

Badakshan

In the remote Pamir Mountains

The soaring Pamir Mountains dominate the landscape of greater Badakshan, which spills over North Eastern Afghanistan, Eastern Tajikistan and Northern Pakistan. The peoples who live in these isolated mountain communities generally feel distinct from the majority of the populations in their nations. Badakshanis speak Eastern Persian mountain languages. They are often fairer skinned than others in their countries, with Caucasian features. However, the most distinctive aspect of Badakshani identity is their religion.

Badakshan is the one part of the world where the Muslim Ismaili sect makes up the majority of the population. The Agha Khan, their spiritual leader, has become like a god to them. To quote a Badakshani: "The Agha Khan is like a living Koran for us. He shows us the way and how to live. Our religion is not stuck in history. We have a modern Imam to show us how to live in the 21st Century. We see the light of Mohammed on him." Most other Muslims consider the Ismailis to be heretics.

There are few believers in Badakshan and no known believing communities. However, many Badakshanis are coming to faith elsewhere. There are believers in Dushanbe - the capital of Tajikistan - and in Moscow, where many Tajik Badakshanis become migrant laborers. Pray for believers living in other places, that they might wisely proclaim Jesus in their communities.



Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *Meditate on Jeremiah 16:19-21 and use it in prayer.*
- ▶ *Pray for those who worship the Agha Khan as a god, that they may come to a realization that he is just a man.*
- ▶ *Spiritual blindness and the spirit of deception seem to be two major strongholds in Badakshan. Pray for these barriers to the Gospel to be removed.*

