

Unreached Peoples: The Ansari People of South Asia

by Paul Hattaway

The sermon highlights the cultural and spiritual needs of the Ansari people of South Asia, emphasizing the importance of evangelism to bring them the message of Jesus Christ.

Scripture: Matthew 9:36, Acts 4:12, Romans 10:14, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, Revelation 7:9

Topics: "Missions Outreach", "Salvation Assurance"

Description

This sermon focuses on the Ansari people of South Asia, particularly known for their intricate silk weaving craftsmanship but often trapped in poverty due to exploitation. Despite their warm-hearted nature and Islamic practices, many Ansari lack assurance of salvation and are in need of hearing about the grace and salvation found in Jesus Christ. The sermon calls for prayers for the Ansari to encounter the truth of the Gospel and be woven into the diverse tapestry of believers worshipping Jesus for eternity.

Transcript

The Ansari. Nearly 16 million Ansari inhabit South Asia, from Pakistan through North India to Bangladesh and Nepal. By tradition, many Ansari are weavers, renowned for their beautiful hand-woven silk fabrics.

For centuries, the rich and powerful have treasured the intricate Ansari silk, which is artistically designed and often laced with beautiful gold thread. From sunup to sundown, their rhythm of looms can be heard throughout narrow winding streets, as the Ansari tirelessly weave their delicate cloth. Considered the largest artisan caste in India, the Ansari are one of the main producers of cloth for the entire nation.

Ironically, most Ansari are confined to poverty, as the middlemen keep the largest portion of their profits. Although most Ansari can trace their roots back to weaving, many have left this trade, applying their craftsmanship and creativity to other trades. A significant number of Ansari have entirely left their artistic heritage and work in other occupations, such as farming or pulling rickshaws.

The Ansari are proud of their Islamic identity. In Arabic, the word Ansar means helper or friend. True to their name, the Ansari are warm-hearted and generous.

Like many Muslims worldwide, the Ansari practice folk Islam, which combines animistic and Islamic rituals in an effort to protect themselves from evil. Since Allah is considered unapproachable, the Ansari pray to

the spirits of dead Muslim saints, whom they hope will intercede to Allah on their behalf. Islam teaches its followers to perform good works as an attempt to please Allah, so they may enter paradise.

Despite their diligent efforts, they still have no assurance they will ever see heaven. Who will tell them they don't need to earn their salvation, that a savior has already paid the price for their eternal life? Who will tell them of the lasting peace that can be found in Jesus Christ? The Ansari are among those in the world who are most hidden from the gospel. Sadly, very few Christians have taken up the challenge to bring this life-changing message to the Ansari.

God longs to weave the Ansari into the diverse tapestry of peoples who will worship Jesus at his throne for eternity. Please pray that God would lift the veil of Islam from the hearts of the Ansari.

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