

Tatar Muslims



Quick Facts

Population: 12,000,000

Russia: 5,800,000

Turkey: 5,000,000

Uzbekistan: 300,000

Kazakhstan: 800,000

Religion: Islam-Sunni

Believers: 0.003%

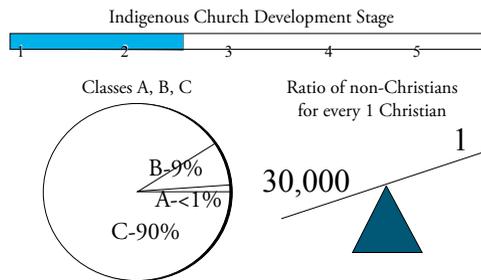
Scriptures: Portions

Ministry Tools: JRGT

C Status: 2

M 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: The Tatars are a complex cluster of Eurasian tribes, mostly related to the Volga-Kama Bulgars, which were conquered by the Turko-Mongolian Hordes in the 13th century. They adopted their conquerors' name and language, while retaining many of their traditional customs. One subgroup, the Crimean Tatars, are close descendants of the soldiers which settled in Crimea, and have more Mongolian features than other Tatars.

Lifestyle: During the Soviet era, many Tatars were forcefully communed into agricultural collectives. Whole populations were displaced, including an estimated 5 million which were driven into Turkey. Urbanization occurred at a rapid pace and Tatars became skilled workers in shipyards, aircraft assembly plants, and the USSR's largest polyethylene and synthetic rubber factories.

Customs: Marriage ceremonies are elaborate, drawn-out affairs among

the Tatars, and each region has its own tradition. The Kazan Tatars have gender separate festivities following the wedding ceremony in the bride's home. Male guests celebrate during the day, and female guests during the night. Among the Volga-Kama, the ceremony commences at the groom's house and continues for several days.

Religion: The process by which the Tatars become Muslim is not well known, though it is believed that Islam began making inroads into the Volga-Kama region by the 9th century. After the Russian conquest in the 16th century, attempts were made to forcibly convert Tatars to Russian Orthodoxy, creating bitter resentment towards the Christian faith. Under the Soviets, thousands of mosques were shut down, though many continued meeting in houses for prayer, Quranic study and Muslim festivals.

Christian Outreach: There has been increased response among the Tatars, es-

pecially with young people. Since the fall of the Soviet Union over twenty church planting teams have worked with Tatars throughout Eurasia, resulting in several strong fellowships being established. Opposition from family members has been strong, and state-sponsored persecution in Tatarstan, though sporadic, is an ever-present threat.

How to Pray:

🙏 Pray for continued open doors for missionaries to work among the Tatars, especially in Central Asian Muslim republics where governments are becoming increasingly antagonistic to evangelical witness.

🙏 Ask God to bless the translation team working on the Tatar Bible, and for its acceptance by all Tatars as the eternal, unchangeable Word of God.

🙏 Ask God to heal the wounds of the past, and bring reconciliation between Russians and Tatars, that there would be no hinderances to the message of the gospel.

🙏 Most Tatars live among Russian Christians. Pray for special favor for those Russian believers seeking to reach out to their Tatar friends and neighbors.

Every year 110,000 Tatar Muslims die without Christ.