

REVISED EDITION



Window on the World

An Operation
World Prayer
Resource

Used by Permission

InterVarsity Press
P.O. Box 1400, Downers Grove, IL 60515-1426
ivpress.com
email@ivpress.com

©2018 by Operation World, a ministry of WEC International

Based on *Window on the World*, 2001 edition, by Daphne Spraggett with Jill Johnstone.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from InterVarsity Press.

InterVarsity Press® is the book-publishing division of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA®, a movement of students and faculty active on campus at hundreds of universities, colleges, and schools of nursing in the United States of America, and a member movement of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. For information about local and regional activities, visit intervarsity.org.

While stories in this book may be true or based on true events, some names and identifying information may have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.

World map and people group map work: Joshua Project (Mark L. Reichel)

Additional cartography consulting: Bryan Nicholson of cartoMission

Cover design: David Fassett

Interior design: Tim Dowley Associates, Ltd.

Images: African children: © Bartosz Hadyniak / E+ / Getty Images
Balinese dancer: © Cahaya_Images / iStock / Getty Images Plus
blue sky: © czekma13 / iStock / Getty Images Plus
Earth: © cundra / iStock / Getty Images Plus
eye icon: illustration by David Fassett
globe and plane icons: © macrovector / iStock / Getty Images Plus
Indian teen girl: © VikramRaghuvanshi / E+ / Getty Images
light bulb: © ihorzigor / iStock / Getty Images Plus
location marker: illustration by David Fassett
mountain: © filizbbr / iStock / Getty Images Plus
palm tree: © alenaohneva / iStock / Getty Images
Vietnam landscape: © Chaiyaporn11441144 / iStock / Getty Images Plus
Grand Palace Thailand: © AleksandarGeorgiev / E+ / Getty Image
Pakistani girl: © Ahmad Abdul-Karim Photography / Getty Images
World map: © switchpipipi / iStock / Getty Images Plus

ISBN 978-0-8308-5783-8 (print)

ISBN 978-0-8308-7410-1 (digital)

Printed in the United States of America ∞

InterVarsity Press is committed to ecological stewardship and to the conservation of natural resources in all our operations. This book was printed using sustainably sourced paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

P	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Y	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18			

Used by Permission

CONTENTS

Introduction	4	Haiti	60
World Map	6	Hazara.....	62
Afghanistan.....	8	Hui	64
Albania.....	10	Iceland	66
Azerbaijani	12	India	68
Balinese	14	Indonesia.....	72
Baloch.....	16	Iraq	74
Bangladesh.....	18	Israel.....	76
Beja.....	20	Iu Mien.....	78
Bhutan	22	Japan	80
Bijagos	24	Kabyle.....	82
Brazil	26	Kazakhstan.....	84
Bulgaria	28	Kurds.....	86
Buryats.....	30	Lesotho.....	88
Chad.....	32	Lobi.....	90
China.....	34	Madagascar.....	92
Cuba.....	36	Maldives	94
Djibouti	38	Mandinka	96
Dogon.....	40	Mexico	98
Druze.....	42	Minangkabau	100
Egypt.....	44	Mongolia.....	102
Ethiopia.....	46	Navajo.....	104
Fiji	48	Nepal.....	106
Garifuna.....	50	New Zealand.....	108
Gonds.....	52	North Caucasus	110
Greece.....	54	North Korea	112
Greenland	56	Oman	114
Guinea	58	Pakistan	116

Papua New Guinea	118	Uruguay.....	174
Persians	120	Uzbekistan	176
Pygmies	122	Venezuela.....	178
Qatar	124	Vietnam	180
Quechua.....	126	Wodaabe.....	182
Refugees	128	Xinjiang.....	184
Rohingya.....	130	Yanomami	186
Romani.....	132	Yazidis	188
Russia.....	134	Yemen.....	190
Samoans.....	136	Zimbabwe	192
San.....	138	Animism.....	194
Saudi Arabia	140	Buddhism.....	196
Somalis	142	Christianity.....	198
South Africa	144	Hinduism.....	200
South Sudan	146	Islam.....	202
Spain	148	Judaism	204
Sri Lanka.....	150	What's Next?	206
Street Children	152	Word List.....	208
Sundanese	154	Acknowledgments.....	212
Syria.....	156	Image Credits	213
Tai Lue.....	158		
Third Culture Kids	160		
Tibetans.....	162		
Trinidad.....	164		
Tuareg	166		
Turkey.....	168		
Ukraine	170		
United Arab Emirates	172		

AFGHANISTAN

A Land That Longs for Peace

MOUNTAINS AND DESERTS

Afghanistan, a land of great mountains and scorching deserts, is at the heart of Central Asia. Its climate is harsh with hot, dry summers and cold winters. But its people are warm, and they hope for a better future for their beloved country.

For thousands of years, fierce wars were fought in Afghanistan by the ancient Persians, Greeks, and Mongols. In more recent times, the British, Russians, and Americans have all invaded Afghanistan. There's also been continual fighting between the many different tribes and ethnic groups inside the country. Its main peoples are the Pashtun, the Tajiks, Hazara (see page 62), Uzbeks, and Turkmen.

NO PEACE

In 1978, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, and many Afghans fled to Iran and Pakistan. The Communist Russians retreated in 1989, and many more Afghans fled the fighting that followed. Although some returned to their own country, many remain in Pakistan.

"Why can't we have peace? What's life like without fighting?" Samir asked his father.

"Sadly, I don't know," his dad replied. "When I was a child, we fought a holy war—or jihad—against the Communists until finally they left. But groups of Afghans went on fighting each other, to get control of the country.

"Eventually the group called the Taliban took over. There was less fighting for a while, but we had to follow their strict Islamic rules. Your mother could not keep her job or even go out of the house without covering herself completely. And there was always supposed to be a man from our family with her. Girls could not attend school at all. Life changed for us and all our neighbors here in Mazar-i-Sharif."



"Is that why some families are scared to send their girls to school now?" Samir asked.

"Yes. Many people fear attacks on girls' schools, which happen from time to time. If we kept *all* the Taliban rules, we wouldn't watch television or listen to music. Men would all have to grow beards and wear only traditional long shirts and baggy trousers—the *shalwar kameez*," said Samir's father. "Things are slowly changing back to a freer way of life, but the Taliban's influence is still very strong.

"Western forces helped overthrow the Taliban and begin a new constitution and government for our country. We started



FACT FILE

AREA: 251,800 square miles

POPULATION: 36.4 million

CAPITAL: Kabul

MAIN LANGUAGES: Dari, Pashto

MAIN RELIGION: Islam

CHIEF EXPORTS: Carpets, fruit, gemstones, opium



Used by Permission

to vote for our leaders and laws. But the Taliban remain active, especially now that most foreign troops have left. And in recent years the so-called Islamic State has been causing a lot of problems. Son, I hope you and your friends will come to know a peaceful Afghanistan—one that I have dreamt of, but may never see.”



NONSTOP VIOLENCE

Continuous violence has had a terrible effect on people’s lives. In most of the country, there’s no clean water or sanitation, nor enough food. Hospitals have been badly damaged, and many doctors have left the country. Healthcare and education are limited, and many of the people in Afghanistan have short lives. Children—especially in rural areas—often die from preventable illnesses such as diarrhea and pneumonia. Most Afghans alive today have never known a time without war.

Although farmers raise animals and crops for food, it is difficult because of the violence. Landmines have been left all across the countryside, so walking in the fields is dangerous.

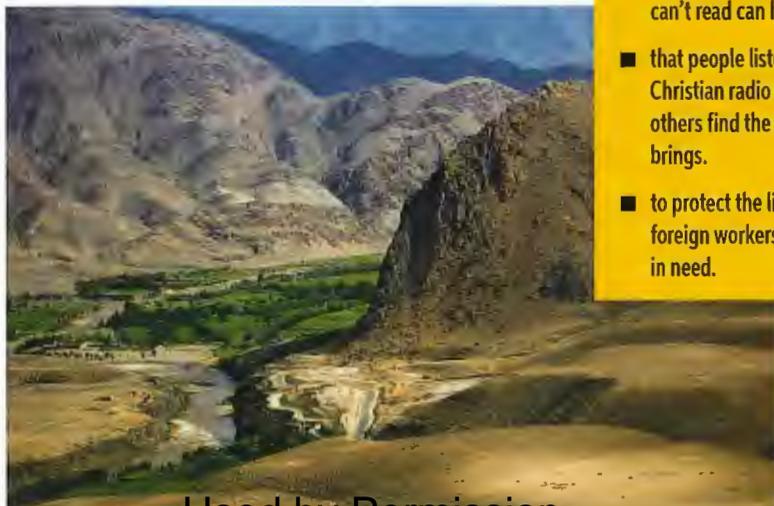
One crop that earns a lot of money is poppies, which people use to make the dangerous drug opium. Although opium is mostly sold to other countries, there are now more than one million opium addicts in Afghanistan.

DREAMS OF JESUS

Fifty years ago, probably fewer than fifty Afghans followed Jesus. Today, there are many hundreds of Afghan Christians. But they often keep their faith secret

to protect themselves from the opposition of their Muslim family or community. Afghans hear about Jesus through Christian radio, from refugees returning home, and sometimes in their dreams, or through seeing visions of Jesus. There is now a complete Bible in Dari, and parts of the Bible have been translated into Hazaragi and Pashto. None of the other language groups has a complete Bible. Only twenty percent of women can read, and many men can’t read either. Afghans need to have a Bible they can listen to, as well as one they can read.

Christians from abroad are trying to show Jesus’ love to Afghans by helping blind, disabled, ill, and needy people. Others provide films, radio programs, apps, websites, and other media resources to teach about Jesus.



TO HELP YOU PRAY FOR AFGHANISTAN

YOU CAN THANK GOD FOR:

- secret Christian believers in Afghanistan, and Afghans who meet Jesus when they flee to other countries.
- the Bible in Dari, and parts of Scripture available in some other languages.
- aid workers who care for the injured, blind, poor, ill, and needy. Many risk their own lives.

YOU CAN ASK GOD:

- to bring peace to this land. People are weary from war and the problems it causes the country, but fighting continues.
- to help people translate the Bible into all the languages of Afghanistan, and to make recordings so that people who can’t read can hear the Word of God.
- that people listening secretly to Christian radio will find Jesus and help others find the hope and peace he brings.
- to protect the lives of Afghan and foreign workers who care for people in need.

Used by Permission

STREET CHILDREN

Unseen Millions

RUSSIA

“Go!” Anton’s mother screamed. “And don’t come back till you’ve got some money.”

Anton raced out of the house before she could beat him. He was hungry, cold, and had been coughing for months. His parents had no work, and they spent the little money they had on alcohol. Anton ran out the door and straight to the attic of the abandoned house where he and his friends often slept. Like him, most of them spent their days scrounging for food or money. Anton was frightened that one day they’d get caught by the police.

Many children like Anton live on the streets of St. Petersburg and other cities in Russia—maybe more than a million. A group called Russia Without Orphans brings together churches and organizations to help needy children find a permanent home where they are loved. Some run shelters where children can get food, a shower, and clothing, and where they can see a doctor if they’re ill. Some help children get into school or learn a trade such as carpentry or computing. Some visit boys and girls who are in prison.

These loving workers can’t help everyone, but they want to make sure every child they meet knows that God loves them and has not forgotten them.

INDIA

“Rupee! Rupee! Give me!” Little Ram stuck out a dirty, empty hand. His huge, brown eyes pleaded for one of the hundreds of passengers to give him a coin so he could buy a *chapati*. He’d eaten nothing all day and felt really hungry. Ram’s parents were both dead, and he had no one else to look after him. At night, he huddled on the railway platform with lots of other homeless boys.

India has millions of children who live on the streets, often on railway platforms. Some—like Ram—are orphans. Others have run away from home or come from homeless families. Some are lost after jumping on a train and getting carried away on India’s huge railway system. Many are controlled by gangs who take most of the money the children get from begging.

COLOMBIA

A businessman in Bogotá noticed a little girl climbing down into a sewer. He was shocked! He went home, put on a wetsuit, and climbed down. He was horrified to discover so many homeless children living in the city’s sewers.

Out of his compassion for the children, this man started going down the sewers regularly to take the children food and get them into school or find work for them.

But not all children come off the street easily. With nobody else to care for them, the gangs they belong to become a sort of family to them. Even though life on



the streets is dangerous and dirty, fear of being alone again can feel worse.

SOUTH AFRICA

Bafana couldn't remember a time when he hadn't felt miserable. His mom and dad were forever drinking and fighting. They beat him cruelly. He thought they didn't want him, so he ran away from home to live on the streets of Johannesburg. When he managed to steal a bit of money for food, older kids or adults often stole it from him. Some other kids got him into sniffing glue—a cheap way to escape the pain of living. Once he was addicted, he had to steal even more money for glue.

That was five years ago. Today, Bafana says with a smile, "I never knew there were such kind people who want to help children like me. Now I go to school. And I've decided to follow Jesus, who loves all children. I thank God for protecting me."

Someone had found Bafana on the street and invited him to a Christian shelter for street children. He decided to go, and it changed his life for good.

LIFE ON THE STREETS

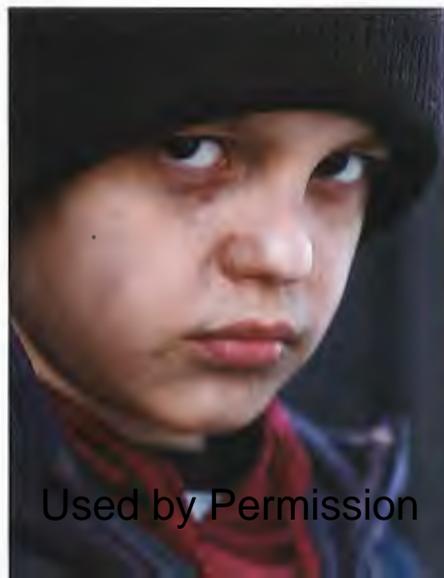
In almost every country, and in nearly every major city, children are living on the streets. We may walk right by them without noticing. Today, there may be as many as one hundred million street children. Some are orphans. Others have parents, but their whole family is homeless. Some have homes they visit from time to time, but they come into the streets to find little jobs or beg for money or food. Many children live on the streets to escape violence or abuse at home. Others run away from home for a life where they can do whatever they want. Natural disasters and wars can also



separate families, leaving children alone as refugees.

City streets are dangerous places for any child to live. Drug use, violence, and abuse happen a lot. Many children sleep on cardboard boxes in train stations and doorways, under bridges, and even in sewers. They have to quickly learn to steal or fight in order to survive. In some countries, the police beat them—even shoot them.

Some children find friends on the streets—other kids or adults, some are eventually reunited with their family, and others are helped by churches or charities that care for children in need. Every child needs a place of safety, where people will take care of them and love them. Many of these street children are your age—or even younger.



TO HELP YOU PRAY FOR STREET CHILDREN

YOU CAN THANK GOD FOR:

- your own home and family.
- Christians and others who show love and kindness to children on the streets every day in cities around the world.
- God's love for children. Jesus taught his disciples that children should be free to come to him.
- every child who has been rescued from the danger of the streets, and each child who has come to know Jesus.

YOU CAN ASK GOD:

- to watch over every child living on the street—to protect them from sickness and from people who would harm them.
- to bring street children to know Jesus as their Savior and friend.
- to help street children know there's a better life for them, and help them make choices that get them off the streets.
- for governments and organizations to protect all children from danger and provide help for their families when they face hard times.

HINDUISM

Hinduism grew out of the way people in India lived and worshiped more than 3,500 years ago. They passed on their beliefs in stories, hymns, poems, and prayers collected over centuries. Many of these have been recorded in Hindu scriptures. They passed on their traditions and rituals from generation to generation, within the family and community.

About 75–80 percent of the people who live in India are Hindus. India is one of the world's biggest countries, and the people of India belong to hundreds of different language and ethnic groups. Hindus who live in different parts of the country worship in different ways and keep different festivals. Temples in north India often look quite different from those in the south.



WHO IS GOD?

Understanding what Hindus believe can be very hard for people from other religions. In one sense, Hindus believe in millions of gods and goddesses. But at the same time, Hindus also say they believe in only one supreme being, and all the gods and goddesses are different versions of one god. Only a handful of gods and goddesses are written about. Among the most popular are Vishnu, the protector of the world; Kali, the destroyer of evil; the fun-loving Krishna, who is often thought of as an older brother; and Ganesh, the elephant-headed god of good fortune. Hindus believe that every

person has an eternal soul, or *atman*. Some Hindus say that all *atman* and all life is part of one supreme being. But others say the supreme being is separate from living things on earth. Some Hindus say there is really no god at all.

So, you could believe in no god, one god, or many gods, and still be a Hindu! You can see how Hinduism can be difficult for others to understand.

WORSHIPING IDOLS

Hindus can choose which gods or goddesses they want to worship—and many stay devoted to their chosen gods for their whole lives. Everywhere you go



Pilgrim, Nepal

Pilgrims at the Ganges river, Varanasi, India





Household images

caste will be your caste for your whole life.

Higher-caste Hindus don't usually mix with people from lower castes, because they consider them impure. This way of thinking is deeply rooted in Hindu life and culture. But young people in India today, with modern lives in big cities, mix across castes more than people of previous generations.

LIFE AFTER THIS LIFE

Hindus believe that, when people die, they come back to life again as another person, or even as an animal. This is called *reincarnation*. Hindus also believe in *karma*, which means that the way people behaved in their past life affects their place in this life—and what they do in this life will decide their place in the next. If they behave in all the ways they are supposed to, they believe they'll have a better rebirth.

Hindus burn the dead bodies of their loved ones. They believe this will help the dead person's soul move on more quickly to its next life. They scatter the ashes in one of the holy rivers.

Rebirth may go on forever, as people can never be sure they've done everything the right way. Some Hindus give up everything—home, family, and possessions—to spend their lives in meditation and prayer. The ultimate goal of every Hindu is to achieve *moksha*—freedom from this cycle of reincarnation.

PILGRIMAGE

The largest festival gathering on the planet is for a Hindu festival called *Khumb Mela*. Hindus go

on a pilgrimage to a holy site, usually gathering on the banks of a river, such as the sacred Ganges. The main event of the festival is a day of bathing in the river. One year, more than thirty million people visited the festival on just one day. But the festival can last many days—even months.

A Hindu may go to worship a particular god or goddess, or to give thanks for something good that has happened. Most pilgrims bathe in the river as they pray and worship to purify themselves from bad deeds. They even take some water home in bottles, to sprinkle over their loved ones and possessions to purify them.

Christians know that only the blood of Jesus can wash our bad deeds away forever, and only faith in him can make us truly pure.

in India, you'll see temples and shrines, where people worship their gods and goddesses. You'll also see shrines in offices, stores, and houses. These shrines usually include an idol—a statue of a god or goddess. Taxi drivers may even have a tiny shrine inside their vehicle.

Hindus often bathe the statues of their gods, before dressing them in fine material or in gold. They then offer prayers, perfume, flowers, incense, and food to the statues or pictures of their gods and ask for their help in daily life.

CASTE

Every Hindu is born into a social group called a caste. Some castes are considered better than others. At the top is the priestly caste, then come rulers and soldiers, and then merchants and farmers. The people in the lowest castes may be the servants of the higher castes. The Dalits, or "Untouchables," are regarded as so low that they're beneath even the lower castes. They usually have to do the jobs that nobody else wants to do—such as sweeping the streets and cleaning toilets.

A person can't do anything to upgrade to a higher caste. Your parents'



Window on the World

is **YOUR** ticket to travel
around the world!



Find out how God is changing the lives of families everywhere through prayer—from the frozen Arctic to the hottest desert, on the highest mountains and in crowded cities.

Window on the World brings alive the culture, history, and traditions of all sorts of different people. With “Fact Files” and “Do You Know?” features, each section brings you information, true stories, maps, and easy-to-use prayer points that take you into homes around the world. See how children live, what they like to do, where they go to school, what they eat and wear, and what they hope and dream.

This revised edition includes new entries for more countries and people groups, with updated information and prayer points from the team at Operation World. It will draw a new generation into learning about the world, reaching out to people, and praying for those who have never heard about Jesus. Through *Window on the World*, young people and adults alike can discover and pray for the peoples of the world.




IVP Books
www.ihpbooks.com


OPERATION
WORLD
family of resources
www.operationworld.org

Used by Permission

ISBN 978-0-8308-5783-8



9 780830 857838

RELIGION / Christian Ministry
/ Youth