



# Tsakhur



## Population

29,000

## Location in Dagestan

In villages: Mukhakh, Kalial, Ot-tal, Djinikh, Korsh, Mishlesh, Muslakh, Tsakhur, Khi-yakh, Syu-goot, Mikikh, Gel'mets, Kur-dul.

## Language

Tsakhur

## Religion

Islam - Sunni

## Bible translation

Portions

## Evangelical Christian

0%

These lines from Song of Solomon could be the words of a Tsakhur person:

*“Do not stare at me because I am dark-complected; for the sun has burned me... They made me caretaker of the vineyards, but I have not taken care of my own vineyard.”*

The Tsakhur are a proud mountain people, living in 13 villages in the high mountains of southern Dagestan in Russia and in 23 villages/towns across the border in northwestern Azerbaijan—at least 30,000 total population. To the Russians and Azerbaijanis, the Tsakhurs are “the wild mountain ones, primitive, with dark features.” And in the southern reaches of Tsakhur territory, they do tend vineyards, although shepherding and working with wool have been the primary economic feature of Tsakhur village life.

Prior to 1850, for centuries the Tsakhur were ruled by their own Tsakhur sultanate. And the Tsakhur are famous for their proverbs and love of wisdom. Tsakhur history is a rich tapestry of rugged beauty and communal identity, but one also beset with tragedy and a lack of grace. Islam gained ascendancy in the Tsakhur world a millennium ago, and at the present moment there are no known Tsakhurs who are infused with the grace of Jesus and His life-transforming Spirit. “I have not taken care of my own vineyard...”

## Prayer Points

- *PRAY for bridges of respect and friendship from bearers of the gospel of Jesus to expand in the Tsakhur world.*
- *PRAY for wide listening of an oral recording of the Gospel of Luke in Tsakhur finished in 2008, and for effective distribution of a brilliant audio version (2013) of the Book of Proverbs in Tsakhur.*
- *PRAY for key “Men/Women of Peace” relationships to grow, via creative linguistic work beginning in last two years.*
- *PRAY that in this decade many Tsakhur will be infused with Jesus’ grace and the Fruit of the Spirit—Gal. 5:22-23.*