

NUBIAN OF SUDAN

1

QUICK FACTS

People Name: Nubian
People Cluster: Nubian
Language: Kenzui-dongola
Trade Language: Arabic
Primary Religion: Islam
Population: 900,000



PRAYER POINTS

Pray for the Nubians to remember their Christian heritage and desire once again for it to be their own.

Pray for the poets, musicians, authors, and other cultural leaders to be saved and lead their people to Christ.

Pray that God will send signs, miracles, dreams and visions to the Nubians.

Pray that the Lord will raise up laborers who are willing to invest long term service as workers among the Nubians.

Pray that African believers will gain a vision to see the Nubians of Sudan reached with the Gospel.

Pray for strong local churches to be planted.

HISTORY

Around 5,000 years ago, a rich and powerful nation called the kingdom of Kush (also referred to as ancient Nubia) was a center of culture and military might in Africa. Ancient Nubia had a wealth of natural resources such as gold, ivory, copper, frankincense and ebony, but they also produced and traded a variety of goods such as pottery. It is thought that this Nubian kingdom was established even before the Egyptian monarchies began to reign along the Nile.

Sudan has remained the main homeland of Nubians through their long history, but some have moved to Egypt. Nubians in both Sudan and Egypt have suffered a great deal and often been intentionally overlooked.

Nubians were once a Christian people. In 580 AD, Christianity became the official religion of Nubia. Eight years after the death of Mohammed in 632 AD, Arab conquerors carried Islam into Egypt. Over the next two years, Muslim Arabs invaded Nubia. After conquering the Nubian city of Dongola, the Arab general made a treaty with the Nubian king. This treaty re-established trade along the Nile routes and allowed Nubia to remain Christian for the next six centuries. Terms of this treaty required the Nubians to send 400 slaves per year to the Arabs, while the Arabs returned horses, cloth, and other goods. Nubia gave way to Islam in the 16th Century as the last Christian church was closed. As it is illegal for Muslims to enslave a fellow Muslim, conversion freed the Nubians from the bond of slavery.

ECONOMY

The Nubian economy is based on agriculture. During the winter months they grow wheat, barley, millet, beans, peas, and watermelons. Mangoes, citrus fruits, and palm dates are also part of the Nubian diet. A thin, course bread called *dura* is one of the basic staple foods. Pieces of the bread are usually piled on top of each other and eaten with vegetables and sauces or spread with date jelly.



NUBIAN OF SUDAN

2

In old Nubia, men migrated to the big cities to find work, while the women farmed the land, cared for the animals, and did household chores. Today, since the land is located far from their dwellings, men do most of the field work while the women work at home. Some women have also found employment as schoolteachers, public service workers, and seamstresses. Some of the men now own grocery stores or drive cabs.



LIFE

The typical Nubian house is very spacious, with several large rooms that are able to accommodate the extended family members and guests. In the center of each home is an open courtyard. The front of the house is colorfully painted with geometric patterns. Most of the paintings and decorations on the homes have religious connotations. The colorful designs are a distinctive and admired feature of Nubian culture.

The literacy rate among Nubians is high in comparison to their rural Egyptian neighbors. Primary and secondary schools have been set up in new Nubia, and there are also teacher training facilities in the area. In addition to education, policies, radio and television are other ways in which socialization takes place among the Nubians.

BELIEFS

For centuries, the Nubians often held lengthy religious and agricultural ceremonies. However, since relocation, the ceremonies have been shortened and are now limited to the villages. During these ceremonies, the Nubians express themselves through singing, dancing, and beating drums. In addition, Nubians practice Islam intermingled with the animism that is predominant along the Nile and in the activities of the local shuyukh, who regulate daily concerns about health, fertility, and marriage.



WAYS TO HELP

Entrance into this country could be gained through providing relief for the extreme conditions in Darfur and other regions. Work that begins there can spread throughout the country and north into the area of the Nubians.

The Nubian people are often the victims of flooding and disasters, which cause disease and health problems. Education in these areas could help the people and provide a more stable living environment for them.

Would you be willing to be among the FIRST to engage these people with the hope of the Gospel? Would you be willing to lead a team? Contact us today to find out more - we need people to visit the Nubian of Sudan and find other great ways to bring new teams to live among them for the sake of the Kingdom.

CONTACT

FRONTIERS

(800) 462-8436
www.frontiers.org