

Monday 11thth Oct



Listen to the worship song below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQWFzMvCfLE>

At a glance, Kyrgyzstan is rich with beautiful landscapes. Lush green pastures, jewel coloured rivers, snow-capped mountains, and fascinating architecture paint a lovely picture of this country. But just below the surface level lies populations of people groups that have yet to discover the beauty of the Kingdom of God and the beautiful name of Jesus.

A small population of less than 3,500, the Dargin people live in the mountainous and landlocked country of Kyrgyzstan as well as in southern Russia. This country was once part of the Soviet Union and gained independence in December, 1991.

Since that date, Kyrgyzstan has ranked high on the corrupt countries index, and it is the second poorest country in Central Asia. These issues cause the Dargins and other people groups to eke out a living at the foundational level. Most live in yurts and live through farming and herding.

The Dargins were introduced to Islam in the 8th century and have largely followed the Sunni sect of that religion. It is common to see them partaking in traditional rituals not commonly associated with Islam. For example, they participate in agriculture ceremonies, ward off evil spirits, and practice magic. Though they have access to the Bible in their language, Dargwa, they remain unreached and unengaged.

- *Pray there would be in an influx of outreach in Kyrgyzstan among the Dargin people.*
- *May they come to know the Lord's beauty as their deliverer and provider.*
- *Pray for a spiritual breakthrough that will help many to discover the true beauty of Jesus suffering, death and resurrection.*

Tuesday 12th October

'For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.'
Ephesians 6: 12, NIV

The Karachay people have a history marked with warfare and political oppression. Today, except for 50 known Jesus followers, the entirety of the Karachay's population follows Islam. This spiritual background dates to the 14th Century when the Karachays were conquered and forcibly converted to Islam. Five hundred years later, the Karachay were conquered by Russia. Soviet dictator Josef Stalin deported the Karachays to Central Asia, a tragic event that led to the death of 35 percent of their population.

Today, the Karachay people have repopulated the southwestern Russian province of Karachay-Cherkessia, though some remain in Kyrgyzstan. The Karachay community highly regard their Islamic cultural identity and traditions and are divided into clans known as *tukums*. There is a strong sense of duty and loyalty within *tukums*, though the confines of their religious traditions leave little room for forgiving grace. In Karachay culture, the need to take vengeance is considered the norm, and cowardice is considered the most appalling characteristic for a male.

- *Pray that the courage and majesty of Jesus' selfless death on the cross would win hearts amongst the Karachay.*
- *Pray for more labourers to go and work amongst the Karachay in Kyrgyzstan and Russia.*
- *Pray for Christians who live near to this people group to gain a vision for reaching out to them with the good news of Jesus.*

Wednesday 13th October



In a busy airport in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, a Korean follower of Christ stood in the lobby, luggage in hand. She hoped her information about the Uzbeks was correct. She had heard that this people group was known for hospitality.

A few minutes later a middle-aged woman beckoned to her with a wave of her hand. "Have you eaten? I have fresh fruit and tea at my home. Come join me for lunch!" "I'll be glad to," she responded with a smile.

During their lunch, the Uzbek woman asked, “Why have you come to Uzbekistan?” The woman responded, “I came to tell people about my best friend, Jesus. He can do so much for everyone that I must tell others.” And so began a conversation about relationship with the saviour.

The Uzbeks are known for their hospitality. This Central Asian people group lives in a desert land near the Aral Sea. Traditionally hospitality could mean the difference between life and death. Uzbekistan is a former Soviet republic, which became independent in 1991. A generation since independence, the estimated number of followers of Jesus Christ has grown from zero to 4,500. Many of these new believers are former Muslims.

To read more about the desert honour code of hospitality, read the blog below:

<https://www.frontiers.org.uk/blog/2017/07/the-desert-honour-code.html>

- *Thank God for what is happening in Uzbekistan, and pray that it will continue. Ask God to raise up leaders for the fast-growing church in Uzbekistan.*
- *Pray for the Bible to be widely distributed.*
- *Pray that those who follow Christ will learn the art and virtue of hospitality so they can use it to show the Lord’s love to unreached people groups in Central Asia.*

Heb 13:2, NIV

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.

*Thanks to Global Prayer Digest for this material <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/>

Thursday 14th October

‘You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst.’ Neh 9:20, NIV

The Karakalpak farmer gazed at his bone-dry field with the thin layer of white over the top of the soil. Even if he had water, there still might not be a crop because the soil was contaminated with salt. He gazed into the distance and saw the shores of the Aral Sea. That lake had been much bigger when he was a boy. Most of the excess salt had come from the lake, blown on to his land by desert winds. He would once again pray to Allah, his only hope for a good crop.

The Karakalpak are a minority people group living in Uzbekistan. They are a poor people, and their situation has been made worse by the gradual drying of the Aral Sea. Since 1960 the Aral Sea has been shrinking, thanks to Soviet era irrigation projects that have diverted much needed water for growing cotton. Today the Aral Sea is less than half of its former size. Increasing salinity has destroyed not only farming, but the once thriving fishing industry, depriving many Karakalpaks of jobs.

- *Pray for the Lord to raise up believers who will help the Karakalpaks with their economic needs and help them grow crops that thrive in salty soil.*
- *Pray that many will discover Jesus through the witness of believers who come to this area and bless them.*
- *Pray for the Karakalpak people to inherit an abundance of both physical and spiritual water that will bless them for eternity.*

*Thanks to Global Prayer Digest for this material <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/>

Friday 15th October

(This is a story, not an actual event.)

The Chinese visitor saw many stalls in the marketplace in Turkmenistan. He walked up to a stall that sold books, and commented, "My, you have many books!" The merchant beamed with pride. "Yes I do. If I don't have it, it doesn't exist in Turkmen." The Chinese tourist looked puzzled. "Then why are there no Bibles?" The merchant tilted his head, and asked, "Even the holy Qur'an isn't in Turkmen. Why would Muslims have a Bible in their language?"

Actually the Bible is in Turkmen, but let's start at the beginning. In early church history, Nestorian Christian missionaries won many Turkmen to Christ. Then in 971 A.D. 200,000 Turkmen households converted to Islam. It was what we call a "people movement," where an entire people become part of one religion or another, usually because of the prompting of their leaders. There were no followers of Jesus Christ among this people group for over 1,000 years after that. In recent years 1,000 Turkmen have become followers of Jesus Christ.

- *Ask God for protection and spiritual growth for the new believers among the Turkmen. May they become mature enough to share Christ with their neighbours.*
- *Pray for a people movement to Christ among the Turkmen.*
- *Pray for an abundance of the freedom given by the Holy Spirit for the Turkmen and other people groups of the former USSR.*

*Thanks to Global Prayer Digest for this material <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/>

Saturday 16th October

Prayer for the Caucasus Region: A Burden Not Meant To Bear

I stood outside our house, locking up our front gate, just as the evening sermon from the neighborhood mosque began its broadcast.

"The Qur'an teaches us that the message received by the prophet Muhammad was unique!" the mosque leader shouted.

What was normally a garbled message from the loudspeaker sounded as clear as a bell on this cloudy night. Perhaps the damp air, lined with remnants of the day's drizzle, had a clarifying effect on the sound.

I leaned on our rusty gate, curiously listening to the sermon. In all our years living in the mountainous Caucasus region, I had never actually been able to understand the sermons until now. Perhaps they had fixed the loudspeaker, or maybe the imam was just fired-up.

"During one revelation," the imam bellowed, "Muhammad was riding a camel. When the revelation came upon Muhammad, the camel couldn't bear the weight of the message, and it fell to its knees. Imagine that! An animal that is able to carry as many as three people while fully loaded with cargo couldn't hold the weight of the Qur'an!"

It started raining again, so I decided to go in to the house. But I couldn't shake the message I had just heard. I sat down with Annie, my wife, and told her what I had just heard.

"Of course it's a heavy message!" Annie responded. ***"The camel can't bear the weight, and neither can these people. It's a burden they can't carry!"***

"Yes, you're right," I said, remembering how Jesus said that His burden is easy and light.

"Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." – Matthew 11:28-30

- Pray for more workers who will persevere in mastering complex languages to reach Muslims living in areas that are extremely difficult to access in this rugged region.
- Ask God to open doors for Frontiers workers to study God's Word with even the most spiritually resistant clans.
- Pray for minority Muslim people groups to experience Jesus' healing following decades of oppression.

<https://www.frontiersusa.org/blog/article/prayer-for-the-caucasus-region-a-burden-not-meant-to-bear>