





### **The Turko-Persian World**

- Turkey
- Azerbaijan
- Iran
- Northern Caucasus Mountain Area of Russia (Muslims of Russia)
- Tatarstan Region of Russia (Muslims of Russia)
- Bashkortistan Region of Russia (Muslims of Russia)
- Turkmenistan
- Uzbekistan
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Tajikistan
- Afghanistan
- Western Pakistan (Afghan/Muslim Peoples of Pakistan)
- Northwest China (Muslim Peoples of NW China)



### Central Asia Demographics

- 270,000,000 people, of which 260,000,000 are ethnically Turkic or Persian
- 500+ distinct ethno linguistic people groups and population segments
- 47 of these groups have more than 1,000,000 people
- 400 of these groups have less than 100,000 people
- 300 of these groups have less than 10,000 people









# Status of Evangelization

.015% (.00015) of all Turkic and Persian people in Central Asia are Christians, therefore, percentage-wise,

Central Asia is the most unreached region of the world.



# Status of Evangelization

- The vast majority of all Central Asian people are Muslims
- The entire Bible is available in only four languages of the region: Russian, Turkish, Persian, Kazakh
- There is one Christian out of approximately every 6,800 people in the region
- There are approximately 700 churches among Muslim-background believers in the region—one church for approximately every 364,000 people

# Top 5 unreached people groups in the region

- 1. Pashtun of Pakistan17 million people, no known church, no known believers
- 2. Azeri Turks of Iran
  15 million people, one known church, 10 believers
- 3. Kurds of Turkey7 million people, no known church, no known believers
- 4. Crimean Tatars of Turkey
  4.6 million people, no known church, no known believers
- 5. Uzbek of Tadjikistan1.4 million people, no known church, no known believers

# Reasons for Vast Amounts of Lostness

- Difficulty of access
- Politically restrictive areas
- Strong Muslim identity
- Unknown to the Great Commission Christian world
- "Stan-a-phobia"
- Historical barriers/Reaction against colonialization

# Hope for the Future

- There has been a ten-fold increase in the past decade in the number of churches (total among Turko-Persians: From almost 0 to more than 700)
- Annual growth rate of 30% in the number of believers in the region
- Approximately 3 people groups in the region are close to experiencing a Church Planting Movement (CPM)







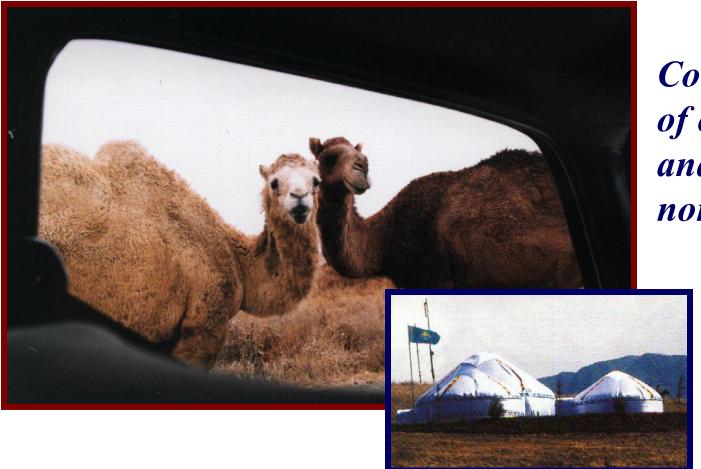
- A former Soviet Republic
- Independent since 1991





Ninth largest country in the world





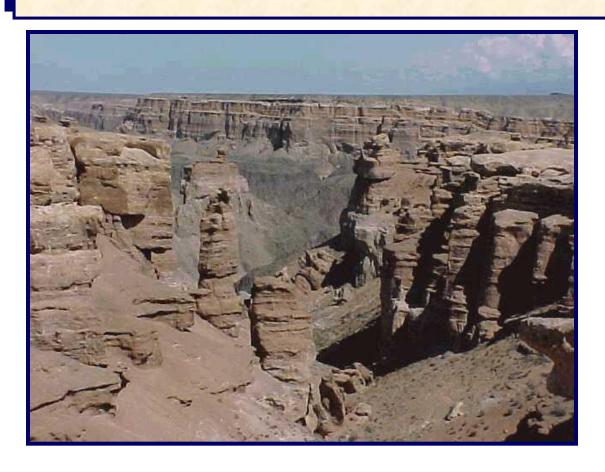
Country
of camels
and
nomads





Country of carpets





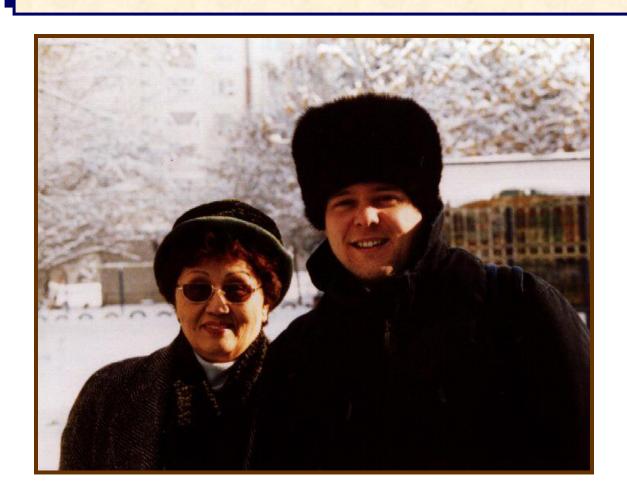
Country of mountains and canyons





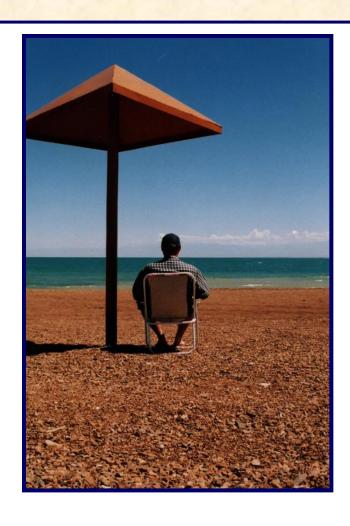
Country of bazars





Country of cold winters

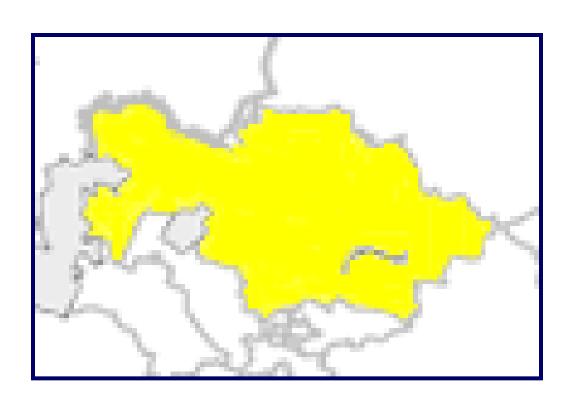




Country of hot summers

### A Nation facing Big Challenges





- Nationhood
- Ethnic
- Environmental
- Religious

## Nationhood Challenge





- A Soviet Republic became a developing country in 1993
- 35 % of population living in poverty
- Extensive unemployment
- Development large oil fields

# Ethnic Challenge





110
different
people groups

# Ethnic challenge



60 % Kazakhs

A largely rural people facing 21st century changes



30 % Russians

Once the dominant people, now losing power and prestige



10 % Other people groups

More than hundred peoplegroups trying to find their place



# Environmental Challenge





Effects of nuclear testing
500 Nuclear bombs tested in 40 years

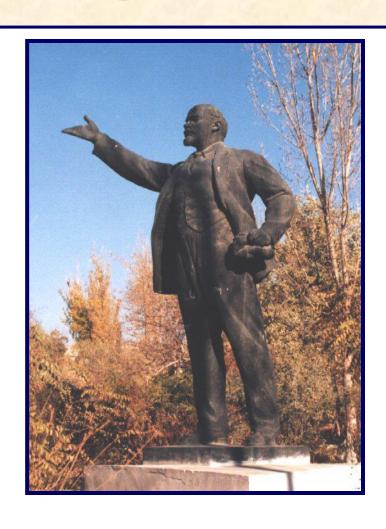


Effects of Receeding Aral Sea

Half its size in 30 years, no fish but pollution

# Religious Challenge





70 Years of Atheism

# Religious challenge



• Strong influence Islam

Number of mosques has grown from 50 to 5,000 in 10 years



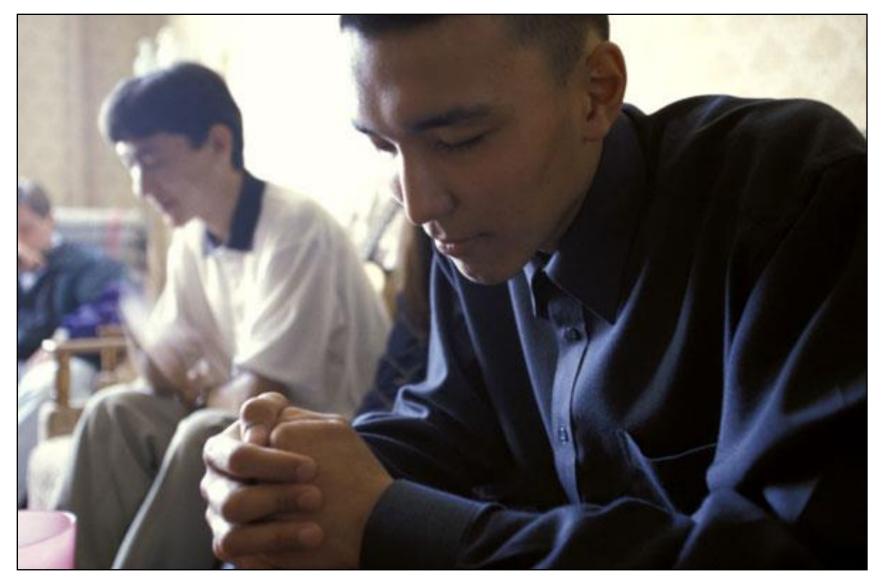
- Rapid growth of sects
- Wide spread Shamanism and Occultism
- Western secular influence

Speeds moral decline, drugs, gambling, prostitution

# One Example of Dramatic Growth: Kazakhs

10 million Kazakhs live in Kazakhstan, China, Uzbekistan and Russia

1990	2012
Less than 10 believers	Over 20,000 believers
0 Kazakh churches	Approximately 300 churches
No Scripture in Kazakh	Entire Bible is now in Kazakh
0 Pastors	Over 150 Kazakh pastors
No leadership training	Various smalll training schools with classes in Kazakh



Kazakh believers worship together



# Reasons for Spiritual Openness in Central Asia

- Consistent cross-cultural witness has entered the region
- Change in attitude toward Muslims by Christian community
- "Closed" country concept was challenged
- Geo-political change since fall of USSR
- Economic stress
- Growing disillusionment with fundamentalist Islam
- Growing prayer movements and diversity of missionary force

#### Characteristics of Central Asian Mission Force

### Mission trends in the region

- Most workers not on traditional "missionary" visas
- Koreans and other two-thirds world workers in abundance
- Growing awareness by governments and majority religions of evangelical presence
- Central Asian believers gaining a burden to share gospel cross-culturally
- CPM theory being discussed and debated



### Lives Changed by Jesus in Central Asia

### "Rosa"

- Kazakh woman, born in Karakalpakistan
- First exposed to concept of Jesus through Jehovah Witnesses material



- Difficult life circumstances caused her to seek closer relationship to God
- Supernatural path to Jesus
- Using small business to support family and spread the gospel

### Lives Changed by Jesus in Central Asia

#### "Yerbol"

- Orphaned as a young boy
- Fell into a life of crime, almost died from stabbing incident

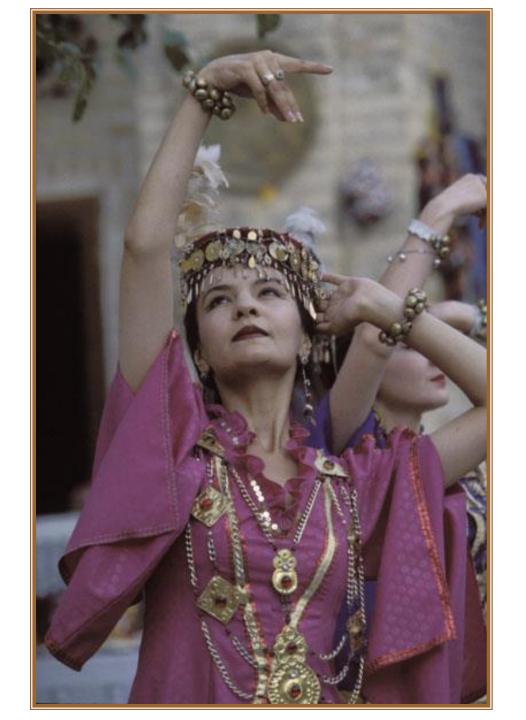


- Got involved in black market caviar trade
- Moved to Almaty to flee authorities, witnessed to by Kazakh bus conductor
- Accepted Christ and started "brick evangelism"
- Leader in Kazakh church

### Characteristics of Central Asian Believers

- Most have been believers for less than five years
- Majority women
- Majority young people
- Maturity rate appears more rapid than in the West
- Persecution:
  - from family and friends can begin immediately wide-ranging responses from governments
    - Most oppressive: Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, China, Iran,
    - Afghanistan
    - Highest levels of openness: Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey
- Trend is toward more restriction in former Soviet States, lessening in Iran, Afghanistan
- Some have been imprisoned and martyred
- Heads-of-households that come to faith are often followed by their whole family





#### How do we share Christ with a Kazakh?

- Love goes further than logic
- Stress your relationship with God
- Stress God's forgiveness through Jesus' sacrifice
- Don't use "powerbands" or Christian jewelry
- Avoid terminology that puts up barriers

#### **Problem Words**

God: Use Kudai, not Allah or Bog.

Bible: Use Kieli Kitab (Holy Book) not Biblia.

Pastor: Use baroosha (shepherd), not pastoor.

Jesus: Use Isa, not Isus Christos.

Church: Use kaoom rather than Russian/ Western term.

Missionary Use 'worker' or 'servant of God'

Christian Use 'follower of Isa'

Baptism Use 'dedication to follow 'Isa'

Cross symbol – Russian control, Orthodoxy, Communism

# Help us face the challenge!!





Pray
for
us!!

