



PEOPLE GROUP:

GARRE OF SOMALIA, KENYA AND ETHIOPIA

The Garre people trace their heritage through their forefather Samaale, who is considered to be the ancestor of most of the pastoralist clans in northern Somalia. Further back, they are descended from a cousin of the prophet Muhammed. The history of the Garre includes participation in Somali dynasties and kingdoms, which contributes to their belief that to be Muslim and Garre are inseparable identities, and, when asked, they state that they have “always been” Muslim.

The Garre are widely dispersed around the Horn of Africa, with three main linguistic groups. Those along the Kenya-Ethiopia border speak the Oromo language. Those in southern Ethiopia speak a dialect of Garre, while the “original bearers” of the language are settled in South Central Somalia as well. In north-eastern Kenya, the history of the Garre is a complicated one, with clan conflicts and immigration issues

woven into this complex region of tribes.

Most Garre are nomadic, herding camels, goats and sheep. They live in transportable shelters made of bent young tree branches covered in animal skins or woven mats, and several related families travel together and stay in circular groupings to keep their animals safe at night. They move around based on the availability of grazing land and water, though recent years of drought have made life hard for them.

The Kenyan government has been attempting to force settlement, but most Garre are uninterested in changing their traditions. Some of them have established themselves in towns and permanent villages, and more youth are becoming settled, although this means they are coming under the influence of established Madrasas and imams. There have been efforts by Al-Shabaab to recruit in various areas where the Garre live.

AT A GLANCE

- Garre men can have up to four wives, but their divorce rate is high.
- In the past, their diet was almost exclusively dairy products, though that is changing.
- Among the Garre near Garissa, Kenya, some have become Christians.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

- Missionaries to reach out to the Garre, who are very difficult to reach not only spiritually, but geographically because of their nomadic lifestyles.
- Christians among the Garre to have a burden to reach their own people, and for God’s protection for those Christians.
- Christ movements among the proudly Muslim Garre.

Sources: Wikipedia and Joshua Project.



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