

The H people of Central Asia

The People Group

The H people are the third largest of over 50 people groups in Central Asia, numbering over 13 million people. They live across the region in rural areas working as farmers and merchants as well as in towns where they work in shops, restaurants and factories. Most H people are direct descendants of Persian and Arab traders who intermarried with locals and converted them to Islam. The H people predominantly identify themselves as Sunni Muslim and their mosques are the centre of their community life.

Only about 500 H people are known to be followers of Jesus. While the number of believers is growing in many parts of the region very few have the opportunity to hear the Gospel. There are still cultural and geographical challenges impacting the sharing of the Gospel and growth of a sustainable faith community.

The Global Interaction team among the H People

Our cross-cultural team in Central Asia is transitioning. Pete and Nomes are in the early days of their culture and language learning which is equipping them for effective ministry among the H people. God is opening doors for them to be involved in the community in formal and informal ways. We trust that as their language skills and cultural understanding develops, so too will their relationships with H people.

Former cross-cultural workers R and B are preparing to return to serve among the H people in early 2020. They return with years of ministry experience among this people group and a heart to build relationships and share Jesus. They will return to teach at the same university they previously taught and will seek to build relationships with H students.

Prayer Needs

- That God will be raising up more workers to join the team in sharing the Good News
- For God's Spirit to be opening opportunities for relationship building and faith sharing conversations as the team connects with their H friends
- That the team will be growing their culture and language learning every day so they can build relationships and share the Good News in culturally understandable ways
- For God to be placing seekers in the path of believers who will journey with them towards Jesus
- That the team will be wise and bold as they seek opportunities to share faith within a challenging environment

Pray for the Team Members (secure names used)

Pete and Nomes

R and B (returning early 2020)

Stories of Hope from Central Asia

Not Impossible for God

Pete and Nomes share how they are spurred on by testimonies of God at work.

"We recently met with leaders of the organisation to share, pray and plan. This was a really valuable and encouraging time. We left feeling more committed than ever to staying here for the long haul, persisting in the challenging and slow process of learning language and endeavouring to build close, long-term friendships with the hope that our H friends discover the joy of knowing Jesus.

If we're honest, a lot of the time, our long-term vision of seeing vibrant faith communities formed among H people is such a distant reality that it seems practically impossible. But while we were away [at the meetings], we were buoyed by stories from other teams who are serving in different but also challenging contexts. For them, after years and years of learning language and building friendships with little to no obvious fruit, the past twelve months or so has brought amazing things and people are wanting to hear about and follow Jesus! God can turn the impossible into a reality (Matthew 19:26)!

We are convinced that God is also at work here and that He has specifically called us to the H people. Our desire is to do this in community, with others who have the same vision and sense of calling. We are praying that God would raise up more people to join us, or more accurately, to join Him in what He is doing here."

Extraordinary God

"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realised that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13

Pete and Nomes, team members in Central Asia, reflected on the story of Peter and John healing the crippled beggar and were incredibly encouraged to see how God chooses ordinary people to bring about His extraordinary purposes.

They are in the early days of their ministry in Central Asia, and they know how dependent they are on God's wisdom, provision, protection, opportunities and the right words to say at the right time. They know that the Holy Spirit is already at work among the H people. He has prepared the path for Pete and Nomes and they are trusting in Him to enable them to do the task He has set before them.

We pray that in time, as Pete and Nomes' relationships grow and their local language skills and cultural understanding develop, God's Spirit will open opportunities for them invite H friends to meet Jesus.

**>>> For more stories of hope, visit:
www.globalinteraction.org.au/News**