

Jaunsari



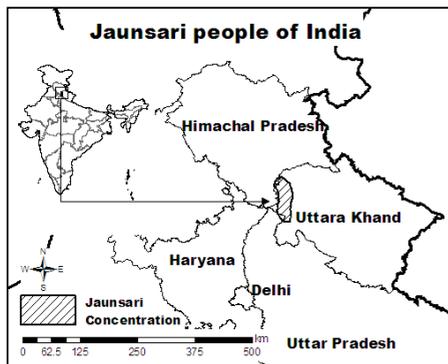
A few Jaunsari believers gather regularly for worship every Sunday

Population: 100,000 (1 lakh)

Literacy: Very low

Scripture status: Translation in progress

The Jaunsari people live in the foothills of the Himalayas, with the snow capped peaks in the background. Many Jaunsari maintain two houses – one in the village and the other a farmhouse called



“Chhani,” near their field. Some even have more than one “Chhani.” Polygamy is an accepted practice in the Jaunsari culture, and a wife may even suggest that her husband takes a second wife if she is unable to give him a son. In such a situation, one would stay in the “Chhani,” and the other would care for the house in the village.

Although they practice Hinduism, there are very few temples in Jaunsari villages. Some of their beliefs and practices are quite similar to Jewish ones. Following the Hindu calendar, on the 14th day of the first month, each family slaughters a goat and sprinkles its blood on their doorposts. They believe that by doing this, evil spirits will not trouble them. Their sacred object is very similar to the Jewish Ark of the covenant, and kept in several select villages. It is a wooden box, covered with silver, containing five precious stones and one stick. No one is allowed to touch the ark, except the appointed poojari (priest).

They believe that this box represents God’s presence.

A very small number of Jaunsari – about 40 of them – have become followers of Jesus. Several of them are forced to live away from their communities, no longer accepted by their friends and family because of their faith, accused of betraying their culture and people for the sake of money. There is a small gathering of



Christians in the Jaunsari area – though most members are non-Jaunsari. Outside their area, a few Jaunsari believers gather regularly for worship every Sunday.

The Jaunsari culture is highly oral, rich with songs and stories passed on from one generation to another. One song written in praise to Jesus is now available. The Scripture translation team is newly formed and is being trained. When the Word of God is available in Jaunsari, this people group will have free access to the truth in the Scriptures, leading to their transformation.

Pray for:

1. The persecuted group of Christians among the Jaunsari – that they will stand firm in the faith and share the gospel with boldness.
2. The translation team to be strengthened, well equipped and for the process of translating the Scriptures to pick up speed.
3. God to enable the team to develop culturally acceptable forms of communicating the Gospel, leading to the transformation of the Jaunsari people.

