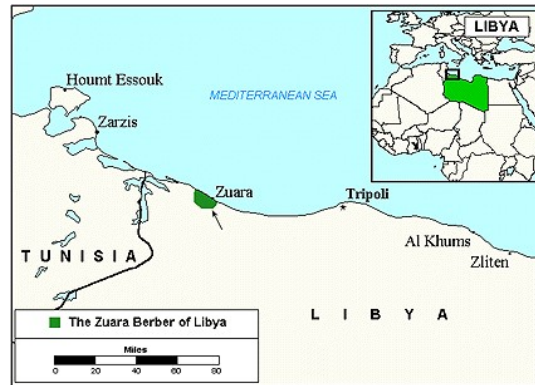


Zuara in Libya



Photo: Anonymous



Map: Bethany World Prayer Center

"Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| People Name | Zuara |
| Country | Libya |
| Status | Unengaged Unreached |
| Population | 58,500 |
| Language | Nafusi |
| Religion | Islam |
| Written Scripture | Yes |
| Oral Scripture | No |
| Jesus Film | No |
| Gospel Recordings | No |
| Christ Followers | No |
| Churches | No |
| Workers Needed | 1 |
| Workers Reported | 0 |

BACKGROUND

The Zuara Berber are one of many groups of Berbers. The Berbers are a North African people group who were conquered by Muslim invaders in the seventh century.

There are three main groups of Berbers in Libya: the Luata, the Nefusa, and the Adassa. The Zuara is one of the smallest tribes and live in the far northwest part of Libya, on the Mediterranean Sea. Today, most Berbers refer to themselves as the Imazighen, which means "men of noble origin." The Zuara are generally bilingual, speaking both Zuara and Arabic.

WHAT ARE THEIR LIVES LIKE?

The Zuara produce and consume large amounts of barley, corn, wheat, and rye. Chickens, goats, and sheep are also raised. This supplemental food source provides milk, eggs, butter, and meat.

Although there is increased urbanization, many Zuara still live in homes made of mud brick and stone. Mountain village homes are quite similar. They are usually flat-roofed houses made of stone that has been reinforced with dried mud.

The Berber dress is very similar to that of the Arabian community. The men wear the traditional djellaba cloak, which is made of cotton with wide sleeves and a hood. They

also wear cotton turbans or caps. The men work in the fields, herd the animals, and hunt; while the women do the housework and care for the children. The women only help the men in the fields during harvest time, when they take the newly cut grain to the threshing floor.

The Zuara live in a society that is male-dominated. The line of descent is traced through the fathers and all inheritances are passed down through the males. Also, to preserve their identity, the Zuara are not permitted to marry outside of their own group.

WHAT ARE THEIR BELIEFS?

The Zuara, like other Berbers, are virtually all Muslims. The Islamic religion is based on the teachings of Mohammed. The Koran ("holy book" of Islam) was supposedly given to Mohammed by the angel Gabriel. Islam is a religion of works that is based on five "pillars": (1) A Muslim must affirm that "there is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet." (2) Five times a day he must pray while facing Mecca. (3) He must generously give alms. (4) He must fast during Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim year. (5) He must try to make one pilgrimage to Mecca in his lifetime.

There are different branches of Islam and the Zuara belong to the Kharijite sect. The

Kharijites are unique in that they believe that Muslims have the right to eliminate unjust rulers. They allow for non-Arabs to hold Islamic leadership positions.

WHAT ARE THEIR NEEDS?

A profession of faith in Jesus Christ can cost a Muslim his life. This explains why there are currently only a few known Zuara believers in Libya. At the present time, Zuara is only a spoken language.

PRAYER ITEMS

* Ask the Lord to call people who are willing to go to Libya and share Christ with the Zuara Berber.

* Pray that the doors of Libya will soon open to missionaries.

* Ask God to provide evangelistic tools and equipment needed to reach them both spiritually and geographically.

* Ask the Holy Spirit to soften the hearts of the Zuara toward Christians so that they will be receptive to the Gospel.

* Ask God to call forth prayer teams who will begin breaking up the soil through intercession.

* Ask the Lord to raise up strong local churches among the Zuara Berber.