

TABLE TALK Eritrea



Crack THE CODE

What's life like for Christians living in Eritrea?
Find out by filling in the definitions!

Match the letters with the numbers, then transfer those letters to the corresponding numbers in the final solution.

Be careful with spelling! And note that one word has been done for you.

Solution Phrase:

$\frac{24}{12} \frac{23}{26} \frac{R}{4} \frac{S}{7} \frac{A}{15} \frac{A}{7} \frac{S}{12} \frac{S}{13} \frac{S}{7} \frac{S}{15} \frac{S}{5} \frac{S}{7} \frac{S}{26} \frac{S}{7} \frac{S}{6} \frac{S}{6} \frac{S}{17} \frac{S}{8} \frac{A}{12} \frac{A}{6}$
 $\frac{7}{13} \frac{R}{17} \frac{A}{4} \frac{A}{7} \frac{A}{15} \frac{A}{4} \frac{A}{17} \frac{A}{12} \frac{R}{24} \frac{R}{23} \frac{S}{4} \frac{S}{7} \frac{S}{26} \frac{S}{15} \frac{A}{7} \frac{S}{12} \frac{S}{13} \frac{S}{26}$
 $\frac{A}{24} \frac{A}{12} \frac{A}{13} \frac{8}{8} \frac{1}{1} \frac{15}{15} \frac{1}{1} \frac{14}{14} \frac{4}{4} \frac{7}{7} \frac{S}{26} \frac{S}{1} \frac{S}{13} \frac{2}{2} \frac{1}{1} \frac{R}{4}$
 $\frac{A}{12} \frac{A}{24} \frac{A}{24} \frac{17}{17} \frac{14}{14} \frac{15}{15} \frac{7}{7} \frac{13}{13} \frac{8}{8} \frac{24}{24} \frac{23}{23} \frac{4}{4} \frac{7}{7} \frac{S}{26} \frac{S}{15} !$

$\frac{A}{12} \frac{S}{26} \frac{M}{10} \frac{A}{12} \frac{R}{4} \frac{A}{12}$

$\frac{12}{12} \frac{4}{4} \frac{24}{24} \frac{23}{23} \frac{7}{7} \frac{14}{14} \frac{17}{17} \frac{6}{6} \frac{12}{12} \frac{8}{8} \frac{1}{1}$

$\frac{24}{24} \frac{12}{12} \frac{10}{10} \frac{17}{17} \frac{6}{6}$

$\frac{11}{11} \frac{17}{17} \frac{26}{26} \frac{17}{17} \frac{4}{4} \frac{15}{15}$

$\frac{11}{11} \frac{4}{4} \frac{1}{1} \frac{25}{25} \frac{8}{8} \frac{23}{23} \frac{15}{15}$

$\frac{7}{7} \frac{26}{26} \frac{6}{6} \frac{12}{12} \frac{10}{10}$

$\frac{4}{4} \frac{17}{17} \frac{11}{11} \frac{26}{26} \frac{17}{17} \frac{12}{12}$

$\frac{4}{4} \frac{17}{17} \frac{2}{2} \frac{25}{25} \frac{8}{8} \frac{17}{17} \frac{17}{17}$

$\frac{15}{15} \frac{7}{7} \frac{8}{8} \frac{4}{4} \frac{7}{7} \frac{13}{13} \frac{5}{5} \frac{12}{12}$

$\frac{19}{19} \frac{1}{1} \frac{6}{6} \frac{24}{24} \frac{12}{12} \frac{13}{13} \frac{1}{1}$

$\frac{9}{9} \frac{7}{7} \frac{8}{8} \frac{7}{7} \frac{13}{13} \frac{7}{7}$

The capital city of Eritrea.

A collection of islands that are closely scattered in a body of water.

Eritrea's national animal.

A large area of sandy land, usually in a hot region, where there is almost no water, rain or plants.

A long period of low rainfall, leading to a shortage of water.

A religion that involves the worship of the god Allah who is mentioned in the Quran, a religious book written by a man name Muhammad.

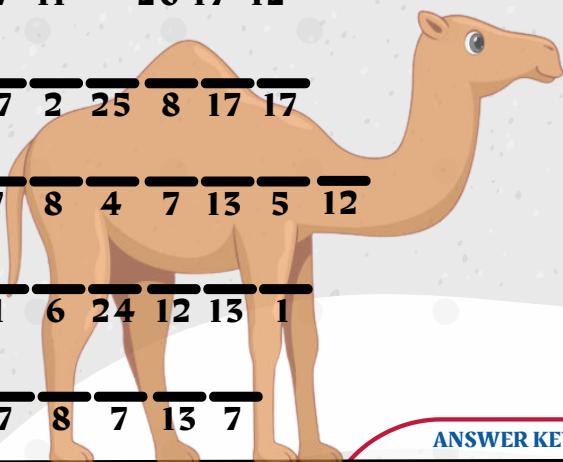
The sea that separates Africa from the Arabian Peninsula.

A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution or natural disaster.

A Semitic language spoken in Eritrea.

An opening in the earth's crust from which lava, ash and hot gases flow or are ejected during an eruption.

A very spicy meat stew that is popular in Eritrea.



Along the Way



Yemane gazed at the patch of sky that was visible through the opening in the ground some six feet above his head. His arms were bound behind him, and his throat was parched after sustaining Eritrea's stifling climate for hours without a drink of water. Once again, Yemane was in the hole because he could not keep his faith to himself.

At age 35, Yemane was drafted into the African nation's military. Yet, he remained a dedicated Christian, faithfully sharing the Gospel with other soldiers. He was often punished for this and had been sent to the hole five times before finally being imprisoned.

Despite terrible conditions, no beds and minimal bathroom breaks each day, Yemane continued to share the Gospel with his fellow inmates. "Whenever I preached," he recounts of those difficult years, "the soldiers beat me. I thought of Jesus on the cross and did not feel the pain."

Eventually, Yemane was placed in solitary confinement and suffered intense heat and dehydration, triggering a stroke which put him in a coma for 14 days. The authorities released him due to poor health, and Yemane was set free, though in a horrible state and disabled due to his stroke.

Thankfully, Yemane was able to seek medical treatment outside of Eritrea, and he now resides in an Ethiopian refugee camp. This long-suffering believer lives a very modest life, not having much but faithfully using what God provides to care for street children and support the local church in the camp.

August 2023

His Way

"And because I preach this Good News, I am suffering and have been chained like a criminal. But the word of God cannot be chained."

2 Timothy 2:9 NLT

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
IRAQ Pray that Christians will be faithful, withstanding threats under daily oppression.	6 CHINA Pray for the successful distribution of Bibles in every part of China.	1 VIETNAM Pray that ministry workers will receive the necessary tools and training for evangelism.	2 NEPAL Pray that Christians involved in political change will keep the Kingdom of God foremost.	3 COMOROS Pray for missionaries who are working to proclaim the "Good News" of the Gospel.	4 MOZAMBIQUE Pray that displaced Christians receiving audio Bibles will be strengthened by God's Word.	5 OMAN Pray that local believers will remain dedicated to Christ despite the cost.
13 SAUDI ARABIA Pray that Christians who feel isolated will be encouraged in their walk with Christ.	7 CHINA Pray for the protection of believers living in areas of risk due to persecution.	8 AZERBAIJAN Pray that church leaders will build up believers to be courageous in their faith.	9 ERITREA Pray that Christian broadcasts will encourage Christ's followers and draw others to Him.	10 NORTH KOREA Pray that governmental workers who receive Bibles will come to faith in Christ.	11 QATAR Pray that the expatriate community will find creative ways to share God's love.	12 TURKMENISTAN Pray that the government will legally recognize the Turkmen-language Bible.
20 MAURITANIA Pray that followers of Christ can safely gather for worship, fellowship and discipleship.	14 NIGER Pray for the protection of believers living in areas of risk due to persecution.	15 TUNISIA Pray for local evangelists who are following up on social media contacts.	16 LIBYA Pray that the Gospel will advance despite the country's unstable political situation.	17 YEMEN Pray that discipleship training courses will effectively develop new church leaders.	18 TAJIKISTAN Pray that believers meeting for worship will be undetected by potential persecutors.	19 EGYPT Pray for emerging Christian leaders who are attending a summer apologetics school.
27 AFGHANISTAN Pray for creative means of providing Christian resources to Afghan believers.	21 MALDIVES Pray for creative approaches to evangelism in this hard-to-reach country.	22 INDONESIA Pray for the healing of Christians who have witnessed the martyrdom of other believers.	23 PAKISTAN Pray for the effective testifying of Shakeel, who came to faith in Christ after reading the Bible.	24 CUBA Pray that pastors presently in detainment for questioning will convey God's love and truth.	25 UGANDA Pray for the strengthening of Christians being confronted with encroaching Islamization.	26 ISRAEL Pray that residents of Jerusalem and other areas of Israel will seek the "Prince of Peace."

Artist:

A pastor in Eritrea

Artwork Title:

"Prisoner"

Medium:

Oil on canvas



Eritrea

Weigh In

1. Eritrea is governed by a totalitarian regime that seeks to control every aspect of life. For example, it is illegal to be an evangelical Christian in Eritrea.
2. Some human rights advocates have referred to Eritrea as "the North Korea of Africa," pointing to the iron-fisted brutality that's used to control its people. The nation has one of the worst religious freedom records in Africa. There are thought to be between 400 and 500 Christians indefinitely detained in Eritrean prisons who have not been officially charged with anything.
3. Military service in Eritrea is mandatory, even for women. Men aged 18 to 40 and women aged 18 to 27 are conscripted. Women represent around 30 percent of the country's military.
4. The Arabian camel, also known as a "dromedary," is Eritrea's national animal.

Way Out

- It is very challenging to be a Christian in Eritrea. One way we can support Eritrean believers is to share what we know about them and their difficulties with others.
- You can help support the persecuted church this summer by hosting a BBQ and inviting guests to learn about Eritrea while enjoying a meal. Invite your friends, church, family or neighbourhood to join the event. You could sell hotdogs, hamburgers, salads, freezies and drinks to raise money, or provide an option for guests to donate directly.
- Advertising on social media in advance would be a great way to promote your fundraiser! Consider setting up various information stations for visitors to learn more about the country and its citizens. Encourage those who attend to pray. Remember, prayer changes everything!

1

Research the concept of totalitarianism. Is it paradoxical for Christians to consciously break the law? Consider St. Augustine's words: "An unjust law is no law at all." What is the difference between a just law and an unjust law?

2

Many Eritrean prisons are nothing more than metal shipping containers. With potential daytime highs in the 30s and nighttime lows near freezing, what effect would these extreme temperatures have on prisoners who are being held in such a structure? How does the human body maintain its optimal temperature?

3

Required military service, along with years of communism and economic depression, have caused many Eritreans to flee the country. Research how Canada's military system works. How would your family be affected if Canada had a conscription program similar to that of Eritrea?

4

Dromedary camels have one hump, while Bactrian camels have two humps. You can easily remember the difference by thinking of a one-humped sideways D for Dromedary and a two-humped sideways B for Bactrian. Camels can go seven days without water in hot weather and six months in cool weather. How long can a person go without water?

One Way

The declared goal of Marxism is utopia. Through reforms in society, Marxists believe that humans will be able to reach this paradise on earth, where everyone is equal and no one has an unmet need. Marxism rejects God as Creator and Saviour, and governments adhering to this ideology try to fix society's problems by implementing strong controls to curb issues that arise out of humanity's sinful nature – selfishness, greed, etc. Inconsistencies are apparent, however, since Marxism denies that people are inherently evil; except, ironically, those who are of the upper class or in power. These members of society are seen as the evil ones whom Marxist revolutionists seek to overthrow.

Biblically, the book of Genesis opens with a world that had originally been created as a perfect environment in every way for Adam's headquarters. Essentially, it was a utopia. However, God's nature is comprised of love, which cannot be automated. Humankind must be free to choose to love their Maker – or not. Although He ran the risk of having humans reject Him, God provided an opportunity for humankind to make the choice between good and evil...between a perfect life with God or the rejection of all He is, in exchange for all that He is not.

Recommended Read

Song of the Nightingale: One Woman's True Story of Faith and Persecution in Eritrea by Helen Berhane (see VOMC's Resources).

Sources: www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/eritrea/; www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/eritrea/; www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Eritrea.html; Religious Freedom Conditions in Eritrea | USCIRF; Release Eritrea.

