

## IRANIAN VIEWER RESCUED FROM ADDICTION



Disillusioned with religion, Hamid\* sought escape from his painful circumstances in drugs and alcohol. His life was miraculously turned around when

he watched SAT-7 PARS programme *Principles of Faith* and heard about a God who loves him.

“I was afraid of God and thought that I would end up deep in hell,” Hamid reflects, remembering his childhood in Iran. Surrounded by religion from birth, Hamid began to doubt from a young age, but continued to follow religious rituals due to family and societal pressures.

However, when Hamid was just 18 years old he suffered abuse at the hands of his employers, who were also religious leaders. “At this point I turned away from God and believed that all religions were lies,” Hamid said. “How could such people who promoted their religion do such a thing?” Hamid became desperate for an escape, and turned to drugs and alcohol to forget his pain.

One day, Hamid came across SAT-7 PARS and started to hear about a God of love for the first time. The presenter of the live show *Principles of Faith*, Pastor Milton, had a testimony Hamid could relate to – Milton was addicted to drugs for decades before finding freedom in Jesus. Hamid dared to have hope that this God could be real.

“Pastor Milton said to pray with him during the programme and Jesus Christ would help me,” Hamid recalls. “I knelt and prayed. Something beautiful happened. Since then, I stopped using alcohol and drugs after an 18-year addiction!”

Hamid’s whole outlook on life has dramatically changed after finding freedom in Christ. “I know God has a plan for me,” he shares confidently. “I read the Bible daily and watch SAT-7 programmes to learn more about faith. I, Hamid, proudly and without any fear announce that I am a believer!” ■

\*Name changed and image used for representation only



**Friday 26 October**  
Praise God for releasing Hamid from addiction and transforming his life!

**Sat-Sun 27-28 October**  
Many Iranians are becoming disillusioned with the religion they were born into. Pray that they will seek answers and find them in Christ.

**Monday 29 October**  
Thank God for the SAT-7 show *Principles of Faith*, which helps Iranian viewers learn the fundamentals of Christianity.

**Tuesday 30 October**  
Pray for SAT-7 presenter Pastor Milton, and thank God for his testimony.

**Wednesday 31 October**  
Pray that Hamid will have the courage to share his amazing story with his friends and family.

**Thursday 1 November**  
“If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36). Thank God for the freedom that is found in Christ.

**Friday 2 November**  
Drug addiction in Iran has more than doubled in the last six years. Pray that those who are struggling with addiction would realise there is a God of hope who can help them.

**Saturday 3 November**  
Pray that even more Iranians will find SAT-7 PARS and discover God’s love, grace and freedom.



# NEWS AND PRAYER

October 2018

## SHATTERING THE SOCIAL MEDIA BEAUTY ILLUSION



Women around the world are bombarded with media images of physical “perfection”, leaving many feeling inadequate. SAT-7’s women’s programmes are tackling

the sources of this pressure to help Middle Eastern women feel beautiful as they are.

As women and girls in the Middle East and North Africa spend more time on social media, many are feeling the pressure to live up to the unrealistic images that they see.

“Women spend one-third of their day on social media,” counsellor Drucilla Tabary shared on SAT-7 programme *From Heart to Heart*. “This is plenty of time to be exposed to edited photographs of models. These images create an illusion that women seek to copy.”

A revealing video clip on *From Heart to Heart* showed several models wearing no make-up, then showed the same women made up professionally to show how much work is done to create the look.

The programme also identified a further source of pressure for women: their own husbands. In a worrying trend, some Middle Eastern men are even making beauty decisions on their wife’s behalf.

“Many men have a say in their wives’ appearance,” said hairdresser Randa Hafez. “Some men even come to the salon and choose their wife’s hair colour.”

To help women withstand the pressure, *Needle and New Thread* encouraged women to find ways to feel confident in their own inner beauty, and to recognise that their true identity and worth is found in God. “Personality is more important than looks,” said make-up artist Sahar Abdel Shahid. “This is true beauty.” ■



**Monday 1 October**  
Thank God for SAT-7’s women’s programmes, which challenge the lies women have been told about themselves.

**Tuesday 2 October**  
“The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord sees the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). Thank God that He knows our true selves – and still loves us!

**Wednesday 3 October**  
Pray for the show *Needle and New Thread*, which tackles all kinds of women’s issues.

**Thursday 4 October**  
Thank God for the show *From Heart to Heart*, which offers live relationship advice.

**Friday 5 October**  
Pray for continued inspiration and wisdom for the producers of SAT-7 women’s shows.

**Sat-Sun 6-7 October**  
Pray that Middle Eastern women will keep a godly perspective when using social media.

**Monday 8 October**  
Pray that husbands in the Middle East will realise that their wife’s true beauty comes from within.

**Tuesday 9 October**  
Ask that viewers will learn to find their identity in God.



**Wednesday 10 October**  
Thank God for Samia and Salah, and for their incredible ministry in North Africa.

**Thursday 11 October**  
“Peace be to you! I am a believer of Christ from Algeria. I would like to let you know that I didn’t know much about Jesus, but because of the SAT-7 programmes I came to know who Jesus really is.” – Alaa, Algeria  
Thank God that SAT-7 is providing much-needed discipleship programmes in North African dialects to support viewers like Alaa.

**Friday 12 October**  
Ask God to provide trained workers to meet the vital needs of the Algerian church.

**Sat-Sun 13-14 October**  
Thank God that so many North African people are coming to Him!

**Monday 15 October**  
Pray that new believers don’t fall away, but will receive the discipleship and support they so desperately need.

**Tuesday 16 October**  
Pray particularly for believers from other faith backgrounds, that they will be kept safe and be bold in their newfound faith.

**Wednesday 17 October**  
Ask God to protect Algeria’s churches, and pray that people will be able to worship in freedom.

## BIG CHURCH GROWTH IN ALGERIA DESPITE ADVERSITY

**Producers Samia and Salah Kessai are no strangers to adversity – the church they attend recently reopened after months of enforced closure. But the couple, who make impactful SAT-7 programmes on the ground in Algeria, refuse to lose heart. Their work is a vital support for those choosing to follow Christ.**

Like many Christian leaders in Algeria, Samia and Salah have witnessed amazing church growth in recent years. “Every three months, the church holds baptisms, sometimes for more than 100 people. In June, 67 people were baptised,” says Salah. But as political tensions have increased, churches have been subject to greater interference from the authorities.

“They refuse to grant permission for churches to operate, and then they close them down because they don’t have official permission,” Salah explains.

Eleven churches have been closed, including Salah and Samia’s in Aïn Turk, near Oran. It was shut down for seven months before thankfully reopening in June. Undeterred, Salah simply says, “The more problems the Church faces, the stronger it grows.”

### DIFFICULT TO BE A CHRISTIAN

North Africa is a difficult place to be a Christian. Believers mostly come from a non-Christian background, and often face pressure from those around them. “Believers need to be freed from the fear of being rejected by society and their families for their faith,” Salah says. “We try to encourage them to be a light and a testimony to others.”

Salah explains that discipleship is a further challenge, as there is a lack of leaders with theological training. “The believers are increasing, but the servants are not enough to satisfy the need,” he says.



Samia Kessai presenting on SAT-7

Without this theological education to strengthen their understanding, Salah says, new believers may start to fall away. “Many people come, but how to keep them in the faith is a challenge.”

### MANY PEOPLE EXPERIENCE GOD

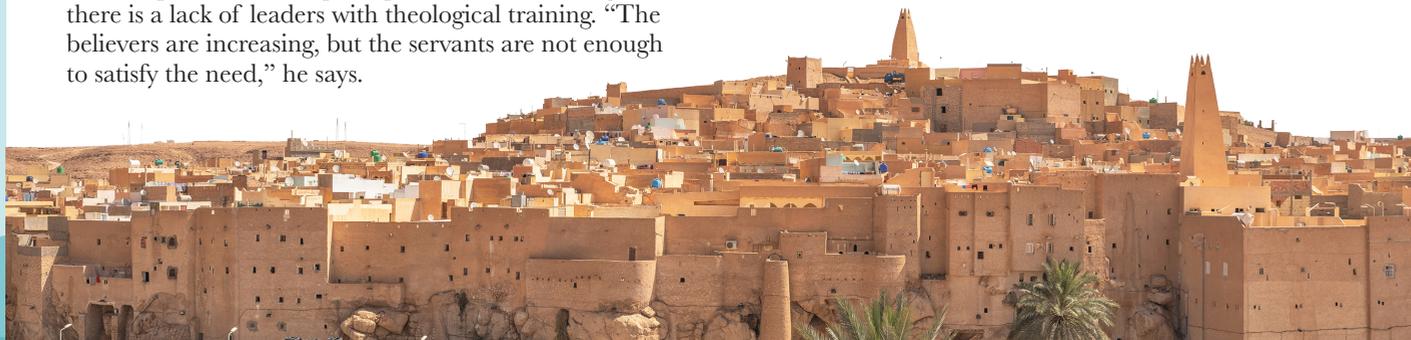
Thankfully, Salah and Samia are helping to meet this vital need for teaching through programmes in the local dialect on SAT-7. The couple produce lively church service broadcasts, as well as Christian teaching programmes and talk shows.

“SAT-7 programmes have a great impact on viewers, who like to watch shows in their own dialect,” says Salah. “Many people experience a personal relationship with God through watching the programmes.”

The impact of the programmes is not limited to Algeria. Salah describes meeting a group of Christians from Morocco, saying, “They told me that they meet in a home for their prayer meeting and watch *My Church in Algeria*. They pray that one day they will have a church like this in Morocco.”

“The number of believers is increasing across North African countries,” he adds. “There are believers even in Libya now.”

Samia encourages believers to learn from the example and heritage of Christians in the region’s past. “Algeria has a well-known history of Christianity,” she says. “It is the birthplace of Saint Augustine in the fourth century! We have a historical Christian heritage and identity. We want them to embrace this.” ■



**Thursday 18 October**  
Praise God that the Algerian church is flourishing despite all the challenges.

**Friday 19 October**  
Thank God for the 67 Algerian believers who were baptised in June, and pray that they remain steadfast in their faith.

**Sat-Sun 20-21 October**  
Pray that isolated believers across North Africa will discover programmes like *My Church in Algeria* and feel part of a Christian community.

**Monday 22 October**  
Pray that the Algerian Church will find favour with the authorities, and that there will be no more church closures.

**Tuesday 23 October**  
Pray for unity among Algerian believers from different backgrounds.

**Wednesday 24 October**  
Thank God for Algeria’s strong Christian heritage, and pray it will be an inspiration to Algerian believers.

**Thursday 25 October**  
“You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.” – Saint Augustine

Pray that people across North Africa will be restless to know more about God.