

## Muslims of Rajasthan in India

Muslims living in the state of Rajasthan, in western India, consist of about 60 different peoples. These groups include the Pathan, Shaikh and Sayyid ethnic groups that are the best known. Out of the estimated population of 61 million Rajasthanis, Hindus account for 88.8%, Muslims make up 8.5%, Sikhs 1.4% and Jains 1.2%. There are about five million Muslims living in this Indian state dominated by the Thar Desert. Rajasthan covers over 132,000 sq. miles (1/2 of the surface of France and basically the same population).

The Muslims mainly speak Hindustani, a mixture of Hindi and Urdu; however, most read from the Hindi script. This means that materials must be translated into a Muslim-friendly script for them to understand. There is a complete Urdu Bible but a full Bible in Hindustani is still needed in order that Muslims may more easily understand what God is saying to them through the Scriptures. Young children often learn Urdu in religious schools (*Madradas*), but as they get older they generally only read the Hindi script (not Urdu, which is their traditional language).

Representative populations of all of the Muslim people groups live in the capital, Jaipur. Rajasthanis

Muslims have a variety of jobs. Some are engaged in tourism, others as bicycle and auto rickshaw drivers, stone cutters, tailors, butchers, shopkeepers and other trades. Those in rural areas are often involved in agriculture.

Believers in the Messiah have been reaching Muslims using a simple “kurbaan story,” which describes the major sacrifices in both the Old and New Testaments. This method shows that the death of *Isa Al-Masih* (Jesus the Messiah) was the final atoning sacrifice. Jesus obtained salvation for them by his death and resurrection. New believers are now worshipping the Lord in home groups called “*jamats*.”

Several Rajasthanis believers are also learning to share their testimonies and life changing experiences using the Bible. Some are capable of telling by word of mouth the story of God and man based on the Bible in an organized way. This is very helpful for illiterate believers and seekers. It is exciting to hear about the changes in their lives since they have come to know the Messiah. As you seek the Lord in prayer, please also lift up the Rajasthanis Muslims to Him.



### ▶ Prayer REQUESTS

- ▶ *Pray for the Rajasthanis Muslims who have discovered the Messiah in His fullness to be obedient to the only true and living God. Please pray for a deepening faith as they enter more and more into a daily experience of dying and rising with Christ. To do this, a complete Bible translation in Hindustani is very desirable.*
- ▶ *Continue to pray that as they witness boldly to others, Jesus is exalted above all. There is opposition (Acts 4:27-31).*
- ▶ *Pray for Rajasthanis Muslims from each of the major peoples (the Pathan, Shaikh and Sayyid ethnic groups): That they will call on Jesus for salvation (Acts 4:12).*