

Hmar



Population: 76, 694

Literacy: 90% in second language

Scripture Status: New Testament is available.

The sturdy, dark-haired, brown-eyed people of Hmar are known for their bravery and live in the north-eastern states of Manipur, Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Tripura. The beauty of the landscape of this region is supplemented by the pleasant climate that is the result of dense forests and rugged mountains. The word "Hmar"

Until he is married, a Hmar boy older than 15 years has to sleep in the village boys' dormitory. The dormitory leader trains the boys in various aspects of life. With the coming of Christianity, formal education has begun to replace this system.

literally means "north". Hmar folk songs reveal that these people migrated from Sinlung, which is assumed to be in China. The Hmar were nomadic in nature and due to ecological factors such as famine, the whole Hmar community was compelled to move, eventually reaching north east India. These people are distinctive in their traditional bright clothes.

The community has close traditional and socio-economic interaction with outsiders and in some places they are engaged in territorial wars with other tribes. The Hmar live in large areas which are difficult to access by road. Even

in this difficult terrain, a Welsh missionary brought the gospel message in 1910. Currently there are numerous churches in each of the Hmar villages. Christianity has influenced the Hmar in quite a number of ways, including their culture and education system. The habit of drinking is also fast disappearing because of their change in faith. Their language, which had never been written down, was written in Roman script by missionaries, and the New Testament was published 1941. The Jesus film dubbed in their language will soon be available for the Hmar.

In earlier days, each Hmar clan had a dialect of its own but because of the effort of Christian missionaries they have developed a common language. Hmar society has witnessed other changes with regard to their social institutions, economic activities, political structure, leadership, religious beliefs and rituals. The efforts of government and voluntary agencies have brought about these changes. However, there is a need for the Hmar to capture the vision of Christ's Great Commission and reach out to their neighbours.

Pray for:

1. The revision of the Hmar New Testament and the dubbing of the Jesus film.
2. The teaching and spiritual growth of the Hmar church.
3. The effective use of literature available in Hmar.

