

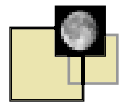
The Cham people are spread among Cambodia (308,000), Vietnam (1,27,000), Laos (15,000) and a few other countries. They were originally from an ancient kingdom located along the central coast of Vietnam called Champa, which was a wealthy maritime nation in frequent contact with China.

The Cham are an important ethnic minority in Cambodia. They are mainly rice farmers but also grow crops such as cotton, maize, tobacco, peanuts, and vegetables. Some Cham are involved in animal domestication, hunting and fishing.

Their most ancient belief was in a "Mother Goddess," and the lives of the common people centered around ancestor worship, fertility cults and hero worship. Historically, the Cham were also involved in Hinduism and Buddhism, but there has been a gradual conversion to Islam over several centuries. Those living in rural areas mix Islam with their indigenous culture and animistic elements, resulting in folk Islam.

In Cambodia, there are multiple Islamic groups, such as Chang Veng, Imam San, Da'wa and Wahhaiyya. The Chang Veng group of villages tend to mix more Malay words with their vocabulary because of their strong connections with and support received from Muslims in Malaysia. The Imam

San group has fewer connections with outside Muslims because their stance on animistic traditions is unacceptable to fundamental Muslims. The Da'wa is a missionary movement from a variety of Islamic countries outside Cambodia. They travel from village to village, spreading their beliefs and preaching in village mosques. The Wahhabiyya is also a missionary movement that preaches a more fundamentalist version of Islam. Only a few dozen Cham have been reached with the Gospel. There are no known churches, and there is no Bible in the Cham language.



## Pray

- ▶ Ask God to open the eyes of the Cham to see the Truth so that they will come to know Jesus as their Savior and Lord.
- ▶ Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send more workers into His harvest field to reach the Cham for Christ.
- ▶ Pray for safety and protection for those who are working among the Cham.
- ▶ Pray for spiritual growth in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ for the Cham believers.