



PRAY FOR PERSECUTED BROTHERS & SISTERS

Pray for the Persecuted Christians in Iran



Christian Population: 800,000 (about 1 %)

Total Population: 82,821,000

Illegal to Convert, Illegal to Preach

Iranian society is governed by Islamic law, which means the rights of and professional possibilities for Christians are heavily restricted. Christians are forbidden from sharing their faith with non-Christians in Iran, and it is illegal to produce Christian literature or hold church services in Farsi, the most common language in Iran. Converts from Islam face persecution from the government. If Christians attend an underground house church, they face the constant threat of arrest.

How Christians Are Suffering

Believers from Muslim backgrounds usually keep their faith secret. Leaders of Christian convert groups have been arrested, prosecuted and have received long prison sentences for "crimes against the national security."

Secret house churches are monitored and frequently raided, and dozens of Christians are imprisoned in appalling conditions. Christians from Armenian and Assyrian churches are allowed to practice their faith openly, but they still face discrimination, and it is illegal for them to share the gospel with Muslims.

Examples

Over the 2020 World Watch List (WWL) reporting period, there were at least 169 arrests of Christians, 114 of them made in one single week at the end of 2018. Many Iranian believers (especially converts) have been prosecuted and sentenced to long terms in jail. Others are still awaiting trial. Their families face public humiliation during this time.

Several house-churches were raided in the WWL 2020 reporting period, most of which can no longer function as a meeting place for Christians.

The practice of courts setting very high bail amounts for detained Christians continues. Arrested believers, who manage to raise such sums of money for conditional release on bail, forfeit that money if they then proceed to flee the country.

There have been reports of the security services informing the parents of young women found attending house church services, stating that the women were found mixing with men inappropriately. Shaming unmarried women is an effective way to stain their reputation and harm their social status, especially in conservative areas.

Pray for Iran

- Nearly all churches that held services in Farsi have been closed in recent years and their leaders arrested. Pray new leaders arise and that believers stay strong in community with one another.
- Pray for Christians imprisoned in Iran to be emboldened to share the gospel with their guards and fellow inmates.
- Shia Islam is the official religion and all laws must be consistent with the official interpretation of Shariah law. Any Muslim who leaves Islam faces the death penalty. Pray that the laws will change, allowing for freedom of religion.
- For a Muslim family, it is a great disgrace when one of its members leaves Islam. Pray for Christians who have been cursed and disowned by their families for their faith.