

# SAUDI ARABIA



## The Epicenter of Islam



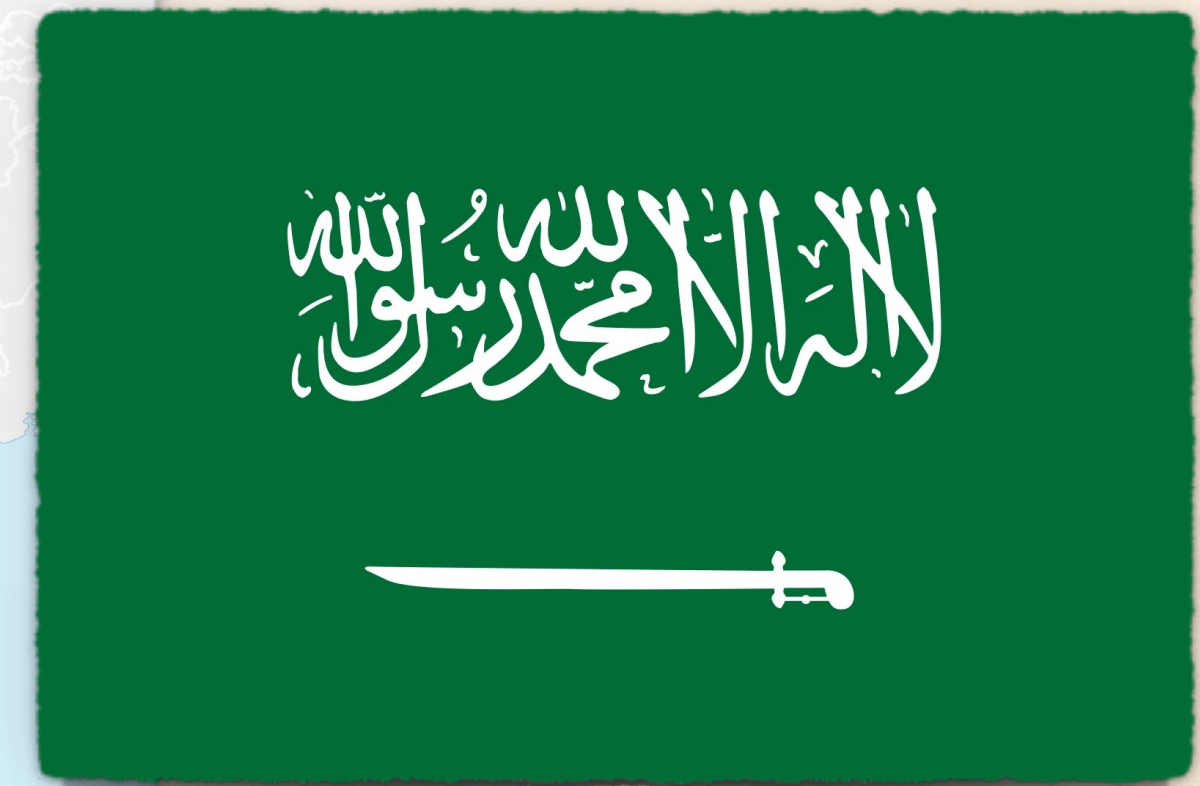
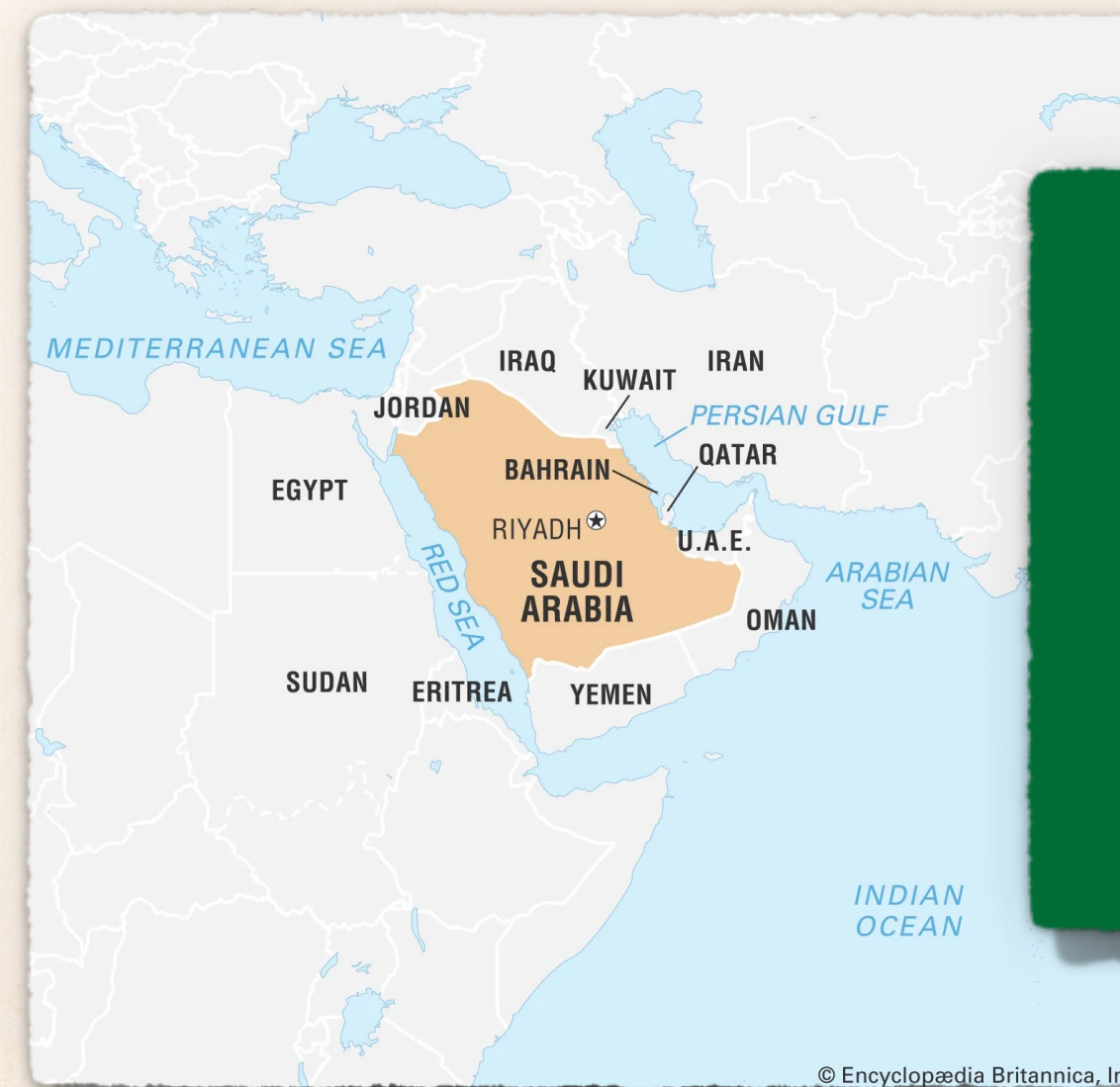


# SAUDI ARABIA

- ❖ Continent: Asia
- ❖ Population: 34,783,757
- ❖ Religion:
  - ❖ Muslim 91%
  - ❖ Christian 6%
  - ❖ Hindu 2%
  - ❖ Agnostic 1%

❖ Literacy Rate: 97.6%

❖ Unreached: 91.1%





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Known for its vast desert landscapes, Saudi Arabia also boasts beautiful coastlines along the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. This arid land is the birthplace of one of the fastest growing – and second largest – religions in the world: Islam. In place of a constitution, the nation abides by the laws of the Quran. The cities of Mecca and Medina are sacred destinations, drawing Muslims from around the world. The Hajj pilgrimage brings millions to Mecca every year! The nation's Islamic heritage, located at the center of ancient trade routes, and Bedouin traditions help form its rich cultural identity. About 16% of the world's proven oil can be found here, adding to its great global significance.





Saudi Arabia has one of the world's worst religious freedom and human rights records. Freedoms of speech, press, and worship are virtually nonexistent. King Abdullah (1995-2015) worked to modernize the nation through social and economic initiatives. Elections were first held in 2005. And in 2015, women were allowed to vote – with some winning seats on municipal councils. Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud became king in 2015 and named his son, Prince Mohammad bin Salman, the Crown Prince. Vowing to leave behind “extremist ideologies” for a “more moderate Islam,” the Crown Prince has worked to give women a bit more freedom while purging political and business corruption.





The nation is even opening its doors to tourism and cinemas – both unthinkable a few years ago. Even so, Saudi Arabia continues to invest billions of dollars exporting Wahhabi Islam, a fundamentalist sect that produces many extremists. Additionally, strict laws against male and female interactions have led many to secret lives of homosexuality, the penalty of which is imprisonment and death. As the country becomes more dependent on oil, the gap between rich and poor grows. This nation is also heavily involved in multiple proxy wars that are destabilizing the region (i.e., Yemen, Syria, Libya, and Iraq).





Saudi Arabia is the epicenter of Islam and one of the world's most oppressive nations. Most Saudis are Wahhabi Sunnis, following a strict and literal interpretation of the Quran. People of other faiths are forbidden to practice openly, and most Christians are migrants. Strict religious laws make it extremely difficult for believers to practice their faith. Christian expatriates are heavily monitored by government authorities, and Saudis who follow Jesus face discrimination, imprisonment, abuse, and even death. Though numbers are unreliable, the secret Church is growing, and believers are present in every city.



# PRAYER POINTS

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“IF YOU ASK ME ANYTHING IN MY NAME, I WILL DO IT.” JOHN 14:14

- ❖ Pray for recent political and social shifts to open doors for Gospel proclamation.
- ❖ Pray for the emergence of a bold, vibrant, and Spirit-filled Saudi Church.
- ❖ Pray for the epicenter of Islam to become a launch pad for the Gospel to the Muslim world.