



Reach the Last

ADVENT PRAYER
GUIDE 2024



Speaking Hope to the World

SPEAKING FLUENTLY IN more than 200 languages, TWR exists to reach the world for Jesus Christ. Our global media outreach engages millions in 190 countries with biblical truth.

Together with international partners, local churches and other ministries, TWR provides relevant programming, discipleship resources and dedicated workers to spread hope to individuals around the globe.

Our prayer guide this year focuses on unreached people groups around the world. Unreached groups lack enough followers of Christ and don't have resources to evangelize their own people.

You'll find these icons to the right throughout the guide giving you a visual indication of TWR's involvement with a specific people group. Here's a legend of what they stand for.

Please note that many of the people quoted in this guide are only partially identified for security reasons.

LEGEND



Radio Program



TWR Women of Hope



Digital Ministry



Radio Distribution



TWR MOTION



TWR Video Ministry



Bible Distribution



Social Media

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DEVOTIONAL

ROCKS ARE MENTIONED throughout the Bible, often symbolizing strength, protection and stability.

David expressed it this way, "My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield" (2 Samuel 22:3 ESV). He says later in that chapter, "The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock, and exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation" (verse 47).

The Psalms are filled with statements about God as our rock. Reading them builds our confidence.

"The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold." (Psalm 18:2 ESV)

"You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation" (Psalm 89:26 ESV).

Those in the Old Testament may not have realized it, but Jesus was their rock. As they looked to God as their rock, that rock was Jesus, too.

Paul tells us about the Israelites in the wilderness, *"They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ."* (1 Corinthians 10:2-4 NIV)

In the Psalms above, notice the words surrounding "rock." Refuge, shield, fortress, deliverer, stronghold, rescue. Jesus is here for you in this world. Are you facing fears, anxiety, uncertainty, instability, the unknown? My friend, your rock is Jesus, and he is your shield. He is your stronghold. He is your rescuer.

Do you need to be saved from something that is plaguing you right now? Turn to Jesus, your rock.

Then there's the spiritual side. Jesus is the rock of your salvation. He has saved you from eternal separation from God.

While the Old Testament followers saw God as the rock of their salvation, Jesus made it much more real to us when he came to this earth. We have a personal Savior who was born, walked with us and went to the cross on our behalf.

Take a few minutes at the start of this Advent season and spend time in Psalm 31. Whatever your pain, the Lord Jesus, the rock, is here for you.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you that you are the stronghold in which I can take refuge. In you, I have a fortress and shield regardless of what comes my way. Thank you for the security and peace that comes from hiding in you.



THE PEOPLE OF *North Korea*

BROTHER CHUN (not his real name) was born in North Korea. Everything there is tightly controlled – from the curated narratives shared over regulated media channels down to the vocational and educational opportunities afforded to individuals. Even the practice of religion is restricted.

Open Doors lists North Korea as the country in which Christians face the most extreme persecution in all the world. Believers discovered by the authorities either receive life sentences to work in harsh labor camps or they are killed on the spot. Family members may also be rounded up to face the same penalty.

Even under such circumstances, there are an estimated 400,000 Christians in North Korea today. That's an estimated 1.5% of its 26 million population. Due to the danger, believers do not openly share their faith, and gatherings are risky. Children in Christian families are introduced to the faith only when they can keep it a secret. In Chun's case, his mother told him about the Bible only when he was old enough to grasp the weight of that information.

Even as a young man, Chun did not feel at ease. He knew his father was originally from South Korea. He yearned to escape and gain his freedom to return to his father's hometown. Many years passed, and Chun could bear to wait no longer. He tried to enter South Korea by himself. His plan failed, though, and he was instead detained in a neighboring country.

Some countries have agreements to repatriate North Korean refugees to face the bitter consequences of their desertion. By God's grace, that was not Chun's fate. Instead, he



photo by tuzla on Shutterstock



FAST FACTS

- Only acceptable religion is Cheondogyo, the cult of the deceased leader
- Hundreds of thousands of Christians have died due to persecution
- Only 1.48% of population is Christian
- North Koreans are isolated from the outside world and indoctrinated with the policies of the “Dear Leader”



was eventually released on parole and transferred to a United Nations (U.N.) refugee camp. There, Chun began the long application process of seeking permission to be resettled in South Korea.

At last, his application was approved. Chun began the challenging transition to a new life in South Korea. Many refugees experience isolation, anxiety and culture shock from living in such a different environment. While the South Korean government does have policies to assist with the transition, some refugees still struggle to adapt.

Thank God that Chun made the transition well! He is currently serving as a deacon at a church for North Korean refugees. He takes care of the church and is always filled with thanksgiving.

Sources: *Joshua Project*, *opendoorsuk.org*, *bbc.com*, *vox.com*, *jacobin.com*

PRAYER

Sovereign Lord, we pray for our Christian brothers and sisters who live in North Korea. Please watch over them and strengthen them through the Korean language broadcasts. May the radio signal and your gospel message speak loudly and clearly.

Reaching the North Koreans

TO ENCOURAGE BELIEVERS in North Korea, TWR broadcasts 16 programs a week on shortwave radio. These serve as a spiritual lifeline to believers in the underground church. The diverse lineup of programs was developed to address the spiritual needs of our North Korean brethren.

Here are some of the unique ways TWR is ministering over the airwaves to North Korean listeners:

- Bible study programs provide essential spiritual food. One program even presents an entire Sunday church service over the airwaves.
- An in-depth, structured Bible instruction and seminary program prepares mature believers to take on pastoral duties in the absence of a traditional church.
- Programs that reach out to atheists or agnostics stand in the gap to share the gospel in an environment where direct evangelism is not possible.

TWR also ministers to North Koreans who have managed to find refuge in another neighboring country. They often experience deep loneliness and isolation, and we believe their hearts may be open to hear the gospel. Before, no one would have openly shared the gospel with them in North Korea.

TWR partners with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to help provide remote follow-up ministry to the North Korean refugees. Follow-up workers from TWR Korea connect with each of these North Korean refugees throughout the week, engaging on various levels:

- A 60-minute call to listen to their struggles. This is an opportunity to counsel, pray and share Bible verses to encourage and comfort them.
- Exchanging WhatsApp messages during the week.
- Sharing biblical audio programs presented in the Korean language.
- Inviting them to join an online Bible-study and worship session on Sundays.

During his time at the U.N. refugee camp, Chun attended one of these weekly online worship services conducted by TWR Korea. That was how we first met him and later provided ongoing support during his transition to life in South Korea.

Sources: Open Doors UK, Joshua Project, BBC, Vox, Jacobin

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for TWR's ministry to North Korean refugees. Please break the chains that bind their hearts and minds so they can receive your good news of hope in Jesus.



THE Afar PEOPLE

AMARI WOKE UP from his dream sweating and crying in anguish.

That morning, he called the producer of Afar-language programs for TWR's partner in Ethiopia. "Can you pray for me now?" he asked. "I want to believe in your God."

The name "Amari" is fictional, but the story told by Wakshuma Terefe, director of TWR partner Yemisrach Dimts Radio (The Voice of Good News), is true.

Amari is among the world's 2.79 million Afar people, a semi-nomadic tribe that lives in the Horn of Africa countries of Eritrea, Djibouti and Ethiopia, according to Joshua Project. Many live in the hottest place on Earth: the Danakil Depression. The vast majority are in the Afar region of Ethiopia. Like the Somali region that borders it, the Afar region is almost 100% Muslim, Terefe said.

Yet for the Afar people, Islam is more about tradition than spiritual knowledge, he said.

"The Afar are not strong Muslims," Terefe said. "They don't know the Quran. They cannot read it. But traditionally what they heard from their forefathers they accepted."

Yemisrach Dimts Radio uses a combination of shortwave radio, memory cards and social media to present the alternative of following Jesus to the Afar people, he said. "The people in that area still use radio. They carry it from place to place when they move."

Even if the Afar are not "strong Muslims," coming to faith in Christ carries a price, Terefe said. The new Jesus-follower may be excommunicated from the clan, may have



FAST FACTS

- Afar population, worldwide: 2.79 million
- Percentage of Afar who are evangelical Christians: 0.01
- Total TWR programming in Afar language: four 15-minute programs
- Average daily high temperature in the Danakil Depression: 106.1F
- Average yearly rainfall: 4-7 inches

Sources: Joshua Project, TWR, National Parks Worldwide, The Conversation



possessions seized, may be arrested and jailed, or even stoned to death.

Despite the obstacles, Afar people are hearing the name of Jesus proclaimed. Among them was Amari.

Terefe described Amari as a big man who claimed that the Yemisrach Dimts producer was destroying the Afar culture. But the producer challenged Amari one day, asking him: If you die now, where will you go? The producer said a person who believes in Christ will go to heaven. That led to Amari's dream in the night and his call the next morning. Amari then journeyed to Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital and the home of Yemisrach Dimts.

"He stayed some days with us and then went back," Terefe said. "He's saved now."

PRAYER

I praise you, Lord, that you are reaching the Afar people with the message of your grace. May more and more Afar turn to you as they recognize the emptiness of their traditions. Give the TWR staff wisdom to produce radio broadcasts that are impactful in reaching these semi-nomadic people.



Reaching the Afar

TWR PARTNER YEMISRACH Dimts Radio broadcasts four 15-minute episodes a week in the Afar language, said Wakshuma Terefe, the director.

“We broadcast almost in the middle of the day ... because it’s very hot in that place,” he said. “So mostly when people rest in their homes, we broadcast the program.”

Yemisrach Dimts also provides programs on social media and distributes audio materials, such as memory sticks.

Here are samples of feedback from listeners over the past two years:

“I am a convert from Islam, and I listen to ... your program. Continue like this, and I will inform others to listen to your radio program. Isa [Jesus] is the one who forgives our sin. Your radio program teaches us that Jesus is our doctor who heals, saves us, redeems us, and he has abolished our sins through his holy work on the cross.”

“I am a single mother of two sons, and I became [a] Christian two years ago because my cousin witnessed Christ for me. I was afraid of the persecution, [so I] moved to this place. I listen to *The Way of Righteousness* radio program through social media. This radio program has been a great blessing to me and my family.”

“I was a Muslim and never heard about God until [the] Afar radio program producer came to our village to share the true Word of God. That time when I heard the message from him, I was [a] very confronting person and did not want to receive. But after [a] few months, some changes began happening in my life. I started needing to hear the Word of God. Then I met the producer again, and he talked repeatedly about Isa [Jesus]. Then I received Jesus as my personal Savior.”

PRAYER

Father God, we pray for the protection of the Afar believers in the midst of much opposition.



THE Tatar PEOPLE

JUST WHO ARE the Tatars? Well, it's complicated. They've been described as "the largest Russian minority" and "a Turkic ethnic group," but their story is too colorful and intriguing to capture in a one-liner.

You see, the term *Tatar* is somewhat shrouded in mystery. This is because various ethnic groups have been called Tatars throughout history, and it can be difficult to find a common ancestry. However, the simple story is that the Tatars started out as nomadic tribes in Mongolia, eventually moved west to form the Mongol Empire and later the Golden Horde.

Today, Tatars are divided into sub-groups named after their geographical locations. While most Tatars live in or around Tatarstan, a republic of Russia, they also live in places like Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Various dialects of the Tatar language exist, with Kazan Tatar being the type spoken in Tatarstan. Curiously, in some urban areas, nearly one-third of Tatars claim Russian as their mother tongue, according to Joshua Project.

The culinary landscape of the Tatars is as varied as their history. Chebureki, for example, are tender pastries filled with minced meat and fried in butter. And then there's chak-chak: a crunchy dough that is dipped in honey syrup and sometimes topped with hazelnuts. Whatever the occasion, the Tatar dinner table is a feast for the senses.

Islam is the main religion, especially in Tatarstan, where it has deep roots. Yet Tatars practice a "light" version of Islam with prayer times organized in such a way as to not interfere with work, says Joshua Project.

Many Tatars practice Sabantuy, or "festival of the plow," which began in a pre-Islamic



photos by imb.org

FAST FACTS

- Most Tatars live in or around Tatarstan, a republic of Russia, but they also live in places like Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Kazakhstan.
- Most Tatars identify as Sunni Muslims, although many practice a “light” version of Islam.
- The complete Bible in Tatar was published for the first time in 2015.
- Less than 1% of Tatars living in Russia are Evangelical



pagan era. Through festivities like dancing, horse racing and wrestling, Tatars display their age-old traditions.

Two rivers merge in Tatarstan: the Kama and the Volga. Similarly, two religions meet: Islam among the Tatars and Orthodox Christianity among Russians. But sadly, many Tatars don't view Christianity in a good light due to the way the Russian Orthodox Church used coercion tactics in past centuries, according to Joshua Project.

Few Christian resources are available in the Tatar language. The New Testament was published in 2001 and the complete Bible was published by the Institute for Bible Translation for the first time in 2015.

One thing is certain. More help and resources are needed to spread Christ's message to the Tatar people.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I pray that Tatar people will encounter the message of Christ through the efforts of the TWR staff as they use radio and social media. May these encounters spark curiosity and open hearts to the gospel.

Reaching the Tatars

A NEW TWR initiative called *Joy* is geared to reach Tatars. Short 30- to 40-second programs are aired on local FM stations in two cities. At the end of each radio segment, listeners are invited to engage with the program content on social media.

Volunteers from local churches in Tatarstan meet with program listeners and distribute New Testament Bibles. They teach one-on-one sessions called *Who Is Isa (Jesus)?*

A dedicated Tatar couple, Alim and Darina (names changed for security reasons), manage the social media platforms and all communications with listeners. “We take our business experience in marketing and apply it to our outreach,” said Darina. “We share God’s Word to get people interested in knowing God personally.”

Alim and Darina send copies of the New Testament to Tatars, who want to know more about Jesus. They are also involved in the program content. “We talk about personal growth, which is a very relevant topic now,” said Darina. “We talk about family issues, and we want to share [with listeners] how God views them.”

The *Joy* project is still in its early stages. What began as an idea and a burden for the Tatar people is now a small but thriving ministry. And exciting plans are in the pipeline. The goal is to have more content available in both the Russian and Tatar languages, to invite more Christian Tatars to be involved in the *Joy* initiative and to broaden the gospel’s reach.

Partnerships are key. As TWR’s local church partnerships continue to grow in the region, Tatars will have more opportunities to join or even start new Christian communities. What’s more, through a TWR partnership with the International Mission Board, a Tatar New Testament distribution channel is now available online.

Less than 1% of Tatars living in Russia are evangelical Christians, according to Joshua Project. Let’s pray that more find the true joy of the living God.

PRAYER

Father God, I pray that you would strengthen and protect Alim and Darina as they lead the outreach efforts and give them wisdom as they create content that resonates with listeners’ daily lives. And, Lord, motivate more local church members to become involved in media ministry.



*I am the
Alpha and
the Omega.*

Revelation 22:13

DEVOTIONAL

"I AM THE Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." (Revelation 22:13 NIV)

What do those words do for you when you read them?

For me, they give me a sense of awe. I feel energized. I want to praise Jesus!

"Long live the king!" is the shout we hear for human royalty. I want to shout that for Jesus, The King, with a capital K.

Jesus is our all in all. Three times in the above verse, he announces his eternal existence. What a mind-blowing thought. Jesus from all eternity into all eternity.

At Christmas, we focus on baby Jesus. But can you wrap your mind around the eternal Jesus? If you can't, that's OK. We shouldn't be able to understand it fully with our limited, human minds. The thought of the eternal Jesus is beyond us.

How is it possible to have an intimate relationship with Jesus, who is the Beginning and the End? The contrast of the infinitely huge to the infinitely personal is extraordinary. The beauty is that while Jesus is eternal, he also longs to have a deep relationship with you.

The apostle John felt the same awe that you feel. Even after spending three years with him! While in exile many years later, he wrote in Revelation, "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: 'Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last'" (Revelation 1:17 NIV).

When Jesus came to this earth 2,000 years ago, people saw his humanity. For the first time, they experienced God personally. Today, we enjoy him as our personal, loving Savior. We need to know he is the Alpha and the Omega while we also experience his cross-bearing love for us.

Jesus is your all in all, the eternal God who came to earth to have a personal relationship with humanity. With you. This is what we celebrate at Christmas.

Praise Jesus!

PRAYER

I magnify you, O Lord, for you are great and highly to be praised. You are the creator and sustainer of this world. You are highly exalted above every star and galaxy. Yet you are a God who loves, RESCUES and takes care of all who trust you. May I walk more closely with you Lord as I lean into your love for me.

THE Madurese

PEOPLE OF INDONESIA

PUTRA* IS A young Madurese boy of school-going age. He is often bullied by his classmates because he is a Christian. The schoolchildren cannot understand how a Madurese person can also be a Christian; it simply doesn't make sense to them.

The notion of a Madurese Christian also seems inconceivable to most adults in the community. This is due to a commonly held belief that *all* Madurese are Muslim; surely the Christians in the community cannot be ethnically Madurese – they *must* be from some other people group.

The Madurese are the third-largest people group in Indonesia, with a population of approximately 7.68 million. Joshua Project estimates that about 99.87% of Madurese Indonesians are Muslim, compared with only 0.05% who are evangelical Christians. Looking at these statistics, it may not be so surprising why such a misconception would exist.

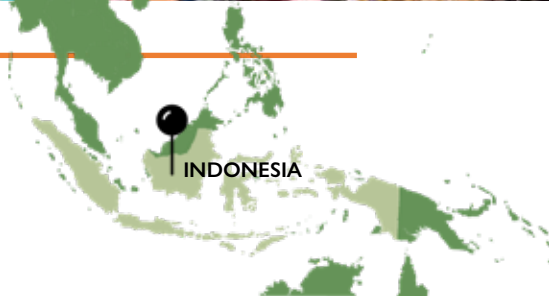
In Indonesia, the Madurese are primarily found on the islands of Madura and Java. They are a proud people who are often praised for their diligence. Madurese men and women have a reputation for working extremely hard and fulfilling their responsibilities. Their strong work ethic is perhaps one of the reasons why Madurese shopkeepers have been able to dominate the traditional markets located in the larger cities of East Java.

The Madurese are also known for their harsh character. They are described as a people of integrity who are fiercely loyal and courageous yet also prone to harboring resentment, hot-temperedness and even outbursts of violence when related to matters of honor. Some have attributed this to their history of having been oppressed by others.



FAST FACTS

- Population: 7,681,000
- Largest religion: Islam (99.87%)
- % evangelical: 0.05%
- Main language: Madurese



And perhaps, in the case of young children, this harshness can surface in the form of bullying.

Putra's mother, Kristina,* knows her son often cries because of how he is treated at school; it breaks her heart to see him go through this. But her commitment to Jesus gives her strength and wisdom, and this as an opportunity to guide her child in God's ways. Kristina is teaching Putra to pray for and forgive the classmates who hurt him.

**Not their real names*

Sources: Joshua Project, People Groups, Open Doors UK, Wikipedia

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for working in the lives of Madurese believers like Kristina and Putra. Grant them your grace and wisdom to be witnesses for you among their people.

Reaching the Madurese

MOST OF THE Madurese are zealous followers of Islam, and it is extremely challenging to reach them through traditional methods of evangelism. Some have never even heard the good news.

Anyone who attempts to leave the faith experiences strong pressure to return. Those who decide to take that step pay a high price – fractured family ties, broken friendships and the sundering of existing relationships.

TWR uses media to overcome these barriers that keep the Madurese from hearing the gospel.

We are currently producing *The Way of Righteousness* programs in the Madurese language. When completed, this 100-episode program will share Old Testament stories that point to Jesus being more than just a prophet – that he is the Son of God who gave his life for our salvation. We plan to broadcast the programs over shortwave radio, so the Madurese people may hear for themselves what Christ has done for them. There are also plans to distribute the programs via audio players.

Believers among the Madurese face a different issue: They have limited access to biblical resources. TWR ministers to this spiritual need by distributing audio players with the *Women of Hope* programs. These share practical lessons grounded in biblical principles. In this way, listeners are educated, encouraged and equipped to leave a lasting impact on their families.

Here are some responses we have received from Madurese listeners:

"I am lucky to have found this program. I'm sure a lot of people will find it great because the program helps us to understand more about the words of God...this program has been a blessing to my faith."

"I'm very grateful to have Jesus in my life even though I came from a humble background. I'm grateful that his love endures forever. Despite our sins, God never changes, because he is our Savior."

"All praise to Christ. I am blessed by the words of God that tell me about worrying. I learned that we shouldn't worry too much. We have to trust God and depend on him."

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we lift up the Madurese people to you. May they tune in to the programs and discover how much you love them. Show them the hope that can be found only in Jesus.

THE Karakalpak PEOPLE

WHEN A YOUNG Karakalpak woman accepted Christ, her parents treated her very badly, scolding and beating her. They wanted to arrange her marriage, but she didn't want to marry an unbeliever.

Her parents placed her under “house arrest,” completely isolating her for many months. They didn't let her go anywhere and didn't allow anyone to visit her. Though she was tempted to run away from home, she felt a divine prompting from the Lord to stay and shine God's light.

For many of us, persecution feels distant. But for Karakalpaks who claim faith in Christ, it's often a daily reality.

The Karakalpaks, whose name stems from “Kara” meaning black and “Kalpak” meaning hat, are a Turkic people first mentioned in the 16th century. Most live in the self-governing region of Karakalpakstan in northwestern Uzbekistan.

Karakalpakstan is an extremely arid region. The Amu Darya River winds through its desert landscapes, eventually reaching the Aral Sea. But with an increase in cotton production, water channels were built to irrigate the cotton fields, taking nearly all the water from the Amu Darya and depleting much of the water supply. This eventually led to profound health and economic challenges.

There are around 924,000 Karakalpaks worldwide, according to Joshua Project, and the Karakalpak language is made up of two dialects: northeastern and southwestern.

Traditionally, Karakalpak society is organized by clans that are seen as extended family networks. In most clans, it's forbidden for a woman to marry within her own clan. Instead, she must leave her community to live with the groom's family.

Handweaving is a big part of Karakalpak culture, but only a small number of skilled



FAST FACTS

- There are around 924,000 Karakalpaks worldwide.
- Traditionally, Karakalpak society is organized by clans.
- The Karakalpak language is divided into two dialects.
- Most Karakalpaks identify with Sunni Islam.
- Few Karakalpaks have ever heard the gospel.



Source: Joshua Project

weavers remain. Yet even today, Karakalpak people hang intricately decorated textiles around their living spaces.

For centuries, most Karakalpaks have adhered to Sunni Islam. And across all eight countries where they live, very few have ever heard the gospel message. It's nearly impossible to own a Bible or any Christian literature in the region, making gospel-centered media key for evangelism.

But there is a small trickle of hope in a dry land.

Karakalpak Christians show an unwavering trust and hope in their Creator, just like the young woman who faced house arrest by her own parents. Fortunately, after a few months her father granted her some freedom. Now, she can occasionally meet with other believers.

PRAYER

Lord, I pray that the local churches would be able to expand their ministries to the Karakalpak in villages and small towns, and I lift up those who are currently involved in TWR's outreach to them. Protect them and their families from persecution.

Reaching the Karakalpaks

"I JUST WANTED to thank you for the radio program, *Springs of Living Water*," a Karakalpak listener said. "As someone facing life's challenges, this program has become like a good friend to me."

Springs of Living Water is one of five programs that TWR broadcasts in Karakalpak. Each topical episode combines a Bible story with practical advice, making them useful tools for home Bible studies. With topics such as "Jesus' Encouraging Words" and "God's Presence in Our Lives," they serve as weekly spiritual food for many.

Women of Hope programs are like a breath of fresh air for Karakalpak women. Islam teaches that women should be silent, serve men without quarreling and simply take care of the family.

This inequality between men and women creates deep wounds that only God can heal. A listener shared, "The stories of women who found comfort and strength through their faith ignited a spark of hope in me. ... I found the courage to resolve conflicts, forgive and nurture a spirit of love in my family."

Divorce is all too common among Karakalpaks, and many people have questions about family life. For this reason, *The Christian Home* is a program that teaches biblical family values. It stresses our need for God's help if we want to create loving, supportive families.

Since Islam has deep historical roots in Karakalpak culture, *The Way of Righteousness*, a program written for Muslims, is aired weekly. It presents the key stories and central messages of the Bible, explaining the plan of salvation and why Jesus is more than a prophet.

Radio Bible Project gives Karakalpaks the ability to listen to God's Word in audio format, either on the radio or through a mobile app. Listeners receive spiritual food without the risk of carrying a physical Bible. And we know that God's Word changes lives.

"Ever since we got the radio, the Word of God has been playing in every corner of our house," a listener explained. "In the past, I only heard God's Word when someone read the Bible aloud to me. However, now I can listen to it at any time. Since we began tuning in to the radio, our family dynamics have been transformed, and our attitudes toward one another have shifted."

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, would you raise up more people who can join TWR's Karakalpak ministries so that through media, more Karakalpaks will know the love of Jesus?



THE *Mongolian* PEOPLE

WHEN MONGOLIA OPENED its borders in 1989 from communist rule, there were only four known Christians. While that number has increased greatly, the amount of believers starkly contrasts with the overall population. The echoes of tradition still resound across the nation's cultural landscape, presenting barriers to the flourishing of the gospel.

Amid the rugged beauty of Mongolia's countryside, where half the population dwells, a quiet struggle persists – a struggle faced by its women. Expected to bear the weight of household chores and child-rearing, many women find their dreams deferred, their potential untapped. Hindered by socioeconomic barriers, they long for a voice, for recognition of their worth beyond the confines of tradition.

Education is pursued among boys and girls alike, but when push comes to shove, both are called back to help with traditional roles for the family: men with herding cattle and women with household responsibilities.

In the cases where women have more access to professional and educational opportunities, they are not taken seriously. They face lower wages, higher unemployment and sexual harassment compared to men. While Mongolian women may have more independence compared with other countries throughout Asia, they are no exception to



FAST FACTS

- 28 people groups including Mongols, Kazakh, Kalmyk, Khalkha
- Population: 3,395,000
- Unreached population: 98%
- Primary religion: Buddhism
- Less than 1% evangelical
- Official languages: Mongolian, Khalka, Russian (others include Chinese, Kazakh, Korean, Ukrainian, Uzbek)
- Of the 330 county-like districts in Mongolia, almost half of them don't have a church

Sources: Joshua Project, Christianity Today

the significant gender inequalities that most women today face.

Yet there is a glimmer of hope – a hope that is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ. In the eyes of God, Mongolian women are not merely bound by traditional views; they are cherished, valued and created with purpose. They, too, can encounter truth and freedom through media.

But there are barriers to bringing this truth to women. The majority of Mongolia clings to a Buddhist worldview, with many of its practices infused into major holidays and celebrations. The concept of grace is tough to grasp, and the idea of salvation freely given is met with skepticism. For those who are willing to believe in Jesus, they think he is “just another god” to add to their list.

The women of Mongolia don't need “just another god.” Idols cannot set the captives free. Mongolians, men and women alike, need the hope and freedom found in the one, true living God, who is Jesus Christ!

PRAYER

Father, I pray that Mongolians would comprehend your grace and gift of salvation. I pray that they would repent of idol worship and accept Jesus as the one, true living God. May they come to see him as the way, the truth and the life.

Reaching Mongolian Women

MOST MONGOLIAN WOMEN do not realize their immense value in the eyes of God. Our mission and delight lie in sharing the truth with women that God loves them unconditionally, leading them to discover the freedom solely found in Christ.

After years of prayers for ministry development in Mongolia, God has graciously answered! In 2023, TWR Women of Hope established a presence in Mongolia. Resources and team members are still needed, but a growing prayer ministry is already underway.

By distributing both physical and digital prayer calendars, TWR Women of Hope offers specific and practical prayer points for women around the world. This reassures women that they are not alone in their struggles. A woman finds strength in knowing she is not isolated in her pain.

There is strength in unity and prayer. The Mongolian team gathers in person for collective prayer. As the team grows, additional prayer groups will be formed in various regions.

Just as the Lord utilized media to spread the gospel in Mongolia in the early 1990s, we recognize the crucial role of media today in sharing this transformative hope. Since Mongolia is one of the world's most sparsely populated countries, radio remains a highly effective tool for reaching people.

The goal is to produce and broadcast the Women of Hope program in the native Mongolian language, addressing practical life challenges and pointing women toward Jesus Christ as the ultimate spiritual solution. As women receive sound biblical teaching and practical training, they become sources of encouragement for their families, local churches, and communities.

In all circumstances, TWR *Women of Hope* proclaims the truth that Jesus is the sole provider of perfect peace, hope and healing.

PRAYER

Lord God, help the women of Mongolia especially to know their worth in your eyes by revealing your abundant love to them. God, use TWR programs such as Women of Hope to reach Mongolian women with the gospel in both rural and urban areas.



*So if the son
sets you free,
you will be free indeed.*

John 8:36

DEVOTIONAL

“SO IF THE son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36 NIV).

When Jesus came as Messiah, the people of Israel were certain he would liberate them from the Romans. They wanted to escape from under Rome's thumb. They wanted to be free indeed.

No one enjoys living in captivity, but we often choose that lifestyle today. Not physical captivity like the Jews in Jesus' day, but spiritual and emotional prison.

Here are the things Jesus has liberated us from:

Death. Eternal life is real. Jesus has broken the bondage of spiritual death and separation from God. Because Christ is in you, you are a new creation, bound for eternal life with God.

Bitterness, anger, jealousy. These are just a few of the negative influences you deal with. And they all come from within. Jesus has broken their power in your life through his death on the cross. Turn to him for freedom.

Self-centeredness. This is at the heart of sin. Putting ourselves at the center pushes God out. Self-centeredness leads to all sorts of acts, attitudes and words that create a wedge between us and God, as well as between us and others. Put Jesus at the center of your life and experience his liberation.

The law. Not the law in your city, but the law of the Old Testament. We tend to try to earn God's approval. Although we know Jesus liberated us from that, we aren't living like it. We still try to earn God's favor.

Freedom in Christ is knowing that we already have God's favor through Christ's death on the cross. Keeping the rules will not earn or lose God's love for you. Instead of obeying him to earn his favor, the liberated life obeys God because of his love and favor.

The prison sentence we accept is self-imposed. We live in defeat because we aren't experiencing the liberated life. It all comes back to Christ and affirming his payment for our sin. Let's approach him daily with this attitude.

As you anticipate the Christmas celebration, live the liberated life that Christ has generously given you. Walk away from self-centeredness and its imprisonment. Walk with Jesus, who has freed you from sin and death.

You are free indeed.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, as I celebrate your coming to earth this advent season, may you remind me of your purpose in coming – to set me free from the chains of sin and give me life abundantly. Thank you, Lord, that in you I am free.



THE *Dari* SPEAKING PEOPLE

A believer in Afghanistan was caught reading the Bible. He was charged and told to return to Islam to be saved. He refused because Jesus was crucified for the salvation of humankind.

The Taliban killed him.

Another believer was caught by authorities listening to Christian radio programs. He was put in prison.

Months have passed. He remains in prison.

Risk is part of life for Christian believers in Afghanistan. Since the takeover of Kabul by the Taliban in August 2021, the country has been under Shariah, or Islamic law.

Leaving the Islamic faith is a risk that can lead to death.

Because of this, most believers do not share about their faith. And they remove any incriminating biblical materials from their phones for fear of being caught by the government.

"In this way, every believer does not openly share with anybody," said a worker ministering to the Afghan people. "Most of the people are afraid of the Taliban."

Afghanistan is ranked 10th by Open Doors on the World Watch List of countries where persecution of believers is extreme. This reality is what spurs the TWR team working among Afghans to discreetly distribute SD cards with videos and programs to encourage believers and share the hope of Jesus.

"Hope only comes from Jesus," the worker said. "Nobody is giving the hope to them."

The team hands out SD cards to Afghan radio home groups. It's difficult and risky for the team members involved. "Without risk you can't do anything," he said.

Despite the challenges, believers in Afghanistan continue to conduct radio home groups. Two or three people gather to listen to TWR's radio programs or watch *Share the Story* videos.

Many have fled Afghanistan to neighboring countries like Pakistan and Iran. Afghans are one of the largest refugee populations, according to UNHCR, a UN refugee agency.

"There are 2.6 million registered Afghan refugees globally," the UNHCR reported.



FAST FACTS

- Dari is one of the prominent languages of Afghanistan, spoken by about 49% of the population
- With only 0.01% evangelical Christian, Dari speakers are one of the most unreached people groups
- The only church in the country was closed in 2021

Sources: britannica.com, Joshua Project



“Additionally, there are 3.5 million individuals internally displaced within Afghanistan.”

The TWR team is ministering among the refugees and local churches provide spiritual help. The team distributed *Share the Story* in the Dari language with contacts via WhatsApp. This 20-episode animated Bible story series was created by TWR MOTION with a Muslim audience in mind. It was created for adults but is also ministering to the Afghan children.

A 10-year-old Afghan girl shared with the team that while she grew up going to church with her family, she did not understand the gospel.

“One day, two pastors visited my home,” she said. “They showed us [*Share the Story*] on WhatsApp and told us about Jesus dying for our sins. I realized I’m not perfect and need Jesus to forgive me. So, I asked him to be my Savior. Since then, I’ve felt God’s love every day. When I’m scared or sad, I pray to Jesus, and he helps me feel better. I’ve also learned that being a Christian means loving others like Jesus loves us. So, I try to be kind to my friends and help people who need it.”

The refugee children have no school and limited activities, but they have access to the internet and mobile phones, the ministry worker said.

“These stories are very helpful for the Dari-speaking kids,” he said.

PRAYER

Father God, I ask that you would get the videos and programs in front of people who are spiritually seeking. And protect those who are sharing them.

Reaching Dari speakers

TWR HAS VIDEOS and audio programs to share the gospel with and minister to the people of Afghanistan, including:

Share the Story, a series of 20 animated Bible stories that take viewers from the creation of the world to the resurrection of Jesus. TWR MOTION, a sub-ministry of TWR, created the videos with a Muslim audience in mind. It was produced in a way that would connect with their worldview by starting with the stories of the prophets and showing how those stories point to Jesus. The stories then move to the New Testament, where Jesus is introduced, showing some of his miracles and ending with his death and resurrection. Themes of sacrifice and redemption are woven throughout the series.

“Before [*Share the Story*] we used to present them with a verbal story, in which they sometime lose interest, but now, they listen to it carefully with more interest,” the team recently shared in a report. “It is also easy for them to memorize.”

“I am 13 years old. I have witnessed the transformation of belief in my parents, which has inspired me to seek Jesus for myself. Additionally, [the *Share the Story* videos] helped me grow in faith. When I watched the story in which Jesus told the Samaritan woman about her sins, I realized Jesus knows everything – even about our hidden sins. I realized he would also know about my sins. It has transformed my life.”

Sound of Life is an evangelistic audio program produced outside Afghanistan. It's broadcast over shortwave and medium-wave (AM) radio.

“I have been sharing what you teach from the Word of God on *Sound of Life* with my wife,” a listener wrote. “Thank you for encouraging men to love their wives and their family.”

Women of Hope is an audio program that provides information, hope, healing and biblical perspectives on life issues women face daily. The program is a first step in helping women in their walk with Christ. To encourage women to grow deeper in their faith, the TWR Women of Hope team provides spiritual material such as blog posts, Bible studies, e-books and discipleship information. This sub-ministry of TWR seeks to bring hope and healing in Jesus to women around the world and across generations.

“I frequently listen to the Dari programs produced by Women of Hope. This program appeals to me because it addresses the absence of women's rights in our culture. I want all women to tune in.”

PRAYER

Lord God, I pray that your Holy Spirit will work among the Afghan people, giving them eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to receive the message of the gospel.

THE Tamang PEOPLE

THE TAMANG PEOPLE are one of the major ethnic groups of Nepal, with a population of approximately 1.8 million. Most of them live in the central hilly region and Himalayan region of Nepal. They have a strong oral tradition by which they pass on their customs and identity.

In 1854, a social hierarchy of ethnic groups was codified into Nepalese law; in it, the Tamang were grouped under a category of peoples that could legally be enslaved. They had to fulfill compulsory labor obligations for the government, and failing to fulfill these requirements could result in physical violence as well as confiscation of their land.

While the government legally abolished any caste-based discrimination in 1963, over a hundred years of marginalization and discrimination has left a lasting impact. Many Tamang today are illiterate and extremely poor, which limits their access to opportunities for improving their lives. Social ills such as alcoholism are also common.

Today, most Tamang engage in agriculture, growing barley, corn, millet, potatoes and wheat – crops that can withstand the lack of irrigation at the higher altitudes where they live. Many also work as manual laborers to gain an additional means of income.

Shanti and her husband are of the Tamang people. One day while listening to the radio, they stumbled upon TWR's evangelical program in their language.

"This program said that 'God loves us, heals us, and redeems us in all situations of our life.' These teachings are different from our religious beliefs, so we rejected it at the time," Shanti recounted.



FAST FACTS

- Tamang population: nearly 1.8 million living mostly in Nepal or India
- Religion: majority follow Tibetan Buddhism
- Economically: generally very poor, agricultural and manual labor
- Evangelicals: 6.6%

Like most of their fellow Tamang, they placed great trust in the teachings of their lamas, priests who lead the people in religious rituals and ceremonies.

According to Joshua Project, about 82% of Tamang follow religious beliefs of Tibetan Buddhism combined with animism and – to a lesser extent – Hinduism. They are considered a minimally reached people group, with only 6.6% professing Christianity as their religion.

However, Bibles and other study resources are not easily accessible. Most believers and church leaders are not trained and lack biblical knowledge.

Sources: Joshua Project, Academia, National Museum, Global Voices, Old Rising Nepal Daily

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I pray for the Tamang people and the historical hurts and burdens they have gone through. Open their hearts and eyes to perceive how your kingdom is different.

Reaching the Tamang

That was not the end of the story for Shanti and her husband, however.

“The program would come on twice a week, repeatedly telling us about who God is, our purpose here on this earth, about creation and eternity.”

Shanti’s husband couldn’t sleep at all with these words resounding in his ear, so they eventually decided to go to a church to learn more. There, they met a pastor who not only addressed their questions about the program but also helped them understand more about God.

TWR partners with various Tamang pastors, providing them with audio players and SD cards preloaded with biblical resources and programs in their mother tongue. The pastors run media home groups and conduct Bible-study sessions using these resources. The audio programs not only overcome the literacy barrier; they are also delivered in a way familiar to the Tamang – due to the oral tradition of their people.

TWR also broadcasts the program from local FM stations, allowing God’s Word to be shared with the general Tamang audience within the coverage area.

A pastor shared, “I found that there are more listeners tuning in lately. This is because not only are the teachings easy to understand, but the program is also presented in their mother tongue. ... People are listening closely to this program, and many nonbelievers have left their alcoholic habits. As a result, some people are even beginning to say good things about Christianity.”

As for Shanti and her husband, they took a little time to decide.

“Five months later we both decided to be Christians and accepted Jesus. Today I listen to the program regularly and learn more about God. I have more faith in him.”

PRAYER

Lord, I praise you for changing the lives of these Tamang listeners. May you draw more people – like you did with Shanti and her husband – to your goodness and to your love.



THE Farsi SPEAKING PEOPLE

AT THE CROSSROADS of the Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia lies the Persian-speaking world, a region that is well known for its tapestry of unique culture, rich history and diverse people groups.

The current generation in Iranian society is marked by significant societal changes. Brother F, the Farsi ministry director, noted a shift in the dynamics of respect between children and parents. The traditional practice of seeking parental permission for certain actions has become less common.

In Iranian culture, families often watch television at home. However, for many young people, Instagram, Telegram and podcasts are the most popular forms of media. Clubhouse, another social media app based on audio clips, is gaining popularity. In the Persian world, most listeners use earbuds and headsets so they can listen in private.

TWR's Farsi ministry team is creating modern content to reach this generation.

"We want to reach the new generations, and you can't use old-fashioned programs to reach them," Brother F said. "The content must match the situation now. Twenty years ago, people had more possibilities. But now, people don't have the same freedoms they had in the past."

After a young woman was killed for not wearing a hijab, there was a rise in a movement in protest of strict Islamic laws that fueled anger in Iran toward religion. Iranians aren't interested in religious rituals and formalities; instead, they need a relationship with God.

"Around 70% of people in the Persian world are disillusioned with Islam," Brother F shared. "Now, they don't believe in any religion. They're lost and need to hear God's Word."

Within this context, Farsi-speaking women are dedicating their lives to Christ, and the number is growing. "In Islam, women don't have rights; this makes them feel hopeless," said Brother F. "We have to encourage them, let them know they're amazing in the eyes



FAST FACTS

- Farsi (also known as Persian) is a language spoken by a global community of over 100 million people.
- Farsi is the native language of Iran and an official language in Afghanistan and Tajikistan.
- Persia is in modern-day Iran.
- Iran consists of many different ethnic groups. Approximately 65% of the population are Persians, the major ethnic group.
- 48,092,000 – the population of the Persian-speaking group, according to Joshua Project.



of God and that God can use them.”

Persian culture is discernible in the biblical books of Nehemiah, Esther, and Daniel. In Matthew 2, wise men from the East came to Bethlehem to worship Jesus, saying, “We saw his star in the east, and we have come to worship Him.” Wouldn’t it be wonderful if modern Persians sought to worship Jesus as their Messiah with the same passion as the magi of ancient Persia?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I ask that you would guide the Farsi team as they look for more effective ways to promote their content in Iran. In this land that so desperately needs you, may they find the broadcasts and be changed by the power of your Word.

Reaching Farsi speakers

“MY HEART IS to help my country [Iran] see their heritage and love the Lord as Darius, king of Persia, said in Daniel 6:26, ‘In my kingdom, men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; For He is the living God and enduring forever,’” said Brother F. “I pray God will again be praised in my country, as He was during the reign of Darius. This is my heart for the Farsi-speaking people – that Jesus Christ will be praised. I want to give my life to this work. I want them to know who Jesus is because he can change their lives.”

Although there’s an ever-growing thirst to know Jesus, the Persian-speaking world is increasingly challenging to reach due to religious and political antagonism toward Christianity. TWR’s Farsi ministry team finds innovative ways to reach places where missionaries cannot physically go, reaching the Persian-speaking world with relevant content through radio, podcasts and digital media that can quietly reach people in the safety of their homes.

Pand, which means “wise words” in Farsi, is a collection of programs, each designed for a specific purpose. *Pand* will continually evolve to keep current with issues; the program schedule can easily be changed daily or weekly in response to events and challenges.

Dramatized stories and music are aired between each *Pand* program to keep listeners interested. The music provides an immersive media experience.

“We use the language and music of the people we are speaking to,” Brother F shared. “By doing this, we touch their soul because music speaks to the soul.” Discipleship programs such as *Time with Pastor Ivan* teach people to walk with the Lord daily with help from the Bible. The teacher in this program is also a singer; he teaches and sings in the episodes.

Women of Hope programs have evolved to address the growing discontent with religiosity observed in recent years. Each episode begins with uplifting music, occasionally accompanied by a personal testimony. The topics are matched with Bible stories that show how valuable women were in Jesus’ eyes and how much he respected them while He was on earth. *Women of Hope* programs help women see that they have the same value and dignity as men in God’s eyes.

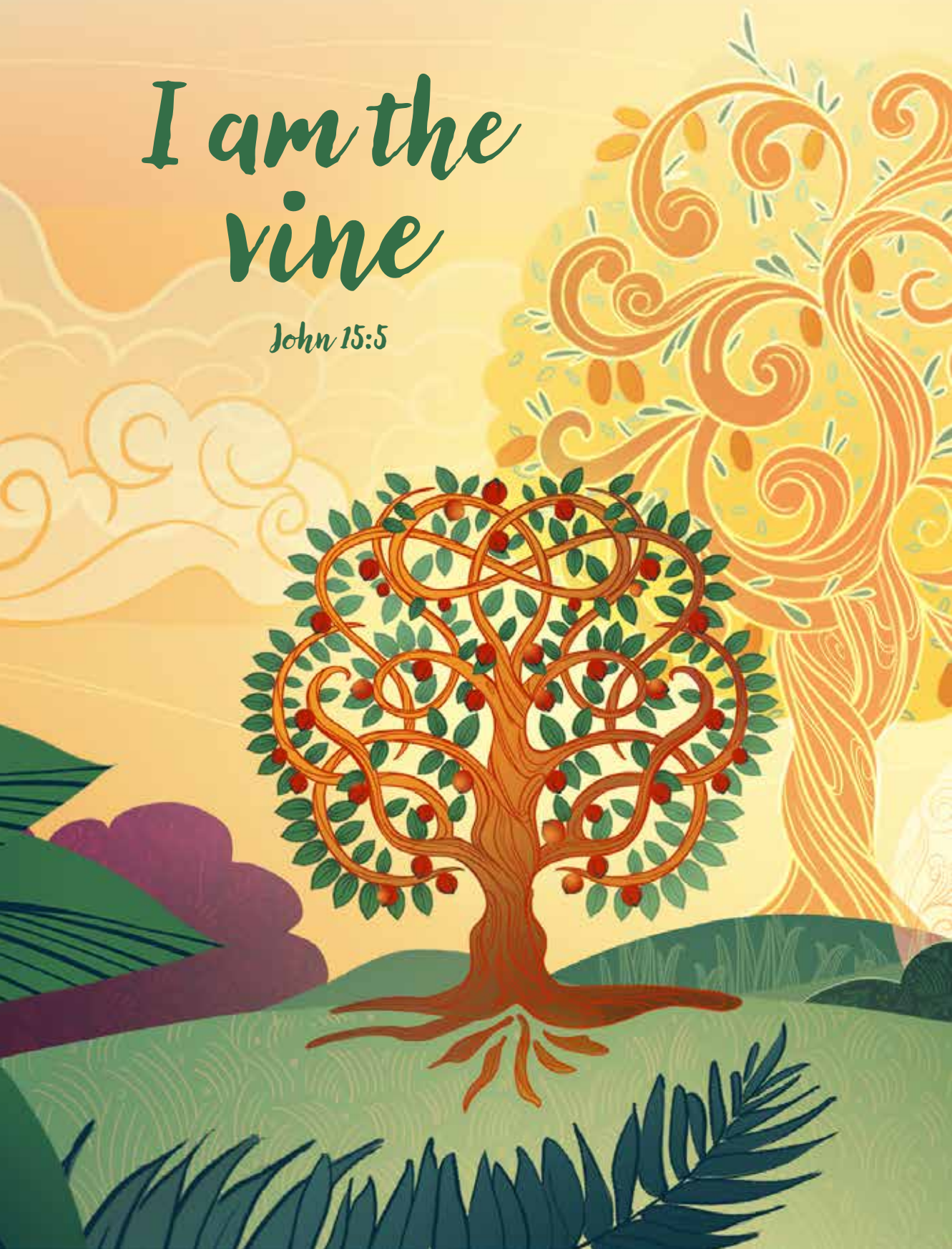
A Persian sister said, “How proud I am to be a woman when I hear your program. I listen to your programs every day. I was very blessed by the content, such as sermons or teachings about anger. I also liked the cooking part very much. Thank you. God bless you.”

PRAYER

Lord, may listeners tune into the radio broadcasts, and may they discover the digital media available to them. May you be glorified as your word is spread throughout this dark region.

I am the vine

John 15:5



DEVOTIONAL

AS WE START this final Advent week, let's look at John 15:1-8. These verses hold the secret to living the Christian life. They are a great reminder of how Jesus intends for us to relate to him.

Jesus' statement sets the scene: *"I am the true vine"* (John 15:1 ESV). He is the source of life. He's not just any vine. He's the true vine.

In his analogy, Jesus is likely illustrating a grape vine, familiar to everyone in that day. Imagine a complex set of intertwined vines crawling up a pole or a fence. You can trace each one to the source of its nutrients.

This is the picture in John 15. Jesus is the source of life. Every shoot that emerges from Jesus the true vine should be full of life.

But that doesn't always happen. Some branches "wither," as Jesus describes. They've stopped absorbing their nutrients from the true vine.

Jesus says it this way about our relationship with him, *"Whoever abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing"* (John 15:5 ESV).

It's so simple! All we need to do is abide, remain in, live in.

It's more than connecting to, because dead branches are still connected to the vine. You can have a relationship with Jesus, but as they say, you could be "dying on the vine." In that case, you might describe your Christian life as lackluster, boring, dry or stale.

The best phrase to make it clear is "live in." Am I living in Christ? You know whether you are living in Christ or not. How can you make sure your relationship with Jesus stays fresh and alive once his birthday passes?

Spend time getting to know and fellowshiping with him. Enjoy Jesus' presence by talking to him (praying) and reading the Bible. A few quiet minutes each day, away from noise and distractions, can make a big difference.

Perhaps sin is junking up the pathway from Christ to you. Impurities will block nutrients from the vine to the branch and cause it to wither.

Or maybe you're trying too hard to live the Christian life. Look again at Verse 5 and see what Jesus says about bearing fruit: *"Whoever abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit."* A branch simply absorbs nutrients from the vine, and the grapes appear.

Do you want to bear fruit in the year ahead? Live in Christ, the true vine.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, may I truly live in you, trusting you for everything I need.



THE Hassaniya

SPEAKING PEOPLE

IN ALL WEST Africa, the nation of Mauritania is least touched by the gospel, according to TWR's international director for West and Central Africa.

The forces of darkness are trying to keep it that way.

"Various examples are reported of Mauritanian Christians imprisoned and tortured," wrote the Rev. Dr. Abdoulaye Sangho. "Missionaries [are] murdered or expelled from the country for proselytism. More recently, two of our local contacts were thrown in jail for trying to convert other Mauritians by distributing Bibles and Christian message content."

Hassaniya is not a people group but a language spoken by 29 people groups in 11 countries, according to Joshua Project, a Christian nonprofit that tracks the world's unreached peoples. By far the largest people group speaking Hassaniya is the Moors. The largest population of Hassaniya speakers is in Mauritania, which has 435 miles of Atlantic Ocean coastline and borders Morocco, Algeria, Mali and Senegal.

Among the Mauritanian Hassaniya speakers, only 0.1% are evangelical Christians in a country where Islam is by far the majority religion.

"Nevertheless, we are always convinced that the Lord calls us to make known the good news of salvation also to this people whom the Lord loves and sacrificed his Son for



FAST FACTS

- Hassaniya speakers worldwide: 5.67 million
- Primary country: Mauritania
- Percentage of evangelical Christians worldwide: 0.09
- 1960 – The year Mauritania became independent from France
- 1981 – The year Mauritania became the last country to abolish slavery

Sources: Joshua Project, CNN, CIA World Factbook

them,” Sangho wrote.

The challenge is significant, because Hassaniya speakers are deeply rooted in their religion. The practice of Islam among Hassaniya people is characterized by a blend of Bedouin traditions, Sufi mysticism and local customs. Religious observance is woven into the fabric of daily life, from the five daily prayers to the celebration of Islamic festivals and rituals.

Amid their predominantly Muslim neighbors, Christians among the Hassaniya speakers navigate a complex landscape shaped by religious diversity, cultural traditions and societal norms. Open Doors, an agency that monitors persecution of Christians, placed Mauritania 23rd on its 2024 World Watch List of countries where Christians experience the most persecution.

Despite these challenges, Hassaniya Christians demonstrate remarkable resilience and faithfulness in the face of adversity. While their numbers may be small, their impact as salt and light within their communities is profound.

PRAYER

Father God, I pray for spiritual awakening among the Hassaniya speakers. I ask that you would mobilize prayer networks and support groups in Africa and beyond that would intercede for these people whom you love.



Reaching Hassaniya speakers

TWR REMAINS STEADFAST in its mission to bring the message of hope and salvation to Hassaniya speakers. Through radio broadcasts in Hassaniya Arabic, TWR endeavors to engage with the hearts and minds of this community, sharing the love of Christ and addressing their spiritual needs.

TWR's programming includes biblical teachings, testimonies, music and culturally relevant discussions, all aimed at making the gospel accessible and relatable to the Hassaniya speakers.

Here is a sample of responses we've received to Hassaniya programs:

I am finally writing to you today to tell you that after listening to the radio several times with your messages, I have decided to follow Jesus. I know it won't be easy since my parents are Muslim. But I am truly determined to live from now on with Christ as Lord and Savior.

– response from a listener to The Messiah in Mali

There is nothing more than "thanks" to express my gratitude to you for the teaching on the prophets that you give us on radio. I am not Christian. Not yet. But you have almost convinced me about the prophet Jesus.

– phone call from a listener to The Messiah in Mali

I was desperate in life. I thought everything ... in my life is bad, and I will never succeed. I am almost 40 years old and still not married or [have] a job that can feed a family. But your message gives me hope. ... The gospel of Jesus Christ is the best news I ever heard.

– phone call from a listener to The Way of Righteousness in Mali.

The teaching about family ... touched me significantly. We are not used to [talking] about love and relations between men and women. We did not dare to talk about it.

– social media posting from a listener to The Way of Righteousness in Cote d'Ivoire

PRAYER

Lord, would you give the TWR staff creativity and discernment as they seek to develop programming to address the ever-changing needs within this community.



THE Indigenous

PEOPLE OF SURINAME

DEEP IN THE dense jungle of Suriname live various Indigenous tribes, some of which have been identified but others remaining undiscovered. Relying on the rivers and other natural resources of their environment to survive, these tribes' way of life does not allow for quick access to the gospel. They traditionally hold an animistic religious view, believing that everything from plants to inanimate objects have souls. With this belief system come many rituals and practices motivated by fear of evil spirits. But hope is gradually reaching their ears and hearts.

TWR missionary Tom Schoen was raised in the Indigenous culture of the Suriname jungle from the time he was 2 as the son of missionaries. His family brought a tribe called the Wayana to know Christ despite an enormous language barrier and vastly different cultural backgrounds. It was a miraculous feat – and it didn't stop there. The Wayana, alongside the efforts of the Schoens, brought the gospel to a neighboring tribe called the Trio. According to Schoen, approximately 95% of the Trios ended up professing faith in Christ.

Now, the Indigenous Wayana and Trio tribes, with the support of TWR, seek to reach other indigenous groups in the Suriname jungle.

"Reaching into these areas is difficult and time-consuming," Schoen explained. "A fierce people group makes many fearful to reach them."

In the years since the Schoens' initial outreach, however, the younger generation of Indigenous people in Suriname are spreading farther and deeper into the jungle, especially among the Trio.

"The challenge is getting to them, as they regularly navigate the jungles and river to resettle for more profitable living," Schoen explained. "Due to degraded soil landscapes from living on the land even a year at a time, the Trio are forced to move farther into the



SURINAME

FAST FACTS

- The smallest country in South America, Suriname's population is one of the most ethnically diverse in the region.
- Prayer is appreciated for stability and maturity to be maintained in tribal churches.
- TWR has released a 75-minute documentary on the Wayana people of Suriname, including actual real footage and interviews with the Schoens. Watch *Lifted: A Dying Tribe Encounters New Life* at twr.org/lifted to dive deeper into this miraculous story.

jungle for more nutrient-rich soil to farm and build a life." Others are relocating to find job opportunities that will better allow them to provide for their families. As a result, the Trio church elders are increasingly losing contact with the next generation.

Today, Tom Schoen, the Wayana, and the Trio are committed to continue ministering to these people, especially through radio, so that hope continues to spread to all of Suriname's Indigenous tribes.

PRAYER

Father, I praise you for the way you have reached into the most remote places with your love and salvation. May more Indigenous people come to know you through the efforts of the Wayana and Trio people and the radio stations that they are establishing.

Reaching Indigenous Tribes

Sixty years after Tom Schoen first arrived in the Suriname jungle as a little boy, he uses the same airstrips built by his father to return – and he's not returning alone. This time, he'll be transporting equipment and a crew to set up two radio stations with him. These stations will be vital to discipling the Wayana and Trio tribes and equipping them to minister to other Indigenous groups.

The project is well on its way to success, with the help of experienced engineers and the completed construction of two transmitter buildings in the jungle. Ground has also been cleared to make room for the antennas. More equipment is needed, including towers, solar panels and generators, as well as funding to ship and fly the equipment directly into the jungle.

After the installation is complete, the work will be only just beginning. Schoen intends to translate a TWR radio program, *Thru the Bible*, for broadcast in the jungles.

With the radios being distributed by the Triana Foundation, a project funded by the Schoen family and TWR, the Wayana and Trio will be able to listen to TWR programs in their own languages. Then, they can take what they learn to the very ends of the Suriname jungle.

"We believe radio will unite, encourage and minister to the tribes as well as spread the gospel to other unreached people groups," said Schoen. Though the vast jungle separates tribes and people, radio can bridge that distance and foster an explosion of faith.

To learn more about the story of the Wayana and Trio tribes' salvation and outreach, you can watch the TWR documentary *Lifted*. The film highlights the Schoen family's work in the Suriname jungles and gives a unique glimpse into the lifestyle of the Indigenous tribes. Watching this miraculous story of redemption calls to mind the message of Psalm 3:3 – "You, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the one who lifts my head high."

PRAYER

Father, may the Wayana and Trio people be encouraged by TWR's radio programming to continue spreading the good news among the Indigenous tribes of Suriname. Pray that the signal will be clear through the jungles so the Word can reach them.

The artwork

THE ARTWORK FEATURED on the cover and throughout the prayer guide comes from the digital pens of TWR MOTION's illustrators – Kayla Schlipf, Hannah McGurk, Mary Vooyo and Amber Kenneson. The art comes from *Journey to Hope*, a 20-episode series of animated Bible stories created to share the good news with those from a Buddhist worldview. *Journey to Hope* is one example of how TWR reaches the world through mass media so that lasting fruit is produced.



COVER ILLUSTRATION:
Journey to Hope
EPISODE 8 "Jesus' Birth," showing Joseph and Mary traveling to Bethlehem.



ILLUSTRATION 1:
Journey to Hope
EPISODE 2 "Creation," showing how God created the world from the book of Genesis.



ILLUSTRATION 2:
Journey to Hope
EPISODE 2 "Creation," showing Adam in the Garden of Eden.



ILLUSTRATION 3:
Journey to Hope
EPISODE 3 "The Fall," showing Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden before being tempted by the serpent.

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