

Bashkir Muslims



Quick Facts

Population: 1,800,000

Russia: 1,600,000

Uzbekistan: 45,000

Kazakhstan: 30,000

Tajikstan: 7,000

Religion: Sunni Islam

Believers: 0.01% (MBB)

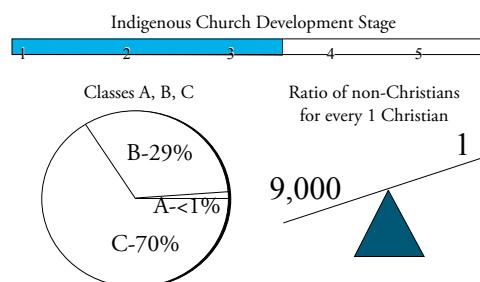
Scriptures: None

Ministry Tools: None

Church Status: 3

Mission Status: 2

MS Subgroups: 4+



Class A- Are members of a Culturally Relevant Church
Class B- Have close access to a CRC, but have not yet joined
Class C- Have no reasonable or close access to a CRC

Identity: The ethnogenesis of today's Bashkir people, as a distinct ethnicity from the Tatars, can be traced to around the 16th century when they were invaded by the Russians. Genetically, they are a mixture of the Oguz, Bulgars, and various Turko-Mongol tribes. Physically they have the greatest degree of Mongoloid features among Middle-volga peoples.

Lifestyle: The Bashkir were nomadic pastoralists until the Russians conquered and colonized their land. By the time of the Communist revolution most were already sedentary farmers, growing a wide variety of crops. They also maintained herds of beef and dairy cattle, sheep and goats, which have greatly multiplied today. The Bashkir are famous for their tradition of Bee-keeping, which is done in century-old family-owned hollow tree apiaries.

Customs: Bashkir-bred and trained horses are prized for their endurance

throughout the Ural mountains and beyond, but among the Bashkir they are also prized for their milk. The mares are milked six times a day in June and July to make *kumyss*, a special Mongol drink used during ceremonies or while entertaining guests.

Religion: Most of the Bashkir are low-practice Sunni Muslims. Due to Soviet influence many younger Bashkir grew up ignorant of Islam, and know at best one or two prayers. However, traditional Islamic ceremonies and customs relating to marriage, death and childbirth have been preserved by the older generation. Following the collapse of Communism there has been an influx of teachers from Turkey and the Middle East attempting to revive Islam, though there has been resistance towards Tatar Mullahs, which have traditionally dominated in religious leadership roles in Bashkortostan.

Christian Outreach: Recent growth among the Bashkir has been encourag-

ing and six fellowships have been established. However, all missionary personnel have now been expelled from Bashkortostan as a result, and only one Bashkir evangelist remains.

How to Pray:

❖ The government has made registration of evangelical churches difficult, and is actively opposing their work. Pray for God's intervention in this situation, and for leaders that are seekers after Him.

❖ Most Bashkir are in rural areas and remain largely unevangelized. Pray for open doors to reach them, and for the necessary personnel to establish new fellowships in every town and village.

❖ The Bible is being adapted from the Tatar translation, a people which the Bashkir have sought to distance themselves from. Pray for divine sensitivity in this process, and that the new Bashkir Bible would be fully accepted as God's message of life and salvation.

❖ Pray for those who remain behind without missionary presence. Ask God to strengthen them and raise up leaders in their midst. Pray for all the gifts of the Spirit to be manifested.

**Every year 16,000
Bashkir die
without Christ.**