



THE AFAR

O LORD, YOU HAVE SEARCHED ME AND YOU KNOW ME... YOU DISCERN MY GOING OUT AND MY LYING DOWN; YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH ALL MY WAYS.
 ~PSALM 139:1,3~



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An Alien World

Welcome to the completely alien world of the Afar. This is a world in which homes are oval-shaped huts that can be collapsed and carried on the back of a camel. Toddlers are pledged in marriage to their cousins, and girls as young as ten are married off. Cultural dance is deeply entrenched, as are unique spiraled hairstyles and teeth-shaping customs. In some areas, temperatures can consistently be sustained above 125°F, and rain may come once a year. Volcanoes, hot fissures, and salt pans are the natural resources in the Danakil Depression. Food is essentially only meat and dairy. Qu'ranic verses are tied in leather amulets for protection, and ghee is used to anoint the body in spiritual rituals.

But the Afar are proud of their heritage! They take great care in preserving their culture and keeping themselves "pure" from the rest of the world. Historically, they are considered to be the first people in the region, and they have tenaciously fought for the land and traditions that have been passed down to them. As nomads, the Afar know every jagged rock, shrub, and watering hole in their region, and they move their herds of livestock intentionally so as to not deplete any one place or resource. **They know every part of their culture and land, but they do not know about the One who knows every ghee-lathered hair on their head.**



THE HORN OF AFRICA
 Approximate area inhabited by Afar people
 Oromo: Father ethnic group



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JESUS LOOKED AT THEM AND SAID, "WITH MAN IT IS IMPOSSIBLE, BUT NOT WITH GOD. FOR ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE WITH GOD."

~ MARK 10:27 ~



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An Impossible Situation

Living in one of the hottest, driest, and unforgiving regions on the planet, **the Afar are survivors**. In recent years, drought has ravaged the region. The little water they have access to is unfit even for animals to drink; disease and malnutrition are constant companions. If rain finally comes, it comes in torrents, causing floods that wipe out entire villages. Locusts continually swarm, eating everything living. One in three children die before they turn 5 years old, and 100% of the women have FGM (female genital mutilation), leading to an increased rate of death during childbirth.

To make an already impossible situation worse, the recent war in the Tigray region of Ethiopia has caused hundreds of thousands of displaced Tigrayans into the Afar region. The refugees have depleted the little resources available, and now **the Afar have nothing left**. They can no longer be generous. Outsiders have come with promises to help the Afar's plight, but they never stay... and when they leave, the Afar are left with less than they had before. Seen by others as expendable, with land that is exploitable, the Afar have little to no trust for people outside.

Who is our Heavenly Father raising up to win their trust? Who will be His ambassador to this fierce and proud people?

Illiteracy and lack of healthcare are astounding... malaria and TB are rampant... salt pans could be a greater source of livelihood with the right equipment... clean water is desperately needed... the possibilities are endless...

- Animal husbandry/agriculture
- Investment and business development could include:
 - Salt mining
 - Solar equipment
- Healthcare
- Education

POSSIBILITIES

A Work Beginning

There is heresy that some Djiboutian Afar in the city have come to faith. Will the Truth be carried back to their villages and pastoral homelands? **Work can be done with the few Afar living in cities** so the Kingdom of God can make its way back to their alien homeland.

PRAY

- **May God raise up many global workers and prayer partners to pave the way for the Gospel's arrival among the Afar.**
- **Pray for the few Afar believers in the city! May they multiply greatly and have boldness to take it back to their families in the remote regions!**