

The Fulani in Nigeria

There are possibly more than 30 million Fulani in Africa, but the vast majority do not know the Gospel. They are spread out from Senegal to Sudan across the southern border of the Sahara Desert (the Sahel). In Nigeria many of the 15+ million Nigerian Fulani stay in small settlements and cities in Nigeria's predominantly Muslim northern region. There are numerous sub-tribes and clans of the Fulani but in Nigeria they generally fall into five large groups: The Adamawa (1.1 million), the Haabe (2.6 million), the Sokoto (2.7 million), the Toroobe (7.5 million) and the Mbororo (2.3 million).

Historically, the nomadic Fulani centered their lives around cattle; times have changed. Some Fulani have abandoned herding and are now even fishermen! Others are educated, urban dwellers who have little or nothing to do with cattle. The vast majority of the Fulani in Nigeria are no longer nomadic. The Fulani described below are mostly the rural Mbororo Fulani of Nigeria. Fulani trace their origins to this type of pastoral lifestyle. Fulani households consist of a male leader, one or more wives, six to 12 or more children and other family members.

Morning: The adults awaken for Islamic prayers about 4:30 a.m. The men spend the morning milking their cows and preparing to pasture them

in the bush. The women prepare a meal, consisting of a corn mush with meatless gravy, eaten about 10:30 a.m.

Midday and Afternoon: After eating, the younger men go into the bush with their cows. A typical family will have 10 to 100 cows, as well as sheep and goats. The young men keep their cows out of fenced areas and farms and help them find forage and water. Older men may go to town or visit their friends. During planting and harvesting, some men work hard tending their crops. The women often carry the milk to town in gourds to sell. They also collect firewood and carry the day's water for their families.

Evening: In late afternoon the cows return and are tied up for the night. The family eats their evening meal at about 8:00 p.m. They chat around their fires until an early bedtime. Women, children and older men usually sleep in huts while the teenagers often sleep outdoors.

While the Jesus film and gospel portions have been put into the Fulani language (Fulfulde), there are still very few Christians who are reaching out to this people. Even so, God has done marvelous things in bringing some Fulani to himself. See the www.morethandreams.tv site for an example.



▶ Prayer REQUESTS

- ▶ *Pray for laborers. There simply are not enough Messianic believers proclaiming the Good News to the Fulani.*
- ▶ *Ask the Lord to touch Fulani leaders and imams that they may become obedient to the Lord Jesus (Acts 6:7).*
- ▶ *Pray for increased understanding among the followers of Jesus and Muslims in Nigeria. Peacemaking and repairing the decades of strife and civil unrest between Muslims and those who follow Jesus is a major necessity.*

