

## Monday 31st May

### My time in the Muslim world

I had a life-changing encounter with Jesus when I was a university student, but I knew beforehand that if I said 'yes' to Him I would serve him full time in foreign places. I went on a short time project to North Africa two years later and, from then on, I had a heart for reaching the Muslim world. I spent 9 years in student ministry in Ireland and also went on many short term projects, mainly with the Jesus film, to a number of African countries.

At age 33, the Lord called me out of full time Christian work and into the corporate world in London where I had a fulfilling career for 24 years. But the Muslim world was always in the background and when I came across Frontiers at New Wine I was overjoyed. I even met some older people like myself - I was in my mid-50s - who were serving overseas in the Muslim world. At very short notice, I went on a prayer walking trip to a country I could barely pronounce and before I returned home, I knew I would be back full time within the year.

Almost to the day, I got on a one-way flight to Tajikistan which became my home for the next 8 years. I spent my first 2 years in a remote part of the country, living with a local family in quite basic conditions. Our team ran a language school where I taught English. For various reasons the team disbanded, and I joined a new team in the capital working with gypsies, a despised people group who are housed in separate villages outside the city. At first they were hostile, but when God-led medical interventions saved the life of a child they began to trust us. Each week, I went with our mainly medical team and we ministered God's love to these precious people who became dear friends. We used audio recordings to bring God's Word as they are mostly illiterate.

In the summer of 2019, I felt the Lord was giving me a new vision for the years ahead after Tajikistan. I sensed the Lord was leading me to use my home in Ireland as a retreat centre and a place of refreshment for overseas workers like myself. The timing was unclear but when I returned to Tajikistan after the summer, I discovered that our team would be disbanding in a year's time. After a hectic year and as the pandemic was gathering pace across the world, in May 2020, I arrived back home. My 8 years in Tajikistan are over, I have just become a pensioner and now I am trusting the Lord for my new vision.

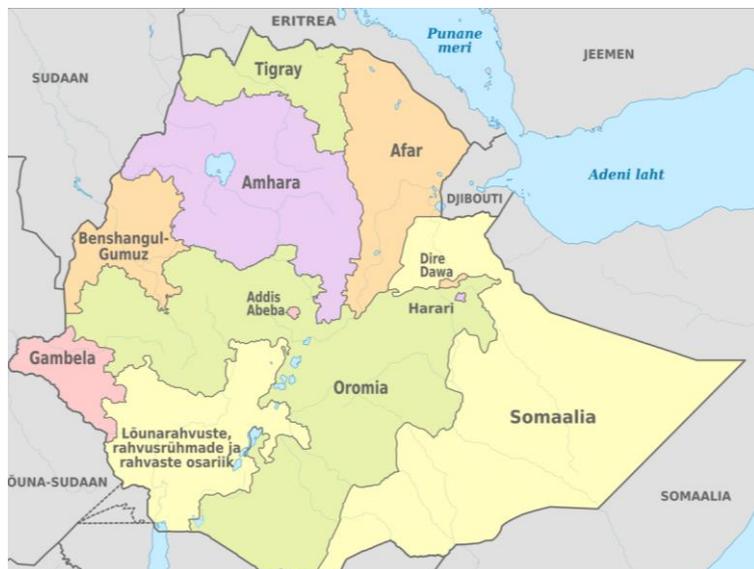
- Please pray that my flat in London will sell quickly so I can build my new home in Ireland.
- Pray for this new vision of a retreat centre and place of refreshment for overseas workers in Ireland. Ask that everything that is needed will be supplied and this centre will be a blessing to workers and be used for God's glory.
- Have you been considering working overseas but thought you had missed the opportunity? Perhaps spend some time asking God if He is calling you to go.

## Tuesday 1st June

**Ethiopia**      **Pop: 114.9 million**      **Muslim: 34%**

Ethiopia is the oldest independent nation in Africa and one of the oldest in the world, giving it a rich and distinct cultural heritage. It shares borders with Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan and Sudan in eastern Africa. It was ruled by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) as part of a coalition after overthrowing the former dictatorship in 1991.

In April 2018, Abiy Ahmed was elected Prime Minister. Shortly after his election to power, he brokered a peace deal with neighbouring Eritrea, ending a long and bloody conflict that had lasted nearly twenty years. Then, at the beginning of November last year, an armed conflict broke out in the Tigray region in northern Ethiopia, that has threatened to destabilise the Horn of Africa countries. Mr. Abiy has said that he wants to unify the country by increasing the federal government's power and minimising the autonomy of regional governments.



Map of Ethiopia showing border of Tigray in north Ethiopia with Eritrea

The TPLF, Tigray's ruling party, wants autonomy in the Tigray region. Mr Abiy ordered the offensive in November after he accused the TPLF of attacking a government military base and trying to steal artillery and other weapons. The Eritrean army quickly joined the war, siding with Ethiopia's central government. There is a long-standing rift between the TPLF and the government in Eritrea. Fighting has continued, with further allegations of massacres being blamed on Ethiopian and Eritrean forces, despite denials from both.

Conflict is not confined to the Tigray state. In all ten states that make up Ethiopia, there is conflict of some kind. This has led to thousands of deaths and widespread destruction, has displaced

millions of people, over 2 million from Tigray alone, and displaced tens of thousands of refugees into neighbouring Sudan.

Added to this suffering, the country faces many other challenges. There is a shortage of foreign currency, growing inequality, a lack of jobs for a huge number of graduates, environmental damage and ethnic tension. At least 70% of the population is below the age of 30 with the average age of the population being approximately 19 years. At the time of writing, a general election is scheduled for this Saturday 5th June.

Against this backdrop, miraculous events are happening through the witness of local Muslim background believers and Frontiers workers, as we will read tomorrow and on Thursday.

- Pray for the general election on Saturday. Ask that the result will be in the best interests of the country and that the leader will be the one chosen by God.
- Pray for peace in this nation, as the present conflicts threaten to destabilise the surrounding countries and lead to more fighting and suffering.
- Let's pray for the church in Ethiopia to be a symbol of God's love, power and presence and one that reaches out to its neighbours and neighbouring people groups and countries, particularly Eritrea on its northern border.

Source of some material: <https://prayercast.com/ethiopia.html> and <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/05/world/africa/ethiopia-tigray-conflict-explained.html>

Source of image: Wikimedia Commons

**Wednesday 2nd June**

### **Jamila's miraculous healing**

Christianity has been a part of everyday life in Ethiopia since the fourth century. Approximately 60% of Ethiopians consider themselves Christians and 34% of the population is Muslim. However, fear of Muslims has meant very few local believers have reached out to them with the gospel message. This is why Christian workers still go to this country. But things are beginning to change.

At our recent Pray Now Live Prayer event we shared this video from an Ethiopian man who leads a Frontiers team in his country: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tS4CCNAOUq4>

If you didn't have the chance to see it or couldn't hear it properly, I exhort you to watch it and hear among other things, an amazing testimony about an MBB who was raised from the dead. For security, please do not share this video.

This Team Leader shares that a few years ago, he and fellow Frontiers workers began training Muslim background believers (MBBs) to reach out to their Muslim communities as taught by Jesus in Matthew 10. Jesus said, *"As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' Heal those who are ill, raise the dead....drive out demons."* (Matt 10:7). Frontiers workers would train MBBs in the morning and send them out in the afternoon with faith and expectation.

The following stories are just some of the incredible testimonies of Muslims coming to faith as a result of this courageous ministry and the signs and wonders that followed. Names have been changed for security reasons.

"Jamila had a throat problem for seven years. For a month or two at a time, she couldn't speak. Her father had tried everything to help her get well but nothing had worked. A boy in her neighbourhood had been ill for many years with a stomach problem. His parents had tried everything to help him, but he didn't get well. Finally, they took him for prayer with Christians and he was healed. Everyone in the village knew about it. Jamila asked her father to take her for prayer. He said, "We are Muslim, we don't need Christian prayer for healing." But Jamila not only had throat problems, she also had difficulty learning; whenever she tried to read she became confused.

One day the mother of the boy who had been healed asked Jamila's father if he would allow Jamila to come to her house for some prayer. Jamila's father agreed. The mother was not a believer at that time, but she still believed that Isa (Jesus) could heal Jamila, as He had healed her son. There was a house church in the village. They took Jamila there. As soon as they began praying, demons started to manifest. Jamila said afterwards, "I didn't know what had happened, but they told me that a lot of demons had been cast out of me. When I woke up, every sickness had gone."

Two of Jamila's sisters and the boy's mother who had taken her for prayer now believe in Isa (Jesus). Jamila has become an amazing evangelist. She said, "I don't want to do anything for the rest of my life, except preach the gospel of Isa."

- Take a moment to reflect on God's mercy and grace and give thanks for healing Jamila and the mother's son. Let's pray that the witness of their healing through the prayers of believers would draw more Muslims into God's kingdom.
- Pray for the protection of new believers, like Jamila, as they preach the message of hope and healing.
- Let's thank God for the church as it demonstrates the power, love and mercy of God to its Muslim neighbours.

**Thursday 3rd June**

### **Healings and Muslims coming to faith**

The following stories are from Frontiers workers in Ethiopia working with local believers. Names have been changed for security reasons.

“We had been training Muslim background believers. Every day we trained them in the morning and then in the afternoon sent them out into the surrounding Muslim villages. They would share the good news of Jesus and demonstrate it - a blind lady had her sight restored, a 21 year boy who was mute and could hardly walk was completely healed and a teacher who had one leg significantly shorter than the other saw her leg grow so they were equal lengths. As a result, many chose to follow Jesus and 27 Muslims were baptised. As they were baptising people, local Muslims came up to them and asked what was happening. As they explained, these Muslims asked if they could follow Jesus and also get baptised. Now 6 house fellowships are being established.”



“A year ago, Saleh had lived on the streets and was not in his right mind. He would yell and spit at anyone who got close to him. People threw stones at him and shouted names to keep away. Saleh noticed that one of the MBBs always seemed to reach out in kindness and love to all to those he encountered. Saleh said to himself that if this MBB also reached out in kindness to him, then he would follow this person’s ‘God.’ The MBB did just this. A day later Saleh was in his right mind. A year later he is leading a fellowship of a hundred Muslims that now follow Jesus.”

As a result of this training and ministry, there are now 2,300 more MBBs and almost 250 new house churches.

Listen to this worship song, Amazing Love and thank God for what he is doing among Muslims in Ethiopia:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=avJ4IDnZWRU>

- Let’s thank God that His amazing love transforms souls and minds and has the power to bring new hope to those He loves like Saleh.
- Let’s take a moment to thank God for Frontiers workers and MBBs, as they work alongside each other to show how God’s power changes lives.
- Praise God for the gratitude that Muslims have shown when rescued by God by living to honour Him.
- Praise God that He heals today – He is the same, yesterday, today and forever. (Heb13:3)

## Friday 4th June

### Djibouti

Djibouti to the north east of Ethiopia, is one of Frontiers' 100 Priority Places.

To learn more about this nation, watch a Prayercast video here: <https://www.prayercast.com/djibouti.html>

Djibouti was under French control in the 19th century through treaties with the Somali sultans, and it was called the French Territory of the Afars and the Issas. When the country gained independence in 1977, it functioned as an authoritarian one-party state until the president stepped aside in 1999 and balanced the nation's two main ethnic groups, the Issa of Somali origin and the Afar of Ethiopian origin.

Djibouti suffers from a lack of resources, resulting in an urban unemployment rate of about 60%. About two-thirds of the nation lives in the capital city. The remainder mainly work as nomadic herders. Over 40% of Djiboutians live in poverty.

About 90% of the population is Muslim; those who leave the faith are often beaten, ostracised and killed. Persecution of MBBs is increasing. About 6% of Djiboutians are Christian. There is religious freedom for foreigners within Djibouti. Somalis are known for sharing their faith with their friends and family across the nation's border. Divisions have occurred within the church as a result of tribalism and jealousy. Unity and boldness are needed among the brave believers living in Djibouti.

A couple are planning to move to the Horn of Africa later this year and have asked for prayer for the following known needs in Djibouti:

- Pray for a Djibouti-based Somali-Kenyan MBB, Saul, who is seeing great fruit out of his ministry but who also faces intense persecution on missionary journeys to Somalis in different nations. Pray for fruit out of his recent journeys and for wisdom in discipling and supporting new believers in Djibouti and from a distance in his other countries of influence.
- Pray for 3 small Yemeni house groups in Djibouti that are mostly all new believers. Pray for an increase in numbers and in endurance.
- Pray for a new believing Somali-Djiboutian family suffering the loss of a daughter killed in an accident; for a new believing elderly man who has been rejected by his family and has had to go to hospital about kidney problems and for 3 new Somali-Djiboutian believers who were recently baptised to grow and thrive in their faith and newfound community.
- Pray for complete provision for the couple planning to move to the Horn of Africa and ask that God would go before them and smooth their path.

Source: <https://www.prayercast.com/djibouti.html>

## Saturday 5th June

### Introduction to the Afar in the Horn of Africa

*"Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*  
John 14:6

The Afar is one of the smaller unreached people groups in the Horn of Africa. Just 2.5 million strong, they account for 33% of the Djiboutian population, 5% of the Eritrean and 1.7% of the Ethiopian. Still largely unreached, they have been listed as one of Frontiers' 100 Priority Peoples.

You can watch a short 2-minute video about the Afar people [here](#).

They mainly live in ruggedly rural environments to which many outsiders do not have access. They occasionally visit regional cities for supplies or move there temporarily for employment or education.



Traditionally they have lived as nomads, totally dependent on their animals. This way of life is being threatened, as available grazing land decreases, exacerbated by poor rainfall for the last few years leading to a lack of food for their animals. Disease among their animals is rife and parasites cause significant losses. Unfortunately, the Afar have little or no access to veterinary services, although government efforts are increasing.

Afar also work as fishermen along the Red Sea. As the sun sets, they can be seen in their boats going out to work. They attach a fluorescent light to a car battery, shining it out over the water to attract fish.

Others paddle surf boards out into the water and cast a hand line with a baited hook and then sit and wait. The fish may carry them far out until it tires and the fishermen can then take it back to sell in the local market.

Still others work in the salt lake, Lac Assal in Djibouti and in an area in Ethiopia called the Danakil Depression, which consists of a vast plain of salt pans and active volcanoes. These are areas of rare natural beauty with blazing hot temperatures, often over 50 degrees Celsius. Men mine the purest salt both in flavour and shape. It is loaded onto camels and then taken to the nearest town. It can take two to three days to get there. It is then sold for distribution worldwide.

Not many Afar towns exist. Some Afar live in apartment buildings in Ethiopia's capital city, Addis Ababa, where they work in government jobs such as on the Afar broadcasts of the Ethiopian radio station. Bati, on the edge of Afar territory, sees an influx of Afar every hot season. Tadjourah in Djibouti is one of the largest predominantly-Afar urban areas.

- Pray the Afar nomads will come to know that they can totally depend on Jesus, the Good Shepherd.
- Let's ask God, the fisher of men, to bring in a mighty catch among the local fishermen, who in turn will become true fishermen for Christ.
- As the Afar mine the salt, pray they would have an awareness of the greatness of God in His creation.
- Pray for recent unrest in Djibouti between unsatisfied Afar people and the Somali-controlled government.