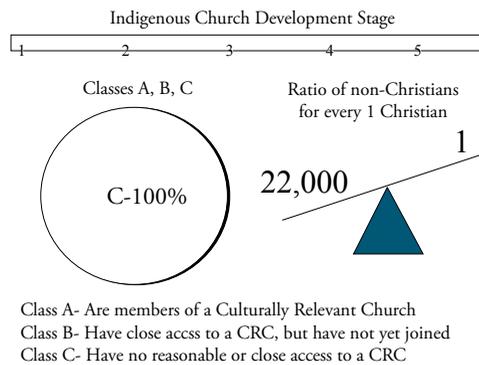


Gurage Muslims



Quick Facts

Pop. in Ethiopia: 1,100,000
Location: S. of Addis Ababa
Lang. Family: Ethiopic
Religion: Sunni Islam
Believers: 0.004% (MBB)
Scriptures: NT (3)
Ministry Tools: JGRT
Church Status: 1
Mission Status: 1
Churches: 0 (MBF)
Organizations: 2
MS Subgroups: 8



Identity: The Gurage are an Ethiopic speaking people, related to the Amharic. The major Islamic subgroup among them is the Selti (1 million in population). Minor Islamic subgroups include the Walane, Ulbareg and Innekor. These are all part of the Eastern Gurage cluster, as opposed to the Western cluster where Islam has less predominance, with the exception of the Gogot sub-tribe.

Lifestyle: The Gurage are subsistence farmers, with an average income of around \$20 a year. Deforestation, poor soil conditions, and climate change have all contributed to their increasing poverty and low crop yields. Their most important crop is the enset plant, also known as the “false banana” due to its shape. *Enset* is a root crop that can yield 40kg of food after five years, and can tolerate long periods of drought.

Customs: When a young man is interested in marrying a particular girl,

he will send one of his friends to offer the family a sum of money in exchange for their daughter. If the proposal is accepted, the groom will prepare for the wedding. The bride will then seek to hide herself from the groom, in a kind of playful game, until the wedding day.

Religion: Islam was first introduced among the Gurage around the 13th century during a Muslim invasion. A contingent of soldiers was left behind that led to Islam’s gradual embrace among many eastern Gurage tribes, though only superficially at first. The new religion was later strengthened by the conversion of Shaikh Said Budella, whose miraculous powers became reknown throughout Ethiopia. His shrine is a major center of Islamic worship and pilgrimage. Islam continues to expand among the Gurage, greatly aided by foreign funds for mosque and madrassa construction.

Christian Outreach: Significant progress has been made among the non-Mus-

lim Gurage sub-tribes. But among the Selti and related eastern Gurage Muslim peoples, little effort has been made to bring them the gospel in a culturally appropriate manner. Two church-planting agencies are now focused on them, and in partnership with one another, are committed to seeing a disciple-making movement established in each of the eight Gurage Muslim sub-tribes.

How to Pray:

✞ Ask for God’s blessing on the pioneer efforts to evangelize the Muslim Gurage. Pray for open doors and receptivity among leaders. Pray also for those scattered Muslim background believers, that they might be gathered together and given a vision for reaching their families and communities.

✞ Development needs among the Gurage are vast, with high illiteracy, increasing health concerns, and food shortages. Pray for the resources to carry out the Great Commandment among the Gurage, and that this would open the way for the fulfillment of the Great Commission among them.

✞ Intercede for the ongoing efforts to complete the Eastern Gurage Bible.

Every year 10,000 Gurage Muslims die without Christ.