

2014—Agul People

21 villages high in the southern mountains of Dagestan—home to the Agul people for millenia. The Aguls were converted to Islam after the Arab conquest of the 8th Century. Many Dagestani peoples who live at lower elevation in southern Dagestan know the Agul because of their annual round-trip sheep migrations from high mountain pastures to lowland pastures near the Caspian Sea. The Agul sheep and their shepherds swarm through lowland territories and temporarily block roads and congest small villages, before they pass on through—heading either further downhill or back up into the high Agul elevations.

The Agul men are renowned shepherds. Many of them also work in construction in urban centers during the winter season, while the women of the family keep the mountain village households going during the long winter months. Most of Dagestan is rugged, but the rocky harsh terrain of the Agul villages represents one of the highest levels of ‘rugged’ for this eastern Caucasus region. Hard-working, weather-beaten faces are the norm in village after village. This mountain lifestyle has created toughness, which is to be highly esteemed. On the other hand, warmer qualities of grace, forgiveness, compassion are typically in short supply.

Jesus was clearly thinking of precious ones like the Agul when it’s recorded, “...he looked on the multitudes with compassion, because they were distressed and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd”(Matt.9:36). The Agul, more than most, would vividly understand what it’s like for ‘sheep to be without a shepherd.’ Pray for stirrings of heart among people of peace (Luke 10:6) among the Agul, stirrings regarding grace and kindness from a loving Creator God who did not stay far away but came near to them—“*everyone needs compassion, the kindness of a Savior...*”

There is currently only one known Agul believer, but there is more hope. Through long perseverance, the Gospel of Luke has been completed in Agul, both in written and audio form. A 2nd publication on the Parables of Luke was also prepared, with illustrations, in the past decade. In this decade, a gifted young couple has come to serve the Agul with needed linguistic skills, in Christian love. The Agul language is like a rare butterfly and, so, this linguistic service is most appropriate. Truly, in a spirit of honor, the grace and kindness of the Savior is coming near to the Agul people.

PRAY for people of peace among the Agul to notice when representatives of the gospel of grace come near to them. PRAY for those who are serving the Agul people in Christian love to be encouraged—Acts 11:23. PRAY for the Lord of the Harvest to continue to send the right servants at the right time into the right relationships in the midst of Agul culture (Mt.9). PRAY for courageous ones among the Agul to break through to Jesus—Acts 16:14-15 & 30-34.

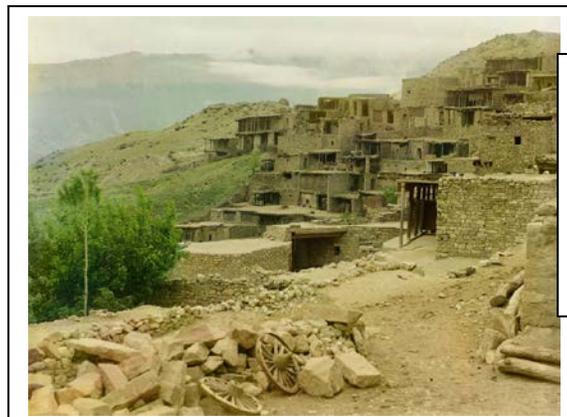
Names of AGUL Villages :

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|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Khlyook | 12. Tpeeg [central town] |
| 2. Kvar-dal | 13. Mi-si |
| 3. Khveredzh | 14. Droosh-tool |
| 4. U-kooz | 15. Yar-koog |
| 5. U-soog | 16. Ku-rag |
| 6. Bed-yook | 17. Burkhi-khan |
| 7. Ree-cha | 18. Khu-deeg |
| 8. Goa | 19. Ar-soog |
| 9. Dool-doog | 20. Bur-shag |
| 10. Fi-te | 21. Tsir-khe |
| 11. Khoot-Khool | |

-- approx. Agul population in Agul villages and urban areas of Dagestan & S.Russia – 34,000



AGUL
Shepherds
near
Village
of
Bur-shag



Ancient
AGUL
Village