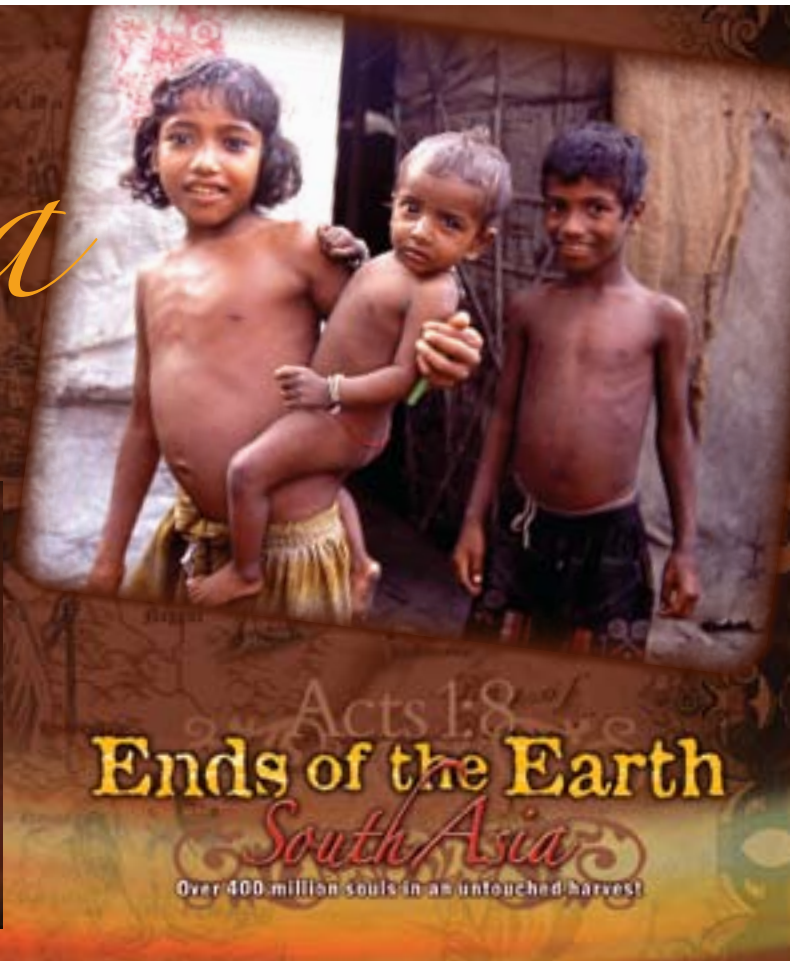


# Pray for the Chotra Bansi of Uttar Pradesh

The Chotra Bansi, also called Bhoi, are a low caste of fishermen, boatmen and agriculturalists. They are typically very poor and uneducated. The largest percentage is found in Uttar Pradesh state in India, but Chotra Bansi people are also found throughout much of the rest of India, Pakistan and Nepal. Women have lower status than the men but are required to contribute to the family's income.



My name is Deepa. Five years ago, my husband was killed in a flood, which is very common in our part of India. The river rose very quickly while he was fishing on the bank of the Ganges River, and he was washed away.

Now I live with my oldest son and his family. My son is also a fisherman. He and his son go out every day to catch fish from the river. My daughter-in-law and I go to the market to sell what they have caught. Some days there are many fish to sell, but many times there are not.

When there are no fish, my son tries to find odd jobs that he can do for other people in our village. His son, even though he is only 8 years old, must also find work where he can to support our family.

When I am not at the market or helping with the home, I go to the temple. As an old woman, I realize that my time is near and I want to make sure that I am on good terms with the gods. I must be very diligent in my daily pujas (worship) so that when I leave this life, I may be able to escape the cycle of rebirth.

*(Deepa is a fictional character whose story is based on research and anthropological profiles of the Chotra Bansi.)*

*\*Note: Photos of this people group are intended to be representations and may not necessarily be photos of this specific people group.*



## Fast Facts

Religion: Hinduism  
Language: Awadhi  
Population: 1.9 million  
Division: Uttar Pradesh

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