

MISSIONARY ATLAS PROJECT MIDDLE EAST

Snap shot

Country Name: Saudi Arabia

Capital: Riyadh

Population: The population is 26,417,599 (5,576,076 are non-nationals) with a growth rate of 2.31%.

Breakdown of the population:

0-14 years is 38.2%; 15-64 years is 59.4%; 65 years and older is 2.4%

The birth rate is 29.56 births for every 1,000 persons and the death rate is 2.62 deaths for every 1000 persons. The infant mortality rate is 13.24 deaths for every 1000 live births. The fertility rate is 4.05 children for every woman.

The life expectancy is 75.46 years.

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/sa.html>

Flag:



Flag description: The green color is traditional in Muslim flags, with the Shahada or Islamic creed in the center in white letters, “There is non God but Allah and Mohammad

is his profit.” The saber points toward the hoist side of the flag. The present flag is related to the ruling family in Saudi Arabia.



Coat of Arms

Language:

The official language is Arabic.

Some dialect variations exist within some rural contexts, but most Saudis can understand each other. Standard Arabic is spoken and taught in public schools, is the official language of the central government, and is used in nearly all forms of media. Fus-Ha Arabic, also known as Classical Arabic, is the traditional dialect of the Qur'an and is used in most religious contexts. Several spoken dialects exist in some rural areas.

Religion: 92.83% of the people in Saudi Arabia are Muslim and Islam is growing at a rate of + 3.2% annually. The majority of the people are Wahhabi Sunni. Religions other than Islam are prohibited, religious meetings of non-Muslims, even among expatriates are forbidden, and evangelization by non-Muslims is restricted by force. Saudi Arabia stands in first place on the world persecution index.

Operation World

Society/Culture: Saudi Arabia is in a constant state of cultural flux. Ancient desert dwelling cultures dramatically changed with the quick spread of Islam. As the birthplace of Islam, Saudi Arabia has become one of the most conservative cultures in the world. Saudis are now facing a new cultural force. Western demand for oil has made Saudi Arabia very rich very quickly. Saudis are now facing significant challenges as they seek to preserve the culture of the past yet move ahead toward modernization brought by the arrival of tremendous oil wealth. Islam and westernization brought by money are the two most significant influences on Saudi culture.

Government: The country of Saudi Arabia is ruled by an absolute monarch. King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud became king in Aug of 2005 when his half-brother, King Faud died. This position is hereditary. The king's powers are theoretically limited in some ways. While he does have the final say in all matters, he usually makes his decisions within the bounds of Shari'a (Islamic) law. He also takes into consideration the consensus of important Islamic leaders (ulema), the opinions of the Saudi royal family, and general public opinion. The king has an appointed Council of Ministers to advise him. They are usually a male member of the royal Saudi family.

Economy: The Saudi economy is very dependent on oil revenues. Oil constitutes 90% of exports, making it the most important revenue. Saudi Arabia has 25% of the world's proven petroleum reserves and is the world's largest exporter of oil. Saudi Arabia produces and refines more petroleum than any other country in the world, making it a leading country in OPEC, an organization of oil producing countries.

Literacy: Literacy rates in Saudi Arabia are determined by the number over age 15 who can read and right. By this definition, the rate stands at 78.8%. 84.7% of males and 70.8% of females are literate. The Saudi government has introduced adult literacy programs across the country in an attempt to eradicate illiteracy. Female literacy has seen significant growth in recent years. In the 1960's, female literacy was at about two percent. Since universal female education was introduced, rates have risen to over 70%.

Geography: Saudi Arabia is located in western Asia on the Arab Peninsula. The Red Sea borders the west while the Persian Gulf, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar form the eastern boundary. Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait form the northern border with Yemen and Oman on the southern edge. The Saudi government claims an area of 2,217,949 square kilometers. Oppressive temperatures and aridity characterize most of the Saudi landscape. The average temperatures in the desert regions ranges from about 58° F (14.4° C) in the winter months to about 108° F (42° C) in the summer months. In the mountainous areas, temperatures range from about 73° F (22.8° C) and 87° F (30.6° C).

Most of the terrain is uninhabited rocky and sandy desert. When vegetation is present in these areas, it is usually tough weeds and shrubs that can resist the harsh environment. The majority of Saudi Arabia only receives about two to three inches of rain per year. Because of such low rainfall, less than two percent of the land is arable. This also gives rise to frequent sand and dust storms throughout the country. There are no permanent lakes or rivers, prompting authorities to build several desalinization plants along the coasts, providing much needed water for extensive irrigation.

History

For thousands of years, Saudi Arabia has been inhabited by semi nomadic and nomadic tribes. The earliest settlers most likely came down from what is now southern Iraq to the eastern part of Saudi Arabia. The towns and villages they established could be found near an occasional oasis or caravan route. Most of the people were subsistence farmers,

tradesmen, or made their living in some kind of animal husbandry. They were pagan idol worshipers, Jews, or members of heretical Christian groups.

During this pre-Islamic time, the trading city of Mecca was a center of pagan worship. Pilgrims came long distances to worship at the building that is now called the Ka'bah. Islamic legend says that Abraham, patriarch of Jews and Arabs, came and built the Ka'bah with his son Ishmael. The black cornerstone is said to have been sent by Allah to earth changing from white to black because of the sins of the world. Most non-Muslim scientists and scholars think that the black stone is a meteorite that the pagans saw fall from the sky and began worshipping.

One of the most significant events in the history of the Arab peninsula and Saudi Arabia was the religious, social, and political reforms made by a man named Muhammad. Born in A.D. 570 in the city of Mecca, Muhammad rejected the polytheism, disunity, and religious corruption among the Arabian tribes. Muhammad was worshipping in a cave on Mount Hira, outside of Mecca, when he received a revelation from Allah. The revelation was recited by the angel Gabriel and when written, became the Muslim Holy Book, the *Qu'ran*.

(accounts of the history of Saudi Arabia and Islam that is so entwined with the nation's story can be found in several sources: Brasswell, *What You Need to Know About Islam & Muslims*, Shahid and Smith, *Sharing the Good News with Followers of Islam*)

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Saudi_Arabia.pdf

In the mid 18th century, the Saudi state was established. The family of Al-Saud was led by Muhammad bin Saud, a local ruler. He made an alliance with an Islamic reformer, Muhammad Abd Al-Wahhab to create a new government. Over the next 150 years, many power struggles ensued between the Al-Saud family and other forces in the area such as Egypt, the Ottoman Empire, as well as other prominent families in the area.

In the early 1800s, the Saudi family was able to capture several prominent cities, including Mecca. This city, which had been ruled by the Ottoman Turks, called on their forces in Egypt to resolve the issue. The succeeding conflict lasted seven years, resulting in the expulsion of the Saudis from the holy city. Years later, because of various international political reasons, the Egyptian forces had to withdraw from the city. The departure gave the Saudi family an opportunity for the reconquest of Mecca.

In the late 1860s, internal conflicts led to the weakening of the Saudi family, opening the door for another powerful family to take over the Saudi capital of Riyadh and causing the Saudi family to have to flee to Kuwait. This family, the Ibn-Rashids were finally defeated when Abd al-Aziz Ibn-Saud drove the Rashids out of Riyadh in 1902 and defeated them soundly at a battle in 1906.

Abd al-Aziz Ibn-Saud has since been known simply as Ibn-Saud. Over the next 20 years, several other conflicts broke out. Each was an attempt by other families to break the Saudi power. Through the different conflicts, Ibn-Saud, with the support of the Wahabbi

clerics, expanded control to many other cities. On May 20, 1927, Ibn-Saud signed a treaty with the British government, legitimizing Saudi control and independence. On September 23, 1932, the various parts of the Saudi kingdom were officially consolidated and named the "Kingdom of Saudi Arabia." This day has become a national holiday in commemoration of the unification. It is also the day that most world powers recognized Saudi as a sovereign, independent nation. National Day, as it is called, is annually observed on September 22 or 23, corresponding with the day the Sun enters the astrological sign of Libra.

The discovery of oil in 1938 marked significant change for Saudi Arabia. Within a few years, nearly all of the major international oil companies were scrambling to develop the seemingly limitless fields of oil. WW II created tremendous demand for oil which Saudi leaders quickly capitalized. In twenty short years, 80% of Saudi Arabia's government revenues came from the sale of oil. In 1973, Saudi Arabia participated in the Arab Oil Embargo, cutting off oil supplies to the US and the Netherlands, causing a sharp increase in oil prices. Because of close relationships with US oil companies, Saudi Arabia has been able to build many processing facilities for crude oil. This has allowed them to significantly control and stabilize the flow of oil entering the world market, strengthening their influence on the international economic stage. They also hold considerable influence as the most powerful moderate member of OPEC, an organization of oil producing countries.

In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait and the Saudi asked the USA to send troops to defend the kingdom. Although Saudi Arabia was not invaded, the crisis stirred up demands for political change, and in 1993 the king set up a Consultative Council - members are appointed by the king and can comment on proposed laws.

The days of easy oil money have changed Saudi Arabia as the population has grown and doubled in twenty years. The average Saudi woman has six children, presenting Saudi Arabia with an impressive challenge. Two generations of generous public assistance from the oil has left the last generations to have a weak work ethic. The money has left the people dependent on cheap foreign labor for most everything.

In 1999, the first high-end tour groups entered the difficult-to-visit nation, but visas remain officially restricted to business travelers, Muslims making the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, and those few lucky folk able to convince a Saudi national to sponsor their visit. The terrorist attacks in the US in September 2001 were something of a landmark event for Saudis too. The involvement of Saudi nationals and the rumors of state sponsorship of terrorism tainted the monarchy. The US military pulled out of the country in 2003 hoping to ease tensions in the kingdom.

Popular discontent within the country at the House of Saud - especially in relation to undemocratic nature and its ties with the US - saw Islamic fundamentalism terror groups become more active. The liberalization of aspects of the criminal justice system in 2002 was greeted with cynicism. In 2003, suicide bombers reportedly linked to al-Qaeda killed 35 people in Riyadh.

The reform movement gathered momentum in late 2003, prompting the monarchy to announce municipal elections to be held within a year and that to grant the Consultative Council the power to propose legislation without royal consent, but to little effect. In 2004, numerous foreigners were kidnapped and executed, and violence marred the Hajj pilgrimage - 251 pilgrims were killed in a stampede.

Today the new King Abdullah promises change, but has made no immediate response to political and social unrest in the country.

[/www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/middle_east/saudi_arabia/history.ht](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/middle_east/saudi_arabia/history.ht)

Society and Culture

Saudi Arabia's most significant cultural and societal force has come as a result of the quick growth and influence of Islam. Before the 600's A.D., most of Arabia consisted of pagan tribes. Many of these worshiped idols. Other groups were sects of Christianity or Judaism. Islam was a cultural force because it worked to unify the Arabs through religion. Since then, Muslims all throughout Saudi Arabia as well as the Muslim world have come together in the name of Islam. Islam itself claims to be a religion that encompasses every aspect of life.

Because Islam is so prevalent in Saudi Arabia, it permeates the daily life of Saudis. As Saudi Arabs turned to Islam, they adopted the dictates of Muslim life. Saudi's are very proud of their Islamic heritage. Not only does Saudi Arabia contain the two most holy places in Islam, Mecca and Medina, but it is also considered to be the birthplace of Islam. Islam is so predominant in Saudi life that significant legislation has been passed in order to enforce Islamic tenants. This includes the creation of the Mutaween, a group of police-like officials whose job it is to enforce Islamic laws among the general public. Known as the Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, the Mutaween seek to enforce Muslim doctrine as well as put a stop to any un-Islamic activities. This includes arresting unrelated men and women who might be socializing together or seizing "un-Islamic" products such as Barbie dolls, CD's and DVD's of western music and movies.

They also enforce Islamic dietary laws by prohibiting the sale or consumption of all pork products and alcoholic beverages. Another responsibility of the mutaween is to find and prevent any proselytizing by non-Islamic groups. Most foreigners caught proselytizing are usually advised to stop but may be deported if they persist.

For centuries, Saudi Arabian culture has centered on tribal or nomadic life. In the 1950's, it was estimated that at least 50% of the population was nomadic or semi-nomadic. Tribes tended to focus on farming and trade while the nomads focused on animal husbandry. In the late 1800's, large amounts of oil were discovered and by the 1960's, oil production and export supplied the government with over 80% of its income. This immense surge in income has changed the culture in Saudi Arabia dramatically.

As western money poured in, new products came along with their corresponding culture. Saudis were confronted in full force with western culture. Many of the clerics focused on the evils they thought were negatively influencing Saudi culture while others saw the advantages of new technology and new ways of thinking. This schism continues as the older Saudis who remember living in mud huts find ways to adjust with all the change.

The foreign visitor will notice many aspects of culture that will impact them directly. Most of these have to do with the Islamic influence. Muslims are required to pray five times a day. The call to prayer can be heard coming from the tops of minarets throughout every town. Many Saudis will go to a mosque to pray during these five prayer times. Some smaller shops close for a short time to observe the prayer. Thursdays and Fridays make up the weekend with Friday being the holy day. Most businesses will be closed on Fridays. The holy month of Ramadan is strictly observed in Saudi Arabia. This means that most practicing Muslims will not eat or drink anything during daylight hours. Most restaurants will not serve food during this time. At dusk, Muslims break their fast and are allowed to eat during the night hours. Most families prepare large meals to break the fast.

Saudis only officially recognize two religious holidays. At the end of the month of Ramadan, Muslims celebrate Eid Al-Fitr. This official celebration runs from the 25th day of Ramadan till the 5th of the next month. Eid Al-Fitr is “the festival of breaking the fast.” The second holiday is Eid Al-Adha, or “the festival of sacrifice.” This holiday commemorates the event of the patriarch Abraham preparing to obediently sacrifice his son on an altar.

To celebrate Allah’s provision of a substitute sacrifice as well as Abraham’s obedience, Muslims kill a sheep, goat, or another animal then use the meat in a large meal. Eid Al-Adha is celebrated during the month of Dhul Hijjah from the 5th to the 13th day. Saudis also celebrate one national holiday. National Day commemorates the founding of the modern kingdom of Saudi Arabia and is observed on September 23rd each year. Unofficial holidays include Muharram, the Muslim new year; Mawlid An-Nabawi, the prophet Mohammad’s birthday; and ‘Id al-Isra wa al –Mi’raj, a celebration of Mohammad’s nocturnal and miraculous visit to heaven from Jerusalem.

Arabs are famous for their hospitality. Saudis are especially hospitable, making sure their guests are fed well and are comfortable. Traditionally, Saudi hosts will serve guests themselves, even if they have hired help. Their generosity includes urging guests to eat more. When eating with in a Saudi home, it is important to remember to eat and accept food with the right hand. The left hand is considered “unclean” because most Arabs use it to wipe themselves after using the toilet.

Most Saudi families eat using forks and knives except for traditional religious holidays. Many Saudis segregate during mealtimes with men eating separately from the women. This practice is especially common when guests are present who are not immediate family. Dates, while once considered a staple to the Saudi diet, are still eaten at many meals. A typical meal will include chicken or lamb on a pile of rice. Tea and/or coffee are served at most meals and gatherings.

Government

The Government of Saudi Arabia does not comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so. Saudi Arabia has moved from Tier 2 to Tier 3 because of its lack of progress in anti-trafficking efforts, particularly its failure to protect victims and prosecute those guilty of involuntary servitude. Despite reports of trafficking and abuses of domestic and other unskilled workers and children, there is evidence of only one Saudi Government prosecution of a Saudi employer for a trafficking-related offense during the reporting period. Some victims of abuse, due to procedural hurdles, choose to leave the country rather than confront their abusers in court. They are required first to file a complaint with the police before they are allowed access to shelters.

The government offers no legal aid to foreign victims and does not otherwise assist them in using the Saudi criminal justice system to bring their exploiters to justice. If a victim chooses to file a complaint, he or she is not allowed to work. The Saudi Government does, however, provide food and shelter for female workers who file complaints or run away from their employers. Criminal cases are adjudicated under Shariah (Shari'a) law, and there is no evidence trafficking victims are accorded legal assistance before and during Shariah legal proceedings.

Recently, international countries and groups have begun to pressure Saudi Arabia to make political reforms toward democracy. In early 2005, elections took place to fill low government positions. Critics have noticed several problem areas in Saudi Arabia's attempts toward democratization. Elections have had low turnout, women are not allowed to vote, and candidates voted into various offices still have no say in the most important government decisions. Polls have indicated that voters tended to choose a candidate based on religious sect or tribal affiliation rather than on the candidate's political platform. Critics have suggested that the king has allowed low-level elections in order to ease international pressures, and has no intention of significant political reform. Analysts have suggested that the Saudi public in general is complacent about their voting rights because of the large expenditures on social services by the rich central government. Others have praised the Saudi government for its steps toward democratization, however small they may be.

Saudi Arabia's legal system is based on Shari'a (Islamic law) and dictates many of the roles of the government. In 1983, a document called the Basic Law was introduced that delineates the different responsibilities and boundaries of the central government. While the Basic Law describes the duties of the king, he is not obligated to obey it.

Non-Muslim visitors should know that they will need an invitation from a Saudi citizen or business. While in Saudi Arabia, visitors will be under Islamic law as interpreted by the Saudi government. Also, visitors must obtain an exit visa in order to leave the country.

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+sa0009\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+sa0009))

Economy

40% of the GDP comes from the oil sector while 35% comes from the private sector. Recent population growth has put a strain on the government and has forced expenditures to be directed more toward education and social programs. The corresponding surge in unemployment has caused the Saudi government to push for private sector growth. They have attempted to relieve the problem by creating more jobs through the privatization of the telecommunication and electric services. The government has also developed eight new industrial cities near natural resources, with the largest one accommodating 30,000 workers in its many factories. The government also offers no-interest loans to Saudis who want to start a small business. Despite these measures, revenues have not been able to keep up with the growth, causing the per capita income to fall from \$25,000 in 1980 to \$8,000 in 2003. About 6.62 million people are eligible to work with 35% of them being non-nationals.

The monetary unit is the Saudi Riyal. One US dollar equals 3.745 Saudi Riyals. The Saudi work week runs from Saturday through Wednesday, with Thursday and Friday being the weekend. Because of the high spending on social programs as well as a healthy per capita income, there are very few humanitarian needs in Saudi Arabia.

Christian History

Large groups of Christians lived and served in Saudi Arabia until they were largely expelled by Muslim conquest some 1300 years ago. In pre-Islamic Arabia, clusters of Christian monasteries were located in the northern Hijaz, and Christians were known to have visited seventh-century Mecca. Some Arabic-speaking tribal people were Christian, including some from the Najdi interior and the well-known Ghassanids and Lakhmids on the Arabian borderlands with Constantinople. Najran, a city in the southwest of present-day Saudi Arabia, had a mixed population of Jews, Christians, and pagans, and had been ruled by a Jewish king only fifty years before Muhammad's birth. In sixth-century in Najran, Christianity was well established and was served by nuns, priests, bishops, and lay clergy.

After the establishment of Islam, Jews and Christians in Muslim territories could live according to their religious law, in their communities, and were exempted from military service if they accepted the position of *dhimmi*, or tolerated subject peoples. This status entailed recognition of Muslim authority, additional taxes, prohibition on proselytism among Muslims, and certain restrictions on political rights. Later, it became harder for non-Muslims to live in harmony with the Muslims.

Religion and government have no separation in Saudi Arabia and together go hand in hand in all areas of life. At one time, early Islamic Arabia tolerated non-Muslims, but today non-Muslims working and living in Saudi Arabia do not have freedom to worship or share. The Saudi religious police, the *Mutawwa*, keep close surveillance on Christian

groups and earn the reputation as the most oppressive religious enforcers in the world. Saudi Arabia stands first or second in the world in religious persecution.

In order to observe their religions Hindu, Sufi, Christian and Buddhist followers practice their religion in secret. They live in Saudi because they are workers who have migrated from other countries in order to make a living in Saudi Arabia. They must exercise care in practicing their religion and are required to respect Islam.

Today in Arabia, it is illegal to assemble and practice a religion other than Islam. Any native Saudi's who are believers are persecuted or killed for their faith. Saudi Arabia is second only to North Korea in persecution of Christians in the world. There are few known believers living inside or out of Saudi Arabia.

Missionaries in Saudi Arabia are tent makers who spend their time outside of their work developing relationships. Their work is hard and does not see a lot of fruit. They often spend time devoted to prayer walking. The gospel is shared through satellite television and Christian radio. Other methods include distribution of the Jesus film and literature in gateway cities like London and Paris

Religions

Saudi Arabia is a Muslim State with strict laws prohibiting the practice or dissemination of other religions. Religious freedom is totally absent. Saudi Arabia holds first place in the world's persecution index.

Non-Christian Groups

Islam Over 92.83% of the people in Saudi Arabia are Muslim, the vast majority *Wahhabi* Sunni. Due to birth rate and emigration, the Muslim groups in Saudi Arabia are increasing at a rate of + 3.2% annually.

The majority of Muslims in Saudi Arabia follow *Wahhabi* Islam that holds to an ultraorthodox approach to Muslim doctrine. Established by A Wahhab who died in 1787 promotes a literal interpretation of the Quran and strict following of Shariah law. They condemn idol and saint worship, despise Sufism, and frequently use the concept of jihad. The Wahhabi leaders have strongly criticized efforts to modernize or westernize the society. Wahhabi influence perpetuates the ban of any non-Muslims entering the holy city of Mecca. Current leaders in Saudi Arabia remain deeply influenced by Wahhabism.

Brasswell, *What You Need to Know About Islam & Muslims*.

Non-religious Persons who follow no religion or claim to be atheists make up 1.40 % of the population or as many 302,000 people. Most disturbing, this group is increasing at an annual rate of + 8.5 %.

Hindu Hindus make up 0.60% of the population or around 130,000 persons. This group is increasing at an amazing rate of + 28.8% annually.

Buddhist The Buddhist population is found primarily among the Chinese and numbers over 90,000 people (.42%).

Sikh Persons who follow Sikh religion number as many as 42,000 or 0.19% of the people

Baha'i Followers of Baha'i make up 0.02 % of the people or almost 4500 persons.

Roman Catholic The Roman Catholic makes up the bulk of those who follow non-Muslim religious practices in Saudi Arabia. The three Catholic groups claim 1.83 % of the population or some 280,000 people. Readers must remember that while some report Christianity as having 4.54 % of the people in Saudi Arabia, this number includes the 280,00 Catholics, 83,000 Orthodox, and some 19,000 marginal groups.

Orthodox The Orthodox groups in Saudi Arabia are divided into four parts and together claim almost 75,000 followers

Marginal Groups Marginal groups exist in four divisions and number over 18000 persons.

Christian Groups

Over 20 protestant groups report 128 congregations with more that 25,600 members. 30 independent Christian groups have more than 74,000 members.

Operation World

People Groups

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American, U.S. (61,000)

Many Americans work in Saudi Arabia in the areas of Engineering and mechanics contributing to the oil companies stationed there. Other Americans work in schools and teach ESL. American influence in Saudi contributes greatly to the economy of Saudi Arabia.

11913

Balochi, Southern (11,425)

The Southern Balochis are primarily Sunni Muslims and speak Balochi. They are also known by the names Baloch, Baluch, and Baluchi, Southern. They also live in Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Nepal, Somalia, and Sri Lanka. Their homeland is in an area of the border of Iran and Pakistan. Some say that the name Baluch means nomad while

others believe it is an old Persian words meaning the “cock’s crest.” They are believed to be descendants of Nimrod, son of Cush.

The Balochi live by an honor code that includes hospitality and mercy, honesty in dealing with others, and offering refuge for strangers. This honor code is the Baluchmayar and is very similar to traditional Muslims codes of honor. These are taught through songs and poetry.

Traditionally Baluchi were semi nomadic shepherds and farmers, with the chief crop being wheat. Their communities are organized into clans with male elders as the heads. They would live in settlements during the summer months and migrate in the winter to coastal areas to find grass for the livestock. Land was owned by tribes not individuals. The area of Pakistan where the largest group of Baluchs can be found is called "Baluchistan."

<http://www4.tpg.com.au/users/goshti/index.htm>

11914

Bedouin Arab (912,940)

The Bedouin of Saudi Arabia people are an unreached group with very few evangelical Christians. The Bedouin speak Najidi Arabic and are primarily Muslim. The Bible, Jesus Film, Christian Radio Broadcasting, and Audio recordings are not available in the Bedouin Arab’s native language. Some Bedouin may know Modern Standard Arabic and may have access to Christian resources in that language.

The word Bedouin comes from the Arabic word “bedawi” and simply means “desert dweller.” This name describes the Bedouin Arab of Saudi Arabia very well. While many Saudi Bedouins still live a nomadic, pastoral life, the majority have settled into farms, towns, and villages. The push for development and literacy among the Bedouins by the Saudi Government has endangered the nomadic lifestyle of years past. In Saudi Arabia, the Bedouins are highly regarded as being more pious in their devotion to Islam. Also, many Saudis consider their simple lifestyle closer to that of the Muslim prophet Mohammad and are highly revered.

Bedouin communities are usually ruled by a Sheikh who makes important decisions in the community and also serves as judge. He is most often limited in his power by a council of men and by custom and by the Quran.

More information about Arab Bedouins as well as Bedouins in general can be found at:

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bedouins

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/rescon/mgcbedu.html>

11915

Bengali (16,236)

The Bengali are primarily Sunni Muslim and speak Bengali. They are also known by the names Hindu; Bengali, Muslims; Bengali (Hindu); Bengali; and Bangladeshi. The Bengali are the original inhabitants of Bengal, the northeastern part of the South Asian

subcontinent. There are also Bengalis living in Burma (Myanmar), Canada, Fiji, France, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

11916

Black African (249,895)

Black Africans primarily speak Swahili. Many in Saudi Arabia also speak Arabic. A majority of Black Africans are Muslims. Others, however, continue to follow animistic African religions. The Bible, Jesus Film, Christian Radio Broadcasting, God's Story video, and Audio recordings are all available in Swahili. Many Black Africans are employed doing many of the jobs that Saudis would never want to do.

11918

Cham, Western (120)

The Cham people are descendants of the Champa who came from China to Vietnam and were influenced by Chinese and later by Indian culture. Champa was an important link in the Spice Route. The Cham people eventually spread to Cambodia and Thailand because of wars and struggles within Vietnam. Today the majority of the Cham live in Cambodia.

Champa received their livelihood from trade in sandalwood, slaves, and most likely piracy. The Hindu culture of India and the Islamic culture of the Malay were two dominant cultures. As a result, the Cham practice a distorted version of Shiite Islam. They are very poor people and an unreached people group.

<http://www.seamist.org/peoples/cham-laos.shtml>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Champa>

11919

Egyptian Arab (324,729)

Egyptian Arabs primarily speak Egyptian Arabic and are primarily Sunni Muslim. There are 46,306,000 speakers in the world. The New Testament was translated in 1932 but needs updating. Bible portions are available, also needing updating. There are three dialects: North Delta Arabic, South Central Delta Arabic and Cairene Arabic.

There are evangelical Egyptian Arabs in Egypt. Denominations are Coptic Orthodox Church with twenty-four dioceses, Roman Catholic with seven rites and 12 dioceses, Assembly of God, Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & the Middle East, and Conservative Baptist, Missions Society of St. Francis de Salas, Franciscans, and Society of Jesus (Jesuits). Eighty-two percent are Muslims.

They do have the Jesus Film and Audio recordings of the Gospel. They do have the Jesus Film and Audio recordings of the Gospel. Throughout many eras of history, Arab Christians have co-existed fairly peacefully with followers of the other religions of the Middle East. Even after the rapid expansion of Islam from the 7th century AD onwards, many Christians chose not to convert to Islam and instead maintain their pre-existing beliefs. Today many are evangelical, but many are Christian through tradition or name only. Arab Christians predate Arab Muslims, as there were many Arab tribes which

adhered to Christianity since the first century, including the Nabateans (whose language was Semitic but not Arab) and later, the Ghassanids, who protected the south-eastern frontiers of the Byzantine Empire in north Arabia. Arab Christians made significant contributions to the Arab civilization and still do. Some of the top poets at certain times were Arab Christians, and many Arab Christians were physicians, writers, government officials, and people of literature.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=102879&rog3=SA>

<http://www.peoplegroups.org/Detail.aspx?PID=11919>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_Christians

42795

Fayfa (22,081)

The Fayfa people speak Mehri, a language of eastern Yemen and Oman. The Bible has not been translated into Mehri. The Fayfa people also do not have access to the Jesus Film, Christian Radio broadcasting or audio recordings in their own language. Many in this group, however know some Arabic.

The sultanate entered into treaty relations with the British in the late 19th century and became a part of the Aden Protectorate. In the 1960s, Mahra declined to join the Federation of South Arabia but remained under British protection as part of the Protectorate of South Arabia. In 1967, the sultanate was abolished and Mahra became part of newly independent South Yemen which united with North Yemen in 1990 to become the Republic of Yemen. Today the Mahra area is the Al Mahrah Governorate of Yemen.

In addition to Arabic, Mehri, a Modern South Arabian language is spoken in Mahra.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mehri>

<http://www.peoplegroups.org/Detail.aspx?PID=42795>

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=103007&rog3=SA>

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Filipino (710,000)

The Filipinos are individuals of mixed race, Philippine and Spanish, from the 300 years of Spanish rule in the Philippines. They speak Tagalog and most are Christians. Some missionary organizations have stopped sending missionaries there because of the percentage of Christians and churches planted.

Often the Filipino women live in the home of the Arab family and cook, clean and take care of the children. They teach the children English and about Christianity in some instances. They are often mistreated in the homes they live in and are paid very little.

11922

Gulf Arab (541,216)

The Gulf Arab live primarily along southern edges of the Arabian Desert. They speak Gulf Arabic. The Gulf Arabs of Saudi Arabia originally were animal herders. They lived in the desert during the rainy winter season, then move to the deserts edge during the hot summer. Some remain in their traditional vocation and way of life, but because the changes to the culture because of the oil, many have moved to the cities.

They live in Oman and Saudi Arabia on the Southern shores of the Persian Gulf in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain.

33591

Han Chinese, Mandarin (80,000)

The Han Chinese people have a total of 1.3 billion people making them the largest people group in the world. They speak 600 Han dialects besides Mandarin, but they all share the same written language.

The Han people have immigrated to nearly every country in the world. They are very talented in the area of business and benefit the economy of other countries because of their talents in trade. They are largely unreached and keep their culture as they move to other parts of the world, but are often persecuted for keeping their traditions. They follow the traditional Chinese religion which is a combination of Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

The Union translation and the New Chinese Version are two translations of the Bible in Mandarin. They also have the Jesus film and Christian Broadcasting available in Mandarin.

<http://www.us.omf.org/content.asp?id=24524>

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=103686&rog3=RS>

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Hui

The Hui Chinese are very similar to the Han in their culture and traditions. They are traditionally jewelry makers and tradesmen. The Hui are Muslim and the Hui's and the Hans wear very similar clothing. Hui men traditionally wear a white skullcap and the women often wear a veil, keeping their faces covered.

<http://www.travelchinaguide.com/intro/nationality/hui/index.htm>

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Indonesian (72,000)

The Dutch colonized Indonesia in the early 17th century. The islands were then occupied by Japan from 1942 to 1945. After four years of UN negotiations, Netherlands agreed to relinquish its colony. Indonesia is the world's largest archipelagic state and home to the world's largest Muslim population.

The average income per person, according to Operation World is \$450. The current issues contributing to the economy include: alleviating poverty, preventing terrorism, consolidating democracy after four decades of authoritarianism, implementing financial sector reforms, stemming corruption, and holding the military and police accountable for human rights violations. Indonesia's current economic state has contributed to people leaving Indonesia to work in other places like Saudi Arabia.

Hundreds of low-skilled workers from India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and Kenya migrate voluntarily to Saudi Arabia;

some fall into conditions of mistreatment, suffering from physical and sexual abuse, non-payment, the withholding of travel documents, restrictions on their freedom and non-consensual contract changes. The money that the Indonesians make in Saudi Arabia is often sent to their relatives residing in Indonesia.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_trafficking_in_Saudi_Arabia

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=53>

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/id.html>

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Irani (123,000)

By definition, Persians (also known as Iranians) are an ethnic group classified primarily by language and secondly by location. The Persian language, called Farsi, is part of the Indo-Iranian language family, and is the official language of Iran. Dari, the language of the elite in Afghanistan, is a dialect of modern Persian.

Around 1000 B.C., Persian groups began to settle in the territory that is now Iran. Loosely associated Persian tribes became a more cohesive political unit under the Achaemenian dynasty. Their unity soon made them the dominant ethnic group in the region.

For 1,200 years, Persia maintained a culture that became increasingly more complex and rigid. This laid the foundation for a successful Arabian conquest in the seventh century A.D. It was not until the Islamic revolution of 1979 that changes came both to Iran and to the Persian people.

Most Persians now live either in Iran or in one of the nearby Middle Eastern countries, small Persian communities can also be found in many other nations around the world.

www.joshuaproject.org

42796

Jordanian Arab (94,950)

The Levant Arabs originally settled all over the Arabian Peninsula and later migrated to North Africa. Today, several hundred thousand Levant Arabs live along the northern edges of the Arabian Desert. They are spread from Israel to Kuwait and as far east as Iran. "Levant" is a broad term that includes several groups of Arabs: the Jordanian, Palestinian, Iraqi, Arabic Jewish, Chaldean, and Syrian Arabs.

Most scholars consider Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula to be the original Arabs. The Arabian culture was developed by tribes of nomads and villagers who lived in the Arabian Desert for many centuries. It was also from there that Arab migrations began, eventually leading to the expansion of the Arab world.

The Levant Arabs have had a close association with Islam throughout their history; and today, all of them except for the Arabic Jewish Arabs are Muslims. The two main branches of Islam in the region are the Shi'ites and Shafiites. Most Levant Arabs speak Arabic, with varying local dialects.

11927**Kabardian** (Circassian) (20,723)

The Circassian people originated in the Soviet Union. As the result of bloody wars, about 90 percent of the people were either killed or fled to various parts of the world in the 1800's. Christianity was introduced among the Circassians between the sixth and twelfth centuries by Byzantine missionaries, but later Islam came to the Soviet Union and was forced on the people.

The Circassians raise horses and specialize in animal husbandry. They have kept many traditions through history. They took their talents in raising and training animals to other countries of migration and the Kabartai horse was adopted as the famous "Arabian Horse."

00000**Korean** (113,000)

Many South Koreans work in Saudi Arabia. They work in businesses and in factories. Recently it has been discovered that North Korea is also sending workers to Saudi Arabia. They are sending people to work in factories around the world for low wages and the money is given back to the North Korean government.

The workers are allowed to keep very small amounts for hard labor. They are considered 'slaves' by much of the world, but the government in North Korea has told the workers that this is their privilege.

42797**Lebanese Arab** (114,253)

The Lebanese Arabs speak Arabic, North Levantine Spoken Arabic. They are primarily Muslim. The Bible is available but the Jesus Film, and gospel recordings are not. Most Lebanese are descendants of the Canaanites who lived in Lebanon about 5,000 years ago. The Lebanese Arabs living in Qatar follow most traditional Arab practices.

42798**Mahra** (18,770)

The Mahra are one of the smaller groups of Arabs in the country, composing less than 1% of the total population. The Mahra live in the far southeastern edge of Saudi Arabia near the borders of Yemen and Oman. They speak an Arabic dialect called Mahri or Harsusi.

The southeastern section of Saudi Arabia has developed a social structure based on a tribal placement system. The tribes are classified into levels of nobility based upon genealogy, responsibility, and marital freedom. The Sunni Muslim Mahra are classified as semi-nomadic warriors, which is, by Arab standards, a position of low recognition
www.joshuaproject.net

11929**Malay** (10,485)

While the Malay are spread throughout southeastern Asia, the majority are centered in the country of Malaysia. There, they make up about half of the population, sharing the country with Chinese and Indian minorities. The dispersal of the Malay was in progress by the fifth century A.D., when the Malay began to dominate local trade in southeastern Asia and long distance trade between northwestern India and southern China. Their domination of sea trade continued until the 1500's and even into the European colonial period.

In addition to sea trade, some Malay may have been transported as slaves in the 1700's; others were political exiles. The most important Malay minorities live in Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore, and Thailand. In Thailand, they are the majority population of the four southernmost provinces. There are smaller communities in Madagascar, Taiwan, Myanmar, Yemen, the United Kingdom, and the southern Philippines. In these countries they are referred to as "Coastal Malay."

46418

Northern Yemeni (270,608)

Northern Yemeni people speak Sanaani. They live in Northern Yemen and some have migrated into Saudi Arabia.

11931

Omani Arab (82,891)

The Omani Arabs in Saudi Arabia make up only one percent of the country's total population. They live in the scattered oases of the Eastern province (or Eastern lowlands), located along the Persian Gulf. The Omani are set apart from other Saudi Arabians by their unique use of the Southeast Asian Colloquial Arabic language and by their culture, which has been influenced by the Ibadi Muslim faith.

Saudi Arabia is a large Middle Eastern nation covering three-fourths of the Arabian Peninsula. Most of it is a vast desert where few people live and little or nothing grows. However, lying beneath its surface is half of the world's petroleum reserves. Today, Saudi Arabia exports more oil than any other nation. Wealth from these exports has made it a leading economic power in the Middle East as well as a land of contrasts. For example, camel caravans and mud houses can still be found next to newly constructed highways and apartment buildings.

42799

Palestinian Arab (137,105)

Palestinian Arabs fall into a category classified as Levant Arabs. "Levant" is a broad term that includes several groups of Arabs: the Jordanian, Palestinian, Iraqi, Arabic Jewish, Chaldean, and Syrian Arabs. Today, several hundred thousand Levant Arabs live along the northern edges of the Arabian Desert. They are spread from Israel to Kuwait and as far east as Iran. Small groups can also be found in North Africa.

Most scholars consider Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula to be the original Arabs. The Arabian culture was developed by tribes of nomads and villagers who lived in the

Arabian Desert. It was also from there that Arab migrations began, eventually leading to the expansion of the Arab world.

The Palestinian Arabs have had a close association with Islam throughout their history; and today, most of them are Muslims. However, there has long been a sizable contingent of committed Christians among the Palestinian Arabs. The two main branches of Islam in the region are the Shi'ites and Shafiites. Palestinian Arabs speak an Arabic language called Mashriqi, with various local dialects.

The Palestinian Arabs speak North Levantine Spoken Arabic. Portions of the New Testament are available. The Jesus Film and other recordings of the gospel are not available. Palestinian Arabs are classified with several other Arab groups such as the Jordanian, Palestinian, Iraqi, Arabic, Jewish, Chaldean, and Syrian Arabs. Many of the Levant Arabs live along the northern edge of the Arabian Desert. Palestinian Arabs have had a close tie with Islam throughout their history. A small percentage of them are not Muslim, the Jewish Arabs.

Palestinian Arabs can be found in villages near fertile regions and in the foothills of less arid regions. Though they are found in towns they are still tribal. Sheiks rule the various tribes and villages are very easily defended based on the building design. Social life is important to Palestinian Arabs. One will remove their shoes when entering an Arab's home. Coffee is often served to guests. There are different classes of Arab social structure. Women wear veils in town and in the home. It is becoming more acceptable for Arabs to choose their own mates but arranged marriages still exist. Children are valued as an asset and women therefore are valued for their ability to bear children.

There are only a few known Christians among the Palestinian Arabs and conversion can be very costly. Many Palestinian Arabs live in restricted areas and it is challenging to present them with the gospel.

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Punjabi (533,000)

A vast majority of the Punjabi live in India and Pakistan; however, communities can also be found in many other countries. Punjabi differ from country to country, but they have retained much of their traditional culture.

The name "Punjabi" is used to describe both those who speak Punjabi, and those who inhabit India and Pakistan. It is primarily spoken in the major regions of India and Pakistan.

There are many different social classes and occupational sub-groups among the Punjabi. Modern Punjabi culture was largely shaped by the partitioning of India and Pakistan in 1947. This event resulted in massive migrations that separated the Muslims from the Hindus and Sikhs who follow a combination of Islam and Hinduism.

11933**Saudi Arab (Hajazi) (7,313,966)**

The Arab culture was developed by tribes of nomads and villagers who lived in the Arabian Desert. It was from there that Arab migrations throughout the Middle East and northern Africa began, leading to the expansion of the Arab world. Today, Saudi Arabia is home to a number of different types of Arabs. The Gulf Arab (also known as the Saudi Arab) live primarily along southern edges of the Arabian Desert. They speak Gulf Arabic.

There are two basic classes of Arabs: the true nomads and the fellahin, or those who have embraced farming. The nomads are best known for their journeys across barren deserts on camels, occasionally raiding caravans that cross their paths. The fellahin are more settled, living on the edge of the desert.

The Gulf Arab of Saudi Arabia are primarily animal herders. They move into the desert during the rainy winter season, then back to the desert's edge during the dry, hot summer months.

46419**Saudi Arab (Najidi) (8,659,457)**

The traditional homeland of the Bedouin Arab is the Arabian Desert; however, some Bedouin groups have migrated north into the Negev Desert region. Jordan was one of the first lands to be inhabited by the Bedouin, and today many Bedouin still live there, primarily raising sheep and goats.

The Bedouin fall into two basic social classes. One class is known as the "true" Bedouin, and they live as nomadic shepherds. The other group has embraced farming and is known as the fellahin. The fellahin lead a more settled life on the edge of the desert. In contrast, the "true" Bedouin have been known for raiding any caravans that cross their paths while journeying across barren deserts. They move into the desert during the rainy winter seasons and back to the desert's edge during the hot, dry summers. They speak Badawi, or as it is more commonly called, Bedouin Arabic.

11934**Saudi Arabian Sign Language (1,217,800)****42800****Shahara (37,539)**

People who speak Geblet or also called Shehri and who live primarily in southwest Oman near the border of Yemen. The region they live in Oman is called Dofar. The people live in the mountains north of Salalah.

11935

Somali (41,447)

Ten million Somali live scattered across eight countries in the northeastern portion of Africa, commonly called the "Horn of Africa," and in the Middle East. Nearly five million live in the Republic of Somalia. They are one of the most homogenous people groups in Africa, speaking a common language, adhering to a single faith, and sharing a cultural heritage.

The Somali first appeared in Africa around 1200 A.D., and began expanding westward and southward about 150 years later. They converted to Islam around 1550, under the influence of Arab traders that had settled along the coast of present-day Somalia.

Somalia is located on the Horn of East Africa. It has a tropical climate that varies little throughout the year. With an average rainfall of less than 11 inches, droughts are a common occurrence. In the 1970's and 1980's, droughts in the northern region forced the Somali nomads to migrate farther south.

11936**Sudanese Arab** (93,088)

The Sudanese Arabs originated in the Khartoum region of Sudan many centuries ago. Today, they live primarily in northern and central Sudan, and in Egypt. A few groups are also scattered in Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, Libya, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates.

The first "pure" Arabs were called "Bedouins." They were tribal nomads from Saudi Arabia, famous for their love of poetry and war. The Sudanese are a tribe who branched off of the Bedouins. They are a heterogeneous people with a mixture of diverse blood and cultures. Their native language is called Sudani or Khartoum Arabic, and is a dialect of Arabic.

The ability to speak Arabic, or one of its dialects, has long been a unifying factor among the Arab people. The fact that most Arabs are Muslims has also served to unify them. The Islamic religion, which developed during the seventh century, gave the Arab-speaking villagers and the nomadic Bedouins common ground. Over the centuries, Arab Muslims have traveled across the Middle East and North Africa, spreading Islam to all who would accept it.

42801**Syrian Arab** (114,253)

The Syrian Arab is in relation to the Levant Arabs who originally settled all over the Arabian Peninsula and later migrated to North Africa. Today, several hundred thousand Levant Arabs live along the northern edges of the Arabian Desert. They are spread from Israel to Kuwait and as far east as Iran. "Levant" is a broad term that includes several groups of Arabs: the Jordanian, Palestinian, Iraqi, Arabic Jewish, Chaldean, and Syrian Arabs.

The Levant Arabs have had a close association with Islam throughout their history; and today, all of them except for the Arabic Jewish Arabs are Muslims. The two main

branches of Islam in the region are the Shi'ites and Shafiites. Most Levant Arabs speak an Arabic language with varying local dialects. Others speak an Arabic language known as Mashriqi

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Tamil (43,000)

The Tamil people are an ethnic group from South Asia with a recorded history going back more than two thousand years. The oldest Tamil communities are in southern India and northeastern Sri Lanka. There are also a number of Tamil emigrant communities scattered to Malaysia, Singapore, Fiji, Mauritius, and South Africa, with more recent emigrants also found in Australia, Canada, and parts of Europe.

Unlike many ethnic groups, the Tamils have never been governed by a single political entity; Tamizhagam, the traditional name for the Tamil lands, has always been under the rule of more than one kingdom or state. Despite this, the Tamil cultural identity has always been strong. Historically, this identity has been primarily linguistic, with Tamils being those whose first language was Tamil. Recently, the definition has been broadened to include emigrants of Tamil descent who maintain Tamil traditions who do not speak the language. There are an about 74 million Tamils around the world.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil_people

42802

Tihami Arab (110,408)

This people group mainly resides in South Yemen, but some live along the coast of Saudi Arabia. They speak the Tihami dialect, which differs in many ways from the other Arabic dialects. They have many Jewish links that are those Jews who live, or whose recent ancestors lived, in Yemen, on the southern tip of the Arabian peninsula. They are sometimes considered to be Mizrahi.

11937

Turk (20,723)

The presence of Turks in Arabia has existed for a long time. The Turks arrived in Antolia, Turkey (Asia Minor) in the eleventh century as conquering warriors. By the year 1299, the Ottoman Dynasty began ruling over what would soon become a vast empire. Over twenty states fell under the Ottoman rule, including present day Hungary, Yugoslavia, Southern Russia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Libya, and Saudi Arabia. This huge empire lasted until Turkey became a republic in 1923.

Because of the empire's size, emigrations, and conquests, Turks were soon scattered throughout many areas outside of Turkey. Nevertheless, one common bond continued to link them together: their language. They speak Turkish or Turkce, a Southwestern Oghuz-Turkic language. Today, major Turkish communities can be found throughout Turkey, as well as Europe, the Middle East, and even Australia.

There are now Christian materials available in the fifteen different dialects of Turkish people.

<http://www.prayway.com/unreached/clusters/8006.html>

11938

Urdu (465,657)

The term "Urdu" is not a description of a specific people. It is a language description of a group of people. Urdu-speaking Muslims are not a specific ethnic group, but people who have been dispersed geographically. They possess group similarities based on cultural factors, the Islamic religion, and the Urdu language.

Urdu is an Indo-Iranian language that developed from the Hindi language. Most of the Urdu speakers reside in Pakistan and northern India. However, in recent times many have moved to various countries in the Persian Gulf, searching for economic opportunities. The Urdu speakers are the descendants of Arab merchants and soldiers, Turks, Persians, and Pushtuns.

They are mainly Muslims who follow the Hanafite school of Islam. The Bible and Jesus film have been translated into Urdu. Christian radio and television are also available in Urdu, but the people remain unreached. There is believed to be near one percent Christian within the Urdu people group. The strict Urdu Muslims believe the Christian practices to be pagan.

11939

Uyghur (6,535)

The Uighur are a Turkic people located primarily in northwestern China. Significant communities can also be found in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, with a small number in Afghanistan. Their origins can be traced back to Turkish nomads who lived in Siberia. They became independent of the Turks in 744 AD, but were forced to leave their homeland in 840 AD. It was then that most of them immigrated to western China. Uighur literally means "allied." For centuries, the Uighur were an important link between China and the rest of the world. They lived along the silk road and worked as caravan drivers transporting Chinese goods

Traditionally, the Uighur were shepherds and oasis farmers. Today, however, many of them are involved in businesses such as manufacturing, mining, oil drilling, trading, and transportation.

Islam has been the dominant religion of the Uighur since the tenth century. In the past, they were Muslim in name only; however, there is some renewal that is currently taking place among them. Today, all of the Uighur in Kyrgyzstan claim to be Muslims of the Hanafite school. As Muslims, they are taught that Christians are their enemies.

11940

Yemeni Arab (Taizzi) (541,216)

Yemeni Arabs consists of four classes of people: the wealthy Sayyid, who trace their lineage back to Mohammad's grandson; the Qatani, or tribesmen; the Shafi'ite townsmen, who are merchants and craftsmen; and the Akhdam, who are the slaves.

The Yemeni Arab have had a close association with Islam throughout their history and nearly all of the Yemeni Arab are Muslims. They range in their Muslim beliefs as half of them are Zaydis Muslims, who are a fanatical sect believing in the importance of jihad and warring in Islam. 40% of the people are Shafi'ites, and 5% are Ismailis. Yemeni Arab society is tribal with over 1,700 different tribes. The tribes are ruled by sheiks, who often fight with each other. The people live in fortress-like villages that can be easily defended.

Missiological Implications

1. Evangelical Christians should mount a vast prayer movement for the people of Saudi Arabia. Former Muslims around the world are reporting conversion experiences through visions of the Risen Christ. Pray that in this nation with such restrictions on outward witness that the Holy Spirit will operate with power in ways to reach Saudis who cannot be contacted directly with a Christian witness.
2. Evangelical Christians should continue to seek means of sharing the gospel with the peoples in Saudi Arabia. The use of radio and television can open some doors for witness, although those discovered with Christian literature of any form can be subject to intense persecution.
3. Evangelical Christians should seek to meet the religious needs of many of the expatriate groups in the country. While also subject to religious restrictions, some means of reaching the expatriates such as the Cham, Filipino, Chinese (Han and Hui), Korean, Indonesian, and others should be sought. Perhaps a method of enlisting and training persons from these groups to move to Saudi Arabia for purposes of witness and evangelism among their own people would prove effective.
4. Evangelical Christians should introduce methods of house church worship to the believers in Saudi Arabia but should wed these methods with means of remaining below the observance of the religious police, the Mutawwa.
5. Evangelical Christians should seek means to evangelize Saudis who live, work, and study outside Saudi Arabia. These thousands can be contact while outside Saudi Arabia on business, travel, and study and presented the claims of Jesus.
6. Evangelical Christians should seek means of reaching the growing numbers of "non-religious" in Saudi Arabia. Over 300,000 persons in a group that is growing at a 8.5% rate is a tremendous challenge.
7. As indicated in number 1 above, prayer for the working of the Holy Spirit is the most promising method for evangelization of the Saudis.

Links

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/sa.html> population information

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+sa0009\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+sa0009))
government information

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Saudi_Arabia.pdf historical information

http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/middle_east/saudi_arabia/history.htm
historical information and politics

The following sources were used to obtain much of the people group information:

www.joshuaproject.org

www.peoplegroups.org

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+sa0014\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+sa0014)) Christian background history in Saudi Arabia.

<http://www4.tpg.com.au/users/goshti/index.htm> Baluchi information on people group and language.

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bedouins Bedouin people group

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/rescon/mgcbedu.html> Bedouin history and people

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Champa> Champa people, land and history

<http://www.seamist.org/peoples/cham-laos.shtml>

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=102879&rog3=SA>

<http://www.peoplegroups.org/Detail.aspx?PID=11919>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_Christians

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil_people

<http://www.prayway.com/unreached/clusters/8006.html>

Turkish History and people

