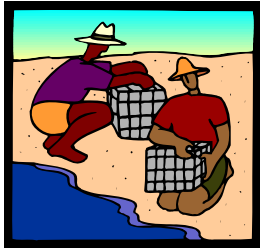


CAN YOU RECOGNIZE THIS PROMISE FROM THE BIBLE?

"fo rify ouf or givem enwhent heys in aga insty ouyo urhe aven lyfat herwil lals oforg ively ou."

(CLUE - THE SPACES BETWEEN THE WORDS HAVE BEEN MOVED)

Life for children is often hard in Togo, especially for those who are orphaned or have been abandoned. You may see a group of children laughing and playing their favourite game of football (soccer) on a dusty road, and never know what their life is really like. They often eat cassava flour boiled with coconut



into a kind of porridge (tapioca) because it is the cheapest food. Many don't go to school but have to work instead - on farms, carrying big loads in the markets, or as servants in homes of rich families. Some as young as 7 years old work to help the fishermen with their nets in order to earn

money to support their parents and brothers and sisters.

True story! Our friend in Togo, Pastor Sika, tells us of a young 12 year old boy that he knows whose father died a long time ago. His mother is also sick and so the boy has to work to earn money to feed his mother and his two smaller brothers. He also has to pay for his own schooling, books and clothes. He has just become very sick himself and so Pastor Sika has asked us to pray for him. There are many children in Togo who have to work to help their family as they are all so poor. Let's pray that they will come to know Jesus so they can be encouraged and given hope for the future.

'Til next time,

love from your friend, Shirley

Facts from: www.lonelyplanet.com and wikipedia.

Answer to puzzle found in Matthew 6:14

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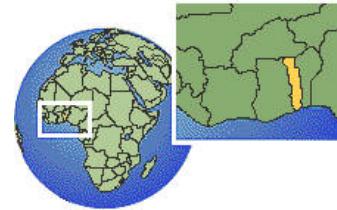
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World Kids
Fun facts for kids! True stories!
PAL Page

Issue no. 43 Feb/March 2008

Do you like tapioca pudding or Cream of Wheat?

It makes a nice hot breakfast on a cold day - but would you like to eat it for EVERY meal EVERY day? Many of the children who live in the country we will talk about this issue do indeed eat it EVERY DAY! They know it as "cassava", and they live in a very small country in West Africa called TOGO.



Can you see it on this map? It looks like a narrow strip of land running north to south into the Bay of Guinea off the Atlantic Ocean. Togo is only about 50-60 miles across and 300 miles long, so it is smaller than the state of West

Virginia, and less than half the size of England. Its neighbors are Ghana to the west, Benin to the east and Burkina Faso to the north. Although it is small, it spans SIX geographic zones with different types of plants, animals and climate. In the north is dry desert; then the Atkora Mountains (about 3,000ft high) run from SW to NE across the country; in the south it is tropical with marshes and lagoons that are hot and humid; finally along the coast there are over 30 miles of beautiful sandy beaches lined with coconut palms.



Togo is not a particularly famous country compared to many in Africa. Its flag has three green stripes separated by two yellow ones, and a white star on a red square background in one corner.



Many different tribes from surrounding areas entered Togo through the years, but then in the late 15th Century the Portuguese arrived. Over the next two hundred years, Togo was involved in the slave trade and that area even became known as the "Slave Coast". It is quite likely that many Westerners had African ancestors that actually came from Togo!

In 1884 it came under German rule until 1914, during the First World War, when it was administered by both the UK and France until it was given independence in 1960. As a result,



there is still some European influence seen in Togo (for example the court system is based on the French) and the main language spoken is French, although English and several tribal languages are also spoken. President Eyadema Gnassingbe took over as the military ruler in 1967, and he continued in power until he died in 2005, making him the longest-serving African

dictator. He was succeeded by his son, Faure, who is still in power after the country actually held a democratic election.

There are just over 6 million Togolese people, but ONE THIRD of them live under the poverty line. Life expectancy is only about 57 years and malaria, typhoid fever and yellow fever claim many lives because of poor hygiene and health provision.

There are 37 tribes, the three largest being the Ewe, Mina and Kabre. About 29% of the population is Christian, 20% Muslim and the other 51% follow tribal religions. This photo shows a market where boys are buying animal parts used in Voodoo ceremonies!



As with many tribal religions around the world, some beliefs and practices seem very strange to us. In some tribes twins are thought to be very lucky and so if one dies, a special statue, or Ibeji, is carved and kept on a special altar in the home. It is believed that the soul was split between the twin babies and so in this way the part of the soul of the dead twin can stay close to the other!

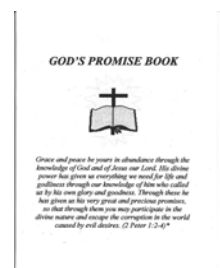


In the dry northern part of Togo are found some strange castle-like buildings made of dried clay. They form the "tata" or traditional village of the Taberma tribe.



The round towers are connected by chambers and the whole structure is well-fortified against warring neighbors, and also gives good protection against choking dusty winds called harmattan winds that come in the dry season.

Many people in Togo have not heard the Gospel and need to be set free from the fear of their tribal beliefs. There are some churches but most are in the cities, and often in the remote villages no-one has ever seen a bible. Only 60% of adults can read and write, so that also makes sharing the Gospel a challenge. We are working with our friend there, Pastor Sika Yawo and his team, to distribute Promise Books in the local language - little books that share over 60 scripture promises from the Bible. You can go to our website www.imofinc.org and download the pattern to make a promise book in English for yourself or to share with others. If you would like to help by giving a donation to buy promise books to give to the children of Togo, get in touch with us!



Can you think of one of God's promises from the Bible?
Read Jeremiah 29:11