

A person in white traditional attire stands in a rocky, mountainous landscape at sunset. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, highlighting the textures of the rocks and the person's clothing. In the upper right corner, there is a white location pin icon.

23<sup>RD</sup> EDITION

# Loving the Lost through Prayer

A Prayer Guide for Some of the  
World's Least Reached People Groups



THE GREATEST PROBLEM

IN THE WORLD IS **LOSTNESS.**

THE ONLY SOLUTION IS

**THE GOSPEL.**

**GOD WORKS THROUGH**

**YOUR PRAYERS TO**

**TRANSFORM LIVES.**

*Image: An aerial view shows the NaYiri palace compound in Nalerigu, Ghana, during a festival that celebrates the region's tribes and ancient institution of the chieftaincy among the Mamprusi people.*

**Together,** we are reaching the nations because God has called us to be a part of His mission. We want all people to hear and respond to the gospel, but we can't do this on our own. We plant seeds and water them, but only God brings fruit (1 Corinthians 3:6).



We invite you to join us as we go to God on behalf of some of the least reached people groups in the world, asking Him to move. Prayer is key to the work of the Great Commission, and every believer can participate.

This prayer guide includes statistics, stories, and photos of unreached people groups, along with stories of God's faithfulness. There are also activities, recipes, and discussion starters throughout the book.

Please join us in asking God to impact lostness, gospel advance, the global Church, and missionary presence. This guide will lead you to pray for lostness that transcends socioeconomic status, culture, and geography. God works through your prayers to transform lives and bring hope to the lost. Let's pray and trust God, together, to do what only He can do.

**The IMB Prayer Office**  
[prayer@imb.org](mailto:prayer@imb.org)

Due to hostility toward the gospel and missions in many regions, we cannot always show faces in photos or reveal exact locations. But we can still pray.

*In unreached people groups, less than 2% are evangelical Christian. Unengaged people groups have no active church-planting strategy among them.*

**FAST FACTS**

# American People

**POPULATION OF**

**648**  
MILLION

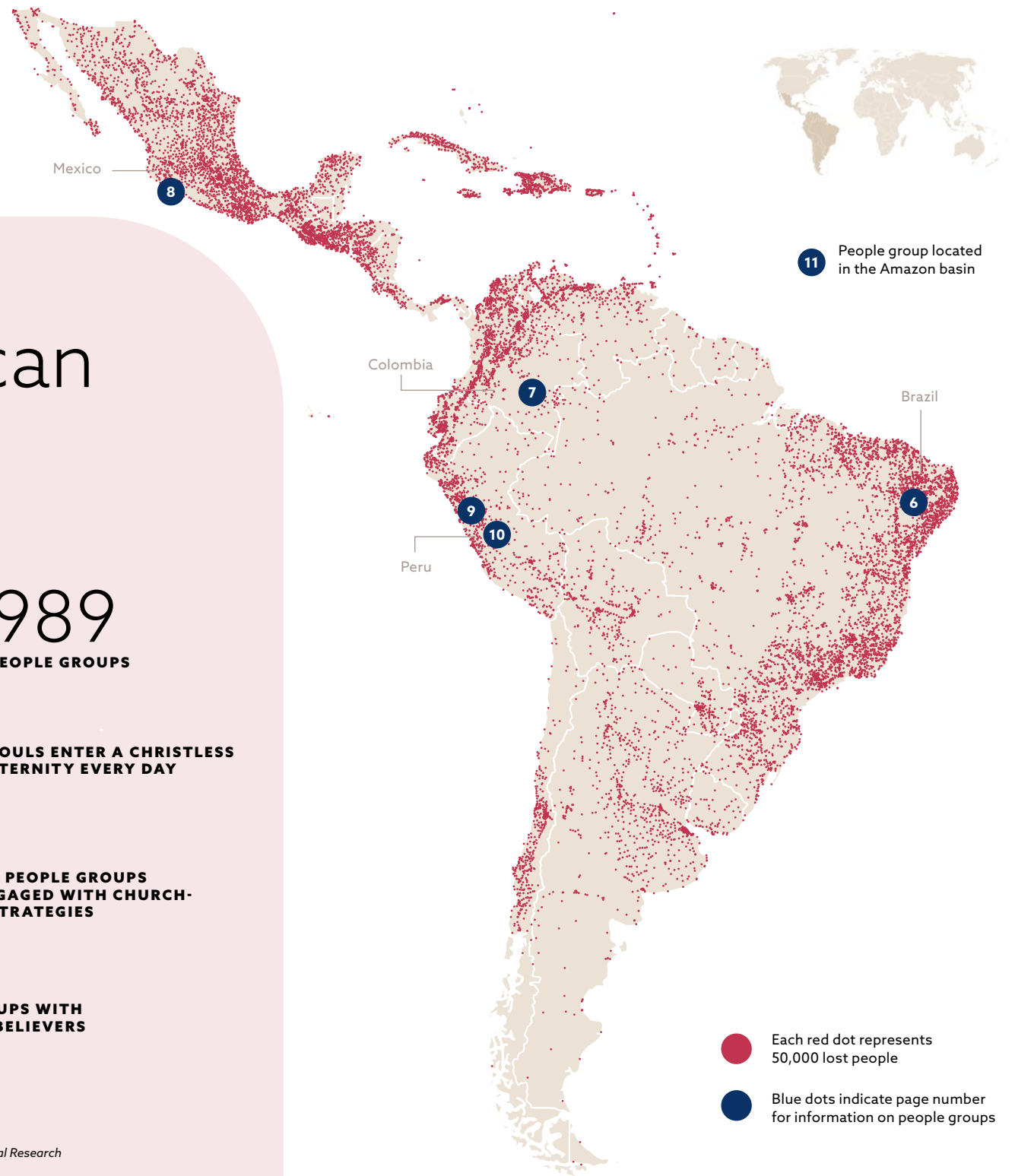
**989**  
PEOPLE GROUPS

**17,708** SOULS ENTER A CHRISTLESS ETERNITY EVERY DAY

**169** UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS STILL UNENGAGED WITH CHURCH-PLANTING STRATEGIES

**127** PEOPLE GROUPS WITH NO KNOWN BELIEVERS

*Map and statistics are based on IMB Global Research data as of December 31, 2024.*





OPPRESSED BY FEARED SPIRITS

## Tucano of Colombia

Tucano (too-CAH-no) people live deep in the Amazon regions of Brazil and Colombia. They spend their days fishing, hunting, foraging, and harvesting what plants they have been able to cultivate in their small communities. The Tucano believe in the Anaconda Ancestor and in a system of three worlds: sky, earth, and underworld. They live in constant fear, seeking to appease and control the spiritual forces around them that they believe determine their well-being or destruction in every aspect of their life. The community also reveres certain leaders who practice sorcery.

DECEIVED BY SPIRITS

## Pankara of Brazil

The Pankara (pahn-kah-RAH) live in the southern regions of Brazil. They usually work as sharecroppers and agriculturalists. The Pankara hold animistic beliefs that include what they call “enchanted ones,” or spirit beings that are part of the Pankara people. They believe these beings visit them through dreams, allowing them to commune with the pantheon of enchanted ones in the hill country surrounding their communities. Designated individuals of the Pankara community worship enchanted ones in private ceremonies.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

Have you ever had to discern whether a spirit or influence in your life is from God or not? How did testing the spirits, as 1 John 4:1-2 instructs, help you make a decision or gain clarity?

*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. **1 John 4:1-2***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Pankara people will embrace true faith in Jesus and reject deceptive spirits.

*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. **Ephesians 6:12***

### LET'S PRAY

Please ask God to show the Tucano people that His power is far stronger than any spirit in the heavens, on earth, or in the underworld.

### ACTIVITY

#### Musical Pan Pipes

Cut eight heavy-duty straws or food-grade PVC pipes into descending lengths (7 in. to 3 in.). Push clay plugs into one end of each pipe and let dry. Secure with adhesive if needed. Arrange pipes longest to shortest with open ends aligned. Tape together, reinforce with a stick if desired, and wrap with yarn. Blow across the top openings. Enjoy making a joyful noise to the Lord!





## Northern Conchucos Quechua Ancash of Peru

The Northern Conchucos Quechua Ancash (con-CHOO-cohs KAY-choo-ah AHN-cahsh) live secluded in some of the most remote regions of Peru's Andes Mountains. Their lives are difficult. They work hard to farm potatoes and beans. Most families build their own small, adobe homes out of mud bricks that help provide warm shelter during the harsh Andean nights. This people group has a variety of beliefs. They worship an Incan goddess called Mother Earth, or Pachamama. They also visit shamans for healing and help with curses, and they bow to idols of local Catholic saints for blessings and miracles. Many live without the hope of the gospel.

SEEKING EVERYWHERE BUT CHRIST

## Western Coastal Nahuatl of Mexico

The Western Coastal Nahuatl (nah-WHAH-tl) are Aztec descendants living along the Pacific coastal regions of Mexico. Many Nahuatl people tend small, family-owned farms. They produce crops to feed their communities and to sell to other regions. They practice a type of folk Catholicism that integrates Catholic religious practices with animistic Aztec beliefs and local traditions, such as sacrificing small animals. It is not uncommon for members of this group to visit local witch doctors, called curanderos and brujas, to curse enemies. For help and guidance, many also make offerings to statues of the local Catholic saint or apparition (what they believe to be a historic appearance) of the virgin Mary.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

When cultures blend faiths, syncretism emerges — like the Nahuatls' mix of animism and Catholicism. How can Christians effectively share the gospel with people who have mixed spiritual practices?

*But as for me, my prayer is to you, O LORD. At an acceptable time, O God, in the abundance of your steadfast love answer me in your saving faithfulness.*

**Psalm 69:13**

### LET'S PRAY

Pray the Western Coastal Nahuatl will turn in faith to Christ alone, not to witch doctors or statues.

*Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine.* **Psalm 33:18-19**



### LET'S PRAY

Pray the good news of Jesus Christ will reach the Northern Conchucos Quechua Ancash people and fill them with hope for eternal life in Him.

### RECIPE

#### *Sopa Teóloga (Priest's Soup)*

Boil 3 ½ lbs. bone-in chicken with 2 stalks sliced celery, 1 chopped carrot, 1 chopped leek, 1 bay leaf, 2 tsp. oregano, and ¼ cup fresh parsley for 1 ½ hours. Remove chicken and debone. Save chicken stock. Soak 6-8 bread slices in some milk and 1 cup stock, and blend. Sauté 2 chopped onions, 2 cloves chopped garlic, 2 Tbsp. chili peppers, salt and pepper to taste, and 1 peeled and chopped tomato. Stir in bread mixture until thickened. Simmer 20 mins. in 4 cups stock. Add 3 diced potatoes and 1 ½ cups crumbled queso fresco. Simmer at least 10 mins. Add chicken and 2 cups milk. Garnish with parsley.

## TRUSTING IN SHAMANS

## Asheninca Perene of Peru

The Asheninca Perene (ah-SHAY-noon-kah pay-ray-NAY) live in high jungle areas of the Peruvian rainforest, where they practice traditional agriculture and hunting, passed down through generations. Many also work as peasant laborers on neighboring coffee plantations. Their animistic worldview includes belief in good and evil spirits that influence their daily lives. The Asheninca Perene often rely on the local shaman to communicate with and appease the spirits on their behalf.

*But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. **Matthew 6:33-34***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that the Asheninca Perene people will hear the gospel and believe in the God who created them and the world in which they live.



### RECIPE

#### Coffee Concentrate

Steep 1 ½ cups (150 g.) coarse coffee grounds in 6 cups (1,200 g.) cold water for 12 hours. Strain through filter. Yields about 4 cups coffee concentrate. For hot coffee, mix 1 part concentrate with 2 parts boiling water. For iced coffee, use a 1:1 ratio with cold water. Add ice.

## STORY OF ANSWERED PRAYER



### DELIVERED FROM DARKNESS

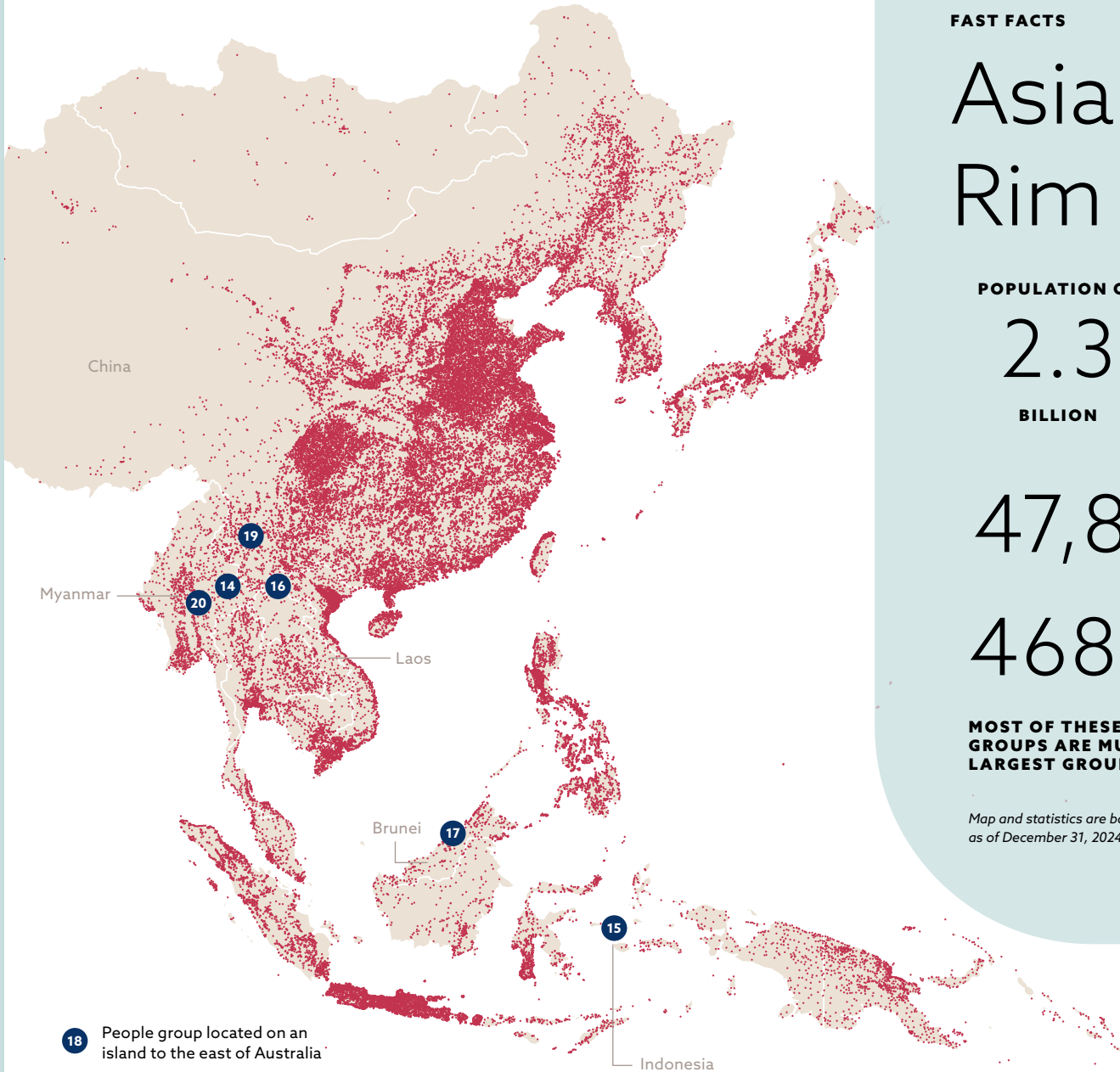
## Indigenous People of the Amazon

Jo was born and raised in the same remote village where he still lives today — tucked deep in the Amazon rainforest, days from the nearest town. His family taught him to fear jungle spirits and appease them through rituals and offerings. These malevolent spirits haunted Jo's dreams and daily life. In 2022, during one of his regular trips to town for supplies, Jo met believers from other villages at a meeting house run by IMB missionaries. Each time Jo returned to town, these missionaries and believers welcomed him, sharing Bible stories in small groups and one-on-one conversations about the God who loved Jo and sent Jesus to save him. In March 2025, Jo chose to follow Jesus and get baptized. Jo is the very first believer from his village!

### LET'S PRAY

Praise the Lord for redeeming Jo from sin into Christ's kingdom! Pray for Jo to abide deeply in Jesus and boldly share the treasure he has found in Christ.

*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. **Colossians 1:13-14***



18 People group located on an island to the east of Australia

Each red dot represents 50,000 lost people

Blue dots indicate page number for information on people groups

FAST FACTS

# Asian Pacific Rim People

POPULATION OF

2.3 3,389

BILLION

PEOPLE GROUPS

47,859

SOULS ENTER A CHRISTLESS ETERNITY EVERY DAY

468

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS STILL UNENGAGED WITH CHURCH-PLANTING STRATEGIES

**MOST OF THESE UNENGAGED AND UNREACHED GROUPS ARE MUSLIM AND BUDDHIST. THE LARGEST GROUP FOLLOWS ETHNIC RELIGIONS.**

*Map and statistics are based on IMB Global Research data as of December 31, 2024.*





## DISTRUSTFUL OF THE GOSPEL

## Tai Leng of Myanmar

The Tai Leng are historically a very proud and segregated people. Located in the hills of northern Myanmar, these Buddhist farmers live in tight-knit communities and view outsiders with suspicion. One man from another Tai people group said, "We don't trust anyone from other villages, even if they have the same language and Tai ethnic identity as us." This makes it very difficult for the gospel to reach Tai Leng people.

### RECIPE

#### Green Tea

Tai Leng people drink tea every day, often more than water! Their distinctive green tea is prepared to be very weak, just hot water with a few loose tea leaves floating at the top. Drinking it requires a special skill. They filter out the leaves with their lips and teeth while sipping the liquid. Make yourself a cup of tea like this, and pray that the gospel will permeate this people group as tea infuses an entire cup of water.

*Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*

**James 4:10**

### LET'S PRAY

Ask the Lord to make a way for the Tai Leng to hear the gospel. Pray for the Tai Leng to humble themselves and see Jesus as the Savior they need.

## TRAPPED BY EXPECTATIONS

## Sula of Indonesia

The Sula are farmers and fishermen who struggle to earn a living harvesting fish, spices, and coconuts. Most Sula people live on Sula Island in Indonesia's North Maluku province. On the surface, they follow Sunni Islam and publicly identify as Muslim on government documents. But in private, they practice traditional customs to seek healing, power, and blessings from various spirits. It's common for them to visit a shaman for help or to curse an enemy. One of the greatest barriers for them to believe the gospel is pressure from their community and family to not leave their religion and traditional practices.

*For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. **2 Corinthians 4:6***



### LET'S PRAY

Pray for "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" to shine down on the Sula people so they will follow and worship Jesus (2 Corinthians 4:6).

### DISCUSSION STARTER

The Sula people, shaped by a history of invasion by foreign powers, value community solidarity. How can the gospel speak to their desires for identity and security, offering true freedom and belonging in Jesus Christ?



## CHAINED TO BUDDHISM

## Phunoi of Laos

The Phunoi (foon-NOY) are an unreached people group of almost 50,000 people in the northern mountains of Laos. While they are surrounded by the hills and valleys that testify to the reality of the Creator God, they do not know or honor Him. Instead, they practice Buddhism and live in fear of powerful spirits they believe they must appease. Some Phunoi have learned about the God who made them. A few have chosen to trust in His power and follow Jesus, despite persecution. They long to see more of their people — their family and friends — embrace the gospel.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

Phunoi believers have faced persecution for following Jesus yet still cling to Him. What do you think motivates someone to maintain their faith when it costs them socially or puts them at risk? How might we learn from their example?

*Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence — as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil — to make your name known to your adversaries, and that the nations might tremble at your presence!*

**Isaiah 64:1-2**

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that more Phunoi people will hear the gospel, trust in Jesus, and know the Creator God who can free them from fear of spirits. Pray for Phunoi believers to be strong in their faith and bold in their witness.

## DEFINED BY TRADITIONS

## Tutung of Brunei

The Tutung (too-TOONG) are a people group living in a slower-paced region of Brunei. For generations, they were fishermen and seafarers, but many have now traded their nets for better paying jobs in larger cities. While their ancestors followed animistic beliefs, most Tutung today practice Islam. In Brunei, being Muslim is considered a lifelong identity — from birth to death. Some Tutung still celebrate their indigenous traditions alongside Islamic practices, creating a blend of the two belief systems. The more beliefs and traditions they cling to, the harder it seems for them to let go and embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ.

*So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God.*

**Matthew 15:6b**

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for the Tutung people to leave behind their worldly traditions and turn to Jesus!



### ACTIVITY

#### *Traditions that Glorify God*

List the traditions you follow, such as holidays or birthdays. Mark which ones draw you closer to God's Word and which, if any, pull you away. Brainstorm new traditions that would glorify God and deepen your engagement with His Word.



## RELYING ON RITUALS

## Xaracuu of New Caledonia

The 7,000 Xaracuu (sha-ra-KOO) people live on the South Pacific Island of New Caledonia. They work as woodcarvers or weavers and are generally sea-oriented people because of their year-round mild climate. They are predominately Roman Catholic but blend this with traditional spiritual practices such as worshipping their ancestors and sacred mountains, rivers, and trees. They need someone to share with them the good news of salvation by grace through faith. They need help to see their own discontentment and to learn how to have a personal relationship with Christ — knowing that only He can fill their emptiness.

### ACTIVITY

#### *Island Inspired Headband*

Many people on the island will weave flowers or straw to wear on their heads. Try making your own headband and pray for the Xaracuu people.

*And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. **John 8:32***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray God will make Himself known among the Xaracuu and change their lives, setting them free from bondage to traditions and rituals.

## ISOLATED IN FEAR

## Mishaba Laluo of China

The Mishaba Laluo (MEE-shah-bah lah-LOO-oh) are a people group of 700,000 in Yunnan, China. They worship tree spirits, rice spirits, and their ancestors — calling out to mountains for a harvest blessing and sacrificing pigs to ancient trees they believe will protect their village. Their traditional beliefs trap them in constant fear of angry spirits and keep them culturally isolated. For a Mishaba Laluo person, becoming Christian feels like betraying their people. While a Bible translation in their heart language is underway, most only have access to the Mandarin Chinese Bible they struggle to understand.



*I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. **Psalms 121:1-2***

### LET'S PRAY

Lord of heaven and earth, plant your saving gospel among the hills and in the hearts of the Laluo people.

### ACTIVITY

#### *Listen for Your Echo*

Find a nearby canyon, hilltop, alleyway, or church auditorium and shout Psalm 121:1-2. Listen for the echo. What if you were calling out for help your whole life and never heard the answer? What if that answer came back in another language that you barely understood? Ask God to lead you to how you can help bring a clear answer of the gospel to unreached people groups.

## STORY OF ANSWERED PRAYER



TRANSFORMED AND THRIVING

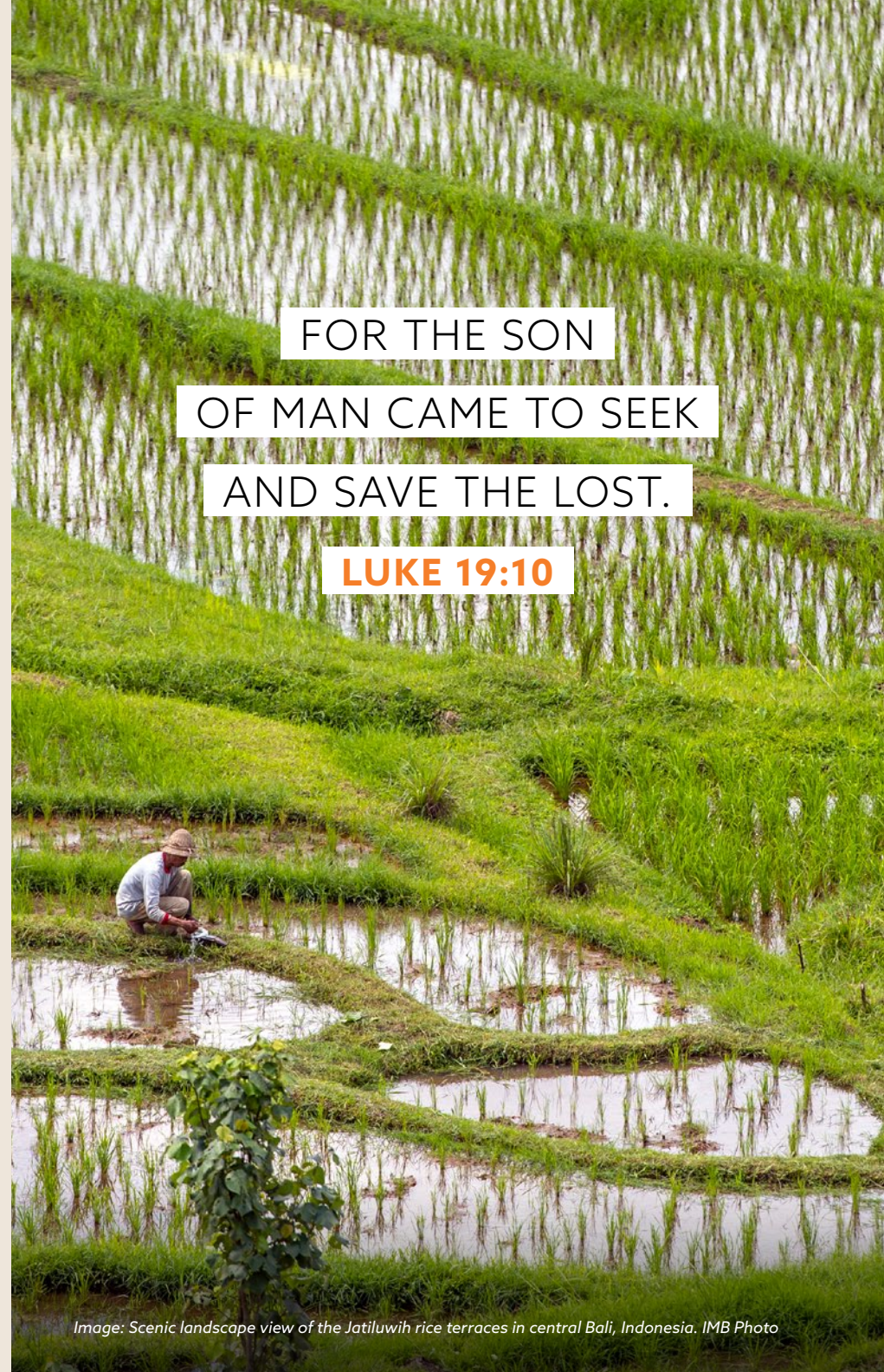
### Silver Palaung of Myanmar

Aleng's life was a haze of addiction. He lived in the heart of the Golden Triangle, a mountainous region where three Southeast Asian countries meet. There, opium was as common as rice. Trapped in its grip, he was barely coherent. He slurred his words when he spoke. No one could tell if he truly understood the gospel. Yet, believers spoke the message of Christ to him again and again. Patiently. Persistently. Then, something changed. A flicker of light broke through the darkness. The gospel took root. Aleng repented, and Christ shattered the power of addiction. Today, Aleng is no longer a man lost in addiction but a bold evangelist among the Palaung people. The same message that once pursued him now flows from his lips as he tells others of the hope and freedom found in Christ.

#### LET'S PRAY

Praise the Lord for transforming Aleng's life for eternity. Pray for Aleng's continued growth in Christ and that God will draw many more Palaung people to Himself through Aleng's witness of hope and freedom in Christ.

*Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you. **Mark 5:19b***



FOR THE SON  
OF MAN CAME TO SEEK  
AND SAVE THE LOST.

**LUKE 19:10**

*Image: Scenic landscape view of the Jatiluwih rice terraces in central Bali, Indonesia. IMB Photo*

FAST FACTS

# South Asian People

POPULATION OF

1.9  
BILLION

2,680  
PEOPLE GROUPS

40,457

SOULS ENTER  
A CHRISTLESS  
ETERNITY EVERY DAY

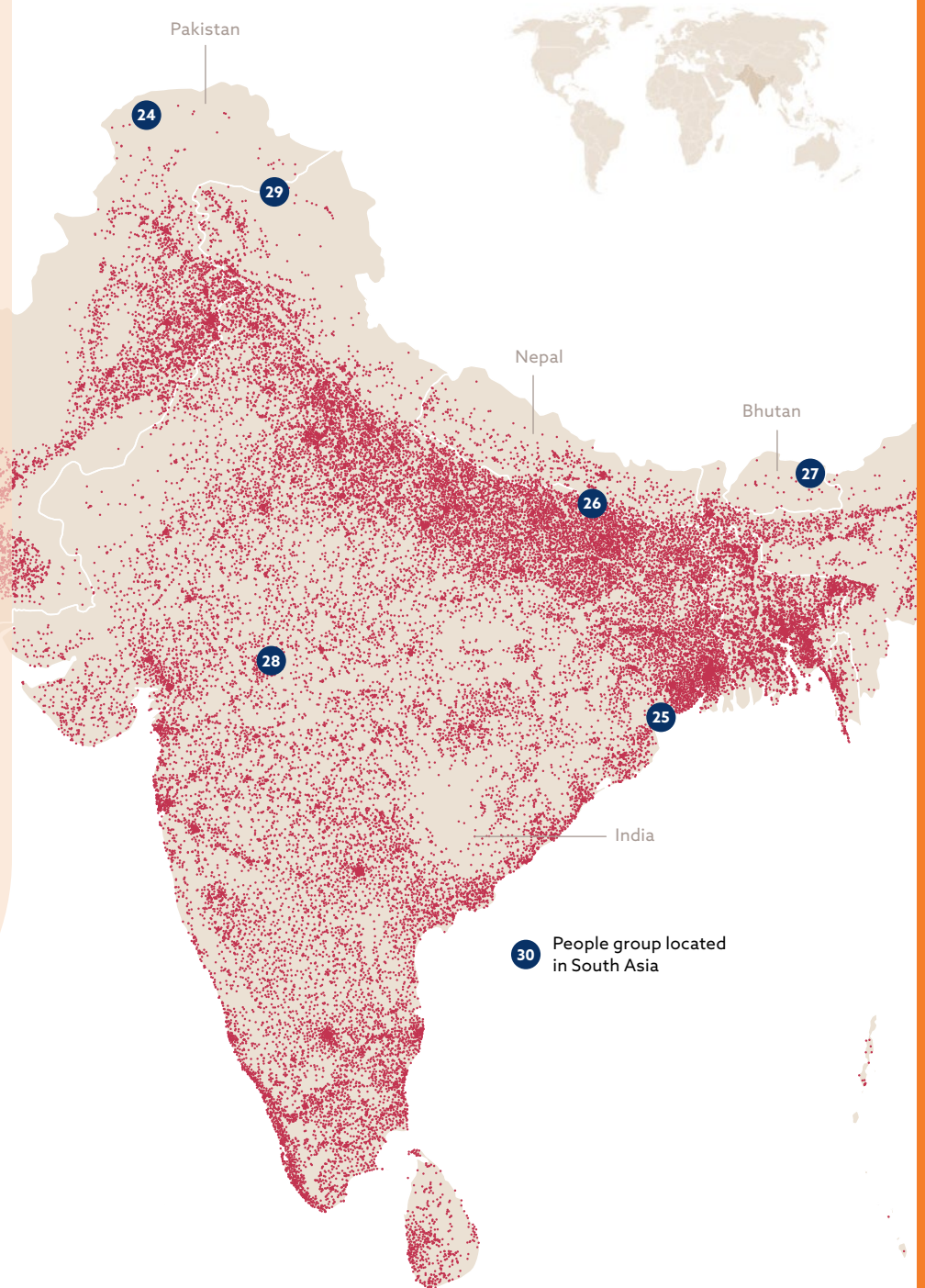
976

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS  
STILL UNENGAGED WITH CHURCH-  
PLANTING STRATEGIES

ALMOST 1/3 OF THE WORLD'S MUSLIM  
POPULATION LIVES IN SOUTH ASIA.

*Map and statistics are based on IMB Global Research data  
as of December 31, 2024.*

- Each red dot represents 50,000 lost people
- Blue dots indicate page number for information on people groups



30 People group located in South Asia

## TRAPPED IN TRADITION

## Kho of Pakistan

The Kho number more than 400,000 and live high in the mountains of northern Pakistan. They are very superstitious and have many traditional practices to ward off evil spirits. Many years ago, Naveed chose to follow Christ after having dreams of a “Man in White” and hearing the gospel from a visiting tourist. Since then, he has followed Christ without community, not knowing any other Christians among his tribe or language group. Praise God that Naveed is not completely alone — God’s presence has given him strength and comfort.

*Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. **Isaiah 41:10***

### LET’S PRAY

Ask God to draw more Kho people to faith this year, providing Naveed with fellow believers for community. Ask for laborers to join this harvest field and for continued strength and comfort for Naveed.



### DISCUSSION STARTER

Naveed has followed Christ alone for many years without any other Kho believers. How might Isaiah 41:10 specifically encourage someone who is the only Christian in their community? What aspects of God’s character in this verse would be most meaningful?



## CHAINED TO IDOL WORSHIP

## Bairagi (Odia) of India

As temple priests and followers of the Hindu god Vishnu, the Bairagi (buy-RAH-jee) of India are chained to the ways, practices, and beliefs of Hinduism. Devotion to Vishnu defines their identity, which is passed from generation to generation. They rely upon meditation and strict self-denial, while also believing that they need Vishnu’s grace to achieve liberation. Found in temples across most Indian villages and cities, the Bairagi are visible yet unreached with the gospel. Without a gospel witness, they will remain bound to worshiping a false god.

*Jesus looked at them and said, “With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.”*

**Mark 10:27**

### LET’S PRAY

Ask the Lord to send a gospel witness to the Bairagi people and do the seemingly impossible in their lives — break the pride, traditions, and deception that bind them and set them free through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

Despite being prominently visible in temples across India, the Bairagi remain unreached with the gospel. What are some examples of people in your own community who might be hiding in plain sight — visible to you daily but untouched by an authentic gospel witness?

## HOPING IN HINDU RITUALS

## Kanu of Nepal

The Kanu people of Nepal make their living roasting grain, making sweets, trading, and shopkeeping. Despite this business connection, they remain economically and socially disadvantaged because of their caste ranking. As Hindus, they seek hope in reincarnation, doing what they can to appease Hindu gods through endless rituals. They hope for blessing in their difficult circumstances, but these practices offer no true spiritual fruit or salvation.



*Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. **1 Peter 1:18-19a***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for the gospel to spread among the Kanu. Ask that they will hear and believe how much God loves them.

### RECIPE

*Nepali Chiya (spiced milk tea)*

Combine ¼ tsp. cardamom, 1 tsp. cinnamon, ¼ tsp. cloves, and a pinch of ginger in a bowl. Boil 1 ½ cups water. Add spices and 3 black tea bags, and simmer for a couple minutes. Add 1 cup milk and bring to a gentle boil. Reduce heat and simmer 2-3 minutes. Add sugar to taste, strain, and serve.

## ISOLATED IN DARKNESS

## Kurtop of Bhutan

The Kurtop people live in isolated areas in northern Bhutan. The nation's royal family has a special connection to the Kurtop people, tracing their ancestry back to one of these remote villages. The Kurtop follow Tibetan Buddhism, which influences all aspects of their lives. Most families consider it an honor to send their young sons to a monastery for a time. Most become monks for the spiritual reasons as well as the physical benefits of provided food, education, and lodging.



*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

**1 Peter 2:9**

### LET'S PRAY

Pray the Kurtop will hear the gospel and follow Jesus, who is calling them "out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

### DISCUSSION STARTER

The Kurtop people live in isolated areas, and many of their sons spend time in monasteries, which can be isolating as well. How might this physical and emotional isolation impact their ability to hear and respond to the gospel? How can Christians pray for the Kurtop people, and what creative ways can be used to reach out to those in isolated situations?

## GROWING UP WITHOUT THE GOSPEL

## Naita of India

The Naita (NAH-ee-ta) are Sunni Muslim who live in small communities throughout Central India. They primarily work as farmers and speak Malvi. Their faith is important to them, and they desire to raise their children to know and practice Islam. After completing their daily studies, Naita children often attend religious classes, where they learn to read the Quran and recite prayers. Because the Naita tend to live in isolated communities, they rarely have opportunities to hear the gospel.

*You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. **Deuteronomy 6:7***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for Naita people to hear the gospel and be saved. Pray that entire Naita households will believe and that parents will teach the Lord's ways to their children diligently.



### DISCUSSION STARTER

As many Naita young women become engaged to be married at young ages, they often must leave school and stay home. This can make it difficult for them to access outside information, including the gospel. What are some challenges of reaching the isolated Naita, especially the young women, with the gospel?

## SEPARATED FROM TRUTH

## Purig-Pa of India

The Purig-Pa are a rural people group living in the Ladakh region of India. They speak Purki and number around 55,000. Most are Sunni Muslim and live simple lives growing food to feed their families. Although some of their villages lie along tourist routes, those deeper in the region off the main road are suspicious of outsiders. There has been sporadic gospel sharing among them, but there are no known Purig-Pa followers of Jesus, and seekers are discouraged from learning more. Once, when a few boys showed interest in following Jesus, the community did not allow them to hear more or share what they heard about the gospel.



*Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. **1 Timothy 4:12***

### LET'S PRAY

Please pray for those who have heard the gospel to turn in faith, standing firm against persecution. Ask God to soften the hearts of those who are preventing the spread of the gospel. Pray for them to receive and share the truth of God's grace and mercy.

### ACTIVITY

#### *The Bana Game*

Try a popular game among Purig-Pa children, the "Bana Game." Players take turns as guard and stacker. The stacker tries to knock down a tower of 5-7 rocks with a ball. If successful, they must quickly rebuild the stack and draw a circle around it before the guard retrieves the ball and hits the stacker with it. Each player gets three attempts per turn.

## STORY OF ANSWERED PRAYER



GOSPEL LIGHT BREAKS THROUGH

### South Asian Peoples

Robert was born to the first known believers in his people group. They fled persecution in their mountain village and settled in a nearby city, where Robert grew up. Despite being raised by Christians, Robert didn't follow Jesus. As a young man, many of his friends and family were persecuted and martyred for their faith. Robert joined a radical militia to avenge their deaths. During a firefight, he promised to follow Christ if spared. He kept this promise after miraculously escaping. Recently, Robert joined a Project 3000 missionary explorer in the mountain villages where his people live. He met his distant relatives and helped lead five men to faith, translating the gospel into their language. The same gospel that transformed his parents' lives and his life continues transforming others today. Now, his people are no longer considered unreached.

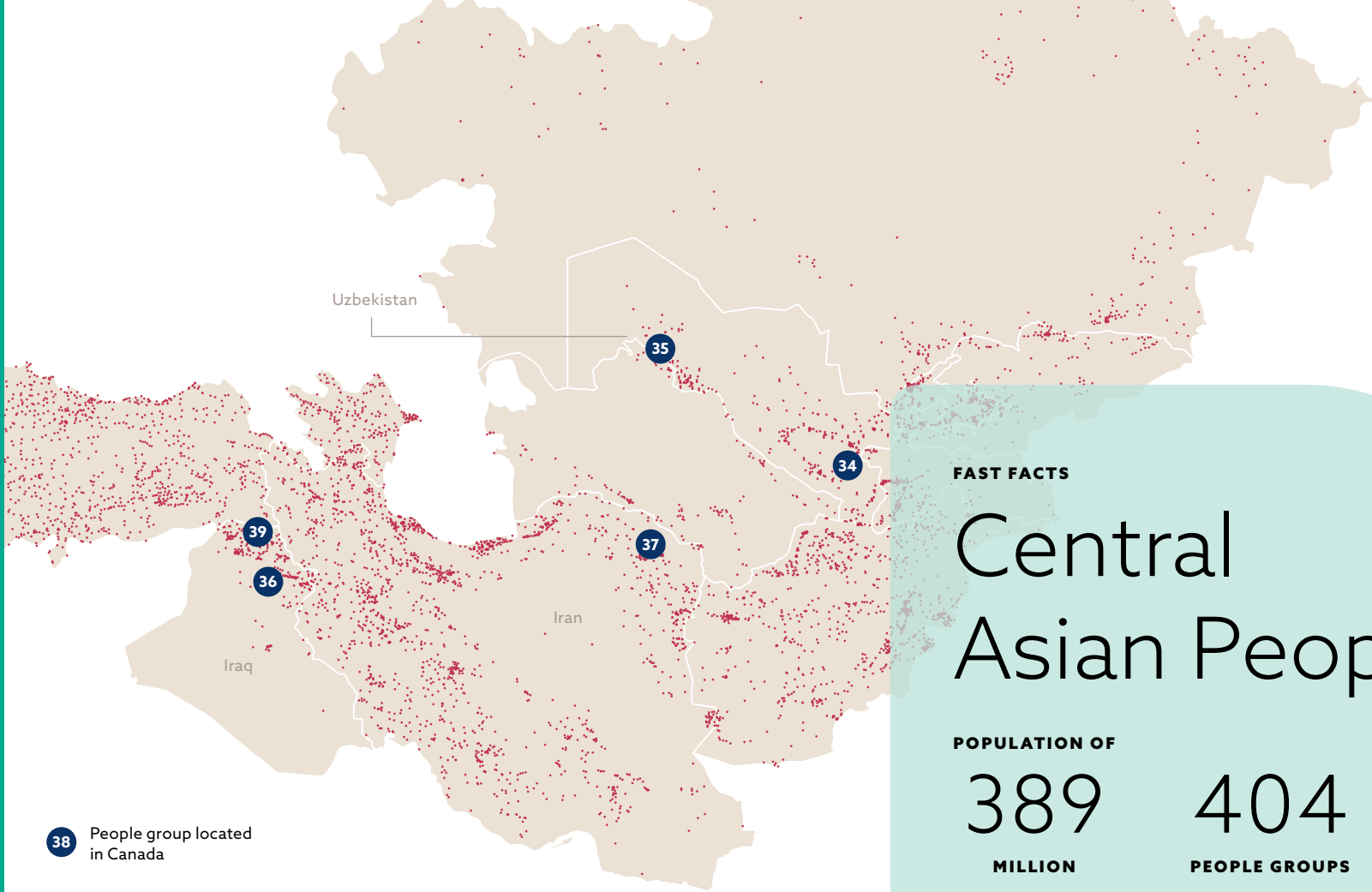
#### LET'S PRAY

Praise the Lord for all He has done in Robert's life and in this people group! Pray that the gospel will continue to spread among them and beyond, reaching new communities and transforming more lives.

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **Romans 1:16***

AND THIS GOSPEL  
OF THE KINGDOM  
WILL BE PROCLAIMED  
THROUGHOUT THE  
WHOLE WORLD AS A  
TESTIMONY TO ALL  
NATIONS, AND THEN  
THE END WILL COME.

**MATTHEW 24:14**



**FAST FACTS**

# Central Asian People

POPULATION OF

389 404

MILLION

PEOPLE GROUPS

8,279

SOULS ENTER A CHRISTLESS ETERNITY EVERY DAY

163

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS STILL UNENGAGED WITH CHURCH-PLANTING STRATEGIES

**MOST BELIEVERS IN CENTRAL ASIA ARE FIRST-GENERATION BELIEVERS, WITH A SMALL NUMBER HAVING KNOWN JESUS FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS.**

*Map and statistics are based on IMB Global Research data as of December 31, 2024.*





HERITAGE WITHOUT HOPE

## Tajiks of Uzbekistan

The Tajiks (TA-jiks) of Uzbekistan are concentrated mainly in the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, and the fertile Fergana Valley, once a significant stretch along the Silk Road. Along with their Tajik language, they speak Uzbek and some Russian. Their culture has been shaped by centuries of Persian influence, Islamic traditions, and Central Asian history. The Tajiks in Uzbekistan play an important role in the country's rich social fabric, contributing to economic development, academia, and the local cultural scene. They blend their traditional customs with modern Uzbek culture while preserving their unique identity through festivals, music, language, and literature. Like the Uzbeks around them, they follow Sunni Islam.

### RECIPE

*Uzbek Plov (rice and meat dish)*

Cook 2 lbs. (small pieces) of lamb in ½ cup oil over high heat until no longer pink. Add 2 sliced onions, cook until soft. Add 5 grated carrots, cook until browned. Add ½ cup of fresh barberries (or cranberries), 1 ½ Tbsp. cumin, 1 Tbsp. coriander, 1 tsp. black pepper, 4 whole heads garlic. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, cook 30 mins. Add 3 cups uncooked basmati rice. Add 2 cups boiling water and 2 Tbsp. salt. Cover and cook 20 mins.

*Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. **John 5:24***

### LET'S PRAY

Ask God to raise up a gospel witness in Uzbek cities, where many Tajiks live.



CLINGING TO CULTURAL IDENTITY

## Turkmen of Uzbekistan

The Turkmen of Uzbekistan live mostly in the western part of the country, particularly in the Karakalpakstan and Khorezm regions, near the border with Turkmenistan. They are descendants of ancient nomadic tribes and follow Sunni Islam. Their herdsman identity reflects itself in their livestock skills and traditional clothing, designed to be practical and durable. They speak Turkmen, Uzbek, and some Russian. Although many Turkmen in Uzbekistan have become integrated into Uzbek society, they continue to maintain their own customs, including traditional music, dance, and cuisine.

*Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness! **Psalm 150:2***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray God will provide a way for Uzbek believers to be accepted into these Turkmen communities where they can share the gospel more easily than in Turkmenistan.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

How can Uzbek believers build relationships with Turkmen and share the gospel? What are some creative ways to use cultural bridges in order to connect with minority groups and share the good news of Jesus, while being respectful of their unique heritage and traditions?



CLOSED TO THE GOSPEL

## Turkmen of Iraq

Turkmen are originally from Central Asia. Those living in the Middle East hesitate to admit they are Turkmen because of a history of oppression from the majority cultures. They live in the Fertile Crescent of Iraq and are not related to the Turkmen of Turkmenistan. Some Turkmen tribes arrived at the time of Genghis Khan. Others arrived later during the Ottoman Empire. They're suspicious of outsiders and tend to follow radical Islam. In the entire Middle East, there are only a few known Turkmen believers. Praise God that Turkmen in Iraq have access to the New Testament in their language.

*In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

**John 1:4-5**

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that God will use online gospel resources to transform Turkmen lives, bringing salvation and spiritual growth that will echo through generations.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

How can Christians use technology, like online gospel resources, to reach people with the gospel who may not have had access to it otherwise, like the Turkmen in Iraq?

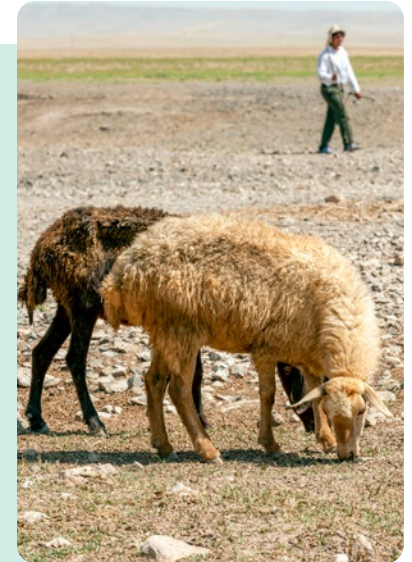
CUT OFF FROM TRUTH

## Khorasani Turks of Iran

Khorasani (kor-ah-SAH-nee) Turks live in the northern part of the Khorasan province of eastern Iran. Many are farmers who raise livestock and grow crops such as wheat, barley, and saffron. Others make jewelry and glassware or weave carpets and tapestries. While many learn Farsi, the national language, their heart language is Khorasani Turkish. Although education is available to all children, literacy rates remain low for girls in the villages. With no known Khorasani Turkish believers in Iran and no gospel resources in their heart language, Khorasani Turks need God to make a way for them to learn the truth about Jesus.

*How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"*

**Romans 10:14-15**



### LET'S PRAY

Pray that God will send Persian believers to tell the Khorasani Turks the good news of His love for them.

### ACTIVITY

#### *Persian Rug Craft*

Persian carpets are renowned worldwide for their intricate patterns, rich colors, and masterful craftsmanship that has been passed down through generations. Look up Persian rugs online and choose yarn in similar colors as the photos. Create a pattern on paper using the colorful yarn and glue.



STRUGGLING WITHOUT THE SAVIOR

## Northern Pashtun of Canada

Globally, the Northern Pashtun (PAHSH-toon) people number over 21 million, with at least 30 major tribes and countless sub-tribes and clans. While they live primarily in southern Afghanistan and western Pakistan, in the last decade, they have increasingly immigrated to Canada. While looking for work and a better life, they still hold onto their culture, heritage, and Pashto language. They practice Sunni Islam and navigate significant challenges. Consistent work and visas can be hard to secure, and integrating Western culture with their own can be confusing and frustrating. Amid these struggles, their greatest need remains unmet — a transformative relationship with Jesus.

*Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him! **Psalm 34:8***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for Iranian and Canadian believers to share the gospel with Pashtuns around them.

### RECIPE

*Afghan Chapli Kabab (ground beef patties)*

Combine 1 lb. ground beef, ½ chopped red onion, green and white parts of 2 chopped green onions, 1 chopped Roma tomato (no seeds), 1-2 chopped green chili peppers, 2-3 chopped garlic cloves, ½ in. chopped ginger, ¼ cup chopped cilantro, 1 ½ Tbsp. coriander, 1 ¼ tsp. cumin, 1 ½ Tbsp. dried pomegranate seeds (anardana), 1 tsp. red chili flakes, ¼ tsp. red chili powder, ¼ tsp. black pepper, 1 ½ tsp. kosher salt, 3 Tbsp. corn starch, 1 egg. Knead for 3-4 mins. Set aside. Add oil to skillet. Fry small, flat patties over high heat until outside is crispy.

## STORY OF ANSWERED PRAYER



FINDING IDENTITY IN CHRIST

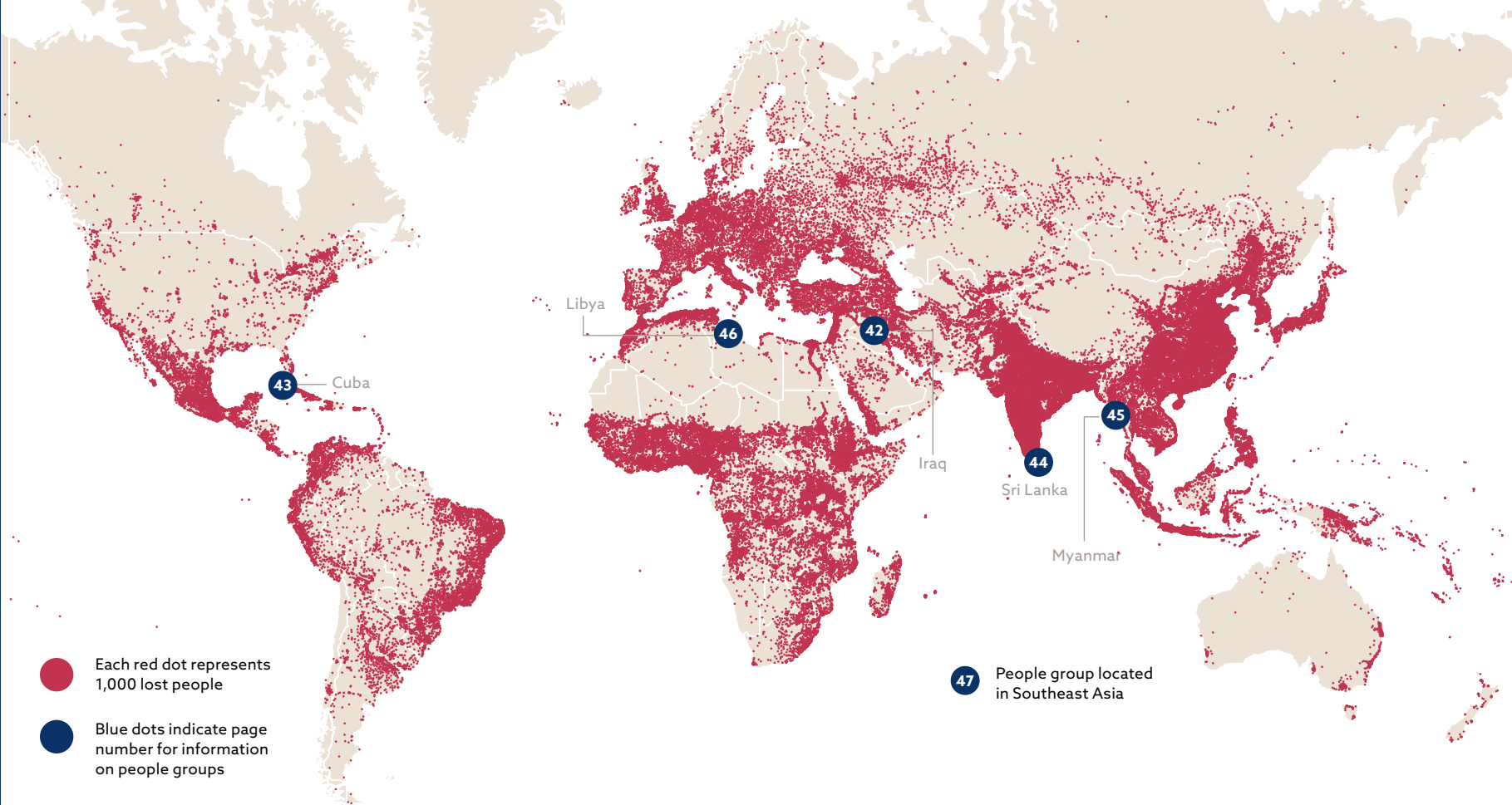
## Kurds of Iraqi Kurdistan

In the 2015 edition of *Loving the Lost*, we asked you to pray for the Kurds of Iraqi Kurdistan. God worked mightily through your prayers. Dozens of Iraqi Kurds who did not believe in Jesus ten years ago, now boldly declare, "Jesus is Lord!" In at least two cities, there are now churches where believers grow in Christ and non-believers can hear the good news for the first time. Small group Bible studies are forming in other places. As more people meet Kurdish believers, they ask in amazement, "Is it really possible for a Kurd to be a Christian?" Praise God that Iraqi Kurds have more examples that show God's transforming power and show the worth of following Jesus!

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for more Iraqi Kurds to trust in Christ alone for salvation. Ask God to continue growing His Church among Kurdish communities in Iraq.

*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***



FAST FACTS

# Deaf People

POPULATION OF

80

MILLION\*

233

PEOPLE GROUPS

1,593

SOULS ENTER A CHRISTLESS ETERNITY EVERY DAY

# 145

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS STILL UNENGAGED WITH CHURCH-PLANTING STRATEGIES

THERE ARE AROUND 300 DISTINCT SIGN LANGUAGES IN THE WORLD, AND IMB MISSIONARIES USE SIGN ROOTS AS THEY TRANSLATE BIBLE STORIES INTO THE DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.



Scan the QR code to access ASL videos of some of the people groups featured in this guide.

\*Culturally Deaf  
Map and statistics are based on IMB Global Research data as of December 31, 2024.



HIDDEN FROM HOPE

## Deaf of Iraq

The Deaf of Iraq include two unique communities, the Arab Deaf Iraqis and Kurdish Deaf Iraqis. Neither has access to the Bible in their heart sign language. Though they are culturally distinct, both communities share many challenges — they are often marginalized by society and sometimes hidden by their families in shame. Many Deaf Iraqis are denied the same educational and employment opportunities as hearing people. Yet God has not abandoned the marginalized Deaf of Iraq.

*And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. **Acts 2:6***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that the Lord will send a gospel witness to reach these hidden people, the Deaf of Iraq. Ask Him to provide them with access to His Word in their sign languages.

### RECIPE

*Mutabal (similar to Baba Ganoush)*

Roast 3 whole eggplants (with skin) until skin is charred and flesh is soft. Remove skin. Squeeze eggplant pulp to remove liquid. Mix eggplant with 3 cloves crushed garlic, 3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil, 1 cup Greek yogurt, 2 Tbsp. tahini, juice of 2 lemons, and salt to taste. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil. Top with chopped parsley and paprika. Serve with pita bread.



SEPARATED FROM CHRIST

## Deaf of Cuba

Poverty and social unrest mark the island of Cuba. The 109,000 Deaf there are not immune to these struggles. For many years, missionary partners have helped provide relief supplies, like food and medicine, while sharing the gospel. But there has been little progress in Bible translation and church planting. Without a video Bible in Cuban Sign Language and a long-term church-planting strategy to engage the Deaf in their heart language, they will continue to lack access to the good news that addresses their greatest problem — separation from Christ.

*And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*

**2 Timothy 2:2**

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for effective plans, people, and funding to support the needs of Bible translation and church planting among the Deaf of Cuba.

### RECIPE

*Tamal en Cazuela (Cuban Polenta)*

Cook 1 lb. of ½-inch cubed pork ribs in skillet until browned (8 mins.). Set aside. Cook 1 cup chopped yellow onion and 1 chopped jalapeño pepper until soft. Add 1 clove chopped garlic. Cook 1 min. Add ½ cup chopped tomatoes, return pork to pan, and cook for 5 mins. Salt and pepper to taste. Puree 7 cups fresh corn kernels (3-4 cobs). Cook puree until thick (10-15 mins.). Stir 1 cup pork into corn. Serve polenta topped with remaining pork. Garnish with parsley and lime.



## BOUND TO EARTHLY TIES

## Deaf of Sri Lanka

Most of the 165,000 Deaf individuals in Sri Lanka rely on their Buddhist families, who often serve as their sole source of income. When they contemplate following Jesus, they must grapple with the choice between financial support from their earthly family or eternal fellowship with God and a heavenly family. The limited presence of only a couple of Deaf churches on the island presents a significant obstacle in sharing God's Word and providing Deaf Sri Lankan believers with a church family.

*But he replied to the man who told him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." **Matthew 12:48-50***

## LET'S PRAY

Pray that the Sri Lankan Deaf will receive the gospel and be a part of God's eternal family.

## ACTIVITY

### Share Tea with a Friend

Ceylon tea with milk and sugar holds a cherished place in Deaf Sri Lankan culture and daily life. Pray for the Deaf of Sri Lanka as you share a cup of Sri Lankan tea with a friend.

## ALONE IN SPIRITUAL DARKNESS

## Deaf of Myanmar

In a country ravaged by civil war since 2021, the military junta allowed the 526,000 Deaf Burmese to be oppressed, resulting in their struggle to secure jobs and a stable income to support themselves. The junta also works to prevent the gospel from getting to the population, presenting significant obstacles for anyone to go and share it with the Deaf. Most people in their homeland follow Buddhism, but Deaf individuals are often excluded from spiritual conversations and remain in darkness, lacking access to the truth and hope found in Jesus Christ.

*You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock.*

**Isaiah 26:3-4**

## LET'S PRAY

Ask Jesus, the Prince of Peace, to grant the Deaf peace from war and oppression and make a way for them to learn how they can have hope for everlasting life through faith in Him.



## DISCUSSION STARTER

What does it mean to "trust in the Lord forever" (Isaiah 26:4) in the face of overwhelming adversity, like the Deaf Burmese are experiencing? How can you apply this biblical principle to your own life?



## MARGINALIZED AND LIMITED

## Deaf of Libya

The Deaf community in Libya is a vibrant and expressive mix of 69,000 Arabs, Bedouins, and Berbers known for their strong social bonds. They communicate through Libyan Sign Language. The Deaf in Libya face significant communication barriers with the general hearing population. They often face social marginalization and limited job opportunities. Most Deaf Libyans adhere to Sunni Islam and tend to be private about their religious beliefs and guarded in spiritual conversations with non-Muslims.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

The Sahara covers over 90% of Libya, making it one of the driest countries on Earth. How can the beauty and majesty of God's creation in this desert landscape be used as a bridge to share the gospel with the Deaf Libyan community, who face significant social and spiritual challenges?

*You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*

**Jeremiah 29:13**

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for Deaf Libyans to be open to the gospel and seek the Lord with their whole hearts. Ask God to call and send workers to go and share the good news with them.

## STORY OF ANSWERED PRAYER



## FINDING FREEDOM IN CHRIST

## Deaf of Southeast Asia

Jueri's life as a Buddhist was consumed by fear. "Darkness enveloped me with no hope," she said. Plagued by sleepless nights and fears of evil spirits, Jueri confided in a friend who suggested she pray to Jesus. Desperate, Jueri prayed for peace. That night, she slept soundly. After that experience, she learned more about Jesus and chose to follow Him. For the first time in her life, she experienced enduring hope. Though she initially struggled to understand the Bible, everything changed when she met Deaf IMB missionaries skilled in Bible storying. After learning Bible stories in her sign language, Jueri exclaimed, "Jesus became alive!" Empowered by God's Word, Jueri shared her faith with her friends and led many to Christ. Jesus transformed her life, freeing her from darkness and filling her with hope.

### LET'S PRAY

Praise the Lord for transforming Jueri's life! Pray that she will continue growing in Him. Ask that more Deaf people in Southeast Asia will also experience Christ's salvation and enduring hope.

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.* **John 14:27**



## How Prayer Led our Family to Missions

The Lord used the *Loving the Lost* prayer guide in a mighty way as He called us to go.

Throughout 2022, our family prayed every week for the people groups in the guide. That sparked conversations with our children. To learn there are people who've never heard of Jesus blew their minds.

We started talking about who missionaries are — people who cross cultures to tell others about Jesus because people can't believe in God unless someone tells them the truth of what Jesus has done.

Then, our oldest and our second-born accepted Christ. As God was working in our family and we were telling people about Jesus, we felt like the next step for us was to pursue missions overseas.

We prayed "Lord, if You want us to do this — leave our church that we love, where life is good, and go overseas — plant it in the hearts of our kids." And He did.

*Image: Missionaries Joe and Laura and their four kids.*

In this season of prayer, our oldest son said, "I want to be a missionary." We asked why. He said, "Well, there are people in the world who don't know Jesus, and we do know Jesus. So we can tell them about Jesus." Our second son said essentially the same thing.

The *Loving the Lost* prayer guide played a huge part in us discipling our children and teaching them about unreached people groups around the world. God used it to grow our hearts for praying for the lost.

Now we're in Europe. Our first day here, our oldest son said, "I'm ready to go out and tell people about Jesus!" Our whole family is right on board. That's been a joy to see.

*Joe and Laura*

JESUS SAID TO THEM AGAIN,

"PEACE BE WITH YOU.

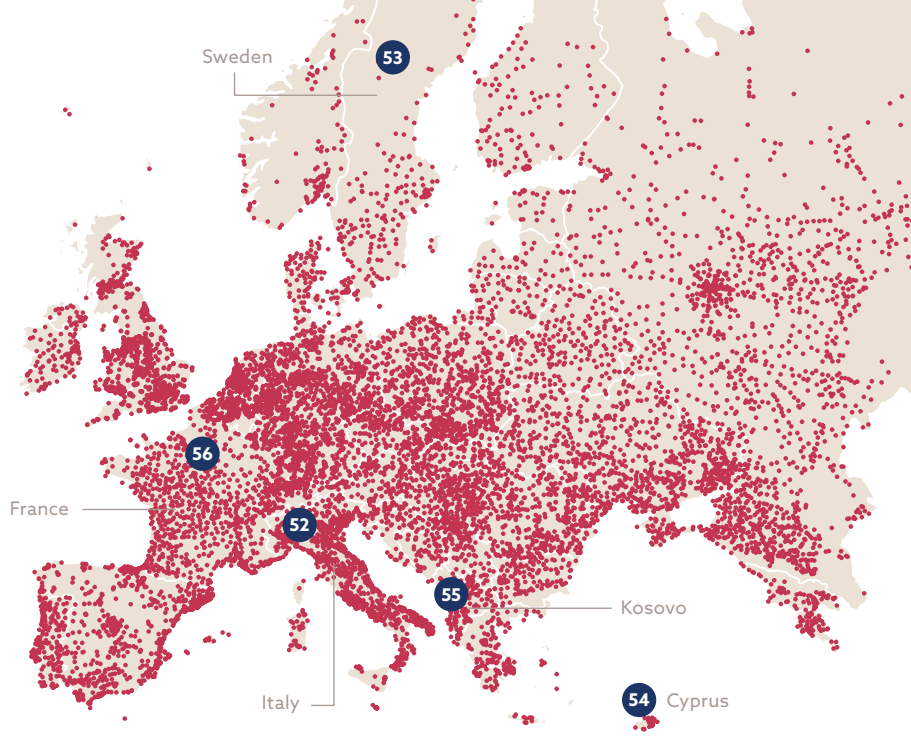
AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME,

EVEN SO I AM SENDING YOU."

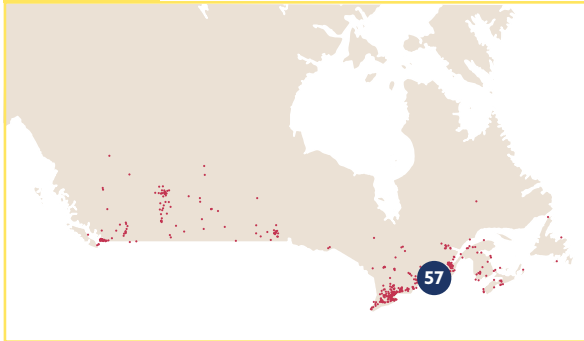
**JOHN 20:21**



*Image: A storm rapidly approaches the small island traditionally attributed to Paul's shipwreck at Malta in Acts 28.*



CANADA



AUSTRALIA



FAST FACTS

# European People

POPULATION OF

783  
MILLION

707  
PEOPLE GROUPS

16,502

SOULS ENTER A CHRISTLESS ETERNITY EVERY DAY

230

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS STILL UNENGAGED WITH CHURCH-PLANTING STRATEGIES

**ONLY ABOUT 1% OF THE PEOPLE LIVING IN EUROPE ARE EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN.**

*Map and statistics are based on IMB Global Research data as of December 31, 2024.*



- Each red dot represents 50,000 lost people
- Blue dots indicate page number for information on people groups

## RELIGIOUS WITHOUT RELATIONSHIP

## Armenians of Italy

For centuries, Armenians in Italy have preserved their culture, language, and religion, with family central to their heritage. Most Armenians call themselves Christian, and the Armenian Church is one of the oldest churches in the world. However, behind this religious identity lies a heart-wrenching spiritual reality that describes many in this people group: "They do not know Jesus at all," confided one Armenian believer. Very few have heard and received the good news of Jesus Christ, and no one is currently engaging them with the gospel. Unless something changes, many Armenians of Italy will remain far from God for eternity.



*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **Ephesians 2:8-9***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for Armenians to understand that only faith in Jesus — not in their nationality — makes them Christian. Pray for Armenian believers to be bold in sharing the hope of Jesus.

### RECIPE

*Madzoon (Armenian yogurt)*

Mix 1 cup plain yogurt, 1 tsp. vanilla, ½ tsp. cinnamon, and a drizzle of honey. Chill until ready to serve. Just before serving, gently fold in ¼ cup seasonal fruit (fresh berries, cherries, peaches, or dried fruit) and 3 Tbsp. walnuts, pecans, or pistachios.



## TRUSTING IN TRADITION

## Southern Saami of Sweden

The Southern Saami of Sweden are surrounded by mountains and snow in northern-central Sweden, where they have traditionally lived as reindeer herders for generations. About 200 years ago, the Lutheran Church spread to these remote communities. While some Saami still attend a Lutheran church, most do so out of obligation rather than genuine faith in Christ, and they lack access to the full Bible in their language. Other Saami follow traditional animistic beliefs, greatly revering reindeer. Whether nominally Lutheran or following ancestral ways, most Southern Saami do not understand Christ's gift of salvation or have a personal relationship with Him.

*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."*

**Isaiah 52:7**

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for the full Bible to be translated into the Southern Saami language. Pray that Saami will be eager to know the truth of the gospel.

### ACTIVITY

*Tree Bark Bookmark*

Many Saami make crafts using birch tree bark. Find a tree with interesting bark texture, place construction paper against it, and gently rub with the side of a crayon to capture the pattern. Cut your rubbing into a bookmark shape. Pray for the Saami people whenever you use your tree bark bookmark.



CULTURAL FAITH, NO BELIEF

## Russians of Cyprus

After the fall of the Soviet Union, many Russians migrated to Cyprus for sunnier weather and economic opportunities. Today, Russians in Cyprus balance maintaining their cultural identity and assimilating into local life. Most consider themselves Christian because they were born into the Orthodox Church, but about a third do not believe in God at all. Since the start of the war with Ukraine, life has become increasingly difficult for Russians living outside their homeland, and many have felt the need to hide their Russian identity to avoid discrimination.

*Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. **Isaiah 55:3***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for Russians to embrace the gospel and find their identity, not in the Orthodox Church or their nationality, but in Christ.

### ACTIVITY

*A Simple Gift, Showing God's Love*

Though many Russians do not yet believe the gospel, God loves them with an everlasting, sacrificial love. He has demonstrated this "in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Give someone a gift today, maybe a flower, a picture you've made, or a word of encouragement, remembering that God's love cannot be earned. It's a free gift.

ISOLATED BEHIND BARRIERS

## Gorani of Kosovo

The Gorani of Kosovo live in small villages nestled in the mountains bordering Albania and Macedonia. They strive to keep their culture and traditions alive. Known for being excellent bakers and using wild fruits to create healthy fermented drinks called "sok," this community faces waning numbers as young people and entire families leave to find work in other countries. Living in remote mountain areas, the Gorani keep to themselves, making them difficult to reach with the gospel. More than 95% of them hold fast to Sunni Islam, and there is currently no known work to reach them with the good news of Jesus Christ.



*As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty. **Matthew 13:23***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send laborers, filled with the fruit of the Spirit, to the Gorani of Kosovo.

### RECIPE

*Fruit Smoothie*

The Gorani use blackberries, cherries, and raspberries to make a fermented fruit drink called "sok." Make a fruit smoothie, using bananas, milk, and frozen berries. As you add the ingredients, ask God to draw the Gorani to Himself and produce an abundant harvest.



## RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS, NOT FAITH

## Serbs of France

The Serbs of France maintain a distinct cultural identity separate from mainstream French culture, often having migrated mainly for school or work opportunities. Their unique cultural heritage includes Serbian Orthodox religious traditions. One example is their Epiphany celebration, where a priest throws a cross into a lake and people race to see who can retrieve it. Whoever wins is said to have good health and favor in the new year. Most Serbs of France participate in Orthodox traditions out of cultural obligation, while many have abandoned the religion entirely.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

Many Serbs attend church and participate in religious traditions because of faithfulness to a religion rather than to Jesus Christ. Do you know others who go through the motions of Christianity out of religious habit or obligation rather than a relationship with Jesus? How can we pray for and support them, guiding them to an intimate relationship with Christ?

*"Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them." Acts 14:15*

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that the Serbs of France follow Christ by repentance and faith.

## STORY OF ANSWERED PRAYER



## EMBRACING REAL FAITH

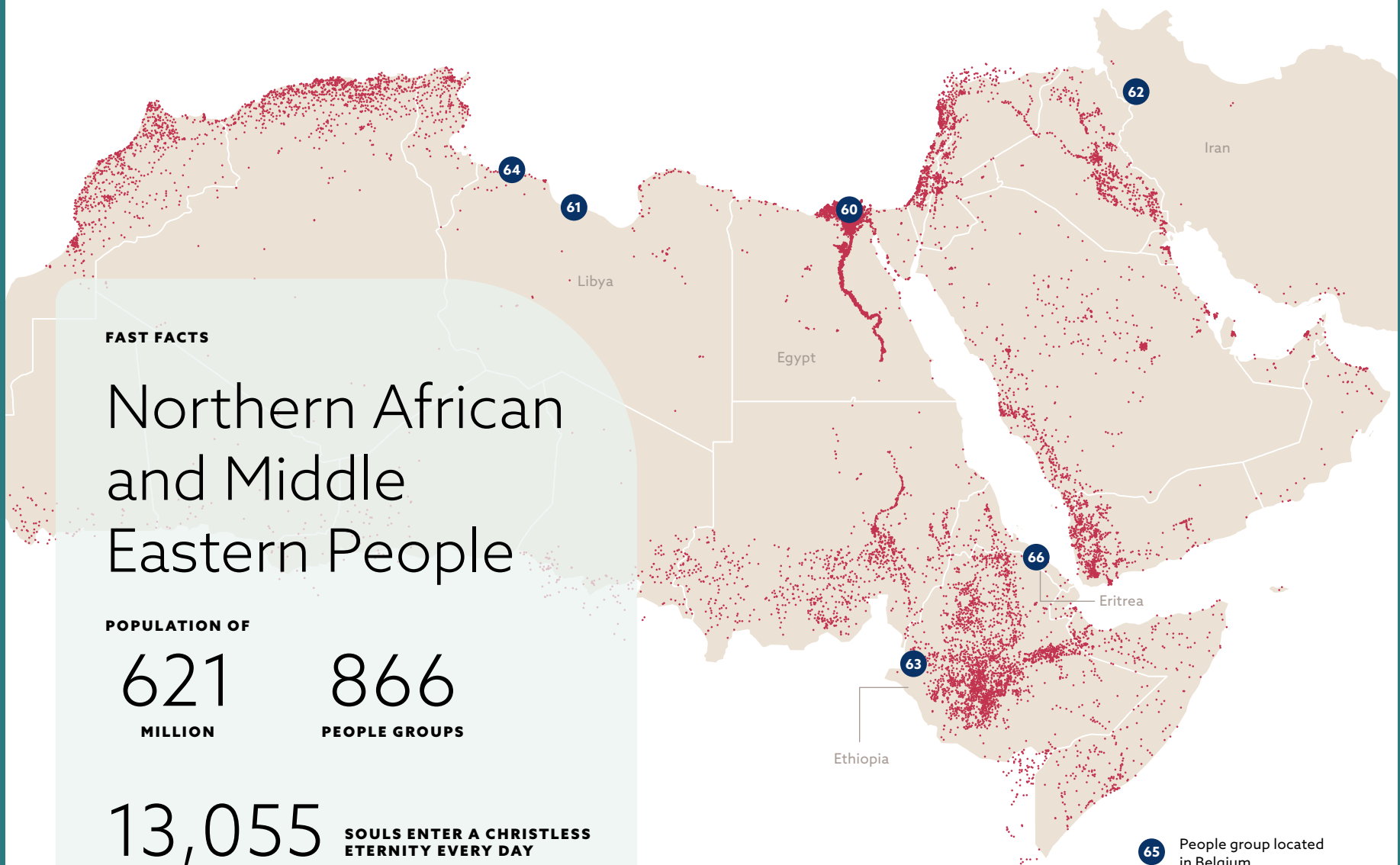
## French Canadians of Canada

In 2018, you prayed for French Canadians (Quebecois) who have worked hard to maintain their French language and culture. The Catholic Church once dominated this region, but many people have stopped going to church and have walked away from faith in general. Still, God has been at work, answering your prayers for these people. Today, new Baptist churches have been planted in several cities where many French Canadians live. One church has baptized over 1,100 new believers! One young woman, struggling with depression, studied the Word of God on her own for three years before finally meeting another Christian who invited her to church. Today, she is not only attending church but also serving and thriving as a child of God.

### LET'S PRAY

Praise God for drawing French Canadians to Himself. Pray for these believers to be discipled well and to boldly proclaim their faith among those who don't know Jesus yet.

*For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith. 1 John 5:4*



**FAST FACTS**

# Northern African and Middle Eastern People

POPULATION OF

621

MILLION

866

PEOPLE GROUPS

13,055

SOULS ENTER A CHRISTLESS ETERNITY EVERY DAY

503

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS STILL UNENGAGED WITH CHURCH-PLANTING STRATEGIES

**ALL THREE OF THE WORLD'S MAJOR MONOTHEISTIC RELIGIONS (CHRISTIANITY, JUDAISM, AND ISLAM) HAVE SIGNIFICANT POPULATIONS AMONG THESE PEOPLES.**

Map and statistics are based on IMB Global Research data as of December 31, 2024.



- Each red dot represents 50,000 lost people
- Blue dots indicate page number for information on people groups

RELYING ON GOOD WORKS

## Northern African and Middle Eastern Peoples in the Nile Delta

Forty million people live in the Delta of the Nile River, an area the size of Massachusetts that runs between Alexandria, the Suez Canal, and Cairo. Egyptian Arabs, Nubians, Domari Gypsies, Bedouin Muslims, as well as a few Coptic Christians live in high-rise apartments surrounded by farmland. Donkey carts, trucks, and cars clog the streets. Everyone knows everyone. People have a village mindset as they farm, work, go to school, marry one another, and worship together. Few have heard of salvation that comes by grace, not by works, or know that Jesus is Lord.

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. **Romans 3:23-24***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that believers in Jesus will meet Northern African and Middle Eastern people in the Nile Delta who will introduce them to others in their tight-knit communities. Pray for believers to have many opportunities to share the gospel.



### RECIPE

#### *Egyptian Ful (Fava) Beans*

Combine 2 cans drained fava beans, ½ cup water, salt, and 1 tsp. cumin in a frying pan and heat. Mash with a fork. Add 2 chopped garlic cloves, 1 chopped jalapeño or other hot pepper, juice of 1 lemon, and a bit of olive oil. Remove from heat and top with chopped tomato, chopped fresh parsley, and chopped jalapeño or other hot pepper. Serve with pita bread for dipping.



GRIPPED BY CULTURAL IDENTITY

## Sirtican Bedouin of Libya

Among the Sirtican Bedouin (SIR-tih-can BED-oo-win) of Libya, cousin marriages are still common to preserve bloodlines and keep resources in the family. Their lives are difficult due to living in hot, rugged environments with few resources and civil instability. This population of 37,000 strongly identifies as Sunni Muslim.

*Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually! **Psalm 105:4***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that the Sirtican Bedouin will seek the Lord. Ask Him to reveal the gospel to them and that they will find their identity in Christ.

### RECIPE

#### *Sirtican Bedouin Unleavened Bread*

Combine 2 cups flour and ½ tsp salt. Add 1 cup cold water. Knead for 5 mins. Pinch into 5-7 balls, roll out to 6 inches. Fry in 2-3 Tbsp. olive oil on hot skillet, 2 min. each side. Enjoy a Sirtican Bedouin meal with a cup of milk, a bowl of yogurt, and a piece of unleavened bread. For dessert, munch on a handful of delicious dates!



HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

## Hulaula Jews of Iran

The world's 52,000 Hulaula (who-LAU-la) originate from Iran, Turkey, and Iraq. They follow rabbinical Judaism, placing special emphasis on the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament. They do not trust in Jesus for salvation. Most live in Israel, but around 375 reside in Iran. They often assimilate to the culture around them, so they are hard to identify. This makes it difficult to reach them with the good news. However, even though the Hulaula Jews of Iran are hidden within Iranian society, they are not hidden from God.

*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations. **Jeremiah 1:5***

### LET'S PRAY

Please ask God to place believers in the Hulaula people's paths to share the good news of the Messiah with them.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

How can the Hulaula's deep respect for the Torah become a bridge for sharing about Jesus as the promised Messiah? What specific connections in those first five books might open meaningful spiritual conversations?

STRIVING WITHOUT ASSURANCE

## Anfillo of Ethiopia

The Anfillo (ah-n-FEE-lo) of Ethiopia are a small people group with a population of less than 3,000. They work as farmers and merchants and live in mud huts. They follow Sunni Islam, constantly working, praying, and fasting to please Allah. The Anfillo are very hard to reach because of political unrest in their region and their location in the deep countryside. Unless something changes, they will remain lost, unengaged and unreached with the gospel.



*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. **John 3:16***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for creativity in accessing the Anfillo of Ethiopia. Pray they will hear and receive the good news that the true and living God loves them and sent His Son to die for them.

### RECIPE

#### *Ethiopian Salad*

Toss together 3 sliced bananas, 1 diced tomato, 1 red onion, 1 sliced avocado, and 5 sliced strawberries. Drizzle with oil. Add salt and minced garlic to taste. Tastes best when paired with a spicy stew!

## CAPTIVE TO ISLAM

## Libyan Arabs of Libya

Libyan Arabs number almost 2.8 million in Libya and 3.6 million worldwide across seven countries. They speak Libyan Arabic and practice Sunni Islam. Religion plays a significant role in shaping their daily lives, values, and beliefs. Libyan Arabs place great importance on hospitality, respect for elders, and family ties. Libyan cuisine features dishes like couscous, tagine, and shakshuka. Their rich cultural heritage is reflected in vibrant festivals, music, and handicrafts. Although the Bible exists in their language, sharing the gospel in Libya can be difficult and involves risk.



*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. **Revelation 3:20***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for Libyan Arabs to have access to the gospel. Pray that those living outside the country will believe the gospel and take it back to their homeland.

### ACTIVITY

#### Host a Libyan Tea Party

To practice hospitality, host a traditional Libyan tea party, serving hot tea with lots of sugar and a side of dates. Serve the tea with your right hand. The left hand is considered unclean in Libyan culture. Greet your guests with a traditional Libyan greeting, such as "asalaamu alaikum" (peace be upon you).



## LONGING FOR SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

## Iraqis of Belgium

What do fries and Jonah have in common? Both connect to the 22,000 Iraqi Arabs, mostly refugees, living in Belgium. Belgium is known for waffles, chocolates, and great fries, while Iraq is the home of ancient Nineveh, where God brought about an amazing transformation in biblical times. Today, God is doing another amazing work by bringing Sunni Muslim Iraqi Arabs to Belgium, where they have religious freedom to encounter His Word, His Son, salvation, and hope.

*Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **Romans 10:9***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that each Iraqi Arab in Belgium will "call out mightily to God" and "turn from his evil way" and be saved (Jonah 3:8).

### RECIPE

#### Curry Ketchup

In a bowl, mix 1 cup tomato ketchup, 4 tsp. curry powder, 2 tsp. paprika, 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce, 2 tsp. honey, 1 tsp. chili powder, and 1 tsp. water. Enjoy with fries.

## STORY OF ANSWERED PRAYER



TURNING TO CHRIST ALONE

### Afar of Eritrea

The Afar (AH-far) of Eritrea live as semi-nomadic herdsmen and fishermen. They are deeply loyal to their families and sultan, defensive of their land and honor, and dedicated to their traditions. For decades, persistent prayer and consistent radio broadcasts of God's Word have prepared this rocky, desert field for harvest. Now, God is bringing forth precious fruit! He is stirring believers of neighboring people groups to reach out to the Afar, bringing to life the Bible stories, songs, and prayers they have heard on the radio for years. Upon this foundation of prayer, Scripture, personal testimonies, and discipleship, God's name is being glorified among the Afar of Eritrea. And some are turning to Him!

#### LET'S PRAY

Pray for Afar believers to stand firm in their faith.  
Ask that God will add to their number.

*Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. **James 5:7***

ALL THIS IS FROM GOD,  
WHO THROUGH CHRIST  
RECONCILED US  
TO HIMSELF AND  
GAVE US THE MINISTRY  
OF RECONCILIATION.

**2 CORINTHIANS 5:18**

Image: Landscape Mount Nebo in the distance. According to the Old Testament, Mount Nebo is the place where Moses died.

FAST FACTS

# Sub-Saharan African People

POPULATION OF

1

BILLION

2,603

PEOPLE GROUPS

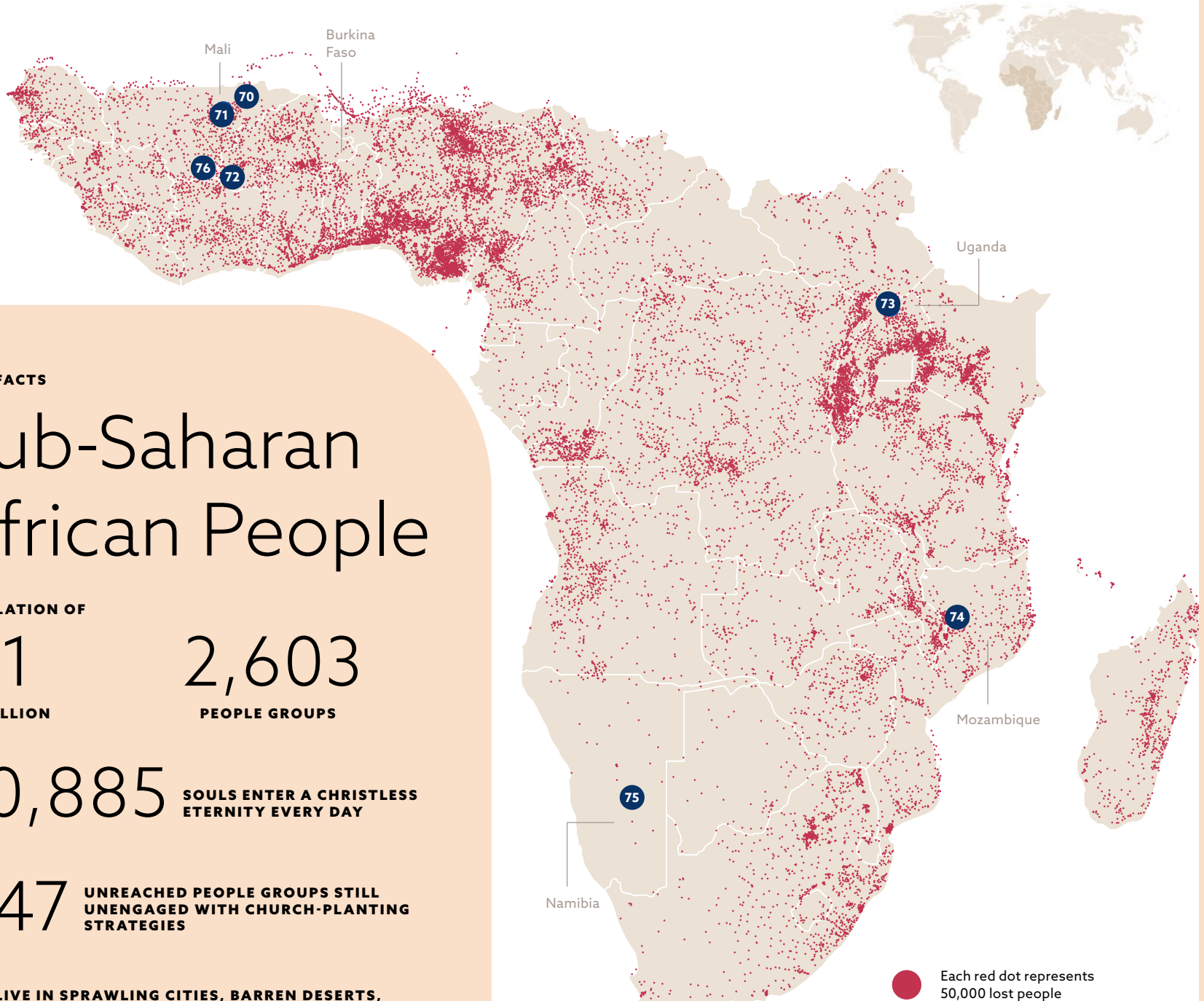
20,885

SOULS ENTER A CHRISTLESS ETERNITY EVERY DAY

447

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS STILL UNENGAGED WITH CHURCH-PLANTING STRATEGIES

THEY LIVE IN SPRAWLING CITIES, BARREN DESERTS, RAIN FORESTS, AND ON TROPICAL ISLANDS.



Each red dot represents 50,000 lost people



Blue dots indicate page number for information on people groups

Map and statistics are based on IMB Global Research data as of December 31, 2024.



## TRAPPED IN SPIRITUAL STRONGHOLDS

## Bozo of Mali

The Bozo (BOH-zoh) people live, grow rice, and fish along the rivers in Mali. For years, God's Word has been broadcast through radio and social media in Bozo regions. Although a fierce spiritual stronghold is preventing them from leaving folk Islam and following Jesus, a spark of light occasionally breaks through. One Bozo man had never heard of Jesus until he found himself in prison, where he first heard Scriptures on the radio in his own language. Intrigued, he contacted a believer who visited him in prison and gave him an SD card loaded with Scripture. Now, the man is back home in his village, listening to the Word of God every day and seeking answers to questions about what he is learning.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

One Bozo man first heard God's Word through the radio in prison. What places or circumstances has God used in your life to reveal His truth?

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. **Isaiah 9:2***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray for God's light to break through spiritual darkness among the Bozo people. Pray that this man and others who are seeking will find true freedom and transformation in Christ Jesus.

## STRANGLER BY SUPERSTITION

## Tiemaxo Bozo of Mali

The Tiemaxo (tee-eh-MAH-kho) Bozo are fishermen who live along the Niger River in Mali. They call themselves Muslim yet still hang onto their traditional animistic beliefs. Though they are people of the water, they live in fear of water spirits. When troubled, they seek help from Islamic teachers who claim power over these spirits through magic. Children are particularly vulnerable, often forced to wear protective charms around their waist, neck, or arms. While used for protection, belief in these charms actually creates spiritual bondage.



*And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." **Mark 1:27***

### LET'S PRAY

Pray that the Tiemaxo Bozo will witness the authority and power of Jesus over evil spirits, just as those in Mark 1:27 did. Pray they will abandon their charms and fully trust in Christ alone.

### ACTIVITY

#### Creations of Clay

Bozo children use heavy, putty-like clay from nearby riverbanks to make their own toys, such as boats, animals, and dolls. Use air-dry clay to create a keepsake that will remind you to pray for the Bozo people.

KEPT FROM CONSIDERING CHRIST

# Senara Senufo of Burkina Faso

The Senara Senufo (sheh-NAR-ah SEN-oo-foh) of Burkina Faso primarily practice animism — a belief that natural objects, places, and creatures possess spirits that must be appeased through rituals. They are extremely community oriented in a way that discourages individual thinking. This is a significant hindrance to anyone considering the gospel. Within this community, a male secret society conducts ceremonies designed for the men to gain wisdom, responsibility, and power. These cultural bonds make it challenging for individuals to choose Christ apart from their community.

*And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. **Acts 16:31-33***



## LET'S PRAY

Pray that the Senara Senufo of Burkina Faso will be engaged with the gospel as a community, like Lydia and the Philippian jailer in Acts 16, so that whole households will come to know Jesus as Lord.

## RECIPE

*Burkina Faso Degue (grain pudding)*

Cook 1 cup millet with 1 cup water, ½ tsp. salt, and 1 Tbsp. butter on stove or in a rice cooker for 20 mins (just like cooking rice). Set aside to cool. In a large bowl, mix 1 cup plain yogurt, 6 ½ Tbsps. crème fraîche, ½ cup sugar, 1 tsp. vanilla, ¼ tsp. nutmeg, and ½ cup milk. Add this mixture to cooled millet and stir well. Serve topped with toasted coconut, fresh fruit, or chopped nuts.



CAPTIVE TO TRADITION

# Acholi of Uganda

The Acholi (uh-CHOH-lee) are a people group of almost 2.5 million living in north-central Uganda. Originally from southern Sudan, they now work as subsistence farmers. They grow crops, such as corn, beans, and peanuts, and they raise livestock to feed their families. While many practice Roman Catholicism, traditional ancestor worship remains deeply influential in their culture. Despite having Bible portions, gospel recordings, and the JESUS film available in their language, the Acholi remain unengaged and unreached with the true gospel message.

*Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." **John 3:3***

## LET'S PRAY

Ask the Lord to call believers to go and make disciples for Him among the Acholi people.

## DISCUSSION STARTER

Though Christian resources are available, most remain in darkness. Take a moment to think about how different their lives would be if they worshiped Jesus and not their ancestors. How do you think the hope of Christ would change them? Pray they will hear and receive the good news.

## BLINDED BY BLENDED BELIEFS

# Makhuwa-Shirima of Mozambique

The Makhuwa-Shirima (mah-KOO-wah shee-REE-mah) people, numbering more than 950,000, live in northern Mozambique where they are surrounded by war and poverty. Only 2% are evangelical, as most are blinded by the blend of Islam and animism they practice. Their cultural identity runs deep, with each generation pressured to preserve traditions for the next. Those who choose to follow Christ often face painful rejection from their families and communities, making the decision to embrace the gospel especially costly.



*The people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned. **Matthew 4:16***

## LET'S PRAY

Please pray for boldness and perseverance for Makhuwa-Shirima believers. Pray for salvation for those still living in darkness.

## ACTIVITY

### *Crossing Cultures for Christ*

Research what it takes to learn a new language and understand deep cultural traditions. Write down three specific things a missionary would need to learn about Makhuwa-Shirima culture to share the gospel effectively.

## EARTHLY FOCUS, ETERNAL NEED

# Nama of Namibia

The Nama (NAH-mah), among Namibia's first inhabitants, once lived communally on their ancestral land. After centuries of displacement, their population of about 140,000 is now scattered throughout Namibia. The Nama live with a focus on the present moment and strongly value community, preserving their culture through poetry, songs, stories, and art. While this present-focused mindset helps them enjoy daily life, it also creates challenges for gospel work, as their cultural reluctance to plan for the future makes it difficult for many to embrace eternal salvation through Jesus Christ.



*So I will show my greatness and my holiness and make myself known in the eyes of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD. **Ezekiel 38:23***

## LET'S PRAY

Pray for the Nama people to understand their need for Jesus and to hear the gospel. Ask the Holy Spirit to prepare hearts and minds and give them a desire for the eternal security that is only found through salvation in Jesus.

## ACTIVITY

### *Paper Plate Flower Craft*

In Namibia's desert landscape, rare rains produce remarkable blooms. Make a colorful desert flower craft by folding a paper plate in half, cutting triangular shapes around the rim for petals, then opening it flat. Scrunch small pieces of colorful tissue paper into tiny balls. Brush glue across the plate and stick the tissue paper balls all over until your flower design is complete.

## STORY OF ANSWERED PRAYER



BREAKING FREE IN CHRIST

### Syenara Senufo of Mali

The Syenara Senufo (sheh-NAR-ah SEN-oo-foh) live in an area of West Africa that has experienced instability for many years. In their culture, it is very difficult for individuals, especially young people, to go against what the community and elders say. In 2011, Bible stories translated into their heart language began being broadcast on local radio. After much prayer, Christians in the region worked together to develop a strategy for church planting. There are now several churches among the Syenara Senufo people. Praise the Lord that even young people are responding to the good news!

#### LET'S PRAY

Pray that these churches will remain faithful, even in persecution, and multiply throughout the Syenara Senufo villages.

*Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

**2 Corinthians 3:15-17**

## Want to gather a group to pray?

You can order additional free copies of this guide for your friends, family, and small group. *Loving the Lost* is available in English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, and French, with selections made available in American Sign Language.

Other available prayer resources include:

- Videos highlighting lostness around the world
- PowerPoint slides featuring each people group in this guide



[imb.org/loving-the-lost](http://imb.org/loving-the-lost)

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*Image: A Deaf Christian is baptized by two Deaf believers.*

"After this I looked, and behold,  
**a great multitude** that no one  
could number, from **every nation**,  
from **all tribes and peoples** and  
**languages**, standing before the  
throne and before the Lamb."

## REVELATION 7:9

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*Cover Image: A man watches the setting sun in the desert  
of Egypt.*

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