

Front Cover

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Dear Praying Friends,

What do you do when there are over 7,000 unreached people groups, and only 365 days in a year to pray for them? Most people will just pray for the larger unreached groups and ignore the smaller ones. But what do you do when there are small groups that regularly get ignored, and the Lord

clearly commands us to disciple all nations?

Most of the larger unreached people groups (UPGs) are engaged, meaning that there is some missionary presence among them, and there are tools to reach them like the JESUS Film, radio, or gospel recordings. This is not the case for most smaller groups, especially in the North Caucasus, a bastion of folk Islam in southwestern Russia.

A lack of Christian resources is only part of the picture. The local cultures do not allow for outside influences, especially with regard to spiritual issues. Very few outsiders are allowed to live among the peoples of the North Caucasus. In direct contrast to the teachings of Christ, there is a strong tendency for people to hold onto grudges for their entire lives.

Before this grim spiritual situation changes, the soil must be prepared through prayer. There is a fellowship of believers called the North Caucasus Partnership which is recruiting people to pray for the many groups of the North Caucasus. They have studied these peoples, met them, eaten with them, and love them. Let's join with them this month in using their information to pray these peoples into the Kingdom of grace and mercy!

Keith Carey, managing editor, *GPD*

A handwritten signature of Keith Carey in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name 'Keith' is larger and more prominent than the last name 'Carey'.

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Diversified Printers, La Mirada, CA

WEB SITE

www.globalprayerdigest.org

ISSN 1045-9731
Contents of the *Global Prayer Digest* © 2014
U.S. Center for World Mission
1605 East Elizabeth Street
Pasadena, CA 91104

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Pray for a Christ-Oriented Fellowship for Every People in Russia's North Caucasus Region



The North Caucasus: So Hard to Reach, But God is on the Move!

—By the North Caucasus
Partnership



Why is this Northern Caucasus 45-language region so hard to reach for Christ? Let's start with 10 intertwined barriers:

1. Geography—It is rugged country and difficult to access.
2. Languages—In the Caucasus there are some of the most difficult and complicated language groups in the world.
3. Military/political instability/violence—Everybody is tense. Leaders are always nervous.
4. Cultures are proud and resistant to change—There are strong internal instincts in the culture to defend and assert that “it must be done this way.”
5. High levels of xenophobia—fear of foreigners and outsiders. They look at people from the outside with doubt, distrust and suspicion. Outsiders are guilty until proven innocent.
6. Enforced uniformity is very high—The shame/honor dynamic is found in Islam, but in this region it predates Islam. “I don't agree with you, but I'll fight to the death for you to have the right to say it,” is very Western. “I don't agree with you, and I'll fight to the death to keep you from saying it,” is the philosophy in this region.

7. Traditional Islam—They rigorously defend their Islamic identity and traditions. They are intolerant and fiercely protective of the status quo. Violators are “traitors.” In the last decade increasing pockets of radical, violent Wahhabi Islam have sprung up.
8. Complex political bureaucracy—The officials reflect the cultural resistance to change and the Islamic defense of the region. Heartland regions are complex with four levels of bureaucracy. Suspicion of outsiders does not just apply to the West, but to anyone not from their region, even Russians.
9. Pervasive corruption among officials at every level—Extortionary pressure is leveraged at every document approval point. There is a discernible pattern: officials must keep paying up the ladder to those who put them in power.



A threatening sign posted on a church in Dagestan

10. Unseen spiritual strongholds beyond Islam—They are deeply felt in the region. Some of this is shown in #'s 3-9 above, but other aspects are unnamable. Ephesians 6:12

Missionary author Patrick Johnstone writes, “It’s hard to

conceive of a more difficult region to evangelize than the Caucasus. Local wars, ethnic rivalries, interreligious hatred, harsh Russian control. There are very high levels of corruption, suspicion, and frequent hostility toward foreigners.... Then there is the diversity and complexity of local languages... the dearth of active churches and Christians, and the lack of Scriptures in most of the languages. In this generation who is willing to risk everything so that these people, loved by God, have the chance to become followers of the Lord Jesus?”

Is there hope?

There are some plus factors:

1. In these cultures there is great hunger for unselfish, pure love—for agape love.

2. Read Shaadia's gripping missionary autobiography which follows. In part four her agonizing search for truth led to dreams and visions. In part five she was deeply impacted by the kindness and fruit of the Spirit coming from believers. Then, in part seven she finally found the Source of Peace that filled her with genuine love.
3. There can be three levels to a relationship: getting acquainted, friendship, and *kunakh*. If you become a *kunakh*, you become part of one another's family. It's an amazing gift of deep friendship, and provides considerable safety. Initially it slows you down, but eventually it speeds you up.
4. Friendship is considered more valuable than your bank account. It is a golden value in these cultures. Here is a key insight: all of the resistance issues mentioned above can be overcome through deep friendships.

On one hand, there are even more difficulties:

1. Power struggles are increasing in the Caucasus provinces. In the past three years clashes between traditional Muslims and radical Muslims have intensified.
2. In 2013, many international Christian workers were expelled from the region.
3. The underlying factor of ungrace-ness is felt everywhere. For example, in approximately half of the 45 languages a clear word for forgiveness does not even exist.
4. Traditional mission approaches—originating from any sector—have not worked. Either missionaries can't get into the area or, if they do, they run into stone walls of resistance.

On the other hand—there are more steps of hope right now than ever before:

1. In the past two years prayer movements for Caucasus peoples have increased from 17 to 33, and first-ever believers have appeared in six more people groups.



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The North Caucasus: God is on the Move!

2. There are now known believers in 25 out of the 45 people groups, and internal Jesus movements in 14 out of the 45. Several years ago there were only eight.
3. When persistent prayer combines with genuine honoring friendship within the culture, spiritual fruitfulness can be observed. See Matthew 9:36-38 and Luke 10:2-6.

What Can You Do?

1. Begin an intentional prayer movement for one of the unprayed-for peoples of the Caucasus. In Luke 18:1-8 Jesus told us to be persistent like this woman. Let us be persistent in prayer.
2. Specifically ask your church, or an assembly within your church, to begin praying for one of the groups highlighted in Days 8-19. These are the 12 Caucasus peoples for which no body of Christians is yet persistently praying.
3. Here are the Four Crucial Areas Needing Persistent Prayer:
 - 1st—Matthew 9:36-38—Pray for the Father to raise up laborers—the right persons, from potentially anywhere, at the right time into the right relationships.
 - 2nd—Matthew 10:16—Pray for those laborers to find loving-serving ways and to be present long-term in or near the people.
 - 3rd—Luke 10:6—Pray that the Lord will prepare and show His laborers the right persons within that cultural world who will be open to true friendship and the gospel.
 - 4th—II Chronicles 16:9a—Pray for laborers who are open to the leading of the Lord and help them to find people whose hearts are open to salvation (John 5:19).

Write to the North Caucasus Partnership for guidance on choosing an unreached people group to pray for. They will coordinate your prayer selection.

Contact us at: kavkaz.59@gmail.com

For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.

The Lord seeks out those who will put their trust in Him. From a human standpoint, it was unlikely that the author of this biography could ever find her way to the grace of Jesus. At one point she says, "Growing up, I knew nothing about Jesus, and didn't want to know anything about Him. In those years I couldn't imagine that He might have some relationship to my destiny." But thank God that He is faithful to those who seek Him with all their hearts.

Pray for many earnest seekers among the people groups of the North Caucasus.

Shaadia's Breakthrough (Growing Up Muslim)

(This was originally written in Russian by a Muslim woman who put her faith in Jesus. We changed her name for security reasons).

“I was born into a Muslim family in the North Caucasus near the Caspian Sea. I grew up in a rural mountain region under the dual influences of the residue of communism on the one hand and strong Muslim religious traditions on the other hand. As a girl, knowing no other way, I was proud and happy that I had been born into a Muslim family. I sincerely believed that Islam was indeed the religion of peace and goodness, and with all my heart I searched for a close relationship with the God of Islam (just like millions of honorable people in Muslim cultures do today).”

“But my story is about the lack of peace in my heart... As I grew up, I was full of pain from many horrible things that had happened to me in my childhood. I couldn't speak about any of this with anyone. The culture of shame and judgment in which I lived was so powerful that it would not allow for this. I believed in Allah, although I was experiencing more and more disappointment with the religion in which I was born....”

Pray that throughout the North Caucasus the Lord will find those whose hearts are open to Him. Pray for His glory to be revealed among all 45 Muslim language groups.

Shaadia's Breakthrough, Continued

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“As I was growing up, I carried with me a mass of internal confusion, emotional pain, and a catastrophic amount of self-doubt. This kept getting worse because of my father.

I feared him greatly. He would often explode in rages in response to just one word. My mother, kind as she was, was not able to teach much to us girls because she herself was so beaten down and unhappy. Often from my earliest childhood I would hear hurled at us from my father's drunken tongue, things like, 'I'll bury you alive!' or... 'I'll cut you up in pieces like cattle!' (Translators note: Robert Chenciner, Dagestan Ethnographer, estimates that, “More than 50 percent of the male inhabitants in Caucasus cultures are regularly suffering from apocalyptic hangovers.”)

“The culture that I grew up in placed high demands on females for modesty and restraint, while males were given permission to do practically anything, and to some extent they were even honored for their exploits.”

“My view of myself plummeted lower and lower as the years went by. It seemed that the gashes and incurable wounds in my heart grew deeper and rawer. I vowed that somehow, at any cost, I would show everyone (and even show myself) that I was actually worth something...”

Pray for the Holy Spirit to powerfully convict men regarding the devastation of drunkenness (Galatians 5:21) in the Caucasus world. Pray for divine grace to penetrate into Caucasus cultures on behalf of girls and women who suffer due to elements of the unredeemed male-dominant culture.

... and envy, drunkenness... and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Pressure to drink among men in Caucasus cultures is enormous. There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death. It takes a courageous man to step back from the dominant culture and think in new ways. It takes an even more courageous woman to find inner strength and healing, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to overcome the accompanying devastations.

Pray for thousands of men in the Caucasus Region who are destroying lives through alcohol. Pray that they will stop and turn. Pray for women to find the healing restoration of the Redeemer.

The cords of death entangled me; the torrents of destruction overwhelmed me.

Shaadia honestly tells of the devastation of sin, and the despair that goes with it. Even at the height of worldly success, she was dying inside. Pride is a barrier for many. But if a person becomes humbly honest, there is hope. Shaadia could have hardened herself and buried herself behind walls of protection. Thank God that she knew that there must be something or Someone who offered much more than this.

Pray for many throughout the Caucasus to respond with deep honesty. For God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Grace will come to the humble.

Shaadia's Breakthrough, Continued

“I resolved that I was going to become famous and successful no matter what it cost me, and through that I would obtain love, recognition, security, and safety. My chosen path toward these goals was via singing. Since my earliest memories I had always loved to sing. Singing to me was like breathing. At age 25 I decided to redouble my efforts to become a singer, and I returned from Moscow to my home region near the Caspian Sea....”

(Translator's note: At this point starting in the early 1990s, over the next 10 years, Shaadia became one of the most famous singers in this eastern Caucasus Region. She was well known to everyone in villages and cities).

“On the one hand, I actually achieved fame, began to earn lots of money, and I was proud that I had climbed this summit by my own resolute efforts. But on the way to success I encountered even far deeper levels of the degenerate side of this world: the bitterness and ugliness of jealousy, power struggles, slander, hypocrisy, greed, sexual immorality... Outwardly I continued to present myself as a ‘superstar’ powerful personage, while inside I was completely disillusioned and empty. I felt so tired; I really didn't want to live. Often I went to bed at night with the hope that I would go to sleep and never wake up...”

Pray for many in Caucasus cultures who are experiencing this exact kind of despair.

Shaadia's Breakthrough, Continued

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“I concluded, ‘Genuine, pure love was the only thing that would be able to fill this horrible emptiness inside me.’ But, worst of all, I understood that this pure love that I craved was not going to be found in the world full of hypocrisy and power struggles in which I then lived.”

“I continued Islamic religious rituals, but honestly wasn’t finding much meaning in them. For months I earnestly asked Allah to show me genuine truth. Every night I’d go to sleep with this prayer on my lips, ‘If it is pleasing to You for me to continue with these religious rituals, I will do them all my life with joy; but if not, let me know. I want to know the true path.’”

“One night, having fallen asleep with this prayer, I dreamed a vivid dream. In the dream I was continuing to pray this prayer. And suddenly I saw far off a vision of a very close friend who had died several years before in an auto accident. She was shaking her head from side to side and repeating, ‘No, Shaadia, no, it’s not true—it’s not correct.’ The dream had intense impact. I knew this was true. Immediately I stopped all the religious rituals, but it wasn’t in my mind to turn away from Islam.”

Pray for the Holy Spirit to break through to true seekers in the Muslim world in dreams and visions.

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

Knock, seek, and ask and you will find; this is the way of our loving God! Shaadia was seeking Him, but before she could find the love of the Savior, she had to find out how ugly the world’s system is. Finding nothing but hypocrisy, greed, jealousy, and power struggles, she knew that what she really needed was the Holy One and His love. But how could she find Him?

Pray that thousands of Muslims from the Caucasus Region will seek and find the true Savior. Pray that they will be drawn to Him by His love, and will be helped via divine dreams and visions.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Notice that it was the Holy Spirit that drew Shaadia to this circle of people. It was not their worship style or the size of the building, but the warmth and love of the believers developed by His Spirit. Do you exhibit the fruit of the Holy Spirit when you meet spiritually lost individuals? Do they see something in you that only God can do?

Pray for the fruit of the Holy Spirit to permeate your heart when you talk with those who need the Lord.

Shaadia's Breakthrough, Continued

“In the same month as that vivid dream, I ran into an old friend. Two years earlier his daughter had been devastated by the tragic death of her young husband. I asked him how his daughter was. To my utter shock, he reported that her life was joyful and active! This seemed impossible... I had never seen someone so hopeless as she had been. He said her restoration had come about through some kind of center she had gone to....”

“I was curious and went to visit this ‘center,’ not knowing it was a place of worship for followers of Jesus. Honestly, the worship service seemed weird to me and didn’t result in any positive impression. But there was Bible preaching after the worship, and I had the feeling that somehow this preacher knew everything I was thinking and exactly the questions that had been bothering me. With bated breath I listened to every word....”

“Afterwards I ended up speaking with a woman of my own language group. By her loving warm manner she imparted to me a deep feeling of trust. Her salvation story and the stories of several others made a deep impression on me. The entire atmosphere in that center was one of unusual love, warmth, joy, and simplicity. This moved my heart powerfully. It contrasted greatly with the world in which I was living.”

Pray for true seekers throughout the Caucasus to encounter lives changed by Jesus; and when they inquire about Him let them be met with love, warmth, and joy.

Shaadia's Breakthrough, Continued

“**T**hat evening, Nov. 26, 2000, I conversed with these people for a long time. I asked whether I could come there from time to time and visit with them—only without Jesus because I was a Muslim and Mohammed was my prophet. They answered that without Jesus any conversation with them would lose all meaning. It’s only because of Him and what He did on the cross that their lives have changed. So, I decided that I would have to sort this out on my own. Yet I was deeply intrigued because in all my years of effort in Islam, Mohammed had never changed my life. So what about this great Jesus who so amazingly changes the lives of people? And how does He do this?”

“I took several books home about Jesus, especially the Injil, the New Testament. When I started, I actually didn’t stop reading until I had read the entire New Testament. I didn’t understand everything, but one thing I firmly knew: I had found what I had been seeking! What I found was summed up in one simple name—Jesus! In Him, the holy Lamb of God, my tormenting thirst for genuine love, purity, and holiness could at last be satisfied. After two days I was completely ready to give my whole life into the arms of Jesus, only I didn’t know how.”

Pray that the Bible will get into the hands of true seekers all throughout the Caucasus Region.

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Have you ever found someone who just won’t listen to what you say about Jesus? It might be that what they need is to find out for themselves by reading His Word. Have they ever really interacted with the reality of Jesus? The four gospels will take them there. But they need to be open to what the Word says so it can be “sharper than any double-edged sword.”

Pray for many others in southern Russia to have open hearts and open Bibles so they can be convicted of truth and righteousness and come face to face with Jesus.

Shaadia's Breakthrough, Continued

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Peter made it clear to his Jewish audience in the second chapter of Acts that they must repent. Their repentance would be symbolized by baptism into Christ, the washing away of sin. It takes courage to decisively repent, turn your life over to Christ and present oneself for baptism. But what a wonderful gift God gives to those who follow Him: the indwelling of the Holy Spirit!

Pray that thousands of Muslims from the Caucasus Region will indeed receive Christ and be filled with the Holy Spirit for God's glory. Pray for Shaadia's testimony to penetrate many spiritually hungry hearts.

"It's not such a simple thing to admit that everything which you've been taught since childhood and which you've long believed is a 'counterfeit.' But I had found the true Lord who was able to fill me with genuine love and Who Himself is Love. On Nov. 28, 2000, I went to a home meeting of these believers. I will never forget the heavenly joy that filled my being when I prayed the prayer of repentance and surrendered my life to Jesus. That night as I walked back through the city to my home, I felt like I was flying—I wanted to sing, dance, and share my joy with everyone!"

"Before long I discovered the importance of water baptism, and passionately wanted to fulfill this covenant step of uniting with Jesus in cleansing the past and resurrection to newness of life in the power of the Spirit. December 17, 2000--the old Shaadia with all her sins was buried in the raging waters of the Caspian Sea, and the new Shaadia was reborn for the Kingdom of God! God's powerful love triumphed in my life. What joy to live and grow in this truth!"

Shaadia is currently devoting her life to completing the translation of the whole Bible into the heart language of her own Caucasus people group (See day 31). Her autobiography, *Love That Triumphs*, is available in an English translation this year.

Pray for courage for Caucasus people who discover the truth of Jesus. Pray for them to overcome barriers and fully respond.

Botlikh People

The elderly Botlikh man implored his younger friend, “Come and see me—I may not have many years yet to live.” The year was 2004, and this Botlikh “man of peace” [see Luke 10:6] was living in the capital city of Dagestan in southern Russia, 200 miles from his home village up in the western mountains of Dagestan. The Christian friend responded, and that afternoon Khalil, with a noble spirit, welcomed the grace of Jesus into his life while his aged wife, Patimat, watched attentively.

A few years later Khalil died; but back up in the large mountain village of Botlikh, no others have yet come to Jesus. Traditional Islam tinged with ancient folk customs holds sway in this region. The people of Botlikh, speaking their distinct Botlikh language and Russian as a second language, number at least 7000. Botlikh village is high in the mountains, but it sits in a secluded valley. The region is famous for its fruit trees, especially grapes and apricots which grow bountifully in this unusual environment amidst the rugged mountain ranges of western Dagestan.

Pray that the fruit of the Spirit which was born in Khalil's life will multiply 30-60-100-fold to his relatives and descendants among the Botlikh people. Pray that the few urban followers of Jesus in Dagestan who have connections with the Botlikh culture will follow the voice of the Holy Spirit like Philip did on the road to Gaza in Acts. Pray for God to help believers to reach key people inside the Botlikh world.—PLS

Why should the Egyptians say, “It was with evil intent that He brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth”?

Moses was interceding on behalf of his people, but with a noble purpose. The issue wasn't compassion for the people who foolishly made and worshipped a golden calf, but the honor of the God who led them out of Egypt. The nations were watching. God's honor was at stake! God put up with the sins of His people, so that the nations would not think He wasn't powerful enough or compassionate enough to save His people.

Pray that we will remember first and foremost the honor of the Lord when we pray for the peoples of the North Caucasus region this month.

Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River.

What fearsome words: Moses is dead! Moses was the man through whom God had done great and mighty works in Egypt and in the wilderness. Joshua, to whom God spoke these words, had been simply an assistant. Today, our generation stands in awe of the missionary giants of previous eras. William Carey, Hudson Taylor, Cameron Townsend, Donald McGavran, and Ralph Winter are no longer walking among us. Nevertheless, God's challenge to us today rings as clear and sure as this word to Joshua centuries ago: "Now you, and all these people, get ready to move." Thus the torch of responsibility passes from generation to generation.

Thank the Lord for those who have gone before us. Pray for His anointing on those who will lead in the near future.

Godoberi People



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A funeral scene in Dagestan

Madina's eyes were wide with shock when she heard the bad news from her cousin Ragimat. "Uncle Gadzhi just died? We must reach our husbands immediately. We'll

have to leave the city this afternoon—the funeral will be tomorrow in Godoberi." Ragimat added, "If we leave quickly, we can get there by midnight and be ready for the funeral observances first thing tomorrow morning." It was going to be a seven-hour drive to the mountain village of Godoberi, the ancient home region of at least 3,000 Godoberi-speaking people in Dagestan, southern Russia.

The Godoberi people, located in the far western mountains of Dagestan next to Chechnya, observe strict Sunni Islam laws. At a funeral the male relatives will repeat endless ritual prayers, hoping to reach a total of 70,000 repetitions. Local Muslim traditions say that if you reach that number, the deceased will have a better chance of making it into heaven—but you'll never know for sure.

Pray that Godoberi families in the city will come into relationship with one of the several thousand followers of Jesus in the urban regions of Dagestan. Pray that they'll come to understand the gift of Jesus to the human race—"for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it's a gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). Pray that such a breakthrough will then be passed by Godoberi clan relationships up into the Godoberi heartland in the western mountains.—PLS

Chamalal People

Day 10

Deuteronomy 21:13b

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“Which way do we go to get to this big wedding?” Rasul and Ibraghim, the two young Chamalal men, asked their older friend. With a slight

smile, he gave them instructions. “Thanks!” Rasul said as the two of them quickly drove away.

Rasul and Ibraghim were two young Chamalal men from an urban region of Dagestan. They were under instructions from their elders to find Chamalal wives. The most hopeful settings for such a find were large weddings in Chamalal mountain villages where dancing and socializing continue for two straight days. There are 14 Chamalal villages in the high mountains of extreme western Dagestan. In these 14 villages, plus eight more across the ridge in the adjacent mountains of southeastern Chechnya, the distinct Chamalal language is spoken by approximately 10,000 Chamalal people. All Chamalal people proudly consider themselves Muslim. They follow traditional Sunni Islam mixed with ancient animistic practices.

Pray that the rich, but harsh heritage of Chamalal culture will be graced with the mercy of Jesus and the fruit of the Holy Spirit. To date there are no known Chamalal believers. Pray that trained linguists will befriend the Chamalal people and honor their ancient complex language with a Bible translation. They can also open the door for oral recordings of the good news of Jesus in the Chamalal language. Pray that young Chamalal people will connect with Dagestani followers of Jesus in urban areas and become messengers to their own people.—PLS

After she has lived in your house and mourned her father and mother for a full month, then you may go to her and be her husband and she shall be your wife.

We often remember the all-out assaults on the Caananite peoples by the Israelites, but forget the mercy that God demanded of His children. After the Israelites had conquered a nation, they were expected to show mercy, not brutality, to the women they captured. I would not even want to describe what people normally did to the women and children they captured during that time period. But God demanded a much higher standard from His children.

Pray that as the peoples of the North Caucasus hear of the God of the Bible, they will comprehend His mercy without neglecting to understand His justifiable wrath.

Bagvalal People

The Lord said to Satan,
“Have you considered my
servant Job?”

In the first chapter of Job we also catch a revealing glimpse of a conversation between God and Satan, a glimpse that reminds us that a war rages in the heavenly realms for souls. Behind the ebb and flow of human circumstances is the conflict between the accuser of men and the Redeemer of men. In light of this spiritual battle, the Scriptures admonish us to put on the full armor of God and to stand firm. This is exactly what is needed in places like the North Caucasus where Satan has captured the minds of the people.

Pray for those laboring for a Christ-centered fellowship among the peoples of the North Caucasus to embrace the victory He will give them over the enemy of mankind. Pray for the complete defeat for Satan’s efforts to kill, steal, and destroy the peoples of the North Caucasus.

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Among the high mountain Caucasus peoples such as the Bagvalal, winter runs from late September to the end of April. The ridge above the Bagvalal village of Kvanada sits at 8500 feet. Southeast of Tlondada village the mountains soar to 11,000 feet. Numbering at least 6000 people, the Bagvalal people of western

Dagestan speak their own distinct language and live in six major villages at high altitudes.

Snow covers the Bagvalal villages typically from October until the end of April. For the cattle and sheep to survive the winter, it’s crucial to accomplish massive hay gathering from the nearby hillsides in July, August, and September. Other items of the harvest are stored and pickled for the winter, and the residents hope that 4-wheel drive vehicles can successfully make it in and out of the region several times during the winter for resupply.

The Bagvalal are a rugged, fierce people who have experienced few if any elements of grace. The atmosphere is exacerbated by the traditional Sunni Islam religion with its stern dictates of righteousness from a distant Allah.

Pray that believers who radiate Jesus’ love and grace will become true friends of the Bagvalal people, studying and respecting (and helping preserve) their amazing, complex language. Pray that bridges to God’s love and joy will open up, perhaps starting with connections to the few Bagvalal who live in urban areas of Dagestan.—PLS

Karata (Accent on last syllable) People

Day 12

Joshua 24:15a, NIV

The most famous mountain in the Karata region is named by translation, “The Eye of the Needle.” Unlike the Rich Young Ruler story in the Gospels, the Karata people are not plagued by riches. But other factors in the Karata world make it difficult for these 6,400 people living in 10 major villages in western Dagestan—to go “through the eye of a needle”—or, in other words, to find their way into the kingdom of Jesus’ grace. Pride, defense of tradition and penalties against violating “collective conformity” are three major barriers facing a Karata person who would consider a new spiritual option. This group has been Sunni Muslim for more than 500 years, and they strictly defend their Islamic traditions.

On the other hand, in Dagestani cultures such as that of the Karata, there is a deep, abiding hunger for unselfish, overflowing love and for true spiritual power. A courageous person will even go through the eye of a needle in order to find the pure love that their heart has been longing for. We know many stories about people from within Dagestan who, against all odds, have received Christ. But as far as we know, this has not yet happened for the first Karata person.

Pray for a “Cornelius” or “Lydia” among the Karata people to courageously respond to the resurrection power of Jesus. Pray for loving Christian friends to honor the Karata language and culture and become “bridge people” who can build loving and trusting relationships with the Karata.—PLS

But if serving the Lord seems undesirable for you, then choose for yourselves this day who you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living.

Free will is a double-edged sword. We have the freedom to choose what we believe, but we are fallible. Our wisdom is flawed, and our perspective is limited. The only one who knows what is coming next, who knows our hearts and knows what is best for us, is God. We are not forced into following Him or believing in His Word. We can follow Him or we can carve out our own path. But why wander alone in the darkness when there is a light waiting for us in Christ?

Pray for many Karata people to choose to serve the Lord this very day!

Akhvakh People

... May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.

Ruth's devotion to her mother-in-law is the highlight of this story. Ruth pledged herself to Naomi, her people and her God, and swore that only death would part them. This is a great example of the devotion we should give to our Lord! As followers of Jesus, we must have such devotion that we will gladly leave our comfort zones and go where He is calling us. We must trust that God will provide for us, and that He knows the way ahead.

Pray that a new generation of workers will give God their devotion so that they will be willing to go to the darkest parts of the North Caucasus to spread the good news.

The mullah wrote the Arabic Qu'ranic verses with ink on a piece of paper, soaked the paper in a cup of water until the ink dissolved in the water, and then had the sick girl drink the water. Her family had asked for this special ritual in a desperate attempt to have her healed. In a nearby town another Akhvakh family, who had been bothered by a troubling spiritual presence in their home and a string of bad luck, called upon another local exorcist to engage in ritualistic work. They wanted to first appease the troubling spirits, and then seek to overpower and expel them from the family dwelling. Such folk Islamic practices are widespread among all the peoples of Dagestan. But one Dagestani scholar suggests that such practices are especially strong among the Akhvakh.

The 6500 Akhvakh people live in nine major villages or towns in the mountainous region of west-central Dagestan. Others live in several ethnic enclaves in Dagestani urban areas. In Acts 8 similar folk magic was superseded by the redeeming grace of Jesus, as Holy Spirit power overflowed in healing and deliverance through Philip's ministry.

Pray that this same empowered work of God will find entrance into Akhvakh communities. Pray for representatives of Jesus' matchless grace to become true friends of the Akhvakh, honoring and helping preserve the unique Akhvakh language. Pray for doors to open for simple prayer in the name of Jesus, as His Word goes out with signs and wonders following.—PLS

Khvarshin People

“**T**hen 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” (Isaiah 61:4).

Look at pictures of Khvarshin villages high in the southwest mountains of Dagestan, and these words of hope from the prophet Isaiah speak volumes. From 1944–1957 the ancestors of the Khvarshin were forced out of their mountain homeland region and resettled by the Soviets into lowland Chechnya. They weren’t allowed to return to Dagestan until the late 1950s. In the following years some returned to their abandoned mountain villages, and some settled in the northern lowlands of Dagestan. In current pictures of Khvarshin mountain villages, you see rebuilt, repaired houses standing alongside still-visible ancient ruins.

Currently the approximately 4000 Khvarshin people of Dagestan speak their own distinct Khvarshi language; they are living in eight mountain villages and several lowland settlements in northern Dagestan. For centuries they have followed Sunni Islam mixed with folk superstitions and practices. Life is hard for the Khvarshi. They need hope. To date there are no known Khvarshi who have come to the refreshing grace of Jesus.

Pray that true believers representing God’s love will come to the Khvarshi people. Pray that God’s grace and kindness will flow across bridges of friendship. Pray that times of refreshing will come spiritually, emotionally, and economically to the Khvarshi people per the promise of Isaiah 61:4.—PLS

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.

Isaiah was a prophet who often spoke of the wrath of God, but he also told the few who would listen to him about the mercy that God would allow after judgment had been administered. For centuries the Khvarshi people have put themselves under God’s wrath, and they have paid dearly for turning their backs on the Savior. However, there will come a day when some of them will embrace Him, and they will be restored. Pray for the spiritual restoration of the Khvarshi people.

It is honorable for a man to stop striving, since any fool can start a quarrel.

We have all heard tragic stories about people who have not allowed an insult to rest, and the results have been damaged relationships, damaged lives, and even death. Such things are extremely common in Dagestan. What can be done about it when a culture has given way to grudges and revenge for centuries? It will take the kind of spiritual transformation that only the Holy Spirit can provide. Pray for the Holy Spirit to move throughout Ghunzib communities so that they will renounce their old ways and embrace the ways of the cross.

Ghunzib People

“We’re going to have to do something about this!” the young Ghunzib man exclaimed, gritting his teeth. “We can’t ignore this kind of insult to our honor. We must retaliate or we’re not men!” The aggrieved party made plans to exact vengeance on the perceived culprits in the nearby Bezhtinski village.

The dispute may have been over animals, over a land boundary, over something relating to women and marriage or over a contested political upheaval. The Ghunzib step of “honor vengeance” would likely result in a retaliatory attack of honor from the Bezhta side.

The Ghunzib live in five high mountain villages in extreme southwestern Dagestan. Their distinctive Ghunzib language is not understood by their nearby neighbors, the Bezhtas. They use Russian as a common language. Ghunzib is spoken by at least 2500 people in Dagestan and in neighboring northeastern Georgia. These villages have been 100 percent Muslim for over 600 years. Their village mosques have been restored in the last two decades. The Ghunzib are a noble people with carefully guarded ancient traditions; but they are also renowned for their quarrels with neighboring mountain peoples.

Pray for believers in the amazing grace of Jesus to become true friends of the Ghunzib people. Pray that men and women of peace among the Ghunzib will understand that “keeping away from strife is an honor for a man” (Proverbs 20:3), and there is even greater honor in forgiveness and second-mile love than in vengeance (Romans 12:17-21).—PLS

Murego/Gubden People

NC Regional Partnership



The Murego/Gubden people group lives in south central Dagestan. Their oral language is related to the Dargin family of languages and is spoken in 15 towns and villages. In these villages

people raise sheep and chickens along with cattle. Fruit-bearing orchards are also visible on many hillsides.

In the book of Acts, Paul said that before his conversion, “he was a Pharisee of the Pharisees.” If Paul had grown up in Dagestan, he probably would have been like the people from the town of Gubden who have the reputation of being the most fierce and fundamentalist Muslims in the area. Islam in Gubden is influenced by a zealous Salafi strain emanating out of Saudi Arabia. Women dress more conservatively than they do in other Muslim regions of Dagestan. The devout people pride themselves in their adherence to Muslim law and rituals. Paul wrote in Philippians, “...as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal...after the Law, above reproach.” But then he found “the power of the resurrection...the righteousness not based on human strength, but through faith in Christ.” And “..what I previously highly valued, I now consider as rubbish, in contrast to the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord!”

Pray that strong believers like the Apostle Paul will come to the religiously zealous Gubden people. Pray that the Lord will prepare hearts among this people group to meet the true and living God on a new Damascus road in the mountains of central Dagestan.—PLS

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.

We all remember this blessing, don't we? It's a standard blessing, remembered by Jews and Christians alike. Though the context is actually a priestly blessing on the children of Israel, it could also be a prayer for the unreached peoples who don't know the God of Israel. Why not pray this prayer for the peoples of the North Caucasus region who desperately need Him?

Pray now for the Gubden people to accept the blessings of the Lord so that He will make His face shine upon them and give them much needed peace.

See, the Lord has chosen Bezalel . . . and He has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts. . . .

There are many ways that the Holy Spirit can move in an individual. He can give anyone supernatural skills to do just about anything. In this case, He gave Bezalel the ability to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver, and bronze. The question is, will we use the gifts God gives us for His purposes, or for our own?

Pray that you will use whatever gift He has given you to serve Him, no matter what.

Tsudakar People

Are you looking for a fur hat in an urban Russian bazaar? Ask around for the Tsudakar Dargin men, and before long you'll have the hat you're looking for. Throughout Russia many Tsudakar men are known as hat sellers.

The 20,000 Tsudakar people hail from eight major towns and villages in central Dagestan. Many Tsudakars speak Dargin and Russian, but their heart identity is as Tsudakar people. They speak the Tsudakar language in their home villages and when they're working together selling hats.

They have been staunch Muslims for more than 600 years. Islam in central Dagestan is not only a religion, but it is also interwoven with the structure of society. The male council of elders in each village oversees religious behavior and communal decisions. There is great pride in Islamic identity; but when conflicts emerge, there is little tradition of grace and reconciliation.

Among the Tsudakar, one person—Sef-utdin (name changed for security reasons) has found the grace of Jesus for now and all eternity. A Russian friend was delivered from drunkenness through Jesus, and through this friend, Sef-utdin found the joy of salvation himself. Now he wears not only a beautiful Tsudakar Dargin hat, but also “the helmet of salvation.”

Pray that the helmet of salvation will continue to adorn Sef-utdin's life, and that the word of God will be heard by many Tsudakar hat sellers. Pray that the fruit of the Spirit will spread throughout many Tsudakar families, clans, and villages.—PLS

Kaitag People

“**W**hat language are you speaking?” the Dagestani spice seller asked. “We’re speaking English,” we replied. “And what is your language?” we asked. “Dargin,” he said. Conversations continued as we graciously sampled dried herbs and mountain grasses used for tea. Noting our purchase choice, he exclaimed, “Oh that grass is from my home village! I speak Dargin, but really, I am Kaitag! You will have the healthiest tea in all of Dagestan,” he boasted.

Muktar, the spice seller, then proudly escorted us to our car as his new guests. He helped load our purchases into the trunk. He wrapped his arm around our driver and in a nose-to-nose whisper said, “It’s essential that you live for God, dear brother. You must set your life apart for God.” We exchanged phone numbers and accepted his very sincere invitation to “come to my village.” We know a visit to the Kaitag people will require precision and alignment like their embroidery. It will require nuanced relationships and permission by elders to enter. There will be difficulty, but when it comes together it will be beautiful!

Pray for God to fulfill His complete revelation to the Kaitags, most of whom are Sufi mystic Muslims, worshipping the creation but not the Creator. Pray that their spiritual zeal will lead them to Isa (Jesus) the savior of all nations. Pray for near-neighbor Dargin Christ-followers to reach out to the Kaitags with respect, wisdom, and love.—SC

The people are bringing more than enough for doing the work the Lord commanded to be done.

This is the kind of problem we would want to have! There was too much being brought into the Lord’s storehouse. The people of Israel were so touched by God’s deliverance that they were willing to give their all for the tabernacle. Are we willing to do the same to ensure that missionaries are fully funded to reach the unreached?

Pray that we will have generous hearts and will fund to overflowing efforts to get the gospel to the unreached Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists.

... Gideon replied, "but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." The LORD answered, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites. . . ."

Gideon is unsure because he knows that his clan is the weakest, and that he is not the most accomplished in his family. But God chose him for exactly those reasons. In order to succeed, Gideon needed to have absolute faith that God would be true to His word and be with him in battle. In our moments of weakness, God is always there! He hears our prayers and answers them. He only asks for our faith and obedience.

Pray that Christ's ambassadors in hostile regions like Dagestan will be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and abundant faith so that His work will be accomplished.

Chirag/Amuq Peoples

NC Regional Partnership



A city friend had told Nefi-zat, (name changed for security reasons) a personal story about how the true God was a loving Father who had provided for total forgiveness of sins.

The next day Nefi-zat, along with her younger sister, took the step of repentance and received this gift of forgiveness through Jesus. Three years ago these two sisters became the first believers in Jesus among the mountain Chirag people.

But what will happen to them with regard to their family? Many times when women come to Jesus in austere Muslim families they are threatened with death. Nefi-zat and her younger sister have gone through the fire of opposition, but they are still alive. Will there be reconciliation with their family? It partially depends on how fierce the Muslim intensity is in the family circle. Many times the radiance of the fruit of the Spirit in the new believer's life touches family members deeply. But sometimes, even that isn't enough.

The Chirag are a rugged mountain people from high in the south central mountains of Dagestan. Combined with the closely connected sister language of the Amuq people, there are five Chirag-Amuq villages and a total population of approximately 3000 in this distinct language group. There are also many Chirag-Amuq now living in urban regions of Dagestan.

Pray for divine protection for the new Chirag believers. Pray that the radiance of Christ in their lives will touch other open hearts among their relatives, and that the precious grace of Jesus will spread from clan to clan among the Chirag-Amuq.—PLS

Tindi People

How could a soap opera open the door for Jesus? Ask Tadz-utdin (name changed for security reasons), a young Tindi university student in the capital city of Dagestan. The Turkish soap opera—the most popular TV show in recent years in Dagestan—for some reason frequently has positive things to say about Martin Luther. This has opened the door for a Dagestani believer Alek (name changed) to share the gospel of grace with Tadz-utdin.

The Tindi people hail from the high mountains of extreme southwestern Dagestan. The central town of the Tindi is picture-postcard famous throughout southern Russia. Its multi-tiered levels of homes and winding village streets command a dynamic view of surrounding snow-capped mountains. The distinct Tindi language is spoken in seven villages in this mountainous region—with more than 10,000 Tindi people living in Dagestan.

Along the winding hilly streets of the town of Tindi, multiple mosques are visible. The Tindi have followed Sunni Islam for many centuries, in conjunction with ancient nature worship of the sun, moon, and other created things. At this point the only spiritual hope that the Tindi have is to try to accomplish enough works according to the Muslim laws to appease Allah and to try to please the animistic spirits.

Pray that God will bring conviction of sin to Tadz-utdin and the Tindi people. Pray that they will become weary with futile religious striving, and that soon there will be someone to tell them about the marvelous grace of Jesus.—PLS

For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place.

What would have happened if Esther had taken the easy road and not risked her life to preserve her people? Mordecai's answer makes it clear: God will bring about His purposes, whether or not you will allow Him to use you! So it is today: God is working out His purposes throughout the nations, raising up and deposing rulers, exalting the humble and humbling the proud, and ensuring a witness for Himself among all peoples. He wants to use courageous and faithful believers to accomplish His will.

Pray that the Lord will increase your vision and faith so that He can use you for His global purposes.

Didoi (Tsez) People

If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you.

Dagestan is a hostile region for sharing the life-giving gospel. Not only are the people suspicious of outsiders, but Muslims usually view followers of Christ as being at least somewhat heretical and people to be avoided. But throughout the world God has placed “people of peace” as Jesus called them. These are people who welcome gospel messengers and give them the opportunity to share their Savior.

In light of this, pray for more “men and women of peace” among the Didoi to welcome the love of Christ. Pray for the Father (Matthew 9:38) to send the right people at the right time into the right relationships, bringing the grace and power of Jesus into the Didoi world.

The Muslim Didoi people—also known as Tsez—have lived on the edge over the past couple of decades! First, their location in the southwest corner of Dagestan became ‘the edge’ of Russia when the Soviet Union broke up in 1991. Immediately south is the non-Russian nation of Georgia. Second, internal power struggles in Dagestan have left the Didoi people on “the edge” of Dagestani life. Third, in 2012 mysterious fires started breaking out in a number of Didoi communities, devastating whole villages; then, the Dagestani military took over the whole region. The name of one burned out village, Khutra, by translation literally means “The Edge.” Due to the above mentioned political and security problems, the Didoi region—at least 38 total villages—has been very upset, on edge, for several years.

Will this crisis among the 20,000 Didoi lead to new openness to the love of Christ? Caring believers have reached out to the suffering Didoi people, but they have been mostly blocked by Dagestani politics and powers. However, in 2013 in far northern Dagestan, a Didoi man came to Jesus!

Pray for the Spirit of God to work through this first Didoi believer to reach his family and clan and extended relationships for Christ. The Didoi are known as “the Eagle People.” Pray that the grace of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit will help them “rise up with wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).—PLS

The weather-beaten face of the aged Archi man shook back and forth negatively. An inquiring visitor had asked this patriarch, “Where did the Archi people originate from?” “Nowhere!” he responded emphatically. “Other people come from us!”

The rugged Archi people fiercely cling to their ancient identity. They are so fierce in their identity that they conclude that they are not the off-shoots of anyone.

The distinct Archi language is spoken in eight Archi mountain villages with a total population of at least 2000 Archis. Russian government pressure tried to classify the Archi under the language category of their nearby neighbors, the Avar, but the Archi never internally agreed. Most use Avar for writing, though some write in the Russian language, but the Archi spoken language is alive and well in village families.

The Archi have observed strict Sunni Islam for over 1000 years. Islam in these mountain villages is a blend of the Five Pillars and ancient superstitious practices, such as veneration of sacred trees.

The Archi are shepherds, and are renowned for their weaving and vigorous defense of their honor; but they are not renowned for the qualities of mercy and grace, which have often been in short supply in this culture. No representatives of Jesus’ grace, kindness, and mercy have yet found their way into Archi communities.

Pray for the gospel of grace and the love of Jesus to find its way into the Archi world. Pray that the Word will be infused into Archi culture through creative efforts. Pray for receptive Archi hearts.—PS

From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.

God expresses honor to each people, while lovingly inviting them to the light of life so they will not walk in darkness. Pride in one’s heritage is admirable; but humility before God is the key to grace and the fruit of the Spirit, both of which are deeply needed in the Archi world.

Pray that the Archis’ ethnic pride will not stand in the way of their willingness to surrender to the true and living God.

These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

The Kubachi people understand the value of silver—it is their livelihood, and many earn a good living by making and selling silver wares. All of us know that silver is very valuable, but we understand how much more value there is in putting our faith in the loving-kindness and mercy of Christ. The Kubachi people have never had the chance to put their faith in Him.

Pray for them to have the chance to say “yes” to Jesus this very year.

Kubachi People

“**S**on, listen to me carefully and watch exactly how I do this. This week I will teach the ancient prescription for our silversmithing production. You must carefully guard what I tell you.”

The Kubachi elder was speaking to his oldest son. This was a matter of honor among the Kubachi who in the Caucasus are the renowned masters of silversmithing and fine metal ware. In the high mountain village of Kubachi their swords, necklaces, fine goblets, and intricate filigree metalwork have been produced for centuries. The secrets of their methods have been carefully guarded from generation to generation.

The distinct Kubachi language of Kubachi town is mutually unintelligible to the languages of all the surrounding villages in this Dargin region of south central Dagestan. At least 7000 Kubachi live in their fog-shrouded central village and in several Kubachi enclaves in Dagestani cities. Honor is a central theme of the Kubachi tradition. Honor also dictates that they must only marry within their own people group.

For more than 10 centuries Islam has blended in with the proud Kubachi culture. Rigid defense of Kubachi traditions and Islam often go hand in hand.

Pray that the hope of 1 Peter 1:7 will spread through Kubachi communities so “...that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”—PLS

What do the mountains of southern Dagestan, the coastal city of Derbent, northern Azerbaijan, Moscow, China, and Ohio all have in common? In each place, people are praying for the grace of Jesus to break through to the historically Muslim Rutul people. They live in 18 mountain villages in southern Dagestan and in several locations across the border in northern Azerbaijan. Read on, and see how God is answering their prayer!

Ten years ago a Christian friend met a Rutul businessman in southern Dagestan and began praying for the Rutul people. A few years later a pastor in Ohio took up the challenge to begin praying for the Rutul people until God raised up a whole church to carry the torch for them. After a month of prayer and fasting for Caucasus peoples in 2010, 15 believers in a house church network in China felt led to commit themselves to persistently pray Matthew 9:36-38 on behalf of the Rutul people.

In the past two years a Rutul mother and son in the capital city of Dagestan came to Jesus. And in the spring of 2013, a young Rutul man working for a construction firm in Moscow gave his life to Jesus through the influence of a fellow worker. These three are the first known Rutul believers in Jesus.

Will you join, will your church join, in persistent prayer for the 30,000 Rutul people? Pray that a Jesus movement will begin to spread out from these three believers to Rutul families, clans, and villages.—PLS

But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book You have written.

In this passage you see the fatherly love Moses has for the children of Israel. But it also gives us the best example in all of Scripture of why we must intercede for those who are spiritually ill. God answered Moses' prayer in a big way! Moses sincerely was willing to lose his own place in the kingdom of God for the sake of the lost. How many of us have this kind of compassion for the lost?

Pray that you will intercede like Moses for the Rutul people who desperately need to become part of God's Kingdom.

Tsakhur People

Do not stare at me because I am dark-complexioned; for the sun has burned me.... They made me caretaker of the vineyards, but I have not taken care of my own vineyard.

God has made all people for His purposes; none should be sneered at because of the color of their skin or their social status. The Tsakhur people are belittled in their part of the world because of their appearance. Would such a people respond to the One who approached a marginalized Samaritan woman and led her to His kingdom?

Pray that they will!



NC Regional Partnership

“Do not stare at me because I am dark complexioned.” This line from Song of Solomon 1:6 could be the words of a Tsakhur person: To the Russians and

Azerbaijanis, the Tsakhurs are “the wild mountain ones, primitive, with dark features.” And in the southern reaches of Tsakhur territory, they tend vineyards, although herding sheep and working with wool have been the primary economic feature of Tsakhur village life. The 50,000 Tsakhur people are a proud mountain people living in 13 villages in the high mountains of southern Dagestan in Russia and in 23 villages across the border in northwestern Azerbaijan. For centuries the Tsakhur were ruled by their own Tsakhur sultanate. That ended in 1850.

The Tsakhur are famous for their proverbs and love of wisdom. Tsakhur history is a rich tapestry of rugged beauty and communal identity, but one also beset with tragedy and a lack of grace. Islam gained ascendancy in the Tsakhur world a millennium ago, and at the present moment there are no known Tsakhurs who are infused with the grace of Jesus and His life-transforming Spirit.

Pray that God will send bearers of the gospel of Jesus to the Tsakhur world. Pray for open hearts in the land who will listen to an oral recording finished in 2008 of the Gospel of Luke in Tsakhur. Pray for the completion of a brilliant plan for an audio version of the Book of Proverbs in Tsakhur. Pray that in this decade many Tsakhur will be infused with Jesus' grace and the fruit of the Spirit.—PLS

Abaza People

Twenty-five hundred years ago the Greek historian, Herodotus, noted that Greek seafarers encountered a tribe named the Abaza along the eastern shores of the Black Sea. The descendants of the Abaza later migrated northeastward into the Caucasus Mountains. For the past 1,000 years they have been loyal Muslims. A war-like people, the Abaza have known little grace. Many died in the Caucasus Wars with the Russian Empire in the middle of the 19th Century. The Abaza now live in at least 14 towns and villages in the mountain region of Karachai-Cherkessia in southern Russia. Their ancient language is fascinating; it functions with 63 consonant sounds and only two vowels! For an outsider it's definitely a mouthful of intense sounds.

Among the 43,000 Abaza, there are 10 known believers. One of the new Christians explained: "when one understands in one's own heart language that God in Christ has forgiven me... it's so much easier to be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ has forgiven me. The fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control—can start to grow and spread throughout the culture."

Pray for a fledgling effort—which is barely underway—to begin translating portions of the New Testament into the difficult Abaza language. Pray for the few followers of Jesus among the Abaza to embody the forgiveness and kindness of Jesus to all whom they meet.—PLS

Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, "The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to build Him a temple at Jerusalem.

What a surprise to read the words of Cyrus (a Gentile), the most powerful world ruler of his day, telling his people that the Lord had given him all the kingdoms of the earth and had appointed him to build Him a temple! God certainly does not act according to our expectations! The Scriptures declare, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; He directs it like a watercourse wherever He pleases" (Proverbs 21:1).

Pray that the Father will direct the hearts of today's Russian leaders to accomplish His purposes among the Muslim peoples in their midst. Pray that they will remember that Christ is the King of the earth, and that their lives are in His hands.

Do not mistreat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt.

Perhaps one of the reasons why the children of Israel were allowed to suffer for so long in Egypt was that they were able to learn what it is like to be oppressed, and not wish the same on others. It was clear that their God wanted them to show justice to aliens when they became a nation, to show the world what could happen when people follow the One True God.

Pray for a new day to soon come to Russia where the unreached people groups in their midst are treated with justice and mercy. Then these nations may see the transformation that comes from the Lord.

Digor People

“I am Digor and I am Muslim. I am also Ossetian and I am also Russian.” The Digor middle-aged man was reflecting on the many layers of his identity. More than 100,000 Digor people live in southern Russia, mostly in the mountainous northwest section of the province of North Ossetia. The Digor have many layers of language.

A high percentage of Digor Ossetians have been Muslim since the 17th Century. Most other Ossetians identify themselves as being Russian Orthodox. Have any Muslim Digor people found their way to Jesus’ saving grace? A few have received Christ in several cities of the Digor region in northwestern Ossetia, but the barriers are great. Like other Muslims, they resist the idea of Jesus being the Savior. They see Christianity as being for someone else, not them. But here is the factor that may trump the first three: there is a deep hunger for grace.

Most helpful will be advances, both in written and audio form, of the message of the gospel in the Digor language. The Gospel of John is completed, and Matthew is half done. When the message of Jesus is in the heart Digor language, doors may begin to open to Digor hearts.

Pray for the Gospel of John in Digor to be completed in audio form. Pray for further progress to be made in Matthew and other books of the New Testament. Pray for new Digor believers to offer the grace of Jesus in Digor style to their friends and relatives.—PLS

Chechen People

Day 28

Numbers 20:12-13

Over a meal of the Chechen national dish Malika wiped her tears as she told the story of her recent job search. A Russian-Armenian family needed a full-time house cleaner, and Malika came highly recommended. But when they found out about her Chechen ethnicity, the family refused to discuss the job further. As a widowed mother of five children, Malika's hope for a \$1400 per month job was shattered, and she wondered why she bothered to come to Moscow.

Then she remembered how free she is in Moscow to fellowship with other people from Muslim backgrounds who follow Jesus. She knows she has true freedom from the bondages and consequences of life under Satan's authority—that's how she describes her family heritage of witchcraft and pagan worship hidden within her former Sufi Islamic community. When the Wahhabis came to "correct" the religious practices of her village, Malika knew she had to get out.

Malika's life parallels the life of Ruth, and she knows that her true "Kinsman Redeemer" is only found in the life, message, and community of Jesus. Of 1.4 million Chechens, hundreds of thousands are living as internally displaced (in Russia, but not in Chechnya) or as diaspora (outside of Russia).

Pray for the few and isolated Chechens who follow Jesus to find or build faith communities. Pray for the Russian and European church to grow and fellowship with believers of Muslim background. Pray for competent ministries to reach out to diaspora and displaced Chechens.—SC

But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them."

This passage is all about obedience, or, in the case of the Israelites, disobedience. When they entered into a covenant with God, they were given His blessing; but they had to honor and obey Him. So it is today! We must learn to listen to His voice and acknowledge that we are ultimately not the ones in control. By submitting to the Lord and obeying Him, we're not giving up all control. Instead we are allowing His presence to guide us so that we may be blessed.

Pray that all the new Muslim background believers will learn how to submit to the Lord so that they may be a blessing to others.

Ingush People

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

In today's entry we read about a Muslim man who sees two kinds of Christians; those who are Christian in name only, and those who actually follow the teachings of Jesus to love one another. Elsewhere Jesus fleshes out what it means to love others when he describes the self-sacrificing acts of the Good Samaritan. Which kind of Christian will they see? Most Muslim peoples like the Ingush have very little opportunity to see and experience the self-sacrificing love that Jesus demands. The world is watching!

Pray that entire Ingush communities will experience the self-sacrificing love of Christ's followers.

Imran stood over the fresh grave, enduring the cold winds of the mountain valley that leads to Magas, the capitol of Ingushetia. Imran's Ingush grandfather was seven years old when his family and whole nation were gathered into rail cars on February 23rd, 1944. His grandpa survived the three-week rail journey to the Central Asian steppe of Kazakhstan with no heat, no food, and only melted snow for water.

His grandfather returned to Russia in 1957. Sadly, Ossetian families had resettled his village home when Stalin put them there to take over Ingush lands. Imran, whose own father died in the 1992 war between Ingusheta and Ossetia, was unable to bury his grandfather in the centuries-old family cemetery. Mercifully, Imran was working for a Russian-owned construction firm, and the new boss happened to be a Protestant Christian. His new boss was very helpful to Imran who still needed to find a location to bury his grandfather. His boss even helped pay for the burial plot! Imran was left with a lot of questions, the foremost being, "where does such love and compassion come from?"

Pray for the Muslim Ingush people who feel double-harmed by both Russians and Ossetians, both known as majority-Christian nations. Pray for more of Christ's ambassadors to practice audacious love for Ingush people. Pray for the Ingush people to seek and find their savior.—SC



The symptoms of deep spiritual captivity in the Caucasus are described as the “three-headed dragon” of abusive power: political, cultural, and physical. The high places of the Caucasus Mountains

are physically majestic. But they are also spiritually significant to the superstitions of the nations who call this land home. Connections to the land are a core aspect of Caucasus national identity.

Pray specifically that high places such as Sufi Pyres and Sufi Ziyarats will lose the religious authority vested in them through centuries of animistic and folk Islamic worship rites. Pray specifically for the Avar mountaintop of Ahulgo, a worship site set where a battle was lost to the Russians on August 22nd, 1839, during the Caucasus Wars. Pray for the Avar village of Ghimri, which is worshiped in commemoration of the Sufi warrior Shamil. Pray for God’s power over Derbent, Dagestan, and over the Krepost (fortress) Narin-Kala, site of 5000 years of spiritual heritage. Pray for God’s power over the Tabasaran holy site of Dyurk in the village of Khustil. Pray for God’s power over the Lezghi holy site of Sharvili near the village of Akhti and over Shalbudzan, the Lezghi’s most important holy mountain. Pray for God’s power to reign over Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chechen President Ramzan Kadirov, and Dagestani President Ramazan Abdulatipov. Pray for God’s power over the honor code culture of blood revenge.—BC

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt so that you would no longer be slaves to the Egyptians; I broke the bars of your yoke and enabled you to walk with your heads held high.

God made a promise to free the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt. Just as they were freed from the bondage of slavery, He has promised to free His children from spiritual slavery. We have been given new life in Christ! We cannot embrace Jesus while remaining apathetic about the things that God cares about such as the fate of those still living in spiritual bondage.

Pray for the transformation of your heart so that you will have a renewed burden to pray for peoples enslaved to sin.

What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to Him?

Good question! The answer is obvious: no other nation could make that claim. Of the millions of false gods worshipped by man since the beginning, no one would claim that their god cares for them in the same way the children of Israel did with their provider, Jehovah Jireh. The nations simply bargained with their gods, a situation that the One True God has always shunned with His followers. Don't the nations have a right to know that they don't have to live this way?

Pray that the nations will understand that they can have a personal relationship with the God who is near. Pray that they will stream to Him.

Bible Translation Process and Progress



A Dagestani Bible translator shared, “When I read my first-ever Christian book in my language, I had a huge spiritual, emotional impact inside me that overwhelmed me. I understood spiritual truths at a much deeper level. I knew I had to finish the Bible for all of my people.

“I heeded God’s call to devote the next decade of my life to complete the Old Testament in our language.

In our culture, even if some don’t read well, the fact that this important book is actually in our language makes all the difference in the world. All will say, ‘This Bible is something that is part of my culture. I can respect it.’ But I wondered whether or not I could make such an extensive life commitment to this huge task? As a test, I began translating the book of Jonah, and I came alive doing it! Not only was I able to do it, I deeply enjoyed it. It brought a level of Scripture understanding to my own life that I had never had before. When I am in my deepest crisis times and cry out to the Lord in prayer, I pray in my own language, not Russian.”

Pray that the 15 active Caucasus language Bible projects will be completed and the eight inactive projects will be restarted. Pray for startup projects for the remaining 14 languages. After 40 years, there is now a complete Bible in Chechen. Pray for widespread usage and acceptance.—SC

Front Cover of
second month

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Dear Praying Friends,

This month we are praying for unreached people groups who live in world-class cities. It took a long time to agree on which groups and cities to write about. In fact, there are so many large urban areas with unreached

people groups that we could easily spend at least another month praying about this topic! So we had to limit this issue to “world-class” mega cities that play an important role in the world’s global economy.

Cities provide an excellent environment for unreached people groups to find the Risen Savior. There is the element of anonymity that allows those who are truly seeking the Lord to have the chance to do so without outside interference. When people arrive in a place where nothing is familiar, they are often ready for new answers. This situation creates a setting where individuals are often more open to the gospel. But there is a downside to this issue as well as you will see in the following article, “The Gospel and the City,” which points out that the social isolation people experience in the cities can potentially keep the gospel from spreading. We must pray for more workers in urban areas who will reach out to people groups in the cities!

In the name of the Risen Christ,

Keith Carey, editor, *GPD*

A handwritten signature of Keith Carey in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name 'Keith' is larger and more prominent than the last name 'Carey'.

April 2014

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GRAPHICS

Matt Anderson

PRINTER

Diversified Printers, La Mirada, CA

WEB SITE

www.globalprayerdigest.org

ISSN 1045-9731

Contents of the *Global Prayer Digest* © 2014

U.S. Center for World Mission
1605 East Elizabeth Street
Pasadena, CA 91104

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Pray for a Strong Move of the Holy Spirit Among Unreached People Groups in Every World Class City



The Gospel and the City

—By Roy Moran,
Spiritual Literacy Catalyst
www.roymoran.com



In 2008, for the first time in history, the population living in urban areas reached 50 percent, and the level of urbanization is expected to rise from 50 percent in 2008 to 70 percent in 2050. China, the world's most populous nation, is 40 percent urban, and it is expected to reach more than 70 percent urban by 2050. By contrast, the world's second most populous nation, India, has

just over 300 million urban residents, or 29 percent of its population. By 2050, India is expected to have 55 percent of the population, about 900 million, in cities.

It is clear that in this century the urban landscape must be a priority for planting the gospel. By 2000 Christianity had a significant presence in 22 of the 26 largest cities of the world (“Rise of Christianity,” Stark p.10). In over 120 areas of the world we’ve seen rapid replication of disciple making disciples. These disciples form into churches that establish and promote God’s hope through the crucified and risen Messiah. The bad news is that most if not all of these exciting innovations are primarily happening among rural people.

To be true to our King's commission, the city must be an aggressive target. Even the Apostle Paul's example points us to urban centers as the hub for geographical regions, providing a base of operations to reach out into the surrounding regions.

The Ephesus Initiative seeks to focus the attention of dedicated believers to creating disciple-making movements among every unreached people. Increasingly the unreached and the unengaged people groups are being found in our cities as you will see in this prayer guide.

Cities contain half of the world's people, and they are growing by 165,000 per day according to the U.N. Urban ministries provide unique challenges that will require risk taking and supernatural intervention.



Challenges of the Mind

Life changes from the moment a person leaves a rural area and steps into the urban situation.

That individual just left a culture dominated by family relationships and entered into a society dominated by work and the multi-cultural environment.

Mega cities are usually culturally complex which can keep the new city dweller from moving quickly

and deeply into new relational networks. For the first time in the life of this new urban dweller, he may meet people of different nationalities and different ways of life, which he may not understand and be able to relate. The hard work in the city may bring economic freedom at the expense of working a major portion of the day. The new urban dweller exchanges time for money, and this new dynamic can change him. For those coming from a situation of economic distress, the exchange is welcomed; yet people seldom consider the cost of the exchange, which can be loneliness, confusion, and entrance into a dissolute life. What a challenge to the city dweller!

Social Isolation in the City Provides an Opportunity for the Gospel

The move to the city isolates new arrivals by the mere fact that people are distanced from their family networks. Communication can be difficult, although mobile technology eases the problem. Short weekly conversations are a poor substitute for the daily interactions they left behind.

Because they usually come from a mono-cultural environment and now are living in a multi-cultural one, life becomes more stressful. In the country, people have an opportunity to engage with longtime friends and relatives. Urban relationships can be more functional than personal. Quickly an impersonalization sets in that increases isolation and diminishes the gospel's ability to move along relational lines. The gospel moves fastest along existing relational networks that are strong and filled with trust. By contrast, relational networks in the cities tend to be weak and filled with suspicion. This is another major hurdle for church planting movements.

A Model that Works in the City

Despite the obstacles, the commands of Jesus to disciple every tongue, tribe, and nation drive us to find ways to make sure that people who live in the city are not left out. There are some who have overcome these obstacles, and others can follow their example.

Shirley Pounds, the director of a Christian outreach to the impoverished in San Francisco, tells the story of Pedro (video here: <http://youtu.be/cNEzEKESHKo>) who found freedom in Christ from alcohol and drug addiction. Through a series of group Bible studies, Pedro became a believer; he soon came to the conviction that God had called him to be a disciple maker. Pedro set his sights on an apartment complex three blocks from the rescue mission where he had been discipled to faith in Christ. He met Angela while building



relationships through bringing food to needy families. She was intrigued by his motivation, so he offered to teach her how to read the Bible for herself and discover who God is. At the first meeting Angela used some of the food Pedro brought to fix dinner for the friends she invited. Pedro, Angela, and others began to meet every Wednesday night to read the Bible together. Soon this group replicated as they started reading the Bible at their own homes with other friends. What started in Angela's apartment has expanded to 50 different home groups!

Angela is an immigrant from Nicaragua, and she has regular contact with her family at home. Through the use of a mobile phone she trained her family how to read the Bible for themselves and discover God. In addition to the 50 home groups in San Francisco, there are now 160 groups in Nicaragua! These groups represent over 2,000 men and women who came to trust Jesus as their King and redeemer despite all the barriers of modern life.

The gospel moved from the heart of San Francisco to the streets of Nicaragua. Despite all the obstacles the city provides, the gospel can and will penetrate even the darkest places. It takes more Pedros and Angelas, ordinary people, following the commands of Jesus.

The city offers a gauntlet that Jesus' disciples must run because we bear the only hope that humanity has: living as part of the family of God, under the leadership of Jesus. Our methods may have to change and our dependence on God will have to ratchet up, but the command to disciple the whole world, cities included, is our mission.

Day 1

John 15:8-9, RSV

By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you; abide in my love.

Because God is love, this is a commandment for us to enjoy a life full of God's agape love. As we do this, the Father is glorified through Christ who intercedes for us!

Pray that we will abide in His love and bear much fruit. Pray that God the Father will keep on answering our prayers to bring the unreached peoples to Himself.—RR

Missionary Biography, Dr. Mitsuo Fukuda

“**W**hen I was six years old my close friend was killed in a traffic accident. After that, I was afraid of dying. I could not sleep well whenever I wondered where I would go if I were to die. When I was 19 years old, a Christian friend told me that if you believe in Jesus, you can go to heaven. I wasn't sure I believed him, but I decided to let my friend pray for me. During his prayer, I met Jesus in a vision and understood many things all at once—the love of God, the meaning of the cross, the purpose of my life, and the promise of eternal life. Since that encounter, I have been able to live a life in daily communion with Jesus. He encourages me and guides me through every situation, and I have never feared death again.”

This is how Dr. Mitsuo Fukuda came to know the Lord. Born in Japan, he was raised in an environment where missionaries and gospel materials were allowed, but people usually ignored them. He overcame a climate of spiritual apathy. He decided to do something to bring the message of a wonderful God to the Japanese people so that they can know the One who gave His life for fallen mankind.

Pray for God to raise up someone from every unreached people group to take Christ to those who are too apathetic to look to heaven for answers.

Missionary Biography, Continued

Dr. Mitsuo Fukuda describes how he began his ministry: “As a Japanese I love both Jesus and Japan. I work at the Educational Policy Lab NPO, and my office is located in Tokyo. It’s natural for me to discuss how God can bring about a spiritual transformation in Japan for the sake of God’s Kingdom with government officers, members of the Diet (Japan’s legislative body) and various business people in Tokyo.”

Businessmen and politicians listen to Dr. Fukuda’s ideas about why God’s ways are useful for modern Japan. Through personal contact, he is able to tell them about the advantages of obeying God’s ways of integrity. The results can transform Japan in such a way that the entire nation could be blessed both economically and spiritually.

As noted on day 23, the Japanese are more likely to listen to their peers than outsiders. Christian businessmen must reach non-Christian businessmen in an environment where they feel comfortable. Towards this end, Japanese Christian businessmen established the International VIP Club in the 1990s. They hold meetings in places where Japanese businessmen normally meet such as in hotel restaurants. Today they hold 11 evangelistic meetings each month in cities like Tokyo and Osaka. The VIP club has over 100 weekly cell-type meetings in hotel restaurants.

Dr. Fukuda is optimistic about the possibilities for extending God’s kingdom to these influential businessmen. Such businessmen are looking for new answers as the economy of Japan continues to falter.

Pray that this will be a time of abundant harvest among Tokyo’s business communities.—KC

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

So what will it take for the world to believe? We must all become one with the very same unity of Christ being in the Father and Father being in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. It’s going to take that kind of unity for the world to believe in Jesus.

Pray that the messengers God is sending to the unreached peoples in Tokyo will demonstrate unity and that the unreached who find their Messiah will live out that unity.—RR

I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

How does His love and unity come to us? They come from the glory that the Father gave to Jesus and Jesus is giving to us. As we together behold His face and are being changed into His likeness, He is telling us that the world will see Christ in us and believe in Him.

Pray that the believers will be obedient to His Word and go into all the world and preach the gospel of salvation through Christ.—RR

Missionary Biography, Tsedash

One person can only do so much to spread the gospel unless they multiply their efforts. Tsedash, a church planting movement (CPM) worker in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, knows this well. She understands that the Great Commission described by Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20 involves making disciples. She was trained by a discipleship making movement (DMM), which in turn resulted in 5,000 churches being planted among unreached people groups in the Horn of Africa!

Tsedash has trained and mentored hundreds of Christian women so that they can make disciples and plant churches. Her personal efforts alone have resulted in over 80 churches being planted since the beginning of last year!

How do they fund their work? One way would be to depend on money from outside of Africa. Such an approach would bring quick results, but would make the church planting movement dependent on outside sources. Ethiopian workers and new believers would learn that in order for their work to expand, they would have to get funds from far away. Instead, each new worker must either raise local funds or sell some of their own property to pay for their missionary work.

Thank the Lord for this strategic work among the unreached peoples of the Horn of Africa. Pray for this movement to expand to the uttermost parts of Africa. Pray for local believers to learn how to use local funding so the work is not curtailed.—KC

Ethne Vision

Ethne is a global network or “family” of mission leaders from every continent who are intensely focused on reaching the unreached peoples for Christ. Ethne has two main characteristics: the first is trusted relationships, as many non-Western participants say this is the first global network where they feel like equal partners; the second is the fact that Ethne strives to be practical because the goal is to do something, not just talk.

Ethne leaders are painfully aware that despite 30 years of focus on the unreached, there are more people in unreached people groups now than there were 30 years ago. The question has been “what must we do differently?” to avoid continually losing ground.

Approximately 140 Church Planting Movements (CPMs) are the main way we are seeing God change these heartbreaking numbers among the unreached. CPMs are rapidly multiplying indigenous churches that are planting new churches within a population segment. This is happening because all new believers are being taught to obey Christ’s commands, and as a result, they expect every believer and every church to reproduce new disciples and churches.

The Ethne Vision is based on Acts 19 where the Christian movement from Ephesus spread throughout the province of Asia in two years. Ethne teams have now formed and are being formed to focus on starting not just one CPM, but multiple CPMs. They can then spread throughout related unreached people groups (UPGs) and cities and areas where, for example, 57 million Cushitic people live in 44 UPGs, 330 million Bengalis live in 407 UPGs, and so on.

Pray with us that God will do far more than we can ask or imagine!—SP

No one takes (My life) from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord.

As we are commanded to live like Jesus, Paul also admonished us to, “imitate me, as I imitate Christ.” In Gethsemane, the mob asked if Jesus was the Christ. At his reply, “I AM”, they fell over backwards. At that point he could have cleared the Garden with a command, but instead chose to lay down His life to pay for the sins of the world. Such a Savior is worthy of our entire devotion!

Pray that the resurrection power of Christ’s words will flow through the people groups we are praying for this month so that they will respond to Him with faith and dedication.—RR

Uzbek People in Tashkent, Uzbekistan

I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

There is a direct line between Christ's resurrection and eternal spiritual life. He is the way to eternal life, and He proved it by rising from the dead. Those who put their trust in Him will not die spiritually, but they will have eternal life, just as He does.

Pray that many Uzbek people will put their trust in Christ, and begin to experience the spiritual life He has for them.—KC



“If you are Uzbek, you are Muslim,” is the constant admonition by the elders to the younger generation. Perhaps the Muslim religious fervor is a reaction to the years of

Soviet domination when religion—any religion—was discouraged. However in 1991 Uzbekistan finally gained its independence from the Soviets, and with political freedom, there also came a resurgence of Islamic fervor. An open door sometimes swings more than one way. There has also been an opportunity for church planting movements to gain a foothold.

Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, is multi-ethnic; the majority of the people in that city, however, are Uzbeks. While the country officially allows religious freedom, there is none for the Uzbeks. All Uzbek people who become Christian endure different kinds of persecution, even in this cosmopolitan city, which is the fourth largest urban area in the former USSR. The Uzbekistan government watches people carefully, especially the young. Those children younger than 18 are not allowed to attend any religious place without their parents, whether mosque or church. Uzbek believers are not accepted in society, often resulting in economic persecution. Their businesses are often boycotted. There are also other forms of persecution—beatings and disinheritance by family members.

Pray for the effectiveness of the JESUS Film and Christian radio being aired among the Uzbeks. Pray for God to raise up strong church planting movements in all 12 regions of Uzbekistan. Pray for Christian Uzbek leaders to be unified in their evangelistic efforts.—JS

Persians in Tehran, Iran



They are fashionistas in their home, but on the street they are hijabis. Such are the women of Tehran, a world-class city and Iran's national capital. Tehran

is the 29th largest metropolitan area in the world. Modernized in the 1920s and '30s, it experienced a great inrush of people following World War II, only to lose population following the 1979 Revolution.

Most of the people are Persians (75 percent) or speak Persian (98 percent). Despite the traditional hijab, they live in a modern city with its historic sites, theatres, museums, universities, businesses, prostitution, drug abuse, and high abortion and divorce rates. Women have achieved much progress in education, commerce, and industry. Many Tehranis are middle class, even wealthy, secular or nominally Muslim.

Although there are synagogues and churches, Twelver Shi'ite Islam is the official religion, and its laws and customs are enshrined in the Iranian Constitution. In Iran church services cannot be conducted in Farsi (Persian), men have the sole right of divorce, and *imams* run the nation. Thus modern Tehran is a mix of modern and medieval, secular and sacred. In this environment, many are turning to Christ in the hope of a better life.

Pray for pastors imprisoned for their faith and for the safety of the believers. Pray that Persian believers will grow in their faith and share the Savior with others. Pray that churches may meet legally and worship in Farsi. Pray that God would continue to convert Persians via visions, dreams, satellite television, radio, and Scripture.—TP

Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

What is finished? Because of the fall of Adam and Eve, mankind fell from grace and became sinners and separated from God. With Jesus' sacrifice of Himself, He won the victory over the evil one. The war over Satan's claim to those peoples still in darkness is finished, and Christ is the victor. All Satan can do now is to deceive the nations into taking a path that leads them away from the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Praise God for redeeming those who call on His Name. It is finished!—DD

Day 7

Hebrews 2:14-15, RSV

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death He might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage.

We all pray, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done,” but somehow ignore the fact that all these powerful verses we are reading this month are God’s weapons He has put into our hands to specifically make things happen in accordance with His will. We need to trust in the Lord and believe His mighty promises and use them to “deliver all those who through fear of death are still subject to lifelong bondage.”

Pray that the Father will use His word to introduce the Pashtun people to Christ and deliver them from fear of death.—RR

Pashtun People of Karachi, Pakistan



“I will kill him and his entire family!” shouted Harmid. Angar shook his head at his brother, and calmly said, “What good will that do?” “Good? It

is the Pashtun way. He killed one of us,” shouted Harmid. “By accident,” Angar pointed out, “Killing him won’t change what happened. It will only make things worse. And the man who killed our cousin is Punjabi.” Harmid snapped, “Does being a Punjabi give him the right to murder?” Angar watched as his brother slowly began loading his gun. “We live and work side by side with the Punjabi,” Angar pleaded. “The entire northwest part of Karachi is filled with Punjabi and Pashtun. You could start a war right here in our city.” Through clenched teeth Harmid replied, “I did not start it. He did. But I will finish it.” Harmid stood up and walked out the door with the loaded rifle.

Despite living in the mega-city of Karachi, the largest Muslim city in the world, most Pashtuns have never heard the message of forgiveness and salvation in Christ. Revenge continues to be a key part of their worldview, and it has led to tragic results.

Pray for the Pashtun of Karachi to have the opportunity to encounter the God who gave His only Son so they could be forgiven. Pray for a great spiritual awakening to move through Karachi, drawing both Punjabis and Pashtuns into a relationship with Christ.—CL

Turks in Istanbul, Turkey

Ayşe is a divorced Istanbul socialite. She grew up in a wealthy family in Bebek, a very affluent section of Istanbul. Her life has been lived with money, possessions, and experiences. It seemed exciting when she was younger, but as time has passed, it only seems shallow and empty. She now wonders, is there any real meaning in life?

Istanbul is one of the largest cities in the world, and it has long been defined as the city where East meets West. All of the country is represented in the 14 million people who live in Istanbul. Crumbling walls, fortresses, churches and mosques span the city, mixed with modern hotels, shopping centers, and commercial skyscrapers. The European side of the city includes ancient Constantinople and Byzantium. Two-thirds of the population live on the European side, where some of Turkey's wealthiest powerbrokers reside near recently arrived villagers who have almost nothing. The Asian side is more residential, having been formed from many villages and small towns that eventually grew together into the large city.

As you move through the crowded streets, you shouldn't be surprised to find scantily clad teens with pierced bodies walking near burka-clad ladies. Every resident of Istanbul must reconcile this struggle between religion and modernity. Most of the inhabitants of the city are Muslim; less than .01 percent follow Christ.

Pray that people like Ayşe whose life is focused on materialism, will find true hope and meaning in the real, living God (from a guest writer).

... and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all men, as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

Did you ever notice that some Scriptures seem to be written to those He is getting ready for the second coming of Jesus with His saints? In these verses, the Lord admonishes us to increase and abound in love one to another and to all mankind as a means of establishing our hearts in holiness before God.

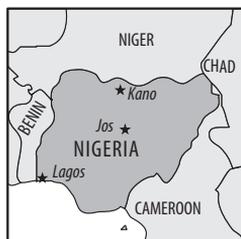
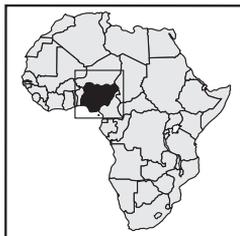
Pray that the Lord will prepare the hearts of believers in Turkey so that they will be able to show His love to the Turkish people. Pray that the hearts of the Turkish people will be open so that they will eagerly receive the good news about Christ and His great love for them.—RR

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

Christ not only is the resurrection and the life, but He is the first fruit of all others who will be resurrected after Him. Men will die, but they have the promise that He will raise them up for eternal life. What a promise to those who are among the remaining unreached peoples!

Pray that the Hausa-Fulani people will be given the gift of faith so that they can believe that the risen Christ offers eternal life to all who call on His Name.—KC

Hausa-Fulani of Lagos, Nigeria



Lagos, Nigeria is the second largest city in Africa. What a hub for Christian outreach this city could become! Among the people living in Lagos are the Hausa-Fulani. They began as two people groups, but are now considered to be one. The Hausa-Fulani make up 29 percent of the entire Nigerian population. Traditionally they have been a migratory people of about 21 million in number. But due to a prolonged drought, many of their youth migrated to Lagos and other urban areas to pursue economic opportunity. Today many of them are gathered into scattered groups called clusters throughout Lagos. Some are gatemen, some sell fabric, some are engaged in foreign exchange, and many are the motorcycle drivers of Lagos.

Although some believers are evangelizing the Fulani in Lagos, the directions and aims of the Christians are not unified. The Lagos Project has been set up by God to bring unity to the efforts. Their mission and prayer “is all about enthroning God in all spheres of influence and culture of Lagos so that His righteousness will reign supreme, followed by His blessings.”

Pray for the entire church to collaborate in reaching the Fulani of Lagos for the Lord. Pray that Fulani hearts will be softened so that they will gladly receive the word of God.—PE

Somalis in Mogadishu

Books list the Somali language as part of the Cushite branch of the African-Asian family. This becomes extraordinary when the promise to the Cush is read in Isaiah 18:7. “At that time gifts will be brought to the Lord Almighty from people tall and smooth-skinned, from a people feared far and wide, an aggressive nation of strange speech, whose land is divided by rivers.”

Praise our Lord Almighty that some from the 15-17 million Somalis will someday bring gifts to Him in faith and holy belief! The Church today has a pre-ordained mandate to bring this about through prayer, giving, and going to the unreached in order to fulfill the Great Commission. Most Somalis are Sunni Muslim. A few years ago in the great city of Mogadishu the Islamic courts tried to confer Sharia (Islamic) Law upon the people and establish an Islamic state. There was a great struggle, and troops were able to overcome the Islamists. The people endured much danger, destruction, and terror, but escaped Sharia Law.

Let us pray joyfully, earnestly, and expectantly for the Word to go forth to the Somalis. Pray that hearts made hungry by the Holy Spirit's calling and the ministry of the saints will find peace, protection, and the abundant life in Jesus Christ. May the efforts of missionaries be multiplied and yield a great harvest in fulfillment of the Isaiah prophecy. Pray for encouragement and protection as we lift the Somalis up to God in prayer for blessing.—PE

For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

It is so wonderful to know that Jesus will put all His enemies under His feet and the last enemy to be destroyed will be death. Today it is very dangerous for Christians to go to Somalia. Many believers have been martyred. But we know that He is on our side! He has already accomplished His part by dying for our sins. He has commissioned us, using all power and authority in heaven and on earth, to go into all the world and preach the gospel. He can and will make it happen!

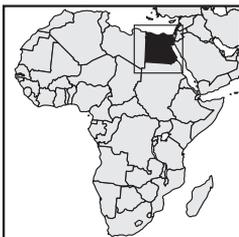
Mighty intercessors, pray for His kingdom to come to the Somali people, —RR

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Before people embrace Christ, they must in some way see His glory. As people grow in Him, they are “changed into His likeness” (transformed) by the work of the Holy Spirit. What better way to see His glory than to embrace and ponder the resurrection! Easter Sunday is a great starting point for those who may consider the glorious one.

Pray that many Egyptian Arabs will hear of His resurrection and have faith to embrace the glorious, living Savior.—KC

Egyptian Arabs in Cairo, Egypt



In June 2013, millions of Egyptians held demonstrations throughout the country in an overwhelming unity of purpose to overthrow President Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood. The government fell. Defense Minister General Abdel al-Sisi and his regime took over. In October 2013, more demonstrations took place in Cairo’s Tahrir Square. This time the Egyptian Arabs were divided, and al-Sisi quickly

brought the demonstrations to a halt. al-Sisi, a devout Muslim, made his position clear in this statement: “Americans believe in ‘life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.’ Islamic cultures cling to principles of ‘fairness, justice, equality, unity, and charity.’ What we must have in Egypt is a democracy established on Islamic beliefs.”

Unemployment, a suffering tourist industry, and the increased costs of fuel and food have dramatically affected the Arabs in Cairo. For Egyptian Arab Christians this has been a horrific time as they have suffered from repeated attacks including the burning of some churches. The government has done little to protect them. Many Egyptians believe that Al-Sisi’s rule could mean they have a tyrannical government not a democracy. Women feel they are losing their rights.

Pray that Egypt’s leaders will be reached with God’s word. Pray that the Christians in Cairo will have renewed strength in the Lord. Pray that the Egyptian Muslims will be open to hearing that true peace is found in accepting Jesus as their Savior.—PD

Moroccan Arabs in Casablanca



A mosque in Casablanca

When the name “Casablanca” is mentioned, people often recall the much-loved romantic melodrama that was filmed in 1942. This exotic portrayal of political and romantic espionage which took place in Casablanca is far from a true picture of the city. Casablanca is North Africa’s largest city with a population

of five million people. The majority of the inhabitants are Arabs and Berbers. It has the largest artificial port in the world and is considered to be economically the most progressive city in Africa. There is a thriving tourist industry which adds to its affluence. But there are hundreds of thousands of people that are unemployed and living in poverty. It’s common to find huge skyscrapers, and next to them merchants in the streets selling everything from decayed fruit to magical potions to heal all types of illnesses.

The fact that Casablanca is 98 percent Sunni Muslim and has the third largest mosque in the world (the famous King Hassan II) does not make this a strict Islamic community. Youth wearing designer clothes show how liberal it is. The city faces continuing problems with crime, drug addiction, and prostitution. Sadly, a huge cathedral in the city stands empty most of the time. The majority of inhabitants do not know the power of God, His word, and His good news!

Pray that God will open the way for Christians to lead the people of Casablanca to Him through tourism, business, and social outreaches. Pray that the Church will grow in Casablanca and be a light for all of North Africa.—PD

... if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

It takes saving faith to believe that Christ rose from the dead. Though no one has ever found the tomb or the body, people put their faith in someone who rose from the dead over 2,000 years ago. But those who do have this saving faith know that it is worth far more than gold! It leads to an abundant, eternal life.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to penetrate Moroccan Arab communities in Casablanca so that many among them will have faith in the living Savior.—KC

If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

Paul goes on to say that if Christ was not raised, then, “We are of all men most to be pitied.” We are asking people to bet it all on the resurrection! To do this, they often must alienate their families, communities, and even face the possibility of death.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to strengthen those believers among the Syrian Arabs in their resolve to keep their faith in the One who rose from the dead.—KC

Syrian Arabs in Amman, Jordan

“Thomas you look terrible! What’s going on?” Thomas, a Christian news reporter, had just plopped down on the bed in a motel in Amman, Jordan. His wife was worried by the haunted look in his eyes. He replied, “For years I have been covering stories involving war torn countries, but I couldn’t handle what I saw and heard today. I interviewed several Syrian refugees here in Amman who had lost spouses, siblings, and children, to say nothing of ruined homes and livelihoods. There are now over 100,000 deaths, two million children are out of school, and diseases like polio are resurfacing. Syria’s government keeps aid from getting to certain parts of Syria, so people are starving. The lucky Syrians come to places like the camps I visited today. The unlucky ones are dead.”

Aid groups are beyond burnout. One worker in Amman said, “The terrible truth is we can help them somewhat with food, medicine, and shelter, but we cannot protect them.” Every moment Syrians live knowing that they could die from a missile, sniper fire, or bombing. One Christian Syrian said it all when he commented, “Our only hope is God. Only the power of God can help the pain and suffering of the Syrian people. Pray for us!”

Pray that this human-made catastrophe will cause many Syrians to turn to Christ for answers. May compassionate hands reach out in the Lord’s Name to Syrian refugees in Amman, Jordan.—PD

Peninsular Arabs in Dubai, UAE

Day 14

Exodus 9:15-16, NIV



Entering the lavish exquisite home of his friend in Dubai, which is a prosperous city in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Abdu was enchanted by the sounds of fountains, birds, and the beauty of colorful orchids blooming among flawless clusters of ferns and exotic greenery. Then his eye caught a picture of an old man wearing simple clothes, sitting on the desert sands playing a lute. His friend explained, “This is a picture taken of my father just 23 years ago. It is tremendous to see how fast our lives have changed. My brothers and I became rich from the oil. We then invested in hotels because tourism was growing. Never again will the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula have to struggle the way my father did.”

Oil changed Dubai within a short time from a small fishing village located on the coast of the Arabian Peninsula to one of the most spectacular cities in the world. Many of the native Peninsular Arabs have benefited from the United Arab Emirate’s generosity in giving them money, housing, medical care, and education.

But regardless of their material gains, many Arabs in the land feel unfulfilled and depressed. Many are hungry to learn about the true and living God. Non-Muslims from other countries have the right to practice their religion, but proselytizing Christianity can lead to imprisonment because Dubai has strict Islamic laws.

Pray that the believers in Dubai will open the eyes of the Peninsular Arabs through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.—PD

But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” You foolish man! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.

This is clearly speaking of the resurrection bodies of believers who have died and are in heaven. There are many Scriptures that also tell us His power is already operating on earth in believers through the Holy Spirit! Just as our baptism symbolizes our death and burial with Him, as we come out of the water, it symbolizes our resurrection with Him.

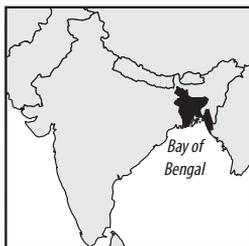
Pray that God will raise up believers among the Peninsular Arabs who are full of Christ’s resurrection power so that no enemy of the gospel will be able to stop the spreading of His word in this small nation.—RR

The blood shall be a sign for you, upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

While God disciplines children He loves, we will also experience times where He is our shelter and fortress (see Psalm 91:1-2). This protection comes because Jesus Christ, our Passover Lamb, was slain for us one Passover eve 2,000 years ago.

Pray that God will enable the harvesters He is sending to communicate to the Shaikhs that the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, is not only their protection in this life, but that by His sacrifice, Christ has made a way for them to have eternal life in Heaven with Him.—RR

Shaikhs in Dhaka Bangladesh



Dhaka shatters my images of Bangladesh. I tend to picture the country flooded by monsoons and overwhelmed by the encroaching Bay of Bengal. But Dhaka rises above the flood-plain to boast a modern, growing, cosmopolitan mega-city. Already one of the largest cities in South Asia, projections point to a population of 25 million people by 2025. Skyscrapers rise. Office buildings pulse. Markets bustle. Shopping malls thrive. Mosques multiply. And bicycle rickshaws abound.

Yesterday, April 14, throngs gathered on major streets, parks, and at 40-plus universities. They celebrated Bangladesh's New Year. At other times, the bustle stops for Eid ul-Fitr and Eid ul-Adha, prominent holy days for this mostly Muslim nation.

Among the throngs in the city some of the residents are "Shaikhs." These people are of Arab or Middle Eastern ancestry. That means their facial features are different from other Bangladeshi. It is unclear if this gives them an advantage in social exchanges. The Shaikhs are almost 100 percent Muslim, and there are few known Christians among them.

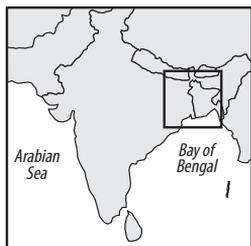
Natural as well as human disasters over several decades have given occasion for Christ followers to show the compassion of Christ in Dhaka as well as other places in the nation of Bangladesh.

Pray that the Holy Spirit would open the eyes and hearts of the Shaikhs in Dhaka. Pray that the Lord would stir a hunger and thirst for righteousness that only Jesus can satisfy.—GEC

Hindu Bengalis in Kolkata, India

Day 16

I Thessalonians 4:13-14



Raju's grandparents emigrated from Pakistan to India during the partition of the subcontinent. They are known as Bangals whose accent betrays them as immigrants. Almost to a man, the Bangals support the red and gold East Bengal football (soccer) team. Roquash's ancestors, on the other hand, have lived in Kolkata for generations. He proudly speaks Bengali the way it is supposed to sound. And almost to a man he and his fellow Ghotis (as they are

called) stand with the green and maroon Mohun Bagan football team. Walking as fast as they can, they join the crowd going to the Federation Cup football match to determine the national championship. Inside the arena they each find their own groups to cheer on their athletes.

Both groups, Bangals and Ghotis, identify as Hindu Bengalis living in Kolkata. This sprawling mega-city forms the home base for many Hindu Bengalis, wherever they have spread. Within the city itself, most of them exist with an uneasy truce between each group—a truce that veils suspicion and prejudice.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will open up the eyes of Bengali Hindus in Kolkata to see that God loves everybody. Pray that the many followers of Christ in their city will bravely proclaim the gospel and touch the hearts of leading Hindu Bengalis in Kolkata.—GEC

But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep.

Notice and appreciate the Lord's gentleness in changing the term "death" to "falling asleep." It's a good sleep; the saint who "falls asleep" goes instantly to his resurrection in heaven with God. What a hope! We don't grieve like Hindus and Buddhists whose religion offers no hope of a resurrection or joyful eternal life with God.

Pray that the Lord will soon comfort the hearts of the Bengali Hindus as they learn from local believers about the hope of the resurrection through the sacrifice of Jesus, the true and living God.—RR

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call. . . . And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord forever.

When Christ returns to earth, He will come with those believers that are already dead and those believers who are alive at His coming will be caught up together to meet Him. What a wonderful future God promises to His followers. How sad that the majority of the population in Delhi are Hindus and believe in multiple gods.

Pray that God will send dedicated believers to Delhi to spread the good news that Christ died on the cross for their sins, making a way for them to obtain eternal life with a loving God.—RR

Yadav People In Delhi, India

Since she arrived at the Delhi office at 8:30 AM, she had not had a moment's rest! After four hours of running around, she slumped on the chair. Her eyes began to focus on the diploma that hung on the opposite wall. It seemed to rise from the clinical green walls, blurring all else, and began to narrate the story of her life.

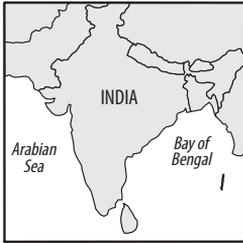
Her father was a herdsman in a remote village in Bihar; He was just like the other Yadavs in his village. He tended to a herd of cows, and he sold the milk to make a living. However, he was unlike the others in one key aspect; he wanted his daughter to go to school, study hard, and make it.

Thus this Yadav girl from a remote village grew up to be the top student in the university which enabled her to earn a scholarship at a leading medical school in Delhi. She remembered with such crystal clarity the day she received her diploma. Her proud father cheered from his seat at the auditorium. Soon she began to work for a world-renowned hospital in Delhi.

“Dr. Yadav, your father's on the line,” said her assistant bringing her back to the present as the framed diploma seemed to disappear into the green wall. Taking the phone off the hook, she greeted her father cheerily, “Namaste Pithaji...”

Pray that Yadavs in metropolitan cities like Delhi will come in contact with followers of Christ who will share the gospel with them.—EJD

Marhatta People of Mumbai



The Marhatta people are inhabitants of the state of Maharashtra in western India. Mumbai, the capital city of Maharashtra, is home to many Marhattas. This Indo-Aryan people group speaks Marathi. Many Marhattas belong to a rural society and own lands and grow crops.

Even though the Marhattas have both an oral and written history that dates back 2000 years, they only gained

attention as a prominent people group in the 1600s. At that time a man named Shivaji, along with the Marhatta warriors, established the Maratha Empire.

Much like the rest of India, the predominant religion of the Marhattas is Hinduism. The Marhattas practice various forms of Hinduism, hold various beliefs and worship different deities. Until recently, they were viewed as more liberal than other Indian groups, meaning that they exhibit tolerance towards other communities. However, there have been recent incidents of violence towards outsiders in Mumbai.

According to peoplegroups.org, less than two percent of Marhattas are evangelical Christians, “but there has been initial or concentrated church planting among them within the past two years.”

Pray that Marhattas in Mumbai and the rest of Maharashtra will soon experience the love of Jesus Christ and begin to follow Him as their Lord and Savior.—EJD

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . we beg you brethren, not to be quickly shaken in mind or excited . . . Let no one deceive you in any way.

How tragic it is that most Marhattas are worshiping idols and do not know the true and living God. But thank the Lord for the dedicated believers who are now trying to plant churches among them. They are trying to bring the Marhatta people from deception to truth.

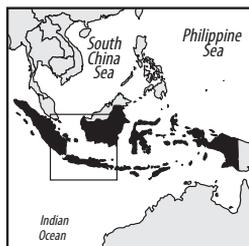
Pray that as the Marhatta people will hear the good news, it will be like a light shining in a dark place. Pray that they will throw away their idols and become grounded in His Word.—RR

I AM the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.

The good news may be hard to believe for people who have never heard about God coming down to earth in human form, dying on the cross for our sins and rising from dead. But there are many people in Jakarta, Indonesia, who believe in Christ and His resurrection from the dead.

Pray for these Christian people to aggressively seek out the Betawi and with much prayer show them love and concern. How will they learn about Christ if nobody tells them? Pray Jesus' resurrection life and power will move through the Betawi people in Jakarta in such a way that they cannot deny His resurrection power.—RR

Betawi People of Jakarta



Indonesia is a country that has continued to merge old-world beliefs with today's technology. To live in Indonesia is to constantly walk this tightrope. For the Betawi people daily life is a steady showcase of this tension, with traditional Islamic beliefs and practices such as early arranged marriage of daughters contrasting with online dating services and high tech jobs.

The Betawi people are artistic and expressive, but they are also known to be short-tempered and direct. Those living in Jakarta work as government employees, laborers, or craftsmen. Betawi youth are less inclined to follow the traditions of their parents, which leads to family tensions, seen much more in the larger, populated areas. The education level among the Betawi is low, partly due to their belief that education will make them similar to the ethnic Chinese or the colonial Dutch, both of whom they abhor. Another source of opposition to formal education comes from Muslim teachers who encourage enrollment in Islamic schools rather than the government run schools. Islam is not only the dominant religion of the Betawi, but it is also the cultural identifier. For a person to be a true Betawi he must be a Muslim. There is also a degree of animism mixed in with their spiritual beliefs.

Pray for a spiritual breakthrough among the Betawi people, especially in Jakarta. Pray that God would send the right people to them to demonstrate His love.—JR

Central Thai people of Bangkok



Sue Garriges

A Thai Man

a blend of old world charm with today's or perhaps tomorrow's technology. These are some of the things that draw outsiders to this city year round.

For those who live full time in Bangkok, life is not nearly so glamorous or prosperous. A majority of Bangkok's wealthy society is made up of local Central Thais; the poorer individuals and families are also local Thais. On the other hand, the majority of the middle class is made up of foreigners or minority groups. Specifically, the Chinese are quite influential leaders in commerce and business activity.

The Central Thai majority is committed to Buddhism. Since being introduced into Thailand in 329 BC, Buddhism has been their guiding belief system with its emphasis on doing good in order to attain Nirvana or perfect peace. Even with the challenges of modern life, parents still try to pass this system of belief onto their children. The residents of Bangkok have experienced anything but peace recently. There have been multiple violent uprisings across the city since 1973 when Thais began demanding democracy. The protests constantly threaten Thailand's lucrative manufacturing sector which produces everything from computer hard drives to automobiles.

Pray that Central Thais will see the shallowness of their daily lives and call upon the Lord. Pray that the evangelical believers will try to win the Central Thais to Christ.—JR

What are the characteristics of a "world class city"? Well, to judge by Bangkok's popularity, you would need nonstop nightlife, quick international access, wealth, and

The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs. After His resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

Although death reigned from Adam to Christ, His resurrection changed everything from that point on; many saints were raised with Him! I like to think that's why Joseph arranged for his embalmed body to be carried home from Egypt. Christ is the resurrection and the life!

Pray that as the Central Thai people come to know Him personally, the Lord will confirm to them that the kingdom of God is near. Pray that God will send many believers to spread the good news of Christ's resurrection to the Central Thai.—RR

Day 21

Matthew 10:8, RSV

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying, give without pay.

Jesus has never cancelled this command, and down through the centuries, those who believed it and obeyed His word, have preached the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ. He gave them all power and authority in heaven and on earth to do it in His Name. Is that not enough power?

Pray for the Father to raise up evangelists, teachers, and miracle workers needed for the Uighurs that they can enjoy the peace and love of God.—RR

Uighurs in Urumqi, China



The Uighur man walked to the factory gate in the city of Urumqi and found a sign that read, “No Uighurs need apply.” The man shook his head and walked away. The Chinese always get

the best jobs, and the Uighurs have to take whatever is left over.

On the way home he walked past a Chinese policeman chiding two middle-aged Uighur men. “Speak Mandarin, not Uighur!” the policeman growled at them. The man hurried away, deciding to make a stop at the mosque before going home. He could pray to Allah, but only if the police hadn’t closed it down again.

There are many Uighurs living in Urumqi, a major city in northwestern China. This people group converted to Islam many centuries ago. A growing number of Han Chinese have moved to Urumqi in recent years. The Han aren’t Muslims. These two people groups don’t like each other, and there have been riots in Urumqi. Few, if any, Uighurs have come to see Jesus Christ as the true source of salvation.

Pray for the restoration of peace in Urumqi. Ask God to lead faithful workers to reach out to the Uighurs in Urumqi with the message of salvation. Pray that God will soon open doors for outreach. Pray that the Uighurs will respond to radio broadcasts and other Christian sources that glorify the Risen Christ.—WK

Hui in Shanghai, China

Day 22

Revelation 1:17-18, RSV



At the mosque the call to prayer was in Arabic, but the men bowing toward Mecca didn't look like Arabs at all! The men looked like Chinese, and the mosque was located in Shanghai, one of China's major cities. The worshippers were from the Hui people group. The mosques are common in districts of Shanghai where the Hui live and there are few if any Buddhist temples.

Today there are 20 million Muslims living in China.

Many of those living in Eastern China belong to the Hui people group. Arab traders brought Islam to Shanghai in the 7th century A.D. They quickly won converts from the majority Han people group, and these converts became known as the Hui. Certain Chinese emperors have favored the Hui throughout China's long recorded history. This was especially true during the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368 A.D.). China's most famous explorer, Zheng, was Hui. He lived during the Ming Dynasty (1371-1435 A.D.) when Hui influence was starting to decline. More recently the Hui have been marginalized. But that changed when China's Communist government exempted the Hui from China's one child policy. Today the Hui are envied by many other people groups.

Ask God to mobilize the church in China toward reaching out to the Hui with the message of salvation. Pray that God will soon open doors for Christian materials to reach Hui communities. Ask God to create a hunger among the Hui for the true God and the true message of salvation.—WK

Fear not, I am the First and the Last, and the Living One; I died, and behold: I AM alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and hades.

See His power in action here! When Christ died for our sins He stated that He now holds the keys to death and hell. Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever! We can thank Him for His loving grace for us.

Pray that God will send His workers to the Hui people in Shanghai and will make these truths real to them.—RR

The words of the holy, the true One, who has the key of David, who opens the door and no one can shut it; Who shuts the door and no one can open it.

Yesterday, we saw that Jesus now holds the keys of death and hades. He has commissioned us, His disciples, to spread the wonderful good news around the world to every nation and people group. He has bestowed on us and in us “power and authority in heaven and earth” to accomplish all He has commanded us to do.

Pray that the Father will increase the awareness of all of these truths to His intercessors, senders, harvesters, and the people He is calling to Himself from among the Japanese.—RR

Japanese in Tokyo, Japan



This could be a scene from the future: It’s the year 2020, and Tokyo is hosting the summer Olympics! People are lining up at the Olympic stadium to buy tickets for the next sporting event.

A Japanese man in his late 20s passes out literature about Jesus and begins to speak to the people. “I used to live near Fukushima. In 2011 the earthquake and tsunami killed most of my family.” He saw that many people standing in the ticket line now had their attention fixed upon him, so he continued. “After the disaster I found no peace praying to Buddha. Then the American Christians helped me rebuild my house and told me about Jesus Christ. When I prayed to Jesus I found the courage to go on with my life.”

It is believed that many people in Japan came to trust Jesus after the earthquake/tsunami disaster in 2011. Many of these new believers are now developing strong ties of fellowship in new churches in order to grow in Christ and share the message of salvation. They also are learning to be bold and are willing to try new outreach methods.

Pray that the Christians in Japan and around the world will find creative ways to use Olympic events to spread the message of salvation throughout the country. May the Japanese come to see Jesus Christ as the only One who gives abundant life.—WK

Vietnamese in Prague, Czech Republic

“You’re under arrest!” shouted the policemen as they kicked down the door of the Prague warehouse. The cops quickly tackled and handcuffed the three young men with Asian facial features before they could escape. Then a police officer opened one of the many wooden crates in the warehouse. “I knew it! Marijuana!” Then the officers hauled off the three Vietnamese gang members in one of the squad cars they’d arrived in.

There are 10,000 Vietnamese living in the Czech Republic. Most of them live in Prague, the capital. The first Vietnamese arrived in Prague before the fall of Communism in 1989. They were students and guest workers. After 1989 a second wave of Vietnamese immigrants arrived. They tended to be people looking for better jobs than the ones available in Vietnam. Both waves of Vietnamese immigrants were hard working and tended to become small business owners. Their children have taken many diverse career paths: some have become scientists and engineers; but unfortunately, some have become drug dealers. Vietnamese gangs are fast becoming major players in Central Europe’s illegal drug trade. In the past the influence of Buddhism sprinkled with some Christian believers would have limited such criminal activity.

Ask God to break the hold that drug addiction has on the Vietnamese youth in Prague. Pray that God would break the hold that Buddhism has on the Vietnamese adult generation and replace it with faith in the Risen Lord. May God raise up faithful workers to reach out to this people group with the message of salvation.—WK

But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: “Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

When people are bound in sin, they seek to hide the clues of their bondage in darkness. But believers are commanded to live a different type of life. The apostle Paul states that their actions involve living in the light and being the light of the world. A beam of light can cast a shadow. The closer it gets to something that is not light, the bigger and darker the shadow grows. Light makes everything visible.

Pray that the Vietnamese people in Prague who are Christians will shine as the light of the Lord and share the love of Christ with the youth who are stuck in the darkness of drug dealing.---
Glenn Culbertson

Little children, you are of God, and have overcome them (i.e. evil spirits); for He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

In Revelation 2 and 3 John lists the prizes awarded to Christ's followers: the crown of life, some hidden manna, power over the nations, white unsoiled garments, his name not blotted from the Book of Life, becoming a pillar in God's temple, and being seated with Christ on His throne, ruling and reigning with Him!

Pray that the Kurdish people will seize these promises and will become victorious overcomers of the evil one.—RR

Kurds in Frankfurt, Germany



Becker

Kurds in Europe

An economic boom resulted in a labor shortage in West Germany in the 1960s. The West German government invited people from Turkey to come to German cities like Frankfurt primarily to work in the factories as “guest workers.” Some of those who came were Kurds. Many of the “guests” married, had families, and settled permanently in Germany. In the following decades other Kurds came to Germany to escape discrimination and even persecution in Turkey. Today there are approximately 700 Kurdish families in Frankfurt.

Recently, Kurds in Frankfurt and Berlin staged demonstrations against the Turkish government, protesting the murders in Paris of three women leaders of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). According to some sources, the PKK began as a “rebel movement,” or terrorist group. Today it is moving more towards a Kurdish-rights organization, although the German government still considers it a threat and carefully monitors its activities and its leaders.

Kurds are diverse in their religious beliefs, although most are Sunni Muslims. According to the Joshua Project, the Bible is available in their language, as well as many gospel recordings, films, and online resources.

Pray that Jesus will reveal Himself to the Kurds, and that missionaries will evangelize them in Germany. Pray that the Holy Spirit will soften their hearts and open their ears to the truth of the gospel in which there is neither Jew, Gentile, nor Kurd.—JWS

South Asians in Manchester, England

In the early 19th century, Manchester, England was a center for industry and capitalism. Many of the people who labored in the emerging factories worked long, hard hours for very little pay. There was much misery and poverty, but people chose to ignore the problems and let the situation fester. The situation created an environment where desperate, poorly thought out ideas could flourish. Karl Marx and Max Weber met in this city, and the misery they saw inspired them to come up with some of the tenets of Communism, a belief system that caused even more misery.

Today Manchester is a friendly city with a world-renowned soccer team and a booming economy. Thousands of South Asian immigrants call Manchester home. Some of them live with a sickness that if left untreated, can make their lives miserable, or kill them prematurely.

The sickness is breast cancer. Some South Asian women mistakenly believe that breast cancer is contagious, and having it carries a stigma, according to research published in the *Asian Pacific Journal of Cancer Prevention*. Some will not even mention the name of breast cancer. The situation keeps women from having free breast cancer screening tests that can detect the disease before it becomes a serious problem.

Pray for the Lord to shower His mercy on the South Asians in Manchester. Pray for physical and spiritual healing for these South Asians, be they Hindu, Sikh, or Muslim.—KC

Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son; if you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

In Psalm 2:8, Our Father decreed to His Son, “Ask of Me, and I will make the nations Your heritage, and the ends of the earth Your possession.” In Revelation 7:9 John saw this come to pass with people from every nation worshipping Him around the throne and before the Lamb. Intercessor, with promises like these, pray that the Father will use all our prayers this month to draw every people, nation, tribe, and city to the Son.

Pray for the salvation of the South Asian community in Manchester, England.—RR

Jewish People in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen!

The angel was speaking from a tomb, so Jesus indeed was NOT there. But He is there, right where you are, if you have accepted Him! The same goes for all who will call on His Name from among the Jewish people. This living Savior is willing to breathe new life into sin-bound, spiritually-dead humanity. We know from other parts of scripture that no nation will be left out.

Pray for the Jewish people in Latin America to be willing and able to embrace the life-giving Savior who will never taste death.—KC



Jews burning unclean items before Passover

Buenos Aires, Argentina, is a city of over 13 million people. The city is a top tourist destination known for its distinct architecture, rich cultural life, and the best beef in the world! Far less known is the fact that one-third of all Jewish people in Latin America live there.

This month in Buenos Aires 250,000 people will celebrate Passover, not on Easter Sunday, but beginning Monday night the week before. They will gather in their homes, not in churches. Some will follow family traditions that have been passed down for generations. If you were an invited guest, you might be surprised to hear them speak not only Spanish, but also Hebrew and sometimes even Yiddish. These celebrants are remembering how God rescued the Jewish people from slavery and miraculously delivered them into the Promised Land.

Two thousand years ago Paul prayed this verse for his Jewish brothers: “Brethren, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.” Romans 10:1. Although there is a thriving remnant of Jewish believers in Jesus as Lord and the promised Messiah, the vast majority of these Jews do not recognize Him as the fulfillment of all of their prophecies.

Pray that God will open Jewish spiritual eyes to see and believe in Jesus their Messiah! Pray for God to bless the Messianic believers who work in the Sababa Jewish Messianic Center in Buenos Aires. Pray for the Jewish believers to be bold and loving as they share their faith.

Bejas of Toronto

Day 28

I John 3:8, RSV

Have you ever wondered what happened to Noah's grandsons? Cush, the son of Noah's son Ham might well be the forebearer of an East African people called the Beja. There are 2.5 million Bejas worldwide with only a very few followers of Christ among them. They have lived in regions of Africa for 4,000 years where they have interwoven Islam with their traditional beliefs. They still practice this folk-Islam wherever they live.

Toronto, Canada has more Beja citizens than any other place in North America. Nearly half of the 2.5 million people of Toronto were born outside of Canada. The city embraces its cultural diversity by providing city services in the 180 languages of its citizens. With such a cluster of Bejas in Toronto, seeing them come to salvation in Jesus Christ is a real possibility. New Beja believers can potentially build bridges to friends and family in East Africa.

One missionary has asked us to pray for the Beja people in Toronto to have "natural, meaningful contacts with bold, yet sensitive believers. Pray that God would supernaturally open hearts and break the bonds that shackle them." One simple way to do this is to watch the YouTube video called, "Beja Celebration in Toronto, Canada." It shows 220 Beja people celebrating during Ramadan. Pray for each of the people you see in this video. Pray that there will soon be a huge harvest of souls in Toronto who will joyfully submit to the loving Savior.—PE

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

Jesus said the works of the devil are to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10). Coupled with all the Scriptures discussed earlier this month, we see that Jesus has done His part in abolishing death and destroying the devil and his works through dying on the cross and His resurrection. Now He has entrusted to us the authority to continue making this happen. As we pray, "Thy kingdom come," and walk under His authority and power, He will use us to spread the good news throughout the world.

Pray that as the Beja people come to Christ, they will become God's salt and light to all the peoples in the Muslim world.—RR

When the chief priest had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money...

It was damage control time for the elders and chief priests. They had Christ crucified, only to see Him raised from the dead. They could have bowed their knees to the Risen Christ and acknowledged their sins, but instead they bribed the guards to say that Christ's body was stolen. Perhaps this sin was even greater than having Him crucified because they now knew the truth, and they covered it up from others who might have believed. In today's world there are those who deny that the Christ is risen. They have not seen the evidence of His resurrection like these Jewish leaders.

Pray that spiritual leaders from among the Lubavitchers will respond to the news of His resurrection by heralding rather than hiding this good news.—KC

Jewish Lubavitchers in New York

On a busy Brooklyn street in the heat of summer, a bearded man stands out with his *fedora* hat and black attire. He spots a man who seems to be in less of a hurry, and asks, "Hey, are you Jewish?" The man, Jeffrey, grins and replies, "Yes." The two of them step away from the rushing crowd to have a conversation.

"I'm Joshua, and I'm part of the Lubavitcher Movement," he says, shaking Jeffrey's hand. "There are more than 20,000 of us in New York, and we have been here since 1940. We want to see the messiah come! But before that happens, Jewish people need to do *mitzvahs*, (good deeds) based on the teachings of the Torah and the Rashi." Jeffrey raises his eyebrow in a comical way, and says, "Do we have to be obedient before the Messiah comes? Or will He come because we need Him?" Joshua quickly replies, "This is what we were taught by our founder, Rabbi Menachem Schneerson. The world is getting better, but it will be better still if we do *mitzvahs*."

This dialogue was fabricated, but it could happen anywhere in New York. The Lubavitchers are determined to reach secular Jews with the message that greater obedience to their teachings will usher in the Messiah.

Pray that the Lubavitchers will understand that the Messiah has already come for all nations, and that He came to save everyone from sin.—KC

Breakthroughs in Dallas-Fort Worth

Day 30

Luke 24:26

Kika, a Nagaland church planter, works with Bhutanese and Nepali, but he's not working in South Asia. Kika is a student at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas reaching Bhutanese and Nepali refugees in Dallas. Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) is the number one destination of refugees coming to the U.S.

Renod, a Lebanese believer, was persecuted for his faith in his home country. He immigrated to the U.S. as a teenager with a hatred for Muslims due to his suffering. Now, Renod has a great love for Muslims and offers free workshops on how to reach Muslims for Christ. This is vital considering DFW has the second fastest growing Muslim population of any U.S. area.

Dadu, a Malayalam speaker and church planter in northern India, first took the Perspectives course in 2012. He is now coordinating the first Perspectives class at his home church in Richardson, TX, a city rich in diversity of unreached peoples. In the Fall of 2013 three Perspective classes enrolled more than 400 students, and eight classes are planned for Spring 2014.

God is on the move in DFW! A Christ-ward movement is unfolding. Kika, Renod, and Dadu are among a growing number of harvest workers from foreign countries that God is raising up. DFW is quickly becoming an area of diaspora mission activity. There is much training in discipleship which is occurring in response to the over 239 languages spoken, representing many unreached peoples.

Pray for the growing diaspora (worldwide) mission movement taking shape in DFW. Pray that representatives from every unreached people group would come to the United States, encounter Christ, and then return to their homeland to preach the gospel and fulfill the great commission.—BC

Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter His glory?

One of the things we so often forget is that before there is glory, there is often suffering. We know that, like Christ, many of His servants are suffering for their faith in places like North Korea and Saudi Arabia. In many cases throughout Church history, the suffering of the saints has led to repentance and the extension of His Kingdom. You have heard it said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. This is widespread today and so true in our fallen world!

Pray that the unreached will be reached in lands where the saints are suffering, and that God will be glorified.

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