

ARMENIA

<http://www.operationworld.org/print/113>

Armenia is a mountainous country in the [South Caucasus](#) region of [Eurasia](#). It is located where western Asia and eastern Europe come together. Turkey lies to the west, Georgia to the north and Iran to the south. It is half way between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. It has been ruled by Ottoman and Persian Empires, then most recently by Russia. It became independent from Russia in 1991 when the Soviet Union was dissolved. The population is about 3.2 million.

The predominant [religion in Armenia](#) is Christianity. The roots of the [Armenian Church](#) go back to the 1st century. According to tradition, the Armenian Church was founded by two of Jesus' twelve [apostles](#) – [Thaddaeus](#) and [Bartholomew](#) – who preached Christianity in Armenia between AD 40–60. Today around 94% of the population claims to be Christian. About 8.7% of the population is Evangelical. Muslim countries surround Armenia.

One of the world's oldest civilizations, Armenia once included Mt. Ararat, which biblical tradition identifies as the mountain that Noah's ark rested on after the flood. It was the first country in the world to officially embrace Christianity as its religion (c. A.D. 300).

In the 6th century B.C., Armenians settled in the kingdom of Urartu (the Assyrian name for Ararat), which was in decline. Under Tigrane the Great (fl. 95–55 B.C.) the Armenian empire reached its height and became one of the most powerful in Asia, stretching from the Caspian to the Mediterranean seas. Throughout most of its long history, however, Armenia has been invaded by a succession of empires. Under constant threat of domination by foreign forces, Armenians became both cosmopolitan as well as fierce protectors of their culture and tradition.

Over the centuries Armenia was conquered by Greeks, Romans, Persians, Byzantines, Mongols, Arabs, Ottoman Turks, and Russians. From the 16th century through World War I, major portions of Armenia were controlled by their most brutal invader, the Ottoman Turks, under whom the Armenians experienced discrimination, religious persecution, heavy taxation, and armed attacks. In response to Armenian nationalist stirrings, the Turks massacred thousands of Armenians in 1894 and 1896. The most horrific massacre took place in April 1915 during World War I, when the Turks ordered the deportation of the Armenian population to the deserts of Syria and Mesopotamia. *According to the majority of historians, between 600,000 and 1.5 million Armenians were murdered or died of starvation.* The Armenian massacre is considered the first genocide of the 20th century. Turkey denies that a genocide took place and claims that a much smaller number died in a civil war.

Last week: ISIS Dynamites Church Memorializing Victims of Armenian Genocide

Read more: <http://www.infoplease.com/country/armenia.html#ixzz3EHshr6XH>

Prayer needs: Training for leaders and laity. The one small Pentecostal Bible school in Yerevan has been joined by a Baptist theological college and a new theological academy through the Armenian Missionary Association of America.