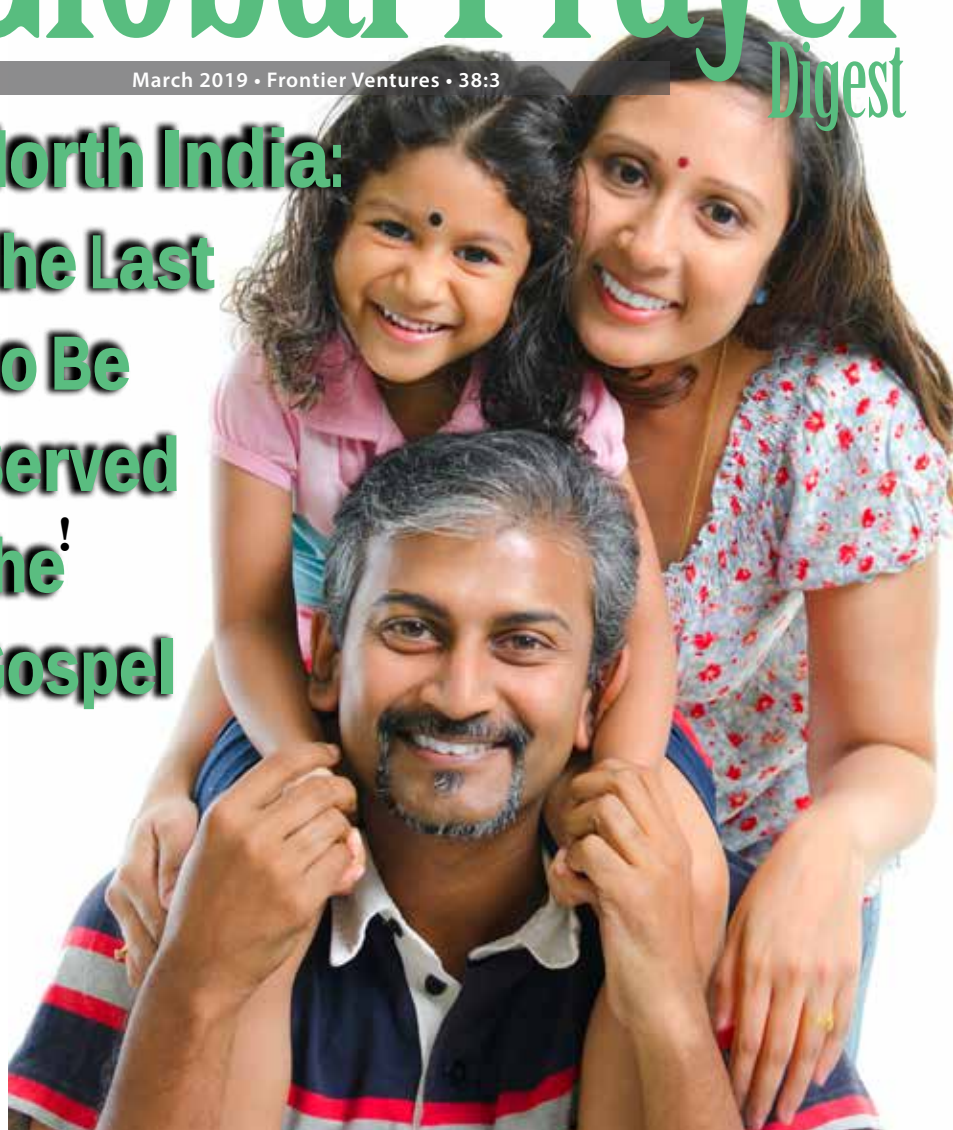


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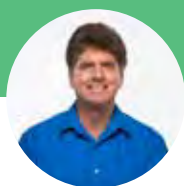
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North India: The Last To Be Served the Gospel



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- 10—Boil Eggs, Shell Them, Spice them!
- 11—Creative, Compassionate Kutanas
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Dear Praying Friends,

About 20 years ago, when the internet was just starting to become part of people's everyday lives, many organizations did not have firewalls to keep out unwanted viewers. I became one of those unwanted viewers for a militant Hindu website. They believed that Indian believers are agents for foreign governments that want to undermine Hindu civilization. At first I laughed, but then I tried to put myself in their position. Westerners have given large amounts of funds to help evangelistic efforts in India, and the last imperialistic power India dealt with, England, was Christian. Along with all the excellent efforts to spread the gospel, there were efforts to extend church planting efforts through offering jobs and goods. Before that time there were Muslim empires that controlled Hindu India that sometimes extended their power through offering rewards for converting to Islam. I finally realized why some Hindus view outside religions as a threat. Religious systems have always been used as a means to extend political control, and that goes for Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism. When people bring Christ to India, Hindus don't understand that it's a relationship with a loving God that we take to them rather than a means of political manipulation. Whether this is true or not, many Hindus today want both Islam and Christianity out of India.

We will continue to pray for Hindus in northern India to understand how a relationship with Jesus Christ offers stronger, loving families and forgiveness from the Sovereign God. They need to know the true character of our Lord!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Carey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Keith Carey, editor-in-chief, GPD

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March 2020

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Yuli Color Reproduction Co., LTD.
(Taiwan)

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<https://joshuaproject.net/pray/guides>

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ISSN 1045-9731

Contents of the **Global Prayer Digest** © 2020
Frontier Ventures
1605 East Elizabeth Street
Pasadena, CA 91104

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Pray for

*A Disciple-Making Movement
Among Every Frontier People in Northern India*



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UTTAR PRADESH: THE HEART AND SOUL OF INDIA

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—by Wes Kawato,
GPD writer

In some ways, India is like the United States. Both countries are divided into states, and some states have more people than others. Uttar Pradesh, in northern India, has 200 million people, a larger population than any other state in India by 88 million!

Winning the hearts and minds of this huge state may be the key to reaching all of northern India for Jesus Christ. But because of historical reasons, it will be essential that evangelists take Christ to Uttar Pradesh, not a foreign religious system. There are deep-seated historical reasons for that.

The Rise and Fall of Empires

Uttar Pradesh is located on the North Indian Plain, on the route many invaders used to conquer India. Very little is known about the early history of Uttar Pradesh except legends involving various Hindu gods. Written history of

this state begins around 320 BC, when the Maurya Empire conquered what is now Uttar Pradesh. The Maurya Empire was only the first of the Aryan invaders; after them would come the Kushan, Gupta, and Gunjara-Pratihara Empires, and then later came the Kannuji Empire. The Kannuji's made Uttar Pradesh the heart of their empire, and Harshavandhana, the greatest of the Kannuji kings, extended Kannuji rule to most of India during his reign from 590 to 647 A.D.

After the collapse of the Kannuji Empire came the Delhi Sultanate. It was during this time that Islam spread throughout most of India. Muslim missionaries didn't begin winning large numbers of converts until after 1500 A.D. Prior to that time, there were almost no Muslims in Uttar Pradesh. As a general rule, Muslim rulers who controlled this Hindu part of the world spread Islam by force and as a way to gain political and economic control. Muslims were given preferential treatment while Hindus were often exploited. The deep-rooted hostility between Hindus and Muslims in Uttar Pradesh began during these centuries, and the hostility is still with us today.

The Maratha Empire conquered Uttar Pradesh in 1788 A.D., and Uttar Pradesh became the heartland of this large, but dying empire. Then in 1803, the British conquered the Maratha Empire, and local rulers, under the control of the British East India Company, divided Uttar Pradesh among various neighboring states. For the next 55 years, Uttar Pradesh ceased to be a political force in India.

That situation changed in 1857 when India's Hindus and Muslims briefly united to break free of British rule. This uprising came to be called the Indian Mutiny, in which Indian native troops, called sepoys, revolted against their British commanders, killing some and causing others to flee. The situation became so violent that the company troops of the British East India Company were unable to restore order and had to call in British regular army troops. They were aided by the troops of Indian states who'd remained loyal to the British. In 1857, battles were fought and many sepoys died on the battlefield, and those who were captured by the British were tried for treason and executed.

By 1858, the British had regained control of all of India. Indian rulers who'd supported the mutiny were deposed, and their states were placed under the rule of British governors while rulers who'd supported the British were allowed to retain control of their states.



After order was restored in 1858, the British redrew many boundary lines in India. Some states were dissolved, and new states were created. One of the new states created in 1858 was the United Provinces. In 1947 India was granted independence by Britain, and the United Provinces was renamed Uttar Pradesh.

The Religious Situation

One of the reasons the British created this state in 1858 was to lump together groups of people who would spend so much time fighting each other that they would have no energy to fight the British. It was the divide and conquer policy for which the British Empire was famous. This state had a Hindu majority and a large Muslim minority. From the beginning, this state had been a major flash point for Hindu-Muslim conflict.

Today, with 19 percent of the population, the Muslims are the only significant religious minority in Uttar Pradesh. This state has very few followers of Jesus Christ. In fact, only about one in 1,000 is a Christian of any sort!

The Political Situation

For years, two local political parties, the BSP and the SP, fought for control of the state parliament in Uttar Pradesh. The BSP and the SP

only existed in this state. The BSP was the party of the Dalits and other low caste citizens. In national elections, most citizens of Uttar Pradesh voted for the BJP. The BJP stands for free enterprise and Hindu nationalism. Very few citizens voted for the once dominant Congress Party, which stands for socialism and religious freedom.

Things changed in recent years when the BJP began running candidates for seats in the state parliament. Many of these candidates won their elections and challenged the rule of the two older parties. In recent years the BSP and the SP formed an alliance to stop the BJP from taking control of Uttar Pradesh, but last year the BJP won both state and national elections in Uttar Pradesh. The stakes are high for the BJP. The BJP absolutely needs the votes from Uttar Pradesh to win national elections, especially given the large number of voters in this huge state.

What draws people in Uttar Pradesh to the BJP? Economically, the BJP favors large privately-owned business and culturally, they regard India as a Hindu land. They use “Hindu” a bit loosely, in that they are not opposed to home-grown religions such as Sikhism, Jainism or Buddhism. By contrast, Islam came to India from outside invaders, and Christianity, in their minds, came through the British Empire. For this reason, Islam and Christianity are the religions of hostile invading empires. Culturally, India should be Hindu, and political power should be held by indigenous Hindus. This kind of message is especially appealing in a land like Uttar Pradesh, where Muslims and Christians once took control by force.

Let's Pray!

- Ask God to create peace between all religious groups in Uttar Pradesh.
- Pray that the Hindus of Uttar Pradesh would see that hostility towards “outsiders” will only lead to greater conflict and communal violence.
- Ask God to protect Christians and Muslims in Uttar Pradesh. Persecution has become a problem in recent years.
- There have been successful efforts to take the gospel to those who speak Bhojpuri, a local language in Uttar Pradesh. These efforts are successful because they respect the local culture, and emphasize the person, Jesus Christ, rather than a religious system. Pray for similar efforts to reach people who speak other languages in Uttar Pradesh.

BARI PEOPLE

IS 9:2, NLT

The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine.

Pray that the Lord would move in the lives of the Bari to seek Him.

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Betel nut

Betel nut is a mild stimulant that is used in South Asia but is rarely seen in the West. The Bari people of central India grow and sell betel nut. Betel nut is chewed and either spit out or swallowed, and it often turns one's mouth red or black. Taken in

small amounts, betel nut is as safe as coffee and tea, although it can do damage to one's mouth, gums, and jaws with long-term usage. They also sell the ultimate biodegradable plates—leaves! The Bari harvest, prepare, and sell large, green leaves that people eat on and dispose of after a meal.

Some Bari have become educated and entered into professions like medicine, politics, engineering, and computer science. However, most are functionally illiterate and work as agricultural laborers. Almost all Bari are Hindus with only a tiny fraction of them being believers.

Pray the Lord of the harvest sends workers to befriend and share the gospel with the Baris. Pray that the Lord will start a movement of Bari families experiencing God's blessings. Pray for Bari families and communities to discover and embrace the free gift of life found by trusting Christ and His finished work.—DK

BHUINHAR PEOPLE

How could one become a landowner in medieval India? The Bhuinhar acquired land through



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their military service to the Mughals and later to the British colonial government. By the 18th century, the Bhuinhar were one of the main landowning castes of northeast India.

However, the Bhuinhar were not content with possessing large tracts of land. They wanted to be known as Brahmans, the highest caste in the Hindu system. Throughout the 19th century, the Bhuinhar lobbied the British to classify them as Brahmans. Other Brahmans of the time saw the Bhuinhar as Kshatriya or rulers, the second caste of Hinduism. Finally in 1901, the British recognized the Bhuinhar as Brahmans. Today the Bhuinhar continue to claim the title of Brahman. They are very active in the politics of the regions where they reside even though the Bhuinhar lost a big portion of their land with the birth of modern India in 1947.

Pray for Bhuinhar families and communities to discover and embrace the free gift of life found by trusting Christ and His victory over sin and death. Pray that many of the Bhuinhar people will come to love Christ with their whole being and will walk in His ways. Pray that there will be a rapidly expanding disciple-making movement among them.—DK

PS 96:6-7, NLT

Honor and majesty surround Him; strength and beauty fill His sanctuary. Oh nations of the world, recognize the Lord; recognize that the Lord is glorious and strong.

Pray that soon the Bhuinhar may recognize the Lord as the one, true God and give Him the glory He deserves.

BIND PEOPLE

ROM 15:13, NLT

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in Him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Pray the Bind will experience the joy and peace that comes only from knowing Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.



The traditional occupation of the Bind people of northeast India is that of boatmen. They have traveled and carried passengers along the sacred rivers of India for hundreds of years. They take pride in their heritage of transporting pilgrims to and from Hindu festivals. With the coming of the industrial age, the Bind have branched out into other jobs such as fishing, digging wells, the manufacturing of salt, agriculture, and basket weaving.

Unfortunately, many are unable to read and write. Many live in poverty. If young Bind people have any hope of improving the living conditions of their families, it will be from learning to read and write and gaining new job skills.

Pray that the children of the Bind receive the education they need. Pray that the Lord opens the spiritual eyes of the Bind so that they benefit from the light of Jesus Christ. Pray that Indian believers reach out and share the gospel with Bind families and communities. Pray for a movement to Jesus to multiply among Bind households.—DK

What is your dream job? Astronaut? Professional athlete? CEO of a billion-dollar corporation?

BAGHBAN PEOPLE

The name of Baghban people means “one who looks after the garden.” They live mainly in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra,



iStock/Kailash Kuma

and Karnataka. They grow, harvest, and sell their crops in the markets, some as “green grocers” in their own businesses. Others hold government and business positions of influence in their respective districts. They are a family-oriented, hardworking, and industrious people. They value education for both boys and girls, and some become teachers and doctors.

There is a strong Hindu influence within this culture. Baghban people participate in Hindu festivals, and only accept water from Hindu castes that are considered superior. Ironically, they will share water with other communities, except those from very low caste people such as sweepers and scavengers, crematoria attendants, and rope makers.

Like most Hindu cultures, the Baghban people have seen the deteriorating family structure of Western “Christian” cultures, and they do not want the same to happen to them. For that and other reasons, they cling to Hinduism and don’t give Jesus a chance to transform their communities.

Pray for Baghban families to sense their empty spirits, and to be drawn to Christ who brings clarity, peace, and joy to all who call on His name. Pray that a strong movement of the Holy Spirit will bring entire Baghban families into a rich experience of God’s blessing in disciples and new church plants.—KH

GEN 2:8-9, NLT

Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there He placed the man He had made. The LORD God made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground—trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit.

Pray that the Baghban people will learn to embrace the God who gives us all that we need.

MURAO PEOPLE

GEN 2:18, NLT

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."

Pray that the Murao people will be transformed by the understanding that women are to be cherished, not taken for granted and marginalized.

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Are the Murao people high or low on the Hindu pecking order? They consider themselves to be

equal to the high caste Thakur people from the second highest Hindu caste of warriors and rulers, or Kshatriyas. This belief is not validated by higher caste members who place them much lower in the social order. Still, the Murao people maintain good relationships with a broad spectrum of other castes, even ones with lower status.

However, they will only marry within their own community. Marriages are arranged by elders from both families. A Hindu priest officiates at the gate of their house for the wedding. They circle a sacred fire seven times to seal their marriage.

When it comes to education, they want their sons to get a good education although many must drop out for economic reasons. Murao girls are marginalized by not having access to higher education. Some of the younger Murao men who have access to education have become professionals or government employees. However, most Murao people do what they have been doing for generations: farming and selling their crops or working as unskilled laborers.

Pray that Murao disciples will make more disciples until their culture is transformed to fully glorify God and represent His kingdom in India.—KH

GONHRI PEOPLE

(This story is intended to illustrate the lifestyle among this people group.)

Nandini sat weeping by the stream

in a quiet place near her Ganhri village. She came here often when her life was too bitter to bear. At that same time, her husband was meeting with family elders to take another wife to bear children since she had not conceived. She had faithfully offered many sacrifices to Pravati, the goddess of love, beauty, marriage, devotion, and children, but to no avail. She had heard about a woman named Rebecca in the Bible who was barren, and her God healed her, giving her children. She wondered if that God would do the same for her. How could she find Him?

Many Ganhri people are well educated, becoming teachers and government workers, but the majority continue as their ancestors have done for centuries, cultivating or fishing. Some are boatmen. Others are fishermen.

Ganhri people live mainly in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. They are a Hindu community, also worshiping many family and regional deities.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will anoint Ganhri families, especially children and young people, to become a new generation that will allow Christ to transform and bless their communities. Pray for a disciple-making movement in the 2020s.—KH



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GEN 25:21, NLT

Isaac pleaded with the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was unable to have children. The LORD answered Isaac's prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins.

Pray that when members of the Ganhri people pray to have children, that their prayers will be answered, so they will know that it is the Lord who blesses.

KAHAR PEOPLE

JN 4:39, NLT

Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, "He told me everything I ever did!"

Pray for the same spiritual openness among the Kahar people that Jesus found in the Samaritans in His day.

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Uttar Pradesh, home to the Kahar people

Although we are praying for the Kahar of Uttar Pradesh, India, they may be found in two other countries

and total some 8.2 million worldwide, divided into 10 sub-groups! They are 100 percent Hindu but may have been in India for over 1,000 years. They constitute a caste. They claim to be descended from one of Brahma's sons and from a warrior caste, which would give them a good social standing. In the ranking system of castes, they carry water to higher castes.

The languages they speak, Hindi, Punjabi, and others, have Bible resources. The JESUS Film is available. So, too, are Bibles and gospel recordings. Radio broadcasts are available. The main hindrance to evangelism is getting the resources and workers to them.

Pray that churches and mission agencies will make a concerted effort to take the gospel to the Kahar people. Pray that many of them will be like the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4 and discover the living water that Jesus offers that leads to eternal life. May they respond by starting home fellowships that will lead to other home groups. Pray for persons of peace who are open to Jesus' spirituality and sharing it with others.—TP

GADARIA PEOPLE

If your ethnicity was that of your occupation, would you change jobs? Given that many



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Cooks, Tanners, and Coopers in Great Britain are no longer working as cooks, tanning leather, or making barrels, but still retain the name of their ancestral occupations, perhaps you would. So it is with the Gadaria. Their name means herder. But today many are leaving herding sheep and goats for wool, milk, and cheese, to be employed in cities as construction workers. They are open to change.

The Gadaria are 100 percent Hindu. Brahman priests are important to their society. By conducting rites of passage and teaching Hindu lore, they help to hold Gadarian society together and instill a sense of community. As a community, they fit within the caste system and do not exchange water and food with certain other castes. Unfortunately, perhaps because of their humble past, few read or write and because of that, one must be creative in evangelism. They need oral and audio Bibles, films, music and songs in order to learn of Jesus.

Pray Christ's ambassadors will be creative and that the Gadaria people will hear oral presentations, watch gospel films, listen to gospel music and come to sing songs of the Savior. Pray their openness to change will result in an unstoppable movement to Christ during the 2020s.—TP

NEH 2:4-5A, NLT

The king asked, "Well, how can I help you?" With a prayer to the God of heaven, I replied . . .

Pray that we won't neglect the short prayers or believe that they don't matter.

NEH 4:14, NLT

Then as I looked over the situation, I called together the nobles and the rest of the people and said to them, "Don't be afraid of the enemy! Remember the Lord, who is great and glorious, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes!"

Pray that leaders among every Kalwar subgroup will have the faith and hope of Nehemiah, that the God of Heaven will fight for them to enter His kingdom.

KALWAR PEOPLE

iStock/harsh vardhan



Color makes for a good Holi festival!

holidays today are not holy. When I was a child, the schools celebrated May Day with a maypole dance in which we wound ribbons around the pole. It was a spring holiday.

The 38 million Kalwars also celebrate a rite of spring. It is called Holi or Holaka. Today, as you read this and pray for the Kalwars, they are celebrating Holi in honor of the god Krishna and the gopis, women herders among whom he lived. Kalwars jump over bonfires, which are believed to have magical powers.

Although the Kalwars are historically known as distillers, alcohol does not appear to play any role in celebrating Holi. Distilling was seen as a demeaning occupation, so beginning in the 20th century, some began to leave that occupation for agriculture, business, military, medicine, accounting, education, and engineering. Unfortunately, alcoholism remains a problem among them. Krishna plays an important role in Kalwar spirituality, and Shamanism is also a part of their beliefs.

Pray that the Kalwars will come to celebrate no one but the Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Pray that they will put their faith in Jesus, God's Son. Pray for divine wisdom for those who lead the Kalwar people into their first church planting movement.—TP

KOIRI PEOPLE

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

Maneesh and

Sankar, two

Koiri farmers in Milak Papri, Uttar Pradesh started to put dozens of eggs from their Girgrgle chickens into a large pot of water heated by their outdoor fire. When the eggs were boiled, Maneesh used a large spoon to put them into a pot of cold water. Koiri families came together, and everyone started shelling the eggs. The women mixed them with oil and spices to sell them in the market. Sankar commented, “Ever since we started to raise chickens, we have had enough money to send our kids to school. And the eggs are good food for us.”

Recently India has found that the hardy Girgrgle chickens are excellent egg producers, and the Koiri people are benefiting from them. Most of the 8.5 million Hindu Koiri of northern India are farmers who grow vegetables, fruit, tobacco, and opium for the local markets. The majority live in villages and struggle to provide for their families. The Hindu Koiri do not understand that only Jesus Christ can forgive sin and make them right with God.

Pray that veterinarians who follow Christ will help the Koiri community with both their economic and spiritual needs. Pray for a disciple-making movement among them in the 2020s.—PD



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LUKE 11:23, NLT

Anyone who isn't with me opposes me, and anyone who isn't working with me is actually working against me.

Pray that when the Koiri people hear of the wonders of Christ that they will be all in, becoming loyal subjects of the King of kings!

KUTANA PEOPLE

MATT 11:5, NLT

... the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the good news is being preached to the poor.

Thank the Lord that He has compassion for those the world rejects!

iStock/bruniewska



(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

“Handicapped children here in Kanpur collected

enough flowers to help produce thousands of paper mache bags in our factory. It gave them money, so they could attend special schools where they are trained in skills to support themselves.” Vivek, a member of the Kutana community, was showing pictures to some visitors to his paper mache company. For several years Vivek’s company had joined other groups to help handicapped and poor people in India. He continued, “There are layers of flowers left outside hotels and temples after weddings and festivals. Retarded children gather the flowers, so we can make paper mache. Children who cannot walk sort and crush the flowers into powder. This approach is not charity. It gives hope of a better life to those in need by allowing them the chance to work.”

There are over 550,000 Hindu Kutana who primarily live in Uttar Pradesh, India. Most of them are businessmen. Like many other business people, they see the value of assisting the poor and handicapped through programs that will help them lead productive lives.

Pray for Christian businessmen to help extend these kinds of projects. Pray for the Kutana people to find their way to the Savior who cares deeply about the poor and handicapped. Pray for a movement to Christ among the Kutana people.—PD

KAYASHTRA SRIBASTAB

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

Sankar, a Kayashtra lawyer, was listening to complaints from two Kayashtra men in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. They said “You have to stop Saachi! She wants to rent out a room to Christians who plan to start a sewing school. Before you know it more of our women will become Christians. It means we will lose business, get no help from the government, and then we won’t be able to send our kids to school!” Sankar replied, “I can’t stop her, but I will talk to her. Anyway, the few women I know who believe in Jesus say He was a good, moral man and teacher. But if people turn away from the Hindu gods, the government will probably stop offering benefits just as you said.”

Almost all the one million Kayashtra Sribastab live in Uttar Pradesh, India. Many of them work as professionals in government service and other occupations in education, law, and medicine. They believe in education for both boys and girls. They are strong Hindus.

Pray the Kayashtra Sribastab people will see the good works of Christ’s followers, and give glory to God. Pray that the good works of believers will lead many of them to seek and find the Savior. May there be a disciple-making movement among them this decade.—PD



iStock/DragonImages

IS 35:6, NLT

The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will sing for joy! Springs will gush forth in the wilderness, and streams will water the wasteland.

Pray for joy to come to the despised peoples of India. Pray for them to put their hope in the Savior.

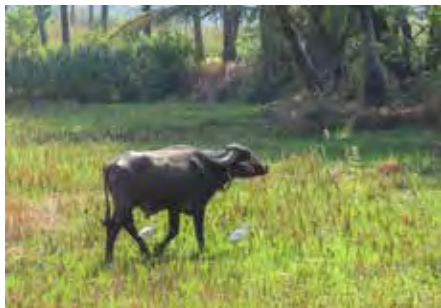
PASI PEOPLE

PS 50:10, NLT

For all the animals of the forest are mine, and I own the cattle on a thousand hills.

Pray for the Pasi people to understand the centrality of God the creator, and His role in their lives.

iStock/Irina Kononova



(The following fictional scenario is meant to portray the traditions of the Pasi people.)

“It all started with a dream about men killing a herd of sacred cattle with a machete.” The children responded by oowing and ahing. “So the next day,” the old man continued, “he found his machete, gathered some friends, and set off into the field. Before long, they came upon a herd of cows, just like in his dream. But something important happened.” The old man smiled and continued: “Pasashuram was there that day!” The children cheered. “Pasashuram heard the cries of the sacred beasts and he went to investigate. When he saw what was taking place, he created five men out of the kusa grass and allowed his sweat to fall on them. This gave them life and energy to defeat the men who were trying to kill the sacred cows.” The children cheered. The old man pointed his finger at them. “You are descended from those grass-men. You were made from the sweat of Pasashuram. You are the Pasi!”

Pray for the Pasi to hear the cries of their Heavenly Father and realize that the tears and blood of Christ were shed to pay for their sins. Pray for the gospel message to reach them in a language they can understand, and that they will respond by forming family Bible studies.—CL

SAINI PEOPLE

(The following fictional scenario is meant to portray the traditions of the Saini people.)



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The doctor had a grim expression as he looked over the lab results. "I'm afraid I have some bad news." The man and his wife sat forward in anticipation. "You will not be able to have children." The man sagged and the woman burst into tears. "It's my fault!" the woman said. "And now ... you must take another wife!"

The Saini live with traditions that involve arranged marriage, do not encourage divorce, and allow taking more than one wife in the interest of having children. They practice Hinduism and folk religion. They engage in exorcisms when they believe someone has been possessed by a demon. Anti-conversion laws are an obstacle to reaching the Saini people, but God will find ways to share the good news of salvation and eternal life as we pray for them to seek Him.

Pray for the Lord to speak to the Saini in their language and in ways they can easily understand. Ask Him to open their ears and minds to hear that message and soften their hearts to receive it. Pray for many Saini to put all their faith in Christ and for a church planting movement to break out among them.—CL

DAY

14

2 KINGS 6:16-17, NLT

"Don't be afraid!" Elisha told him. "For there are more on our side than on theirs!" Then Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes and let him see!" The LORD opened the young man's eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire.

Pray for the eyes and ears of the Saini people to be opened to the power and love of God almighty!

JAISWAL KALWAR

JN 7:37, NLT

On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, "Anyone who is thirsty may come to me!"

Pray for a spiritual thirst among the Jaiswal Kalwar community that will drive them to seek and find Jesus Christ, the giver of living water. Pray that they will be spiritually satisfied in Him alone.

iStock/metamorworks



Enterprising Jaiswal people!

of the Kalwar, (see day 9) a name derived from the Sanskrit word kalyapala, which means "distiller of liquor." Since Colonial British times, the Kalwar have supported themselves by making fermented liquor in pot-stills. Sir Denzil Ibbetson, an administrator in British India and an author, described the Kalwar people as "notorious for enterprise, energy, and obstinacy." If the Jaiswal Kalwar were willing to submit to the Lord, think of what He could do to help them thrive as a community!

Today, this people group from Uttar Pradesh is mostly engaged in farming, forestry, business, trade, government, and labor. Quite a few of the younger educated members are doctors, engineers, accountants, and teachers. There are about one million Jaiswal Kalwar. They are Hindu and there are no known followers of Christ among them. The complete Bible is available in Hindi. Additionally, audio resources are available on the internet.

Pray that God will bring the attention of the Jaiswal Kalwar people to these resources. Pray that they will start family-based Bible studies and ultimately a disciple-making movement among all Kalwar communities.—CMW

MALLAH PEOPLE

According to the Ramayana, one of the two major Sanskrit epics, there was a boatman



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JOHN 7:38, NLT

"Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.'"

Pray for the Mallah people to find the rivers of living water that will then overflow in their communities bringing unlimited spiritual blessings.

named Nishad who was asked by Lord Rama and his wife Sita for a ride across the Ganges River. To Lord Rama's astonishment, the boatman refused. Nishad explained that he feared that the touch of the deity's foot might destroy the boat, and then Nishad would be left without a means of supporting his family. Rama assured Nishad that no ill would befall him, so the humble boatman ferried Rama and Sita across the river.

The Mallah people of Uttar Pradesh are also called Nishad after the character from the story. They take pride in their occupation as boatmen along the holy Ganges River. Even though they are a low caste, they are able to take Hindu devotees on their pilgrimages, and this is considered a high calling, a holy occupation. The Mallah live along pilgrim routes and are therefore constantly exposed to Hindu rituals.

May they know the holiness that can be theirs in Jesus. Pray that God will bring His gospel to the Mallah and that they will respond by beginning their own movement to Christ.—CMW

BARDIHA KUMHAR PEOPLE

JOHN 7:39, NLT

When He said, “living water,” He was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in Him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into His glory.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to abundantly bless the Bardiha Kumhar community with spiritual riches that only come from Jesus Christ.

iStock/Akhlesh



(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

Have Thine
own way
Lord, have Thine

own way Thou art the potter, I am the clay. Mold me and make me after thy will while I am waiting yielded and still.

Pravin surveyed his collection of items for sale. There were cooking pots, water pitchers, toys, and idols—all made of clay. He was pleased and proud of his handiwork. His name means “skilled;” his parents had named him well. He had followed in his father’s footsteps and become a potter like other Bardiha Kumhars. Even though they came from a scheduled caste (nobody called them “untouchable” any longer), he held his head high. Everyone needed to buy his wares either for daily life or for Hindu rituals. He would take his wares to the market tomorrow and earn enough for the week’s meals.

The Bardiha Kumhar people of Uttar Pradesh are potters. Children end their education at the elementary level, so even though the Bible exists in Hindi, not many Bardiha Kumhar would be able to read it easily. Instead, they would need to listen to audio resources.

Pray that these resources become a central part of their communities and that they allow God to shape their lives. Pray for workers to go to them. Pray for the Bardiha Kumhars to have an unstoppable disciple-making movement in the 2020s.—CMW

MACCHI PEOPLE

Chapter 16 of Acts recounts the travels of Paul and Silas revisiting the new churches that had recently been started by Paul and Peter on a previous



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Fisherman at sunset

journey. Paul had a dream of a man in Macedonia calling him to come over, which they did. Soon the gospel of Jesus was planted and flourishing on European soil. The Holy Spirit still calls today. In Matthew 24:14 it says, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nation, and then the end will come."(RSV)

Such a group are the Macchi fishermen who live along the coastal areas of Gujarat, India. They are Hindu and worship many gods and goddesses. Unfortunately for them, these gods interfere with their need to be united with the one who loves them so much that He sent His son to die to pay for their sins. "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?" (Rom 10:14) (NIV) Will it be you?

Pray for the Lord to thrust out workers to the Macchi people.—JS

ACTS 16:9, NLT

That night Paul had a vision: A man from Macedonia in northern Greece was standing there, pleading with him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!"

Pray for the Holy Spirit to call Indian believers to the Macchi people this year.

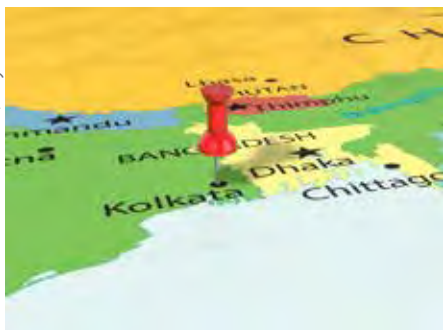
KAIBARTTA PEOPLE

MATT 4:21-22, NLT

A little farther up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind.

Pray for many Kaibartta people to respond to the gospel, and call others to take Christ to the unreached.

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Fishermen should be able to easily relate to the story of Jesus and the fishermen. He called to follow Him.

The Kaibartta's primary occupation has been that of fishermen since their earliest days. They are located primarily in West Bengal. They are also considered a low caste and most Kaibartta cannot read, which limits their access to the good news. They are Hindu, worshipping many gods and goddesses, but they are also animistic, and their animism probably has more influence in their lives than the Hindu religion.

William Carey is considered the "Father of Modern Missions." He came to India as a missionary in 1793 and worked in Kolkata, which is the largest city where Kaibartta reside. Carey likely touched some Kaibartta people and led them to Christ, but God has no grandchildren, and today there are no known believers among this people group.

Pray for workers to pray and go! Pray for the Kaibartta to be freed from their spirit worship and the fears they impose upon those who believe in them. Pray for a power encounter that will make it obvious to them that Jesus can free them from any spirit being. Pray that they will begin their own disciple-making movement.—JS

BHAR PEOPLE

DAY
20

The Bhar people of northeastern India are Hindu but their worship mainly involves



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the spirits of created things not the Creator God. They are an agricultural people and have historically practiced child marriages, but adult marriages are now the norm.

There are many Christian resources available to them in their primary languages, but the workers are few. They desperately need workers to invest in their spiritual lives and point the way to the Loving Father. Sharing Bible stories is a promising way to start. They could relate to the story of the many types of soil that Jesus describes as He related it to the receptivity of people to the gospel message. They can appreciate the good soil that reproduced many fold.

Pray that the hearts of the Bhar people will soon be that good soil that Jesus talks about. Pray for every Bhar community to have a minimum of one opportunity to hear of Jesus accurately in their mother tongue. Pray for good schools to be available and for the Bhar people to make it a priority to send their kids to school. Pray for a disciple-making movement to flourish among the Bhar people. Pray that Bhar families will soon enjoy the spiritual blessings that come from following the one true God.—JS

MARK 4:8, NLT

Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they sprouted, grew, and produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted!

Pray for the Lord to provide good farming soil for the Bhar people, and also good "soil" in their hearts that will respond to Jesus.

DANGI PEOPLE

JOHN 7:12, NLT

There was a lot of grumbling about Him among the crowds. Some argued, "He's a good man," but others said, "He's nothing but a fraud who deceives the people."

Pray for the Dangi people to understand that Jesus is far more than one more god or just a good man. Pray that many will give Him all their hearts.

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The Dangis live in the rocky, hilly forests of western central India,

and they gather most of their food from the forests where they live. They respect all animals, and since they live so close to nature, they are often called "the children of nature." Their homes are one-room bamboo huts made with thatched roofs. Their climate is moist and warm, so they wear very little clothing. They love their freedom, and their poverty has made them people of sturdy character. Their lives are built around their search for food.

The Dangi people enjoy singing and dancing. Even though they are considered Hindu, animism dominates their lives. They pray to deceased ancestors. Their lives revolve around rites, rituals, and folk beliefs to appease these spirits. They worship these same spirits through magical rituals. Their medicine man is thought of as the ultimate "good man." He communicates with the gods and is considered their guide and healer.

May the Dangi people soon hear of the real "good man," Jesus Christ who committed no sin and paid the ultimate penalty of death to redeem all men, including the Dangis. Pray for Dangi families to teach other families the ways of Jesus.—JS

DAROGA PEOPLE

Are the Daroga people prestigious Rajputs? They think so, though many others do not. They used to serve



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Proud Rajasthan!

Rajput rulers as domestic workers, and to them, this qualifies them as being part of the Rajput community. Now, some take employment in white-collar jobs such as teachers, businessmen, and defense personnel. Others work in agriculture. The Daroga strive for upward mobility and send their children to get higher education. Even so, this people continues to hide their identity. Most Daroga people remain in Rajasthan though they also live elsewhere in India.

All live without Jesus. They hold a Hindu tradition of worshipping various gods in addition to worshipping their ancestral gods. While they haven't experienced the love of the Father, there are plenty of Hindi language resources for them to find Him. Only one in a thousand follows Christ in Rajasthan! Workers need to take them the Light of the World.

Pray that the Father will nudge a believing community to adopt the Daroga for prayer and outreach. Pray that He will call evangelists, pastors and teachers from within their community who will present Jesus to them in a meaningful way and start a disciple-making movement. May they find dignity in their identity when they become part of the family of God.—LR

NAH 1:5, NLT

In His presence the mountains quake, and the hills melt away; the earth trembles, and its people are destroyed.

Pray for the Daroga to experience the Living Father and give Him their undivided devotion.

DHAKAD PEOPLE

ACTS 17:27, NLT

His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward Him and find him—though He is not far from any one of us.

Pray that this will be the year when many from the Dhakad people find their way to the Lord of lords.

iStock/Zzvet



(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

Rajee's voice was growing weak, so he had to

give his son, Khal, his orders before it was too late. Khal kept shooing away flies from the old man as he lay in the dry heat of Rajasthan. Rajee croaked, "Look over at the dresser. Our family god is there, and now it's time for you to have it." Khal began to protest since these idols go from father to son after the father dies, but Rajee waved his hand and continued. "Protect it well. And don't forget to worship Gaondei and Banjari Mata, or things will take a turn for the worse for this family. Always remember that I am proud to have you as my son. Never forget that you are a Dhakad and a Hindu."

The Dhakad people live in Rajasthan, a state where about one in 1,000 professes Christ. Hinduism is all the Dhakad people know.

Pray for spiritual openness among the Dhakad people, and dreams of Jesus. Pray for loving and bold workers who will eagerly plow the hard spiritual soil of Rajasthan to see a harvest for the Lord of lords. Pray that the 2020s will be a decade where there is a movement to Christ among the Dhakads and other Hindu people groups for Jesus Christ.—KC

KAMBOJ (KAMBOH) PEOPLE

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

The caste council gathered to discuss the

recent drought. An abundant harvest for the Kamboj!

With furrowed eyebrows, these landowners spoke with hushed tones. One man in attendance, also one of the only Christian Kambojs, prayed silently. He didn't pray for the drought to end, instead he prayed for the caste council to know Jesus and end the spiritual drought.

The Kamboj people are an ethnic community of the Punjab region of India and Pakistan. North India hosts almost 600,000 Kamboj people, called Kamboh in Pakistan. They are found mainly in Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan. They own much of the agricultural land in these states. They produce wheat, rice and other grains, as well as vegetables. The Kamboj are said to be the most important and finest class of agriculturalists of India. Their work in Punjab has boosted the economy and decreased poverty rates in the region.

In India, the Kamboj are Hindu. Although only one in 500 know Jesus, the Kamboj speak Hindi and have ample evangelistic resources available.

Pray that the few Kamboj believers will faithfully pray for their community. Ask God to give them anointed outreach strategies and boldness to carry them out. Pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal Himself to caste councils and family heads. May they disciple their own people in understanding the promises of God.—LR



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1 KINGS 18:1, NLT

Later on, in the third year of the drought, the LORD said to Elijah, "Go and present yourself to King Ahab. Tell him that I will soon send rain!"

Pray for the Lord to provide the Kamboj people with the right amount of rain this year, and that they will understand His loving kindness and mercy as a result.

RAIGAR PEOPLE

HAB 3:17-18, NLT

Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will rejoice in the LORD! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation!

Pray for the long-suffering Raigar people to soon rejoice in their Creator no matter how hard life may be.

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In Hindu culture, dead animals are considered unclean, and working with them makes one unclean. As

such, those who do, such as the Raigar—dyers and tanners of leather—are considered untouchable, or “Dalit.” Though this is their traditional role in society, some Raigar have left the leather-working niche, and have taken up other occupations such as rug-weaving or making trade ornaments. The Raigar are also considered a scheduled caste, which means that they are eligible for government assistance in the form of special public jobs or university admission. The majority of Raigar people are not landowners, and many cannot read. Even so, some have pursued education and entered into business in the cities, though they are still shunned by upper castes Hindus. This shunning is so severe that the Raigar need their own priests and shrines because the Brahmans will not help them nor allow them to enter temples.

The Raigar typically live in villages, often without access to clean water, indoor plumbing or electricity. Family heads arrange their marriages, and their girls wed young.

Pray that they would gain access to clean water, healthcare, and quality education. Pray that the Raigar would discover acceptance in Christ and respond by devoting their families to Him. Pray for a spiritual movement among the Raigar so powerful and so unprecedented that all of India notices.—BK

RATHIA PEOPLE

Take a look at this picture. Does it inspire you to praise the One who created it? The scenery is spectacular in Himachal Pradesh,



The beauty of Himachal Pradesh

iStock/Kirsten Walla

home of the Rathia people! Spectacular is also an appropriate adjective to describe the woven goods produced by Rathia women. These are made from the wool of their sheep.

Marriages among the Rathia are arranged, and families will negotiate an acceptable exchange before agreeing to the wedding. If his first wife does not give him a child, a Rathia man is permitted to marry a second woman. Since the Rathia are among the Rajput clans, they do not want to lose their high status by marrying outside their community.

Look at the photo again. You will notice a sign with a bit of advice for Rathia men: “Drive on horse-power, not on rum power.” Their men are noted for their drinking habits.

Pray for a Holy Spirit driven freedom from alcohol addiction that will show India what God can do to help even prestigious communities. Pray for harvest workers to ignite an unstoppable church planting movement among Rathia Rajputs. Pray for indigenous missionaries to pray for and go to the Rathias. Pray for outbreaks of dreams, signs, wonders, and miracles that will draw this community to the Lord.—BK

PS 121:1-2, NLT

I look up to the mountains—does my help come from there? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth!

Pray that when the Rathia people see the beauty around them, they will give praise and devotion to the Creator.

SONDHIA PEOPLE

LUKE 4:18, NLT

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. . .

Pray for the Sondhia in India to be lifted out of spiritual, social, and material poverty through receiving the transforming gospel of Christ into their lives and communities.

iStock/taska2000



Vishnu

or write. They are considered a Backward Caste—educationally or socially disadvantaged and eligible for special treatment for government jobs and higher education. Mainly poor farmers, the Sondhia own and farm small plots of land. Like their ancestors, most Sondhia live in villages. Some have moved to cities for better educational or business opportunities.

The Sondhia follow Hinduism. They consider Vishnu, the preserver god, to be their patron deity. As Hindus, they believe that good works and rituals will help them escape the continuing cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. Their primary language of Hindi does contain the complete Bible, The JESUS Film, and audio Bible recordings.

Pray for many workers to go to India's Sondhia people with these tools. Ask for the Holy Spirit to lead the Sondhia to the true Lord of all. Pray for softened hearts and that the message of Christ penetrates Sondhia leaders and families to bring great blessing upon their communities that will spread far and wide.—CR

As poor and low-status people, the 568,000 Sondhias of west central India hold a special place in God's heartfelt purposes! Sondhia consider themselves Rajputs, or "sons of rulers," a claim which other Rajput groups do not accept. Over 20 percent of Sondhia men and 40 percent of Sondhia women cannot read

THAKKAR PEOPLE

Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which



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is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others.

1 Tim 6:17-18, NLT

The Thakkar people of western India are part of the Kshatriyas, the second highest caste. The words of the Apostle Paul to his spiritual son, Timothy, could be used to convict and draw them to faith in Christ. They require the presence of believers who choose to publicly live out their faith. Volunteers who choose to reach out to this people group will have the assistance of a full Bible in print and online. Other materials include the JESUS Film and educational printed curriculum.

Pray that the Father would raise up many believers to bring the good news that leads to the true riches that comes from the knowledge of God to the Thakkar people. Pray that the hearts of these people would be broken by the love of God leading them to disciple others who will disciple still others.—JY

1 TIM 6:21B, NLT

May God's grace be with you all.

Make this your prayer for the Thakkar people of India!

GOSAIN PEOPLE

PS 100:1-2, NLT

Shout with joy to the LORD, all the earth!
Worship the LORD with gladness. Come before Him, singing with joy.

Pray that the Gosain people will give their entire devotion to the God of heaven!

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Hindu ascetic

Once the Gosain were ascetics and caretakers of Shiva temples; now some are beggars or casual laborers. Most belong to the land-owning class and are spread across several Indian states. These formerly strict vegetarians now eat meat, and many smoke marijuana, opium, and hashish.

Because only the boys have formal education, women have a lower literacy-rate. This forces women into a lower status than men. This community frowns on women who earn salaries. Despite modern laws, only the sons inherit property, and the oldest son becomes the leader of the family after the father dies.

The Gosain are devout Hindus. They are disciples of Shiva and worship him in many of his 1008 forms. They also make offerings to other Hindu gods and goddesses. Each clan also worships its female and male clan deities, and perhaps an ancestral god. The Gosain believe in evil spirits. There are no followers of Christ among the Gosain. There is a strong social stigma against turning away from Hinduism. The state of Uttar Pradesh, where many of them live, has anti-conversion laws.

Pray that the Gosain people will hear the good news about Jesus, and begin their own disciple-making movement.—AHS

BAIRWA PEOPLE

Traditionally, they were farmers, landowners, and traders. They are respected by the



iStock/Nikhil Patil

people of Rajasthan as honest, hard-working, and peace-loving. Nevertheless, the Bairwa feel exploited by the higher castes, and they struggle for the rights of poor farmers. They emphasize education for their children. As a result, many of them are becoming doctors, engineers, scientists, and successful politicians.

The Bairwa are virtually one-hundred percent Hindu. They worship many Hindu gods, goddesses and saints. They follow Hindu marriage practices but allow widows to remarry and they have abolished child marriage.

The primary language of the Bairwa is Hindi. Depending on their location, they also speak any of 12 different Indian languages. Global Recordings Network (GRN) has recorded the gospel message in each of these languages. Most of the Bairwa also have additional Christian resources available, yet there are no known followers of Christ among them. It is hard to reach Bairwas with the gospel message in India, but many Bairwas now live and work in other countries like the USA, Dubai, and Kuwait.

Pray that God will open the door for the Bairwas to hear the good news. Pray that believers will come across them wherever they live and lead them to the Savior. Pray for a movement to Christ among them.—AHS

PS 100:3, NLT

Acknowledge that the LORD is God! He made us, and we are His. We are His people, the sheep of His pasture.

Pray that the Bairwa people will soon join in worshipping the God who gave them life.

BISHNOI PEOPLE

GEN 1:28, NLT

Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

Pray for the Lord to use the Bishnoi people's love for the earth to draw them to the God who created everything.

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Khejri tree

trees—now the state tree of Rajasthan. A teenage girl hugged a tree in protest, and she was beheaded. Over 300 Bishnoi followed her example and were also executed. In more recent years, a Bishnoi man was killed trying to protect a deer from hunters.

Bishnoi literally means 29. That's the number of rules given them by their founder in 1485. He saw a vision of the people destroying the environment. Their Hindu culture became intertwined with respect for nature. The rules encompass protecting animals, trees, and any type of life. Other rules cover social behavior—they don't lie or criticize others. There are also rules about personal hygiene and health—they don't smoke, drink alcohol or eat meat. Finally, there are rules about spiritual life that include fasting. They are forbidden to make animal sacrifices. The dung they use to fuel their fires is carefully inspected to ensure that no ants or other insects are incinerated.

The Bishnoi speak Hindi and 13 other Indian languages. Christian resources are available in each of these languages.

Pray that the Bishnoi will come to love the God who created the animals, trees, and everything else, and give Him praise. Pray for Bishnoi families to accept the eternal blessings of Christ.—AHS

Why are the Bishnoi called tree huggers? According to legend, soldiers were sent to cut down Khejri

*More than half of the globe's
seven billion human beings
now live in cities.*

REACHING THE CITY (EMS 20)

Reflections on Urban Mission
for the Twenty-first Century

Gary Fujino, Timothy R. Sisk, Tereso C. Casion, editors

Rapid urbanization and globalization processes worldwide have changed the landscape of our times. In Asia and Africa the number of urban dwellers increases by an average of one million per week, according to the United Nations. More than half of the globe's seven billion human beings now live in cities. These realities have far reaching implications for mission in urban contexts at the start of the third millennium. *Reaching the City: Reflections on Urban Mission for the Twenty-first Century* seeks to address the missiological challenges associated with this new world order.

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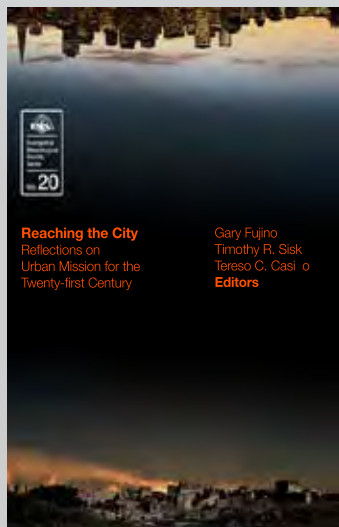
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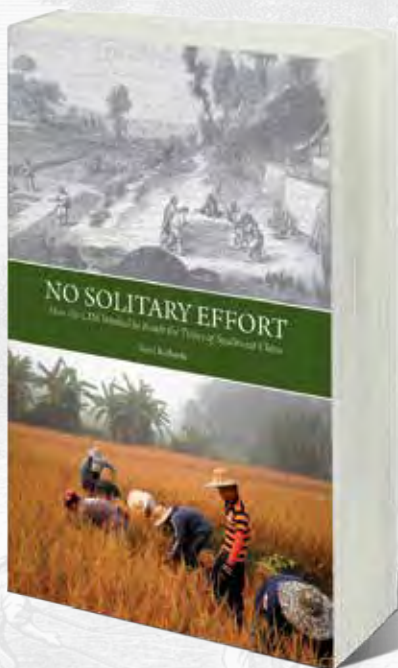
—Rev. Dr. Patrick Fung, general director, OMF International

NO SOLITARY EFFORT

How the CIM Worked to Reach the Tribes of Southwest China

Neel Roberts

No Solitary Effort describes how members of the China Inland Mission engaged the tribes of Southwest China as part of their comprehensive plan to evangelize all of China from 1865 to 1951. That endeavor required the combined lifelong efforts of numerous missionaries, spanned several generations, and was invariably affected by events and decisions that occurred thousands of miles from where the actual ministry was taking place. The task was incomplete when the missionaries were forced to leave, but the foundations for the Church which were laid have stood. This book addresses the great challenges to cooperation that faced the missionaries. It also reveals the rich rewards that were obtained by the united efforts of committed Christians who had no timetable for withdrawal, but only an unwavering commitment to work together until the task was accomplished.



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