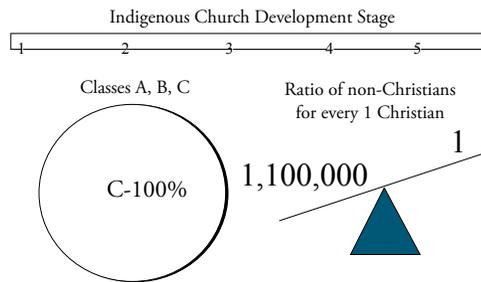
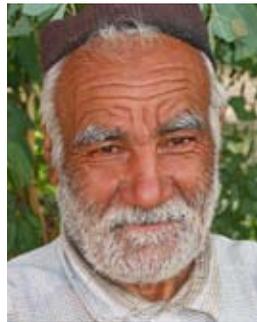




Quick Facts

Pop. in Iran: 1,100,000
Location: Zagros Mountains
Lang. Group: Luri
Religion: Shia Islam
Believers: 0.00%
Scriptures: None
Ministry Tools: None
Churches: 0
Organizations: 0
Church Status: 0
Mission Status: 0
MS Subgroups: 4



Class A- Are members of a Culturally Relevant Church
 Class B- Have close access to a CRC, but have not yet joined
 Class C- Have no reasonable or close access to a CRC

Identity: The Bakhtiari are an Indo-Iranian people, closely related to the Luri. It is believed they were once united with the Luri as a single tribe that split around 1,500 years ago. Today, they insist on their uniqueness as a people, and react negatively when labeled as “Turkic,” though they have borrowed culturally from neighboring Turkic peoples, such as the Qashqai.

Lifestyle: The Bakhtiari were once entirely transhumant nomadic pastoralists, raising mostly sheep. However, the discovery of oil on their pasturelands significantly affected their lives. In order to wield power away from the ruling families of *khans*, the government began a systematic process of “de-tribalizing” the Bakhtiari by forcing them to settle in towns, and executing the heads of families that resisted. Today, only about 20% are still nomadic.

Customs: The Bakhtiari have been known for their complex hierarchical

structure of tribal organization, which was traditionally based around their nomadic lifestyle and rights to pastureland. The smallest unit of authority is a *mal*, which consists of about ten related families that migrate together. They are united with other families under a *kalantar* (headman), which are under the *khans* (chiefs), which are under the *ilkhani* (confederation chieftans).

Religion: The Bakhtiari are Shiites, like most Iranian peoples. Their religious practitioners are mostly untrained, though for some their spiritual authority comes from the belief that they are descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, called *Sadaat*. Part of the government’s plan of de-tribalizing and asserting control over the Bakhtiari involved the establishment of Shariah courts, and appointing those Bakhtiari leaders that cooperate with them as the adjudicators.

Christian Outreach: There is no known outreach to the Bakhtiari, and no Chris-

tian resources have been produced in their language. This is partly due to the fact that the Bakhtiari have been largely unresearched by both anthropologists and missiologists, and have thus remained off the radar, until very recently.

How to Pray:

🙏 Intercede for the immediate deployment of missionary teams to the Bakhtiari. Ask God to open up doors in the restricted-access nation of Iran to enable a permanent witness among them.

🙏 Many families of the Ilkhani went into hiding due to persecution by the Persian Mullah’s that control Iran. Pray for these historically strategic families, that missionaries might be able to reach out to them with the power of the gospel. Pray also that God would move in the hearts of all the tribal leaders, especially the *kalantars* and *khans*, to embrace Jesus as their Savior.

🙏 Intercede for the translation of Luke’s gospel in the Bakhtiari language that will enable the production of the Jesus film.

🙏 Pray for specialized, long-term ministry among the more difficult to reach nomadic Bakhtiari.

**Every year
10,000 Bakhtiari die
without Christ.**