

# Saudi Arabia: 14 Treasures of a Hidden Kingdom [part two]

When I was kid, I glued together a construction paper crown, draped a bathrobe over my shoulder and, waving a measuring-stick scepter, became the queen of a vast kingdom. At the heart of every kingdom lies hidden jewels, guarded secrets, and wonders untold. You may envision Saudi Arabia as a kingdom of wiry camels roaming across wind-blown sands and, in the distance, a mirage of gurgling water, but don't open your eyes quite yet. Envision troops of baboons, wildflowers carpeting valley floors, apricot orchards sweet with blossoms, and a very surprising ancient palace. Could this be the desert Kingdom of Saudi Arabia? Now open your eyes and come discover the treasures of the hidden kingdom!

Saleh, robed and bearded with his *gutra* flapping in the wind, guides us south from Mecca where a gap in the mountains marks the end of the Hijaz region and the beginning of the steep, rugged geographical region known as the Asir. Looking at these jagged mountains, Saleh tells us of an Asir farming community called the Hanging Village of Habalah, connected to the outside world for centuries only by a single rope. Meaning “rope ladder” in Arabic, Habalah was a tiny stone village clinging to the side of a sheer cliff that was home to more than sixty families. The only way for families to travel the impossibly steep slopes of the Asir Mountains was to be lowered on ropes attached to iron posts that had been driven into the edge of the cliff. Saleh explains that since the government couldn't offer schools and medical care for the families at the bottom of the 600-foot (183-m) gorge, the Saudi Arabian king built the residents a new village. This is the first of the desert kingdom's treasures: inaccessible, hanging Habalah.

Traveling southward along the steep **precipices** that rise out of the narrow plain, we find the cooler air a reprieve from Saudi Arabia's desert temperatures.

**precipice:** an extremely steep rock, such as a cliff face

Saleh notes that the Asir highlands are not only a popular vacation retreat for heat-weary Saudis but are also one of the most populated regions of the kingdom. Gazing out our window, the reason is apparent — we have a beautiful view of mountain **pinnacles**, with valleys grayish-blue in the distance, and sharp-eyed **kestrels** hovering in the cool, clear air. This fertile, mountainous region of Saudi Arabia begs the question, “*Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow on the mountains*” (Psalm 147:8)? Why, our glorious Creator God, of course!



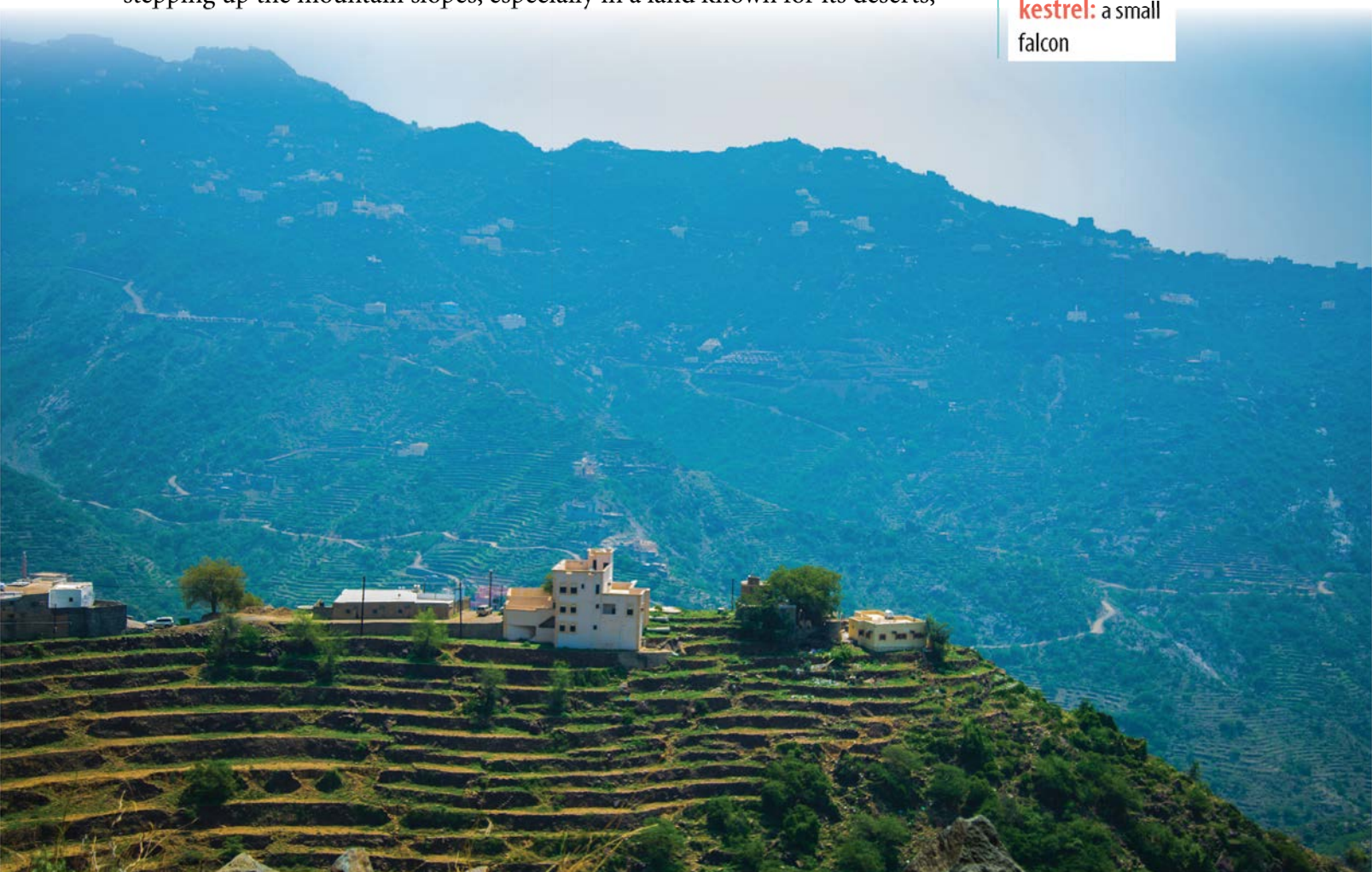
Kestrel

How has God created such a lush green region in a desert country? By sending rains to fall generously on this southwest corner of Saudi Arabia. Whereas the Hijaz region of the west coast is dry, the Asir highlands lie just within the range of the southwest monsoon rains from the Arabian Sea and India. A **monsoon** is a very heavy yet nourishing rain that sweeps in from the south. Twelve to twenty inches (30–50 cm) of rain falls in the Asir during the summer, more than anywhere else in the kingdom, and any winter snows that descend melt immediately. Standing on this mountain ridge with a handful of flowers, we can't help but think that these breathtaking mountain peak views; a surprising selection of plants; and the roaming of animals like baboons, hyraxes, and the rare leopard make the Asir region an unexpected jewel in Saudi Arabia's crown.

Back in our vehicle, we watch as farmhouses cluster on **terraces**, which are giant fields like steps up the mountainsides. Amazed to see these farms stepping up the mountain slopes, especially in a land known for its deserts,

**pinnacle:** the highest point

**kestrel:** a small falcon





Arabian leopard



Baboon



The old walled city of Sanaa, Suq al-Milh

Saleh informs us that the farmers of the Asir grow crops as varied as wheat, apricots, pears, tangerines, grapes, and pomegranates. From these terraces fashioned from soil and rock, Asir farmers have been growing and exporting coffee for more than 300 years!

The thick walls of the farmhouses are made of stone and mud, dotted with small window openings, and painted a pristine white. The rooftops, doors, and windows are painted with vibrant colors and patterns. Traditionally, Saudi women made paints naturally, boiling indigo plants for dark blues and squeezing the juice of pomegranates for flaming reds. Everywhere we travel, we see firsthand how geography influences homes and how the resources God has given in that place sustain and enrich people's lives.

Before departing this region of the kingdom, Saleh says we must experience the famous *souqs* of Asir. Open in a different town each day of the week and named accordingly, we visit Abha's Suq al-Thaluth, or "Tuesday Market." Amongst the vendors selling brightly painted clay **incense** burners; silver Bedouin jewelry; and perfumes like frankincense, jasmine, and musk, we find — in contrast to Saleh's plain *throbe* — the Najran Saudis wearing brightly colored *izars* (a garment tied to the waist and covering the lower half of the body) topped with black embroidered jackets. The

**incense:**

an aromatic substance that is burned to produce a pleasant scent

Najran is a region that is a three hours' drive southeast of Abha. The Najranis live south of Abha in mud towers up to 11 stories tall with tiny windows high on the **ramparts**. With a forest of **turrets**, their fort-like homes are like an impenetrable hidden kingdom in the far southwest corner of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia! Do you remember how God uses geography to create groups of people with different and interesting homes, clothes, and foods?

Driving northwest now, we see that the mountains of the Asir and Hijaz taper off in the east to a vast irregular plateau. Does this harsh landscape look like the home of a king? Across the central heartland of Saudi Arabia, we travel endlessly over barren sands, passing clusters of mountains, and yet see no towns or villages. "Of course," says Saleh, "for only a hardy few could live in this sand-swept region of Saudi Arabia." Yet the tribe of the first king of modern Saudi Arabia, the House of Saud, called this Najd region home. *Najd* means "highland" in Arabic, which perfectly describes this rocky desert sloping away from the coastal mountains. (This region can also be described as an elevated plateau.) Saleh tells us that a number of wadis cross the Najd from west to east.

Dir'iyah, the hometown of Saudi Arabia's king, was built on an **escarpment** overlooking a wadi. Looking like the sandcastles I used to build at the beach, Dir'iyah is a maze of towers, walls, mosques, and palaces made of mud and straw. Who ever heard of a king living in a palace of mud? Saleh tells us that the columns around the king's courtyard were actually trunks of palm trees and that the roofs of the palace were of mud spread on palm branches. These old Dir'iyah palaces we've discovered are another guarded jewel in Saudi's kingdom!

**ramparts:** a means of protection or defense using an embankment

**turret:** a small tower on a building

**escarpment:** a steep slope

Dhee Ayn Marble Village in Bahah



Dir'iyah is the ancient hometown of the House of Saud, the family of Saudi Arabia's king.



Masmak Castle



Traditional house in Najran



Saleh next points out Masmak Castle in Riyadh, the ancient mud-brick fort where the king's family lived long ago. Beyond the fort is a spacious tiled area called as-Sa'ah Square, where locals gather in the evening to talk and drink tea.

We haven't seen any churches in our exploration of Saudi Arabia, have we? That is because one of the king's

spokesmen declared that "there are no churches [in Saudi Arabia], not in the past, the present, or future." Saleh tells us that in Saudi Arabia, passing out Bibles is a crime punishable by death.

We call the king of Saudi Arabia "king," but Saudis call him "The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques." As the caretaker of Islam's holiest sites, Saudi's king believes he is keeping his country pure by prohibiting all other religions from worshiping in public in the kingdom. Sadly, this means that many people in this country will not be able to hear the truth of the Creator God of the Bible and His Son, Jesus Christ, who died on the Cross to save us from sin. This situation is one that truly calls for the prayers of Christians around the globe for those believers within Saudi Arabia who have the courage to privately share their faith with others under these dangerous conditions.

You may be wondering where Saudi Arabia's king lives now. We'll find the king in the capital city of Riyadh. Meaning "a place of gardens and trees" in Arabic (*rawdah*), Riyadh is an oasis city and was founded at the meeting of many wadis. As we look out at these bustling streets and the Kingdom



Centre Tower, a graceful skyscraper and the second-tallest building in Saudi Arabia, it's hard to believe Riyadh, one of the fastest-growing cities in the world, started out as a tiny mud village not so very long ago.

There is a strange mix of past, present, and future in Saudi Arabia, isn't there? There are camel markets in the same city as skyscrapers; mud-houses alongside shopping malls; and long-robed kings and princes living among fast cars, neon signs, and young Saudis talking on cell phones. Before leaving Riyadh, Saleh asks some of us if we'd like to go visit Saudi Arabia's king. Any man can! The king holds a regular *majlis*, or court, where any male in the entire kingdom may come before the king with a personal appeal or request. If you could go before Saudi Arabia's king, would you be nervous? Probably...but earthly kings and their kingdoms cannot compare to the King of kings or the King of Heaven as revealed to us in God's Word. It might help you to remember our Heavenly King and know "there is none like unto thee, O LORD; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations?" (Jeremiah 10:6–7).

## Memory Joggers

Isn't Saudi Arabia an amazing, diverse land? I love to learn about her people. ① What do you remember about Habalah in the Asir region? ② What are the Asir highlands like? ③ What is a monsoon? ④ What are terraces? ⑤ What kinds of produce are grown in the Asir region? ⑥ What kinds of flowers will we find? ⑦ What animals might we see? ⑧ How are the houses decorated? ⑨ Are souqs open in the same place every day? ⑩ What kinds of things are sold there? ⑪ How do we describe the geography of the Najd region? ⑫ Can you describe the palace at Dir'iyyah? ⑬ What is as-Sa'ah Square?

## Adventure Challenge 27

name \_\_\_\_\_

### Fill In the Missing Letters!

1. The village of \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ba \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_h is called a “hanging village.”
2. This village was also part of the A \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ r Mountains.
3. The highlands of these mountains are within the range of the \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ t \_\_\_\_ west monsoon rains.
4. It was a tradition for Saudi women in this region to create paint from \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ di \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ .
5. The \_\_\_\_ aj \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ Saudis wear bright *izars*.

### What Does the Word Mean?

1. This place means “a place of gardens and trees” in Arabic.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The King of Saudi Arabia holds court, which is also called this word.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. This word means “highlands” in Arabic.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Bonus!** Can you name three animals mentioned during this part of the chapter?  
Or list three crops mentioned in this part of Saudi Arabia?

1.

2.

3.

## Word Search

precipices      pinnacles      monsoon      terraces      ramparts  
turrets      escarpment      Riyadh      Masmak Castle

B Y B N F V N I S Z X T O S S W  
O Y N X Y M Q T D V Z I E E S W  
M A R V S O Y C F H S C L E S X  
O S F B W X Y T D L A C C S B D  
C R H B G H H A Z R A I T C O U  
C N M N H W Y R R N P E M A V F  
K I I F K I V E N I R U O V L R  
R K V W R W T I C R G V N N K U  
M V Y X C F P E U L J G S X N Q  
W C N O G E R T C Y X V O A M C  
W F J Q P P U X C L Z W O I W I  
M A S M A K C A S T L E N V W Y  
P R E K P K Z R A M P A R T S P  
G O B Y Q G W I Z A Z H C S K P  
G L X E S C A R P M E N T S F H  
B G L J B X P T L X K D W S N O

## The Custodian of the Mosques - Short Essay

Why does the king of Saudi Arabia not allow other religions to be worshipped publicly? Why should this be something Christians should pray about?

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→ Have you ever gone a whole day with nothing to drink? Doesn't just thinking about it make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth and your throat feel parched? It feels good to get a cold glass of God's life-giving water! Enjoy a sip or two before we move into the next part of our journey. Saleh has deep, dry, dangerous places to take us to next. Whatever you do, don't forget your water bottle. Your life will depend upon it!

Leaving Riyadh, we drive northeast across the desert toward Dammam. "Is that a train of camels we see trekking across the desert off in the distance?" we ask. "No," says Saleh, "that is actually a train of iron!"

"In the desert?" we exclaim.

"Yes," says Saleh. "Presently, Saudi Arabia's only railway tracks across the sands between Riyadh and the Gulf Port city of Dammam. The king and his government have recently planned the railway to snake farther west across Saudi Arabia's dry dunes, through a gap between the Hijaz and Asir mountains to Jeddah on the opposite side of the country. Instead of cargo ships rocking the waves of the seas for five to seven days around the Arabian Peninsula, freight trains will carry the goods from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf in 18 hours, less than one full day. Who needs a water-conserving camel when one can take the train that requires no water at all?" Saleh laughs.

Saudi Arabia may have scant water resources, but it produces rivers of fuel! Saleh points to the tower stretching like a crane out of the sands near Dammam. Is it a windmill pumping water? No, it's an **oil rig** drilling streams of black oil from underneath Saudi Arabia's sands. God tucked more than one quarter of the world's known supply of oil under the Saudi Arabian desert. This oil is a product of the processes that occurred during and after the Great Flood in the Book of Genesis. Pumping out more than 12 million barrels of oil per day, the Saudis then heat the oil so that nearly half of it becomes refined and changes into gasoline. Saudi Arabia sells its oil, or "black gold," to other countries all over the world, and with that tremendous wealth, Saudis have built a flourishing economy.



**oil rig:** a structure, usually a tower, used for drilling oil or gas out of the ground



Saleh waves us toward the eastern coastal plain to find the most flourishing, verdant greens, an island of growth in the sea of desert sands. There, ahead of us — have you ever seen so many date palm trees in your life? This is the Al-Hasa Oasis, home to more than half a million people. It's not only the largest oasis in Saudi Arabia but one of the largest in the world. (If you find the city of Al-Hufuf on your atlas, you've found the principal city of the Al-Hasa Oasis.) Actually, the eastern coastal plain, the fourth region of Saudi Arabia (do you remember the other three, Hijaz, Asir, and Najd?), is sometimes called the Al-Hasa after the great oasis. While some of the world's largest oil fields can be found in the sands around the oasis, the Al-Hasa produces a different kind of desert wealth: food! Over three million palm trees find water for their roots from the sixty springs of water that bubble up here. Everywhere we look in Al-Hasa, a name meaning “drinking” in Arabic, we see water courses carrying water to farms of rice, corn, and citrus fruits. Did you know that more than 100 million eggs a year are produced on poultry farms here in the oasis? In a country of sand with an average rainfall of only 4–5 inches (10–12 cm) per year, lush Al-Hasa produces food eaten by Saudis all over the country.

When I was a little child, I once went exploring in a cave. Inky black, pierced only by a shaft of sunlight, the cave was full of unknown mysteries. My father laughed that bears lurked ahead, my brother suggested snakes, and I wondered if it wasn't time to go home! Do you think it's time to explore some more of Saudi Arabia's mysterious treasures? Nodding, Saleh smiles and drives us southwest.

Driving to Al-Kharj, south of Riyadh (check your map!), we watch as circles of green dot the rocky desert. Saleh reports that large irrigation systems, much like your lawn sprinkler, rotate to water huge circular fields of alfalfa. Why all that alfalfa in the desert?



Saleh laughs and says we are driving on what locals call Milk Road. Do you see all the cows under special awnings, shaded from the intense desert sun? Saleh tells us that a dairy farm near Al-Kharj holds the title of the world's largest integrated dairy, milking more than 30,000 cows and producing enough milk to give a city of 100,000 people more than a gallon (3.78 liter) jug of milk every day! Yes, as difficult as it is to imagine, the world's largest dairy farm is in the middle of the Saudi Arabian desert! "But where does the water necessary for the crops and cooling the cows come from?" we ask.

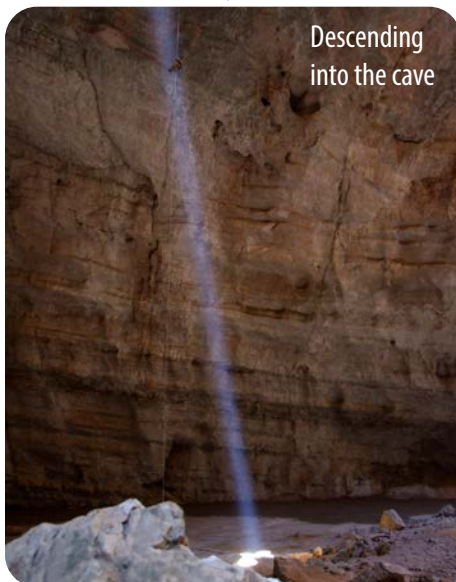
"That is part of the mystery," says Saleh.

Underneath the Saudi sands, God created aquifers of water. Farmers near Al-Kharj have dug thousands of wells, some as deep as a mile (1.6 km) into the earth, to pump out water so hot it is close to the boiling point! The water is cooled in ponds before being sprinkled on cows or crops.

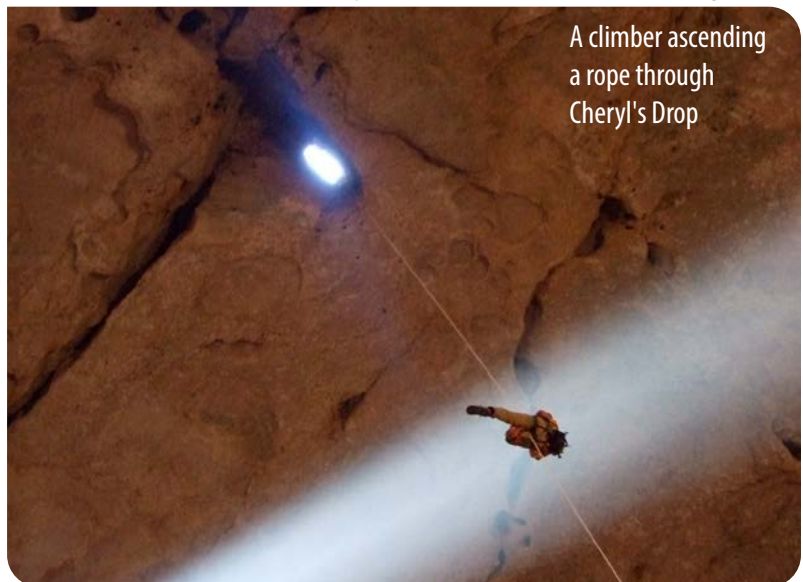
Saleh asks if we would like to go diving in the desert to explore these aquifers of water. "Diving into underground water in the desert?" we say incredulously.

"Yes," says Saleh, "come!"

Ahead of us a massive rocky cliff rises out of the desert, a huge black slit at its base beckoning us to come explore below. This is a *dahl*, which is the Arabic word for "cave," a sinkhole in the sand. Named Ain Hit, *ain* meaning "spring," this is one of the most famous *dahls* in the kingdom. Watch the sharp limestone boulders that cover the cave's floor. Notice that the walls of the cave's entrance are a grey-blue rock called **anhydrite**. Carefully scramble down the crumbly slope through a small opening — such blackness! Turn on your flashlight — ah, there is the water. Isn't it the clearest, stillest water you have ever seen? The bottom of the underground lake shimmers light green around a black hole, the entrance to an underwater cave. Saleh tells us that in earlier times, the clear waters of Ain Hit were just below the surface, making it a watering hole for thirsty camel caravans. The irrigation of farms like those on Milk Road has caused the water table to dramatically decline, with Ain Hit's water level now dropping far into the darkest reaches of the cave. We have no scuba diving equipment with oxygen tanks, so instead of diving, we settle for simply dipping our feet in the cool water. On our way out of the *dahl*, we wave hello to a Saudi family with three children coming to



Descending  
into the cave



A climber ascending  
a rope through  
Cheryl's Drop

explore the underground waters of the sinkhole. Their father beckons them to come farther down into the cave. But they only cling tighter to their veiled mother's black *abaya*. Children in Saudi Arabia feel just like I did about caves as a child!

Driving east, we watch the landscape grow increasingly barren and the sand dunes grow higher, like towering mountains! Saleh informs us that sand dunes in this region of Saudi Arabia may peak as high as 1,083 feet (330 meters). That is about 30 times taller than your house! Doesn't this fifth region of Saudi Arabia look different than the regions we've visited before? This is the Rub Al-Khali, literally meaning "the quarter of emptiness," one of earth's harshest regions. Saleh says Saudis simply refer to this area as the Sands, the largest expanse of sand in the whole world! The countries of Spain, Belgium, and the Netherlands would fit into this Empty Quarter, and there still would be room to spare. Almost entirely uninhabited, even the Bedouins only skirt the edges of this forbidding territory because its summer heat is too extreme.

The smothering heat of the Empty Quarter makes it hard to breathe. There is no way to escape the scorching heat; there is no shade to find cool relief. Quench your dry throat with a long drink from your water bottle. "Too bad we aren't *dhabs*," Saleh mutters. A *dhab* is a bulky lizard up to 25.5 inches (65 cm) long. The *dhabs* of the Saudi Arabian Peninsula live their entire lives without drinking even a single drop of water! All the water they require is supplied by the dry, salty plants they eat on the edges of the deserts. Saleh suggests that perhaps we should be like a *dhab* and dig ourselves a tunnel 7 feet (2.2 m) down into the sand to escape the relentless rays of the sun! Actually, God designed *dhabs* to become the same temperature as their environment, with their skin color acting a bit like a thermometer: dark grey at night, beige as the day warms, and bright yellow when it is so hot that only a *dhab* would trot across the sands. Saleh tells us that the nomadic Bedouins of Saudi Arabia eat the *dhab* as a desert delicacy, which tastes much like chicken!





Saleh squints about. It is so easy to lose direction in the Empty Quarter with nothing to serve as landmarks. But we can't afford to get lost with such a scant water supply. Wait! What is that over there on the horizon? A tribe of Bedouin nomads are riding a long string of camels off in the distance, and due to the extreme heat, they look as if they are walking on air. Saleh is certain that the Bedouins will be able to direct us — Bedouins can even tell by their footprint in the sand whether a traveler was male or female! As we approach, we see that the Bedouins are setting up camp for a meal. With large smiles, they wave us into their tent and out of the sun's 131°F (55°C) noonday temperatures. A circle of tribal women, entirely cloaked in black and faces hidden behind veils, sit on pillows and rugs off to the side, away from the men. An elderly Bedouin presents us with a big, white bowl filled with frothy warm milk — camel's milk! Doesn't it taste rich, creamy, and slightly sweet?

As we travel eastward into the late afternoon, the wind — *hawa* — sweeps in. Over the howl of the gusting wind, Saleh tells us that yes, uninhabited Empty Quarter sands lie before us, but what lies



below is the largest oil field on the entire planet: Ghawar. Ghawar stretches nearly 175 miles (280 km) long and 25 miles (40 km) wide across desolate desert. Thousands of meters below these dunes lies more than 70 billion barrels of oil patiently waiting to be pumped out of the more than 3,000 wells punched down into it. Saudi geologists came in search of oil here because of that anhydrite rock discovered at Ain Hit and indeed found, far below the barren landscape, an excellent anhydrite seal over immense lakes of thick, rich oil. The Empty Quarter is not empty at all!

As the sun sets, Saleh smiles that brilliant smile of his. He's given us the grand tour of Saudi Arabia. From Jeddah as the gateway city to the Hijaz's Mecca; up through the cooling heights of the terraced Asir mountains; across the rocky, gravelly central plain of Najd; along the eastern region of the Al-Hasa with its lush oasis; and down into the Empty Quarter. What jewels we've discovered in this kingdom and such fascinating people we've met! What has been your favorite gem? Oh, look up! Do you see the twinkling diamonds God has sprinkled across the Saudi Arabian skies? Maybe these starry heavens on a hushed night in the Empty Quarter are the most memorable sight of all.

*"Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light...Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: Let them praise the name of the LORD" (Psalm 148:3, 11-13).*

## Memory Joggers

It's hard to imagine a more different world than our own, isn't it? Let's talk about all you've seen today. ① How does the government hope the railroad at Damman will help goods reach Saudi Arabia? ② What liquid will we find in abundance under Damman? ③ What is it used for? ④ Where is Al-Hasa? ⑤ What trees grow here? ⑥ What bubbles up from the ground? ⑦ What is Milk Road? ⑧ What familiar animals live in this area of Al-Kharj? ⑨ What do you remember about the water these animals drink? ⑩ What is a dahl? ⑪ How do we find the water at Ain Hit? ⑫ What color are the cave's walls? ⑬ What is a dhab? ⑭ What lies below the expanse of sand in Ghawar?

Ghawar



## Adventure Challenge 28

name \_\_\_\_\_

### Short Answer

1. What type of transportation is used to move oil from Riyadh to the Gulf Port City of Damman?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Saudis heat and refine some of the oil so it becomes what?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What percentage of the world's known supply of oil is found in Saudi Arabia?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which oasis on the coastal plan of this region is home to half a million people?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What are the five regions of Saudi Arabia?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Language Learning

Match the definition or description with the word in Arabic.

_____ 1. Cave	a. <i>dhab</i>	_____
_____ 2. Spring	b. <i>hawa</i>	_____
_____ 3. Empty Quarter	c. Rub Al-Khali	_____
_____ 4. Bulky Lizard	d. <i>dahl</i>	_____
_____ 5. Wind	e. <i>ain</i>	_____

## A Picture Is Worth a Lot of Words!

You have read about how the three million palm trees in Al-Hasa find water. Can you draw a helpful diagram to illustrate this? Be sure to write in the number of palm trees and the number of the springs of water.



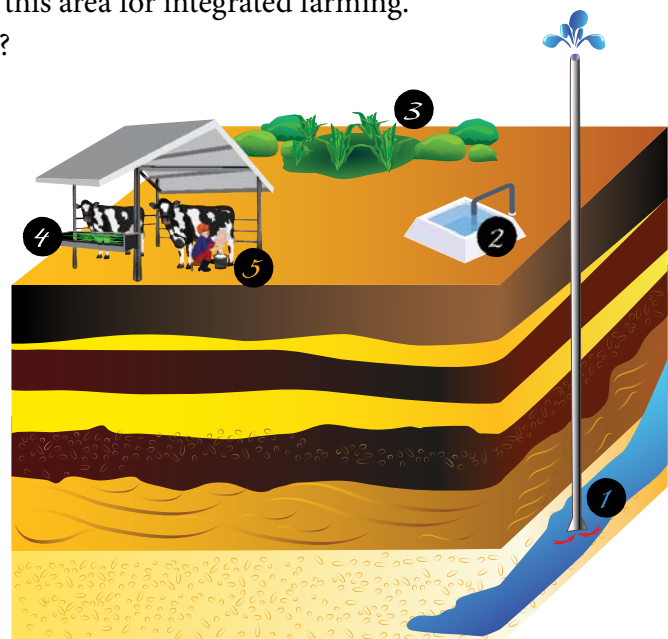
## Along the Water - Based Farms on the Milk Road!

This graphic illustrates the importance of water in this area for integrated farming.

Can you figure out what is happening in each step?

Give an explanation of each step of the process.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_





## Go into all the World

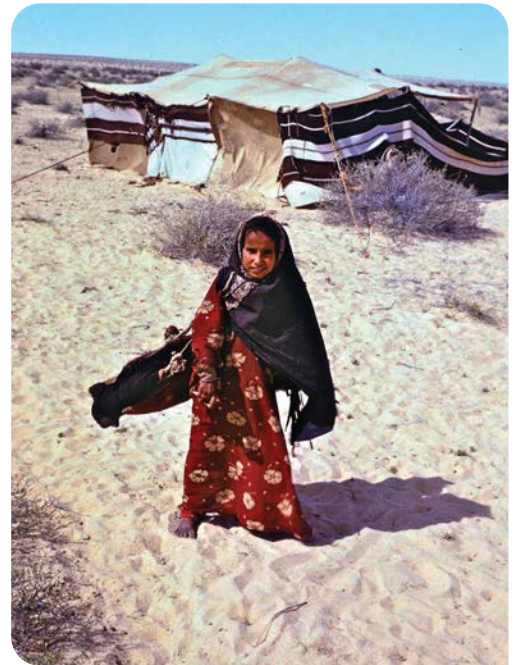


**A walk of prayer:** *We were astounded when we took a peek inside Saudi Arabia. We not only found a land full of ancient wonders, we found that Saudi Arabia is full of boys and girls who are much like us. They were created by God who loves them dearly — just as He loves you. Yet, many do not yet know the truth about the true God and the salvation that is to be found in Christ Jesus. Let's remember to keep the brave missionaries in our prayers as they share these truths to a fallen world.*

***Will you and your family join me in praying for the Saudi people?***

Lord, give us Your love for the peoples of the world and help our family to live in a way that shows our love for them.

- 🌍 Father, Saudi Arabia is a land that is completely foreign to most of us, but You understand and know her very well. May Your will be done in Saudi Arabia.
- 🌍 We pray for the pilgrims who come from every corner of the globe to worship at the various Islamic sites in Saudi Arabia. May Your light shine on them and may their hearts be open to hear Your voice of truth with the essential salvation message of the gospel and the need for Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
- 🌍 In a country of vast oil wealth, we remember those who do not benefit from the natural resources You supplied this nation. While there are many rich in Saudi Arabia, there are also many poor. We remember those who have less. Please be their provision.
- 🌍 We pray for Christians living in Saudi Arabia. Lord, it is a crime to worship You publicly in that nation. May Your people have boldness to serve You and courage to walk the way of Christ. May they be protected and sheltered under Your wings. Please keep them from harm and help them to honor Your name.
- 🌍 We ask for strength for those who are persecuted in Saudi Arabia. May they not grow weary but have joy and peace even in the midst of suffering. We ask that You would move on the hearts of the government and religious leaders to allow freedom of religion in Saudi Arabia.
- 🌍 We pray that the peoples of Saudi Arabia may taste Your goodness and grace, Father. Kindle a passion for You in their hearts. Rain down Your love, mercy, and hope on that land.
- 🌍 We love you, Lord, and the people who are living in Saudi Arabia today. May the light of our Savior dawn over all nations today. Draw us all closer to You, Father. In Jesus's Name, amen.





## A Tasty Tour

[optional]

### Arabic Coffee

I hope you like coffee! Saudis consider the ritual of preparing and serving coffee the first rule of hospitality. In the past, each time coffee was served, men would roast the beans over a fire on a long-handled spoon and then grind them with a mortar and pestle. Once prepared, the coffee is poured in small cups without handles and filled halfway. To be polite to our hosts, we must restrict ourselves to three servings and shake the cup with a quick movement of our wrists to let them know when we are finished. (In case you don't like coffee, we've included a recipe for mint tea also!)

#### Ingredients:

2 cups cold water

6 tsp ground coffee

6 cardamom seeds (crushed) or  $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp ground cardamom

Cloves (2 to 4, based on your preference)

A few strands of saffron

#### Directions:

Put the coffee, cardamom seeds, cloves, and saffron into saucepan with the water; bring to a boil; and allow to simmer for about 30 minutes. Allow coffee to settle for a minute or two and then pour a small amount into coffee cups.

Note: Saffron can be expensive and hard to find in some places. A saffron substitute is  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon turmeric then add  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon paprika for a little flavor.



### Mint Tea

#### Ingredients:

1–2 tea bags (or loose leaf tea if you have it)

2 tbsp fresh mint leaves

4 cups boiling water

Sugar cubes (per your preference)

#### Directions:

Place the teabags (or loose tea) and mint into the bottom of a saucepan, crushing the mint against the bottom. Fill the pan with boiling water and allow to stand for a few minutes. This tea is usually drunk very sweet, so add plenty of sugar cubes!

name \_\_\_\_\_

## Mapping It Out!

Let's have more map fun!



**Let's record the locations of:**

Abha

Tabuk

Riyadh

Dammam

Al-Kharj

Kaf

**If you'd like, draw pictures or symbols on your map representing:**



A camel in the desert



Cows at Al-Kharj



Monsoons (rain)



A market at Abha



Skyscrapers in Riyadh



A train winding through the desert



name \_\_\_\_\_

Geographers write what they've seen in order to share the adventure with others — and so they can revisit the places in their memories! On your travel log, record three important sights you want to remember from your photos of Saudi Arabia.

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Born in eastern Saudi Arabia, Ghazi A. Algosaibi, a widely known Saudi poet, was the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the nearby country of Bahrain who wrote of a simple Arab life.

*I sing a happy song*  
*happier than the sunrise*  
*on another shore;*  
*happier than the smile*  
*a birthday-child smiles;*  
 —Ghazi A. Algosaibi