

“But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.”

John 4:23

PRAYER POINTS

SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES

Lostness imprisons thousands of South Asian peoples. It stretches from the heights of the Himalayas to the beaches of the Maldives. Lostness permeates slums and high rises. It is palpable darkness. It is overwhelming hopelessness and fear. It is true desperation and incessant and futile worship of everything but the one, true God.

LOSTNESS IN SOUTH ASIA LOOKS LIKE DESPERATE, FUTILE WORSHIP

South Asia is home to over 1.8 billion people, including over 600 million Muslims. It's the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. The lostness of South Asia fills megacities and rural villages. The enemy has deceived some of the most educated minds on the planet. He has trapped some of the poorest of the poor. As followers of Christ, we grieve the 232,000 people that die each week and enter an eternity without Christ.

The Bible speaks of eyes that see yet cannot perceive, ears that hear, yet do not understand (Isaiah 6:9-10; Mark 4:11-12). These realities were judgments on Israel, fulfilled in their rejection of the Savior. Yet, they also describe the spiritual reality of countless millions in South Asia and around the world where the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers (2 Corinthians 4:4). Left to themselves they cannot see; their ears are deaf to



A Pakistani vendor at the Empress Market in Karachi, Pakistan. IMB Photo.

the truths about God. In desperation, image bearers of God fashion a deity in their own likeness. Others revere, bow down, and offer gifts to idols of clay, paper, or even a pile of cow dung they call holy.

People in South Asia live their days in hopelessness, fear, and desperation. They worship the way the enemy has deceived them into worshipping for thousands of years – bathing in pollution-filled rivers and sacrificing to false gods. But their idols are silent. People strive endlessly in their worship, yet receive no hope, peace, or life.

Pray for the people of South Asia to “flee from idolatry,” (1 Corinthians 10:14) and “worship the Father in spirit and truth” (John 4:23).

ANSWER TO YOUR PRAYER

Last October, we asked God to call out laborers to reach the harvest in India's global cities. Thank you for praying! God spurred on the church in Chennai, India to spread the gospel across this city of 12 million people. Local believers have shared the gospel with hundreds of people over the past several months. Many lost people have responded in faith and want to learn more about God through studying the Bible.

1 SOUTH ASIANS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. A worker sat in a coffee shop, ready for Bible study with a friend who had expressed interest in Jesus. But the friend cancelled. A woman sitting near the worker said the same thing just happened to her. "We smiled and opened our Bibles," the worker said. "God brought us together." Praise God!

2 SOUTH ASIANS IN AFRICA. "Would you please pray for South Asians in East Africa?" workers ask. "So many times, we have shared, but it seems that there is very little fruit so far. Please pray that we will not grow tired and discouraged. Pray that South Asians will hunger and thirst for the truth."

3 SOUTH ASIAN UNENGAGED PEOPLES. The 7,500 Habura of India are a nomadic people group who have traditionally been known as thieves. Pray that these Hindu people will come to follow Jesus, who told a thief on a cross, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43 ESV).

4 PUNJABIS OF PAKISTAN. Christian institutions in Pakistan focus on providing a quality education to lower-income and marginalized communities. Pray that Jesus will be made known in these places of learning. Ask that students will have good opportunities to hear and respond to the gospel.

5 PEOPLES OF KAVERI BANKS, TAMIL NADU, INDIA. A local married couple is joyfully engaging in evangelism, church planting, and training other local churches to do the same. However, the wife is enduring sickness after sickness as well as cultural conflicts with her husband's parents. Pray for this couple.

6 SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES. A South Asian pastor said that churches are walking in the biblical principles and practices that they learned from other South Asians whom workers had trained. Church members are actively making disciples and have seen 10 new house churches form in one year. Praise the Lord!

7 PEOPLE OF THE LOWER PLAINS OF KARNATAKA, INDIA. A believer shares the gospel as she teaches at sewing centers in five different villages. In three villages, women from these sewing centers started attending church. Pray for the teacher to keep boldly sharing the gospel. Pray for the women to trust in Jesus.

8 NEPAL. A small Buddhist people group in a secluded valley speak only their native language. Pray for the only known believer among them as she translates Bible stories into their language. Pray that the people will learn God's Word, call on the name of Jesus, and be saved.

9 MUSLIMS OF TAMIL NADU, INDIA. Nathan is seeking to know the differences between Islam and Christianity. He has decided to read through the Bible in a year so that he can prove it wrong. Pray that as Nathan reads his new study Bible, he will accept the truth.

10 SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES. Jesus is the name above all names and the only way to salvation. Pray that the name of Jesus would be lifted high across South Asia and beyond. Pray that God would get the glory due His name from the over 1.8 billion South Asians.

11 HINDU PEOPLES OF THE CENTRAL HILLS OF NEPAL. A cult has swept through the area. They say people can worship Jesus along with Hindu gods, and they discourage followers from studying God's Word for themselves. Pray that people will not be deceived. Ask the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of those who have been led astray.

12 MAGAHI SPEAKERS OF INDIA. Some believers hope to start a new work in the largest Magahi-speaking city. Please ask the Lord to guide them as they seek to find local pastors and believers whom they can partner with in this effort to share the gospel there.

13 BUDDHIST PEOPLES IN THE HIMALAYAN BELT OF NEPAL. Three million Tibetan Buddhists are spread out in hard-to-reach villages across the Himalayas of Nepal. Please pray for a handful of churches that are being trained and disciplined to reach their Tibetan Buddhist neighbors with the gospel.

14 BANGALORE HOSPITAL, KARNATAKA STATE, INDIA. The 50-year-old Bangalore Baptist Hospital serves over 100,000 patients annually. Their priority on evangelism has resulted in 900 churches across the state. Pray for planning and permissions as they work toward adding clinic space and 150 beds for specialty care.

15 MUSLIMS OF DELHI, INDIA. Believers have begun regular outings focusing on sharing the gospel in the "Bhindi" area. Pray that people will be open to God's Word and be interested in learning more. Pray for follow-up opportunities and for the Holy Spirit to draw people.

16 BHUTAN. The Kingdom of Bhutan is a tiny landlocked nation nestled within the folds of the Himalayas between India and China. It has been protected from outside influences for many years. Pray that the people of Bhutan would turn from darkness to the light of Christ.

17 SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES. Salvation is not found in Vishnu, Brahma, Shiva, Kali, Muhammed, gurus, Buddha or in any other name. Pray for God to break down the enemy's schemes that keep South Asians blinded to the truth or in any other name than Jesus Christ.

18 MUSLIMS OF DELHI, INDIA. Many people who expressed interest in the gospel recently received a copy of the Book of Matthew. The book shares contact information for a local believer. Pray that people will read it and reach out to learn more. Pray for wisdom as local believers follow up with people.

19 SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES. "Jesus stood up and cried out, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water''" (John 7:37-38). Pray that the spiritually thirsty will drink this living water.

20 SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES. Pray for God to send laborers to the people of South Asia. God's Word says "the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" (Matthew 9:35). Pray that God would send out His church to every South Asian nation, tribe, people, and language.

21 NAINITAL, INDIA. Nainital is mostly a mountainous region, with a population of 1 million people. Please pray that God's Spirit would move in this region, calling people to Himself. Pray that local believers would have boldness to proclaim His Word.

22 SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES. "For a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries" (1 Corinthians 16:9). Praise God for opening a door to effective ministry among South Asians. Ask God to give endurance to His church who are laboring among South Asians.

23 BANGLADESH. More than 200 million Bengali Muslims follow the Quran and their revered prophet, Muhammed. Turning to Jesus often results in persecution and loss of family and support systems. Pray that whole families will decide to follow Christ together.

24 NORTHEAST INDIA. Believers are working on projects throughout the year to engage unreached Muslims in northeast India. Pray that these believers will proclaim the gospel with boldness. Pray that the Spirit will move in hearts and call many to salvation.

25 SOUTH ASIAN UNENGAGED PEOPLES. The Patari are a Hindu unengaged and unreached group of 30,500 people. Pray that believers who live near the Patari would intentionally go to them and share the gospel. Pray that God would establish churches among the Patari.

26 SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES. Living water comes from the source of life - the one true God. Pray that those who receive living water will be like the Samaritan

woman and joyfully go and tell others this good news and invite them to meet the Savior.

27 WOMEN OF BANGLADESH. In Bangladesh, an impoverished Muslim-majority nation, daughters are often seen as liabilities and are married off as soon as possible. Pray for Bangladeshi girls and women to know their value as God's beloved image bearers. May they follow Him as Lord and Savior.

28 SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES. Pray for believers to have wisdom as they interact with churches where the prosperity gospel has taken root. Pray that the true gospel will spread rapidly throughout South Asia.

29 ROHINGYA. The Rohingya are a persecuted Muslim people group who were driven out of Myanmar in 2017. They have been living in refugee camps in Bangladesh without citizenship. Pray that many Rohingya will come to Christ and gain citizenship in heaven that can never be taken away.

30 MALDIVES. Around 3,000 people live in Mahibadhoo, the capital island of South Ari Atoll in the Maldives. Ask God to soften the hearts of people living on this island so that they will be open to the good news. Pray that God would send laborers to them.

31 SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLES. "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Pray that South Asians would cast aside every form of idolatry and worship Jesus in spirit and truth.

WORKER URGES PRAYER FOR SOUTH ASIAN MUSLIMS WHO RELY ON ANNUAL BLOOD SACRIFICES

In South Asia, over 8 million Muslims from 203 different people groups are unengaged and unreached with the gospel. This means that there is no known effort in place to reach these 8 million men, women, and children with the good news. Each year during the Islamic sacrifice holiday, Eid al-Adha, every Muslim who is able will make a blood sacrifice to Allah.

Goldie Frances works among South Asian Muslims and shares her reflections on this sacrifice.

"As I read His Word this morning, I am hearing the moans of bulls, the cries of goats, and the chop of meat being cut on wooden blocks. I look out the window and see the blood that fills my street. Every year the practice and purpose are the same — to make a blood sacrifice in hopes of forgiveness of sin. I just 'happen' to be reading Hebrews 7 this morning:

"He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.



Muslim men kneel during one of the five daily calls to prayer in Kolkata, India. IMB Photo.

For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.' (Hebrews 7:27-28, ESV)

"I am grateful for the rain the Lord God has sent this morning to help accelerate the cleanup. Join me in praying for the millions who have made blood sacrifices. May they soon have the opportunity to understand those final words spoken from the cross — 'It is finished.'"

Lostness in South Asia



South Asia has the greatest concentration of lostness on the planet.

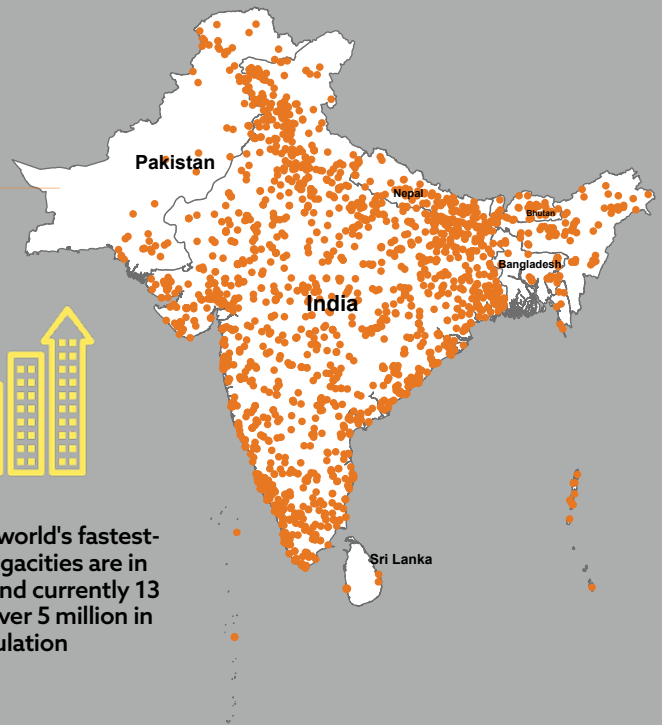


South Asia is home to approximately 1/3 of the world's Muslims.



Some of the world's fastest-growing megacities are in South Asia, and currently 13 cities have over 5 million in population

2,322
Unreached People Groups (UPGs)



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THE NATIONS,
TOGETHER.**