

THE JAPANESE OF JAPAN

“Are you sure Nori was not imagining things?” asked Kenta, doubtfully. “Well, she insisted that she heard sounds in her kitchen,” answered Akiko with an uneasy look. “She went to check and she swore that she saw an apparition of her brother Haru standing by the window!” “But Haru has been dead for a week!” exclaimed Rika. “Don’t tell me you believe in ghosts!” “Well, science cannot explain everything,” said Kenta, thoughtfully. “After all, Haru committed suicide. He didn’t die naturally. How’s Nori now?” “She’s really shaken by the incident,” said Akiko, soberly. “Poor girl! Her mother has brought her to a Shinto temple healer to heal her of her shock. They have also invited a Buddhist priest to their home to perform a ritual to appease Haru’s soul. As it is, the entire family is still badly affected by Haru’s suicide.”

Hardworking, cultured, courteous and innovative are traits have made the **Japanese** (population: 120.4 million) admired worldwide. Yet beneath the surface is a society struggling with one of the world’s highest suicide rates, increasing social ills, rising divorce, high abortion rates and a growing fascination with the occult.

The **Japanese** adhere to a mixture of Shinto beliefs (their indigenous religion that revolves around spirit worship) and various Buddhist sects, the main ones being Mahayana, Nichiren, Shingon and Zen. Many Buddhists actually observe Shinto rituals as well.

Despite religious freedom in Japan, strong social norms discourage conversion to Christianity. Only 1.2% profess to be Christians.

- Pray that the Light of the Gospel may dispel the spiritual darkness in Japan.
- Pray that missionaries will have the wisdom to present the Gospel in culturally relevant forms.
- Pray for the **Japanese** men, who are generally more resistant to the Gospel.
- Pray for the younger generation of **Japanese**, many of whom are non-religious and who observe Buddhist and Shinto rituals more out of tradition.
- Pray for the spiritual growth of the **Japanese** Church, which comprise mainly women.

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/>