

# Nepali Caste Hindus



## Quick Facts

**Population:** 15,000,000

Nepal: 10,000,000

India: 4,500,000

Myanmar: 170,000

Bhutan: 150,000

**Religion:** Hindu

**Believers:** 0.13% (HBB)

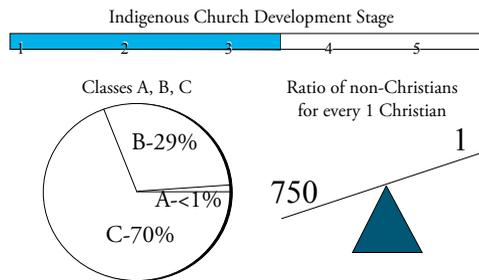
**Scriptures:** NT, OT

**Ministry Tools:** JRGT

**Church Status:** 3

**Mission Status:** 2

**MS Subgroups:** 50+



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:** Around 300 years ago, a Muslim invasion led to the mass-migration of Paharia Brahmins and Kshatriyas from India to present-day Nepal. These families attempted to colonize and convert the Tibeto-Burman tribes. To a large extent they were successful, leading to the creation of a new Hindu society and a new Hindi dialect. Many Nepali call themselves Paharia and their language Gurkhali.

**Lifestyle:** The Brahmins and Kshatriyas introduced the idea of individual ownership of property to the indigenous peoples, and then proceeded to divide the arable land amongst themselves. Over time, the colonized tribal population became the virtual slaves of the new land-owning aristocracy. Today, most Nepalese live in absolute poverty, engaging in small cottage industry and subsistence farming.

**Customs:** Marriage is performed by the Brahmins for almost all Nepali

castes. During the ceremony the priests chant mantras and worship the *yagya*, an earthen vessel containing the sacred fire. The couple will walk around the vessel seven times or sit before it. Garlands and rings are then exchanged.

**Religion:** Nepal was once the world's only country with Hinduism as the state religion. However, centuries of abuse by the high castes led to widespread disillusionment and a nationwide insurrection. Over 60% of the country is now controlled by Communist rebels. The assassination of the deified royal family in 2002 by one of its own members greatly strengthened the Maoist movement and deeply shook the faith of the Nepalese. In 2006, as part of a cease-fire agreement, the Monarchy was stripped of all power and "un-deified," and a secular government installed.

**Christian Outreach:** Under the rule of the monarchy, conversion and proselytism were illegal and punishable through

imprisonment, torture, and occasionally execution. However, under these conditions the Church grew in strength and numbers, especially among the 4.5 million Dalits (26 untouchable castes). However, the historical Hindu groups such as the Brahmins (3.1 million) and Chhetris (3.8 million) remain unreached, though there has been greater response among them than with their social counterparts in India.

## How to Pray:

✠ Although the Dalits have been discriminated against, and restricted from participation in Hinduism, many unfortunately practice their own form of caste discrimination in the Church. Pray for repentance and that the unity of these courageous believers would be a sign to the upper caste Hindus.

✠ Persecution by the government has eased up against the Church, but in Maoist controlled areas it is still very dangerous to proclaim the gospel. Pray for God's supernatural intervention among the Communist leadership.

✠ Intercede for the few Brahmin Christians that God might anoint them to evangelize and disciple their community and nation.

**Every year 135,000 Nepali Hindus die without Christ.**