16 June

Quick look at Bhutan

Bhutan is about the size of Switzerland. Similarities are impossible to ignore as one considers the alpine meadows and jagged peaks with year-round snow. Waterfalls and streams flow wildly in the spring and many of the most prized garden flowers in the West today (like several species of the rhododendron, clematis, lily, and poppy) were bred from plants and seeds collected in the Eastern Himalayas. And like Switzerland, Bhutan is landlocked by neighbors larger than themselves.
Land of the Thunder Dragon

Although this country is called Bhutan by the world beyond its borders, the Bhutanese call their home Druk Yu, or "land of the thunder dragon". The people themselves are known as Drukpas.

The early history of Bhutan is known as it is mixed with mythology. The medieval and modern periods are filled with warlords, fortresses and feuds. Only since the beginning of the 20th century has there been a break in the isolationist policy. The break has not been a large one. Interestingly, the development of collectible postage stamps has been responsible for financing much of the modern, yet controlled development of the country.

Seventy-five percent Buddhist

The state religion is a branch of Tibetan Buddhism. The Chief Abbot is chosen from among the most learned lamas and has rank in the society equal to the King. The Buddhist faith was and is fundamental to the Bhutanese culture and ethics. It permeates all aspects of secular and religious life.

Bhutan has been politically very closed to the gospel. There is a growing number of Christians now (maybe 2000), but many ethnic groups do not yet have a witness among them. The New Testament has been translated into Dzongkha, the main language of Bhutan.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church began a work for the Bhutanese people in 1991. The outreach to this country is made more difficult due to the fact that Christian missionaries are not allowed. Thus the work began outside the country, just across the border in India, for the Bhutanese living there. "Nineteen lay Bible workers study with these people. Some new believers have returned to Bhutan to share their faith. In 2006 about 120 Bhutanese became Adventists." -from Quietly Doing God's Work. Click and read 2 short stories from Bhutan. I believe they will help you to pray more fervently, hearing the examples of God's work already begun in many hearts.

Heaven’s answer

The Kingdom of Bhutan presents itself to the world as an enlightened place. They embrace the concept of Gross National Happiness as the principle which guides its development. Why might it be that this nation of 600,000 people has over one sixth of its population seeking asylum elsewhere? This makes Bhutan one of the highest generators of refugees per capita in the world.

"The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus
Christ. ...It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world...to reveal the light of God's love." * This revelation is needed in Bhutan; for the people to hear His name and have the chance to believe in Jesus and experience true happiness. There are many Bhutanese refugees that have resettled in the United States. You can pray not only for Bhutan, but do some research, find out if some Bhutanese refugees have settled in your area and pray how Jesus would have you reach out to them.

*Desire of Ages, p.19 par. 1
Work expands in Bhutan

by Beverly Thompson
Regional Director
Posted January 20, 2011

A decade ago, Gospel Outreach started a Bhutan-India border ministry with 10 workers. One person touched by the story of Jesus’ love after hearing about the Sabbath was Pema Khadullama.

Pema had been raised a Buddhist in Bhutan. Eight times a Buddhist priest had declared him dead: five times from malaria, once with another illness, and twice after accidents.

“Three times I was on the stretcher being carried to my grave when I awakened,” Pema says. “I know that God has a special work for me.”

After much Bible study and many delays Pema finally was baptized and soon was asked to open work inside Bhutan, a country with no religious freedom at the time.

After one year, Pema brought seven candidates for baptism. However, Pema’s wife was dismayed with the changes in his life. She packed his clothes and put them outside their door, refusing to let him in.

Despite the challenges, Pema has dedicated his life to spreading the gospel. Last year Bhutan gave official religious freedom to its citizens, and 50 Bhutanis were baptized by mid-2010. As of last month, GO is sponsoring eight workers in Bhutan. There are now more than 100 baptized members.

The first Bhutan Seventh-day Adventist church (a lamb shelter costing $1,000) was built last year in Samste. It is Pema’s dream to have five lamb shelters built every year for four years. Then there would be a church in every province in Bhutan.

Pema has translated Steps to Christ into Dzongka, the primary language of Bhutan. He is requesting 1,000 copies at 60 cents each to be printed for distribution by each Gospel Outreach worker.

Please partner with us in these opening days of spreading the gospel to Bhutan.
Filed Under: Perspectives Tagged With: Bhutan

Archives

- April 2011 (10)
- February 2011 (9)
- January 2011 (8)
- December 2010 (5)
- November 2010 (5)
- October 2010 (9)
- September 2010 (11)
- August 2010 (4)
- July 2010 (9)
- June 2010 (26)

Return to top of page

© 2011 Gospel Outreach

Home | About Us | Contact