

RASHAIDA OF SUDAN

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An unengaged Muslim people group

QUICK FACTS

Alternative names:
Rashad

People Cluster:
Arab, Sudan

Languages:
Sudanese Arabic,
Hijazi Arabic

Population:
155,000

Gateway towns:
Kassala

Helpful professions:
Community
Development,
Literacy projects,
Business, Water
engineering

**Few creative access
options for Western
teams**

**Few creative access
options for Asian or
Latino teams**

**Intermediate
potential for work of
proximate African
churches**

**Neutral attitude to
the West and the US**

**Intermediate
hardship level for
teams**

**Somewhat receptive
to the gospel**

ABOUT THE PEOPLE

The Rashaida people are closely related to the Bedouin of Saudi Arabia and mainly live in Sudan and Eritrea. Those in Sudan live in the northeastern region of the country, near the city of Kassala. There are both nomadic herders and sedentary landowners. Many nomadic Rashaida live in the area

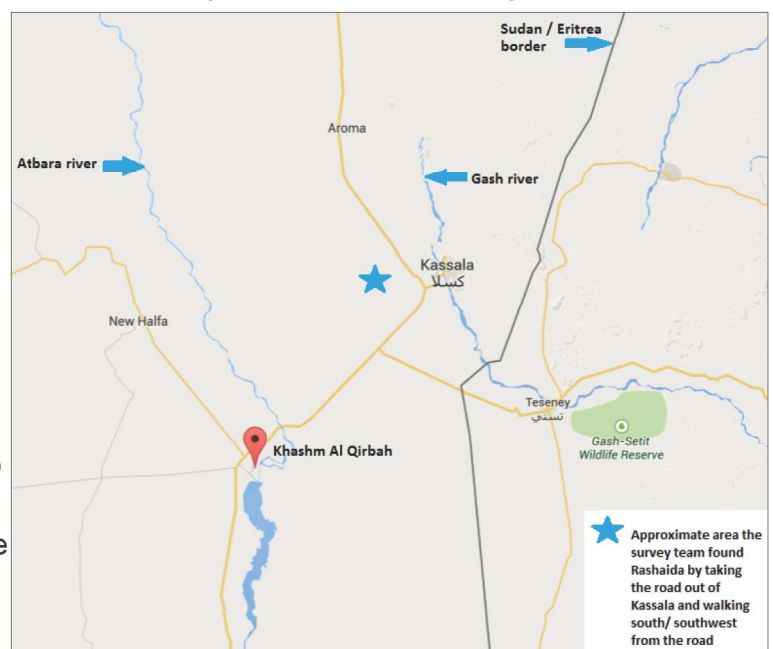
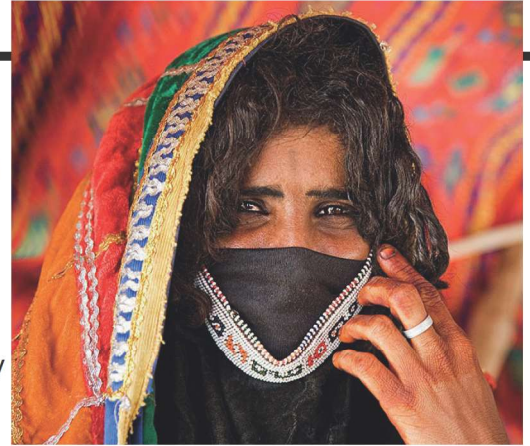
between the Atbara and Gash rivers, following seasonal migration routes. Others are partly nomadic, living in the Khashm Al Qirbah agricultural scheme. The map shows where a survey team located a semi-

permanent Rashaida settlement in 2011. The Rashaida are marked out by differences in the Arabic they speak, compared to Sudanese Arabs. There are strong differences in pronun-

ciation, and much of the vocabulary for common words are unique to the Rashaida.

DAILY LIFE

Nomadic Rashaida live in tents made of goatskins. Men work as herdsman, breeding goats, sheep and camels. Although largely illiterate, they memorize the pedigree of their animals in great detail, keeping mental records of their herds over seven or eight generations. Their camel breeds are highly prized across the Arabian Peninsula for camel racing, and fetch very high prices. Rashaida camels are small, stocky and a reddish colour, with a high milk yield and are especially hardy and drought resistant.



STRATEGIC INFO

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PRAYER POINTS

Pray that the Church will hear the call to love the Rashaida

Pray for the Lord to reveal Himself to the Rashaida through dreams and visions

Pray for God to raise up teams of people to reach the Rashaida in a way that is effective among them as a nomadic people group



Women work in grinding grain, churning milk, tanning animal skins, weaving, making tents and jewellery making. Wool sheared from camels can be used for tents and cloth.

Some Rashaida have settled, where they either work in agriculture, or are supported by family members who have found work in Saudi Arabia or in the Gulf.

The Rashaida are known for their brightly coloured turbans (or emmas) and their coloured robes (dashdashas). These garments are the most colourful of all tribes in the country. Rashaida women wear a distinctive veil (ginaa) which covers their nose and mouth. Sometimes the veil is decorated with tiny lead beads around the face. The purpose of the veil is that from teenage years a woman's face is never seen by a man besides her husband.

The Rashaida maintain much of their Arab customs, and are known to live in isolated communities, where they prefer to live separately from other tribes. Communities tend to be made up of fifteen to thirty extended households who migrate together, headed by a prominent man who they respect, resolves disputes within camp, and between other tribes.

They generally marry first cousins, to protect interests of the wider family. A dowry is paid to the bride's family: livestock, cash and cloth that the wife will use to build the tent. Women own the tents – so that the man is completely reliant on his wife for shelter and food. After marriage the couple usually live with wife's family for first year, then return to father's camp.

In recent years tensions have emerged between other tribes in the region, resulting in conflict over pasture land and water. The mechanisation of sorghum production has resulted in reduced grazing land, environmental damage and desertification.

BELIEFS

The Rashaida are Sunni Muslims. Islamic practices govern their worship as well as many aspects of their everyday and societal life. Because of their nomadic lifestyle and mobile tents, they generally worship in family prayer houses, rather than mosques. In addition to pure Islam, many Rashaida believe in spiritual beings such as jin and ghosts, and believe certain territory to be haunted.

Could God be calling you to pray for the Rashaida, or to go there yourself?

Web:
www.peoplegroups.org

www.joshuaproject.net

MORE INFO