



Sept. 1, 2008

# Marriage in Tadjikistan

*A Muslim Woman's empty dreams*

## Day 1

LIMITED NUMBER OF WIVES

Tonight, the respected businessman Sharif is going to visit Nazira's family. On the telephone he said he wants to talk with her father about a new car, but Nazira knows the real reason for his visit. Nazira is already 24 years old and single. For quite some time her family has been looking around for a potential husband for her. However, that is not so easy. Farud, for example, who wanted to marry her three months ago, is an alcoholic, like many people in Tadjikistan.

Evening came and Sharif visited Nazira's family. Since the civil war of the 1990's, this Central Asian country is slowly recuperating and business is steadily growing. Sharif is one who is doing well economically. His house has running water with regular electricity, and he drives a German car. In Tadjikistan the estimated average annual income is around **250 Euros** per person, but Sharif is one of the exceptions.



He already has two wives and Nazira will become his third. It seems obvious that Sharif is a good candidate. Quickly the parents agree and arrangements are made. The wedding will take place in the coming two weeks.

Everyone is happy, however Nazira realizes that some of her cherished dreams will not come true.

It is estimated that the number of Tadjikistan workers in Russia number about one million. Since there are only seven million people in Tadjikistan, this means that a large percentage of the male population is away from home. Women and children are in the majority. In the villages the women live amid tensions between old traditions, atheism and a new wave of radical Islam.

Tadjik believers were few and far between even when there was freedom of religion. Now worries about radical Islam are being countered with new laws to restrict the rights of small religious groups. These laws also affect Christians.

### PRAYER REQUESTS:

- ▶ *Pray for increasingly healthy and Biblically-oriented families among the followers of Jesus in this nation.*
- ▶ *Pray for the many Tadjik men in surrounding countries to be reached with the Good News.*
- ▶ *Pray that Tadjikistan believers can develop more and more their own style of worship in their own language.*

Mohammed limited the number of wives in Islamic marriage to four spouses. Previously some men had been marrying many more women than they could support financially. According to Muslim scholars, women were better treated in Arabia following the rise of Islam than previously. Islam recognizes that men are especially weak in the sexual realm. The possibility of having four wives is seen as a limit on man's sexual urges and thus gives stability to society.

