

The Alaba of Ethiopia

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The Alaba people of Ethiopia live on the central highlands of Ethiopia, some 250-300 km southwest of Addis Abeba to which it is connected by the asphalt Shashemane-Soddo Road. The land is flat and dry with savannah type vegetation. Maize, teff and red pepper are the main crops cultivated.

The Bilate River borders the Alaba country on the west side towards the Kambaata people. The languages of both these people groups are closely related Highland East Cushitic languages. The Alaba has been administrated under the Kambaata for years although at the moment Alaba is a special administrative area by itself.

There are considerable differences between the centre, Kulito, and the vast rural areas. 1) Kulito with 25,000 inhabitants and a big busy market, has a mixed population of which some 13% speak Alaba. In the rural area only the Alaba language is used. 2) Kulito has a few Protestant churches and quite a noticeable Orthodox population. The rural area is totally Muslim. 3) In the countryside the literacy rate is around 7%, whereas Kulito is more literate. The Alabas are traditionally self confident and very resistant to outside influence. This has kept them from modern developments and education. Now this tends to be changing and the statistics from 2002-2003 show that there are 36 schools in the Alaba area with some 26,000 students in them.

The life style of the Alabas is very humble. Practically all the houses in the rural area are round-shaped, thatch roofed houses, made of wood and mud. They are without ceilings and have mud floors. Livestock spend the night in them together with people. 85% of the people get their drinking water from rivers and ponds by carrying it long distances. More than half of the urban houses are without electricity. Firewood and tree leaves are used for cooking.

The Alaba administrators express their biggest needs to be schools and clinics for more villages and wells for villages that are without drinking water.

Primary Religion:

Islam

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

Churches:

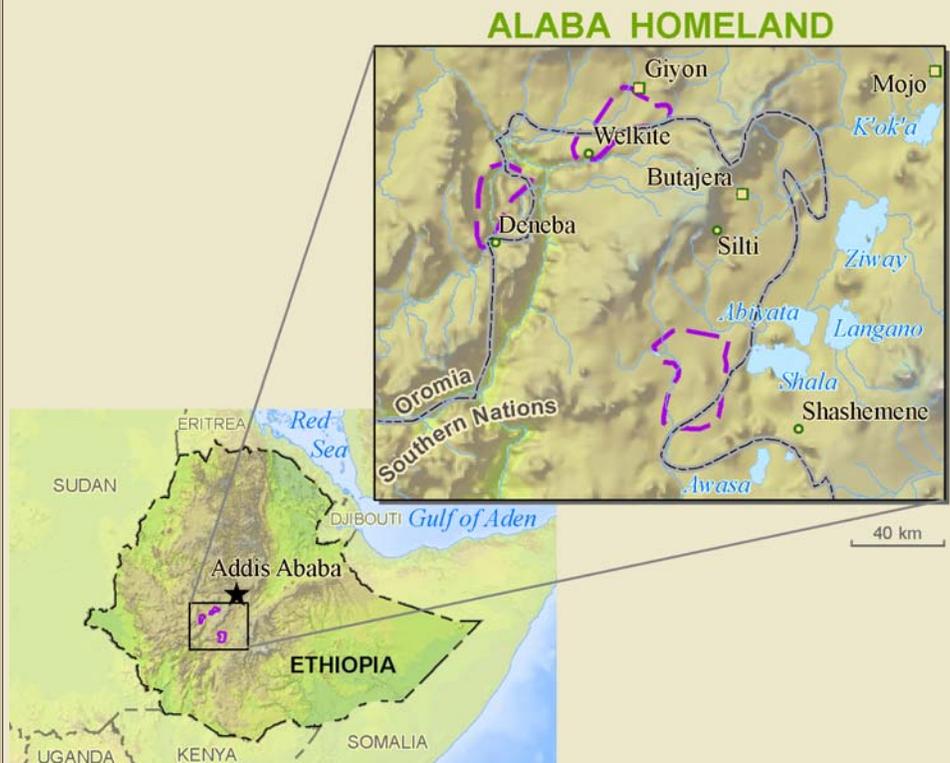
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Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

No

Population (date):

126,257 (1998)



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Item Name	Item Note	
Have They Heard The Gospel?		Profile Summary
Call Themselves Christian (%)	3%	
Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son (%)	60	
Believe In The Local Traditional Religion (%)	90	
Have Not Heard Who Jesus is (%)	40	
Number Of Pastors	none	
Comment (Pastors)	workers are mainly outsiders, not locals	
Number Of Communities	200	
Number Of Churches	30	
Comment (Churches)	"There are five different Protestant denominations present in Kulito; and it is likely that they have congregations in the countryside. But those are congregations of outsiders who are working and living in the area. And can be very small and weak, and often just gatherings at homes."	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	Very low literacy rate and nothing available in the mother tongue. In the rural area no bilingualism. The urban people are mainly outsiders, although there surely are also bilingual locals among them.	
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	No	
Countries Where People Group Lives		Group Description
Country Name	Ethiopia	
Geography & Environment		Group Description
Map Features	Main centre called Alaba Kulito on the road from Shashemane to Shone and Soddo. The western border is the Bilate River running south. In the North are the Silte people, in the east the Oromo people and in the south the Sidamas.	
Literacy		Group Description
Comment (Literacy)	8.6% literacy rate (Ethnologue)	
Religion & Response		Status of Christianity
Attitude To Christianity	Resistant	
Comment (Attitude To Christianity)	Even incidents of hostility and persecution have happened recently.	
Attitude To Religious Change	Resistant	
History Of Christianity In Group		Status of Christianity
Year Began	1950	
Comments (History of Christianity)	"A compound, totally ruined by now, has been shown that has told to have had a primary school run by SIM. Some of the Muslim officials in power 10 years ago told they had got their first education in that school. Within the last 10-15 years more Christians have come into the area for work. "	
Scripture		Status of Christianity
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Literature	No	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Recordings	No	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Film/Videos	No	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Radio	No	