

## PAKISTAN

In Pakistan there are 463 distinct people groups. Following are two of the groups.



### **Baloch, Eastern**

The Eastern Baluch are part of a much larger population of Baluch numbering about 8 million. The various groups speak different languages, each with distinguishing characteristics. Their homeland reaches from eastern Baluchistan to southwestern Punjab, which borders India. This high, dry region was once a very populated country watered by a large number of flowing rivers. Today, it is a barren area of rocky mountains and dry river valleys mixed with desert land.

Their name, "Baluch," is shrouded in controversy. Some say it means "nomad," while others claim that it is an old Persian word meaning "the cock's crest." Their history is just as mysterious. Some have traced their origins to Nimrod, son of Cush (Noah's grandson). But while some things are uncertain, we do know that they first moved to the region in the twelfth century. During the Moghul period, this territory became known as "Baluchistan."

What are their lives like?

The Baluch traditionally earn their living by a combination of farming and semi-nomadic shepherding. They usually raise sheep, cattle, or goats. Agriculture is limited because of the harsh climate; nevertheless, it plays a large role in the economy. The chief crop is wheat. To aid in the household economy, some farmers raise chickens. They also depend on wild fruits and vegetables.

One wild plant, called the "dwarf palm," is used as a dietary supplement. The meat of the palm is eaten, and the leaves are used to make ropes, shoes, mats, spoons, tents, and pipes. Techniques of survival differ from valley to valley and from high mountain areas to lowland plains. However, each community tries to keep as many different animals as possible and to grow a wide variety of crops.

The Baluch have overcome the obstacles of living in an extremely harsh, arid climate. Today, most of them live in two types of settlements that are conducive to their semi-nomadic lifestyle. Their permanent villages consist of clusters of mud houses, loosely organized around the home of the local chief. They live in these mountain and valley settlements in the summertime. However, in winter, they migrate to the plains and coastal areas, seeking green grass for their livestock. During this time, they live in

tents, and move freely across the landscape as weather conditions dictate. These temporary settlements are smaller, consisting of closely related kin.

Baluch marriages are arranged between the bride's father and the prospective groom. A "bride price" of livestock and cash is paid. Once a woman is married, she passes from the authority of her father to that of her husband. Marriages are monogamous and lifelong, and marrying a non-Baluch is strictly forbidden.

Baluch mayar, or the "Baluchiway," is the honor code by which the Baluch live. These principles include extending hospitality and mercy, dealing with each other honestly, and offering refuge to strangers. They are preserved through both songs and poetry. Children learn proper behavior by watching their elders, and are taunted whenever they misbehave.

Many Baluch cannot read or write; and until recently, their language was unwritten. However, they have a long tradition of poetic compositions. Poets and professional minstrels are highly regarded.

What are their beliefs?

The Baluch are Sunni Muslims. Their religious practices remain private, and there is no concept of a "state religion." All forms of secular authority are separated from the spiritual authority held by religious leaders.

What are their needs?

The Baluch have been isolated for many years due to Pakistan's harsh climate, the difficulty of communicating in mountainous terrain, and their reputation as bandits. Since the governments of Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan all have a share in Baluchistan's welfare, they have begun building roads and developing agriculture programs. However, the Baluch have remained largely unaffected by these developmental changes.

Prayer Points

- \* Ask the Lord to call people who are willing to go to Pakistan and share Christ with the Baluch.
- \* Pray that Christian broadcasts will be made available as communication improves.
- \* Ask God to strengthen, encourage, and protect the missionaries that are trying to reach the Eastern Baluch with the Gospel.
- \* Ask the Holy Spirit to soften the hearts of the Eastern Baluch towards Christians so that they will be receptive to the Gospel.
- \* Pray that God will open the hearts of Pakistan's governmental leaders to the Gospel.
- \* Ask the Lord to raise up a strong local church among the Eastern Baluch.

\* Pray for completion of Bible translation in this people group's primary language.



Country: Pakistan

Continent: Asia

Region: Central Asia

Persecution Rank: 14 (Only top 50 ranked, 1 = highest persecution ranking)

10/40 Window: Yes

Population in this Country: 7,660,000

Largest Provinces: Punjab (2,414,000) Balochistan (2,080,000)

Sindh (1,987,000) Northwest Frontier (202,000) Islamabad (600)

Population in this Country: 7,660,000

Affinity Bloc: Iranian-Median

People Cluster: Baloch

People Name General: Baloch, Eastern

Primary Language: Balochi, Eastern (4,970,000 Speakers)

Primary Religion: Islam, Christianity 0%

**Pashtun**



The Pashtun, or Pushtun, are a race of warriors who live primarily in Afghanistan and Pakistan. They consist of about sixty tribes, each with its own territory. Although their origin is unclear, their legends say that they are the descendants of Afghana, grandson of King Saul. However, most scholars believe that they probably arose from ancient Aryans intermingling with subsequent invaders.

The Pashtun have played an important role in the history of their region. From their community have come Muslim rulers, administrators, and soldiers. While many of them have moved out of the highlands in search of an easier life in the plains, their mountainous homeland continues to be their citadel of strength and freedom.

The Pashtun are said to be elegant, colorfully attired, hospitable, considerate, fierce in hatred, and kind in friendship. Though very dedicated to their religious beliefs, they are also fond of pleasure. They are known for their marksmanship and their love of honor.

What are their lives like?

Most of the Pashtun live in southern and central Asia. Their homes lie along a chain of barren, rugged mountains (the Indus and the Hindu Kush) and the Syistan Plateau of Iran. Large Pashtun communities can also be found in ten other countries.

At the core of Pashtun society is the extended family. Each family group owns its land and lives in a fortified residence called a qala. Every qala is divided into two areas: a general living area and the private living quarters. A high wall in the middle separates the two areas.

Distinctive tribal customs and traditions also form an integral part of Pashtun society. The true essence of their culture can be seen in the "code of ethics" that they live by.

This unwritten code is called Pushtunwali ("the way of the Pushtun"), and is close to the heart of every Pashtun.

Pushtunwali is followed religiously, and it includes the following practices: melmastia (hospitality and protection to every guest); nanawati (the right of a fugitive to seek refuge, and acceptance of his bona fide offer of peace); badal (the right of blood feuds or revenge); tureh (bravery); sabat (steadfastness); imamdari (righteousness); 'isteqamat (persistence); ghayrat (defense of property and honor); and mamus (defense of one's women).

Pashtun men usually wear sleeveless, embroidered vests over long sleeved, cotton shirts that are buttoned at one shoulder and hung over baggy trousers. They also wear unique turbans which are tied in such a way to indicate tribal identity. In certain inaccessible regions, rifles, pistols, knives, and other weapons are considered essential items of dress. The women wear basically the same type clothing as the men, but they generally use more colorful material.

The Pashtun tribes range from the highly educated who live in cities to tent-dwelling nomads. Although their societies are based on tribal traditions, the Pashtun who live in cities or villages have a different attitude towards social status than do the nomads. This is because the villages are made up of both Pashtun and non-Pashtun peoples. In most cases, the Pashtun are the landowners.

Members of the wealthier Pashtun families will occasionally farm or tend the animals but they will not engage in any other occupation within the village. The men usually perform the more difficult tasks outside the home, while the women are responsible for the things within the home.

Traditionally, inheritances are divided equally among all the sons. The daughters are usually excluded, in spite of the clear teachings in the Koran concerning such matters. A daftari is a man who possesses a share in the tribal lands and has a voice in tribal councils. Such a person is regarded with high esteem in Pashtun society.

What are their beliefs?

The majority of Pashtun are Sunni Muslims. Islam came to them as a great liberating and unifying force, freeing them from the cult of Brahminism and the harshness of Buddhism. For this reason, their underlying faith and steadfast devotion to Islam are very strong.

What are their needs?

The Pashtun are a people who have known frequent war. In 1979, the Soviets led a massive invasion into Afghanistan. Approximately three million Afghans (many of them Pashtun) fled across the border into Pakistan. The Soviet occupation has ended but Afghanistan is currently torn by war between the Taliban and the national government supported by the United States and NATO.

Many of the Pashtun are extremely poor and live in unsanitary conditions caused mainly by poor water supply). A large number of the adults are also illiterate. The need for qualified medical teams and school teachers is great.

Since their entire way of life is opposed to change, the Pashtun present one of the strongest challenges to the Christian Church today. Much intercession is needed if they are to be successfully reached with the Gospel.

#### Prayer Points

- \* Ask God to raise up prayer teams that will break up the soil through worship and intercession.
- \* Ask God to grant wisdom and favor to the mission agencies that are focusing on the Pashtuns.
- \* Pray for the Pashtun children who grow up in fear and hatred of outsiders.
- \* Ask God to encourage and protect the small number of Pashtun believers.
- \* Pray that God will provide greater peace and freedom to live and work among the Pashtun.
- \* Pray that God will reveal Himself to these precious people through dreams and visions.
- \* Ask the Holy Spirit to soften their hearts towards Christians so that they will be receptive to the Gospel.
- \* Ask the Lord to raise up strong local churches among the Pashtun.



Country: Pakistan

Continent:

Asia

Region: Central Asia

Persecution Rank: 14 (Only top 50 ranked, 1 = highest persecution ranking)

10/40 Window: Yes

Population in this Country: 22,522,000

Largest Provinces: Northwest Frontier (15,607,000) Balochistan (2,453,000)

Punjab (2,064,000) Sindh (1,126,000) Azad Kashmir (168,000) Islamabad (17,000)

People Name in Country: Pashtun, Northern

Affinity Bloc: Iranian-Median

People Cluster: Pashtun

People Name General: Pashtun, Northern

Primary Language: Pashto, Northern (9,417,000 Speakers)

Religion: Islam 100%, Christianity 0%