

**Cornerstone - Global Ministries**

# One Nation at a Time – SYRIA


**The Country**

Following the breakup of the Ottoman Empire during World War I, France administered Syria until its independence in 1946. The country lacked political stability, however, and experienced a series of military coups during its first decades. Syria united with Egypt in February 1958 to form the United Arab Republic. In September 1961, the two entities separated, and the Syrian Arab Republic was reestablished. In November 1970, Hafiz al-ASAD, a member of the Socialist Ba'th Party and the minority Alawite sect, seized power in a bloodless coup and brought political stability to the country. In the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Syria lost the Golan Heights to Israel. During the 1990s, Syria and Israel held occasional peace talks over its return. Following the death of President al-ASAD, his son, Bashar al-ASAD, was approved as president by popular referendum in July 2000. Syrian troops - stationed in Lebanon since 1976 in an ostensible peacekeeping role - were withdrawn in April 2005. During the July-August 2006 conflict between Israel and Hizballah, Syria placed its military forces on alert but did not intervene directly on behalf of its ally Hizballah.\*

**Facts and Figures**

**Capital City:** Damascus

**Population:** 20,178,485

**Religion:** Sunni Muslim 74%, other Muslim (includes Alawite, Druze) 16%, Christian (various denominations) 10%, Jewish (tiny communities in Damascus, Al Qamishli, and Aleppo)

**Language:** Arabic (official); Kurdish, Armenian, Aramaic, Circassian widely understood; French, English somewhat understood

**The Church**

Despite enjoying freedom to worship and witness within their communities, Syrian Christians are monitored. Pray that those who have come to Christ might be embraced by the church and withstand persecution from the Islamic community. \*

**Our Prayer**

- Pray that the current good standing of Evangelicals might continue.
- Pray also that they might discern how best to share the Gospel, witness to those around them, and develop love for their Muslim neighbors.
- Pray for the Muslim majority in Syria. Conversions out of Islam are few, but increasing. Please pray that false conceptions of what a Christian is might be enlightened through contacts with believers who have a holy lifestyle and radiant witness.
- Christian literature and the Jesus film are widely distributed and freely available. Pray that these strategic and boundary-less tools would bear great fruit, as missionaries are not allowed to reside in Syria.
- Pray that the Word of God would have a powerful impact on all those who read it, and that many non-Christians would follow Jesus as a result of these ministries.

**Our Partnerships**

- Please pray for a **missionary family** that has just recently returned to Syria after having their visas rejected. Unfortunately, they have not been allowed re-entry and are staying in a neighboring country until further notice. Pray that they would be a light in their current situation and not be discouraged by the continual challenges.
- Please pray for our other **missionary family** that was sent back to the United States after having resided in Syria for over 13 years. Pray that they may be allowed to return and continue nurturing the relationships with the nationals and their teammates. Pray for strength, perseverance, patience, and encouragement while they await permission to return or are assigned another field.

\*Some statistics and information were gathered from the Operation World Prayer Calendar and CIA World Factbook.



Grace and peace to you in our Lord! In order to facilitate a global perspective amongst the staff and communities, we have put together a template to encourage the body to pray for a specific country and partnership each week.

**Pray for All People:**

**1** First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, **2** for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. **3** This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, **4** who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

--1 Timothy.2:1-4

"...The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."

--James.5:16b

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact us at 805.581.9532 or e-mail:

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