

Monday 25th February

Ethiopia

Pop: 109 million

Islam: 34%

You can watch a 3-minute video of the country [here](#)

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 Somalia, Eritrea, Kenya, Sudan and Djibouti in eastern Africa. Ethiopian coffee, enjoyed throughout the world, is the nation's main export.



Agriculture has been the foundation of the Ethiopian economy for centuries, but years of over-cultivation and unreliable weather caused frequent droughts, famines, and eventually civil unrest. As a result, a Marxist junta overthrew the long running monarchy in 1974. Many of the same problems brought an end to the junta in 1991 and led to the establishment of a democratic government. Though now considered one of Africa's most stable nations, the previous troubled years have also left Ethiopia one of the poorest.

In April 2018, Abiy Ahmed was elected Prime Minister and has pledged to bring more transparency to government and reconciliation to a country that has been torn by protests. Shortly after his election to power, he brokered a peace deal with neighbouring Eritrea. This ended a long and bloody conflict that had lasted nearly twenty years.

President Ahmed is bringing in reforms. Like other African countries, such as Kenya and Zimbabwe just over a decade ago, Ethiopia has tried to reform its closed, autocratic system, but with little success. Now there is a deep hunger for change.

The country faces many 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.

Christianity has been a part of everyday life in Ethiopia since the fourth century. Approximately 60% of Ethiopians consider themselves Christians. However, fear of Muslims often means local believers do not reach out to them with the gospel message. This is why Christian workers go to this country. There is a strong Muslim influence, 34% of the population is Muslim. Both faiths have lived relatively peaceably alongside each other, but some Islamic groups are threatening that fragile peace. President Ahmed will need much wisdom to navigate the challenges ahead.

- Pray for President Abiy Ahmed to be a strong but flexible leader, who combines justice and mercy and who is able to bring people along with him as he seeks to bring change, reconciliation and unity.
- Let's lift the nation of Ethiopia into God's presence, asking Him to bring peace and healing to this land.
- Pray for the Ethiopian Church to use this opportunity through the peace deal to take the gospel to Eritrea.

- Pray for militant Muslims to know the truth of Jesus Christ and for the church to reach out to its local Muslim neighbours.

Source of most material: <https://prayercast.com/ethiopia.html>

Tuesday 26th February

Oromo **Pop: 37 million**

The Oromos are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, numbering 37 million and making up 34.5% of the population. They are dispersed over a large region and speak 74 ethnically diverse languages; but differences in dialect do not prevent the various Oromo groups from understanding one another.



The current president is Ethiopia's first leader from the Oromo ethnic group. He is reported in the national press to be a devout Pentecostal Christian, born to a Muslim father and a Christian mother. He has said he wants to bring reconciliation to his country and reforms that bring change for the good of all people.

Oromo people have been at the centre of anti-government protests since 2016. They have been protesting against systematic marginalisation and persecution.

One of the Oromo groups in Ethiopia is the Hararghe people. Gospel workers are known to work among them.

“The Hararghe Oromo are soft, their hearts are open, but this window will not remain open for long!” says one Ethiopian mission leader.

The Hararghe Oromo people are 97.5% Muslim. Most of them are livestock pastoralists and farmers living in towns and villages in eastern Ethiopia. Although many practise folk Islam, there is a growing influence of Wahhabism, an orthodox form of Islam, which has turned some away from the gospel.

Many Ethiopian churches have begun to have God’s heart for this people. As a result of their outreach, the Oromo have begun to follow Jesus in growing numbers.

- We praise God for the growing number of believers among the Hararghe Oromo. Let’s pray that all find their identity and acceptance in Jesus Christ alone.
- Pray for the emerging body of believers among the Hararghe Oromo to be spiritually strengthened, to grow in their understanding of their identity in Christ and to be equipped to see their people come into God’s Kingdom.
- Let’s pray that neighbouring people groups such as the Somali and Afar would also be reached as a result of what God is doing among the Oromo.

Source of most material: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/hararghe-oromo-breakthrough/>

Wednesday 27th February

Somali

Pop: between 2 - 6 million

Islam: 99%

Several million Somali live scattered across eight countries in the north-eastern portion of Africa and in the Middle East. They are one of the most homogenous people groups on the continent of Africa.

They converted to Islam around 1550, under the influence of Arab traders that had settled along the coast of present-day Somalia. By 1650, they had moved into Ethiopia. Continuing conflicts in Somalia have seen more move over the border into Ethiopia in recent years. Estimates of the number now living there, where they are known as the Western Somali, vary considerably between 2 to 6 million.



The increasing number of Somalis has led to conflict and fighting on the borders of the Oromia and Somali regions.

Somali society is based on the nuclear family, which consists of a husband, wife, and children. A typical family owns a herd of sheep or goats and a few burden camels. Some may also own a herd of milking camels. The more camels a man has, the greater his prestige.

The Somali consider themselves warriors. The men often leave the women in charge of the herds, so that they might train to become more effective fighters. They are a very individualistic people, sharply divided by clans. Fights often occur between the clans, resulting in many deaths.

Having an abundant supply of food is a status symbol among the clans. Each family periodically holds banquets for their relatives and friends. A family's prestige is determined by the frequency of its feasts, the number of people invited, and the quality and quantity of food served.

However, very few Somali children attend school and over half of the adults are illiterate. Access to modern health services is very limited in Ethiopia. Droughts, famines and wars have created numerous problems. Malnutrition alone has accounted for the death of thousands of Somali since the 1970's.

There are only a few known believers among the Somali living in Ethiopia. There are workers in Ethiopia living among the Somalis, reaching out to them with the love of Jesus.

- Pray for peace between the Somali and Oromo people groups.
- Ask God to grant favour and wisdom to Frontiers workers and other gospel workers focusing on the Somali.

- Pray for the Spirit to breakthrough in dreams and visions and for supernatural healings amongst the Somalis.
- Pray for the Somali church to be united, and bold and wise in its witness.

Source of most material: https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/14983/ET

Thursday 28th February

In one of her news updates, a Frontiers worker wrote:

“There are two community projects that I and the team I work with feel God has laid on our hearts for the part of Ethiopia where we live.

The first involves an international school, where we want to provide an international level curriculum that is available to all levels of society, such that it is a true community school. We want class sizes to be small, and to foster good relationship between parents, students and teachers. This should be a place where wisdom as well as knowledge is sought and good character is highly valued.

The second project is for a community centre for women. Men tend to meet at cafes and drink tea or coffee but this is very rare among women. Traditionally women would have been surrounded by mothers and aunts and sisters and cousins. This is changing. A lot of women have extended family in other towns, often they are divorced or their husbands live in a different town for work. Consequently, there are a lot of women who feel alone. We want to have a place where they can come and feel safe, have other women to talk to and where they can learn from each other.

In the morning the centre would run as a café where women can meet in a safe space. In the afternoon informal counselling would be offered. There would also be sessions on a lot of different subjects, such as parenting, health, first aid or making crafts they can then sell.

Neither of these projects is running yet. Not only are they a huge undertaking, but funds need to be raised and permits granted.”

- Please pray for favour, so that the permits are granted by local governments.
- Pray for the necessary funds to be available and for the local people to really get behind the projects.
- We thank God for the vision He has given to our workers. Please pray for great encouragement and perseverance for the tasks ahead.

Friday 1st March

Stories from our worker (continued)

There is a young girl aged 13 years old, who had not walked in nearly 2 years because her foot was really damaged. It started as a simple wound. She went to a local clinic where they dressed it, but there was little sign of improvement. Finally, using contacts, my team mate managed to get her admitted to a private hospital. There they discovered there was TB in the bones of the foot. She started treatment, but we were warned that her foot had been left untreated for so long, that they were aiming for improvement not a cure.

Today her foot is *completely* healed. She is walking normally and back at school. We believe this is a miracle.

- We praise God and pray that this will be a door to her finding her Saviour.

Last year we held a “Happy Birthday Jesus” party, as one of the women here called it. Five of these women then joined us over the next few weeks to talk about the life of Jesus. They are still asking questions and show real interest.

- Please join us in praying that we will not grow weary as we disciple these women and that fear will not get in the way of them following Jesus. Let’s ask they will have eyes to see and ears to hear the truth.

We have five teenage boys who come to our home on a Saturday. They do a little work, are given some money, a hot meal and an English and ‘moral’ lesson. When two of the boys left and two new ones came, the eldest said, “we need to watch the Jesus film again.”

- Please pray with us that the film won’t just be entertainment to the boys, but that the truths shown will go deep in their heart and they will become leaders in their community.

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labour on what does not satisfy?

Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare.” Isaiah 55: 1-2

Saturday 2nd March

Praise and prayer points from our worker (continued)

In a news update last year, our worker shared how she had been reflecting on praise as a weapon in the daily spiritual battle. Out of this she wrote a song and has given permission to share it here.

“When discontent creeps in and I’m dissatisfied, I’ll tell my heart to give thanks.
When temptation comes and sin is beckoning me, I’ll turn my thoughts to the cross.
When needs around me are great and I’m overwhelmed, even so I choose to praise.

I choose to praise because you're good, I sing because your love is true.
I will join in with the angels in declaring that you're holy.
I will fix my eyes on heaven, for it is my eternal home.

When I take up praise as a weapon, darkness flees. Confident the war is won.
When I raise my voice and in my true King delight, chains that bind me are broken.
When we gather in worship, Jericho's walls fall. In all things I choose to praise.

You're my saviour, author of justice. You're working, restoring, always there.
You are the same now and forever, Father, Spirit, Son I worship you.”

She also shared how she has always loved the song Blessed Be Your Name. You can listen to it [here](#) and perhaps pray the following prayers that she has asked for those she works amongst:

- That the Father will lead her to those He is drawing to Himself.
- That the spirit of fear and discontent among Muslims will be replaced by a spirit of hope, faith and contentment.
- That mental health will become a priority; there are many people with severe mental health needs just left to fend for themselves.
- That there will be support and care for the street children. The number of children spending all day and sometimes the night on the street has grown hugely in the last 4-5 years.
- For the increasing number of beggars on the streets. She recently passed 15 in just 150 metres. Let's cry out to God that they will know Him and that his love, mercy, goodness and compassion for them never changes.
- For men to stand up and be good fathers and husbands. For a culture that places a huge importance on family and clan, it is an area that really needs redeeming by the Father.
- For the church to reach out to its Muslim neighbours.
- For whole families, not just individuals to come to know the Son.
- For foreign workers' children; that they will have meaningful friendships and good education. Pray it will not seem like they are missing out, but rather an opportunity to see the Father at work.