



Bible Access List

Where Bible access is most difficult, and Bible shortage is greatest

Jordan

Bible Restrictions Rank: **49**
CONSIDERABLE ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

Bible Shortage Rank: **56**
Bible needs estimate between ten and twenty five thousand



An Overview of Bible access in Jordan

Jordan's Christian population is less than 2% of its almost 11.4 million inhabitants. This amounts to barely 140,000 believers. The majority are believed to have access to a Bible in spite of considerable access restrictions, pointing to a need to bridge the gap of access to our brothers and sisters in Jordan.

Bible access in Jordan exists but only within tight constraints. Legally, Christians are allowed to own and read Bibles, but the situation becomes far more complex in practice. While state-recognized Christian denominations are permitted to import and distribute Bibles, this process is tightly regulated and typically subject to bureaucratic control and limited to Christian-use only. Any suggestion of evangelism, especially toward the Muslim majority (which constitutes over 95% of the population), is strictly prohibited and can result in interrogation, expulsion, or even imprisonment.

For Muslim Background believers or MBBs, the risk escalates to another level. Possessing or distributing a Bible can lead to ostracism, loss of legal status, police monitoring, or family-imposed isolation and violence. In such cases, owning a Bible is not only spiritually dangerous, it can be life-threatening.

Jordan's advanced infrastructure presents a paradox. With near-universal electricity and over 90% internet penetration, the country offers digital pathways to access Scripture that many other Middle Eastern nations lack. However, this access is monitored. While Christians—especially MBBs—report heightened surveillance and self-censorship online, digital access to Bibles is possible but not without risks. Laws such as the 2023 Cybercrime Law criminalize broad categories of online speech, including perceived defamation of religion and makes digital evangelism risky.

Before we continue, would you take a pause to pray for Jordan?

How can I pray for Jordan?

- **Creative and Innovative Access.** Pray for the emergence of creative and safe methods to access Bibles in Jordan, leveraging the nation's widespread internet and infrastructure. Ask for wisdom and discernment for believers as they explore new avenues, carefully navigating the intricate legal and societal terrain. May they find strength and guidance in their pursuit of spiritual growth through the Word of God, utilizing the technological assets at their disposal to foster a deeper connection with their faith under the current restrictions.
- **Global Partnerships.** Pray that God will build strategic partnerships between local churches, international Christian organizations, and even digital platform providers. These collaborations are crucial for innovating ways to meet the Bible needs of Christians without compromising their safety or violating local laws.
- **Governmental Change and Peace.** Pray for a softening of hearts among the government's leadership regarding religious materials and their distribution. Ask for a peaceful dialogue that can lead to eased restrictions on Bibles, fostering a society that values religious expression and free access to Scripture.

After praying for Jordan, continue reading on the next page to learn more.


Bible Access Restrictions

Some Access Restrictions

-  Import restrictions for part of the population
-  Print restrictions for part of the population
-  Storage restrictions for part of the population
-  Ownership restrictions for part of the population
-  Distribution restrictions for part of the population

Other Limiting Factors

Some Other Factors

-  Pockets of poverty


Bible Shortages Among Believers

-  Bible ownership is over 50%, **estimated Bible need** is 10 and 25 thousand

Main religion: Islam

Country population: 11,385,000

Christian population:

 139,000, 1.22% of total population

World Watch List: #50

WHAT'S BLOCKING BIBLE ACCESS IN JORDAN?

Legal Recognition Doesn't Mean Full Freedom

Jordan is often viewed as a peaceful place for Christians compared to its neighbors, but real challenges remain, especially for MBBs and members of unrecognized churches. While Orthodox, Catholic, and a few mainline Protestant churches enjoy legal recognition and a degree of freedom, non-traditional groups like Evangelicals and Pentecostals are only registered as "societies." This status limits what they can do legally, especially when it comes to sharing Bibles or holding public events

MBBs Face the Harshest Barriers

For Muslim-background believers (MBBs), Bible access is the most restricted. Their conversions are not legally acknowledged, and many face pressure from multiple sides: interrogations by the intelligence service, threats from their own families, and legal complications through Islamic courts. They also can't change their religious identity on official documents, which impacts everything from child custody to school enrollment.

Constant Surveillance Creates Fear

Even churches that are officially recognized are monitored, especially if they're connected to MBBs. Sermons, gatherings, and Bible studies can be watched or questioned. Any Christian material that might be seen as "offensive" or evangelistic must first be cleared by the government. This leads to self-censorship, where churches are afraid to speak openly, limiting how freely Scripture can be shared or studied.

Discrimination Against Christians

Job discrimination is another roadblock, especially for MBBs and members of non-traditional churches. Some report being denied internships, medical placements, or jobs in the military simply because of their faith. In a society where tribal and religious identity strongly shape your opportunities, Christians often find themselves pushed to the sidelines. And when basic needs like income or healthcare aren't met, buying a Bible becomes an afterthought.

Public Faith Can Stir Public Backlash

Even peaceful expressions of faith can lead to problems. In one case, Bible verses displayed on banners in Amman were taken down after people mistakenly believed they were Jewish texts. Social media attacks followed. In another, a church service was disrupted by stone-throwing neighbors during Ramadan, who felt it was inappropriate to worship while conflict raged in Gaza. These moments show how public displays of Christianity, even unintentional ones, can ignite backlash.

Unmasking the Forces That Restrict Bible Access in Jordan

Jordan	Islamic Oppression	Religious Nationalism	Ethno-religious hostility	Clan oppression	Christian denominational oppression	Communist and post-Communist oppression	Secular intolerance	Dictatorial paranoia	Organized corruption and crime
Persecution Engines →									
Persecution Drivers ↓	Strong	Not at all	Not at all	Strong	Medium	Not at all	Not at all	Medium	Very weak
Government officials	+++			++	+++			+++	
Ethnic group leaders	++++			++++					
Non-Christian religious leaders	++++			++					
Christian religious leaders					++++				
Violent religious groups	++							++	
Normal citizens	+++			++					++
Extended family	++++			++++	++				
Political parties	++							++	
Revolutionaries or paramilitary groups									
Organized crime									
Multilateral org. & Embassies	++								

Reference

The more fully shaded the circle in orange, the stronger the level of persecution. The number of "+" signs indicates the frequency or intensity of the driving factors behind it.

Very Strong

Strong

Medium

None

In Jordan, the primary forces restricting Bible access stem from a complex blend of **Islamic oppression, tribal-based clan oppression, dictatorial paranoia, and Christian denominational protectionism.** These persecution engines, while not always overtly violent, are often driven by ethnic group leaders, non-Christian religious leaders, Christian religious leaders, extended family, and sometimes government officials.

Now, we can go deeper to ask the question: How does this affect Bible access? Furthermore, where can we pinpoint the problem so we can address the need and demand for Bibles in China?

A CLOSER LOOK AT PERSECUTION ENGINES

A persecution engine is simply this: the source of persecution in the country. A persecution driver (or actor) is the one "driving" the persecution. Taking a closer look at these engines and drivers, in proper context, will give us insight on how we can solve the problems of Bible access in the country.



Despite its image as a tolerant monarchy, Jordan imposes Islamic values across society. MBBs from Islam face the harshest consequences, ranging from legal incapacitation to family violence. Public preaching is tightly monitored, and evangelism toward Muslims is forbidden. The government itself, while affirming historic churches, exerts pressure through intelligence monitoring and court systems, especially against those suspected of proselytizing or aiding MBBs.

Meanwhile, radical Salafi and Wahhabi influences, amplified by social media, fuel growing anti-Christian sentiment, further discouraging public Scripture engagement.



Tribalism remains deeply rooted in Jordan's social structure, especially outside urban centers. This is particularly dangerous for MBBs, who are viewed as betraying both faith and family. Family and tribal leaders often react with violence or social expulsion to protect "honor." Bible access is nearly impossible under such scrutiny, and MBBs who own or share Scripture risk being disowned or reported to authorities.



While King Abdullah II projects an image of religious tolerance, political power remains centralized, and government security services routinely monitor church activities. Churches are wary of integrating MBBs, fearing infiltration or punitive action.

Bible-related gatherings are monitored or obstructed by state security. In times of regional unrest, such as during the 2023 Israel-Hamas war, the regime may tighten religious restrictions to placate Islamist factions, which indirectly limits Christian expression and Bible availability.



Tensions between historical churches and newer evangelical groups also limit access to Bibles, particularly for seekers and new believers. Evangelicals, often the most active in Scripture distribution and discipleship, face obstacles gaining legal recognition. In 2021, a prominent Orthodox leader labeled Evangelicals a "danger to Jordanian society," successfully blocking their legal recognition, which jeopardized legal protections for thousands of Jordanian believers. Without legal standing, these churches face barriers in organizing Bible studies, importing Christian materials, or registering conversions legally.

THE URGENT NEED FOR BIBLES IN JORDAN

Against the backdrop of discrimination, tribal pressure, and the quiet rise of Islamic radicalism, Bible access in Jordan remains challenging. To address this spiritual gap, between 10,000 to **25,000 Bibles** are estimated to meet the immediate needs of believers, while several thousand more are estimated to support seekers—those curious about the Christian faith amid growing interest and quiet conversions.

A Growing Church, A Growing Demand

Despite being a minority, the Christian community in Jordan is slowly but steadily growing. This intensifies the urgency to ensure that both new and seasoned Christians have access to the Word of God.

Bible Formats for Diverse Needs

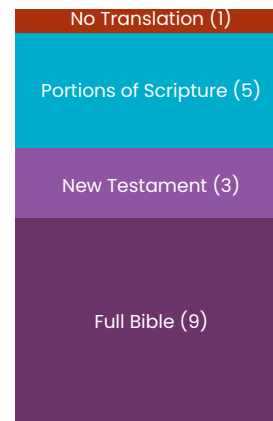
When it comes to Bible formats, printed Bibles remain the top priority. Many believers do not have consistent access to digital tools. Audio Bibles come next in importance, particularly for MBBs who must consume Scripture discreetly, often without leaving a trace. Bible apps and digital platforms are helpful for the tech-savvy youth, especially in urban centers like Amman, where internet access is high.

The Translation Gap

Linguistically, Jordan’s Christian population is diverse, with believers speaking at least 18 different languages. Currently:

- Only **9** languages have a full Bible translation
- **3** have only the New Testament
- **5** more have just a portion of the Bible
- At least **1** language still without any translated Scripture

This means entire people groups remain virtually unreached in their mother tongue due the lack of access to Scripture.

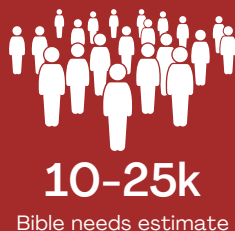
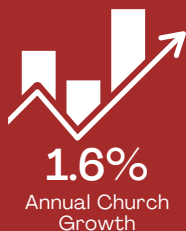


Spoken Languages with Believers in Jordan

THE CLARION CALL

The need in Jordan is both logistical and deeply spiritual. It is not simply about delivering books, it is about delivering hope. It is about equipping a quietly courageous church in a region marked by fragility, surveillance, and mounting religious pressures.

The call to the global Church is clear: now is the time to act. By prioritizing Bible access in all necessary formats, accelerating translation efforts, and supporting underground and emerging communities of faith, we can ensure that every believer in Jordan, whether public or hidden, has access to the life-transforming Word of God.



The Bible Access List (BAL) and the Country Profile utilizes data from various primary and secondary sources. Key resources include the survey data, World Christian Database, Open Doors' World Watch List files, World Bank development indicators, and Bible translation data from multiple organizations. For a complete list of data sources and links, please refer to the BAL Methodology available at Bibleaccesslist.org.