

2014—Bagvalal People

Winter up among the high Caucasus peoples, such as the Bagvalal, really runs from late September to the end of April. The ridge above the Bagvalal village of Kvanada sits at 8500 feet. Southeast of Tlondada village the mountains soar to 11,000 feet. Numbering at least 6000 people, the Bagvalal people of western Dagestan speak their own distinct language and live in six major villages at high altitude.

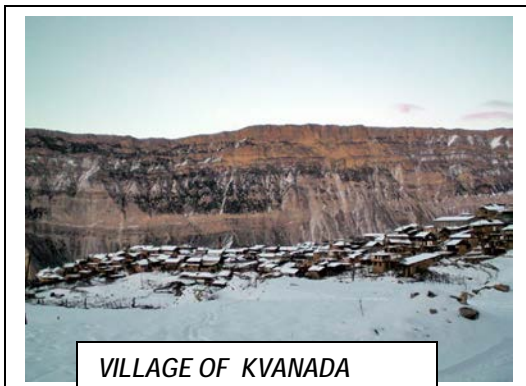
Snow covers the Bagvalal villages typically from October until the end of April. For the cattle and sheep to survive the winter, it's crucial to accomplish massive hay gathering from the nearby hillsides in July, August, and September. Other items of the harvest are stored and pickled for the winter, and the residents hope that 4-wheel drive vehicles can successfully make it in and out of the region several times during the winter for resupply.

The Bagvalal are rugged, with fierceness on many points and few elements of grace. The atmosphere is complemented by traditional Sunni Islam, with its dictates of 'works righteousness' and a distant, stern Allah God. The Bagvalal would be greatly warmed by the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit—but for centuries now among the Bagvalal it's felt like "forever winter, and never Christmas."

PRAY for carriers of Jesus' grace to become true friends of the Bagvalal, studying and respecting (and helping preserve) their amazing, complex language. PRAY that bridges of relationship for God's love and the joy of the Holy Spirit will open up, perhaps starting with connections with the few Bagvalal who live in urban areas of Dagestan.

NAMES OF BAGVALAL VILLAGES:

1. Kvanada
2. Gimerso
3. Tlisi
4. Tlibisho
5. Khushtada
6. Tlondada



VILLAGE OF KVANADA
-- Bagvalal Language Region



VILLAGE OF TLONDADA
-- Bagvalal Language Region