

# SAUDI ARABIA

## Having bold faith amid great risk

Saudi Arabia is the birthplace of Islam. It is where the prophet Muhammad was born and where Muslims believe the Qur'an was revealed to him. Mecca is the holiest city in the eyes of Muslims. It is where all Muslims must travel on *Hajj*, or pilgrimage, at one point in their lives. It is also completely closed to non-Muslims. If the people who live in Mecca never leave, they will never meet a follower of Christ.

### Why Pray?

Saudi Arabia is the most difficult place in the Middle East to be a Christian. Non-Muslims face many restrictions and cannot obtain Saudi citizenship. Non-Muslim places of worship are banned. Even meeting in someone's home as a group of believers is forbidden.

Despite this, many Christians have sacrificed their comfort to follow God's call on their lives to share the good news in Saudi Arabia. They share their faith with people who would face great sacrifices if they choose to follow Christ. Local people who make this decision are subject to the death penalty if their faith is discovered. Believers in Saudi Arabia face great risks but they also have bold faith.

### Amal's Story

Amal\* left his home in Lebanon more than 20 years ago after problems with his father and his wife. Tired and hungry and with no place to go, he found himself at a Christian monastery. The priest took him in, gave him food and a place to sleep, and became his friend and counsellor.

Eventually Amal found work assisting pilgrims in Mecca. He did the pilgrimage nine times! But the more he searched the Qur'an and other Muslim writings, he felt spiritually lost. Finding no life there, he became an atheist.

Having renounced his Muslim faith, he could no longer assist in the pilgrimage to Mecca. So, he moved to Turkey. But he entered with a fake visa and was caught. He was put in prison. We know through Paul that hope can be found even while in chains. It was while in Turkey that Amal found the Scriptures and started reading them. Since then, he has been in touch with one of our team and they led Amal to Christ! The new life he could not find in Saudi Arabia is now his through Jesus.

### Prayer Points

- Praise God for bringing Amal from a place of hopelessness to find hope and life through Christ.
- Pray for Christians whose lives are at risk each day as they live and proclaim Christ in Saudi Arabia.
- Pray for people who live in Mecca, for an opportunity to arise where they can hear about the gospel.
- Pray for the strongholds over Saudi Arabia to be broken in the name of Jesus.

## Next Steps

Luke 11:13 tells us "how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him." Will you continue to pray for believers in the Arab world.

You can sign up for prayer updates to help you pray at [pioneers.org/prayer-signup](https://pioneers.org/prayer-signup).