

## MEETING THE UDMURTS, THE MARI AND THE KOMI PEOPLES

The Finno-Ugric peoples living in Russia have in recent years received several Scripture portions in their own languages. The literature has been diligently read in homes and schools, and the sowing of the Word has now started to bring a harvest.

Maina Sashina, an Udmurt evangelist, has ministered for many years among her own people. Now she also travels to Mari and Komi villags. She relates the following:

“The song group from our church has regularly visited Udmurt villages also in the Republics of Bashkortostan and Tatarstan. In many villages people knew nothing about Jesus Christ, but they listened to us everywhere with great interest. Why? – We were speaking and singing in their own language. People were also eager to take literature.

As we now revisit these villages, people tell us that they have read the books they received. Many want to learn to know God.

The book ‘Bible Stories’ is very useful. It gives the basic message of the Bible to people who don’t have any idea about Christianity.

For those who have become believers New Testaments would be necessary, but unfortunately the edition has already run out. The work on the whole Bible in Udmurt will take a couple more years to complete.”



Mari children dancing at an end-of-term fête, Yoshkar-Ola.  
[Photo: T. Ollikainen, IBT Helsinki]

*Gratefully for God's faithfulness*



*Anita Laakso, Institute for Bible Translation, Helsinki*



Mari people in the Central Park of Yoshkar-Ola. [Photo: T. Ollikainen, IBT Helsinki]

### Udmurts and Maris Travelling Together

“In recent times we Udmurts have visited Mari villages in the Votkinsk region together with Mari Christians. In places where people have already had the possibility to read and hear about God in their own language, they are eager to hear more. The Mari people also have the New testament, and now they are eagerly waiting for the completion of the Psalms.

This summer our music group has been invited to visit the Komi Republic. We are planning to give Christian concerts together with the Komi believers in their villages. Also these people want to hear the Good News. The New Testament in the Komi language, completed in 2008, has already led many people to God.”



### Praise Reports and Prayer Requests

#### Praise God

- That the Word of God produces faith among the Finno-Ugric peoples.
- For our intercessors and supporters of the work.
- That we have received the finances for printing the book “Bible Stories” in Komi-Permyak.

#### Pray

- For financing of new publications: Acts of the Apostles in Hill-Mari, Genesis in Olonets Karelian.
- The printing schedules of the new translations and their distribution in the target areas.
- Protection for work-related journeys.
- Good health for everyone participating in the work and their families.



Mansi children and women of Sosva village, Siberia. The women have got copies of the Gospel of Mark and the Selections of Luke in Mansi.  
[Photos: M. Taivassalo, IBT Helsinki]

## MEETING THE MANSI PEOPLE

Marja Taivassalo, who has travelled widely in Siberian villages, has witnessed with her own eyes the joy of the Mansi people on receiving the Word of God in their own language.

“Last August (2009) I was able to visit the Mansi who live by the tributaries of the River Ob. Our destination was the Mansi village of Sosva located by the River Severnaya Sosva. However, at that time of the year the water was already too shallow for hydrofoil crafts and other ship traffic. Luckily we found a motor boat for the last part of the journey to Sosva, an authentic Mansi village. The area was completely beyond all internet connections – but not behind God’s back! The very next day I met a young Mansi Christian, Lilia. She had become a Christian through the ministry of a small Evangelical Church in the village. The pastor told me that the other Mansi are too timid to participate in the church meetings.

A Finno-Ugric Christian meeting was arranged on our last evening. And, to our great joy, many Mansis arrived. For the first time in their lives they heard songs and testimonies about God – the living God, who does not need to be placated with endless sacrifices. When the evening ended, many accepted a Gospel portion or the “Bible Stories” book in their own

native language. Someone wanted to take the literature also to his relatives who lived far away.”

The Mansi received the Gospel of Mark in 2000, and the “Bible Stories” in 2003. Selections from the Gospel of Luke have also been published. Now we are working on the Gospels of Luke and John. Marja Taivassalo has studied Mansi language and she works now as the exegetical checker in the Mansi team.

### The New Testament in North Karelian is Nearing Completion

The North Karelian New Testament is in its final phase of checking. We are also hoping to record the translation after the checking is complete, so that both the book and the recording could be published simultaneously.

“The recording of the Olonets Karelian New Testament and Psalms has supported the use of the books in a tremendous way”, says the exegetical checker, Sinikka Saari. “The recording of the North Karelian New Testament is also important. The people who for some reason find reading difficult, can listen to the cassettes.”

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Maksu välitetään saajalle maksujenvälityksen ehtojen mukaisesti ja vain maksajan ilmoittaman tilinumeron perusteella.  
Betalingen förmedlas till mottagaren enligt villkoren för betalningsförmedling och endast till det kontonummer som betalaren angivit.