

Unreached Peoples: The Madurese People of Indonesia

by Paul Hattaway

The sermon highlights the cultural identity, struggles, and spiritual needs of the Madurese people of Indonesia, emphasizing the importance of Christian outreach and prayer for their transformation through Christ.

Scripture: Psalm 37:4, Proverbs 3:5-6, Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 28:19-20, Romans 10:14-15

Topics: "Missions", "Evangelism"

Description

This sermon focuses on the Madurese people of Indonesia, highlighting their strong ties to Islam, their struggles for a better life through migration and education, and the need for the transformative power of Jesus Christ in their lives. It emphasizes the importance of prayer, support for Christian workers ministering among the Madurese, and the call to share the good news of Jesus with this unreached people group.

Transcript

Indonesia is home to more Muslims than any other country in the world. More than 300 ethnic groups lend incredible diversity to this island chain. 13 million Madurese located in East Java and on the island of Madura make up one of the largest of these people groups.

The Madurese have carved a home for themselves out of a rough and rocky land. Only with difficulty have they cultivated the infertile soil of their island. Their battle against nature has been a resourceful one.

Many find work in the miles of salt pools that stretch along the coastline. Fishermen spend long hours in their boats pulling in the day's catch. Others make their living through ornate wood carving, an art form for which Madura is renowned.

Some say the Madurese are rough people, just as their land is rough. An old Madurese proverb says, death or shame, death is better. Duels to the death, fought with sickle-like blades, reflect the hot-tempered nature of this people.

These encounters, known as charok, are becoming less common, yet to this day the Madurese are identified with this practice. Traditional bull racing serves as another display of the fierce determination and brave spirit of these people. Centuries ago, the Madurese accepted the teachings of Muhammad.

Today their identity is inextricably linked to Islam. They are known as one of the most devout Muslim groups in Indonesia. A Madurese will proudly boast, all Madurese are Muslim.

Religion forms the very core of Madurese culture and fuels its passion. What is important in my life is worshipping the one true living God. I will be proud of my children if they become pious religious people.

Most children in Madura are educated in the ways of Islam through private boarding schools called pondok persantrans. These schools are headed by powerful Muslim leaders called kiai. Within Madurese communities, kiai are central figures, esteemed for their advice and wise counsel.

The role of the kiai is to think and teach so that the followers will not leave Islam. Though they still cling tightly to Islam, the Madurese are not content. Many have left their homeland in search of a better life.

Nearly 10 million Madurese have migrated to the island of Java. Others commute daily by ferry, carrying their goods to markets in the nearby city of Surabaya. These people have placed their hopes in jobs, money and education.

I would like to become a rich person, to have a car, a life where I'm not thinking all the time about my next meal. Their hopes have not been fully realized. Many Madurese drive bechans.

The hours are long, the heat is grueling, the pay is low, and the customers are few. Madurese fruit sellers line the streets. Roadside vendors sell traditional dishes like soto and satay madura.

Scavengers collect scraps from sunken ships, construction sites and garbage dumps to remake and sell in the market. Just as the Madurese have transformed the old into something new by their hard work and creativity, some of the younger generation are seeking to transform their lives. Madurese youth are filtering into the city to study in universities, hoping that education will offer them a better life.

The Madurese story is one of desire, desire for change, desire for a new life. One thing that Madura people need is a better life, just a better life. I guess that is a general wish, there is no specific wish of Madurese people, they just would like to have a better life.

They have not found that better life in Islam, nor in the improvements they so desperately seek through migration or education. Only in Jesus Christ can the miracle of new life become reality for the Madurese people. For those who hope in the Lord will not be disappointed.

For more than a hundred years, small numbers of Christian workers have faithfully toiled among the Madurese. But just as the land of Madura is hard, so are the souls of its people. The seeds of the gospel have fallen on rocky soil.

The bonds of Islam are strong and can only be broken by a release of the power of God through the intercession of His people. Commit to pray. Support workers who are ministering among the Madurese.

Consider giving your life to help reach these people with the good news of Jesus Christ. For more information visit www.fema.org

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/jow09f11cR0.mp4>

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