

True story!

There is a 19 year old boy called Daniel in Afghanistan, who remembers what life was like under the strict Shariah law of the Taliban. His family was one of the few Christian families there, and when Daniel was only one year old, his father, David, was stabbed and killed by his own brother! David had been smuggling bibles from town to town there and so when his brothers found out that instead of being a Muslim like them, he had become a Christian, they killed him. They went to his home and demanded the name of the Christian leader from David's wife, but she wouldn't tell them. Then they threatened to kill her baby son, Daniel, if she didn't tell them. She was able to warn the Christian leader and gave him little Daniel to take out of the country with him.

When Daniel finally returned 6 years later, he found his mother had remarried to a Muslim man, and she wanted nothing to do with Daniel any more. Daniel was very sad, but returned to live with the Christian leader who promised to take care of him. Now Daniel has grown up to be a strong Christian and tells others about Jesus there in Afghanistan. He is discipling five Muslim converts that he led to Christ and plans to travel through the land and preach to many people.



In the Bible, Daniel was taken to a land that was ruled by the Persians, just like Afghanistan once was.


Although life is better now in Afghanistan, it is still very difficult for Christians there. There are 48,000 mosques where Muslims can worship their god, but not one single church for Christians! 99% of the Afghan people are Muslims, and many still believe very strongly that those who accept Jesus should be killed! Let's pray especially for the Christians there and that many Muslims will come to know the truth! 'Til next time,

Your friend, Shirley

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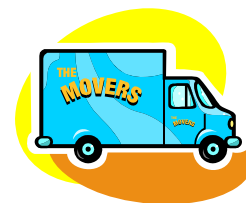
World Kids

Fun facts for kids!  True stories!

PAL Page

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Can you guess which country in the whole world has the fewest number of motor vehicles per 100 people?



In the United States there are 765 motor vehicles for every 100 people (including cars, buses, semi-trucks, ambulances and so on). But in the country we want to discuss this month there are so few, it works out to be only 0 per 100 people! Can you imagine how different that would make your life? It would mean that you would have to walk everywhere and could only buy the things that are produced in your area. Our country this month has land that is mostly harsh mountains and scorching desert - a very difficult place to live! It is also the country with most known terrorist organizations in the world (13 of them!!) - so it is probably a country that most of us would never want to live in! Can you guess which one it is?

It is **AFGHANISTAN!** You can find it on a map in central Asia surrounded by countries such as Pakistan, Iran, Tajikistan and others with similar names!



The capital of Afghanistan is Kabul

The flag of Afghanistan has three vertical stripes in black, red and green, with a gold emblem in the middle. The land of Afghanistan has had many rulers



including the Greeks, Turks, Persians, British and Russians, but as a nation it was founded in 1747. Most recently, in 1996, a hardline religious group took over the country. It was called the Taliban - Muslims who wanted to establish the most "pure" Islamic state in the world. They were sponsored by Pakistan and imposed very strict rules on all the people of Afghanistan - affecting especially the girls and women. Only boys were allowed to attend school, and hospitals were only allowed to treat men and boys (no girls at all!). Women were not allowed to work outside the home - and in fact could not even step outside their home unless with a man from their own family.



Imagine what this meant for women who were widows and had no male family members!!! One such family was so desperate that the 12 yr old daughter dressed up as a boy to try to find work and earn money, but she was found out and the family was punished by the Taliban leaders. Fortunately the girl was helped by a group of aid workers and now attends a school for orphans.

Under Taliban rule all women had to wear a veil (called a "burqua") to completely cover their face, and all men had to grow a beard! Television and movies were prohibited, no-one was allowed to read foreign books and in the capital, music was forbidden! Children were even forbidden to play with dolls and teddy bears because they resemble people!



The Taliban also helped Osama Bin Laden, who was the main leader of terrorists who attacked New York on September 11th 2001. As a result, the US and allied troops entered Afghanistan and defeated the Taliban and its strict rule. A new democratic government was formed and President Karzai was elected in 2004. Because of the war many areas were bombed and destroyed, causing people to have to live in refugee camps. Other countries have sent aid and there have been many improvements, but life is still very harsh in Afghanistan.

Some women have returned to work outside of the home, and primary school education is now compulsory for both girls and boys, but still 86% of primary school age girls are out of school as changes take place very slowly in the areas outside of the main cities. Most ADULTS in Afghanistan have only attended school for an average of less than TWO YEARS and until people become better educated, progress will be slow. Most of the Afghan people are very poor - only 4% have electricity, and a healthy baby born today in Afghanistan has a life expectancy of only about 35 years!!!

So it is not surprising that if someone comes along and offers a poor farmer the chance to produce a special crop that grows well in the barren desert land and can be sold for a lot of money, he will jump at the chance! Many are doing just that and work hard to produce fields of beautiful poppies! But they are not just pretty flowers - these are special poppies that are used to produce a drug called opium. It is then sent in many forms to Europe and other parts of the world, where drug addicts will do anything to buy it!



AFGHAN ANIMAL PUZZLE

From the following pictures, circle those of animals that might be found in Afghanistan:



*Do you know a parable that Jesus told about these animals?
(You could look it up in a concordance or ask an adult)
Read through the parable again and decide which YOU would want to be, and what you should do!*