

# How Can We Help?

By David L. Robbins



**WHAT CAN EQUAL CHRISTMAS?** We celebrate the Creator of the Universe becoming flesh (John 1:14). The Only Son of God was a Missionary, perfectly and humbly fulfilling the roles of Prophet, Priest and King. Christianity is Christ, the historical invasion to the womb of the Virgin Mary of overwhelming, unconditional love.

Christmas is mission. To embrace Christmas is to grip the purpose of why He came. The key component is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus, the Change Agent, and His message, the power of God, have the dynamic potential to transform any person and people group anywhere.

Recently I wrote of "The Man with Soul". A tribal of India, Madan Singh Rana has as much a soul as any man I have ever met. Against all odds he is leading an indigenous mission among the three million Tharu on the border of Southeast Nepal and India.

Brother Madan incarnates Christ to his own people so winsomely and thoroughly. He is on the same economic level, a huge factor in effective mission. He communicates in the local, district, and state languages. The food, the social structure and the cultural nuances are second nature to him. And the required suffering is accepted and embraced without complaint.

So how can we help? Here are three strategic ways.

**Will you take 5 minutes a day to pray for the unreached people groups?** I am calling every believer to pray and to target establishing an indigenous missionary movement among every people group.

**Will you take 1 hour each month to get alone without interruption to think?** Since each of us is a priest, will you be a go between? This world is

reachable immediately. We must think in terms of modest cost and resulting dramatic impact.

**Will you invest 1% of your income to support indigenous missions?** Economics in the Non-west are incomparable to the West. A full time missionary and his family can serve for \$100 per month, planting a church with a network of cottage churches. Missionaries are multiplying and Bible Schools are emerging.

This Christmas we can spread the message of the Saviour to the Muslims, through former Muslims; to the Hindus, through the former Hindus; to the Buddhists, through the former Buddhists; and to the Animists, through the former Animists.

*"The rough ground shall be made level" (Isaiah 40:4).*



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*"The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."*

*~James 5:16*



To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. (Ephesians 4:12 NIV)

## How Beautiful on the Mountains

By Keith Peters

**IN 1998, A YOUNG COUPLE** moved to the Indian state with the least percentage of Christians and began to pray. Almost 100% of this population, located in the Himalaya Mountain range, practices Hinduism. The strong devotion to idol worship is fairly easy to see, as each mountain is named after a Hindu god, and the state upholds an anti-conversion law. In 1999, after a year and a half of intercession and seeking God for guidance, Dinesh & Rachel began their outreach ministry.

With a primary focus on planting churches in this unreached state, Dinesh and Rachel wondered how they could effectively declare the Gospel to this resistant people.

After 18 months of prayer they began to feel discouraged. One day Dinesh went out to walk and pray and came upon a lady who was crushing rocks with a small

hammer. She would take a swing and the hammer would just rebound off the rock. She would keep swinging and the hammer seemed to just be like rubber on this rock. Dinesh wondered what this woman was wasting her time in doing. Finally after many strikes the rock began to have cracks appear throughout. And then, with one swing, the rock would just crumble into small pieces. Dinesh then knew why God was leading them to pray for so long. The longstanding bondage of this state needed to be struck with persistent, faithful prayer.

The Lord also spoke to the couple to train the local indigenous people to plant churches. This has been and continues to be the core of their ministry. They contend that you can do all the work you want but unless a church is planted there will not be a lasting testimony in a community.

About a year after they began their ministry of training the indigenous people to plant churches, Dinesh went to a village where some mountain people had come to the Lord. He asked the people if they were prepared to take water baptism. 55 of the new believers responded positively so he said, "Let's go to the river and do this baptism". They went to the mountain river and Dinesh went to the water to begin baptizing. He stuck one foot in the frigid water and quickly jumped out. He wondered, "How am I going to baptize all these people if I can't even put my feet in the water?" He looked to the local leader that they were training and asked him to go in the water and baptize the people.

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## How Beautiful on the Mountains

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For a whole hour he stayed in the water and baptized all 55 believers. That day Dinesh's call to train the local indigenous leaders to do the work of the ministry was largely confirmed.

In 2000, Dinesh and Rachel began their leadership training with four young believers. They spent several days with these new believers training them in the truths of the faith. What happened from here? Dinesh invited these four individuals to find other local Christians who appeared to be marked for leadership, and to bring them along for the next training session. Thus, by invitation and outreach this group of leaders began to grow. The local believers started to plant churches and reach out in their villages. Praise the Lord: little by little, the church has grown steadily over the past 11 years.

Today, as a team from AIM, we are sitting here in a hall with 110 local church leaders. These churches are beginning to multiply in this difficult state. It is beautiful and inspiring to see how God is building His church in this remote place.



*"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" (Isaiah 52:7)*

## Coming Together to Reach Bangladesh

By Keith Peters

**PASTOR SWAPON AND RACHEL BOSE** have been – and continue to be – very influential in helping the Bangladeshi Church to take seriously the call to Mission. In November, AIM had the great blessing of spending time with the Bose's, our partner ministry leaders in Bangladesh. We were constantly inspired and challenged by stories of what God is doing in this largely Islamic country.

For example, Pastor Swapon shared that January will be an exciting time in Bangladesh. Not that this news will make the headlines. In fact, it won't be shared very widely at all. So, what is happening that is so exciting? Indigenous Mission leaders from all over the populous country

will meet together to do two things regarding the remaining 34 unengaged people groups of the country: first, they will pray together and second, they will commit to working together to bring the Gospel to these people. This unity in the Bangladeshi Church is encouraging. Even more inspiring is their combined vision and passion to see that the Gospel penetrate each corner of the country.

Pastor Swapon shared about a vision he had to build and pastor a megachurch in the capital city. Grandiose thoughts about gathering a large group of people together could have easily overshadowed the Bose's long-time vision to see not only one large church raised up, but the entire country saturated

with churches. The Lord graciously kept them on track with this wonderful vision for reaching all of Bangladesh.

As Pastor Swapon and Rachel shared countless exciting stories and biblical truths with us, we sensed their excitement for this upcoming January meeting. They pointed out that the National Pastors' Conference held earlier in 2011 really paved the way for the determination to target the remaining unengaged peoples in Bangladesh. As these pastors and leaders from the various denominations meet together, their unified prayer is to 'adopt' 6 of the 34 unengaged groups and together see that churches are planted among them.

## A Cup of Chai with Pastor James

By Keith Peters

*"The people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits." (Daniel 11:32b)*

**NARROW ROADS HUGGED** the mountains all the way up to steep peaks and down into valleys as we drove to a remote region in the Indian Himalayas. Numerous tight hairpin turns were designed on the side of the mountain to enable travel to these remote regions. After several hours of driving we arrived in a picturesque valley where a lone church building graced the side of the steep cliffs.

We walked into this simple solid structure greeted warmly by the local pastor who had been serving there for about 12 years.

Pastor James formerly served in the Indian army. Several years before his scheduled retirement he had a dream about travelling through the hills he grew up playing in. He had a deep love for the Lord and envisioned taking the Gospel to the many unreached surrounding his home mountain village. God had given him a burden to reach his people.

As we began to get to know Pastor James over a cup of local chai tea and traditional

snacks it was evident that he had a deep sense of God's calling for his life in that place. Due to his history of integrity in the army he was offered a well paying civilian position following his years of service. He and his family, however, gave up those comforts to serve God whose plan they know to be better than anything man can offer.

Pastor James prayed for a solid church building to be constructed as their mud building was wearing away with time. He prayed conditionally, however. He asked that God only provide the solid structure if He was going to fill it with people. We sensed a sincere passion in Pastor James to see that unreached region impacted by the Gospel.

It was exciting to hear about the 10 cell groups that have been planted in the nearly inaccessible parts of this region. Distance keeps most of these believers from traveling each Sunday to attend the central church, but two times a year they have a multi-day gathering together which brings all the believers together.



After several hours with Pastor James, we joined the local small group of believers and ended our visit by singing Psalm 42 to a traditional mountain rhythm: "The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me - A prayer to the God of my life." (Psalm 42:8) What an encouragement to see firsthand how our Lord is establishing His church in remote mountain regions; places where Christ's name has never before been named!

### PRAISE AND PRAYER

*For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. ~2 Corinthians 5:14,15*

1. Thank Him for the wonderful Leadership Seminars conducted in North India from Nov 28 - Dec 7. Pray with us for the Leadership Seminars in 2012 which are taking shape, conditional on the resourcing by our stewardship team. Our God will provide for all our need.
2. Give thanks for all the open doors in the churches in Winnipeg area for the ministry of Pastor Swapon Bose and Rachel Bose. The 25 days invested in stewardship development were excellent. The Lord has provided wonderful brothers and sisters in our work. Praise be to God.
3. Thank Him for the provision of new staff, embracing the vision of AIM. Travis Thiessen, Pastor of Ridgewood Evangelical Mennonite Church and AIM Board member, who has recently resigned from his 15 year tenure to join our staff next summer as Pastor of Indigenous Mission Leaders. Pastor Joy and Lulu Tira who joined our staff in July are fitting in and providing excellent international networks.
4. Thank Him for projected 2012 Seminary Diaspora and Indigenous Mission courses in Canada and in the Philippines with Dr. Joy Tira and Dr. David Robbins. Pray that seminaries and Bible Colleges will embrace the vision of an indigenous missionary movement among every people group in the world. May these places of preparation lift up their eyes which are white unto harvest. May countless students embrace the vision of worldwide evangelism and church planting, be they full missionaries or full time pastors.