

Monday 9th November

Jordan

The Kingdom of Jordan has borders with Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria and Israel. It is strategically placed at the crossroads of Asia, Africa and Europe and has been repeatedly referred to as an 'oasis of stability' in a turbulent region.



It is a country with a rich biblical heritage. There are many Old and New Testament sites bearing witness to this, including Mount Nebo where Moses saw the Promised Land and Bethany where John baptised Jesus. In 633, Islam came to Jordan, a year after Muhammad's death. Today the country's population of over 10 million is 95% Muslim, mostly Sunni, and about 4% Christian.

Today the country faces many challenges. In March, the country went quickly into strict lockdown when the first cases of Covid-19 were reported. These restrictions were eased as the virus was controlled. However, by the beginning of October, the Kingdom had seen an increase in the number of coronavirus cases over the past few weeks, with some days now seeing over 3,000 cases reported daily.

At the end of September, King Abdullah dissolved Parliament, making way for an election this week on November 10th. Prime Minister Omar al-Razzaz was asked to stay on in a caretaker capacity until then. He was appointed by the King in 2018 to defuse the biggest protests in years after tax increases were brought on the instruction of the International Monetary Fund to reduce Jordan's large public debt. Jordan's economy is expected to shrink by 6% this year as it tackles its worst economic crisis in many years, with unemployment and poverty aggravated by the pandemic. Jobs are scarce -many move to oil-rich countries in the Gulf looking for employment. Tourism is important to Jordan's economy, but it has been greatly impacted this year.

- In this time of upheaval and change, let's pray for peace and stability in this country.
- Pray for God's kingdom to come in the Kingdom of Jordan, bringing blessing and abundance.
- Pray for the Parliamentary elections taking place this week and for good and righteous leaders to be appointed.

Source of some content: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/3/jordans-king-abdullah-accepts-resignation-of-prime-minister>

Tuesday 10th November

King Abdullah II

"Pray ...for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." 1 Tim 2:2

King Abdullah II is one of the most influential Muslims in the world. He is named after his great-



grandfather, Abdullah I, the founder of modern Jordan. He has been monarch since 1999 and has nominal but nonetheless extensive powers. He appoints governments, approves legislation and can dissolve parliament. He believes he is a 41st generation direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad and he is the head of the Hashemite Dynasty, the oldest ruling dynasty in the Muslim world.

King Abdullah is deeply respected and admired within Jordan. He is seen as an honourable man with honourable intentions. In a region full of instability and discord, Jordan stands as a beacon of stability and reasonableness, largely due to the sensible policies of King Abdullah and his father before him. He is a strong political bridge between the Middle East and the West. His wife, Queen Rania, is very active in humanitarian and educational causes.

King Abdullah once said, "To me, the call to love is a call to concrete action. Our world needs to confront challenges to our shared humanity and values. They are the very ground of the coexistence and harmony our future depends on."

He is a champion of moderate traditional Sunni Islam and maintains good relations with most countries, both local and international, including Israel. He permits Christian denominations to function and allows them to use church law for family matters rather than Sharia law, which governs every other aspect of Jordanians' lives.

I encourage you to watch this video from PrayerCast about King Abdullah to inspire and inform your prayers: <https://prayercast.com/king-abdullah.html>

- Let's take a moment to thank God for King Abdullah and his rule and reign. Pray for him to know the truth of the kingdom of God and to grow in wisdom.
- Pray for followers of Jesus to be invited to the palace, where their call to love might impact his life, family and rule.
- Pray for King Abdullah to embrace Jesus as his Saviour and lead many Jordanian Arabs to do the same.

Source: <https://prayercast.com/king-abdullah.html>

Wednesday 11th November

Jordanian Arabs Muslim: 95%

The majority of Jordanian Arabs, both Jordanians as well as Palestinians who fled to Jordan after the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967, are Sunni Muslim. Jordanian Arabs are kind and friendly, ready to help anyone in need. Hospitality is central to Jordanian culture, with ever-present cups of coffee and tea offered to friends and strangers alike. Guests feast on the best a family has to offer.

Most Jordanians are Muslims and are unreached with the gospel. The following story about Abdu Rahman's life gives a good glimpse into what life is like for a conservative Jordanian following Islam. He is a typical religious Jordanian. He prays five times a day at the mosque, if he can get there, although if that is not possible, he will take out his prayer mat, face the direction of Mecca, and pray in the corner of his shop. On Friday he attends the sermon at the mosque along with other male family members and friends in his community. He gives faithfully to the poor, fasts during Ramadan and looks forward to the opportunity of going on pilgrimage to Mecca. For Abdu Rahman, Islam is more than a religion; it is his family, his heritage, his culture and his pride. It has enabled him to start a business and will be an important part of his marriage and how he raises his children. It is something he cannot question. To step away from it is to deny everything that he, his family and his community are. Islam is infused in every aspect of the lives of Muslim Jordanians. When they become believers of Jesus, it's a delicate process of remaining in their culture while adopting the new way of living in Christ.

Increasingly Jordanians are questioning the foundations of their faith, even the very nature of Islam itself and the character of Muhammad, particularly after a captured Jordanian pilot was burned alive by IS in 2015. Muslim-on-Muslim violence is seen as repugnant. While this leads some to atheism, it draws others to Jesus.

You may want to watch this video from PrayerCast for more prayer fuel for this unreached people group: <https://prayercast.com/jordanian-arab.html>

- Pray for Jordanian Muslims to be saved together as families and communities.
- Pray for Muslims to be set free from legalism, to be drawn to Jesus and to become new creations in Christ.
- Pray for Muslim background believers to redeem the beautiful aspects of Islam within their Muslim culture.

Sources of content: http://www.cryoutnow.org/uploads/7/3/5/6/73561751/30-day_prayer_guide_for_jordan.pdf and <https://prayercast.com/jordanian-arab.html>

Thursday 12th November

Christianity and the church in Jordan

In the early 20th century, Jordanian Christians made up nearly 20% of the population, much higher than today's estimated 4%. As possibly the only nation open to all Arabs, Jordan is becoming important in the training and preparation of new Christian leaders in the Arab world. Jordan's relative freedom and stability have made it possible for a lot of Christian literature and Bibles to be distributed there. Some churches are alive and growing, enjoying a strong government commitment to freedom of religion. Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Anglican are the denominations that make up most of Jordan's Christian population. Although the churches within Jordan generally have good relations with each other, only about 10% of the Christian population have meaningful relationships with Muslims. While Christians are well integrated into Jordanian society and have a high level of freedom, they are not free to evangelise Muslims.

However, years of hardship and much prayer are bringing a new openness. Christians no longer simply ask, "How we can reach Muslims?", but "How can we disciple the new believers?" Twenty years ago, it was unheard of for Muslims to come to Christ. Conversion to Christianity from Islam is costly; new believers risk losing their reputation, employment, and even their family (including their children). They are an oppressed minority. Many Muslim background believers still live isolated lives, not integrated into fellowships of other believers. Despite this, there are still Jordanian believers standing strong in their faith in Jesus and the ripple effect of these faithful followers is powerful.

Tomorrow we will read a couple of recent stories from Jordanian Arabs.

- Pray for more to come to know Jesus through Jordanian Muslim background believers who fearlessly share their faith.
- Ask God to strengthen, unify and grow the Jordanian Christian community.
- Pray for new believers to multiply and produce huge harvests.
- Ask for the church to have divine knowledge on how to train and disciple new believers to be true and loyal followers of Jesus.

Did you know? Like Arab Muslims, Arab Christians refer to God as Allah. The use of the term Allah in Arab Christian churches predates Islam by several centuries.

http://www.cryoutnow.org/uploads/7/3/5/6/73561751/30-day_prayer_guide_for_jordan.pdf

Friday 13th November

Jordanians search for Christ

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your household." Acts 16:31

Cry Out are a network of believers dedicated to seeing God's kingdom come and His will be done in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq.

In a recent prayer letter about Jordan, they shared: "During this season of coronavirus many people have been spending more time in their homes and on social media. Here are two stories of people who were searching for Jesus on social media and connected to believers in their country.

Ali from Jordan had many questions about the existence of God and communicated with an online believer. As they got acquainted, Ali began to ask many questions. He began to understand that the goal of our creation was love. They prayed together and the online believer shared his faith and encouraged Ali to meet a local believer who lived in the same city. Shortly after, Ali did meet with someone face-to-face. It was a good meeting where Ali even expressed a desire to get baptised. It is amazing to meet such open people that God is preparing. The Holy Spirit has done an amazing job through believers.

Another member of our network is visiting Ahmad and studying the Bible. During one visit, Ahmad's son came with his father and loved the conversation. Then he went to buy a bible and started to read it. We prayed that his son would experience Jesus' love and that he would start to grow in his

faith by Jesus' grace. Shortly afterwards, when they met for another bible study, Ahmad's daughter was there! She was so happy to hear the word and was joining in the study. She had good questions which our team member answered. Ahmad's son was searching and discovering more and more about Jesus. He asked many questions about the basic topics in Christianity."

- Let's pray for Ali and Ahmad and his family to be saved, to grow in their faith and to begin to share the gospel with people around them.
- Let's continue to pray for every worker and believer in this country and region as they bring the good news to those who do not yet know Jesus.
- Pray for new ways to take the gospel to the unreached and for wisdom in using social media to reach people with the message of hope.

Source: <http://www.cryoutnow.org/>

Saturday 14th November

Refugees in Jordan

For decades Jordanians have accepted wave after wave of refugees from neighbouring countries, because of their deep sense of hospitality. The first refugees were from Palestine, following the Arab-Israeli War in 1948-1949, while another wave of Palestinians arrived in 1967 following the Six-day War.

Following the 2003 Iraq war, over 1 million Iraqi refugees arrived in Jordan. Although many have since returned home, approximately 130,000 remain.



Zaatari camp by Wikimedia Commons

Syrian refugees make up the largest number, estimated to be at least 1.3 million. They face the daily hardships of financial struggles, exploitation, broken marriages, health issues and missing relatives in Syria. 85% live below the poverty line. At the beginning of September, two cases of coronavirus were confirmed in Azraq camp which is home to more than 40,000 people who have fled their country's civil war. More cases are expected. Zaatari camp in Jordan houses around 80,000 refugees, while many more live outside the camps.

Accepting refugees has come at a great cost to the county: rents have skyrocketed, jobs are scarce, and development money initially earmarked for Jordanians now flows to Syrian refugees, at a cost of £1.8 billion per year.

But God is working among refugees there. The government is happy for Christians to reach out to Syrian refugees – which they are bold in doing. Many Muslims are becoming believers. Syrians are becoming peacemakers as they gather and study the Scriptures.

- Let's ask God to bless Jordan for its history of taking in refugees and for continuing to do so despite the immense cost.
- Pray for healing and restoration for all refugees and for the many who have crossed into Jordan to hear the truth of the gospel clearly.
- Let's ask that, as refugees become followers of Christ, they will be seen as a blessing to Jordan.

Sources of some content: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/9/8/first-covid-19-cases-confirmed-in-jordan-camp-for-syrian-refugees> and <https://prayercast.com/jordanian-arab.html>