley
Kawato

India's religious problems today are deeply rooted in her past. Most of you have heard of the clashes between Hindus and Muslims in the state of Kashmir; but Muslims live all over the country, and they make up 14 percent of India's population according to the 2011 census. Religious violence can happen in just about any part of India. Why is this? Read on and find out.

Islam Spreads Through Conversion and Conquest

Many of India's Muslims trace their origins back to Arab traders who settled on the west coast of India during the 7th century A.D. Conversions to Islam quickly followed, and more of them happened when the Muslims of Arabia began sending missionaries to India around 1050 A.D. Iman Al-Mutansir Billah was the first of these missionaries. They

found that some parts of India had already been exposed to Islam even though they were far from the trading ports. There had been Muslim attempts to conquer India going back to Mohammed Bin Qasim in 672 A.D.

Many early invasions led to short lived empires. Muslim invaders came to stay after 1000 A.D. Mahmud of Ghazni conquered most of northern India. By the 16th century the Ghazni Empire had collapsed and the political void was filled by the Mughal Empire.

Mughal forces came from Persia and were already Muslims when they arrived in India. In 1526 Sultan Babur, the founder of the dynasty, defeated his enemies at the first Battle of Panipat. That victory made the Mughals the dominant power in India. The Mughals tolerated other religions in the territory they ruled. Many of their subjects converted to Islam in order to gain economic favors from the Mughal court.

Most of India's conversions to Islam happened between the 12th and 16th centuries A.D. when India was ruled by one Muslim empire after another. The Mughal Empire began to weaken with their defeat at the Battle of Karnaby in 1739 A.D; but its demise was not complete until the British Raj, a reference to British rule in what are now the South Asian countries of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

European Interference

European traders arrived in India after 1498 when Vasco Da Gama, a Portuguese explorer, sailed around Africa to reach India. India's spices proved to be popular in Europe. European powers soon began fighting for trading rights for India's spices.

At first the Portuguese were the dominant traders in India. They established a trading colony in Goa. Years later the Dutch kicked out the Portuguese. They established a trading colony in Sri Lanka. By the 1700s Britain and France had ejected the Dutch. These nations fought a series of wars for control of India. The American Revolution was just one front in a global war between Britain and France. While the French were aiding the American colonies, British and French troops fought for control of India. Britain eventually won.

By the 1700s the Maratha Empire had collapsed, leaving behind many smaller states in India. By the time the fighting between Britain and France ended in 1783 there was no longer a unified Indian nation that

could put up a united front against the British. That allowed Britain to make separate deals with the rulers of the Indian states. By 1850 a combination of economic and military aid had turned many Indian sultans into British puppets, increasing Indian resentment against the British. The British also recruited thousands of Indian men of all races and religions to serve in her military.

The Mutiny of 1857 and the British Raj

One of the few times India's Hindus and Muslims united to resist British rule was in 1857. There was a rumor that the British were using beef fat to coat bullets. That offended India's Hindus. Another rumor said that the British were using pork fat to coat bullets. That offended India's Muslims. These rumors led to a rebellion among Britain's native troops in India, better known as sepoys. Cooperation between the Hindu and Muslim rebels quickly broke down. The Hindu Sepoys became discouraged and abandoned the cause, leaving the Muslims to fight alone. When the British attacked, most of the Sepoys killed were Muslims. The rebellion was crushed, and India's Muslims never forgot how they'd been abandoned by the Hindus.

The Indian Mutiny of 1857 gave the British Empire an excuse to take direct control of India. British regular army units moved into India with orders to restore peace. Sultans who'd supported the mutiny were deposed. In 1858 A.D. much of India was placed under the rule of British colonial governors.

During the era of direct British rule, the British protected the Muslims from Hindu attacks. This was part of Britain's policy of maintaining peace in India. Things remained peaceful until 1918 when India's colonial army returned from fighting in World War I. Many ethnic Indian veterans felt their country deserved independence, especially given the inability of European nations to get along. Calls for independence grew ever louder between 1918 and 1947. Those agitating for independence were led by skilled leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru.

In 1941 the start of World War II in the Pacific caught the British by surprise. Britain needed troops to fend off a possible Japanese invasion of India. Most Indians weren't eager to fight for the British again. That forced the British to offer incentives to recruit Indian troops, so they made secret deals with Hindu and Muslim community leaders, leading to more animosity between Hindus and Muslims.

The British won WWII in 1945, but they were financially drained. Great Britain could no longer afford the cost of maintaining a colonial empire so they made plans to grant India independence. Shortly after the war Lord Mountbatten became the new governor of India. He quickly learned how much India's Hindus and Muslims hated each other. That forced him to resort to a two-state solution. The secret deals made by the British during World War II also tied Mountbatten's hands. Britain had promised independence to both the Hindus and the Muslims. Gandhi and Nehru opposed Mountbatten's two state solution. They argued for the creation of a unified Indian state. Mountbatten stuck with his original plan. India and Pakistan were granted independence in 1947. India was created to be a secular-Hindu nation, and Pakistan was created to be a safe haven for South Asia's Muslims.

India's Independence in 1947

Things didn't go smoothly during the transition to independence. Britain gradually withdrew her troops from India. In March of 1946 the Great Calcutta Riot left 4,000 Muslims and Hindus dead. The killings got worse in 1947. Hindu militants drove Muslims from areas slated to be part of India. Muslim militants drove out Hindus from areas slated to be part of Pakistan. Thousands on both sides died.

Even after the partition of India became official in 1947, India and Pakistan fought their first war. These two countries fought a second war in 1965 over control of Kashmir. They fought a third time in 1971 when Bangladesh seceded from Pakistan and India sided with Bangladesh.

After 1947 India was left with a large Muslim minority despite efforts of Hindu militants to drive them out of India.

Today there continues to be tension between India's Hindus and Muslims. Hindus sometimes accuse Muslims of killing "sacred" cows, leading to bloody riots. In 1992 the destruction of Babri Mosque by Hindu militants angered the Muslim community. Many Hindus believed the mosque sat on the birth place of Lord Ram, a Hindu god. This was another pretense for attacking the Muslim minority.

Pray for peace between India's Hindu and Muslims!

ASSAMESE MUSLIMS IN INDIA

ROM 10:14, NIV

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Make this your prayer for Assamese Muslims today!

iStock/dheeraj11



Delicious Assamese food!

Thousands have sought refuge in Europe, fleeing violence in Africa and the Middle East. Central American refugees have confused immigration and border control efforts in the United States.

The same problem exists for the Assamese Muslims in India's northeastern state of Assam. They are the minority in a Hindu majority state. Complicating their status even more is that they are a collection of Muslim peoples—refugees escaping poverty in Bangladesh and descendants of Muslim soldiers who once fought in Assam and decided to stay. Even though they are Muslim they celebrate many Hindu festivals and customs. They even allow their daughters to marry Hindu men.

These Assamese Muslims have been victims in recent uprisings and attempts by the Indian government to regulate immigration from Bangladesh. Many of them fear for their lives even though their families have lived in Assam for generations. They have many problems, but they do not recognize their greatest danger – unless they respond to the only savior, they will never experience his blessings and peace.

Ask the Father to send his harvesters to Assam to befriend and share Christ with Assamese Muslims. Pray for Christ's blessings to reach Assamese families.—JS

One of the hottest political issues in the world today is illegal immigration.

KASHMIRI MUSLIMS IN INDIA

In the heart of one of the most spectacularly beautiful areas of the world is the site of some of the fiercest conflicts – Kashmir!

With the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, Kashmir was given the choice of siding with either of the two countries. The ruling Hindu class in Kashmir chose India, but most of the people were Muslims. Kashmir has been a battleground ever since.

Most Kashmiris live in rural areas and farm and raise sheep, goats, and yaks. The world is familiar with the fine wool from these animals – cashmere. There is little opportunity for these mostly rural Muslims to interact except during festival celebrations or pilgrimages to shrines.

Kashmiri Muslims enjoy singing and telling stories around the fire. Their love for music may be a way to reach their hearts for Jesus. They are a hospitable people. Those who reach out to them must find a person of peace.

Pray for the Lord to raise up men of peace to open the doors of Kashmir to the Prince of Peace. Pray that God will give Kashmiri believers boldness to share Christ with their people and deliver them from persecution. Pray that God will give Kashmiri Muslims a revelation of who Jesus truly is and the boldness to learn more about him and share his love with others.—JS



Military personnel are common in Kashmir

iStock/vlad_karavaev

2 THES 3:16, NLT

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you his peace at all times and in every situation. The Lord be with you all.

Pray that the Lord will give spiritual and physical peace to the Muslim Kashmiris.

1 TIM 2:9-10, NLT

And I want women to be modest in their appearance. They should wear decent and appropriate clothing and not draw attention to themselves by the way they fix their hair or by wearing gold or pearls or expensive clothes. For women who claim to be devoted to God should make themselves attractive by the good things they do.

Pray that Muslims will understand that there are many things that they already believe that can lead them to the eternal Savior.

MAPPILA MUSLIMS IN INDIA

iStock/Zzvet



Fishing off the coast of Kerala

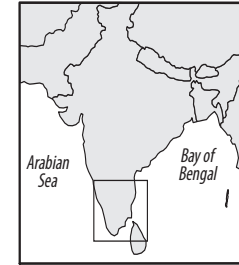
Mappila Muslim women are the heads of their families because their husbands are often gone on fishing or other sea-going ventures. The Laccadive Mappila live on the Lakshadweep Islands off the southwestern Kerala coast of India. God knows them intimately and longs for them to be represented at his throne in eternity. They migrated as Hindus from Kerala in the 7th century but converted to Islam due to the work of an Arab missionary. Their islands are tropical like Hawaii, and they raise the same fruits and vegetables as the Hawaiians. Their islands are covered with coconut trees, so the husky fiber is used to make ropes and mats which provides their main industry.

The fact that their society is matrilineal is unusual for Muslims. However, they are monogamous even though Islam allows for a man to have as many as four wives. It may be that the wives, being the bosses, decided that they did not want their husbands to have other wives! Unfortunately, monogamy hasn't helped in their marriages. Divorce is easy and common, and over half of their marriages fail.

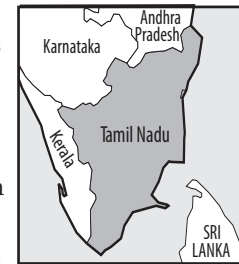
Pray that God will call believers from Kerala to go to the Lakshadweep Islands to share Christ with the Mappila Muslims. Let us pray for God to give them dreams and visions of himself. Pray for entire Mappila families to be blessed by Christ.—JS

TAMIL MUSLIMS IN INDIA

It's not easy being a minority group in any country. That is the case with the Tamil Muslims in Tamil Nadu, India's most southeastern state. They comprise 5.5 percent of the population of this predominantly Hindu area, and there is also a strong Christian minority that speaks Tamil. Some Tamil Muslims live in close-by Sri Lanka. They are a diverse group, but are identified by their common language of Tamil. Some members of the Tamil Muslim community are descended from Tamil women and Arab traders, much like the Mappila Muslims that we prayed for yesterday.



AlvaroRodriguezElez



The Tamil Muslims are peace-loving, and in general, get along with their Hindu neighbors. Their occupations run the gamut from white-collar jobs, industrial workers, to those engaged in intricate embroidery work. Though there are Tamil speaking believers who can reach them, it will be difficult; Muslims who profess Christ are usually considered traitors by their community. Believers will usually need to go through Muslim community leaders.

Pray that God will give the vision of reaching Tamil Muslim families to churches or organizations. Pray that they will adopt them as their special people group to pray for, visit, befriend, and bless with the presence of Christ. Pray for the Holy Spirit to move among Tamil Muslim leaders.—JS

2 TIM 1:8B, NLT

With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the good news.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to give strength and supernatural love to all who reach out to the Tamil Muslims.

MUSLIM DARZI PEOPLE IN INDIA

PROV 16:3, NLT

Commit your actions to the LORD, and your plans will succeed.

Pray that Solomon's advice would be embraced today by the Muslim Darzi people of India.

iStock/alexey



A Muslim Darzi tailor at work

The traditional story says that the Hindu god Parasarama was pursuing two brothers to destroy them. A priest offered to hide them in a temple, employing one to sew clothing and the other to dye clothes. Up until recently the Darzi have taken after the first brother and become tailors, while another group called the Darji are cloth dyers.

Though most remain Hindu, about a million are now Muslims in India. Their name comes from the Persian *darzan* which means “to sew.” Today many are taking advantage of educational opportunities to become teachers, designers, and other professionals.

There has been no progress in gospel outreach to the Darzi people. The Muslim population speaks Urdu, so they have Bible translations, the JESUS Film, and gospel recordings in their language. To our knowledge, no believers are actively reaching out to them. But Urdu radio broadcasts have the potential to turn their hearts to the Lord.

Pray for Muslim Darzi people to heed the word of the Lord when they hear it. Pray that believers will commit to assisting the Darzi people with economic opportunities and micro loans as a way of showing them the goodness and lovingkindness of Christ. Pray that believers from throughout India would reach out to both the Muslim and Hindu Darzi communities.—JY

MUSLIM DHOBIS IN INDIA

There exists a notable class of washer-men, the Dhobis, who live within the Indian caste system. They are found on street corners and byways, ready to provide their services to anyone who needs clean clothes. In northern India and Nepal, some Dhobi are involved in government service or agriculture, though most retain their traditional occupation. Many are Hindu, and there is a separate Dhobi population defined by their Islamic practices.

Although they are not strangers to education the Dhobi of India are considered untouchable. Indeed, the Muslim Dhobi in some Indian states are more literate than in other Muslim communities. However, literacy rates are still low, and even the children work to help sustain their families. In Muslim Dhobi communities, women have low status and maintain no rights over family properties. Families arrange marriages, and boys marry as young as 16, girls as young as 14. Christian materials are available in languages of the Muslim Dhobis, but workers are few.

Pray for workers among the Muslim Dhobis, and that many will respond with repentance, gratitude, and dedication to the Lord of lords. Pray for increased economic opportunity and education, and for women to be honored in Dhobi families. Pray for a change in heart that will move Dhobi families to embrace and demonstrate the radical love of Christ.—BK

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I KINGS 7:40, NLT

He also made the necessary wash basins, shovels, and bowls. So at last Hiram completed everything King Solomon had assigned him to make for the Temple of the Lord. . .

Pray that the Muslim Dhobi people will understand that all work can be a holy act of worship and devotion to the Lord.

MUSLIM HAJAM (NAI) PEOPLE IN INDIA

PS 105:1, NLT

Give thanks to the Lord and proclaim his greatness. Let the whole world know what he has done.

Pray that when the Muslim Hajam people hear of the risen Christ that they will tell others what he has done.

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A Muslim Hamam at work

The Hajam (or Nai) are much more than a caste of barbers. They have always trimmed beards and nails, provided shaves, extracted teeth, set sprains, and lanced boils. Today many of the Muslim Hajam perform minor surgeries as well, including circumcision. Though they have low status because they deal with “dead” matter like hair, they

have a special place in South Asia because they are essential at major events such as weddings or funerals. The Hajam can also be matchmakers, and Hajam women are sometimes midwives. To make things more interesting, they are noted for being good conversationalists while they service their customers.

Those who rise in social status drop the name of Hajam and call themselves Salmani, as they claim to be descendants from the prophet Solomon.

Though the Hajam are a fairly large Muslim group within India, there is still little-to-no ministry among them. They can be slow to adopt new ideas, which suggests that reaching them may be a challenge. However, the Hajam are a strategic group to reach, and they have contact with many other communities.

Pray for workers to enter the field of harvest among the Muslim Hajam. Pray that Hajam leaders would not only hear, but embrace the love of the Father, and tell others of his goodness.—BK

MUSLIM QASSAB PEOPLE IN INDIA

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

The rich aroma of the spicy meat dishes was soaring out of three large serving containers as Rasheed, a Qassab butcher, was carrying them into a large tent set up in Mumbai’s Islamic Relief center for the poor. He walked over to his wife who was doing volunteer work and said, “Elijah, this is the best I can do for today. I sold more meat today so there was not much left.” She replied, “It will be deeply appreciated. Allah has blessed us since we have started to help others. Your meat store is doing better each day.” Smiling, Rasheed replied, “I feel you and I are closer to Allah since we have shown mercy to those who are poor and hungry.”

For centuries Qassab Muslim butchers have been well known for their meat throughout India and parts of Pakistan. They are friendly and often show generosity to others. To them the way to follow God is to be a Muslim. They reject efforts made by believers to tell them about the need for Jesus.

Pray that the Qassabs will hear God’s words and accept them. Pray for leaders of their families and communities to embrace Christ and open the door for others to learn to love and obey Jesus Christ.—PD



Qassab at his shop

iStock/Bravissimo

2 TIM 2:10, NLT

So I am willing to endure anything if it will bring salvation and eternal glory in Christ Jesus to those God has chosen.

Pray that God will raise up people who will endure anything to make sure the Qassab people in India have a chance to meet and obey the only savior.

ACTS 3:19-20, NIV

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus.

Pray that the Bhisti people will soon experience and help others experience spiritual refreshment from the Lord that will be far more satisfying than cold water on a hot day!

iStock/ChandrasekarReddy



(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

The scorching afternoon heat made Faatina's feet feel like

they were on fire as she walked through the streets of Kolkata, India. She was so thirsty and saw a haggard looking older Bhisti man struggling as he carried his heavy *masak* (goat skin filled with water). A younger man, also with a *masak*, was calling out, "Come have a drink of cool water!" It had been a long time since she bought a drink from a Bhisti. She asked the younger man for a drink. She then inquired, "why is this older man doing this hard work?" Aaqib replied, "We have no choice, all we know is to be water carriers. We must earn what we can so our children go to school and get better work than this."

The Bhistis were a Muslim group from Arabia who trace their history back to the Mughal invaders of India. Originally, they supplied water for villages, and gradually, this became their main source of income. Today there are about 545,000 Muslim Bhistis spread across parts of India and southwestern Pakistan.

Pray that the future will bring new hope for the Bhistis, not just through a vocational change but spiritual refreshment from Jesus Christ.—PD

MUSLIM BELDAR PEOPLE IN INDIA

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

"Come over here! This man needs help!" Mohammad was calling an ambulance driver as he ran to a Beldar Muslim man who had collapsed. The poor man was a farmer who had walked 111 miles along with 50,000 other farmers and their families to Mumbai. They came because they desperately needed help promised by the government.

Over several years a devastating drought had all but destroyed their ability to grow adequate crops, so the Indian government offered relief. When these promises never materialized, 1,750 of these farmers committed suicide. Some of them were Muslim but the majority were Hindu. Now Mohammed and others in Mumbai were trying to help these poor farmers by giving them food, water, medical help, and shelter at Azad Maidan, a public park in Mumbai, so they can have the strength to plead their case with government officials.

Pray these farmers will receive government help so they can thrive economically and get back to growing needed food. Pray that believers will offer material and spiritual comfort at this time of need. Pray that the Beldar people will have their lands refreshed with rain, so they can have a good harvest. Pray that they will give thanks and devotion to the King of kings.—PD



Pray for adequate rain for Indian farmers

iStock/IndianFace

2 THES 3:1, NLT

Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we ask you to pray for us. Pray that the Lord's message will spread rapidly and be honored wherever it goes, just as when it came to you.

Pray that the good news will quickly spread through Muslim Beldar communities, and that they will respond with repentance, faith, joy, and commitment to the Lord.

PINJARA PEOPLE IN INDIA

DAN 4:37, NLT

Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of heaven. All his acts are just and true, and he is able to humble the proud.

Pray that the Pinjara people would, like Nebuchadnezzar, learn to praise, exalt and glorify the King of heaven.

iStock/Marvot



Cotton, all ready for Pinjaras

are the Pinjara. In fact, their name means, “cotton weaver.” They produce and sell cotton products such as mats, mattresses, clothing, pillows, and blankets. Many Pinjara have taken up other occupations such as selling leather goods, baskets, stationary, and *paan* (betel leaf) in shops. Some are engaged as daily-wage laborers, masons, bullock-cart drivers or rickshaw-pullers. The educated Pinjara work in government and private sectors.

Originally all Pinjara were Hindus. About 500 years ago when the Moguls ruled India, many Pinjara converted to Islam. Today most Pinjara are Muslim, but there is still a sizable population of Hindus among them. Strict Muslims sometimes criticize the Pinjara for retaining many Hindu customs and worshipping Hindu gods. The Pinjara speak many different languages depending upon where they live. Most Pinjara also speak Urdu, a major South Asian language.

Pray that the Muslim Pinjara would gain access to Christian materials in Urdu and that they would be receptive to the claims of Isa or Jesus. Pray for entire Pinjara families and communities to discover and embrace the free gift of life found by trusting Christ. Pray for the Pinjara people to be delivered from their fear of Christianity and to embrace God's blessing through his word.—DK

MUSLIM TELI PEOPLE IN INDIA

What is an important ingredient in food that we seldom think about? Many cooked foods contain cooking oil of some type.

The Muslim Teli are a people who live in north India and Pakistan. Their traditional occupation is that of extracting oil from mustard and sesame seeds. Their name Teli means, “oil presser.” The Teli are said to have descended from Baba Hasu, the man who invented the wooden oil-pressing machine.



This is our third month in a row praying for the Telis!

iStock/ArRich

The Teli's traditional occupation of oil pressing is now being replaced with growing cash crops like wheat and maize. Much of the oil processing in India and Pakistan is now done in modern factories. The Teli have many small businessmen and traders among them, although many are still engaged in oil pressing. The primary language of the Muslim Teli is Urdu, a language with a complete Bible and ample Christian literature.

Pray that the Lord will start a movement of Teli families experiencing God's blessings. Pray for workers needed to sow God's word into Teli families, healing and strengthening households with God's blessings. Ask the Lord to raise up and send out a new generation of fruitful, multiplying witnesses from among the Teli people.—DK

2 COR 5:20, NLT

So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, “Come back to God!”

Pray that the Teli become Christ's ambassadors in India and tell many about his mercy and grace.

BADHAI PEOPLE IN INDIA

2 TIM 2:1-2, NLT

Be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.

Pray that the Badhai would be strong in God's grace and are trained in the ways of the Lord.

iStock/reddees



An Indian carpenter

Of all the occupations that the Son of God could have engaged in, he chose carpentry! A people group called the Badhai or Barhai practice the same trade as Jesus did. The Badhai name comes from a word meaning “cutting.” Most of the Badhai are Hindus, but many converted to Islam during the Mogul Empire (1526-1857).

Muslim Badhai still work as carpenters and woodcutters. Rural Badhai make wooden farm implements like plows in the same way as their ancestors have done for hundreds of years. Some urban Badhai have gone into the furniture business and have become wealthy. Others have purchased land and work in agriculture.

According to *People Groups of India*, the Badhai have a rich oral tradition of folksongs, dances, and tales that they often share with other communities. The primary language of the Muslim Badhai of India is Urdu, which allows them to communicate with most Muslim Indians who live in the northern states.

Pray that God will move believers to engage and build friendships with the Badhai. Ask God to deliver families and communities within the Badhai people from fears that hinder them from embracing his blessings. Pray that many of the Badhai people will come to love God with their whole being and will walk in his ways.—DK

NAIKDA PEOPLE IN INDIA

The Naikda people are westerners! Not in the global sense, but in the sense that they live primarily in most of India's western states. That is unusual, considering that India is divided more by north-south than east-west. They have a tribal background; it wasn't until colonial days when most of them moved away from being hunters-gatherers near the forests. They cleared land and started to farm. As more outsiders encroached on their farmland, the Naikda people began to rebel, primarily against the British colonialists whom they blamed for unwelcome changes.

There are nearly four million Naikda people, and because of their tribal background, they are considered what Indians call a scheduled caste, which means they have low status. They eat any kind of meat, which indicates lower status than high caste communities.

They are a Hindu community, even though they practice many of their ancient religious practices. Such an arrangement is usually allowed in the Hindu religious establishment. These people would find it hard to accept a different religious system if believers present the gospel in this fashion. They need to be told about relationship with Christ.

Pray that the Naikda people will turn their hearts to Jesus and establish a means of discipling new believers who will in turn make other believers. Pray for these Hindus to teach others to become faithful “devotees” of Jesus Christ.—KC



rmunes

2 TIM 2:9, NLT

And because I preach this good news, I am suffering and have been chained like a criminal. But the word of God cannot be chained.

Pray that the word of God will not be held back among the Naikda people of India.

GUJAR PEOPLE IN INDIA

1 TIM 1:12-13, NLT

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength to do his work. He considered me trustworthy and appointed me to serve him, even though I used to blaspheme the name of Christ. In my insolence, I persecuted his people. But God had mercy on me because I did it in ignorance and unbelief.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to strengthen those who will step out in faith to reach India's Muslims.

iStock/Judy Dillon



do with the Gujarars of India? Read on to find out!

India's diversity is seen in the Gujar people, most of whom are either Hindu or Muslims, though 0.3 percent are Sikh, and an unknown number worship the sun. Some in the United Kingdom are Christian believers. All of these are Gujarars, though their culture may be different depending on their religion. Like the chameleon, the Gujarars blend into their surrounding societies.

The Gujar name derives from a word meaning cattle grazers. Most live in central northern India, Pakistan, Kashmir, and Afghanistan. Some are seasonal nomads, while others live as semi-nomads. Others live and work in towns. Some, living in forests, are not integrated into Indian society. Most live in extended families under a community council.

Pray that the Gujar people will allow Christ to bless and transform their culture. Pray that they will follow Christ as a group. Pray that Gujarars who are genuine followers of Christ in the U.K. will evangelize Gujarars in South Asia. Pray that God opens Gujar family councils to the gospel and Christ.—TP

What animal can camouflage itself by changing its color? The chameleon, of course. So what has a chameleon to

MUSLIM JATS IN INDIA

Can a change of occupation lead to a change of religion? In the case of the Jats, it did. When some of their gotras

(communities) moved from being soldiers to being farmers, some converted to Islam. Persecution by Hindus also helped push Jat communities towards Islam. Muslim Jats are especially numerous in the north Indian states of Rajasthan and Haryana.

Today, Punjabi and Sindhi speaking Jats are wealthy and politically powerful, which has given them the opportunity to enter politics locally and nationally. More an ethno-linguistic group than a caste, Jats are classed as a backward (i.e., underprivileged) caste in some Indian states, so some try to get “reservations” for jobs and positions in universities.

Originally Buddhists, most Jats are now either Hindu or Muslim; they often adhere to the faith of the majority of the people where they live. Some in the U.K. are Christian believers.

Pray for missionaries and ministries to work with Muslim Jats to help them improve their lives economically and to find their way to Jesus. Pray that Jat believers in the UK will evangelize Muslim Jats there and in India. Pray for churches to regularly pray for Muslim Jat families until there is a church planting movement among them.—TP



Jats are noted for being muscular

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1 TIM 1:15, NLT

This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”—and I am the worst of them all.

Pray for the Jat peoples to understand and embrace the Christ who came to save them from sin.

MUSLIM RAJPUTS IN INDIA

MATT 4:24A, TPT

His fame spread everywhere!

Pray that the Lord's fame and glory spread throughout the Muslim Rajput communities of India. Ask God for gospel breakthroughs that lead to disciple-making movements, powerfully blessing India's Muslim Rajputs.

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Beautiful architecture from the days of Rajput glory

How is it that over 2.8 million Rajputs in India follow Islam, when the large majority of India's Rajput peoples are Hindu? Centuries ago, when the Hindu Rajputs ruled northern and western portions of India, Muslims invaded and conquered parts of India. Many Rajputs converted to Islam and have remained Muslim to this day.

Muslim Rajputs live throughout India in 27 different states, but the largest concentrations are found in the northern states. This proud, formerly warrior caste people group has become primarily an agricultural community; however, some have taken on employment in service or wage-labor jobs. In this patriarchal culture, the women often do weaving, embroidery, and make handkerchiefs.

Though India's Muslim Rajputs adhere to Sunni Islam, they also follow various Hindu practices. Of the many languages spoken by these Muslim Rajputs, 2.26 million use Urdu as their primary language. The complete Bible, JESUS Film, and audio Bible teachings are available in Urdu. However, there are no known believers among these Muslim Rajputs.

Ask God to draw them to Jesus (Isa al Masih in the Qur'an). Pray that Muslim Rajput families experience God's blessing through a movement of family-based discovery Bible studies. Pray that churches will seek out the Muslim Rajputs of India for intentional prayer and outreach.—CR

MUSLIM MEWATI PEOPLE IN INDIA

(This fictional account is intended to depict the spiritual situation of this people group.)

Aabis was walking through the marketplace when the book was thrust at him. He looked into the eyes of the man offering it to him and blinked. "What is this?" he asked. "A gift," the man replied. Aabis recognized the markings. Shaking his head, he handed it back and replied, "I know what this is." "Have you read it?" said the giver. "No. But I know that you are trying to get me to convert to your religion. To be Mewati is to be a Muslim. It is who I am."

The Mewati people persistently practice Islam. It is part of their heritage, their culture, and their identity. Like most Muslims they believe that allowing Christ to be their lord would mean turning away from family and community. It could mean being ostracized and persecuted, even risking their lives. How can this barrier be overcome? By sending more workers, providing more Bibles, engaging in more focused evangelism and church planting efforts? Probably. But first, we need to pray!

Pray for the Lord to tear down the obstacles that are keeping the Mewati from putting their trust in Christ. Also pray that God will give them a powerful desire for spiritual truth. Pray for their hearts to be prepared to receive God's ways.—CL



BibleGiver/iStockB-C-Designs

1 THES 1:8A, NLT

And now the word of the Lord is ringing out from you to people everywhere, even beyond Macedonia and Achaia, for wherever we go we find people telling us about your faith in God.

Pray that the Muslim Mewati people will respond to the word of the Lord, and study it in their homes.

MUSLIM MALIK PEOPLE IN INDIA

1 THES 1:4, NLT

We know, dear brothers and sisters, that God loves you and has chosen you to be his own people.

Pray that the Malik people will respond to God's abundant love.

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Researchers tell us that the Malik are 100 percent Muslim. There are no believers among them. Zero. Imagine the spiritual warfare

taking place for the hearts of this people group! The enemy would love to drag all of them into an eternity away from God. And thus far, he has been doing a very effective job of this. Despite having the Bible, the JESUS Film, and a number of other gospel resources available in their heart language, they continue to be imprisoned by darkness.

What can we do to change this? We can fight for them. Not physically with bullets and bombs. The Bible tells us that “though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds” (2 Cor 10:3,4). The Malik are being held captive by the lies of the enemy. To rescue them, we must pray.

Pray for the hearts, minds, spiritual eyes and ears of the Malik to be opened. Ask God to reveal his light, piercing the darkness and setting them free from spiritual captivity. Pray for their leaders to respond to the light of Christ.—CL

MUSLIM RAYEEN PEOPLE IN INDIA

One million people seems like a lot of people. That's the population of Austin, Texas, about twice as many people as live in Dublin, Ireland, or Cancun, Mexico. If one million people went missing, their absence would certainly be noticed. There would be an investigation, a well-organized search operation.

There are approximately one million Rayeen people in the world today, and they have gone missing. Their names haven't been written in the Book of Life. They are, at this writing, considered unreached. The majority of them are “lost.” Strangely, there doesn't seem to be a search party actively seeking to find them.

Pray for the Lord to alert mission groups to the urgent need to send someone to this people group. Pray for the Rayeen to be “found” – to hear and respond to the invitation to eternal life. Pray for their names to be written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Ask the Lord to open spiritual doors through their family leaders so that they can enjoy the unparalleled blessings of the Savior. Pray that soon there will be Rayeen disciples making more disciples.—CL

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1 THES 1:10, NLT

And they speak of how you are looking forward to the coming of God's son from heaven—Jesus, whom God raised from the dead. He is the one who has rescued us from the terrors of the coming judgment.

Pray that the Muslim Rayeen people will flee God's wrath into the loving arms of Jesus Christ.

1 THES 5:16-18, NLT

Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

Pray for the Lord to grant joy and thankfulness to members of this Muslim community when they turn their hearts to Jesus Christ.

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Dholak drums

hours thinking of, practicing, and performing the *dholak*. He was three when he first became mesmerized by the beat of this two-headed, horizontal drum. He begged his father for his own instrument. At four, he gave his first public performance. All his relatives concurred that he was a boy wonder and heartily supported his musical endeavors.

Now, however, Hussein was a teenager and his father wanted Hussein to stop playing, to get serious about school, and go to a prestigious university. His father said, "We are Sayyid people; we have long enjoyed a high status. You must forget your musical dreams and become a lawyer, engineer, or doctor like me and your uncles and your grandfathers. Music is the stuff of boyhood, and you must set it aside until you have landed a good job."

The Sayyid people have long been leaders. They are entrepreneurs, scholars, artists, teachers, lecturers, administrators, engineers, doctors, lawyers, defense personnel, and political pundits. They live throughout the Indian subcontinent and are Muslims.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to touch the hearts of these successful people. May they adopt his definition of a successful, prosperous life. May they know the best kind of music—singing God's praises here on earth and in heaven!—CMW

MUSLIM SAYYIDS IN INDIA

(This fictional story describes the life of the people.)

Ever since childhood, Hussein had spent the majority of his waking

MUSLIM SHAIKH QURESHI

If you were to look at a map of India marked with the locations of the Shaikh Qureshi people, you would see that almost the entire country



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would be covered! Seven and a half million Shaikh Qureshi are scattered throughout the subcontinent. They also live across many socio-economic lines. Some are well-educated and modern. Others raise cattle and continue traditional practices such as marriage between cousins. Some allow divorce and remarriage. In some communities, the family property is passed largely to the sons in the family, with the daughters inheriting a smaller portion of the land.

Psalms 147:4 says, "He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names" (ESV). The Qureshi people are numerous like the stars, and although they are diverse as a people group, they don't possess any strongly defining characteristic. Yet God knows the name of each person and wants to share his abundant lovingkindness with each one.

Ask him to call out families and clans from among this Muslim people group to become his children. Pray that soon they will experience the abundant blessings when they hear God's word and submit to Jesus Christ, the only savior.—CMW

2 THES 1:12, NLT

Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Pray that when Shaikhs give their lives to Jesus, that they will be blessed with joy and honor that will make all that they have pale by comparison.

1 SAM 2:10, NLT

Those who fight against the LORD will be shattered. He thunders against them from heaven; the LORD judges throughout the earth. He gives power to his king; he increases the strength of his anointed one.

Pray that these Muslim judges will have a Godly fear of the one who is both judge and abba, daddy.

MUSLIM QAZI PEOPLE IN INDIA

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(This is a fictional story to illustrate the life of the people.)

Musa's stomach flopped over like a soggy

piece of naan (bread). The village baker had just dragged a thief to Musa's court and asked him, the *qadi* (or qazi, judge), to find the thief guilty of stealing bread. What made this occasion unique was that the accused had been a boyhood friend. Though it had been years since the two men had seen one another, the recognition was mutual—and uncomfortable. Musa's friend had grown up with a widowed mother, whereas Musa had inherited his father's house and position as community leader. The thief explained that he had lost his job and his family was starving. Musa's sense of justice allowed for no sentimentality, but it still hurt to rule against his childhood friend.

The Qazi people are 100 percent Muslim and live in Gujarat and Rajasthan in western India and in Bihar in eastern India. Their name derives from the word for “judge”. They are religious and judicial leaders. They perform births, purifications, marriages, deaths, and burial rites. Because of their elevated status, the Qazi have considerable clout among Muslims.

Pray for God to touch their leaders, so that they, in turn, may reach those in their sphere of influence. Ask God to humble their hearts so that they will surrender to the ultimate judge over all.—CMW

MUSLIM MOGHAL PEOPLE IN INDIA

Have you ever heard of a 100 percent Muslim people group that has no workers among them and less than one in 1,000 is a believer? You are about to pray for one. They are Moghal people of India.

Moghal people have few opportunities to hear about Jesus Christ who loves them so much that he willingly sacrificed his life so that their community may have access to the only way to be forgiven from sin. Although Moghal people speak Urdu and a wide range of printed, audio, and visual Bible resources are available in their language, few would use these materials. They live among families and friends who regard these materials as far less accurate than what they hear in the mosques. Those who decide to listen to the truth of the Bible may be rejected from their communities. Moghals remain connected with the larger worldwide Muslim community though their faith in the teachings of the Qur'an.

Pray for dedicated disciples to go to the Moghal people, and for their hearts to be ready to receive their savior. Pray for Christ's grace and truth to expand into the entire Moghal society as they begin to experience the unconditional love of Father God and the direction of the Holy Spirit.—KH

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1 TIM 2:5-6, NLT

For, there is one God and one mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message God gave to the world at just the right time.

Pray for the Muslim Moghal people of India to understand and embrace this truth.

1 TIM 6:6-7, NLT

Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it.

Pray for the wealthy Bohras to find contentment in knowing Christ Jesus, the only savior.

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prayed to Allah in seclusion from the men.

Bohra people in India have chosen to separate themselves from other Muslims, whom they consider trouble-makers, uneducated, and anti-social. Bohra people project themselves as educated, successful, giving, and peaceful, and they are generally considered in high regard by others in India. They are known as traders (the name Bohra means trader), cloth painters, and business managers.

They are 100 percent Shi'ite Muslim, although they practice their own interpretation of the Qur'an, and they are deeply influenced by their spiritual leader in all aspects of their lives.

Complete Bible resources exist in Urdu and Gujarati; however, their custom of setting themselves apart from other communities keeps them from hearing and learning of the Lord Jesus Christ who wants to be the primary influence in their lives. They often consider Christian beliefs and values a "Western religion" that has nothing to do with them.

Pray that God will raise up many prayer teams to adopt the Bohra people, and pray until the blessing of knowing Jesus as savior and Lord spreads rapidly from family to family.—KH

SHI'ITE MUSLIM BOHRAS IN INDIA

The women's section of the Shi'ite mosque was awash with color! Bright pinks, rich reds, beautiful greens, vibrant blues where everything except black predominated the clothes of Bohra women as they

MEMONS IN INDIA

Rev 3:17, R18, NIV—

Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.

Memon people in India are well respected, prosperous in business, good-hearted philanthropists, independent, and shining examples to all who come in contact with them. They establish welfare programs wherever they are found in India. They seem to have need of nothing ... is this true?

This unreached people group is 100 percent Muslim. They are devoted to their religion, and have built many mosques throughout India, making it possible for others to worship as they worship. They are revered as "good people." How does Almighty God see them?

Pray that these dear people, for whom Jesus Christ gave his life, will see their nakedness before him and bow in repentance, submission, and thankfulness to the God who loves them infinitely. Pray that the god of affluence will be overthrown among the Memon people and that their families and communities will be overcome by his abundant riches of grace, mercy, and truth.—KH

2 THES 3:5, NLT

May the Lord lead your hearts into a full understanding and expression of the love of God and the patient endurance that comes from Christ.

Pray that the Memons of India will soon have that understanding that will lead them to eternal blessings.

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MUSLIM AND HINDU MANIHAR PEOPLE IN INDIA

IS 49:18, NLT

Look around you and see, for all your children will come back to you. As surely as I live," says the Lord, "they will be like jewels or bridal ornaments for you to display."

Pray that the Manihar people will understand that they themselves are more precious to the Lord than beautiful ornaments.

iStock/indigasmx



Their name describes their occupation; it comes from two Sanskrit words – “Mani” (precious stone) and

“Kara” (maker). They live in harmony with other Muslim communities and even accept food and water from them.

Manihar men and women work together in their homes to manufacture and sell intricately designed bangles of all colors and sizes. Some have taken up other trades, but there are few businessmen or office workers among them. Several now send their children to school.

Some of the Manihars are Muslim; they worship Allah and revere Mohammad, but also visit the tombs of Muslim saints whom they believe can intercede with Allah on their behalf. Others are Hindu, and both need prayer.

How will they hear the gospel? Printed Bibles and Christian literature are of little use because very few Manihar can read. Non-readers struggle to use the internet to find the many audio resources available in their languages.

Pray for the JESUS Film to be widely distributed among the Manihar people. Pray for their family and clan leaders to open spiritual doors in their communities. Pray that the Manihar will find the true mediator between God and man and respond with joy, repentance, and faith.—AHS

MUSLIM LOHARS IN INDIA

Why are the Lohars blacksmiths by trade? They attribute their origins to a Hindu god, Vishwakarma who, according to legend, made iron



The work of a blacksmith

iStock/ImageDB

chariots for other gods. The term Lohar originally signified blacksmiths or iron workers. Others are farmers. This group differs from the Lohars in Pakistan we prayed for last month. Most are Hindu, though there are also Muslim and Sikh Lohars. Both communities need our prayers.

Lohars speak the primary languages of the states in which they live. Few can read. Some favor formal education while others don't. Despite skills gained from years following the metalworking trade, they cannot compete with factory-made implements, and many have lost their jobs and with it their self-esteem. Lohar women are considered inferior to men, but they work with their husbands and are allowed contact with other men. Though marriages are arranged at birth, the ceremony takes place later in life.

Ask God to raise up messengers to take the gospel of Christ to the Lohar in India. Pray that both men and women will find their identity and self-esteem as they become members of the true family of God. Pray for entire Lohar families to embrace Christ together, and to disciple others who, in turn, will disciple still others until there is a disciple making movement.—AHS

I THES 2:4, NLT

For we speak as messengers approved by God to be entrusted with the good news. Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts.

Pray that God will send courageous messengers with this mind-set and heart-set to the Lohar people in India.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

Pray that this will be the description of workers who will reach out to the Holar people.

HINDU HOLER PEOPLE OF INDIA

iStock/JosuOzkaritz



(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

Her husband's health was desperate, so the

Hindu Holar mother prayed to her sun god for favor. But what could a low caste woman like her offer a great god? She knew it was probably futile, but she had no other god to turn to. Maybe he would accept her offering, but probably not. Would the god of creation hear her prayer? Probably not, she thought as she put away her religious paraphernalia.

Most Holar are Hindu. In fact, 93 percent are Hindu. Though they worship a sun god, they understand there is a god of creation and they seldom approach him. The Holar people dwell mainly in Bihar and are also found in surrounding states. Most are farmers, while a few others are weavers or hunter-gatherers. Holar culture is in a state of great change due to the rapid changes happening in India right now. People with low status and no power like the Holar people are very vulnerable at this time.

Pray that the Holar people will find God's refuge and favor in Christ alone. Pray for the Holy Spirit to deploy believers to preach the hope of the gospel to Holar families. May they know paradise in the presence

HINDU KUNBI PEOPLE IN INDIA

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

As the Kunbi herdsman used his stick to scrape off cow dung that pressed around the edges of his sandals, he related to the dung. It is how he felt – smelly, dirty, embarrassing, and untouchable. Yet the strongly dominant Hindu culture that lived around him considers the cow holy, but his work with cattle was seldom appreciated, especially by the so called “forward” castes who held all the power. The Kunbi people are poor, and they have always been farmers and livestock herders.

Of the 1.2 million Hindu Kunbi, fewer than one in 1,000 is a Christian of any sort, just like the other frontier people groups we will be praying for through May. Kunbis are a barely detectible minority in the western states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. Social divisions like subcastes, sects, and clans regulate their marital alliances. Hopelessness is common amongst the rejected of society. Statistics show that farmer suicide is highest amongst the Kunbi. They smoke a kind of homemade cigar, resulting in a high incidence of mouth and throat cancer.

May the Kunbi abandon their deadly smoking addictions and instead be filled with His Spirit. Pray that their leaders will have dreams about the God of creation who loves them and is calling them into his family. Pray for Kunbi disciples to make other disciples.—LR



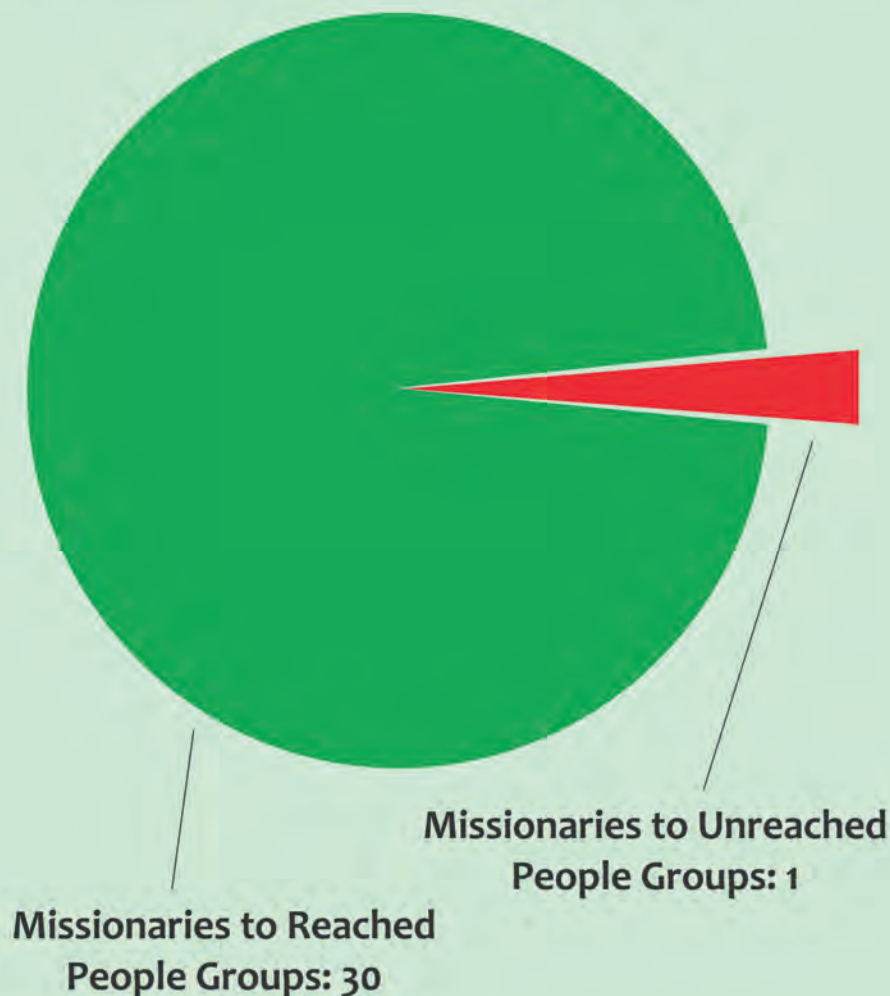
iStock/Radiokukka

But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life. All honor and glory to God forever and ever! He is the eternal king, the unseen one who never dies; he alone is God. Amen.

Pray for true humility and God-esteem to come to Kunbi people when they realize that they can be forgiven by Father God and receive eternal life with him!

The Great Imbalance

For every 30 missionaries to reached people groups there is only 1 to unreached people groups.



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