

What is the Global Prayer Digest?

The *Global Prayer Digest* is a unique devotional booklet. Each day it gives a glimpse of what God is doing around the world and what still remains to be done. Daily prayer for that still-unfinished task is at the heart of the Adopt-A-People movement. Condensed missionary stories, biblical challenges, urgent reports, and exciting descriptions of unreached peoples provide a digest of rich fuel for your own times of prayer for the world.

Become a Daily World Christian

The *Global Prayer Digest* is a key tool in a movement to help fulfill Christ's commission to make disciples of all the peoples of the earth. This movement involves a daily discipline of learning, praying, and giving to help reach the world's nearly 10,000 unreached people groups. Unreached peoples are those groups which do not yet have a strong church in their own cultural and social setting.

Myanmar, Mothers and the Frontier Fellowship Movement

The Frontier Fellowship Movement is an adaptation of a custom among tribal Christians in Burma (now called Myanmar) and elsewhere. As the mother in each family prepares meals for her family, she sets aside a handful of rice in a special container, and prays for their church's missionaries to unreached people groups. Rice from families in the church is sold to support their frontier missionaries.

Loose Change Adds Up!

In adapting the Burma Plan to our culture, we have simply substituted loose change for rice and have added this educational and inspirational *Global Prayer Digest*. One person's loose change will average about \$100 per year exclusively for frontier missions! When the national goal of one million Adopt-A-People Prayer Partners is reached, that will mean \$100 million more per year for the frontiers!

Devotional Ideas

How can you make the most of this prayer digest:

- Some people use it as a supplement to their regular devotional time.
- Others enjoy reading and praying around the dinner table with the entire family.
- We encourage you to gather monthly with other Christ friends who are involved in this movement.
- Join the "Frontier Fellowship movement" (left), a version of the Burma Plan, to financially support frontier missions.

Every day at the top of the page you'll find the name of an unreached people group for which to pray. The small maps will help you locate the day's feature.



Dear Praying Friends,

About 25 years ago, I read a paper in an anthropology class, which described me how the gospel had changed a Native American community in South America. The people group, who were officially supposed to be Roman Catholic, had the bad habit of sponsoring

fiestas where the entire community would become very drunk from corn liquor. This dysfunctional lifestyle left the people group sick and destitute. But after the community embraced the gospel of Jesus Christ, everything changed. They stopped spending their money on drunken fiestas that drained their resources. The people now had enough money and understanding to send their children to school and obtain medical care. The community felt the peace and joy of the kingdom of God.

In the last 25 years, thanks to mission efforts that have provided Native Americans a way out of sin's entanglements, there has been much progress in evangelizing tribes in southern Mexico. Mexican missionary statesman, Moises Lopez, sent me four testimonies from missionaries currently working in Mexico, and you will read about them in the first four days of this month. In each case Mexican brethren faced persecution and even the threat of death, as they brought the gospel of Christ to those who didn't want to hear it. In each case the Lord had the victory, people repented, and the community was transformed. For this reason, I am dedicating this issue of the *GPD* to the brave Mexican missionaries who have put their lives on the line to take the kingdom of God to Mexico's Native American communities.

In Christ,

Keith Carey, Managing Editor, *GPD*

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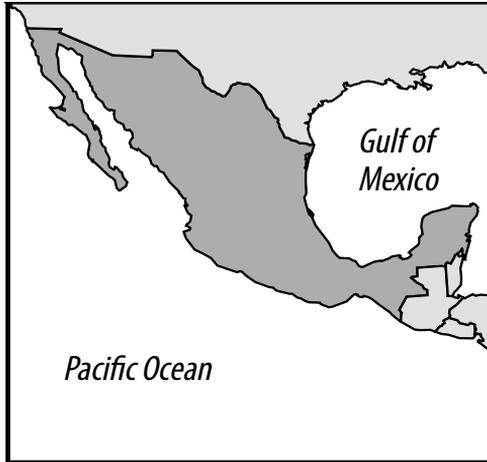
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Pray for a Strong Fellowship for Every People in Mexico



When the Gospel Penetrates, Takes Root, and Spreads

—by Dr. Gerry Gutierrez, GRN missionary to Latin America, formerly stationed in Oaxaca, Mexico. She is the writer of, *From América to Los Angeles*, and editor of *Alcancemos las Etnias de Mexico*, two resources for people interested in the Hispanic diaspora in the USA. You can reach her at: gerrygutierrez@globalrecordings.net



Dr Gutierrez working with children in Mexico

The growth and spread of the gospel is a dynamic process that involves many factors that interact over a period of time. Calling a people group “reached” or “unreached” does not take into account the variations of receptivity to the gospel in different locations and times. How people respond to God’s Word often depends on what is going on in their lives at any one time or location. They may be suffering from a season of drought and be open to the gospel. On the other hand things may be going well, and they may forget their need for a loving Deity.

This article highlights the geographic complexity of some of Mexico’s indigenous peoples. Mexico’s southernmost state of Oaxaca has over a million indigenous people speaking more

than 150 languages. Many of these people called Oaxaquenos live in their ancestral lands. But many others reside in the state capital, Oaxaca City or in the capital of the country, Mexico City. Others spend part of the year as migrant farmers in the fields of Culiacan or Baja California. Many have gone to the United States to work on farms or in the cities. This migration pattern is found in many people groups from Latin America who have formed transnational communities with strong ties in both their home country as well in another nation.

How Does the Gospel Spread and Take Root in these People Groups?

At stage one we see a people group distributed in many locations within their country and outside their borders. As stated previously, the tribes from Oaxaca are not only in their homeland, but also in Mexico's Baja California and in major cities of the United States like New York, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Atlanta. Many tribal groups are animistic in their homelands with no exposure to the gospel of Jesus Christ or any other major religious system for that matter. If the group has migrated to cities with a Christian population, many times the first contacts with believers are made outside of the ancestral lands. If the initial migration places people in another religious belief system, they will adopt those beliefs to some degree, mixing them with their traditional practices.

At stage two we see individual believers won to Christ in multiple locations either in the native location or among migrants. At this point there is no persecution because the new faith is underground and has not been noticed by others. The gospel is being spread through personal and family contacts in a very natural manner, and it can jump freely from one location to another. This stage of quiet growth can last for several years, depending on the people group, the resources available to reach them, the underlying spiritual condition of the people, and the evangelistic efforts made on their behalf.

At stage three there are visible gatherings of believers in churches in several locations, and the church is growing numerically and in spiritual maturity. If the surrounding culture is hostile to the gospel, persecution will increase rapidly which may cause massive migration of people toward areas of their transnational community where there is more freedom.

At times the visible church totally disappears in parts of the people group due to death, migration, and hostility; yet the testimony and seeds of new growth remain dormant in the group.

Another variation of church growth can occur when the people in the ancestral lands remain resistant to the gospel, while those in other locations are very receptive and highly evangelized.

When we understand the complexity of church growth over time in people groups, we can better evaluate the needs of a group and plan effective strategies for reaching all the communities of each group at whatever stage they are.

Whom Are We Praying For This Month?

Almost all of the people we will pray for this month are from Native American groups called the Zapotec, the Nahuatl, and the Mixtec. Many of these groups and sub-groups live in Mexico's southern most state of Oaxaca which is Mexico's most ethnically diverse state.

Some of these tribes, especially the Mixtec, also live in the neighboring states of Guerrero and Puebla. There are numerous Mixtec sub-tribes, and they live either in the highlands or lowlands (valleys). The total population of the Mixtec tribes is estimated to be about 830,000. There are so many unreached Mixtec tribes that we will be praying this month for Mixtec groups from days 1 to 21.

The Nahuatl tribes are the descendents of the Aztecs who had a great empire until they were conquered by the Spaniards in 1519-21. According to *Wikipedia*, about 1.5 million southern Mexicans speak a Nahuatl language today. They are



the ones who gave the name Oaxaca to the state that is home to most of the unreached people groups we will cover this month.

About 800,000 to a million Zapotec people live in Mexico, and are concentrated in the state of Oaxaca. An additional 100,000 Zapotecs have migrated to the United States. They had a highly developed civilization before the Spanish conquest.

Why Has It Taken So Long for These Tribes to be Reached With the Gospel?

In a word: isolation. The mountainous terrain allows people to stay isolated from the rest of the world. If you have used the GPD for any length of time, you have probably noticed this pattern. People groups that live in mountainous areas like China's Yunnan Province, Russia's North Caucasus Mountain region, and Mexico's Oaxaca State remain isolated and less reached with the gospel than other parts of the world.

Day 1

Luke 6:47-48b, NET

Everyone who comes to Me and listens to My words and puts them into practice—I will show you what he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep, and laid the foundation on bedrock.

Jesus is the bedrock! All other foundations are as unreliable as a sand foundation under a building. For centuries, the Mixtec peoples have relied on spirits that can offer them nothing. This month we will be praying for many people who have built their homes upon the sand.

Pray for the church to continue to grow and to find faith in Jesus, the strong bedrock of our faith.

A True Missionary Story About the Tacahua Mixtec People

In 1996, we started to visit two Tacahua Mixtec families, and the community threatened us. I was only 24 years old, but I had the audacity to tell the Mixtec people that their god was nothing compared to the God I served. They were imposing a fee of 500 pesos per family to participate in a pagan festival. I said that the day will arrive when there will be many followers of the true God in their town. The people ordered me to leave town and not to come back. After I walked up the hill they began to shoot their guns in the air including Eusebio, a village elder. Going to Tacahua at night and certain days meant persecution, beatings, and jail time for early believers. It was worth it, and God delivered us.

Today, Tacahua has a group of at least 90 believers. The first pastor in Tacahua was Francisco Javier Castro, son of Eusebio. Eusebio is one of the leaders of the church in Tacahua. He and his family serve the Tacahua church as a living example of the power and love of God toward the Mixtec peoples.

In 2014 there was a rally in Tacahua led by several pastors from different Mixtec groups. I visited it. The pastors constantly invite me to come and preach, and they often make mention of the pioneering work that God allowed me to do there.

Pray for continual growth of the Tacahua Mixtec church that will spread to other Mixtec groups.—From a worker in Mexico

A True Missionary Story About Mixtecs of San Pedro el Alto

Day 2

Luke 5:5, NIV

In 2004 we began to visit the Mixtec people of San Pedro el Alto. We started by making friends with merchants when we were



selling bread and vegetables. Thus began the relationship with the people of the community. In 2006 we permanently set in place our worker, Mariano Rocha. A lot has happened in this town, but it was thanks to the persistence of Mariano that today we are seeing the first fruits of the work.

In a community like San Pedro el Alto, as well as in the other Mixtec communities, you can only gain acceptance by actively participating with them in three things: community work, cooperation (meaning giving material or financial donations), and by being elected to public office. Mariano has remained all this time and has served them exceptionally well. Today Mariano is respected to the extent that they consider him to be a neighbor, and he has been given land. In these villages everything is communal, so it is significant that they gave Mariano land. I was present in 2014 for the first evangelistic meeting. The four Christian families with Mariano invited other families to hear of God's love. Although several were invited, only 15 came, but this was still a breakthrough. Gradually we will see how God will change this place so deep in animistic religion.

Simon answered, Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because You say so, I will let down the nets.

Can you relate to what Simon Peter was saying here? I'm sure that many workers in Mexico can. There are times when it doesn't seem that the fields are ripe for the harvest, but instead, we are wasting our time on unresponsive people. But as you can see from today's entry, a team of Mexican missionaries spent years "letting down their nets" before God gave them the catch they had waited for. Could it be that there are other mission fields where perseverance and patience are what they need?

Pray that missionaries among the unreached peoples in Mexico will not grow weary, but will persevere.

Pray for open hearts among the Mixtecs of San Pedro el Alto, and that they will soon follow the Lord, putting false spirits aside.—Alex Rodriguez, Mexican worker

A True Missionary Story About San Juan Teita Mixtec People

But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

There are many examples of workers in Mexico who must turn the other cheek and love oppressive enemies. But when they do so with patient perseverance, the kingdom of God is extended to new communities as it was among the San Juan Teita Mixtec people.

Thank the Lord for Mexican missionaries who have enough love and faith to persevere till the gospel advances. Pray for the Holy Spirit to strengthen God's children to supernaturally turn the other cheek so that people will see the Kingdom at work.

In 1996, just three weeks after I married Shayra, we decided to serve as missionaries of the gospel among the Mixtecs of San Juan Teita. We soon had a struggle when the community participated in a pagan festival, and I did not attend. By the afternoon everyone was drunk; 15 men beat me with sticks. They took me to a 10 by 10 jail cell and immediately called a general assembly where they agreed to hang me. My wife was able to communicate with friends who prayed.

Two sympathetic Mixtec people walked all night and told the authorities. After three days state authorities came to my rescue with at least 20 heavily armed policemen. They broke the lock of the jail and transferred me to Tlaxiaco where the government officials insisted that I not return to that town. However, Shayra and I decided to return. The town authorities had started the rumor that I was put in a high security state jail, and I would never come back. So when I returned, everybody was surprised.

We lived seven years among the San Juan Teita Mixtecs. When we left they had a strong church, and today at least 35 believers serve the Lord. It's amazing how people in the community who once attacked us now asked us to stay! Today we visit San Juan Teita sporadically, and our relationship with the community is excellent.

Pray for the San Juan Teita Mixtec church to grow in faith, love, and perseverance as they learn to serve Him.—From a Mexican missionary

A True Missionary Story About Yosonotu Mixtec People

Day 4

Luke 20:17b, ESV

Santa Catarina is a community where each year the Yosonotu Mixtecs worship the “Lord of the Column” two weeks before Easter. At midnight, they begin a procession which features a figure of the beaten and bloody Christ bent over a column that is carried on people’s shoulders as they proceed to the Catholic Church. During the procession women drape the image with purple scarves, which they later retrieve to use in funerals. The Yosonotu Mixtecs hold a great feast at the celebration that is attended by more than 50,000 people around the country. Unfortunately all the rituals they perform during this celebration are full of animism. The Yosonotu Mixtec people have a deep fear of the spirit world.

For years believers have tried to evangelize the Yosonotu Mixtecs; however, for various reasons they have not succeeded. At present there are still two brave workers among the Yosonotu who are providing a service to the community; this has given them an opportunity to stay and minister to the tribe. It is urgent for many believers to intercede for the Yosonotu Mixtec community right now because we know there will be big challenges once the first fruits of the work come in.

Pray for a large harvest among the Yosonotu Mixtec people. Pray that when the harvest comes, the new believers will live victorious lives in Christ, free of fear. Pray that the few workers among them will be protected from the enemy, and given authority to trample on the spiritual serpents and snakes that keep the Yosonotu people away from their loving Savior, Jesus Christ.

—Alex Rodriguez, Mexican worker

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

Mixtec comes from the Nahuatl word *mixtecah*, meaning, “cloud people” or “people of the rain.” The Mixtec peoples, whom we will focus on much of this month, are renowned for their art, manuscripts, jewelry, and metal work. Contemporary Mixtecs have adopted a cosmology of various earth and sky gods and believe that renewal and fertility of the earth will be achieved via good works, acts of self-sacrifice, and a modeling of the ancient relationships between man and the gods. During the Mexican colonial period aspects of Catholicism were mixed with their beliefs.

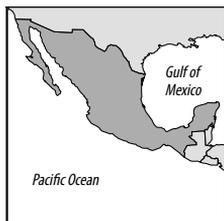
Pray that the Mixtec peoples would come to a deeper understanding of the Creator of the earth and sky and that the “people of the rain” would be drenched by the living waters of the gospel.—VA

The twelve were with Him, and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and disabilities: Mary (called Magdalene), from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna the wife of Cuza (Herod's household manager), Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their own resources.

Notice how unexpected this situation is. Former demoniacs and someone associated with Herod were supporting the Lord's ministry with their finances. The Lord provides in strange ways! Likewise, we are rejoicing today over a fellowship that put aside their desire for a better building so they could have the resources to reach out to an unreached people group. Are there other churches you can think of that do this same thing?

Pray for the Lord to raise up more sacrificial supporters to make sure that His work among the unreached is completed.

Bethel Church—Mexican Church Efforts



Members who are mostly poor farmers formed Bethel Church in Nochixtlan, Oaxaca, Mexico. Their meeting place was severely damaged by an earthquake, so the 50 members had to build a temporary church from scrap wood and tin. The windows and door spaces were covered with plastic.

Nevertheless, when they heard of the unreached people groups

(UPGs) near their area, they had to decide between reaching the unreached or re-building their place of worship. They did not have the resources to do both. Regardless of how uncomfortable their meeting place was, the small congregation prioritized reaching the unreached people groups first before finishing the building program.

Today one of the two teachers in their community has given up the financial security of his job to live among the adopted unreached group. The congregation has become so enthusiastic about reaching the adopted group that a good number of them now travel every week at their own expense to help their missionaries. A number of fellowships have been planted among the new group. The church's excitement is so high that they have decided to adopt a second unreached people. The original church has grown to about 100; only 80 attend every Sunday, as 20 are helping their missionaries! Now the Bethel Church has planted several churches among two different unreached people groups.

Pray for many fellowships to have the faith to put aside their needs and to sacrificially reach out to the unreached peoples.—Liz Adleta

Seed Company Work Among the Huichols

(The Seed Company works to accelerate Bible translation and impact through Great Commission partnerships. Its vision is for God's Word to transform lives in every language in this generation.)

Piling up all his fetishes, Victoriano sat back and watched the smoke curl around him. As a village shaman for the Huichols, in the past he had invoked the spirits to both cure and curse with these “magic” trappings. But no more! The fire sparked, and Victoriano caught the acrid smell of his old life burning up in the crackling flames. He has a new, stronger power in his heart now: Jesus who said, “I am the living One. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave” (Revelation 1:18, NLT). As the fetishes turned to ashes, Victoriano and several other new believers joyfully went down to the river to be baptized.

The Huichol are an indigenous people of Mexico. Earlier that morning several Seed Company missionaries had arrived in Victoriano's village, together with believers from four other villages. Using translated Huichol Scriptures, the men with the Seed Company now take turns preaching and discipling the believers each week until God provides a pastor.

Thank the Lord that His Word is touching Huichol hearts. Pray that His Word will penetrate communities among each Huichol village.—The Seed Company

For a more complete story, go to: <https://theseedcompany.org/projects/huichol-complete-ot>

As He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it.

A Huichol wise man once said, “Human beings must learn to share the tears of every living thing, to feel in his heart the pain of the wounded animal, each crushed blade of grass.” The Huichol peoples have been taught that they are lost and that doom and destruction is coming upon Mother Earth. They believe that Taupa (Father Sun) is coming closer to the earth to purify it. They live their lives in fear and bondage, believing it to be their task to “hold up the sun” before it destroys the earth.

Pray that the Son of God will shine His purifying light upon the Huichol peoples. Pray that He will reveal to them that the Son is drawing near to purify hearts, not for destruction, but for redemption.—VA

Seed Company Work Among the Apoala Mixtec People

On another Sabbath, Jesus entered the synagogue and was teaching. Now a man was there whose right hand was withered. The experts in the law and the Pharisees watched Jesus closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath, so that they could find a reason to accuse Him.

The Pharisees were concerned about following rituals and traditions; Jesus was concerned about extending the kingdom of God. The two goals collided. The indigenous peoples of Mexico often have to choose between the two. Will they follow the rituals and traditions laid out by their ancestors, or will they seek the kingdom of God? That is what missionaries offer today.

Pray that many will seek and find true spirituality when they encounter Christ.

Until recently the 10,000 member Apoala Mixtec people group worshiped false gods. In earlier years they used to make sacrifices to the earth, the sun, and the moon. But thankfully this is becoming less common. While some of the people in the communities still follow the customs of their ancestors, others have come to understand the gospel. New believers are using Bibles translated into their native language by Seed Company workers, and they now know that Jesus is the Light of the World. When they understand God's Word in their native tongue, the effect on the young people is so startling that many of them talk to their parents about salvation in Jesus Christ.

The Apoala Mixtec people in the surrounding communities are now also beginning to be more sensitive to the gospel. A Seed Company translation team working in the area is grateful for the ability of the members of the tribe to understand God's Word in their own language. Members of the small church understand the message in their own language better than they would in Spanish. The Seed Company is partnering with nationals who are translating the Bible into their own tongues; they also are providing training, financial and technical resources, organizational and managerial advising, etc.

Pray for the Seed Company team's health and the well being of their children and elders. Pray for the Apoala Mixtecs to trade the spiritual customs of their ancestors for the life-giving ways of Christ.—Seed Company

Seed Company Translation Work Among the Jicaltepec Mixtec People

Day 8

Luke 6:11, NET

Spencer Presley



What a blessing to see people touched by God's Word that is translated into the Jicaltepec Mixtec language! People who once resisted the gospel are changing their

attitudes and becoming open to hearing and reading the Scriptures. For example, a local Jicaltepec man who was opposed to the church later heard in the book of Numbers in his native language that God punishes murmuring and rebellion. He also learned that God can even use an animal to communicate His will to mankind as He did with the donkey in Numbers chapter 22. Consequently, this man changed his attitude.

One mother gave her children recordings of Genesis in the Jicaltepec Mixtec language. She also read the translated New Testament to them. As a result of her efforts, her children accepted Christ as savior and were recently baptized.

A young man working on a translation with the Seed Company is becoming a leader among the youth and a great example of a follower of Christ. The Lord has blessed him with a talent for preaching the Bible in Jicaltepec Mixtec, and he continues to study the New and Old Testaments on a regular basis. He's a beautiful example of how God's Word transforms lives when it is heard in the native language of the people.

Pray for the Word of God to transform both individual lives and the dynamics of entire Jicaltepec Mixtec communities. Pray that believers among them will shine like the sun in a dark environment.

But they were filled with mindless rage and began debating with one another what they would do to Jesus.

Jesus made a point of getting the people out of their comfort zone. He could have followed the traditions of Israel, but extending the kingdom of God meant changing hearts. So the crowd and the healed man rejoiced while the religious leaders were enraged. The same thing happens in today's world; those who are comfortable with the old ways are still enraged by those who take the kingdom of God to people who need Jesus.

Pray that our hearts will be devoted to the Kingdom of God so we can be obedient to His ways. Pray that those believers working with the Seed Company in translating the Word of God into the Jicaltepec Mixtec language will find hearts open to the gospel.

Day 9

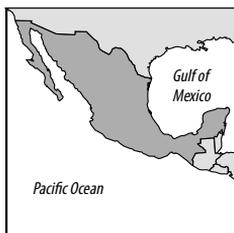
Luke 10:3, NET

Go! I am sending you out like lambs surrounded by wolves.

Today you are reading about a missionary team who lived completely at the mercy of people who could easily be provoked to violence. God protected them, and given time, the “wolves” embraced the Lamb of God. The peoples’ hearts were transformed, and they are now part of God’s family. But this doesn’t always happen. It is often true that the lambs become a sacrifice for the sake of the Kingdom.

Pray for God to intervene, and protect His “lambs” who venture out among “wolves” to extend His grace and mercy.

Seed Company Work Among the Mixtecs of Mechoacan



Through the challenges of civil unrest, the Seed Company mission team to the 8,500 Mixtecs of Mechoacan had confidence in God’s Word to penetrate hearts. They knew many of those same machete-wielding people have Scripture verses in the recesses of their mind. Their souls are echoing the wisdom of God’s Word. Translators watched as heart language Scripture bypassed normal language filters and pierced peoples’ hearts with God’s love.

“During the revision by the team of a translation draft or by testing in the community, we always saw results,” recalled Isaac, one of the Seed Company workers in Mechoacan. “It touched our hearts, and we saw how great God is and how much He loves us.” And now they draw on the strength of endurance as they wait to see the counsel of God outweigh the chaos that can impact a society.

Pray that the Word of God will fall on good soil among these Mixtec people, and produce a hundred-fold crop of faithful believers filled with God’s Holy Spirit. Pray that they will be filled with the fruit and the power of the Holy Spirit so they can be His servants in other parts of Mexico.—The Seed Company

International Mission Board (IMB) Work Among Tijaltepec Mixtec People

Day 10

Luke 8:47b, NET

Do you believe in divine appointments? Valley Baptist Church of Bakersfield, California does. In 2011 they decided to adopt an unreached, unengaged people group (UUPG) from the International Mission Board's (IMB) "Embrace" initiative that seeks to reach more than 3,000 UUPGs in the world. After studying a map of the world that highlighted such groups, Pastor Phil Neighbors noticed how many were located in southern Mexico. He contacted a missionary there who agreed to help him find a good fit. The Tijaltepec Mixtec people live in the mountainous area near Oaxaca. To his surprise he discovered that they also had a large migrant population living just 20 miles away from Valley Baptist Church near Bakersfield! Neighbors agreed that this was God's divine appointment.

The church began working with both groups of Tijaltepec Mixtecs. On short term trips to Mexico, the church provided free medical clinics, children's events, worship services, and showed the JESUS Film. At the same time the church in Bakersfield issued an invitation to local Mixtec migrants to form a joint fellowship. They were stunned when 400 showed up. The church has been able to provide video messages between the two groups. They hope the gesture builds goodwill and opens a door to share the gospel, plant a church in Oaxaca, and begin a church-planting movement near Bakersfield.

Pray that the Valley Baptist Church will continue to hear God's voice directing their ministry outreach in Mexico. May this connection bring entire families into God's kingdom in both Oaxaca and in the US.—JS

In the presence of all the people, she explained why she had touched Him and how she had been immediately healed.

A Native American leader explained something about this verse that amazed us here at the Venture Center. Jesus had listened to the woman's long story while an urgent situation was brewing. A man's daughter was dying, and only Jesus could save her. Yet Jesus took the time to listen to the woman. He addressed the urgent situation later, and the girl was healed. How difficult it is for those of us who are time-oriented to wait and listen!

Pray that the workers with Valley Baptist Church will have the discernment and patience to listen to the Tijaltepec Mixtec people both in Mexico and Bakersfield. Pray for wisdom and encouragement for other churches in the United States to develop such innovative programs.

Cacaloxtepec Mixtec People

The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me, and the one who rejects Me rejects the one who sent Me.

This can send a chill down your spine! Jesus was actually saying that those who listen to His harvesters, are listening to Him! Those who are sent to take the gospel to the nations are actually His mouthpieces.

Pray that workers in Mexico's harvest fields will rejoice and be glad that they are His mouth as well as His hands.

Yesterday we read about the Tijaltipec Mixtecs in the Mexican State of Oaxaca. This area of Oaxaca is very mountainous, and even villages that are geographically close are isolated due to the rugged terrain. The Cacaloxtepec Mixtecs have the same needs as their cousins in Tijaltipec. The lack of communication networks severely impedes their economic growth. Generally villages consist of women, children, and the elderly. Most of the men have migrated to the U.S. in hopes of working and sending money home to their families.

It is a very lonely life for those left behind. They are subsistence farmers raising corn, wheat, and beans. They mix Catholicism with many local tribal beliefs and rituals. Their social life is directed by local customs. They are considered an unreached people group; however, followers of Christ from the neighboring region of Huajuapán have been trying to reach them.

Pray for effective efforts of believers in Huajuapán to connect with this people group. Pray for another divine appointment that will result in a new outreach to the Cacaloxtepec Mixtec people. Ask God to connect an American church with the Mixteco of Cacaloxtepec and also with their migrant husbands and fathers working in the U.S. Pray for God's Word to become easily available to the Cacaloxtepec Mixtec people.—JS

Coicoyan Mixtec People

Day 12

Luke 4:18-19, NET

A scrawny man, Florentino Hernandez, lies on an abandoned soiled mattress partially sheltered by a rusty wall and the remains of a leaky roof. Observers say he has been in this condition for about five years. Hernandez lives in the slums of Coicoyan des Flores, one of the poorest municipalities in all of Mexico. He is a Coicoyan Mixtec, a member of a Native American people group originating in the mountains of southwestern Mexico. He cannot work and has no access to medical care. He exists on scraps of food given by equally poor neighbors and people passing by. (<http://contralineainfo/archivo-revista/index.php/2013/01/13/coicoyan-de-las-flores-entre-el-abandono-el-derroche/>)

Many Coicoyan Mixtec have left their remote villages to seek work in large cities of Mexico or in the US. They send money home to their families in Mexico to help them survive in their villages where subsistence farming barely provides enough food for part of the year.

The Joshua Project sees a great need for mission work among the Coicoyan Mixtec. There are an estimated 25,000 members of this group and very few faithful disciples of Jesus. According to the Joshua Project, “only one American church ministers to the Coicoyan Mixtecs with medical, dental, and baseball clinics. There is an audiovisual Scripture project available, the JESUS Film, using the Gospel of Luke that has been translated into Mixtec and Zapotec, the indigenous languages of Oaxaca.”

Pray that the Lord will touch the hearts of medical missionaries and lead them to the Coicoyan Mixtecs. Pray that the Coicoyan Mixtecs will open their hearts wide to Jesus Christ.—JWS

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives and the regaining of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

This is Christ’s mission.
Release from captivity!
Sight for the blind! Release from oppression!
The Lord’s favor! These are things that all peoples from around the globe want. Jesus offers it all, but we have to do it His way, not our way.

Pray that the Coicoyan Mixtec people will seek the Lord’s favor and enter His light.

While the people were filled with anticipation and they all wondered whether perhaps John could be the Christ, John answered them all, "I baptize you with water, but One more powerful than I am is coming—I am not worthy to untie the strap of His sandals."

John the Baptist was clear about how much higher the Lord Jesus is than anyone else. How unfortunate it is that many Mixtec people in Mexico have settled for "patron saints" who can do nothing for them. Throughout Latin America there are peoples like the San Agustin Tlacotepec Mixtecs who worship and revere saints rather than focusing on the Lord of lords.

Pray for the indigenous peoples of Mexico to see that Jesus is indeed who He said He is, and beside Him there is no other.

San Agustin Tlacotepec Mixtec People

A Christmas festival tradition at San Agustin Tlacotepec goes back 400 years when Spanish priests brought Christianity to this part of Oaxaca. But Christmas is not the only time for festivities in the area. On August 28 there is the dance of the Moors and Christians in honor of the city's patron saint. Both times people wear masks and dance in parades. Brass instruments and drums make up the main part of their music. In one fiesta people are dressed as Aztec warriors and Spanish soldiers who dance through the streets to a stage to re-enact the Spanish conquest of Mexico. Thus the Mixtec people relive history, both sacred and secular.

Sacred sites abound in Mixtec religious geography. The rain god is important for this farming people. To some extent the syncretism between Catholicism and animism is seen in their fiestas, dances, and city name. The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) has a website on this people group that suggests that the Mixtecs of San Agustin Tlacotepec speak a different dialect than other Mixtec tribes.

Pray for a spiritual hunger for the Bible and for Christ among these people. Our wonderful loving Lord is left out of their celebrations. Pray that key people will come to faith in Jesus, and for San Agustin Tlacotepec Mixtec believers to grow in faith. Pray that this Mixtec tribe will be cleansed of their animistic practices that divert their attention from the Savior.—TP

Atlatlahuca Mixtec People

Day 14

Luke 8:20-21, NET

Not all Mixtec communities are the same! Judging from the YouTube videos you can find on the Internet, the Mixtec community in Atlatlahuca is more prosperous and modern than the one we prayed for yesterday in San Agustin. Although many of the inhabitants of Atlatlahuca are agricultural workers who use oxen to plow the land, farming isn't their only economic option. The Atlatlahuca Mixtecs see themselves as the "key to Mexico" and court Mexican and foreign tourists. Tourist money augments the income their community makes from working on the farms. Their town nestled among the mountains has a neat, clean central plaza and a public basketball court. Outlying neighborhoods have electricity and remind one of the modest colonias of Tijuana on the Mexico-US border. They have their own website.

Like the other Mixtec subgroups we will pray for this month, the religion of the Atlatlahuca Mixtec is a form of Roman Catholicism which pushes Jesus to the margins of their spiritual lives. The population numbers some 11,300; 95 percent of the people are officially Catholic, while 0.70 percent are Protestant. The other four percent do not identify with either group.

Pray for biblical renewal among the Catholics in the group. Pray that the Bible believing Protestants will have wisdom so that the people will learn how to receive Jesus into their lives and community. Pray that tourists will witness to God's grace in Christ. Pray that those who leave Atlatlahuca will come to faith in Jesus and witness to friends and family back home.—TP

So He was told, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see You." But He replied to them, "My mother and My brothers are those who hear the Word of God and do it."

Though Mary was a great woman of faith, she was very human. In this instance, she and her sons had forgotten who Jesus was, and they were hoping to take Him on a one-way trip back home. How should Christ's ambassadors present Mary to people who revere her as much as they revere Jesus?

Pray that people who look to Mary rather than to Jesus will remember her humanity, and know that only Jesus can offer a place in the family of God.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

Mixtec comes from the Nahuatl word *mixtecah*, meaning, “cloud people” or “people of the rain.” The Mixtec peoples whom we will focus on much of this month are renowned for their art, manuscripts, jewelry, and metal work. Contemporary Mixtecs have adopted various earth and sky gods, and believe that renewal and fertility of the earth will be achieved via good works and acts of self-sacrifice. During the Spanish colonial period, aspects of Catholicism were mixed with their beliefs.

Pray that the Mixtec peoples would come to a deeper understanding of the Creator of the earth and sky and that the “people of the rain” would be drenched by the living waters of the gospel.—VA

San Juan Del Rio Mixtec People

(Note: This story serves to illustrate the lifestyle of this people and is not an actual account)

“Quiet down, children, and I will tell you a story.” “A story!” the boys and girls shouted excitedly. “Tell us a story, narrador!” “Shh...!” The old man motioned for them all to be seated. The group quickly fell silent, their eyes watching the old man carefully. They knew him as el narrador – Spanish for “the storyteller.”

“This is the story of the Mixtec peoples,” the old man explained. “And it begins long, long ago, when the first Mixtec came to the place of clouds.” “Where is the place of clouds?” a young voice asked. “In Oaxaca, Puebla, and Guerrero. The Nahuatl people called it Mixtlan, the place of the clouds. The people who settled there were Mixtecs, meaning people of the rain.” “That’s us!” another small voice chimed. “We are the people of the rain.”

Only about 800 Mixtecs – “people of the rain” – live in San Juan del Rio, Mexico. This people group currently has few if any opportunities to hear the gospel message. The Bible is not available in their Mixtec heart language, and most of the people follow a mixture of Catholicism and ethnic religions.

Ask God to raise up translators to provide the San Juan Del Rio Mixtec people with their own Bible-based materials. Pray for the good news to reach the San Juan Del Rio Mixtec and for their hearts to respond to God’s invitation to forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life.—CL

San Mateo Penasco Mixtec People

Spencer Presley



(Note: This story illustrates the beliefs of this people group and is not an actual account.)

They saw dust rising into the air and

spotted the pickup approaching. The two men slowly walked to the fence to meet it. “Do you recognize that truck?” the first man asked. The other shook his head. “A stranger,” the first man said as the pickup neared them.

The truck came to a stop. “Mixteco?” the stranger asked in Spanish. Neither of the men responded. The man handed a pamphlet through the fence. “This is something very important. And it is written in your language.” The first man took the pamphlet and examined it, turning it over in his hands. “Will you read it?” the white man asked. Both men nodded. They waited while the white man climbed into his pickup and drove off. When he was gone, the first man said to the second, “We would certainly be glad to read it—if we could read!” They laughed.

Most of the Mixtecs living in San Mateo Penasco are pre-literate. Even if the Bible was available in their language, they could not read it.

Pray for missionaries to come to the San Mateo Penasco Native Americans and share Christ. Ask God to prepare the hearts of the San Mateo Penasco Mixtec to hear and respond to His message.—CL

Then people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and take their places at the banquet table in the kingdom of God.

For those from unreached people groups, this is an encouraging verse. This verse puts to rest the idea that the kingdom of God is only meant for people from certain parts of the world or certain people groups. No! Some from every people will take their place.

Pray for the unreached peoples of Mexico to be inspired to want their place at the banquet table.

Assuredly I say to you, there is no one who has left house, or wife, or brothers, or parents, or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive many times more in the present time and in the age to come eternal life.

There will be many surprises in heaven! Only our Father knows the true cost involved to carry the gospel to unreached people groups. A mother's heart might have to break before she is able to offer her dear children to her Savior to use their lives as He sees fit. She must realize that they were never truly hers; she was privileged to give them birth, to nurture them, and to cover them in prayer all their lives.

Pray that families and churches will let go of their loved ones and send those who care for unreached peoples to the nations.—KH

San Miguel Achiutla Mixtecs

Like every family, each people group has traditions that are handed down from generation to generation. For the Achiutla Mixtecs who live in the area known as San Miguel, there is a tradition of honoring their ancestors. For several centuries they have preserved a Dominican monastery fortress site that faces the Achiutla River. The structure was built on a pre-Hispanic temple, and for many generations it was their most important political and religious center. Achiutla is very remote, accessible by road only during good weather. During the 19th century the government forced everyone to move away from the monastery down to the base of the mountain that it is built upon. In spite of this, the Mixtecs still make the journey to the top of the mountain for worship services and for continued maintenance on the building.

The Achiutla Mixtecs have lived in this area since pre-Columbian times. One of their traditional gods is known as Dzahui, who is worshiped along with the Sacred Wrapper, also called, “The People’s Heart.” It is a jade stone about the size of a chili pepper and sculpted into the form of a bird and coiled snake. The Achiutla also maintain a steady tradition of music and dancing, complete with colorful costumes and live music. They number about 800 people.

Pray that God’s people will be moved by the Holy Spirit to connect with the Achiutla Mixtecs. Pray for Mixtec eyes to be opened to their spiritual need and the inability of their traditional gods to meet those needs.—JR

Santa Lucia Monteverde Mixtec People

(Note: This story serves to illustrate the life of this people group and is not an actual account.)

“Which animal is the right one?” wondered the Monteverde healer. The medicine man was a strong believer in *tona*, the belief that each person has an animal companion. Like most *tona* healers this man believed that finding the right animal was the key to finding healing for all of his patients. He had never heard of Jesus Christ or that Jesus was the Great Physician, the One who could heal all diseases and show us the way to the kingdom of God.

There are approximately 4400 Santa Lucia Monteverde Mixtec people. This people group lives in a region where evergreen trees color the landscape green all year round. Thus, the name “Monteverde” meaning “green mountains” is appropriate for this Mixtec tribe. Most of the people earn their living by farming.

Centuries ago Spanish colonists brought Catholicism to this people group, but they neglected to teach them the way to following Christ. Today there are few if any followers of Christ among this Mixtec tribe. Most of them practice a badly corrupted form of Catholicism that is based more on pre-Columbian superstitions than on the teachings of Christ.

Ask God to raise up faithful workers to reach out to the Santa Lucia Monteverde Mixtec people with the good news of Christ. Pray that the Bible would be translated into their language. May this people group come to see Christ as the Great Physician, the source of all true healing.—WK

So it seemed good to me as well, because I have followed all things carefully from the beginning, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know for certain the things you were taught.

One of the reasons why we are praying for officially “Christian” peoples this month is that they have substituted the knowledge of God as revealed in the Scriptures for rituals and fabricated myths which point them away from the Savior. In many cases, these same people have access to the truth through translations of the JESUS Film and gospel recordings. Yet they must decide to put their faith in our loving Savior.

Pray that the Santa Lucia Monteverde Mixtec people will put their faith in what God has revealed about Himself in the Bible.

Again He said, “To what should I compare the kingdom of God? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of flour until all the dough had risen.”

The kingdom of God permeates everything it touches. People are transformed into Christ’s likeness. There is spiritual and physical healing. This cannot come through any false spiritual system, even if they use the label “Christian.” True transformation will come to the tribes of Mexico only when they put their faith in Christ alone.

Pray for the peoples of Mexico to discern the difference between false spirituality and true kingdom of God spirituality that leads to healing and life.

Santa María Tataltepec Mixtecs

Spencer Presley



(This story is intended to illustrate the attitudes and beliefs of a given people group).

“Help us,”
 H whispered the Santa María Tataltepec Mixtec woman as she clasped her hands. She noticed the resemblance of her gesture to that of the Virgin of Santa Maria, the statue she knelt before. Her gesture was the only way she knew to reach God, for she longed for the peace she saw in the Virgin Mary’s eyes.

Her family and her tribe had been skilled farmers since before the Aztecs dominated her tribe. Now villagers from another Mixtec tribe were threatening to use her village’s land for the season while allowing their own land to remain fallow. Her village needed the Virgin’s help.

The Santa María Tataltepec is a small Mixtec subgroup from the state of Oaxaca. The mountainous land where they dwell is covered in pine, fir, oak, and other alpine trees. More than half of this tribe earns their living by cultivating apples, coffee, and other produce. About 90 percent are Catholic, but the tribal customs they’ve kept have made them nominal at best.

Ask God to send His people to translate the Bible and other materials into the heart language of these Mixtecs, and pray that there will be a spiritual openness to the things of Christ. Pray that the Santa María Tataltepec Mixtecs will learn that true peace comes only through the Savior Jesus Christ. Pray that they will put their faith in Him.—LR

Santa Maria Yosoyua Mixtec People



Condit

Decorated dancers prepared to wear their enormous masks for the carnival. The wind instruments, violins, and guitars began to

practice for the celebration. The village called “Plain Ice” finally had water! Their Mixtec kinsmen who had migrated to the United States to find work had helped their families remaining in Mexico to have the resources they needed to produce potable water! Until 2009, these Mixtecs fetched their drinking water from two wells 100 meters away.

Nearly 1,000 Mixtecs live in the district called Yosoyua in Oaxaca. Santa Maria is their honored saint. The main income in this region comes from locally irrigated agriculture and from the migrant workers, like those who have sent money from America to build the wells. With the temperate climate, their sandy clay soil grows crops like mustard and pumpkins. Recently they are hoping to earn additional money from non-agricultural sources; they want to produce hand-made backpacks, tablecloths, and other items out of palm.

This Mixtec tribe honors ancient customs, worshipping traditional idols as well as Catholic saints. Their resulting religion looks different than either Catholicism or traditional religion. The Santa Maria Yosoyua Mixtec people are one of Mexico’s least evangelized people.

Pray that the Mixtecs of Yosoyua will taste the water of true life in Christ. Pray their migrated kinsmen will discover Jesus and evangelize the Mixtecs in Mexico.—LR

Exert every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.

Throughout Church history, there have been efforts to cheapen grace. One can become part of God’s family by taking communion, giving money, believing a certain way, or attending worship services. But Jesus tells us something entirely different. We must enter through the narrow gate, and few will find it.

Pray for workers in Mexico to teach the way of the narrow gate so that the peoples will not be satisfied with ways that lead to spiritual darkness.

“What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, I want to regain my sight!” Jesus said, “Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.”

Isn't it odd that Jesus asked the blind man what he wanted Him to do? The man called Him 'Lord,' and was prepared to believe Him for His healing. Someone had already told him the Lord Jesus' identity, so he knew that Jesus was the healer because He is the Lord. Unreached people groups are those who do not yet know the right questions to ask because they do not know the identity of the Savior of all men. We must tell them; then they will know about the God who loves them.

Pray that faithful messengers will use God's Word to communicate about Himself to people who have never heard His Name.—KH

Sinicahua Mixtec People

The Sinicahua Mixtec people are small in stature, but good hearted as they struggle to live in Oaxaca. Their homeland is a mountainous area where erosion and deforestation have curtailed their ability to grow the corn, beans, and wheat they need to sustain themselves. These Sinicahua Mixtec people are sometimes forced to leave their homes and travel north in order to grow a few vegetables for their families to eat.

There are customs that provide for the welfare of the community by requiring each man to work an allotted amount of time for the good of the group. If they do not complete their obligations, the men are expected to pay money instead. Community customs include considering themselves to be Catholic with much folklore and legend blended in. True heart-knowledge and acceptance of Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior is scarce among these 1740 people. Fear is prevalent in the community as they spend much time and effort trying to appease and protect themselves from evil spirits.

Pray that the Sinicahua Mixtec people will receive a true revelation of Jesus Christ. Pray that the fear of the evil spirits will evaporate as they learn of their victory through Christ. Pray for them to have ready access to Bible teachings provided by Global Recordings Network. Pray that the Lord will call preachers of the Word to minister grace to them.—PE

Yaitepec Chatino People

Day 22

Luke 4:30, NET

Most people have heard of Mexico's Virgin of Guadalupe, but did you know that there are at least three "virgin" cults in Mexico? One of them, favored by the Chatino tribes, is the Virgin of Juquila. According to local legend, this virgin, represented by a two-foot tall statue, arrived from Spain 200 years ago, and it was installed in a chapel in Juquila. A fire gutted the chapel, but the statue was unharmed except for being blackened by fire and smoke. No matter how many times people tried to move the statue, she returned to the church site. She was put in the church and deep magical powers were attributed to the statue.

Today, many people in Mexico, both Latino and Chatino, make deals with the Virgin of Juquila. They ask her for a favor in exchange for a certain number of pilgrimages to Juquila. These pilgrimages are difficult; Juquila is remote. After going on a pilgrimage, one must purchase a keepsake with her image. Devotees of the virgin ask her to forgive their sins and protect them from evil, two things that only God can offer.

Pray that Yaitepec Chatino people will understand that a statue can offer nothing, and their devotion to this idol only increases the wrath of the One True God. Pray that they will put their faith in the loving Heavenly Father who can forgive sins and offer protection.—KC

(<http://iglesiadescalza.blogspot.com/2009/05/mexicos-third-virgin-nuestra-senora-de.html>)

But he passed through the crowd and went on his way.

One of the reasons why the indigenous peoples of Mexico look to saints and virgins is that they want to live long, healthy, prosperous lives. This in itself is not a bad thing; but they have forgotten the lessons of Jesus. In this passage, God gave Jesus free passage through a murderous crowd because His time had not come yet. People forget that God is in control.

Pray that the Yaitepec Chatino people will embrace God's will for their community.

And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars.

According to Aztec legend, Coatlicue, the mother of creation, was made in the image of “the unknown” with lacerated hands and was dressed in skulls and snakes. She was impregnated by a knife and gave birth to the moon and stars. Her children later plotted to murder her, but she gave birth to another child—the god of war—who turned on his siblings, murdering them all in a rage. This war caused the heavens to crumble, birthing planet Earth.

Pray that the Lord of creation will open the eyes of the Nahuatl peoples to the biblical origins of their beginnings and to know the fact that they are all created in the image of God.—VA

Durango Nahuatl People



Tucked in a remote part of the Sierra Madre Mountains is a tribe totaling about 1300 that call themselves Catholic, but actually practice the pre-Columbian worship elements of their Aztec ancestors. The sun, moon, Venus, eagles, and deer are all incorporated together with what they call their form of Catholicism. They are called Mexicaneros meaning “those who speak Mexican.” Mexicanero, their language, is a dialect of the ancient Aztec language. Today we call them Nahuatls, and those who live in Durango State are one of Mexico’s remaining unreached people groups.

A decade ago the evangelism of this tribe was begun in the form of literacy programs, dental clinics, and clean water programs. There was also the beginning of a Bible translation into their language. This was the preliminary effort to reach out to the Durango Nahuatls.

Pray Philippians, 1:6 over these secluded people, “...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Pray that the solid work of actually proclaiming the good news will now begin in earnest and not be hindered in any way. Pray that the Nahuatl will see their spiritual needs and the worthlessness of their present path. Open their hearts, minds, and entire lives to the Lord Jesus Christ. Pray that the Holy Spirit will call workers to take this good news to the Nahuatl people in Durango.—PE

Michoacan Nahuatl People

Day 24

Luke 9:16-17, NKJV



(This is a story to illustrate the circumstances of this people group).

The air was hot and dry, as Jose chopped the hard ground around his corn plants. The plants were not growing well due to lack of rain. Recently Jose's family had sacrificed their last chicken to the spirits, hoping for rain, but the sky didn't have so much as a trace of a cloud. How could Jose tell his children that the spirits weren't answering his

prayers? How could he tell them to worship the spirits when they seemed to offer no rain? Water, fire, sky, night deities, and a twisted variation of Catholicism dominated their lives and thinking.

The 4,500 Michoacan Nahuatl people are the descendants of the powerful Aztecs. The Nahuatl people groups speak different languages, as they did in pre-Columbian days. The New Testament was published in their language in 2006, and they now have gospel recordings available in their tongue.

Pray that believers will go to these people and learn their culture and their language. Pray that they will discover the key to communicating God's truth to them of the sacrifice of His beloved Son in payment for sin. Pray that gospel recordings will be shared widely with this people group. Pray that families will be saved and challenged to spread the gospel, taking responsibility for the spiritual welfare of their own people. Pray that new believers will learn to stand in their spiritual armor against the enemy (Ephesians 6:10-18).

He took the two loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed them, broke them, and kept giving them to the disciples to set before the multitude. They all ate and were satisfied, and the broken pieces which they had left over were picked up, 12 baskets full.

Our heavenly Father is the Creator who loves us as a father loves his children. He is perfectly faithful to meet our needs; and He continues to meet the needs of His family through necessities and trials. The Lord Jesus "kept giving the people food," and "They all ate and were satisfied." This is how a loving father desires to provide for his family.

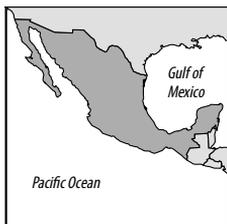
Pray that these dear Michoacan Nahuatl people, whom our Savior loves perfectly, will understand that He loves them, and will never treat them like the spirits they now worship.—KH

Foolish is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. All these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. Seek His kingdom, and these things shall be added to you. Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The “Queen Mother of God” (Mary) is worshipped in the Catholic church of Mexico. God’s Word presents Mary as a typical Jewish mother of her day, loving, caring, and unpretentious. By contrast, many Catholic churches are laden with riches, while the people live in poverty. This is not God’s way!

Pray that the Nahuatl will see through old customs and beliefs and will see Father God’s true ways—to love the Lord God and our neighbors as ourselves.—KH

Tlalitzlipa Nahuatl People



There are only 300 members of the Tlalitzlipa Nahuatl people group located in the State of Puebla. They provide for themselves on the hillsides of their southern Mexico homeland. Corn plays a very important role in their society and forms the basis of their food. These people also raise animals and plant orchards and fruit trees.

The Tlalitzlipa Nahuatl people are descendants of the powerful and mysterious Aztecs, who in years past dominated much of what is now Mexico. The language spoken by the Tlalitzlipa Nahuatl, however, is almost extinct. They now speak Spanish as their dominant language.

These people are considered Catholic, but remain pre-Columbian in their spiritual beliefs. There are no known believers among them. A New Testament translation exists in their language, and there is one other New Testament that has been translated into a similar language. They have audio recordings.

There are no known believers among them. One must wonder how a translation and recordings occurred if there are no believers in such a small people group. Did God call people to go? Did they choose not to do so? Did they go and not survive?

Pray that the Nahuatl will have easy access to gospel resources. Pray that they will be freed from the terrible fear of evil spirits and learn about the true and wonderful God who loves them. Pray that God’s light will shine on them so that this small group will come to know Lord Jesus as the only way to God.—KH

Popoloca (AKA, Mezontla) People

Day 26

Matthew 17:27, NIV

(This story serves to illustrate the lifestyle of this people and is not an actual account.)

Roberto shocked his grandmother with this question as she carefully painted an altar. “Grandma, why do you work so hard on this altar for the Day of the Dead? They are dead and cannot see how beautiful it is!” She turned abruptly to him and replied, “You must not say that! The Day of the Dead is when the dead come back to life to visit us and see beautiful things like this altar and taste their favorite foods. I always put the cross at the top because it shows that God is in heaven. I use this special jar for the flowers because your grandfather made it and painted many pictures on it. He painted cows, chickens, scorpions, and even a big lizard. We want the dead to be happy, and that makes us happy too.”

The 2,400 Mezontla people, also known as Popoloca, mainly live in the town of Los Reyes in the state of Puebla. It is about 150 miles south of Mexico City. They produce beautiful brown pottery which provides for much of their livelihood.

They identify as Catholics, but they have little knowledge of the God of the Bible. Folk customs, spirit worship, and fear of the dead are prominent in their lives.

Pray God will move to bring faithful missionaries to live among the Popoloca so that they will know God and His message of grace found only in Jesus.—PD

But so that we may not cause offense, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.

There is a right way to do things. . . and a wrong way. The right way is God’s way, even when it seems crazy. He knows how to reach all people with His truth of the gospel. What works for one people group may not work for another. We must be willing to obey our Lord’s leading, whether it makes sense to us or not.

Pray for those who go to the mission field. Pray that they will be sensitive to our Father’s leading. He knows all things, and loves all people perfectly.—KH

Therefore produce fruit that proves your repentance, and don't begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that God can raise up children for Abraham from these stones!

One of the easiest mistakes that Roman Catholics make is to think that being part of their church affiliation means salvation. John the Baptist made it very clear that isn't true. Ethnicity and religious affiliation will not save anyone. What John said to the Jewish people then applies to everyone today. People must repent and embrace His kingdom.

Pray that the Tlapanec Teocuitlapa people will understand that repentance is the key to salvation, not religious affiliation.

Tlapanec Teocuitlapa People



A witchdoctor's altar

Speaking to a group of anthropology students in Mexico City, the professor did his best to hold their attention. "Tlapanec speaking people are usually known as the Me'phaa. Their population is about 100,000, and they live in small communities located in the State of Guerrero." They believe that Naguals can transform themselves into an animal at night, usually an owl, bat, turkey, or if they are very powerful, a jaguar. If a Nagual is an evil witch, she can do harmful things such as drink blood from human victims, steal property, or cause disease. There have been some records of the murder of Naguals suspected of doing harmful acts. However, the Tlapanec community is known to hire "good" Naguals to remove curses cast by evil Naguals. Myths and legends are an important part of the Tlapanec culture. They have numerous gods and practice various rituals, especially giving offerings to ensure a successful harvesting of crops."

The Tlapanec Teocuitlapa people have been exposed to Catholic missionaries. However, they only added the worship of Catholic saints to their list of deities. Although they do believe there is a main God, they do not know Him or His ways. They are unreached and need well-prepared disciples of Christ to bring the Living Lord into the darkness that has consumed them for so long.

Pray they will soon know God's grace!—PD

Santa María Quiegolani Zapotec People

(This story serves to illustrate the life of Santa María Quiegolani Zapotec and is not an actual account.)

Leaning against the cool stone walls of the tiny quarters she calls home, Estella let the palm reeds drop into her lap. Picking up the basket that was beginning to emerge, Estella examined the pretty pattern. As she looked at the pattern she began to imagine with her mind's eye the countless people—her people—who had lived before her and from whom she had inherited the dexterity and artistry to weave baskets and embroider lace.

Their lives hundreds of years ago would not have been very much different from hers today. They would have lived in small communities just as they live today. The men would have farmed the land, and the women would have raised children, woven baskets, and embroidered pretty patterns. Their faith would not have been very different from hers. They would have gone to church and worshipped God as their European conquistadors did, but they still held onto animistic beliefs that they had inherited from their ancestors. Picking up her basket, she sighed; for nothing much had changed in all these years.

Pray for a radical spiritual transformation among the Santa María Quiegolani Zapotec people that will change their communities forever. Pray that this people group will come to know, experience, and love the Lord Jesus Christ as their only Lord and Savior.—EJD

Woe to you when all people speak well of you, for their ancestors did the same things to the false prophets.

It would be easy for indigenous people in Mexico to be satisfied with their twisted form of Christianity. Neighbors will speak well of them if they go to mass, perform the rituals, and devote their lives to lesser things. But God sees these things very differently.

Pray for workers in Mexico to find those who will seek the true and living God even if it means losing face and status in their communities.

...but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

Zapotec legends tell of a woman name Lucia Zenteno whose long black hair blocked out the sun. The people banished her, but when she left, their river, who loved her, followed. Bereft of their water source, they set out to find Lucia to beg her for forgiveness. Today, the Zapotecs celebrate the Catholic tradition of the Day of the Dead where large masses are held to rescue doomed souls from purgatory.

Pray that Jesus, the source of living water, will fill the dry hearts of the Zapotec peoples so that they may thirst no more!—VA

Tlacolulita Zapotecs

The sun rose from among the mountains on the east dispelling the darkness that shrouded the tiny hamlet that hung precariously to the mountain slopes. The rosy early morning hue descended methodically on the first row of houses, then the next, until every household was awakened from slumber. Some woke up to a day of work in the fields, while others arose to a day of work at home. Sunlight eventually beamed into all their windows as the aroma of freshly brewed, locally grown coffee began to dissipate, subtly hinting that breakfast was over and it was time to work till sundown, when the sun would give way once again to darkness.

It is believed that the Tlacolulita Zapotecs came from one single family. A long time ago a priest founded a ranch between the homelands of the Chontal and Zapotec peoples. He took many members of a family to work on his estate. Since then the family has grown to become their own people group.

The Tlacolulita Zapotecs are Roman Catholic Christians; their faith is nominal, and most of them practice traditional religion.

Pray for missionaries who will make true disciples among the Tlacolulita Zapotecs and teach them the truths of faith. Pray that these efforts will transform their communities in such a way that others will see that Jesus indeed came to give abundant life (John 10:10).—EJD

Culiacan Project

Day 30

Luke 5:10b-11, NET



Migrant Workers

“Where do you live?” “Santa Maria Quiegolani.” “Are you Zapotec?” “Yes.” “Then maybe you can understand this recording.” The Zapotec farm worker

looked puzzled as the Global Recording Network (GRN) volunteer took out a recording in the language of his Zapotec subgroup, and began to play it. The man called his family members to listen. “This is not in Spanish! It is in our language!”

This is an example of what often happens at the yearly “Culiacan Project” every February. GRN volunteers share recorded materials in many small indigenous languages. Many of these people are from groups that we prayed for this month, and they have few other chances to hear that Christ is the Savior for all mankind.

GRN has faced many difficult trials; their building was burglarized less than two years ago, and they lost their recordings. But they were able to produce more recordings before February. Unfortunately this story was written too soon to hear of any breakthroughs. However, many unreached people groups, including those that we prayed for this month, have been reached through the Culiacan Project. By this time, some of the people who were reached have forgotten the message. Others are still being pursued by the Holy Spirit to open their hearts to Jesus.

Pray that those who received recorded messages about Christ in their heart languages during the February Culiacan Outreach will put their faith in the gospel message. Pray that it will impact their lives in a powerful way.—KC

Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” So when they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

One of the key things we are facing today is a lack of people willing to leave their livelihoods and get into full-time ministry. There are plenty of people willing to go to the mission field for a week or two, but it requires a much higher level of commitment to “leave your nets” and devote your life to frontier mission work. For example, here in the *GPD* office, we are often cumbered by a lack of people with computer skills. Many other mission organizations face the same problems.

Pray for the Lord to give the faith and courage to His children to “leave their nets on the shore” and serve Him full time!

Whoever does not carry his own cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, wanting to build a tower doesn't sit down first and compute the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?

It is way too easy for short-term evangelistic teams to ask for a show of hands from those who want to enter the kingdom of God. Based on what Jesus said in this passage, they must first count the cost. Are you willing to tell people you try to evangelize the cost they must pay to follow Jesus?

Pray that as short-term mission teams spread out this summer, they will tell their audiences what price they must pay rather than settling for giving simplistic messages.

Zapotec People in Los Angeles

Thirty years ago the *Ethnologue* reported that there were numerous unreached Zapotec tribes. Not only Zapotec tribes remained unreached, but subgroups of subgroups of Zapotec tribes! Last year as I gathered information to do a *GPD* issue on Mexico, I found that most of these Zapotec groups are now reached. How did that happen?

There have been a number of ways that the indigenous peoples of Mexico have been reached. Global Recordings Network (see yesterday's entry) has made an all-out effort to ensure that even small tribes have at least a basic gospel message in their local dialect. The first 10 entries of this prayer guide give examples of church-planting efforts by both Mexican and North American workers that have resulted in new believers among groups that were unreached 30 years ago.

Also there is the effort by the Spanish-speaking believers in Mexico's diaspora to reach their Native American countrymen in the United States. Native American peoples who have migrated to the U.S. have usually become more like the Spanish-speaking population. The movement towards Christ among Spanish-speaking believers has affected formerly unreached Native American communities. There are now Zapotec-based fellowships in Los Angeles, though their worship services are in Spanish, the language that unifies these diverse tribes.

Thank the Lord for the bold efforts of Spanish speaking believers in the United States. Pray that their efforts to reach their Native American neighbors will result in the Kingdom of God coming to every Nahuatl, Zapotec, and Mixtec community in a powerful way.—KC

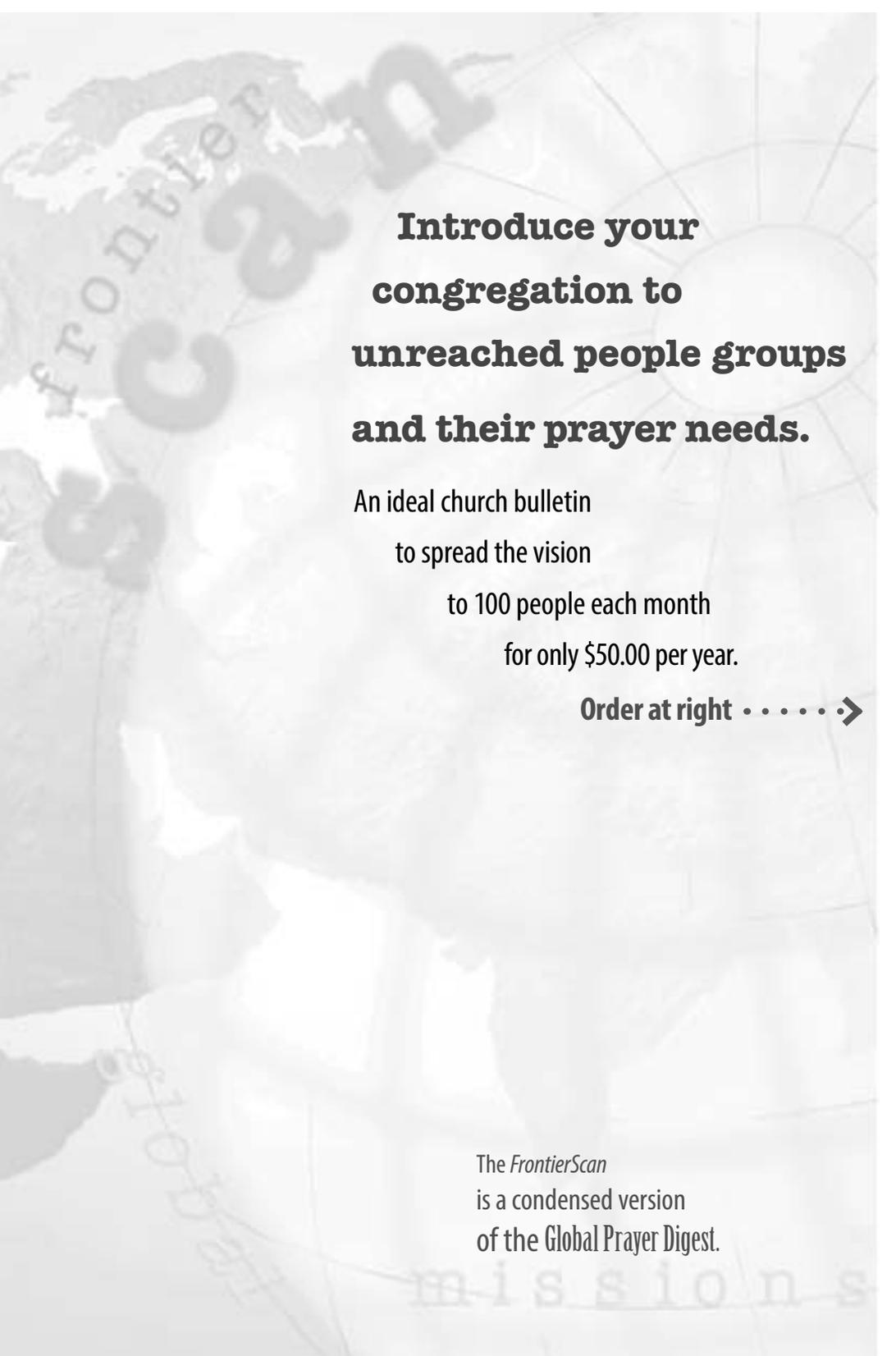
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Digest

GOD'S HEART

FOR THE RIAU
MALAY ISLANDERS

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Dear Praying Friends,

This June issue of the *Global Prayer Digest* illustrates the important role that the *GPD* can play in the evangelization of the world. Most efforts to pray for unreached people groups (UPGs) focus exclusively on large groups. But the *GPD*

produces a prayer guide both for larger groups and also for smaller forgotten peoples like the ones we will pray for this month. These small people groups are important to the Lord. Jesus said that some from every tribe must be reached before He can return to the earth in victory (See Matthew 24:14 and Revelation 7:9-10).

This month we are focusing on the Riau Malay peoples, many of whom live on such small islands in Indonesia that we can't even find them on the map. Missionaries who are familiar with the Riau Malay peoples have submitted the daily prayer entries. Some of our entries are about specific UPGs; but the prayer guide will also focus on the spiritual problems that keep these isolated people suffering and separated from the Lord who loves them. The entries will also emphasize the importance of having the light of the gospel shining in a dark part of the world.

Because each entry is written by people who are familiar with the Riau Malay, most (starting with day three) will include composite stories about people who live in a land that desperately needs the Light of the World.

Please take time each day in June to remember the Riau Malay peoples in prayer.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Keith Carey". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Keith Carey, managing editor, *GPD*

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Pray for a Movement to Christ Among Every Riau Malay People



Praying for the Light to Come to the Peoples of the Riau Islands

—By K. P.

Notorious pirates, a runaway Sultan, and being the crossroads of the ancient sea trade: these things help to describe the early history of the Riau Islands! Even in the 3rd century AD, these islands were a major player in the India-China trade route, guarding the modern-day straits of Malacca, Singapore, and Riau. For hundreds of years thereafter, the Riau Islands played a significant role in such infamous kingdoms as the Srivijayan, Malacca, and the Riau-Lingga-Johor Sultanates. In more modern times, however, Great Britain and the Netherlands struggled to take control of the trade routes and took advantage of the political weakness of the sultanates. The Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824 left the British controlling territories north of the Singapore Strait and the Dutch controlling territories from Riau, which is south of Singapore, to Java. Then the rise of the Industrial Revolution in Europe and the shifting trade routes rendered the Riau islands largely obsolete, with the exception of Batam Island, just south of Singapore. After the Second World War, the European powers withdrew from the region. In 1965, the area was divided into three new countries: Singapore, the Malaysian Federation in the north, and Indonesia in the south.

The majority of today's two million Riau islanders live in one of the most remote and isolated corners of the earth. There are 3,000 islands that stretch from Sumatra Island to the South China Sea; they cover 98,000 square miles of water. In 2004, part of the Riau Islands became an independent province of Indonesia called the Riau Islands Province. It is comprised of the principal group of the Riau Archipelago, together with the other island groups to the south, east, and northeast. The Riau Islands as a whole can be classified into 10 major island groupings stretching from East Sumatra to West Borneo, Singapore, and Malaysia. Despite their isolation, God is moving in powerful ways in the Riau islands.

Batam Island

Just 20 kilometers from Singapore, Batam Island in the Riau Islands Province of Indonesia stands out as an economic powerhouse. It has a unique population when compared with the rest of the province. Batam Island has become a melting pot of the Indonesian population, made up chiefly of migrant workers from around the country and representing all of Indonesia's 127 unreached people groups. It draws a large percentage of young, unmarried Indonesians looking to *merantau*, or "experience the world," before returning home to settle down. It is a free trade zone with Johor, Malaysia, and Singapore, and this contributes to the booming sex and narcotics trades, which are also supported by the large tourism industry from Singapore and Malaysia. Batam is the second largest human trafficking corridor in Indonesia.

On the brighter side, it has become one of the most spiritually open locations in Indonesia, with 22 seminaries and over 300 protestant churches. In 2012, the World Prayer Assembly named Batam a "key island." A few groups in Batam are working outside of this island to bring the light of the gospel to the very dark and closed islands in the rest of the province.

Pray that the love of Christ will overcome the darkness of the trafficking industry and that freedom in Christ will shine forth. Ask for the liberation of the captive women and children and for God's movement through the local churches to reach out into the outer islands.

Beyond Batam

Outside of Batam, Riau Islanders mainly belong to six major unreached people groups: the Riau Melayu, Bugis, Chinese, Minangkabau, Sea Peoples, and Javanese. Other minority groups include the Sakai, Hutan, Akit, Bawean, Kuala, and Talang Mamak. Some of the island chains in the Riau Province are so isolated that indigenous people have never seen outsiders in their lifetime.

The geography of these islands, their sheer number, and the vastness of the water between the islands provide great challenges to the spread of the gospel in this region. Other barriers include the dark spiritual strongholds of animism, folk Islam, witchcraft, spiritual blindness, human trafficking, piracy, oppression of women, drugs, and sexual sin. Prayer is the key to unlocking a church planting movement to spread like fire across these waters, igniting a modern day gospel movement.

Riau Melayu

The Riau Melayu is the largest unreached people group in the Riau islands. It is believed that they are descendants of an ancient kingdom centered in the heart of the modern-day province of Jambi, Sumatra. The Buddhist kingdoms of Majapahit and Sriwijaya predated the conversion of these people to Islam in the 12th century. Many of today's Riau Melayu retain their pre-Islamic animist and Buddhist religious roots and practice a syncretistic folk Islam that even includes elements of Hinduism. The Riau Melayu believe that their historical identity is related to the Riau-Lingga-Johor Sultanates, which grew out of the infamous Malaccan Kingdom after its defeat by the Portuguese in 1511. In the 19th century, a split in the royal Riau-Johor family created a separate kingdom, which moved its base to the Riau Islands. This legacy is of particular importance to the modern day Riau Melayu people. It's obvious that a spirit of separation and division is at work in the spiritual realm in these islands, affecting families, marriages, and churches. Intercessors have been led to pray for unity, in particular regarding family splits, adultery, divorce, disunity, and division in the body of Christ.

It is said that "To be Melayu is to be Muslim;" however witchcraft, sorcery, and headhunting are still practiced in these islands, though the latter is rarely found. Many minorities have become absorbed into the Melayu identity and consider themselves to be Melayu, both socially and culturally. For this reason we can pray for the Riau Melayu and the Islanders as a whole, instead of the many minority people groups separately.

Sea Peoples

The Sea Peoples, ethnically distinct from the Melayu, are another notable unreached people group in the Riau islands. One local historian estimates only 10,000 Sea Peoples remain in the Riau Islands today. They are the descendants of notorious pirates who controlled the shallow reefs and shoals that make up the complex waterways among these islands. Historically they were often hired by Melayu overlords to guard the people and the kingdoms. Today, many of them remain nomadic, retaining their water-bound lifestyle. The majority of Sea Peoples are extremely impoverished, mostly fisherman, and live hand-to-mouth. Major challenges to their progress are the lack of access to education and negative outside influences.

Other Ethnic Groups

Other major unreached people groups in these islands include Bugis, Chinese, Minangkabau, and Javanese. The Chinese people are the most distinct from the Riau Melayu, mainly due to their adherence to Buddhism; however, some of the Chinese have converted to Islam or Christianity. Chinese Indonesians are often engaged in business and have higher economic status than the ordinary person. Many local churches consist mainly of people of Chinese background.

It is believed that there are less than 30 Riau Melayu who profess Christ in the entire Riau province, with one reputable source noting the number is as low as 10.

Unengaged Peoples

In addition to the larger people groups on these islands, there are several pockets of completely unengaged, unreached people groups. A small movement has already occurred in one remote location (unnamed for security) where an entire village turned to Jesus. Other islands remain nearly untouched by the outside world. Remoteness and isolation is a major challenge for modern-day mission workers. Aside from the geographical challenge, the issue of transportation and the cost of fuel, other barriers to church planting include the animistic and Islamic religions. The spiritual blindness must be exposed and eliminated through prayer. Church planters working in these islands continue to face persecution and isolation.

Let's Pray!

- Pray for more gospel workers in the Riau Islands.
- Ask for encouragement, spiritual vitality, and unity for gospel workers already in place.
- Pray for the Word of God to reach, disciple, and equip those who are spiritually open.
- Ask for dreams and visions to touch hearts in remote areas.
- Pray for creative ways to access these islands.
- Ask for favor as groups attempt to enter closed places.
- Pray for intercessors to be raised up to pray for the Riau Islands.

Day 1

2 Samuel 5:23-24, NASB

When David inquired of the Lord, He said, “You shall not go directly up; circle around behind them and come at them in front of the balsam trees. It shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then you shall act promptly, for then the Lord will have gone out before you to strike the army of the Philistines.”

God’s instructions may not have made sense to David. But David had faith in the Lord, and he obeyed. Likewise, Dr. Jeffries understood that despite what he saw around him, the war was with spiritual forces, not the brutal Japanese military.

Pray that today’s missionaries will understand what David, Dr. Jeffries, and others have known. Pray that lessons from the Bible will penetrate their hearts as they minister in His Name.—KC

Dr. Robert Jeffries’ Dream, 1939



In a Japanese internment camp during World War II, some missionaries on Indonesia’s Sulawesi Island huddled together for prayer each day. After some time a young woman on that team noticed that their leader, Dr.

Robert Jeffries, was hiding a map and flashlight in his pants, which he would take out each night and labor over. When she asked him what he was doing, he explained that their real “war” was not with the Japanese, but with the occupying spiritual forces of the islands of Indonesia. Each night he prayed fervently for the generation to come that would march forth with the gospel to claim these islands for Jesus. He specifically named the Anambas and Natuna islands of the Riau Islands Province. (Story from *Evidence Not Seen* by Darlene Deibler Rose)

Pray for today’s generation of missionaries and church planters, mostly indigenous, who are completing this important mission first prayed forth by this small band of believers over 70 years ago. Pray for endurance, faith, boldness, and miracles. Pray for discipleship and multiplication of the churches. Ask for God’s Spirit to blow through these islands and bring the Light of Life. Ask for hearts to receive and follow Christ.

Single Workers Among the Riau Malay Peoples

“**H**elp me Dear Lord!” Wendy screamed. A man whom she knew was chasing her after luring her to the jungle, pretending there was an old lady who needed her help. Now he was pursuing her with a knife and attempting to rape her. Wendy screamed to the Lord for help. Suddenly the man stopped. He put her on his motorcycle, drove her back into town, and threw her onto the street. Wendy was saved... but not before enduring physical, emotional, and spiritual wounds.

Wendy moved to this town to share the good news with people who have never heard it. She sews clothes to get by, and looks for people with spiritual interest. She tells them stories of hope, forgiveness, and peace. She tells them about Jesus.

Her struggles are not just spiritual, though she tires from the lack of fruit. Her struggles aren't just emotional either, though she misses her friends and the opportunity to worship at church.

Wendy and many other women working among resistant, unreached peoples know a kind of suffering that many of us will never know. Certainly there are other ways for Wendy to serve the Lord. This is what her family and friends tell her. But no one is reaching out to these people in Sumatra, so Wendy is doing it.

Pray for partners for single workers to join them in difficult places. Pray for protection, especially for women on the mission field. Pray for healing from the pain that Wendy and other women have experienced.

I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where shall my help come? My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.

This verse gives us a glimpse of the Lord's provision and protection. He is the only one who can help and save us when we are threatened. At the time it was written by David, most of the world looked to unclean spirits for their protection, as do most people today. By the direction of the Holy Spirit, David shows us the true way.

Pray that the Lord will watch over those who share His good news and answer when they call on His great Name. Pray that He will protect them from evil—physical, emotional, spiritual, and guard their hearts and their bodies. Pray that He will give them courage and strength to follow Him no matter what the circumstances.—KC

Challenges and Opportunities for Teams

“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the Lord of hosts.

Human efforts will not change a thing. Only a work of the Holy Spirit can transform stony hearts into hearts of flesh and encourage people who walk in darkness to seek and find the light.

Pray for the light of Christ to shine into the Riau Islands, to bring dreams and visions, and to prepare many hearts to receive Him. Pray for more workers to be trained and serve in these harvest fields. Ask God to protect these workers and provide all they need for life and godliness. Ask that they would shine God’s light through their lives. Ask for all who choose to follow Jesus to be obedient, fruitful, and radiate His love.—KC



(This story and all the following stories in this GPD issue represent the lifestyle and customs of the people. They did not actually happen)

Arlin and Teti had prepared for years for this day. After two days in transit on ferries and fishing boats, they finally arrived on the island where they’d longed to serve. On the dock they met a friendly fisherman who invited them to his home for the night. The next day they found temporary shelter and began to look for people of peace (i.e., those God had already prepared to be open to His good news).

After two months they were discouraged and wondered if they’d ever find a person of peace on this island. They fell on their faces and cried out to God, worshipping Him with tears.

A week later Arlin met Sam and learned that he’d recently dreamed of a man in white who said, “Follow me!” Arlin told Sam that he knew this man and could introduce Sam to him. Arlin, Sam, and three of Sam’s friends started meeting together to learn about God from stories in the Old and New Testaments. As they learned about Jesus, Sam became more and more excited. Now he is a follower of Jesus, the first in his village. His whole family has come to Christ, and they’ve started a local cell church.

Pray that this kind of fruit will come from efforts to take the light of Jesus to the Riau Islands.



Scott was tired. He'd been working long hours trying to implement the ministry plan he and his team had put together. They longed to

see the unreached around them come to Christ, but had seen little fruit. Many who did come to Christ later fell away. The small group of believers struggled to trust one another because of gossip. Scott believed in the power of prayer and wanted to pray more, but found it hard to find the time. When he did pray, he poured out his frustrations to God. But he rarely took time out to be still and listen to Him.

Finally, he emailed his sending church and asked them to pray that he and the small group of believers would become people of prayer. That marked the beginning of a new chapter in Scott's work. He then realized that his own efforts would never be enough, so Scott cried out to God to change him. He began to spend time listening for God's voice, then testing what he thought he'd heard by God's Word and obeying. His ministry team and the small group of believers began to listen to God and obey Him as well. They learned to love God and love one another. They grew in joyfulness and loved to worship together. As they began to reach out to the lost people around them, God opened many hearts. The number of believers increased.

"I have brought You glory on earth by finishing the work You gave me to do."

Quotes: "The problem is we don't know what He wants because we're too busy doing what we think He might want done. It really wouldn't be a bad idea to ask Him what He wants, would it? And then to listen?" *Deepening Your Conversation With God*, by Ben Patterson. "When man listens, God speaks; when man obeys, God acts; when God acts, men change," *God Guides*, by Mary Geegh

Pray that all missionaries would be people of prayer who listen well and obey. Ask that missionaries would live fully for God and flee sin, counterfeits, and compromise. Ask that missionaries would be the fragrance of Christ and live in love and unity.—AT

I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.

“Being one” does not mean that we always agree. Instead, it means that we approach conflict in a different way than the world. Conflicts happen, but when we understand that we are in Christ, we approach conflict with love, and with the understanding that a dying world is watching. It means that we approach conflict with the other person’s good at heart, in such a way that fosters spiritual growth rather than self-protection.

Pray that each of us will learn to resolve our conflicts with love and forgiveness.—KC

Conflict Avoidance

Last year, two single women, Teti and Lani, arrived in their new location with high hopes. They were sent by their church to bring the gospel of peace to this remote village. They spent much time together in prayer and worship. Their relationship grew, yet Teti was hesitant to speak up when she felt hurt by something Lani said. She wouldn’t speak to Lani for three days and neighbors began to wonder about their relationship. The church that sent Teti and Lani didn’t provide relational support, and it would bring shame on both Lani and Teti for their leaders to hear of their struggle.

Globally, one of the most common reasons for missionaries to leave the field is relationship problems with other workers or with their sending agency. Often believers are hesitant to bring up issues of hurt or concern, so problems fester. Misunderstandings and mistrust grow. This doesn’t help to bring the fragrance of Christ to those who are lost.

Pray that believers will learn how to navigate conflict in a Christ-honoring way. Ask that mission agencies will understand how to help their workers address relational issues. Pray that workers will truly be ambassadors for Christ, and be models of godly reconciliation and forgiveness to a hurting world. Pray that God will help workers know His love for them and their security in Him. Pray that they would love God and love others. Pray that cross-cultural workers would be slow to anger and quick to forgive.

Spiritual Problems: Divisions

Helen was devastated. Her good friend had suddenly stopped speaking to her after a heated argument. Mutual friends began to choose sides, and many of them started avoiding Helen. Sales dropped in the small store she owned until she eventually closed its doors.

The city Helen lives in has a long history of division, which affects government, businesses, relationships, marriages, families, and organizations. Unresolved issues are the norm. Once a relationship is broken, it's rarely mended. While to an outsider Helen's neighborhood appears friendly, underneath are rivalries, anger, bitterness, gossip, and unforgiveness. Some pay witchdoctors to invoke curses on their neighbors.

Divisions affect believers and unbelievers alike among the Riau Malay peoples. Those who try to help are often swept up in the problem. The few missionaries who've come to this city have left after short periods of time due to trauma from relationship conflicts.

Division has deep historical roots in the Malay Kingdom. Long ago, the former kingdom split in two due to division within the royal family. Layers of division were added over the centuries. Today it's common to see splits within families, separation, violence, and murder.

Pray that the light of the gospel of peace will shine brightly in these places. Ask that those who don't yet believe would experience God's love in their relationships with believers in Christ. Pray that unhealthy communication patterns will be transformed by the Holy Spirit. Pray that multitudes would find new life in Christ and live in love and unity with one another.

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you forgive one another. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

What Paul is describing here amounts to a spiritual transformation. When the kingdom of God comes into a person's heart, there is transformation that spells itself out in the form of love, forgiveness, and humility.

Let us pray that this transformation, which only comes from the Holy Spirit, will come to the Riau Malay peoples in a way that will amaze the Muslim peoples of Indonesia.—KC

Day 7

Isaiah 42:6-8, NASB

I am the Lord, I have called You in righteousness, I will also hold You by the hand and watch over you, And I will appoint You as a covenant to the people, as a light to the nations, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon, and those who dwell in darkness from the prison. I am the Lord, that is My Name; I will not give My glory to another, nor My praise to graven images.

God calls us to righteousness and truth for the nations, and for families. Without Him, there is only darkness and deception, which leads to distrust and betrayal.

Pray for the Riau Malay peoples to understand this, and come to the Light of the World.—KC

Spiritual Problems: Deception, Adultery, and Betrayal

Seeing her fear, Sakra was sure his wife, Sari, had betrayed him. He beat her mercilessly and threw her out of the house. Weeping, she limped to her friend Maya's house. Maya cared for her and listened to her story. Sari shared that Sakra's personality seemed to have radically changed over the past six months. She was mystified. It seemed that no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't please Sakra. She didn't understand why Sakra felt she'd betrayed him. What she didn't know was that six months earlier Sakra had met Marta, a young widow with two children who had used witchcraft to attract Sakra. Three weeks earlier Marta became Sakra's second wife. Since then, Sakra had rarely been home. He was frequently angry at Sari for not making better meals, yet he'd stopped giving her money to buy food. Sari had tried hard to please Sakra, yet it seemed impossible. She became more withdrawn. Sakra had wrongly interpreted her withdrawal as evidence that she'd betrayed him. Yet the truth was that he'd betrayed her. Deception, adultery, and betrayal are ancient spiritual problems caused by the devil in the Malay World.

Pray that God will open blind eyes and rescue people from deception and illusions. Ask that God would weaken the power of witchcraft, rescue those hurt by it, and bring those participating in it to repentance. Ask that all would know the truth and be set free.

Spiritual Problems: Accidental Death and Guilt

Day 8

Malachi 4:2, NASB



Gone, all gone. All he had hoped for was lost. Worst of all, his friend was lost at sea. When he slept, the images chased him. He

was certain it was his fault. Why did he and his friend go out fishing that day? Only he survived. Now it seemed his friend's ghost followed him. If only he knew what to do to bring peace to his friend's restless soul, to release him to the afterlife.

Leo finally got up, still shaking from the nightmare. The memory was still so fresh, even though it all happened 15 years ago. He'd not been out on the ocean since that day, and he never wanted to fish again. He walked the short distance to the work he'd finally found: cutting hair at a small salon. He liked it; it felt safe. No customers yet, but he was away from his bed.

The peoples of the Riau Islands believe that the queen of the ocean lives between Batam and Bintan Islands, and she takes lives when she's angry. They live in fear of her and offer her sacrifices.

Pray that God will shine His Light on all who have suffered through the deaths of friends lost at sea. Ask for hope, healing, and new life for all who are in bondage. Ask for believers to be the hands and feet of Jesus, bringing healing to those wracked by guilt. Pray that the power of destruction will be weakened and destroyed.

But for you who fear
My name, the sun of
righteousness will rise
with healing in its wings;
and you will go forth and
skip about like calves from
the stall.

Unresolved guilt is an impossible burden. It can haunt someone all his life, depriving him of peace. There is no way to move forward, except by the grace of Christ, the One who forgives and gives our lives a hope and a purpose.

Pray that those haunted by guilt will be freed from it by our chain-breaking Savior. Pray that such people in the Malay World will be filled with unquenchable joy that will affect their Muslim neighbors.—KC

Day 9

2 Cor 10:3-5, NASB

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

There is a special power in knowing and obeying the ways of the King of the Universe. Taking every thought captive is an essential part of this.

Pray that idols (anything pursued more than God) will be recognized, and the consequences of serving them will be clearly visible. Ask that people will turn from idols to serve the living God. Pray that those involved in human trafficking will repent and ask that all corruption supporting it will be destroyed.—KC

Spiritual Strongholds: Greed, Human Trafficking, and Corruption

Finally Sam had arrived in this city that held so much promise. He'd heard stories over the years of others who had come here and found financial security. They even sent money back home to their families. This brought much honor. His older brother, Allen, had come here first and found a job at a factory. He'd done well, and now there was enough money for Sam to come to the big island and finish his high school education. When Sam arrived he found that Allen had become heavily involved in the promiscuity that seemed to be part of the fabric of this city. Then Allen pressured him to join a group at Sam's high school that was involved with sex trafficking. Sam was enticed by the money and power of it all, yet began to feel more and more empty inside. He tried to ignore it, but eventually he became deeply depressed. Sam began using drugs to try to dull the emptiness inside.

Fueled by a desire for money, the sex trade is largely fed by the Singapore and Malaysian tourist industries. Girls often are coerced or kidnapped, though some voluntarily join the sex trade. Once entrenched in this nefarious industry, it's very difficult for the women to break free. Children born into brothels are often taken from their mothers and sold or sent away.

Pray for the spiritual bondage of the sex trade to be broken throughout the Malay World.

Spiritual Stronghold: Islam

Day 10

Isaiah 42:22, NASB



“Allah Akbar!”
(God is great!)
The call to prayer was heard all over the city five times a day. Often Komar heard it echoing from multiple mosques at once. Komar tried to be a good Muslim and hoped he would go to heaven after he died.

He believed that space in heaven was limited, so he kept working harder to follow the ways of Islam.

Martato, a Christian missionary, arrived three months ago on this remote island and began going daily to the market to look for people of peace. He also spent much time in prayer, listening and asking God to go before him and lead him to people who were open to the good news. He found many who were friendly, but no one who seemed open to talk about spiritual topics with him because they knew he was a Christian. Often they would say: “Your religion is yours. Ours is ours.” Then they walked away.

One day Martato met Komar who was more open than anyone he’d talked to before. But Komar struggled with the idea that Martato felt certain he would go to heaven when he died. When Martato returned home that night, he again asked God for direction, as it felt like his words continually fell on deaf ears.

Pray that God will send His Spirit to remove blindness of the heart from the people and expose the darkness of false ideologies and worldviews. Pray that the peoples of these islands will see God’s light and truth and respond to Him with love and faithfulness.

But this is a people plundered and despoiled; all of them are trapped in caves, or are hidden away in prisons; they have become a prey with none to deliver them, and a spoil, with none to say, ‘Give them back!’

Those who reject the ways of God are lost and trapped. Their trap could be any religious system or, in the case of secular humanism, it could be pride and self-sufficiency.

Pray for God to deliver those trapped by the enemy of mankind. Pray God will bring His light to these dark places through dreams, visions, miracles, His Word, and through believers.—KC

Day 11

John 6:51, NASB

I am the Living Bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.

There are many reasons why people live in poverty. Sometimes there is a lack of natural resources, sometimes it has to do with a poor work ethic or special circumstances. Though some live in a part of the world where physical poverty is prevalent, spiritual poverty is erased when people depend on the Bread of Life.

Pray for the island peoples to find their spiritual nourishment from the Living Bread that came out of heaven.—KC

Spiritual Stronghold: Poverty



Elsa wants to go to school more than anything else; her dream is to become a teacher. There is one school on her island, but it's located many kilometers from her home. Even if she could find a way to get there, her family doesn't have money for her school fees. Elsa lives in a small village

at the southern tip of the island with three younger siblings. Their diet is mainly fish and rice. Most of the adults in her village don't know how to read.

One day a stranger arrived in the village. Rina, a young single woman, had been sent there to start a school. Elsa received a scholarship and was able to attend together with many other village children. Their parents hope that education will help their children escape the cycle of poverty that has long held this island in its grip.

On these outer islands, many of the inhabitants live hand-to-mouth. A mindset of poverty is common among them with little thought for tomorrow; there is complacency forged by a lack of opportunity. Some find work on the big island. If they do, they send money home, though some squander it pursuing worldly pleasures.

Pray that the children of these islands will escape the cycle of poverty through education. Pray that the people will find the Bread of Life, the wonderful God who loves them. Pray that God will prepare their hearts to receive the peace and joy that only He can give them.

Tambalan Riau Malay (Riau Islands)

Day 12

Isaiah 9:2, NASB



These extremely remote Riau Islands boast the grave of a famous runaway king who escaped a pursuing army to find refuge among the Riau Malay people. In these difficult-to-access islands there is no known church.

Lina, 25, was born on the remote island of Tambalan. She's never left the island or met any outsiders. Her father works as a policeman, and her mother runs a small store. Lina was able to finish high school, the highest education available on the island. Soon she plans to leave the island for an arranged marriage to a distant cousin in Borneo. While she's scared to leave, she's also excited for new opportunities.

Recently she was terrified and intrigued by the dream of a man in white. She's searched books and listened to the radio for information on the prophet Jesus, but hasn't been able to find any. When she leaves the island she plans to continue her search.

Pray for the light of Christ to break through the darkness. Pray for dreams and visions followed by the truth of God's Word. Ask that the peoples of these islands will know the One True God as their refuge. Pray for radio programs in the local language to reach to this area. Pray that God will open a way for workers to access this island. Pray for those who might be open to the gospel to have the opportunity to leave the island, hear the good news, and bring it back to their people.

The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.

The Bible is full of references to light and darkness. The difference has to do with what is seen and revealed vs. what is hidden. As it stands, the light is dim in much of the world, including the places we are praying for this month. But when the light of Christ shines, truth will be revealed.

Pray for God to shine into the dark corners of Tambalan Island with His characteristic mercy and love.

Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend, and do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity; better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away.

It is heartbreaking to invest your whole self into friends only to have them reject the greatest friend of all, Jesus! Yet the conversion of hearts is the Holy Spirit's business. Our business is to be faithful in giving testimony and to pray. How we feel and what God has done for us is always a topic to share with those whom we care about and are in our circle of influence.

Pray that the years of investment Jonni and Rita have given to their neighbors will bear a great harvest.

Natuna Riau Malay (Natuna Islands)

Jonni and Rita moved to Natuna two years ago from a Christian village in Sumatra. They have worked hard to make friends and finally feel welcome in their middle class neighborhood. Almost all of their neighbors are Riau Malay Muslims. One of those is Jonni's friend, Sabar. They enjoy conversing deeply on many subjects. Although Sabar is always polite and friendly, it seems like an impenetrable wall goes up whenever Jonni talks about Jesus. Sabar usually just smiles and says, "Your religion is yours, mine is mine," or "All religions are similar."

It is important for those who live on these remote islands to live at peace with one another. The people are friendly and will eventually accept those from different cultural or religious backgrounds who respect their Riau Malay identity. Yet an impenetrable wall seems to keep the gospel from advancing in Natuna. They believe that to be Riau Malay is to be Muslim.

Pray that God would raise up people of peace from among the peace-loving Natuna Riau Malay. Ask that hindrances to the advance of the gospel will be identified and addressed. Ask for God's light to shine brightly in these islands, bringing dreams and visions. Pray that multitudes of Natuna Riau Malay will find a new life in Christ.

Serasan Riau Malay (Serasan Island Cluster)

Day 14

Isaiah 61:4, NASB



Tomi moved to the big island to go to elementary school because there is no school on his island. He lives with distant relatives,

but is often mistreated by them. Neighborhood children look down on him. Although he's 12 years old, he's only in 4th grade because of multiple school interruptions. The government sends teachers to the bigger islands; but there is often a shortage of teachers, and sometimes no teacher is available for three to four months at a time on this Serasan Island.

Although life is hard, Tomi is excited to go to school and learn. This year the teacher arrived a month late. So Tomi read the same book 10 times, hoping to learn more each time. He wants to become a teacher and return to his island so that there will be a full time teacher there.

The Serasan Riau Malay people live amidst poverty and lack of opportunity for business, education, jobs, healthcare, and more. Many villages and most of the smaller islands don't have schools. Those that do offer only elementary grades up through grade six. When possible, children might live with relatives in a larger city to continue their education. When a child on the islands becomes a teacher, the community rejoices.

Pray for Serasan Riau Malay children to receive a quality education. Ask that God would open doors for the Serasan Riau Malay to find productive work. Pray that God will raise up the next generation to know the truth about Him and leave behind the desolations of many generations.

Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins, they will raise up the former devastations; and they will repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations.

How sad that children must bear the sorrowful consequences of their forbearer's decisions, while Jesus offers "abundant life" to those who turn to Him. Children with the hope and drive to work hard to overcome these obstacles to productive life can be great leaders for their people, and inspire others in their communities. Such children are surely treasures and yet, educated people can go to eternal darkness as well as those unlearned.

Pray that the children who are hungering for education may meet the Great Teacher of their souls and learn from Him. May they all partake in the abundant life the Savior intends for them.

If I say, 'Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, and the light around me will be night,' Even the darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.

This whole of Psalm 139 is all about inviting God to examine our lives closely. Intercessors, as you are praying God's Psalm 139, ask that the people will understand that He is searching them out, looking for them as worshippers, and is well aware that they need His help in seeing Him and connecting with Him.

Pray that He will prepare them to receive Him from the very first harvester He sends to them.—RR

Pulau Laut Riau Malay (AKA, Outpost Island)



Each night Aki watches the lights from the cargo and navy ships that pass by his fishing spot. He also gazes at the many bright stars in the

clear night sky. As he sits quietly, waiting for the fish to bite, he wonders about his destiny. Will God accept him into heaven? He feels the darkness pressing in on him and longs to know the freedom the stars and passing ships must feel. When he looks down at his catch, a medium sized mackerel that's slowly dying in his hands, he thinks about the brevity of life.

The extremely remote island of Pulau Laut (AKA, Outpost Island) is located in the farthest north corner of the Riau Islands. Getting there is a challenge due to severe weather. In good weather ferry boats run every three to four days from Natuna, a nine-hour trip. And getting to Natuna from Batam, the largest island near Singapore, takes about 48 hours by boat. Chicken on Outpost Island costs around eight dollars per pound and spinach almost four dollars. Education and other opportunities are scarce in this hard-to-reach location.

Pray that God will send more believers to this remote island. Pray that God will shine His light on this island. Pray that the Pulau Laut Riau Malay will see a great Light and receive a new life in Christ.

Anambas Riau Malay (Anambas Island Cluster)

Day 16

Revelation 1:13-14, ESV

Power, that's what Susi wants; she's sure of it. As she walks up the mountain, she feels connected to her ancestors and more in control of her life. At the same time, she feels out of control and afraid of death and the future.

When Susi and her father, a local witch doctor, reach the top of the mountain, they'll be able to see the entire island from the place of power. When the call to prayer from the mosque resounds, it will be the right time. Timing and orchestration are crucial. Every piece must be in place; then she'll pray and ask for good fortune. Her father will pass down to her more of his witchcraft rituals and incantations so that she can control her life and the lives of others.

Anambas, a place of natural beauty with stunning island seascapes, consists of over 200 islands. Most of the people live on the largest island in the capital of Terempa. Like many of the Riau Malay, they have Buddhist roots and an animistic expression of Islam. Although a world-famous diving spot is located here, it is still very isolated and remote.

Pray for dreams and visions to be poured out on the Anambas Riau Malay people. Pray that those who receive dreams and visions of Jesus will understand and follow Him. Pray that God will send believers to the Anambas Riau Malay so He can set them free from spiritual captivity.

...and in the midst...one like a Son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of His head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire.

This Jesus we see in the book of Revelation is the same Jesus the harvesters are bringing to these Riau Malay people. He is a combination of royalty and divinity that has no parallel. Our job as intercessors is to prepare the way for Jesus to come to them, as in "Prepare ye the way of The Lord."

Pray that the harvesters will reflect the glory, love, and grace of Jesus as they gaze continually on Him, and that the reflection of King Jesus in their lives will deeply affect the Anambas Riau Malays.—RR

Day 17

Matthew 11:28-30, NASB

Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

Many associate rest with a nap or a quiet hour with a book. "Take my yoke upon you. . . ." That seems to contradict the image of sipping a cool drink under an umbrella in the sand. But the yoke was not designed to bridle one into a forced partnership; it was designed to relieve one from solely bearing the burden of a heavy load.

Pray that the gospel would be preached to every people group on the Letung Islands, and that the Word would be a burden-lifting source of rest.—VA

Letung Riau Malay (Letung Island Cluster)



The Letung Riau Malay live in the Anambas District. Schools are rarely found on these islands, and it is unattainable for many children in the fishing villages.

Noni lives in a small fishing village. He's 10 years old, but has never been to school. Recently a

kindergarten was started, and his younger sister, Neta, began attending. Now she's learning her letters. Noni is glad for her, but as he watches her eagerly learning, his smile is tinged with sadness. He hopes that someday there'll be a school he can attend, preferably soon. He makes himself feel better by telling himself that soon he'll be old enough to fish with his father. After all, he thinks, he's already learning to fix the fishing nets. Maybe he can also be apprenticed to his uncle who makes excellent fishing nets.

Pray that God would bring quality education to the Letung Islands. Pray that many disciples of Christ would move to these islands as teachers and government officials. Pray that God would encourage the hearts of those who lack education and other opportunities, so that they would come to Him and find rest. Pray that God would open the eyes of the Letung Riau Malay to see His truth and receive Him.

Batam Riau Malay (Batam Island)

Many Batam Riau Malay people live in designated neighborhoods in and around the city of Batam. They often benefit financially from the opportunities found from living in a more prosperous economic climate than the surrounding islands. At the same time, there are many challenges associated with raising children in an atmosphere where many people in surrounding neighborhoods aren't native to Batam. The larger society is not cohesive. Promiscuity, prostitution, and corruption are common. Batam has been named the second highest city for human trafficking in Indonesia. This is a serious problem that manifests itself in many ways: mistrust, broken relationships, separation from loved ones who live on other islands, betrayal, and adultery. In the midst of this are 91 Christian denominations and people from almost all of the 127 unreached people groups in Indonesia.

Eta, a Riau Malay, lives in one of the designated neighborhoods. Her family has lived there for hundreds of years. It is hard for her to find stable work because she is competing with thousands of other young women from all over Indonesia for the coveted jobs at the electronic and textile factories.

Pray that mission mobilization efforts in these islands will be successful, training effective, and placement God-breathed. Pray that God will bring down barriers to the Batam Riau Malay worshipping Him in spirit and in truth. Pray that the children who live on the streets will find shelter in the arms of God. Pray that women will find stable employment and not become part of the sex trade.

Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

The modern world has more access to information and education than ever before, and yet it seems that people are more ridden with anxiety and depression than ever before. Ironically, it's almost like access to information has led to bondage. Peace and joy are good litmus tests for measuring how much truth we possess as individuals, as well as a church. Contentment is a gift of grace that cannot be obtained through books or bullion.

Pray that missionaries and tentmakers would bring the truth of the gospel to the peoples of Batam, and that they would, in turn, be set free.—VA

Violence will not be heard again in your land, nor devastation or destruction within your borders; but you will call your walls salvation and your gates praise.

Sincerity without knowledge of God's truth is dangerous. People cannot receive God's gift of salvation, already provided for them, unless they know how to do so. Our Father's desire is for all people groups to live without violence and destruction, but with peace, salvation, and praise.

Pray for workers and the local church to be strong in His unity, laying down their lives to reach the unreached. Pray for workers and intercessors skilled in spiritual warfare to bind the enemy, tearing down his strongholds so God's truth will prevail. Pray that the Bintan Riau Malay people will become desperate to know God and receive the true and living Lord.—KH

Bintan Riau Malay (Bintan Island Cluster)

The villagers live in fear. They all closely follow ancient customs in a vain attempt to ensure their safety and appease evil spirits. They have a strong desire to know the true and living God, but are aware that they are not able to reach Him with their false ideologies. Tragedies like the death of a loved one continue to abound.

Arlin does not know where to turn. Who can save him from destruction? Where will he go after he dies? Is there any hope for the future? He has faithfully followed the ways of his ancestors, but in his heart he knows that he does not know God personally.

Bintan Island is the provincial capital of the Riau Islands, and one of two historic homes of the royal family of the Riau-Lingga Kingdom is on it. On adjacent Penyeget Island, the former home of the Sultan of Riau-Lingga, houses a mosque and a place of spiritual power built entirely of egg whites where the jinn (spirit beings) are said to roam freely. It is operated as a tourist attraction today. Despite the fears of the unknown future, the animistic roots of these devout Muslims continue to run deep.

Pray for exposure to truth and an end to the power of deception. Ask for a window of opportunity for the local church to bring the gospel to their neighbors. Pray for the expansion of God's kingdom in Bintan Island. Pray for God to rule and reign over the hearts and minds of the Bintan Riau Malay people. Ask for the destruction of ancient strongholds and unholy spiritual alliances that keep the people away from Christ.

Lingga and Singket Riau Malay (Lingga and Singket Island Cluster)

Day 20

Psalm 97:9, NASB



Nathan struggled to believe that God was more powerful than the stories of the local religious leaders. Yet he'd listened to

the stories. And he'd felt the fear. Was God really stronger than evil? Would he protect Nathan from experiencing more persecution? What if He didn't? Would Nathan be able to stand firm and to radiate Christ's love to those who persecuted him?

Nathan poured out his heart to God in desperation. Then, spent, he sat quietly in the growing darkness. As he waited, peace entered his heart. He sensed God strengthening him and filling him with the love of Christ. "I AM enough." The words filled his soul. "Yes, God, you are enough. You are greater than all evil combined. I worship you."

Even before the famous Riau-Lingga Kingdom was established in this province, the Island of Lingga was a "great and noble city," according to Marco Polo. He took special note of it in his travel journal in the 13th century. Lingga is home to one of the most revered power places (mountains) in the entire province. According to legend, no man has ventured to scale this mountain, the highest in the Riau Islands, and ever returned.

Pray for encounters with Jesus for those who live in these islands and for the expansion of the church. Ask God to strengthen believers who face extreme persecution. Pray for a spirit of faith over fear.

For You are the Lord Most High over all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods.

If Almighty God is Who He says He is, we must go forward in obedience to claim His victory in Christ. It is always possible to do His will. God says in His Word that it is His desire for all people to know His gospel so they can make their choice to believe that He has already paid the full penalty for all their sins.

Pray for those who have made their choice to receive God's gift provided for them. Pray that they will stand fast in obedience and unity, knowing that there is no power stronger than that of their Almighty God. Pray that the enemy will be defeated at every turn and be exposed, and that the Malay peoples will exalt Him above all gods.—KH

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Jesus wasn't describing Himself in this passage; He was describing His followers. "You are the light of the world." He didn't tell them to try to be a light or to work hard to be a light. They already were lights! All they had to do was let that light shine before men.

Pray for more believers to let their light shine before the Karimun Riau Malay.—CL

Karimun Riau Malay (Karimun Island Cluster)

Tessa, 46, is Karimun Riau Malay and the mother of two teenagers. She works full time in the office of a granite mining company. Interacting with foreigners and watching them interact with one another has opened her eyes to new ideas and new possibilities. Although she works long hours, she encourages her children to work hard and to learn much. She's determined to do all she can to help them have a better future.

Last month Tessa met Sarah, who was visiting the office for six months to improve the financial accounting systems. Tessa was surprised that Sarah, a Christian, was so friendly and kind. She hopes that she can find an opportunity to ask Sarah questions about her faith.

Karimun, an island with a history of piracy and human trafficking, has become an international business magnet. Many foreign companies are now located there. When Karimun Island opened to business, the minds of the people also opened to new ideas. This new open-mindedness can either bring the people closer to, or lead them further from the good news.

Pray that businesses that come to these islands will be used by God to open doors for the gospel. Pray that followers of Christ who work in these businesses will radiate the love of Christ through their interaction with the people. Pray that the Karimun Riau Malay will clearly see the Light of the World and receive His life. Ask God to protect the Karimun Riau Malay people from evil influences.

Kundur Riau Malay (Kundur Island)

Farid has always been told that Christians believe in three gods. He believes that the birth of Jesus was the result of immorality. Trained to be hostile toward Christians, whom he considers infidels and unclean, he persecutes all of them that he meets. Because of his distrust he feels threatened by the idea that there are Christians in his village. Before his son, Rashim, married Grace, she converted to Islam. But Farid hates Grace's family because they are Christians. Farid's wife begged him to be peaceful with them so that there would be peace in the family. Now he's conflicted and struggling to know what to do.

The main city on Kundur Island is Tanjung Batu. While known for its granite mining, the people are mainly fishermen, and survival is difficult. Inter-religious marriages are common, even though one partner must first convert. Christians are often persecuted.

Pray that God will shine His light over the Kundur Riau Malay and help them choose Christ and His abundant life over Islam. Ask God to bless the Kundur Riau Malay with His Word—to bless God, their families, their neighbors, and even their enemies. Pray for glorious breakthroughs for Christ among this people group. Pray that those who are persecuted for their faith will stand firm and radiate love to their persecutors.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

When we share the good news of Christ, we are sharing life. Whether or not people accept the message, it is still an invitation to be forgiven, have their lives spiritually transformed, and spend eternity with God. Those who choose to respond to and accept this invitation will experience the fruit: a relationship with their Heavenly Father.

Pray for the Kundur Riau Malay people of the Kundur Islands to have the opportunity to hear the message of life. Pray for them to surrender their hearts to Christ.—CL

Riau Akit

... to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

Paul was giving a powerful testimony of his confirmed faith in God to King Agrippa. He faithfully told him that his message was to inform people of the things of God so they would be released from the darkness of Satan's dominion over mankind. Paul said this liberation would put them under the power and authority of God who, through Jesus, forgives them of their sins and gives them the inheritance of eternity!

May the Riau Akit open their eyes, hearts, and minds to God's message. May they faithfully give this glorious light to others so they will leave Satan's dark domination.

Mina, an Akit woman, recently learned that Jesus was not just a prophet, but the Son of God. After embracing this and choosing to follow Him, she wrestled with the importance of baptism. When she asked to know more, it was explained to her that baptism was much like the Akit custom of washing for purification before a wedding ceremony. Then Mina was able to understand. Her joy overflowed when she was baptized.

According to local historians, the Riau Akit people emerged through intermarriage between Malay and Chinese traders. Most of the Riau Akit live in remote and isolated areas with little access to outside information. They adhere to syncretistic forms of Islam and folk religion, much like the other islanders in the province. Recently God has been expanding His Kingdom among them.

Thank God for breakthroughs, and ask Him to continue to expand His Kingdom among the Riau Akit. Pray that Christ's followers will share the gospel with the Riau Akit in ways that they can understand. Pray that Riau Akit believers would have pure hearts and worship God alone. Ask God to protect Riau Akit believers from persecution.

Burung Riau Malay (Burung Island Cluster)



Kina, 13, lives each day in fear. The spirits she was dedicated to at birth torment her unless she does all that they demand.

She doesn't know where to turn. Every day it feels like she dies a little more inside. When she obeys the spirits, she feels better for a little while; then the darkness again closes in. She wonders if she's losing her mind. Her mother already has. The pressure was just too great for her mom.

Will this torment ever end? Who can she turn to for relief? Kina wonders. This refrain continues to play in her mind, but no answers come. So she again worships the spirits, wishing they would give her life and hope instead of destruction and fear. And so the cycle continues.

Extreme poverty, isolation, and a very dark spiritual stronghold keep the Burung Riau Malay captive. They desperately need the gospel of life and truth. Yet there are many barriers.

Ask for unity in place of the spirit of division that's been at work in the darkness. Pray that many Burung Riau Malay will turn from appeasing evil spirits to worshipping the Father who loves them. Ask for God to bring life, light, and peace to the Burung Riau Malay people. Pray for a window of opportunity for the gospel.

But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

We are called to worship the Lord in spirit and truth. This means not concocting a god to our own liking; but worshipping Him as He defines Himself. In doing so, we acknowledge His sovereignty.

Pray for people like Kina, who are tormented by unclean spirits, to find and worship the True God.—KC

Riau Sea Peoples

For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, Who rescues us from the wrath to come.

All but about 7,000 people groups today have at least some who have turned from idols to worship the living and true God. And we know from Revelation 7:9-10 that there will come a day when some from every people will bow their knees to Him. That is why we pray for the unreached peoples. It is God's will that they, too, will join the chorus of those who sing His praise.

Pray that soon members of the Sea People communities will turn and worship Him alone.—KC



For years Yeti had been abused by her drunken husband. Oppressed and dissatisfied with life, she can't imagine anything else. Yet she

longs for a better life for her children and wishes there was more to life than she knows. Her only exposure to any other religion is through Lily, a Buddhist shop owner's wife who lives on her island.

The Sea Peoples of the Riau Islands have a history dating back over 1,000 years. Once a nomadic tribe, they've now mostly settled along the coasts of the smaller islands and are integrated into the local Malay communities. Historically the sea peoples controlled the complex waterways of the thousands of islands in the province, and were contracted by Malay nobility to provide security and maintain order in the Malay kingdom. They were also notorious pirates, living off plundered bounty. Today they are extremely impoverished, mainly sustenance fisherman, and they are dispersed throughout the islands. Their water-bound lifestyle is no longer feasible because of the destruction of the reefs by commercial fishing and sand mining. They lack education and economic opportunity and have extremely restricted access to outside information and services.

Pray that the Riau Sea Peoples will turn from their idols to serve the true and living God. Pray that Jesus would rescue the Riau Sea Peoples from the wrath to come. Pray that God will open doors for the spread of the gospel. Prepare the hearts of the Riau Sea Peoples to welcome the Lord. Pray that God will pour out His Spirit on the people of these islands.

Jambi Malay People

My name is Diana, I have early onset glaucoma, but because of Jesus, I have true vision. I was raised in a Muslim family. My father had seven wives. In Islam a man can have up to four wives at one time, so my father had to divorce some of his wives, and my mom was one of them. My father was a violent alcoholic who claimed to be a Muslim, but obviously he wasn't a true Muslim. When I was growing up, I prayed five times a day and fasted during the holy month of Ramadan. Unlike my father I was committed to my religion. I even tried to convince my school friends, who were Christian, to follow Islam. When I invited them to become a Muslim, they said, "We don't want to follow a religion that doesn't offer forgiveness for sins." This statement haunted me, and I began to ask questions about Jesus.

Jesus began to visit me in visions and dreams, talking to me about my sin. Years later, when I was sick, a pastor prayed for me, and I was healed. I began to study with some people at their home about Jesus. My understanding of Jesus grew, and I realized that I couldn't live without Him. By God's grace, I was even able to share truth with my Muslim mother, who also follows Jesus now.

Maybe my eyes aren't so good, but in my heart I can see Jesus clearly, and I'm thankful to be a part of His vision for Jambi. Now I live and work in Jambi sharing Jesus' forgiveness and truth.

Pray for the healing of Diana's eyes. Pray that Muslims in Jambi would receive the kind of 'true vision' that Diana knows. Pray for new believers like Diana's mom to grow deep roots in Jesus because they all face terrible persecution.

Then again He laid His hands on his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and began to see everything clearly.

One of the things that draws those from unreached people groups to Jesus is His healing power. Many come to Him when they are healed. But what happens when they are not healed for whatever reason? Some are still drawn to Him because of His loving-kindness and mercy.

Pray for many people from the Jambi Malay to be drawn to the Lord, be it through healings or because they have experienced His mercy, holiness, and righteousness.

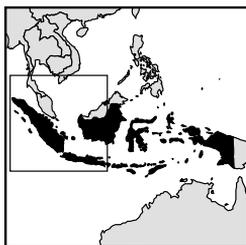
Instead of your shame you will have a double portion, and instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion. Therefore they will possess a double portion in their land, everlasting joy will be theirs.

Honor and shame are extremely important in Eastern cultures. To many people, shame is worse than death. This is a card Satan often uses to keep people away from the Savior. How can we reach the nations for Christ when they believe that embracing Him will cause shame for their entire community?

Pray for the Lord to handle the honor/shame issue so that peoples will embrace Him.

(For good insights on these matters, see the Jan-Feb, 2015 edition of Mission Frontiers, <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/gospel-restores-honor-to-the-dishonored>)

Riau Malay People on Sumatra Island



Siti was raised a Muslim in Riau Province, and she was taught that Islam is the only true religion. When she married a Christian man, her parents supported the marriage as long as she didn't change her religion. Married life was not what she'd expected, and in a time of depression, she had a dream. She was on a large rock surrounded by a great flood. As she tried to avoid falling into the water, she saw

a great light from the sky and a voice telling her she must believe in Jesus. Then she saw a child struggling in the water. She reached out to save the child and got him onto the rock with her. Then many people started to come, and papers began falling from the sky with Arabic writing saying, "Believe in Jesus." The dream troubled her greatly. She was afraid that if she believed in Jesus, her family would reject her. The memory of the dream still haunted her.

She told her husband that she wanted to go to church with him. The people of the church and her husband led Siti to faith in Jesus. It hasn't been easy; her family said they'd rather Siti be a prostitute than follow Jesus. This is the worst kind of shame.

Pray for Siti and for other Riau Muslims in Sumatra where trusting Jesus means deep rejection by those they love most. Pray for strength for those who endure shame for His name.

North Sumatran Malay People

Day 28

Acts 18:8, NASB

Ryan came to know Jesus when he heard the good news some time ago. His new faith transformed his life. He began sharing his faith with many others who also believed and were baptized. He meets weekly in his home with five other new believers. But Ryan's wife, Betty, did not like these meetings. For her, to be Malay means you are Muslim. Betty's hostility to the meetings led her to run off Ryan and his group when they came for Bible study. Ryan prayed for his wife and for others in his family who were unhappy about his new faith. As time passed, she began to be open to their visits, and she even began to listen to the stories that Ryan shared with her.

Finally the Lord opened Betty's eyes and her heart as her husband spoke to her about Jesus and His love and forgiveness. As she grew to understand who Jesus is and what the cross was all about, she desired to have the abundant life He offers. Ryan baptized his wife, and now they have baptized other members of their family who have decided to follow Jesus!

Pray that this multi-generational movement will continue to affect the north Sumatran Malay People. Pray for those who believe in Christ as they face persecution and difficulties. Pray that they their faith would grow stronger in the Lord Jesus. Pray that Ryan and Betty's faith would mature and transform their family and those around them.

Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, were believing in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard believed and being baptized.

Most of us are so accustomed to individuals coming to Christ that we often forget the importance of families coming to Him. The above Bible story is but one of several examples in the Bible of group "conversions." The intimacy of a family provides an ideal situation for discipleship and spiritual growth. And few cultures outside the individualistic West would accept one member of their community making important decisions that are not approved of by their elders.

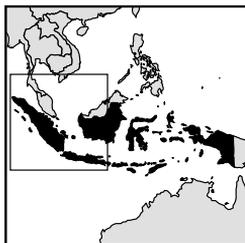
Pray for entire families to embrace the Savior among peoples throughout Indonesia and Malaysia.

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

The Lord makes it clear that we are to honor our parents with our words and our obedience. Yet we must obey God above all. There are no easy answers as to how this must be lived out in an environment where Christ is not honored.

Pray that believers from zealous Muslim families will have the discernment and wisdom to know what the Lord would have them do in difficult situations.

Malays of Northern Sumatra Island



Jeff grew up Muslim in a Muslim world. In fact, people from northernmost Aceh Province in Sumatra call their home the “front porch of Mecca.” It wasn’t so long ago that Sam, his oldest brother, was violently thrown out of Jeff’s home by Jeff’s younger brother and his son. Sam was sharing the good news about Jesus with Jeff, and they kicked and punched him as they chased him away from Jeff. Jeff wanted to defend him, but he was intimidated by his family members.

Jeff’s family threw away his phone, hoping that he’d completely lose track of Sam, but the Lord had other plans. When they met again, Jeff threw his arms around Sam and apologized for how he’d been treated. Jeff was hungry for truth.

Connection with the family and community in Aceh province, Sumatra, is almost as important to a person as his own breath. Jeff is finding a new family, and a new kind of honor. His love for Jesus has grown as he’s studied the Bible. He shares his faith with others, hoping to draw more people into community with the Lord. Usually he is turned away, but sometimes people are willing to listen, and willing to follow. And the Lord’s family grows!

Pray for Jeff’s family and other Indonesian families to find a relationship with Jesus. Pray that they will listen to the truth. Pray for safety, faithfulness, and much spiritual fruit for those like Jeff who share the truth.

Sakai People

Day 30

Acts 10:38, NASB



The Sakai people of central Sumatra are truly forgotten! They live in a small, isolated area, along a river where fishing is their primary source of

income and food. They are far removed from any cities. The people are poor, but in spite of that, they are happy.

The Sakai people carry ID cards that indicate that their religion is Islam; but they are also animistic in their beliefs. For example, each home has a large bird's nest hanging above the door to ward off evil spirits. The government still calls them Muslim, and they built a *mushollah* (a small Islamic place of prayer) in their village. But the Sakai eat pork, and they use the *mushollah* only for educational activities.

A few years ago a church brought in some teachers and began an elementary school in their community, which met in the *mushollah*. The village leader said that they would not receive any help from anyone. "We've been forgotten," he said. But the children who had never been to school before began to learn the basics of reading, writing, and math. Then the government heard of the activities of the church and quickly shut the school down. Then the government sent teachers to the village, and now there is a school there; but there is still very little spiritual light.

Pray for Jesus' light to reach the forgotten Sakai people. Pray for creativity for workers to find ways to reach this isolated people group. Pray for spiritual interest and openness.

You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

The Sakai people are very remote, and they seem to be forgotten by the world. Yet they did not escape the notice of the church that reached out to them in the Name of Jesus.

Pray that others who know Jesus and are filled with His power to go to these remote people. Pray for dreams and visions in this untended harvest field!—KC

Take the Next Step Towards Completing the Great Commission!

You are already praying each day for a people group that does not have a gospel witness, so you are among the most committed! But did you know that there are various tasks that need to be done in the *Global Prayer Digest (GPD)* office that could greatly help this worldwide prayer movement to expand? Specifically, we need volunteers with the following skills. If you or someone you know can help, contact Keith at the editorial desk: keith.carey@frontierventures.org

We need:

1. International network managers (supporting relationships in Korea and Latin America by sending them *GPD* files, making sure they have what they need, and getting prayer requests from their contacts for all *GPD* intercessors. Must be fluent in writing for either Korean or Spanish, though we hope to add other languages as God provides. Two hours a month commitment)
2. Web page, email assistant (We provide the training. Two hours a month near the end of each month.)
3. Marketing and advertising assistants (Four hours a month)
4. Prayer network manager (Developing small group resources to serve houses of prayer and local churches. Four hours a month)
5. Online radio programmer (Producing daily programs that discuss prayer related ideas, issues, ideas, insights)
6. Graphic artist to do layout for the print edition (five hours a month)
7. Researchers for information on specific unreached people groups (Three hours a month)
8. Proofreaders (Three hours a month)

Keep in mind that *THIS* will be the result of your prayers!

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

(Revelation 7:9-10, NASB)