

THE MARMA OF BANGLADESH

The old man gathered the children around himself by the village campfire. “Long ago, before Buddha caused me to be reborn as a farmer, I was a pirate captain who had grown rich looting Chinese junks headed for India. Those junks were loaded with treasure! They had gold-plated ceramic vases and beautiful silk.” Numaching smiled at the sight of her children listening closely, eager to hear more, as their great-grandfather told stories about the colourful past of their **Marma** people, events that happened during a time when this people group lived many miles from where they are now. Though she herself often took the old man’s tales with a pinch of salt, Numaching did not dismiss them altogether. After all, their ancestors were fierce pirates and her people believed in reincarnation, being Buddhists till today.

Today, the **Marma** (population: 46,000 plus) are peaceful farmers living in Bangladesh. Their pirate days ended after the Burmese drove them out of Myanmar and forced them to settle far from the sea. Today these Buddhists are in Bangladesh, a country controlled by Muslims.

Though the **Marma** are officially Theravada Buddhists, they also worship spirits found in nature. Few (8.1%) have found their way to Christ. The **Marma** people need to know that Satan has kept them in bondage and leave them destitute.

- Pray that as the **Marma** people remember their history, they will understand that they like the rest of humanity are descendants of sinful mankind that need to find their way back to God.
- Ask God to open the eyes of this people group to their need for salvation in Christ alone.
- Pray that the **Marma** will realize that reincarnation does not guarantee eternal life and that they have only one life to live while on this earth.
- Pray that workers may be mobilised, trained and sent out to the **Marma** people so that they can have the opportunity to know their Saviour.

This is a series of useful prayer profile compilations to pray for people groups collated from various online sources. Please click on the links below for more info: <https://joshuaproject.net/>, <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/>, <http://asiaharvest.org/people-group-profiles/>