

Global Prayer

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Digest

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Month Two of 40 Weeks of Prayer for the Most Unreached Provinces!

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Uttar Pradesh: The World's Most Populous Province

(Week 5, Sept. 5-11)

—By Justin Long, missionary researcher

Imagine a province with more people than all but three countries! That is Uttar Pradesh (UP) India. There are over 200 million people there, and by 2028 it will likely reach 240 million. Uttar Pradesh is and has been both India's most populous state and the chief contributor to the nation's population increase.



This large population is largely rural, with people spread unevenly over the province. The economy is poor, based mostly on agriculture. UP is estimated to be only about 22 percent urban. Cities are densely populated and polluted; rural areas are disconnected, isolated, and wracked with extreme poverty and poor health. Unclean water and poor sanitation lead to the prevalence of water-borne diseases.

UP is Important to Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists

UP is considered the heartland of Hinduism. The sacred Ganges River is both worshiped by Hindus and an important source of water for over 400 million people along its banks. Many believe if they die in Varanasi they will skip the process of reincarnation and go straight to their ultimate reward. Ironically, despite its value, the Ganges is one of the most polluted rivers in the world. The Hindu festival Kumbh Mela is estimated to be the largest festival in the world. Held every three years at one of four locations, it draws 100 million people who believe bathing in sacred rivers during these times washes their sins away. Uttar Pradesh is also important to Buddhism and Islam. Buddha lived and preached in Uttar Pradesh and there are many Buddhist pilgrimage sites. Key mosques draw Muslim pilgrims as well.

The Gospel and UP

Christianity has a long history in UP. It probably first entered in the 1500s through the Mughal Empire, a Persian-based empire ruled by descendants of Genghis Khan. The Emperor Akbar invited Jesuits from Goa to the region. Protestant work in the region probably started with the CMS in the early 1800s, centered around Agra. Unfortunately, none of the missionary efforts grew. Just how many Christians are in Uttar Pradesh today is a matter of debate, but it is safe to say the percentage is very low.

Yet a small percentage of 200 million people can still be a substantial force for evangelism. Any work within the province certainly should be in partnership with local believers as much as possible. Further, we know this church is growing. UP is the home of several rapidly growing church planting movements. However, most of these believers come from Dalit groups—untouchables—and caste barriers are very difficult for them to cross. Moreover church growth, although rapid face threats, intimidations, reconversion campaigns, and in some instances systematic and severe persecution. The result: there are many places and peoples in the province with no church, and there is a great need for more workers. Operation World notes 579 of 613 peoples have no Christian witness. The Joshua Project website reports 2,324 out of 2,597 people groups remain unreached!

The outlook for Christianity in the province is therefore positive but distant: there are great reports of growth, but religious barriers are strong. The 80 percent Hindu line is extremely important in India; when Christian growth bumps visibly against that level, it will further harden opposition and intensify persecution. However growth is achieved, it will require much prayer, discernment, and hard work.

- Pray for the Lord to thrust out workers to UP who have the discernment to know what to say and when. Pray that they will be bold and loving as they take Christ to UP.
- Pray for a movement to Christ among all 2,324 unreached people groups, especially the powerful forward castes.

Guangxi Province: China's Spritual Cauldron

(Week 6, Sept. 12-18)

—By Justin Long, missionary researcher

istock/Gringos



“Guang” literally means expanse; “Guangxi” is expanse west, while “Guangdong” is “Expanse East.” Guangxi is located on the southeast coast of China, on the northeast border of Vietnam. Mountains cover over two-thirds of the province, leading to spectacular river valleys.

A little over half live in the largest cities. Millions still live and work as farmers in the remote countryside. The economy is primarily agricultural. Though rich in resources, Guangxi is a poor province. While Han Chinese form the majority, Guangxi is known as a home to minorities, with a higher share of non-Han Chinese than most provinces. The Zhuang are the largest of the groups: about 14 million of China’s 19 million Zhuang live here. Other groups include the Dong, Miao, Yao, Hui and Yi.

The remoteness of Guangxi kept missionaries out for centuries. The first known to have entered was R. H. Graves, a Southern Baptist worker. Throughout the mid-1800s, some were able to do evangelistic trips into the region, but none were able to establish a long-term presence until the 1890s, just prior to the Boxer Uprising. In the early 1900s, several agencies established stations in the province. By 1920 there were numerous agencies and nearly 100 foreign workers as well as three times as many national workers. During that period, a movement to Christ was recorded in the extreme southeast of the province. The work of expatriates was halted by World War II and the Communist revolution in China.

- Pray that Han Chinese workers will be salt and light to the unreached minorities.
- Pray for spiritual hunger that will draw family leaders to Jesus Christ.
- Pray for Christ-oriented efforts to help the spiritually lost turn away from cults, drugs and prostitution.

Dhaka: The World’s Densest Population Center

(Week 7, Sept. 19-25)

—By Justin Long, missionary researcher

The city of Dhaka occupies about 20 percent of Dhaka Province. Over half of Dhaka’s 15 million live in 300 square kilometers of city. This makes it the densest population center in the world.

Dhaka is the economic, political, and cultural center of Bangladesh. In fact, the city of Dhaka is responsible for nearly half of Bangladesh’s GDP. The economy is growing rapidly. Most of this wealth is in the city itself, centered around industrial manufacturing, particularly of textiles and pharmaceuticals. The economy has drawn global multinationals, startups, and many thousands of migrant workers.

Yet despite the success, the world’s densest population center is poor. About half the population are labor-peddlers. There are half a million rickshaw drivers, small shop and stall owners, and perhaps another million in the textile industry. Unemployment is estimated at about 20 percent, and many live on less than three dollars a day. There is a strong educational system, with primary schools, dozens of colleges, and the famous University of Dhaka. Yet across the province (and the country) literacy rates on average remain low.

Several rivers flow through Dhaka Province including the Padma or lower Ganges. Ironically, water challenges face Dhaka. Just 60 percent of the city’s households are connected to the city water system. Much waste is dumped into nearby rivers, polluting them. Groundwater resources are dropping, leading to water scarcity. Too much water can also be dangerous: three-quarters of the country lies less than 10 meters above sea level, and the vast majority of the land is a flood plain. Monsoons and rainfall off the Himalayas flood 20 percent of the country each year. Small scale flooding is required for agriculture, but large-scale flooding can be devastating. Cyclones in 1991, 1997, and 2007 killed nearly 250,000 people.



istockdk_photos

The Spiritual Climate in Dhaka Province

Christianity has been present in Dhaka for over four centuries. It entered the country in the 1500s with the Portuguese. Catholic missionaries reached Dhaka by 1612 and proceeded to make converts and build large churches. A famous Catholic convert from Hinduism, Dom Antonio, saw an estimated 20,000 low-caste Hindus converted in the late 1600s. Protestants are far more familiar with the famous William Carey, who labored in Serampore in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Among other things he translated the Scriptures into Bengali. After Carey, a host of additional churches of various traditions entered Dhaka and established significant ministries.

Yet in spite of this long history of work, there has been very little response, and what response there is has been mostly from the Hindus, since there have been few efforts to reach the Muslim majority. Over 90 percent of the population is Muslim. Hindus make up most of the remaining 10 percent.

Today most of the missionary activity in Bangladesh is focused in Dhaka. Even there, the mission effort is mostly aimed at minorities, and barely touches either Bengali Muslims or high-caste Hindus. Low-caste Hindus have proven responsive, and an estimated two percent of these have come to faith. There have been significant movements in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in the southeast of Bangladesh, but Dhaka itself has seen proportionally little fruit.

The current church is small but growing. While there is some persecution, the biggest challenge appears to be the need for workers both to ripe fields (minorities) and to break new ground among the untouched Muslims and high caste Hindus.

- Pray for bold and loving workers to labor among Muslims and forward caste Hindus!
- Pray for a disciple-making movement among each of Dhaka's 193 unreached people groups.



istockEduardo1961

Rajasthan: A Province Deeply Affected by a Proud History

(Week 8, Sept. 26-Oct 2, pp. 113-119)

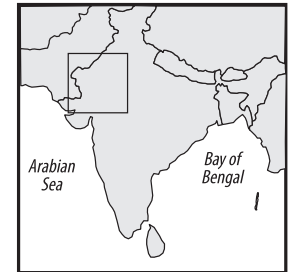
—By Justin Long, missionary researcher

The name Rajasthan means “Land of Kings.” The province has a history deeply colored by battles, wars, heroes, and great kings. For centuries, Muslim armies invaded the Indian subcontinent using paths that typically brought them through Rajasthan. The most powerful were the Moghuls, whose invasion was slowed (but not stopped) by the Rajputs and others. When the Moghul Empire declined, the Rajputs were among the first to break away; they accepted the sovereignty of the British and were granted autonomy in exchange. Some of the traditional privileges of the rulers in Rajasthan were abolished in 1970 but old ways still endure; women are especially limited in rural areas.

Rajasthan is a largely agricultural state, but industrial factories and information technology figure in as strong and growing parts of the economies of its cities. Another substantial part of the economy is tourism. With its desert dunes, camels and tigers, temples, and forts, Rajasthan attracts nearly one third of all visitors to India. Jaipur is particularly famous for its many shrines and palaces. Most months feature a huge festival of one sort or another, so there are plenty of opportunities for touring, meeting people and prayer walking.

It seems clear the largest concentrations of Christianity are around the larger cities in each district. Outreach in rural areas is rare. Most of the response to Christianity has, to date, been amongst the lower castes and untouchables, and many Christians in the area have in fact not been local converts but rather migrants from southern provinces. The higher castes (particularly the Rajputs) have seen next to no response at all.

- Pray for a movement to Christ among all 545 unreached people groups in Rajasthan, especially the less responsive higher castes.



DHANUKS OF BIHAR, INDIA

PS 32:1-2, NLT

Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

Pray for many from the Dhanuk people group to be forgiven of sin by the Lord, and to respond with gratitude and devotion.

iStock/Kateryna Pavluk



They mainly live in river basins and near the edge of the forest, and fish is a mainstay of their diets. The houses of Dhanuks are built in clusters of 10 or 12 and plastered with mud. Most of them earn their livelihood by working as agricultural laborers and household servants.

Alongside their Hindu beliefs, the Dhanuks believe in magic, witchcraft, and ghosts. As soon as a baby cries when it is born, the family puts the branches of the jujube tree and unwanted shoes at the main gate of the house to drive away ghosts. These people desperately need spiritual freedom offered by the One True God!

Pray for the Lord to give them physical and spiritual prosperity. Pray that the Holy Spirit will send to Dhanuk family elders dreams and visions that will prepare their hearts to believe the truth about Jesus when they hear it. Pray that God will thrust out His workers to these communities and help them start a disciple-making movement.—JS

KAHARS IN BIHAR, INDIA

In the Hindu caste system, those who perform manual labor are at the bottom, and that includes the Kahar community. In villages, they are often involved in carrying water for high-ranking communities for weddings, funerals, and other occasions. Their name, Kahar, is associated with their occupations of being carriers. Their lives are similar to other low-ranking caste people. They are also involved in agriculture and tending to animals.



Water carriers

iStock/Vitalii Karas

With the modernization of the world, even India's low caste communities are being exposed to more technology, increased industrialization, and instant communication with the world. The Kahar now have the opportunity to be exposed to other ideas, including the gospel message! This could very well be the time for the gospel message to reach the Kahar with the truth of the One True God and Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, who died for them and yearns for them to be among those numbered around His throne for eternity.

Pray for believers to "carry" the good news to the Kahar people. Pray for the Kahar, "carriers," to become carriers of God's good news to all of their caste. Pray for the Lord to bless the Kahar community in every way, leading them to give Him praise and devotion.—JS

PS 33:13, NLT

The Lord looks down from heaven and sees the whole human race. From His throne he observes all who live on the earth. He made their hearts, so He understands everything they do.

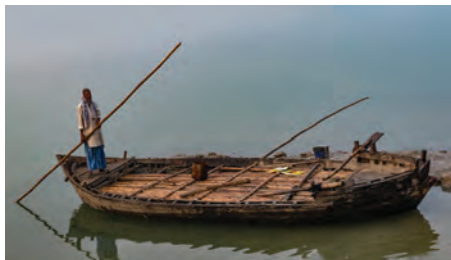
Pray that will be a source of comfort for the Kahar community. Pray that they will look to Him for direction on how to purge their hearts from sin and evil.

GONRHIS IN BIHAR, INDIA

PS 34:8, NLT

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in Him!

Pray that the Gonhri people will soon taste and see that the Lord is good.



Would you rather catch fish with a net, manage

a fishing boat, or clean fish? If you were part of the Bihar's Gonhri community, any of these could be your task for the day. Although not all of them are in the fishing industry and there are some that are well educated and are teachers or government workers, the majority continue as their ancestors have for centuries, cultivating or fishing.

The Gonrhi are unusual in their family life because their daughters receive an equal share of the family wealth if they don't have brothers. Otherwise, the boys receive it all. They have monogamous marriages, but the one exception is if the wife is infertile. Then the husband can take a second wife.

One way to reach the Gonhri with the gospel may be to share with them the life of Christ and His association with fishermen when He called some to be among his 12 disciples. He even preached to thousands by sitting on a fishing boat and teaching them the ways of God!

Pray for the Father to send His hand-picked "fishers of men" to share Christ with the Gonhri people so that they too can share good news with other communities. Pray for a movement to Christ in the Gonhri community in Bihar.—JS

KANDU PEOPLE IN BIHAR, INDIA

The Kandu (or Halwai) are strictly vegetarian and don't drink alcohol, yet many of them

make their living by selling sweets! They are among India's business castes, called Vaishyas. Many Kandu people live in the Indian state of Bihar, and some also live in other northeastern states as well as in Nepal and Bangladesh. They marry within their clan, although marriage outside their group is not forbidden.

The Kandu are 100 percent Hindu with no known followers of Christ. They are considered an engaged but unreached people group. Engaged means at least one mission agency and their workers have specifically been reaching out to the Kandu people. Their efforts have not brought forth any Kandu believers. It is difficult for anyone from a business caste to accept Christ because they associate it with the religious system of "Christianity" of the lower castes. To them, this might lower their status.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will raise up Kandu believers through the JESUS Film and through His chosen ambassadors. Pray the youth of this community will discover Christian music and other resources on the internet and will listen to it with spiritual understanding. Pray for a disciple-making movement among the Kandu people that will spread to other business communities of Bihar, India.—JY



istock/PisitBurana

PS 66:17-20, NLT

For I cried out to Him for help, praising him as I spoke. If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But God did listen! He paid attention to my prayer. Praise God, who did not ignore my prayer or withdraw His unfailing love from me.

Pray that leaders of the Kandu community will discover this truth and teach it to others.

SAWARIA BRAHMANS IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

1 KINGS 10:9, NLT

Praise the Lord your God, who delights in you and has placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the Lord's eternal love for Israel, He has made you king so you can rule with justice and righteousness."

Pray that Sawaria Brahmins will understand what the Lord can do for leaders who obey Him.

iStock/nilanewsom



(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

“Father, why do you still read the

Vedas? They do not offer answers to life today. The Vedas are filled with poetic lyrics and empty philosophies. How will this allow us to gain inner peace?” Rishi was a Sawaria Brahman studying to be a doctor at Bareilly International University in Uttar Pradesh. His dad responded, “Being Brahman is an honor. It is our duty to always seek knowledge through the Vedas.” Rishi replied, “I believe in science and studying hard to become a good doctor to help others. I accept the honor of being Brahman; however, I no longer believe that I can find knowledge through the Vedas.” The father replied, “Your brothers are all educated, wealthy, and successful. They no longer believe in our Hindu gods or the Vedas and seem so restless. This saddens me.”

There are over four million Sawaria Brahmins residing throughout India. Many younger Sawarias are pursuing higher education and often come from affluent families. They no longer follow Brahman spiritual rituals, and some identify as atheists.

Pray that believers will develop friendships with the Sawaria and help them to find true inner peace from a relationship with Christ.—PD

KANAUJIA BRAHMANS IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

“Girik, what am I to do with all these jasmine flowers? You only want half of them.” For years the farmer has been selling his flowers to the Brahman Kanaujia perfume producer and shop owner in Kanaujia, Uttar Pradesh. He was shocked when the owner only wanted half an order of flowers. Girik replied, “I’m sorry Tejas. We have to cut expenses. Our customers want the cheaper perfumes that are alcohol based. I’ve heard that Yadav, our Chief Minister, went to Grasse, France and made a deal to market our perfume with a large company there. Maybe this will help boost sales.”

In addition to carrying out their duties as Brahman priests, the Kanaujias work in high positions in the areas of medicine, government, law, and business such as perfume production. They have much prestige in Uttar Pradesh, a state in northern India with a population of over 200 million.

Pray that God will open the Kanaujia minds and hearts to His word. Pray that they will experience life's greatest hope and joy and teach it to others. Pray for them to have a disciple-making movement this decade that will transform many into Christ's likeness.—PD

iStock/pjipix



PS 42:5-6A, NLT

Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise Him again—my Savior and my God!

Pray that many from the Kanaujia Brahmins will gain encouragement and hope in the Lord and responds by praising His great name.

GADARIS IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

PS 45:17, NLT

I will bring honor to your name in every generation. Therefore, the nations will praise you forever and ever.

Pray for missionaries with this kind of attitude to go to the Gadari people.

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Herding in Uttar Pradesh

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

Joan, a US specialist in animal

science, was presenting her research on the Gadaria herdsmen of Uttar Pradesh to the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). “I have nothing but praise for India’s approach of respecting traditional methods of livestock breeding. The Gadaris are an excellent example of this. They have free range of herding their animals in the forest regions of Uttar Pradesh, so they don’t need money to purchase feed for their flocks like you see in China.” Showing a picture of a Gadari herdman she continued, “This man with his large flock of goats is taking them to a marketplace in Banda, Uttar Pradesh. The money he receives from selling his animals has greatly improved the life of his family. India is doing so well that they are even exporting some of their livestock.”

Most of the 6.5 million Hindu Gadaria live in Uttar Pradesh and southern Rajasthan. Traditionally they were herdsmen, but today, many are working as masons. Almost all Gadaria are Hindu and faithful to their regional gods and goddesses. They are very skeptical of anyone who tells them that Jesus is the only way.

Pray that the Gadaria will no longer resist God’s grace and begin their own discovery Bible studies.—PD

KACCHIS IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

As I walked to a university in India, I had to avoid a troop of monkeys swatting at us while swinging from branch to branch, aping Hanuman, the warrior monkey king capable of expanding himself to a mountainous size. The six million Kacchis worship him and five other gods of the Hindu pantheon. A few Kacchis are Buddhists or animists. None of the Kacchis follow Christ.



Hanuman, the monkey god

iStock/inteki

Originally from Nepal, they may be found as far south as the Andaman Islands in the Indian Ocean, but primarily they are found in central and north India, where they engage in agriculture, manufacturing, and small retail businesses. A few are professionals in government and medicine. As they have adjusted to urban living, their spiritual beliefs have become more nominal, and they are more open to new ideas. Both men and women are educated, although there are more men than women with education.

Pray that urbanization and education open them to allowing Jesus Christ to bless their families and communities. Pray they avail themselves of Hindi Christian literature and the JESUS Film. Pray for an unstoppable movement to Christ among the Kacchi people which will bless other communities as well.—TP

PS 50:14, NLT

Make thankfulness your sacrifice to God and keep the vows you made to the Most High.

May thankfulness be the sacrifice of the Kacchi People to the Most High.

LODHIS IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

PS 56:4, NLT

I praise God for what He has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me?

Pray for the Lord to bless the Lodhis with trust in Him that will allow them to be free from fear.

iStock/abhisheklegit



An orchard in Uttar Pradesh

Change is inevitable. Indeed, that may be humanity's universal constant, no matter where we live, what

our age is, or whatever our ethnicity is. India is changing. India is fast becoming a major industrial nation. Even agriculture is changing.

The 6.8 million Lodhi, who speak three different languages, are farmers and herders, so agricultural decline significantly affects their community. They are now beginning to work in orchards as contract laborers. Others cut and sell grass while others are entering the transportation industry. Despite their claim to upper caste origin, they are considered a backward caste, meaning they have low status in Hindu society.

The vast majority are Hindus, and they worship many gods. Some worship the monkey god we read about yesterday. Others worship Krishna, and others, the god of power. Some may follow a guru, some worship their ancestors, but few follow Jesus.

Pray that Lodhi who follow Christ will mature in their faith and grow in number. Pray that will begin discovery Bible studies leading to an unstoppable disciple-making movement. Pray that this season of change will cause increasing numbers of Lodhi to be open to spiritual change and put their faith in the Lord of lords.—TP

MALLAHS IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

The Mallah are not only an unreached people, they are closed to the gospel, despite Scripture and the JESUS Film's being available in their languages. There are few, if any believers among their 2.3 million, and there has been no progress in reaching them. Perhaps this is because they believe they have the sacred job of ferrying pilgrims across the Ganges River. Curiously, they worship mostly female Hindu deities. As for the name Mallah, its origin has been traced to either Arabic or Hindi.

Although some are farmers, fishermen or jute growers, others have left the countryside to work in the transportation industry. One is in Parliament. He is the exception, however, because low literacy and lack of education are the rules for these people. They are caste-conscious and are classified as a backward caste or scheduled caste, meaning they have low status.

Pray that God will provide opportunities for education, health care, economic growth, clean water, and learning of Christ. Pray that Indian followers of Christ will be used by God in meeting these needs. Pray for spiritual hunger that will lead entire families to form the beginning of an unstoppable movement to Christ in the Mallah community.—TP



iStock/Shyamal Majumdar

PS 51:5-6, NLT

For I was born a sinner—yes, from the moment my mother conceived me. But you desire honesty from the womb, teaching me wisdom even there.

Pray that leaders of the Mallahs will understand that all of us have a sin nature from birth, and we need a sin-forgiving Savior.

PINJARAS IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

JOHN 4:35, NLT

You know the saying, "Four months between planting and harvest." But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest.

Pray for God to send many equipped workers to help prepare and bring in the Lord's harvest among the Pinjaras in Uttar Pradesh.

iStock/prescott72



The Muslim Pinjaras clean and re-fluff cotton with a vibrating bowstring, a time-

consuming process that prepares cotton for spinning into cotton quilts, mattresses, and pillows. Pinjara refers to cotton weaving or cotton carding. Many also work in other areas of unskilled or skilled labor. Over 3.4 million of them live throughout India, mostly in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh.

Pinjaras hold a good trading and social relationships with both Hindu and Muslim communities of their region. About 500 years ago, many of the Pinjaras converted from Hinduism to Islam under a harsh Mughal emperor. Though they continue to follow Sunni Islam, they still observe many Hindu ceremonies and customs. This causes them to be looked down upon by stringent Muslim groups.

Being mostly illiterate, the Pinjara need oral resources to reach them for Christ. Their primary language of Urdu contains the JESUS Film and other audio-visual Bible materials. However, there are relatively few workers among them.

Ask God to stir fellowships to intercede regularly so that the Pinjara soften to Jesus. Pray that oral resources in Urdu penetrate the hearts and minds of Pinjara leaders and families. Ask for Pinjara believers to come forth to help start disciple-making movements, bringing rich blessing upon the Pinjara communities of Uttar Pradesh and beyond.—CR

PUSHA ZHUANG IN GUANGXI PROVINCE

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

The Pusha farmer stiffly bent over and examined the earth. I'm getting too old for this, he thought. The seeds he had planted had hardly grown. That meant that the earth was no longer fertile, and he and his family would have to move. He had seen this day coming, for this had been his lifestyle since he was a boy. His father had raised him in the practice of slash-and-burn agriculture—how to clear a patch of forest and burn the vegetation. This left a layer of nutrient-rich ash on the land. Unfortunately, the nutrients lasted only around two years, at which point the family had to leave.

There are only 7,000 Pusha Zhuang people. They live in Guangxi Province, and most now speak the trade language of Mandarin. They have political benefits by being part of the officially recognized Zhuang minority groups. Animism and traditional religions characterize traditional Pusha people, although a small percentage of them describe themselves as non-religious. There are no believers among these people, but since they read and speak Mandarin, the Bible is accessible to them.

Please wrestle in prayer on behalf of all the Zhuang subgroups, who all need a disciple-making movement.—CMW



iStock/yuelan

PS 61:5, NLT

For you have heard my vows, O God. You have given me an inheritance reserved for those who fear your name.

Pray for many from the Pusha Zhuang people to do the same!

JING PEOPLE IN GUANGXI PROVINCE, CHINA

PS 65:3, NLT

Though we are overwhelmed by our sins, you forgive them all.

Pray that many from the Jing people will feel overwhelmed by their sins and find the sin-forgiving Savior.

iStock/shunjian123



Fishing in Guangxi Province

The Jing people are from Vietnam, and many live in China's Guangxi Province. Many of

them traditionally made their living as fishermen who collected pearls and seahorses for medicinal purposes. Well-acquainted with the power of the sea, the Jing have a number of taboos associated with fishing. For example, while in a boat, the Jing do not say the word "oil" because it has the same pronunciation as "swim," implying that the boat may be wrecked and the people will have to swim.

The Jing people are very musical. They favor antiphonal exchanges, in which two groups or choirs sing back and forth in turn. Jing songs feature epic titles including "The Legend of Killing the Dragon," "The Fiddle Fairy," and "Seeing the Guest Off at the Bank of Xunyang River." In a courtship ceremony, a boy and a girl will take turns singing, then to demonstrate mutual interest, they will sprinkle sand near the other person.

The Jing practice Taoism with Buddhist elements. As speakers of Vietnamese and Mandarin, they would be able to read the entire Bible in both those languages, but not in their heart language. They have very little awareness of the gospel.

Pray for the person, Jesus Christ, to soon become very real in Jing communities.—CMW

MULAO PEOPLE IN GUANGXI PROVINCE, CHINA

You are at a restaurant in Guangxi in southern China. You look at the menu. You took Chinese in college,

but only two characters are familiar. You recognize "cat" and "dog" although in Chinese 101 you weren't told to expect those words in a menu! You humble yourself and ask for help and discover that the other dishes offered are snake-vile soup, bamboo rat, muntjac-horned pheasant, short-tailed monkey brain, gem-faced civet, ants, fruit-eating fox, and armadillo face.

In the sixth month of the year, Mulao people celebrate "Insect-Eating Festival." At this time, families prepare a bug banquet—a meal featuring dishes made of insects. This tradition originated from a legend about a woman who had no means to feed visiting relatives with anything other than the insects that her son had caught. Her guests delighted in the scrumptious meal and even went into the fields to gather more insects! Since then, the Mulao people have returned to the fields annually to collect critters for their cook-off.

The Mulao number around 200,000. They speak Mulao as well as Mandarin Chinese and Dong.

Pray for believers to sow seeds in the hearts of the Mulao, leading many to accept the lordship of Jesus Christ. Pray for a powerful disciple-making movement.—CMW



iStock/Ranta Images

PS 85:11, NLT

Truth springs up from the earth, and righteousness smiles down from heaven.

Pray for the Lord of Heaven to send His blessings and mercy to the Mulao people.

COL 2:9-10, NLT

For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.

Pray for the Lakkia come to understand that Jesus is the Son of the one true God and that they may receive God's gift of eternal life.

iStock/gingos



Guangxi Province, China

the person of your dreams? Lakkia youths of Guangxi Province sing to each other as part of their courtship. If one young man or woman likes another, they exchange belts or bracelets. Then a matchmaker from the young man's family goes to the family of the young woman to try to arrange a marriage.

The Lakkia are an indigenous people of about 15,000 who live in the Dayaoshan Mountains of the Guangxi Province. They have traditionally grown maize, rice, and sweet potatoes for food, and their cash crops include tobacco, peanuts, and sugarcane. The Lakkia practice folk religion with elements of Taoism. There are currently no known Lakkia believers.

Pray for spiritual hunger that will be satisfied by none other than Jesus Christ. Pray the Lord sends Holy Spirit anointed believers to befriend and share the gospel with the Lakkia. Pray that the Bible is translated soon into the Lakkia language. Pray that there will soon be a movement to Christ among the Lakkia people that will bless and transform their communities.—DK

LAKKIA PEOPLE IN GUANGXI PROVINCE, CHINA

Among what people does it help to have a good voice in order to marry

E PEOPLE IN GUANGXI PROVINCE, CHINA

It's probably because they live in Guangxi Province, home of the Zhuang peoples, but the Chinese government has tried to classify the E people as one of the Zhuang subgroups. This is despite the fact that their language is very different. Since it is obvious that they are different from the surrounding Zhuang peoples, the Chinese have given them a derisive name.



Guangxi scenery

iStock/aphostory

The northern part of Guangxi Province has been a crossroad for various migrating people for hundreds of years. Thus, there is a mix of culture and blended ethnic groups. The E are no different. They are not Han Chinese, but they celebrate Chinese festivals like Chinese New Year along with their own celebrations. They also add aspects of Chinese ancestor worship with their own rituals.

The E do share this with the Zhuang peoples: They are highly unreached. In fact, the E people have almost no Christian witness in any of their 19 villages. Who is going to take Christ to these 44,000 people?

Pray for the Lord to break through to the E people this decade. Pray for spiritual openness that will lead them to put their trust in Christ and begin a disciple-making movement. Pray that their physical needs will be met along with their spiritual ones.—KC

PS 65:9, NLT

You take care of the earth and water it, making it rich and fertile. The river of God has plenty of water; it provides a bountiful harvest of grain, for you have ordered it so.

May the E people thank the Lord with all their hearts for rain and other physical blessings. May the Lord bless their farmers with an abundant harvest this season.

LINGHUAS IN GUANGXI PROVINCE, CHINA

COL 3:16, NLT

Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom He gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.

Pray that the Linghua begin to read the Bible and for their hearts to become full of praise to God.

iStock/tunaru



How do you eke out a living as a farmer when more and more people are living

in your area? Plots of farmland have become smaller and smaller as the Linghua homeland in Guangxi Province gets more populated. They grow rice, sweet potatoes, and maize as their main crops. Will some of them begin to migrate to China's cities?

The Linghua people is a name given to a group of Mandarin Chinese speaking farmers who live in a mountainous area near the Vietnamese border. Over the last hundred years, the Linghua have nearly assimilated into the majority Han culture. However, they still retain their ancient folk religion of ancestor veneration and some of their ancient customs.

As far as we know there are currently no believers among the Linghua. Many Christian resources are available in Mandarin including a complete Bible and the JESUS Film.

Pray for the Linghua people, especially their family leaders, to have a hunger and thirst for the truth of the Word of God. Pray for Chinese believers to reach out with biblical resources and help the Linghua to begin their own discovery Bible studies. Pray for them to have an abundant harvest this year, and give God the glory.—DK

PALYUS IN GUANGXI PROVINCE, CHINA

How would you like to be an elder and not be able to communicate with your grandchildren? This is the fate of many Palyu people of western Guangxi, China. Bolyu, once their primary language, is rapidly disappearing. Bolyu is now spoken by only a small minority of the Palyu. Most now speak Mandarin in their families and with outsiders. Within a few years, Bolyu may become an extinct language.

The Palyu live in mountain villages. As late as the year 2000, foreigners were not allowed to visit the area where they live. The main occupation of the Palyu is agriculture and animal husbandry. They practice folk religion, which includes animism and veneration of their ancestors. They live in fear of evil spirits that they believe can bring disaster if they are not appeased by sacrifices and rituals. A tiny group of the Palyu have become believers. Many Christian resources are available in Mandarin Chinese including the complete Bible and the JESUS Film.

Pray for the Lord to send believers to share the good news with the Palyu and to help them with their physical needs. Pray for the Lord to bring whole villages and families to Him among the Palyu and form strong church fellowships.—DK



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JOSH 1:9, NLT

This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

Pray for the Palyu believers to be strong and courageous in their witness for Christ.

SHAIKH IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH

PS 82:82, NLT

Rise up, O God, and judge the earth, for all the nations belong to you.

Pray the Shaikhs in Bangladesh will understand and embrace that they belong to Christ alone.

iStock/ryuivist



While most people groups have a straightforward history, the Shaikh peoples

do not! In the year 711, the area now known as Pakistan was conquered by an Arab army, sparking an incoming wave of Arab and Islamic immigrants. Divided into multiple communities, some of the Shaikh are descended from a people group that predates this conquest of the area and successive immigration. Other groups are descended from these immigrants themselves, while still others originated from high caste Hindu converts to Islam. One of the primary shared traits of the Shaikh is that they are Islamic. They have high status among all Muslim communities.

The Shaikh can be found in a variety of South Asian countries, but today we will pray for the 130 million in Bangladesh. In each country, they speak a different language; in Bangladesh it is Bengali.

Pray that workers would be sent to them and that doors would be open to share the good news. Pray that the Shaikh in Bangladesh would respond to the person of Jesus Christ instead of shying away from the religious system of Christianity. Pray that organic discipleship movements would spring up among them and that the Holy Spirit would move powerfully in signs and wonders.—BK

SAYYIDS IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH

Lineage is very important to many Eastern peoples. One of the largest Islamic communities of South Asia,

the Sayyid, traces their ancestry directly back to the daughter of Mohammad himself. They arrived in South Asia by the sea, and today are mainly a land-owning community. Sayyids in Bangladesh are a highly educated and literate people group. Like the Hindu priestly caste, the Brahmins, the Sayyid occupy the highest of Muslim social classes wherever they can be found. Traditionally they were priests and religious teachers, but now they can also be government officials, teachers, and businessmen. Sayyids can be either Shi'ite or Sunni, but always Muslim.

The Sayyids form a spiritual “gateway” who direct other Muslim peoples. Imagine the impact they would have on other Muslim communities if they would direct them to the Savior!

Pray for loving and bold disciple-makers to be sent to the Sayyid. Pray that their hearts would be opened and that through them Bangladeshi Muslims would embrace the Light of the World. Pray that Sayyid leaders will seek out the truth of Isa (Jesus) and that they will become like Paul, dedicated to carrying the gospel they once scorned to all the world throughout the 2020s.—BK



iStock/MD.SAZZAD HOSSAIN

PS 75:7, NLT

It is God alone who judges; He decides who will rise and who will fall.

Pray that many from the Sayyid community will understand that God is the only judge, and they have to depend on Him alone.

KALUS IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH

PS 87:4, NLT

I will count Egypt and Babylon among those who know me—also Philistia and Tyre, and even distant Ethiopia. They have all become citizens of Jerusalem!

Pray that members of the Kalu people will soon desire to become part of God's family.

iStock/Grigorenko



Mechanization of the cooking oil industry

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

The mustard oil ran slowly from the press

to the jar. The Kalu man watched the oil as he also watched the sweat drip from his arm. This reminded him of the legend that his caste came from the sweat off of Lord Shiva's arm while he was bathing in oil. He thought about all his prayers to Lord Shiva that were never answered.

These Hindus are largely in India's state of West Bengal and Dhaka, Bangladesh. While some Kalus are landowners and farmers, they have a long tradition of being sellers of oil and of being oil pressers. Kalus are now finding it difficult to maintain their trade, especially in areas where there are mechanized oil mills. Their wages are low, and there is a shortage of oil seeds in the market. The mustard oil Kalus use is expensive compared with cheaper soybean and palm oil. The profession of the Kalus has been hit hard.

Pray for the Lord to thrust out loving workers who will help the Kalu people with their economic needs while showing them the way to the cross. Pray that this will be the decade when a disciple-making movement explodes among the Kalus and other unreached people groups in Dhaka, Bangladesh.—LR

ANSARIS IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH

When missionaries reach out to a new people group, they hope to see a few friendly faces among them. The

mostly poor and illiterate Ansari have a reputation of being the friendliest in Dhaka, Bangladesh. In fact, their name means "friend indeed" or "one who helps." Ansaris are especially eager to please businessmen who buy their beautiful crafts.

The Ansari proudly trace their ancestry back to a time when they welcomed Mohammed into their homes as he and his men fled from their enemies. "Allah has taught us to do good deeds," they will tell you. "This may allow us someday to be in Paradise." According to their Muslim religion, they will never know in this life if those good deeds outweigh their bad ones.

The Ansaris incorporate many folk beliefs into their observance of Islam. There are almost no believers among those in Dhaka, Bangladesh, or anywhere else for that matter. There are currently no known church planting teams working among the Ansaris.

Pray that the friendliness of the Ansaris will open doors for believers to develop closeness with them and opportunities to share Christ. Pray that whole Ansari families will come to know the assurance of salvation available through Christ.—AHS



iStock/Ninja Studio,j

PS 66:9, NLT

Our lives are in His hands, and He keeps our feet from stumbling.

May this soon be so for today's people group. May their feet never stumble, and may the experience the blessings of the Lord.

BIHARIS IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH

PS 27:10, NLT

Even if my father and mother abandon me, the Lord will hold me close.

Thank the Lord that no matter what persecution is faced by anyone from the Bihari people group who chooses to follow Christ, He will be there for them.

iStock/skipaudio



A Bihari refugee camp

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

The Bihari man left the refugee camp in Bangladesh and went to a government office. Now that he was officially a citizen of Bangladesh, he thought for sure he'd be able to get a passport. The passport would let him visit relatives who had been resettled in Pakistan. Much to his chagrin, when he reached the head of the line, the clerk responded, "I'm sorry, but a refugee camp doesn't count as a permanent address. Without a permanent address I can't issue you a passport."

Many of the Biharis in Bangladesh had sided with Pakistan during Bangladesh's 1971 war for independence. They weren't Bengalis and didn't support the efforts of the Bengali majority striving to gain independence from Pakistan. After Bangladesh became independent, the Biharis were considered traitors and were forced to flee to refugee camps for safety. Over the years a few Biharis were allowed to resettle in Pakistan, but most remained stuck in refugee camps in the Dhaka area. Only in recent years were Biharis too young to have fought in the 1971 war granted citizenship. Almost all Biharis are Muslims.

Pray that God would lead a mission agency to reach out to the Biharis in Dhaka to help them with their physical and spiritual needs.—WK

BODHAIS IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH

(This story illustrates truths about this people group.)

The Bodhai woodcutter went into the forest looking for a good tree to cut down. He would use the wood to make furniture. As he studied the trees in the forest, he wondered how many people would buy his tables and chairs. He wasn't Bengali, and non-Bengalis were often regarded with suspicion in Bangladesh. Most Bodhai were Muslims who knew little about the carpenter from Nazareth who desired to save them from their sins.

There is a branch of the Bodhai people group living in Nepal, and these Bodhai are Buddhists. There are 1,700 Bodhai living in Bangladesh, and these people are Muslims. Most Bangladeshi Bodhai are woodcutters and carpenters. Like most minority groups in Bangladesh, they are mistrusted by the Bengali majority. There are no known followers of Jesus Christ among this people group.

Ask God to raise up faithful workers to reach out to the Bodhai of Bangladesh with the message of salvation. Pray for believers to provide them with a new market for their wooden goods. Pray that they will be given a firm faith in Jesus Christ as the only way to life eternal. Pray for an unstoppable disciple-making movement among them to begin this decade.—WK



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PS 29:9, NLT

The voice of the Lord twists mighty oaks and strips the forests bare. In His temple everyone shouts, "Glory!"

May there be many from the Bodhai people that cry "glory!" when they hear the name of the Lord.

PS 26:2, NLT

Put me on trial, Lord,
and cross-examine me.
Test my motives and
my heart.

*Pray that many from the
Namesej people will
have the humility to see
the Lord's guidance and
seek His face.*

iStock/Andrew Marcus



majority nation? One of the largest of the Hindu communities in Dhaka are the Namesej, and they have lived in what is now Bangladesh for over a century.

They would prefer to resettle in India but can't for a variety of reasons. During the 1800s, when this region was a British colony, the British protected the Namesej from their Muslim Bengali neighbors. After 1900 the Namesesjs strongly supported Gandhi's efforts to form a unified multi-religious state in India. These efforts failed, resulting in the partition of India soon after their independence in 1947. When Pakistan became a separate nation, Hindus who did not wish to live in a Muslim state left East Pakistan (now called Bangladesh) for regions that would remain part of Hindu India. Only the rich among the Namesej were able to do this; the poor were left behind.

There are very few, if any, followers of Jesus Christ among the Namesej, so pray that this people group would develop a hunger for Jesus Christ, the true source of salvation. Pray that soon they will experience the blessings of the Lord, and share His blessings with the many other Hindu people groups in Dhaka, Bangladesh.—WK

NAMESSEJS IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH

MEENA PEOPLE IN RAJASTHAN

What is standing between the Meena of Rajasthan and the Kingdom of God? The Bible has been translated into their heart language of Hindi, and the JESUS Film is also available. According to *Operation World*, every home in the state of Rajasthan has been provided with gospel materials on at least two occasions, yet only one in 1,000 follows Jesus in Rajasthan, including the unreached Meena people. A number of mission organizations are currently working among the Meena, but there is still no church planting movement.

What is standing between the Meena of Rajasthan and the kingdom of God? There are many obstacles including the threat of persecution, excommunication from their families, false information, and a variety of demonic strongholds. Thankfully, God knows exactly what is standing between this unique and specially created people group and His kingdom. He also knows precisely how to break through to reach them and draw them into relationship.

Ask God to reveal His strategies for rescuing the Meena from the kingdom of darkness and ushering them into the kingdom of His son. Pray for the eyes of their hearts to be enlightened and for Him to send His Spirit to overcome any and all that is keeping them from seeing and choosing to follow Christ.—CL

iStock/INehring



Meena woman

PS 69:5, NLT

O God, you know how
foolish I am; my sins
cannot be hidden
from you.

*Pray that many from
the Meena people
will understand the
foolishness of trying to
hide their sin from the all-
knowing God.*

RABARI PEOPLE IN RAJASTHAN

PS 86:8, NLT

No pagan god is like you,
O Lord. None can do what
you do!

*Pray for many Rabari
people to understand there
is no God like the one who
gave them life and offers
them life to the full!*



Rabari women in Rajasthan

Their name means “outsider,” and unfortunately, it is a fitting description of their physical, social, and spiritual status in India. The Rabari people of Rajasthan are believed to have migrated from Iran about a thousand years ago. Traditionally nomadic and moving with the seasons to provide grazing land and water for their cattle and camels, they have been forced to settle down as the situation in India has changed. Today, they are only semi-nomadic, with many living in tents and shacks in shantytowns on the outskirts of cities. The Rabari are a “scheduled tribe” (also known as untouchables), which means they are below the caste system, historically disadvantaged, mistreated, and looked down upon.

Even more concerning than their poverty or the social discrimination they face is their spiritual condition. The Rabari are Hindus. They consider Durga and Shiva to be their gods and also have clan deities they seek to appease through various rituals.

Pray for the Lord to speak to the hearts of the Rabari people, displaying His love for them and revealing that they were purposefully created and belong to Him. Pray for a movement of His Spirit throughout Rajasthan, drawing men, women, and children to Jesus and establishing God’s Church among the Rabaris.—CL

RAIGAR PEOPLE IN RAJASTHAN

*(The fictional
account below
is meant to
illustrate the
challenges
facing this
people group.)*



“Pay attention!” the father demanded. “Stop daydreaming and watch.” He demonstrated again, showing his son how to smooth and flatten the freshly tanned hide on a pulley machine. When he finished, he said, “Your turn.” The son mumbled, “I don’t want to be a tanner.” His father looked at him, incredulous. “You have no choice. To be Raigar is to work with animal skins. They call us ‘untouchables,’ and that has been the case for centuries. You are what you are.” The young man shook his head and replied, “The caste system stinks worse than these animal skins.”

Raigar comes from a word meaning tanning, and this people group has traditionally worked in the leather trade. It has resulted in being outcast by other Hindus as anyone handling dead things is considered dirty, and the Raigar are treated accordingly.

Pray for the Raigar to hear and respond to God’s invitation to be part of His family. Pray for them to seek Him for the acceptance they have been refused by their fellow Hindus. Ask the Lord to bring healing and hope through family-based fellowship groups.—CL

PS 80:3, NLT

Help us, O God of our
salvation! Help us for the
glory of your name. Save
us and forgive our sins for
the honor of your name.

*May the glory of the
Lord be enhanced by the
salvation of the Raigar
people of Rajasthan.*

AGARWAL BANIAS IN RAJASTHAN

PS 30:5:NLT

For His anger lasts only a moment, but His favor lasts a lifetime! Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning.

Pray that this people group will understand from the heart that the Lord's anger only lasts a moment, but He gives joy for eternity.

iStock/yuliang11



certain beggar, Lazarus, ... desiring to eat the crumbs fallen from the rich man's table. Lazarus died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham. The rich man died ... being tormented in Hades ... he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus ... He cried, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; I am tormented in this flame." Abraham said, "Remember, in your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus evil things; now he is comforted, and you are tormented. ..." He said, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rises from the dead."

Agarwal Bania people are affluent, educated, and supposedly have the world by the tail. Truth be known, they do not. Like all people, they will face judgment for their sins when they die, unless they find the only Savior.

Pray that God's Holy Spirit will confront their leaders, as only He can, with the truth of the gospel and His infinite grace.—KH

BAIRWAS IN RAJASTHAN

Bairwa means "brave." Historically, they were a trading caste. They are now associated with animal husbandry, agriculture, agribusiness, mining, and academics, and they are known for their skill in making mats and ropes. Their lives are restricted and governed by the caste in which they were born. Their mindset is that they cannot change.

Despite their small population, they have some influence in their struggle for social rights for poor farmers. Education is important to them, but despite their focus on education, the Bairwa need to send more children to school (especially the females) and attain higher levels of education.

They follow Hindu practices, which influence every part of their lives and customs. Almost none follow Christ. There are Bible resources in their Hindi language, but who will go to them?

Pray for Indian believers to faithfully give their lives for Bairwa people to experience Almighty God's infinite love and provision for their sins' penalty. Pray that the Lord Jesus will raise up many others to join in discipling Bairwa believers, teaching them to disciple new believers. Pray that God's Holy Spirit will lead key leaders of the Bairwa community to Him and that many others will follow their example. Pray that healthy and growing church plants will sprout among these dear people.—KH

iStock/Eduardo1961



PS 33:8, NLT

Let the whole world fear the Lord and let everyone stand in awe of Him.

May this soon be true for the Bairwa people group!

Coming Up in the Oct-Dec 2020 Issue

We will pray for unreached people groups
in these provinces:

Rajasthan, India, continued (Oct 1-2)

Banten, Indonesia (Oct 3-9)

Madhya Pradesh, India (Oct 10-16)

Punjab, Pakistan (Oct 17-23)

South Sumatra, Indonesia (Oct 24-30)

Haryana, India (Oct 31-Nov 6)

Odisha, India (Nov 7-13)

Maharashtra, India (Nov 14-20)

Telangana, India (Nov 21-27)

Guizhou, China (Nov 28-Dec 4)

Gujarat, India (Dec 5-11)

Sylhet, Bangladesh (Dec 12-18)

West Sumatra, Indonesia (Dec 19-25)

Mymensingh, Bangladesh (Dec 26-Jan 1)

“We have the great privilege of being ambassadors to many who know little about our Lord. This book will show us who our new neighbors are, and how to reach out to them with love and grace in a way they will understand. I pray many churches and Christians will respond to this special opportunity.”

– Larry Phillips, Executive Director/President, Global Grace

EthnoLA
Reaching the Nations, Tongues,
and People of the Greater Los Angeles Metro Area

This book studies the diaspora from the world in the Greater Los Angeles Metro Area (GLAMA). Jerome Hannaman from Frontier Ventures in Pasadena, California, created a database of more than 300 people groups/ languages in GLAMA and is the driving force for this publication.

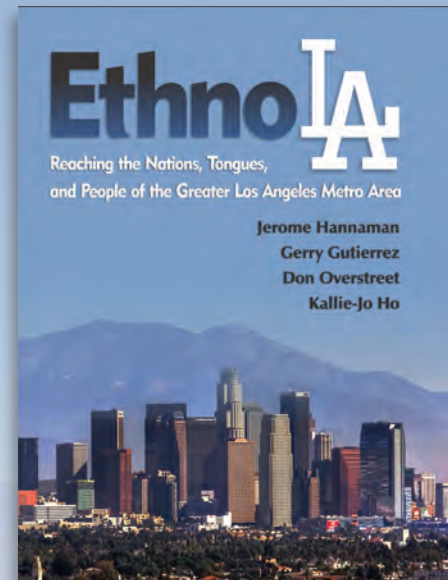
The co-authors of this project, Gerry Gutierrez, Don Overstreet, and Kallie-Jo Ho provide an overview of the life, spirituality, location, and communities of the world living among us. We pray that individual Christians and churches learn about and then reach out to the mission field in our backyard.

The Church is responsible for representing Christ to these people, and the long-time residents of Los Angeles have the privilege of reaching out to love, serve, and witness with open hearts and arms.

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