



Crimean Tatars



Crimean Tatars emerged as a distinct ethnic group at the close of the 13th century, following the Mongal invasion of Crimea in 1239. More than two hundred years passed before the Crimean Khanate was officially founded. By that time, Islam was firmly established in the southern areas of modern Ukraine, especially among the Crimean Tatars.

Strategically situated on the Black Sea, Crimean power increased until 1783, when a series of wars between Russia and Turkey resulted in Crimea's absorption into Russia. The Russian government pursued the Muslim population, and more than 100,000 Tatars were compelled to leave their country. Then, in 1944, Stalin's Soviet regime deported the entire Crimean Tatar population to Central Asia and Siberia, accusing them of cooperation with Germany. It wasn't until 1989 that repatriation to their homeland began.

Today, Crimean Tatars are a minority group in Crimea, and continue to face discrimination. The mass deportation of 1944 immobilized their culture; nearly one half of their population died en route, and those who survived were forced to grow up among foreigners, far from home, often uneducated.

Until 1989, the Soviet Union refused to recognize the Crimean Tatars as a distinct ethnic group. Since the commencement of their repatriation, the Crimean Tatar National Movement Organization has documented an ethnic population of 580,000. So far the Tatars have been allocated eight areas for settlement in their homeland. Before the deportations, these areas were populated by 15 % of the Crimean Tatars; now they must contain 63.6 % of the people.

Their dress and language make it difficult to distinguish Crimean Tatars from Russians or Ukrainians. Many of their traditions are falling away, especially among the younger generation.

Islam remains the dominant religion of Crimean Tatars. The majority are nominal Muslims, though the number of those practicing Islam has increased since Ukraine's independence in 1991. Only 0.10 percent of the Tatar population is Christian.

Population

586,900

Locations

Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Turkey, Romania, and Russia

Language

Crimean Tatar

Religion

Islam - Sunni

Bible translation

New Testament

Evangelical Christian

0.10%

Prayer Points

- *Pray for the Crimean Tatars to realize that there is a God who loves them.*
- *Pray for workers to be raised up and sent to the Crimean Tatars to give them His Word and to help them establish a Christ centered fellowship.*
- *Pray for a publication of the Bible into Crimean Tatar and wide distribution of it.*
- *Pray for tentmakers with skills in agriculture and construction to live among them, evangelize them and plant Tatar churches.*