



OM EAST

Literature and Media
2018 Ministry Review



Bringing hope to the least reached

4 Jesus Christ's power to make everything new

Slobodan never thought he could be free, but Jesus gave him a new start. Now Slobodan urges Roma in Croatia and Serbia that there is a better way.

6 New Bible storybook for the Chukchi

Believers travel by snowmobile or helicopter to share a message of great worth with indigenous reindeer herders and fishermen.

14 Counter-cultural faith among the Gurbet

Goran's decision to follow Jesus challenged cultural values and traditions he grew up with, causing him to live differently in his Gurbet Roma community.



OM EAST

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LITERATURE AND MEDIA

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Front cover: Nenets child
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Arctic Russia
Back cover: Watermelons
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N – No restrictions

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Welcome to OM EAST! Tour of the literature and media office during OM EAST's 50th Anniversary celebration.

“I want to use my gifts for God’s glory and His fame. It’s amazing to be part of making disciples of all nations by producing Christian literature and media. The ultimate goal is that one day there will be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne of God and worshipping our God!”

– **Simon**, production coordinator and graphic designer



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OM EAST opportunities: east.om.org/go

“Come and see what God has done,
His awesome deeds for mankind!”

Psalm 66:5

Dear friends,

This was a special year—OM EAST celebrated 50 years of ministry! I’m so thankful for everyone who joined us for our anniversary weekend in Austria. I very much enjoyed meeting together to remember God’s faithfulness and give Him thanks for His amazing deeds. A definite highlight of 2018!

In our ministry of producing literature and media, it was especially exciting to see the first Bible storybooks published in the Amur and Schmidt dialects for the Nivkh people in Far East Russia. In Siberia, the Chukchi people also received Bible storybooks in their language. God’s Word is going out to minority groups and individuals will hear the Good News of our Saviour Jesus Christ!

We are grateful to all those who support us to provide local workers in Eurasia with culturally appropriate resources, which help them share the gospel.

As you read the following pages, may the Lord show you what He is capable of and how great His works are. Jesus can change someone’s heart; He is able to bring renewal. And He has not forgotten any nation.

All glory and honour to God!

Edwin Keller
OM EAST Field Leader

2018 OM EAST STATISTICS

17

LANGUAGES

34

PRINT
PUBLICATIONS

70,600

PRINTED
COPIES

31

eBOOK PDFs

25

ePUBS

6,200

DVDS

We want to see vibrant communities of Jesus followers
among the least reached.

OM EAST’s literature and media ministry produces high quality print and digital media in over 25 languages. Always working with local partners, we seek to share the gospel, strengthen churches and bring hope to people groups throughout Eurasia.



Serbia

Jesus Christ's power to make everything new

In a carpark in Bor, Eastern Serbia, Slobodan* suddenly cried “Yesssss!!!” and abruptly rushed over to his colleague’s vehicle. “I thought he was excited about chocolate or cake someone had brought,” said an OM EAST worker during a visit. This wasn’t what caught his attention. OM EAST partner Slobodan had spotted his colleague unloading copies of the freshly printed *Roma Family Picture Bible*, which he had translated into his regional Serbian dialect.

“I worked on translating the *Roma Family Picture Bible* with great enthusiasm because I know people in the Bor area,” expressed Slobodan,

who grew up outside the mining town in Eastern Serbia where his parents still live today. “Illustrations and simple language sometimes have more impact because, sadly, people think not everyone can read the Bible.” The Bible storybook was produced to make God’s Word accessible to Roma families and it was designed by OM EAST to fit their culture.

“They have seen the change in me—a huge testimony of God’s grace and His power to make everything new!”

“I want to give this to my parents; I hope it will speak to them,” Slobodan said. “My parents don’t know Jesus, but they have seen the change in me—a huge testimony of God’s grace and His power to make everything new!”

THE OLD HAS GONE

Slobodan had been addicted to heroin and other substances for many years. “I was dying before, just going from one shot to the next,” Slobodan stated. At a Christian rehabilitation center, Slobodan heard about God. “I think God was just waiting on me to ask Him: ‘Please help me,’” he reflected.

“I was like the walking dead,” Slobodan emphasised. “But God is able to give life to dead bones—He is Almighty!” Slobodan compares the transformation he has experienced with the vision in Ezekiel chapter 37: “*I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley... So I prophesied as [the LORD] commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone...and breath entered them; they came to life.*” – Ezekiel 37:2b,7,10b

“My life was like these dry bones,” Slobodan said. “Then I heard God’s Word, and something started to make a noise in my heart. When God revealed Himself to me, my dry bones came together, and I received the Holy Spirit.” Slobodan believed in Jesus Christ whom God sent to earth to save people from their sins; he gave his life to the Saviour who heals, cleanses and restores.

“Through my testimony, I want people to see how deep the hole may be from where God can save us,” Slobodan shared. Recovery proved to be an intense process, involving over a month of sleeplessness, as well as hallucinations. “I never thought I could be free, but when Jesus frees you, He takes it all away. I no longer desire drugs,” said Slobodan, who has now been clean for 12 years. “Since then, with ups and downs, I am trying to serve Him.”

THE NEW HAS COME

“I want to tell others who don’t know, that there is a better way,” said Slobodan. He desires to share the

hope of Jesus in whom there is unfailing love, full redemption, forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”

2 Corinthians 5:17

Slobodan lives in Croatia where he and his wife work with Roma Bible Union, making Jesus known among Roma in her home country. During a visit to Bor, Slobodan presented the *Roma Family Picture Bible* to a small congregation that meets in the pastor’s basement. The couple and their colleagues trained local church members to lead children’s clubs in surrounding Roma villages, also distributing

Bible storybooks on outreaches. “I see those living in Bor and hear what they tell me—I used to be the same,” said OM EAST’s partner.

The vision in Ezekiel continues to inspire Slobodan; his Creator is still able to breathe spiritual life into individuals and He can bring renewal along believers’ journeys of faith. “We need believers to speak God’s words to us personally and as a church today so we can be renewed,” he expressed. “Let the Lord renew us as He used to do in those days. When God is working, it is heard and seen. Let people see this in our lives!”



“It is the greatest and most remarkable of all changes that a man can undergo—to be brought out of the grave of spiritual death and made to rejoice in the light and liberty of spiritual life. None could work this but the living God, the Lord and giver of life.” – C.H. Spurgeon (‘Faith’s Checkbook – Daily Readings’, 2013 Watchmaker Publishing, p.167)

Praise God for His power to make everything new! Give thanks for Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross; praise Him for His resurrection and victory over sin and death. Give thanks for God’s grace in Slobodan’s life. Please pray Roma would trust in Jesus who sets free. Please pray believers would be strengthened and renewed for His name’s sake.



Siberia

New Bible storybook for the Chukchi

“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.” – Hebrews 4:14

The Chukchi people, a minority group with a population of around 15,000, are indigenous reindeer herders and fishermen living in Siberia (Russia). Partners of OM EAST seek to bring the truth about Jesus Christ to the Chukchi, whose beliefs are animistic.

“The biggest challenges in reaching the Chukchi are isolation and fear,” explained Natalie**, a field worker.

“It is very expensive to travel to their remote villages, and official permissions are required to go into these areas. Furthermore, they fear the consequences of not following rituals such as wearing amulets (charms), feeding the fire and feeding the land.”

OM EAST’s partners on the field want to tell the Chukchi about Jesus, the great high priest who came down to earth to pay a costly price in offering Himself

as the ultimate sacrifice for people’s sins. They want to speak of how Jesus was then raised to life and overcame sin and death. They desire the Chukchi to know that through faith in Jesus, it is possible to have peace with God and assurance of salvation. To help communicate this hope, they published a book of 25 Bible stories in the Chukchi and Russian languages. Their Android app also enables individuals to both read and listen to the content. The Bible storybook declares Jesus’ authority over nature, sickness, death, demons and to forgive sins. OM EAST provided the new publication’s design and layout, also creating an eBook version.

“My local colleague Katarina** is distributing the storybook and she says some people even want her to write a little note to them personally inside it,” shared Natalie. The Bible storybooks are being given out in the Republic of Yakutia. Katarina visited a village with 300-400 inhabitants, home to a handful of believers.

To get there, it is a four-hour flight from Yakutia’s capital, followed by a six-hour journey by snowmobile or a 45-minute flight by helicopter. Harsh and dangerous weather conditions make it wise to travel using two snowmobiles in case one breaks down in the vast frozen landscape.

“It’s worth the labour of translation, it’s worth the cost of travel, and it’s worth the risks of the climate to deliver the message of greatest worth to the Chukchi people,” reflected an OM EAST worker, while considering what their partners on the field are prepared to invest to fulfil what God has put on their hearts.

Praise God that the Chukchi are hearing the gospel. Please pray individuals use the print and digital Bible storybooks. Please pray they would have courage to leave their rituals and accept Jesus as their Saviour who offers forgiveness and eternal life. Please pray local followers of Christ hold firmly to the faith they profess.

“The biggest challenges in reaching the Chukchi are isolation and fear.”

Through faith in Jesus, it is possible to have peace with God and assurance of salvation.



OM EAST 50TH ANNIVERSARY

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF
GOD'S FAITHFULNESS!



For more photos and recordings, go to the 50th Anniversary page on OM EAST's website: east.om.org



Dale Rhoton
OM co-founder who initiated GE



Edwin Keller
OM EAST Field Leader

In 2018, OM EAST, formerly known as Greater Europe (GE), celebrated their 50th Anniversary. During the Easter weekend, over 120 people from around the world gathered in Stockerau, Austria, to mark this significant milestone. OM workers, supporters, partners and former team members met together to remember God's faithfulness and give thanks for His amazing deeds.

The OM EAST team is thankful for all who came to make their 50th Anniversary celebration very special and they are grateful to God for His blessings during this wonderful occasion.

"I'm so thankful for everyone who took the time and made the effort to come and celebrate with us. The Lord has answered our prayers beyond our expectations. Hearing all the God-stories was a reminder that God has not changed; He is still the same and we can expect the impossible of Him!" said Edwin, OM EAST's field leader.



HISTORY OF OM EAST/GE

EURASIA SUPPORT TEAM (OM EAST), PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS GREATER EUROPE (GE)

1968

VISION LAUNCHED

1968 Vision launched to smuggle Bibles and Christian literature into Communist Europe and the Soviet Union. Dale Rhoton starts Greater Europe (GE).

OM co-founder, Dale Rhoton, meets **Pastor Richard Wurmbrand** in Communist Romania, shortly after the pastor's release from prison in 1964. Wurmbrand's testimony and **believers' desire to receive Scripture** even at **great cost**, spurs Rhoton to mobilise a team to take resources behind the **Iron Curtain**.

1968 – 1989 BIBLE SMUGGLING



BRINGING HOPE TO THE LEAST REACHED

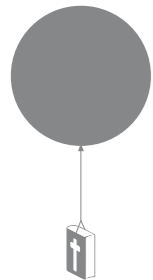
70s - 80s

CREATIVE WAYS TO SMUGGLE BIBLES

With God's help there is no risk too great, no idea too crazy...



Concealing Bibles and Christian publications in altered vehicles containing secret compartments, and driving across borders into the Eastern Bloc.



Sending Gospels by air via weather balloons, released from OM's ship, Logos, aiming for the shores of Communist Albania.



Sealing Gospels in bags and floating them down river from Greece and Yugoslavia into Albania.



1983-1989 Delivering hundreds of thousands of publications by stowing them inside prefabricated wooden huts transported from Finland to Greece, dropping off the hidden load in Communist Romania.



For some OM team members, being caught carrying books considered as "dangerous goods" results in confiscated vehicles, deportation, blacklisting or temporary imprisonment.



OM workers witness miracle after miracle as they succeed in transporting Christian literature into Communist Europe and the Soviet Union.



Early 1980s GE begins in-house publishing to strengthen local believers and help them share their faith.

90s - to date

CREATIVE WAYS TO PRESENT GOD'S TRUTH

Making the most of **new freedom and new opportunities**, OM outreach teams intensify distribution efforts. GE expands and develops publishing ministry, working with local partners.

2007 GE becomes **OM EurAsia Support Team (OM EAST)**, producing resources in the heart languages of people groups throughout Eurasia.

With God's help there is...No place too hard, no people too far, no language too difficult...



The hope of Christ is brought into segregated Roma villages in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. First Scripture portions are made available in minority Roma dialects.



Publishing leaflets and booklets written and designed specifically for those trapped in prostitution in Central Europe.



Schoolbags for Bosnia initiative begins in 2005, equipping the church to respond to physical needs in Muslim villages, often enclosing evangelistic literature addressed to the parents.



Bible storybooks reach indigenous groups in Siberia, such as the Nenets living on the Yamal Peninsula, Siberia - "Yamal" means "The end of the earth".



In addition to sending literature, OM teams transport large quantities of humanitarian aid.



Developing digital media, including downloadable eBooks, to distribute more widely.



Producing comics in Arabic and Farsi, which communicate the gospel message among refugees arriving in Europe.

FALL OF THE IRON CURTAIN 1989

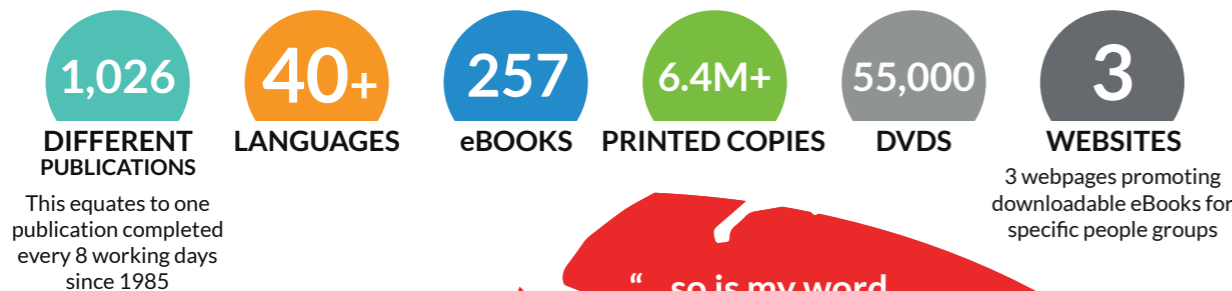
2018

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

"As literature and media has gone out over the past 50 years, a lot of seeds have been sown. This milestone represents the Lord's faithfulness, which continues into the next 50 years—one day we will see a great multitude standing before the throne of God!" – Edwin, OM EAST field leader

OM EAST continues to experience that with God's help, there is **no place too hard, no people too far and no language too difficult**; we believe the **gospel** has the **power** to **change everyone and everything**. As individuals meet Jesus at their point of need, **lives are changed** and communities **transformed**.

1985 – 2018 LITERATURE AND MEDIA



Making the most of media in the future

"In your opinion, which types of media distribution will have greatest impact in sharing the gospel among least reached groups in the next decade?"

This is just one of the survey questions OM EAST is asking partners and OM teams globally. The team would like to find out how to better support them with literature and media.

Over the past year, OM EAST has been praying about its ministry's direction in the future. OM EAST and OM Europe leaders sense God's prompting to expand the work of producing culturally appropriate print and digital media. "Once we have identified needs and key areas to develop in, we anticipate changes, including inviting more specialists to join our team based in Austria," said OM EAST's leader Edwin.

It is an answer to prayer for the team to have three graphic designers preparing to come during 2019. They're hoping to welcome other specialists, such as app developers, web designers and creative media innovators. OM EAST continues to seek the Lord for His will in developing media, which helps share the gospel and disciple believers among least reached groups.

Please pray for wisdom as OM EAST and OM International leaders plan ahead to support ministries with needed resources. Please pray God would prepare the way for the new graphic designers. Please pray God would guide other specialists to join the team too.



Serbia

Counter-cultural faith among the Gurbet

“We are Roma—sometimes we have too much, sometimes we have nothing. I am somebody who survived,” Goran* said, reflecting on his people and his life.

OM EAST partner Goran belongs to the Gurbet Roma, a predominantly Muslim minority group living in Serbia. Goran heard God’s Word when he started going to church with his wife and daughters. He believed in Jesus Christ after recognising an answer to prayer. “In 1996, my mother was in a coma for three months,” Goran shared. “My wife said we should ask the pastor to pray.” Their pastor prayed and then declared she would recover. “I said [to myself], if my mother really gets up, I will give my heart to God,” Goran remembered. “Two days later she got up.”

Goran’s decision to follow Jesus challenged cultural values and traditions he grew up with, causing him to live differently in his Gurbet Roma community.

CHANGING FAMILY VALUES

“The Roma come from the east where a lot of worth is placed on having a son,” Goran explained. “When I worked on the black market I had a lot of money. In one day I could earn enough to buy a car, but it meant nothing to me because I didn’t have a son.” The number of sons is reflected by the size of a family’s house; there is one storey per son. Goran as father of two daughters had only a ground-level house. “It was terrible,” said Goran, expressing the sorrow that remained for many years.

“From this moment on, my life was different—our God is the best!”

At a seminar around five years ago, the theme “Me and my son” rubbed salt into the wound. “I came home with sadness in my heart,” he said, crying at the memory. “Then I heard [the words], ‘you have an emptiness in your heart; I am the Fullness that fills the emptiness.’” God’s comforting words changed Goran’s heart; for the first time, he gave thanks for his daughters. “From this moment on, my life was different,” emphasised Goran. “Our God is the best!”

“In our culture adoption is a taboo topic,” Goran added. Nevertheless, his daughter and son-in-law chose to adopt, since they were unable to have children. “They were the first to adopt here,” shared Goran. “Now 10-20 other couples have adopted children, too.”

LEAVING THE FAMILY BUSINESS

“Do you want to work for me?” Goran sensed God ask him in 2002. Goran left the black market, completed a theology diploma and co-pastored a predominantly Roma church for 15 years.

“You are stupid! You have to follow the Roma tradition,” a man had responded once Goran told him he intended to work for God. Goran considered his family heritage: “My father stole, my grandfather stole...should I follow this tradition?” However, when the same man saw Goran again, he encouraged him in his choice. Similarly, another friend acknowledged: “You are a new man. You are on a good path!”

“I want to show Roma, and others, that Roma can do things,” Goran said, addressing perceptions of, and toward, his people group. “This is very important for our culture.” Two years ago, the former pastor started a Christian non-profit organisation. His tasks include Bible translation as well as producing literature and media for the Roma. OM EAST provided the design and layout for Goran’s new book—a Gurbet Roma-Serbian-English picture dictionary. The dictionary is being used in a school, and it is also a tool to help Serbian or foreign believers learn Gurbet Roma so they can communicate the gospel in people’s heart language. “It’s good to represent the Roma and

the Lord,” said Goran, whose publication featured in the local press. “My greatest joy is to work for God. As we translate Scripture, we are glorifying God.”

PASSING ON HOPE



“There is no word for ‘hope’ in our language,” stated Goran. “The words ‘blessing’ or ‘thankfulness’ don’t exist either.”

“What does it say about the condition of a people group who need to borrow the word ‘hope’ from the local language?” an OM EAST worker wondered. Gaps in the vocabulary are one of Goran’s greatest challenges as he makes the Bible available in Gurbet Roma.

“When I translate, there is revival for me in my heart; I have read Hebrews ten times and I want to study it again,” he said, smiling. “It’s important to put God’s Word in your mouth.” Goran has found a Saviour; Jesus

Christ has forgiven his sins, changed his heart and given him a new purpose and hope. “What you know, you should give to another,” said Goran, who leads a youth group and desires to invest more time speaking to individuals in his community about God’s Word.

“It’s important to put God’s Word in your mouth.”

Goran lives and works in the Roma area of the town, Leskovac, where most are from a Muslim background. Last year, three OM EAST team members visited him there. They were joined by a young man who interpreted into English. One OM guest asked their

host to tell them about someone whose life he has seen God at work in. “Instead of relating Goran’s reply, the young man turned to me and said with a smile, ‘I am the first,’” the OM worker recalled. “This was so special to find our interpreter had come to faith through Goran passing on the hope he has received.”



Praise God that He is the God of Hope. Praise God for His authority to forgive sins and His power to transform lives. Praise God for the faith He has given Goran. Please pray for wisdom as Goran translates. Please pray the Gurbet Roma would respond to Jesus, the only Saviour.



Arctic Russia

Entering a reindeer herder's world

“I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.” – *Isaiah 49:6b*

TO “THE ENDS OF THE EARTH” OR TO “THE END OF THE EARTH”?

Field worker E.S.* moved to Arctic Russia with the dream to share the gospel by translating the Bible for the Nenets people. The Nenets are indigenous reindeer herders living in Northern Siberia, including on the Yamal Peninsula. “Yamal” means “The End of the Earth”. Out on the tundra, locals travel by snowmobile or reindeer sled. To reach particularly remote villages, it takes two to four hours by helicopter from Salekhard, the main city in the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug.

The Yamal Peninsula is home to more reindeer than people and winter lasts nine months. “It’s very cold; minus 40°C can be pleasant for a walk if there is no wind,” joked E.S., an OM EAST partner. E.S. previously worked on an OM team. It was during this time that her vision for Nenets Bible translation began.

In 1992, an OM colleague challenged her to pray for the Nenets. She received a book on minority groups, which offered just a few lines of information about them. Eight years later, E.S. relocated to Northern Siberia where she has invested 18 years of her life bringing the gospel to “The End of the Earth”.

UNDERSTAND OR MISUNDERSTAND?

The minority group has a population of around 45,000 people. Half of them live in Russian-speaking villages, while the other half are nomadic reindeer herders who live on the tundra and speak the Nenets language.

“Nenets is the heart language of the reindeer herders. It’s much easier for them to understand,” E.S. said. “Translation is a complicated process because there is a great gap between two totally different cultures.” E.S. found it straightforward to learn Nenets since the word order is similar to her own native language.

When local woman N.* read a passage in Nenets, she discovered she had misunderstood the same Scripture in Russian. “This is why we need the Bible in our own language!” N. expressed. Four books of the New Testament are in print, while others are in progress. Two illustrated Bible storybooks have been designed and published by OM EAST.

A BOOK OF LIGHT OR A LIGHTER LOAD?

“I moved to Arctic Russia during December, the darkest month,” E.S. recalled. “One day when I was testing translations, the electricity suddenly cut out. We sat without light all day. It was dark! Then I understood the meaning of light.”

For E.S. this experience of the Arctic winter darkness is a picture of life without Jesus Christ. She desires that the Nenets would know Jesus as the light of the world. It is Jesus who frees people from sin and gives them the light of life if they ask Him for forgiveness and choose to follow Him. “I want every Nenets child to have a Bible,” said OM EAST’s partner, who has distributed thousands of Bible storybooks over many years. E.S. has observed children taking more interest in the Bible storybooks than the chocolate she offered.

A nomadic lifestyle makes it difficult for the reindeer herders to carry a collection of Christian literature. “They don’t have extra things—just the minimum is enough,” E.S. explained. “They have one pot, one kettle, and they don’t need a freezer!” However, they do have mobile phones. Her solution is to develop publications into applications so they can be stored on mobile phones, also allowing individuals to listen to the text. OM EAST plans to help provide these resources digitally. “Apps are able to help bring salvation to the Nenets!” said E.S. with joy and excitement.

FAITH SEEN OR FAITH TO SEE?

E.S. met N. 16 years ago at a church in the town Salekhard. Later, N. invited her to visit two family members on the tundra. E.S. tested a translation by reading some Scripture verses to their hosts. They reacted by walking out, leaving her alone in the tent. Jesus’ teaching had touched a nerve. “N. came in,

“When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”

John 8:12

angry, asking me what I had told them,” E.S. remembered. “But N. showed me pity because my face was black and swollen with frostbite. She let me read another passage to her, which described how to be born again into a new life of following Jesus, and gave the example of selling everything and giving to the poor. This made her more angry!” However, when they next saw each other, N. had changed and she had decided to be baptised and wanted to give E.S. a tithe to print Mark’s Gospel. Since then, E.S. recovered from frostbite

and, over the past decade, N. has sometimes joined E.S. and another woman early in the morning to pray.

“Not many are excited about the Bible,” said E.S., crying as she spoke. “I’m looking for revival!” There are around 200 known Nenets believers, representing a small percentage of the population. The indigenous people group believe in numerous gods. For many, the reindeer are their life, their source of food, clothes, transport and shelter. E.S. longs for the Nenets to acknowledge their Creator as their true provider and life-giver.

“A few have faith and I see some who want to read the Bible. Through them I have hope,” reflected E.S.. “There is hope that they will know Jesus. I see beyond reality. We need to be patient, keep serving and not give up.”



Give praise to God who is light. Give thanks that He speaks through His Word. Please pray Nenets will put their trust in Jesus and receive His salvation. Please pray for wisdom as E.S. helps make God’s truth available. Please pray that believers grow strong in their faith.



Mark knows of three Jesus followers among the minority group whose beliefs are rooted in shamanism. He wants more Nivkh to encounter the Good Shepherd who laid down His life to be an atoning sacrifice for sin. He desires to share the message that anyone who confesses Jesus Christ is Lord and believes in their heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, will be saved and have eternal life.

“We have published literature, but it is now the work really begins,” emphasised Simon, OM EAST’s production coordinator. “Let’s pray for believers giving out copies and speaking with individuals. One day there will be Nivkh worshipping before God’s throne!”

“It’s beautiful to think it will be the first time many will read God’s truth and hold it in their hands.”

“I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.” – John 10:16

“While drawing, I have been thinking about how the Nivkh don’t know the Bible passages,” said Julia Haupt, OM EAST graphic designer and artist. “It’s beautiful to think it will be the first time many will read God’s truth and hold it in their hands. I want my drawings to express the message.”

Praise God for His love and Shepherd’s heart! Give thanks to Jesus for His great sacrifice; give thanks for the freedom and forgiveness found in Him. Please pray for believers distributing literature; please pray Nivkh listen to Jesus’ voice and choose to follow Him.

The illustrated Bible storybooks are being distributed on Sakhalin Island and in villages along the Amur river.

Scripture references: John 10:11, 1 John 2:2, Romans 10:9 and John 3:18.

Far East Russia

The Shepherd’s heart for the Nivkh

The Nivkh live in the Russian Far East; they are an indigenous people group with a population of around 4,500. In 2018, OM EAST and their partners printed the first Bible stories in two Nivkh dialects called Amur and Schmidt, also including the passages in Russian. OM EAST provided illustrations, design and layout for this new publication while staff from Wycliffe Russia worked on translation.

“Initially, I was not at all inspired to translate for such a small number of people,” admitted Wycliffe translator Mark**. The Amur and Schmidt speakers are even fewer than the total population since



some speak other Nivkh dialects or Russian. “But later, the parable of the Lost Sheep came to mind, where the Good Shepherd left the majority to go after one stray sheep,” Mark added. “Then I realised the number of native speakers is not the only criteria that counts.” Following Jesus’ example, Mark recognised it’s still worth the effort to publish Bible stories in the Nivkh dialects.

“The description of Jesus as the Good Shepherd is a beautiful picture of His love for those who belong to Him and for those who don’t yet believe in Him,” reflected an OM EAST worker.





30m.

30m.

70m.



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