

HEAVENLY WORSHIP IN IRANIAN HOUSE CHURCHES



Living a quietly dangerous life, followers of Jesus in countries like Iran are seeing God move powerfully wherever there is room for them to gather. And

when your faith has been pushed to the margins of society, the only room left might be your living room.

Despite the dangers, house churches in Iran continue to grow and multiply. Believers face public exclusion, discrimination and even arrest if they are at all public with their faith. Staying off radar can be very difficult, especially when neighbours and local authorities are watching and waiting to catch you out. But into this precarious situation God's Spirit is sweeping.

Dina, a SAT-7 viewer from Iran, recently shared with us, "By the grace of our loving Lord, every Saturday we have a house church meeting in our home. Praise God! In the last few months, more people have come to faith in this house. We were five and now we are nine. Please pray that our house church will be protected."

SAT-7's ministry is especially valuable to secret Christians. *Heavenly Worship*, a live weekly worship programme, is a perfect example of this, giving the gift of beautiful Persian praise songs to those who long for a soundtrack to their faith. This programme, among others, is invaluable to isolated believers who cannot worship freely and struggle to find Christian resources in their dialect.

A male viewer, Babak*, wrote in to say, "I sing the songs with all my mind and heart, and take part in the worship along with the musicians. I thank each and every one of you, beloved of God, who brings the praise and worship of the Lord to our hearts and homes." ■

*Name and image used for representation purposes only.



PRAY

Friday 1 May

Praise God that believers in Iran, faced with so many difficulties, are still meeting in their homes to pray and worship together!

Sat-Sun 2-3 May

Pray that God would protect Dina and the church that meets in her house.

Monday 4 May

Pray for *Heavenly Worship* viewer Babak, that he would continue to enjoy our programmes and grow in faith.

Tuesday 5 May

Ask God to pour out his blessings on secret Christians in Iran this week.

Wednesday 6 May

Pray that the worship leaders on *Heavenly Worship* would be encouraged and strengthened in their giftings.

Thursday 7 May

Praise Jesus that He is with us whenever and wherever we gather.

"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

(Matthew 18:20, NIV)

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO PURSUE PEACE AND EQUALITY

***Puzzle*, a wonderfully ambitious new programme on SAT-7 KIDS, is encouraging 12-15-year-olds to build their future on the values of freedom, peace and equality.**



In a region where many young people live with the consequences of division, conflict and hatred, it is vital that an alternative message is heard. This is where *Puzzle* steps in, teaching young people to live freely and accept each other's differences.

In each episode, two teams of 25 children from a diverse range of ethnic and religious backgrounds take part in a series of fun challenges. As the two teams progress through the rounds they can win points, and the team with the most points will win the chance to take part in a social development project of their choice.

By engaging with the show's activities and songs, young contestants and viewers learn about their right to freedom of religion and belief and the equal value of every person. Although these profound topics are generally contemplated by adults, it is empowering young people in these areas that will create the possibility of lasting change.

The realm of a 13-year-old is not the lecture hall, however. Milad Hadchiti, presenter of *Puzzle*, is aware of the power of fun. He seeks to create an atmosphere on the show "where people interact while playing and being entertained, and they learn something new in the process".

Milad explains, "We want them to learn that they have a right to a healthy and safe childhood. They have a right to play and be free to express themselves and think freely." *Puzzle* is empowering young people by educating them about their rights. And in doing so, the programme is helping to build a future of freedom and peace for all in the region. ■



PRAY

Friday 8 May

Pray that God would use Milad Hadchiti, presenter of *Puzzle*, to make a hugely positive impact in the lives of SAT-7 KIDS viewers.

Sat-Sun 9-10 May

Pray for children who have taken part in *Puzzle* programmes, that they will keep what they learned on the show in their hearts for a long time.

Monday 11 May

Ask God to bless the *Puzzle* production team as they continue to serve Him.

Tuesday 12 May

Pray that the material shown on *Puzzle* would compel viewers of all ages to pursue values of freedom and peace.

Wednesday 13 May

Pray for political leaders in the MENA to work towards freedom of religious belief.

Thursday 14 May

Pray that God would raise up brave teenagers in the MENA who know their rights and speak out against injustice.

Friday 15 May

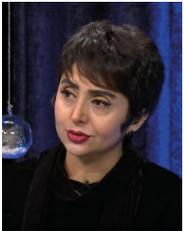
Thank God for His strong desire to lead His people into freedom.

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."
(Galatians 5: 1, NIV)

SAT-7 PARS FURTHERS THE FIGHT AGAINST FGM

Globally, it is estimated that 1 in 20 females have undergone some form of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The more you know about the trauma FGM can cause, the more shocking that statistic becomes. SAT-7 is fighting against this life-destroying practice by spreading the anti-FGM message in Iran, where many nationals don't even know that it is practised.

The practice of FGM stems from a belief that a woman must be circumcised in order to be “pure”. It is an unquestioned rite of passage in many communities, and mothers often encourage their daughters to undergo it.



Psychologist Dr Javaheri (pictured), appearing recently on the SAT-7 PARS talk show *Insiders*, comments on how damaging this dynamic is. “When girls face emotional distress at a young age they turn to [their mothers]. But where can the victims of FGM go? Where can they find refuge?”

Dr Javaheri speaks plainly of the harm that FGM causes. “It is nothing but torture and abuse that will stay in the subconscious of the girl for a very long time. If the relationship between mother and daughter is formed in the midst of such an extremely violent event, what is this relationship destined for?”

The physical consequences are usually terrible too; lots of amateur surgeons cause “serious infection and permanent harm” to the victims.

Several countries need to hear Dr Javaheri’s message urgently.

SAT-7 PARS’ focus on the topic complements the advocacy of SAT-7 ARABIC, which has long worked to challenge the practice in countries where FGM is more widespread. In Egypt, for example, 87 percent of women have undergone FGM.

“Although laws have been put in place, the mindset has not yet changed,” says SAT-7 ARABIC Programming Manager George Makeen. “There has been an improvement, but the majority [in Egypt] still practise FGM. This is why we need to campaign against this horrific practice continually.” ■



PRAY

Sat-Sun 16-17 May

Ask God to use the recent *Insiders* episode about FGM to help those who are hurting and inspire many to fight against the practice.

Monday 18 May

Pray that God would use psychologist Dr Javaheri to raise awareness of FGM and tackle the problems it creates.

Tuesday 19 May

Pray for girls in the MENA whose mothers have insisted on their undergoing FGM. Ask God to heal their hearts, bodies and relationships.

Wednesday 20 May

Pray for George Makeen, SAT-7 ARABIC Programming Manager, to be encouraged and equipped to keep fighting the practice of FGM.

Thursday 21 May

“Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?” (1 Corinthians 6:19, NIV). Pray that a revelation of this truth would sweep through Christian communities in the MENA.

Friday 22 May

Pray for a miraculous paradigm shift in Egypt, a country with an ingrained pro-FGM mindset.

Sat-Sun 23-24 May

Thank God for the value He places on each one of us, created in His image.

SAT-7 TÜRK KIDS FUELLING FAITH OF NEXT GENERATION



The task is big. But bubbly “big sister” Nora Yazırlioğlu, presenter of the new season of SAT-7 TÜRK Kids, has found quite the supporting cast. A sheep puppet and a rocket scientist, among other guests, are helping Nora to fuel the faith of the next generation by sharing essential Christian values with their young viewers in Turkey.

“There just isn’t anything like this on any of the other channels we can get here,” explains a mother in Turkey. “The programme provides such a fantastic opportunity for me to explain to my children what we believe as Christians in ways they understand.”

SAT-7 TÜRK is fulfilling a need in a country where Christian resources are scarce. “It is vital for SAT-7 TÜRK to have biblical programming for children,” shares Melih Ekener, Executive Director of the channel. “By airing interactive children’s programmes, such as *SAT-7 TÜRK Kids*, we’re appealing to both children and parents about how to grow up in a godly way.”

During the programme Nora sets daily tasks for the children that encourage them to build healthy relationships and to engage with their environment in a positive way: for example, “look after your family pet” or “list why you are grateful to your parents”. As they participate in these tasks, young children develop skills that enable them to have a positive influence in their society as they grow up.

Another segment of the programme is presented by Ege Ekener, who encourages children to be curious about the world around them. Dressed in a lab coat, Ege shares “Pearls of Wisdom”, interesting facts about the human body, animals, and the environment.

The programme is dynamic and entertaining, with features that vary from day to day and include children’s songs, crafts and stories from the Bible. What doesn’t vary, though, is the Gospel message of God’s love for children, which runs throughout the entire series. ■



PRAY

Monday 25 May

Thank God for SAT-7 TÜRK Kids, for the biblical teaching and joy it brings to children.

Tuesday 26 May

Pray for God to bless the work of Nora, presenter of SAT-7 TÜRK Kids, so she can bring life to the programme’s young viewers.

Wednesday 27 May

Pray for God to energise and inspire Melih Ekener, Executive Director of SAT-7 TÜRK.

Thursday 28 May

Pray for Christian parents in Turkey who, like the mother in the story, need opportunities to explain the Christian message to their children.

Friday 29 May

Pray that the children watching SAT-7 TÜRK Kids would have a real encounter with the love of God.

Sat-Sun 30-31 May

Pray that young Turkish viewers would grow into mature believers “who keep [God’s] statutes and seek him with all their heart – they do no wrong but follow his ways.” (Psalm 119:2-3, NIV)