

- Population: 5,766,000
- Religious Populations: Muslim (largely Sunni) 96%, Christian 3%

In the Bible we learn that a man named Simon of Cyrene, who was passing through Jerusalem on a journey, was forced to bear the cross of Jesus (Mark 15:21). Cyrene was the region around present-day Benghazi in eastern Libya. Even though this Libyan is mentioned in the New Testament, the present Arab inhabitants have never had a significant opportunity to hear the story of Jesus. Sunni Islam is the state religion, and any form of Christian witness to Libyans is strictly prohibited.



President Muammar Gaddafi has ruled the nation after leading a bloodless coup to depose the ruling monarchy in 1969. For many years, Libya was negatively associated with international terrorism and Islamic revolution in the eyes of the world community.

Tripoli is the capital (population 1,682,000), principal sea port and largest commercial and manufacturing center in Libya. Benghazi — also on the Mediterranean coast — is the second-largest city (population 850,000) and is the most intellectual Libyan city. Prostitution has become more present in Benghazi recently since traditional marriage ceremonies have become too expensive for many people.

The oil industry provides Libya with one of the highest per-capita incomes in Africa; other industries include agriculture, textiles, fishing, and, more recently, tourism. Libyan young people have grown up with widespread government subsidies and free handouts. Strict media censorship has isolated them from most outside influence. Yet the growing presence of the Internet is causing some problems, and about 70 % of Internet café users visit pornography sites. However, oil revenues have also enabled students, the future leaders of the nation, to study abroad. This may give some the opportunity to hear the Gospel.

Visit [www.springsinthedesert.org](http://www.springsinthedesert.org) for more information.

## Pray

- ▶ Pray for President Gaddafi and others in authority in the nation.
- ▶ Pray for Libyans living abroad, that they may hear and receive the Gospel.
- ▶ Pray for more intercession teams, entering as tourists, to go and pray for this land.
- ▶ Pray for Christian radio and satellite broadcasts. Over 100 hours of Arabic programs can be heard by Libyans each week. Many have written to the radio stations, but censorship hinders follow-up correspondence.
- ▶ Pray for the development of the Jesus film into Libyan Colloquial Arabic, the spoken language of most Libyans. Until this is available, pray for Libyans to be touched by other Arabic versions.