

Monday 24th February

Challenges facing present day Somalia

Pop: 15.6 million

Muslim: 99%

Since President Siad Barre was overthrown in 1991, Somalia has been without an effective central government and the country has once again dissolved into clan warfare and chaos. Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo was elected as President in February 2017 but faces enormous challenges; these



include the ongoing attacks by al-Shabaab, a militant Islamic group in the Horn of Africa. Bombings and attacks in the capital of Mogadishu and across the country continue. This and ongoing conflict has led to Somalia being ranked as one of the top five countries for the number of people leaving as refugees.

Somalia is also the world's third-most dangerous place to follow Christ, especially given its current record of persecuting believers and clinging to a cruel form of Islam. Most Somali Christians keep their faith completely secret. If al-Shabaab finds someone who has become a Christian, they will often kill them on the spot.

The risk of famine has plagued the country for many years. This is in part caused by drought and clan-based conflict. Somali loyalty is to their clan and not their nation. Even within the clan, there is much distrust. This has made it almost impossible to rebuild the nation, for without trust there cannot be any meaningful economic or social interaction. This year the risk of famine has increased even further; at the beginning of this month, Somalia declared a national emergency as the largest plague of locusts in 25 years hit the country. The locusts consume large amounts of vegetation and so pose a major threat to Somalia's fragile food security.

You can watch a video from PrayerCast about Somalia: <https://prayercast.com/somalia.html>

Christ is the only one who has the answers for the failed state of Somalia and we must call out to Him.

- Cry out to God for those suffering for their faith and for those who face the threat of death, and ask God to deliver them and to give them supernatural courage.
- Famine has killed thousands of Somalis. Cry out for those suffering in this nation that they will receive the aid they need and that what the enemy meant for evil will be turned to good.
- Pray for a firm foundation of faith in the living Christ that can turn Somalia around.
- Pray that Somalis will find a way to work together for the common good to rebuild their country and bring much-needed peace and stability.

Source: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/somalia-land-of-piracy-pollution-and-no-principles/>

Tuesday 25th February

Somalia's need for a godly leader

Perhaps the answer for this country lies in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. These books tell of two Jewish leaders who understood that their nation needed a purpose in order to be re-built. They had survived exploitation by foreign powers and they knew they were under God's judgment. At last, a Persian king named Cyrus who feared God gave them the opportunity to return to Israel and re-build their temple and their nation. Ezra and Nehemiah understood that they needed something far



greater than nationalism to make this work. They needed to become a nation dedicated to Almighty God, ruled with justice and mercy. This is what Somalia needs!

Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo (pictured) has been president of Somalia for the last three years. Let's pray that he will be the sort of person described in Matthew 5: 6-9:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

- Pray for God to raise up Ezras and Nehemiahs for Somalia.
- Let's lift up President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo and pray that he will be known as a peacemaker and a godly leader.
- God's Word says that we do not have because we do not ask (James 4:2). Let's ask for more peacemakers from among the people of Somalia and from members of al-Shabaab.

Source of some material: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/somalia-land-of-piracy-pollution-and-no-principles/>

Wednesday 26th February

Christian workers among the Somali people

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways." Isaiah 55:8-9

Many Christian workers among the Somalis have served selflessly in various ministries. Some of them have been killed for their ministry. Things have changed since the onset of civil war in 1991; access into Somalia is now extremely difficult and dangerous. Despite all the concerns and difficulties, Christian workers continue to faithfully labour among the Somali people throughout the Horn of Africa and around the world. They use their practical skills to help the Somali people in many ways. They dig wells, feed the hungry and teach them how to farm and run a small business. They help treat the sick and provide education. They care for the needs of Somali mothers and children.

They train and work alongside local healthcare professionals. All these activities and more are done in the loving name of Jesus Christ.

It is difficult for Christian workers to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Often it takes years until a friendship has grown to such a level that they can talk about their hope in Him. Islamic controls are tight. This limits a seeker's ability to ask honest questions about the Christian faith.

Despite all the barriers to the gospel, the Lord is giving signs and doing miracles among the Somali people. The Lord is touching the hearts of Somalis and drawing them to Himself. God has opened amazing windows of opportunity and different doors through which Christian workers can bring light and hope.

- Pray for more workers who are willing to go to Somalia and that they will find effective and creative avenues of outreach.
- Church history tells us that the church grows most when persecution is present. Pray that believers among the Somalis will endure persecution in a Christ-like way, willing to give their lives for the sake of the gospel if that is what is called for.
- Let's thank God for the perseverance of Somali Muslim background believers and ask Him to protect those who must keep their faith a secret and help them to find fellowship with other believers. Ask Him to soften the hearts of their friends and family and strengthen them in their Christian walk.

Source: http://www.prayforsomalia.org/Library/booklets/YOPS_english.pdf

Thursday 27th February

Somalis **Muslim: 99%**

East Africa boasts a wide diversity of some 70 ethnicities among 300 million people. Within that region, only Somalia has a large majority; 85% of its population are Somali. They range from well-to-do, educated urbanites to nomads struggling for the basic necessities such as water. The majority of the population are at the lower end of the economic spectrum and very few children go to school. Since the language did not have a written version until 1972, many adults are illiterate.



The Somalis depend on their camels. There is one camel for every 2.5 humans. The camel is a Somali's 'car,' his 'bank account,' and his 'food pantry.' The more camels a man has, the greater his standing in the community. Camel milk is a major source of nutrition and herdsman may drink up to 11 litres a day. Camel meat is savoured at celebrations and the fatty hump is the most prized portion. Interestingly, the name of the people comes from "so maal," which is an expression of hospitality meaning "Go milk a beast for yourself!"

Somalis are Muslims who believe that their religious leaders have the power to bless and curse. This power is believed to linger around tombs and is said to help cure illness following a visit to a tomb. Less than 1% of Somalis follow Christ and these believers are despised by their countrymen.

For more information to pray for the Somalis, watch a 90 second clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXjAvRe7rQk>

- Pray for soft and repentant hearts among the Somalis to receive the gift of God's love and salvation.
- Pray for Somalis to hear the Word and respond to it by teaching others His ways.
- Pray for the struggling and persecuted church in Somalia to continue to bear fruitful witness to Christ among its own people.

Source: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/somalis-in-somalia/>

Friday 28th February

Testimony of Somali refugees

As we read on Monday, the civil war in Somalia has created thousands of refugees, forcing many Muslims to leave their homes including Shino and Shania. This is their amazing testimony:

They like most of their countrymen were Muslims. They prayed and fasted, but Allah always felt far away and as though they couldn't please him. One day Shania received a video from a friend. It showed a group of Muslims reading from the Quran before beheading a man. She was so upset and angry she didn't pray that night because she questioned why Allah hadn't saved this innocent man. That night she had a dream. She saw a light and a man coming from heaven and he was calling her. She woke up confused and asked Allah if it was him she had seen and if it was she would follow him. That night she had another similar dream and then her mother gave her the Quran to read but Shania declared that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. Her mum was angry when she told her this and called her an infidel. Shania gave her life to Jesus and despite opposition, shared His love with her husband and family, but they threatened her and gave her husband two options; to take her children away and leave or kill her. Shino protected her but tried to persuade her to return to Islam for her own safety. He read the Bible to try and show her that she was wrong.

Unknown to Shino, their son and daughter had become Christians and he knew he had to try and read the Bible sincerely seeking the truth. After four years of searching, he read in John 8 about the woman caught in adultery. He knew from the Quran that she was stoned by the Muslim leader. Instead he read in the Bible how Jesus showed her mercy. As he continued to read, he came to verse 24: "I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am he, you will indeed die in your sins." Shino took the step of faith. Together with Shania they are showing love to their enemies. Even though there is a fatwa on their lives, they live and preach Jesus even if that means unto death.

Although the video clip of their story is 15 minutes long, it is such a powerful testimony that I encourage you to watch and listen to it here: <https://prayercast.com/shino-and-shania.html>

- Praise God that He continues to reveal Himself to people in dreams and visions. Pray for Jesus to reveal Himself to many more Somali refugees.
- God has promised to pour out His Spirit on all flesh, men and women, young and old, rich and poor. Pray that God would pour out His Spirit on the people of Somalia and they would see dreams and visions of Jesus and be powerfully saved and empowered to be His witnesses. (Joel 2: 28-32).

Source: <https://prayercast.com/shino-and-shania.html>

Saturday 29th February

Encouragement and faith

“I lift up my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.” Ps 121:1-2

Often we join King David looking up to the mountains of problems and difficulties, of huge armies walking against the little flock of the Lord. We can be tempted to lose hope and give up; after decades of praying for things to change in the Muslim world and sometimes seeing little fruit, it is tempting to lose hope.

God has His timetable for the Muslim world and for Somalia. At His appointed time the seed of His word in Somali ground will germinate, grow and bear much fruit. At His appointed time many Somalis will join the multitude of nations around the throne of God and praise His Holy name. Our part is only to give testimony, much like Shino and Shania, wherever He provides a chance to do so. If we look to our own weak hands, we will become desperate and tempted to give up. If we look to our Heavenly Father, He will raise us up and strengthen our faith to continue until He calls us home.

If you have been praying for something for a long time and haven't yet seen the fruit, listen to this lovely worship song for encouragement: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaiQ8KiyM8k>

- Pray that we will look up to the Lord and wait for Him in our daily walk of faith.
- Pray for His help in those days when we are tempted to be overwhelmed by the many needs and problems we pray for in the Muslim world.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will strengthen our faith every day. “Ha rajo dhigin” in Somali means “don't give up hope.” Let's not give up hope as we serve an almighty God.
- Pray for the boldness to believe that the humanly spoken “impossible” will happen in Somalia.