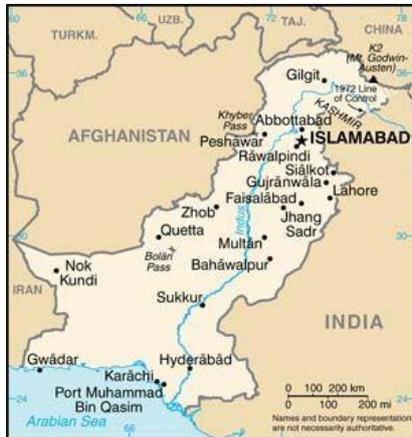


## Monday 22nd October

Pakistan in Southwest Asia has a 1,046-kilometre (650-mile) coastline along the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman in the south and is bordered by Afghanistan to the west, India to the east, Iran to the southwest and China in the far northeast.



It is a country of huge contrasts. Geographically, there are the mountains in the north, coast in the south, deserts in Sindh in the southeast and Balochistan in the southwest and fertile plains in the Punjab in the east.

About 70% of the population live in villages and work on the land, but this is changing. The Karakoram Highway which connects Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan region to China's Xinjiang region, has drawn people from the valleys to settle in Gilgit, the capital city of the Gilgit-Baltistan region, with the hope of a better life.

Some villages have only recently received mains electricity. Life in villages is slow, education is poor and generally people have few opportunities. In the cities there are the poor who are crowded together in small, inadequate homes and have barely enough to live on and there are the rich who have beautiful homes, large vehicles, wear the latest designer clothes, take holidays in Dubai and Skype their relatives abroad.

For many, life is a daily struggle owing to endemic corruption, regular power cuts, financial hardship, sickness and disease and lack of clean water. There have also been several terror attacks in a few of the main cities over the last few years, causing hundreds to lose their lives.

Jesus said: "I have come that they may have life and life to the full." John 10:10. Muslims in Pakistan are not experiencing life as Jesus intended.

In Pakistan the gospel is available in various languages and formats; portions of Scripture, DVDs, radio programmes, booklets and tracts, but most Muslims have no access to these or knowledge of their existence.

- Let's pray for the people of Pakistan to come to know Jesus and the abundant life that is available to them through Him.
- Let's pray for a changed people leading to a transformed country, where justice and integrity are hallmarks of life.
- Let's pray for the Word of God to be spread widely around Pakistan.

## Tuesday 23rd October

**Balti**                      **Pop: > 327,000**                      **Islam: 100%**

Watch a very moving clip of the Balti people [here](#)

The Balti are a forgotten people in the mountainous northeast of Pakistan in Baltistan. The name 'Balti' refers to a chamber below the living room of the clay brick houses, where animals are kept.



Most Baltis are hardworking farmers, following methods of farming and animal husbandry developed over centuries in this high mountain landscape. Like most of North Pakistan, the land is a virtual desert, the only rain falling on the high valleys and peaks and the constancy of the water supply being totally dependent on the many glaciers from the great Karakoram mountain range. Due to intensive irrigation of the terrace fields with glacier water, farming is possible on the hard grey land. Wheat, rye, peas, millet, apricots and other crops are harvested. Goats, sheep and yaks are kept.

About 500 years ago, together with the rest of the population of Northern Pakistan, the Balti people converted from Buddhism to Islam. As in most traditional forms of Islam only men visit the mosques and the social activity surrounding the mosques is central to the male lifestyle. The women perform their prayers in the field or in the house, outside of the official authority and structure of the mosques.

Since 1974, when a road to Skardu situated in the long Skardu Valley in North Pakistan was completed, the region has been flooded by Western mountaineering expeditions to peaks in the Karakoram mountain range including K2, the second-highest mountain in the world. Many other tourists from Pakistan and abroad also now visit the region and as a result many Baltis have found jobs with relatively high wages.

This kind of development often brings rapid perceptible change to the fabric of a society and today many young Baltis have turned their backs on traditional labour as farmers, to work as porters, mountain guides, jeep drivers or employees in hotels.

There is no consistent programme of outreach and witness. However, there have been some bold distribution efforts in the past ten years and many have received the Scriptures. As a result many have enrolled in Bible correspondence courses or listen to Gospel radio services in Urdu, Pakistan's national language.

A shopkeeper from Skardu listens every morning to Christian broadcasts. When asked why, he answered: "I love these words. They are good for my soul."

A religious leader of a village at the foot of K2 said, after he had read the Bible in Urdu for the first time: "This is a wonderful book. I will read through it in the winter."

One year after his first encounter, Mohammed, a hotelier, joyfully reported that he studied the book of Genesis by a Bible correspondence course.

There are signs of a future harvest! The beginning of the work has begun.

- Pray for a great awareness of this vast, almost unreached people group and for individuals to be sent by churches worldwide to work in God's harvest field of Baltistan.
- Pray for health, strength, perseverance and direction for those already working and witnessing amongst the Balti people.

- Let's pray for a great harvest among the Balti people for God's Kingdom.

### Wednesday 24th October

**Kohistani**

**Pop: 500,000**

**Islam: 100%**

The Kohistani live in remote valleys in tight-knit village communities in Northern Pakistan. They farm by means of artificial irrigation on any flat arable land. Apart from agriculture, livestock breeding represents an important basis of their livelihood. Many shepherds climb up to 14,000 feet high with



their flocks of sheep and goats in search of pasture and water. In the springtime, the farmers plant rice in the low-lying valleys. Afterwards, they move with their flocks into the high valleys of the Indus and up even higher into the summer pastures. In early autumn they return for the harvest. This happens in a permanent circle of nomadic life, affecting most families.

Blood vengeance is one of the values of the Kohistani peoples. Ownership of land and rights concerning the pastures are passed on to the relatives on the paternal line. The traditional administration of the Kohistani consisted of the administrative council in which landowners of the villages or from the region settle matters internally. But this system has recently been replaced by that of the district administration, typical of the Pakistani system of justice. The building of the Karakoram highway, which leads through the heart of Kohistan, has introduced a political, economic and cultural opening of the region.

Over 500 years ago, the Kohistani converted from Buddhism to Sunni Islam. Even today though, they continue to follow pre-Islamic customs and rites including witchcraft and sorcery.

Some people have heard the gospel and there has been a good and faithful witness through medical work to the people of Kohistan for many years. The work however is grindingly slow.

Recently there has been good contact made with Kohistanis now living in the Gilgit district and surprisingly open contacts have been made even at a highly religious level. These are the first signs of harvest from amongst this notoriously hard-to-reach people group. Much follow up needs to be done and church planting initiatives here may well provide a natural witnessing community that will eventually reach their own people group further south in the heartland of Kohistan.

- Let's pray for the light of God's truth to shine into the lives of the Kohistani people.
- Pray for the continued perseverance and encouragement of those already working amongst the Kohistani people; that they will know God is with them and they will see fruit.
- Pray for further developments in understanding the complex languages in Kohistan and that out of this might come significant audio and written materials that will supplement the ongoing work needed to establish the church in Kohistan.

## Thursday 25th October

**Wakhi**                      **Pop: 49,000**                      **Islam: 100%**

Watch a short video of the Wakhi people [here](#).

The Wakhi live in northernmost Pakistan. They live simply as mountain sheep farmers and craftsmen. More recently they have been involved in the growing trade between China and Pakistan.

The common identity of the Wakhis is a religious heritage dating from the beginning of Islam. More recently the Wakhis converted to Ismaili-ism and follow the spiritual leader of the Ismailis, Prince Karim Aga Khan. He is said to be a direct descendant of Mohammed and lives in France and Geneva and visits his followers about every four years. Due to the influence of the present Aga Khan's more humanistic Western approach and the general liberal attitude towards the Quran amongst Ismailis, there is a general acceptance and openness towards the 'previous Holy Books', which Muslims consider to be: Torah - the book of Moses, Zabur- the book of David and Injil- the book of Jesus.



Amongst the Wakhi there are no known believers, but a growing number of earnest seekers have been found. Hundreds of Wakhis have heard the gospel in the last decade and many of these now have the Scriptures in Urdu in the form of Bibles, New Testaments and Christian books. The local language recordings on cassette have also begun to be used more widely. However few, if any, long-term workers are known to be living among them.

- Pray for the needs of this people group to impact the Pakistani and world-wide Church, out of which would come concentrated prayer, intercession and practical involvement.
- Let's pray for the continued involvement of short-term workers from Pakistan and abroad, in prayer, discipleship, evangelism and Scripture distribution amongst the Wakhi people.
- Let's ask for the raising up of long-term workers, pursuing social, language or business programmes, who will be able to reach out to the Wakhi people of north Pakistan and beyond.
- Let's pray for the growing number of earnest seekers to become believers who will be rooted and established in their faith.

## Friday 26th October

**The Burusho of Nagar**                      **Pop: 90,000**                      **Islam: 100%**

The Burusho people of the old kingdom of Nagar are one of the most forgotten and scorned people of Pakistan. Their homeland is in the Hunza-Nagar District, a series of mountainous valleys in the extreme northern part of Pakistan.



They are virtually all Shi'ite Muslims and have also been ruled by a line of "Mirs." This kingly line continues to this day, though only as a figurehead leadership with no political or executive powers. Historically they have always been at enmity with their more striking neighbours over the river in Hunza, the Hunzakots, but have always come out second best, whether in combat, political recognition or from the benefits of development.

The land of Nagar is dominated by the 7,780m high mountain of Rakaposhi and most Burusho live literally under its shadow. Most people eke out a living from farming small plots of terraced fields and fruit orchards, or from shepherding goats and sheep on the steep mountainsides. Unlike their more progressive Hunzakot neighbours, they have often missed out on developments in health, education, trade and tourism. The Karakoram Highway significantly bypasses the heartland of Nagar and is a permanent reminder that, as a kingdom, they have once again been bypassed to their detriment.

The people of Nagar have also consistently missed out on prayer and evangelistic efforts that have almost exclusively been directed at the Hunzakots. The result is that few Burusho in Nagar have ever heard the gospel and few contacts have been made. Little literature distribution has been attempted in Nagar, though recent workers have found a surprising openness amongst the people of some valleys. This openness needs to be capitalised on if the people of Nagar are not to miss out yet again.

The Shi'ite background, the more conservative attitudes and the poor self-image of the Nagar people are three things that will have to be overcome to enable the establishment of a church in this group.

- Pray for freedom for the people of Nagar from their poor self-image, despondency and the oppression that generally dominates this needy people.
- Let's pray for the raising of awareness of the particular needs of this little known and understood people group and that many around the world would adopt the people of Nagar as an emphasis for prayer and outreach.
- Let's pray for Pakistani labourers to take the challenge of the gospel to the people of Nagar.

## **Saturday 27th October**

### **I hear the sound of rain in Pakistan.**

In November 2006 at a Prayer Conference in Pakistan, a Nigerian pastor spoke from 1 Kings:

*"Now Elijah the Tishbite from Tishbe in Gilead said to Ahab; 'As the Lord the God of Israel lives whom I serve, there will be neither rain nor dew in the next few years except at my word'" 1 Kings 17:1.*

After the contest with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel... *"Elijah said to Ahab, 'Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain.' So Ahab went off to eat and drink, but Elijah climbed to the top of Mount Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees.*

*'Go and look towards the sea' he told his servant... 'There is nothing there,' he said. Seven times Elijah said, 'Go back.'*

*The seventh time the servant reported, 'A cloud as small as a man's hand is rising from the sea.' So Elijah said, 'Go and tell Ahab, 'Hitch up your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.' Meanwhile the sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, a heavy rain came on....." 1 Kings 18:41-45*

The Nigerian pastor said, "I hear the sound of rain." We don't yet see the heavy rain of God's transforming presence, but it's coming. When Elijah said, "there is the sound of heavy rain", there was no sign of rain. His servant had to look seven times. Then the rain came, heavy rain.

By faith we hear the sound of heavy rain over Pakistan. It is God's presence, God's transforming presence.

- Let's pray with expectation for that which we don't yet see, but which by God's grace and mercy will come in His time and in His way. By faith let's hear the sound of rain over Pakistan.
- Let's pray for the Pakistani church to be a bold and effective witness to its Muslim community, for labourers with a desire to go and live in this country and for Pakistani Muslims to find the one true God they are searching for.
- Pray for a changed Pakistan that will impact the world.