

Hamer Banna of Ethiopia



Picture Credit: Joshua Project

About the Hamer Bana

The Hamer-Banna are Muslim shepherds living in the highlands of southwest Ethiopia. The Hamer-Banna consist of two separate ethnic groups, the Hamer and the Banna, who speak virtually the same language. Though they refer to themselves as either Hamer or Banna, they call their language Hamer-Banna. They belong to a group of culturally distinct people known as the Sidamo. Although they are racially mixed with the Bushman hunters who originally inhabited the region, they do not have Bushman features.

What Are Their Lives Like?

They live in camps consisting of several related families who live in tents arranged in a circle. The cattle are brought into the center of the camp at night, where the men and older boys usually sleep on cots. While their livestock consist mainly of cattle, there are some sheep and goats. Most plant fields of sorghum, while others plant sesame and beans. Because the crops are left unattended while they travel during the rainy season, the yields are low so few households have enough grain to last through the year. Men indulge in elaborate hair-dressing and women wear colorful garments. Men marry as many women as they like from within their own tribe.

Population: 86,000

Language: Hamer-Banna

Religion: Ethnic Religions

% Christian: 1.5%

% Evangelical: 1.30%

Bible Available: Bible N.T. Complete 2014

Ministry Resources: Bible N.T. Audio Online, Oral Bible Stories, Jesus Film, LUMO Film of Gospels, Downloadable Scripture in their language

What Are Their Beliefs?

The Banna are mainly adherents to traditional religions. For instance, they believe that natural objects (rocks, trees, etc.) have spirits. They also believe in jinnis, or spirits that are capable of assuming human or animal form and exercising supernatural influence over people.

What Are Their Needs?

The New Testament is available in the Hamer-Banna language in both print and audio, and the JESUS Film is available. More laborers and evangelistic tools are needed; however, prayer is the key to reaching them with the gospel.

Prayer Points

- For workers who are filled with the fruit and the power of the Holy Spirit to go to the Banna people in Ethiopia.
- For God's kingdom to come and his will to be done among the people.
- For a movement of Banna households to study the Bible and accept the blessings of Christ.
- For a spiritual hunger that will drive the Banna people to the arms of Jesus.

Information from The Joshua Project at joshuaproject.net



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