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Tajiks in Ukraine

by JS

Tajikistan is in the mountainous center of Central Asia, and its people are the oldest ethnic group in the area. Because o f its location, Tajikistan has repeatedly been invaded by armies, starting with Alexander the Great. Because of these ong oing invasions, Tajiks have fled to many other countries. Today over 4,000 Tajiks live in Ukraine. They are nervously wat ching the country's conflict with Russia and have mixed emotions about the outcome. They fear losing Russia as a p owerful trading partner; but at the same time they remember their own oppression from the Soviets.

Most Tajiks are Sunni Muslims. Religion was discouraged under the Soviet atheist policies in all of the Central Asian cou ntries; but now there is a growing resurgence of Islam. Tajiks are a very musical people and have even turned much of t he Qur'an into music. They are also a spiritual people and enjoy discussions of spiritual things. They understand the concept of sacrifice, which could be a redemptive analogy to Christ dying on the cross. Music and poetry could be a key to reaching Tajiks for Christ. Introducing them to the great poet, David, and his Psalms might have special meaning for t hem.

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Pray for evangelicals in Ukraine to befriend the Tajiks in their country. Pray for creative ways to use music and poetry to reveal the good news of Christ's sacrifice to them.