



CHILDREN'S PRAYER DEVOTIONAL

Part 4: Praying for the Persecuted Church





Week 23: #8 Iran

Did you know?

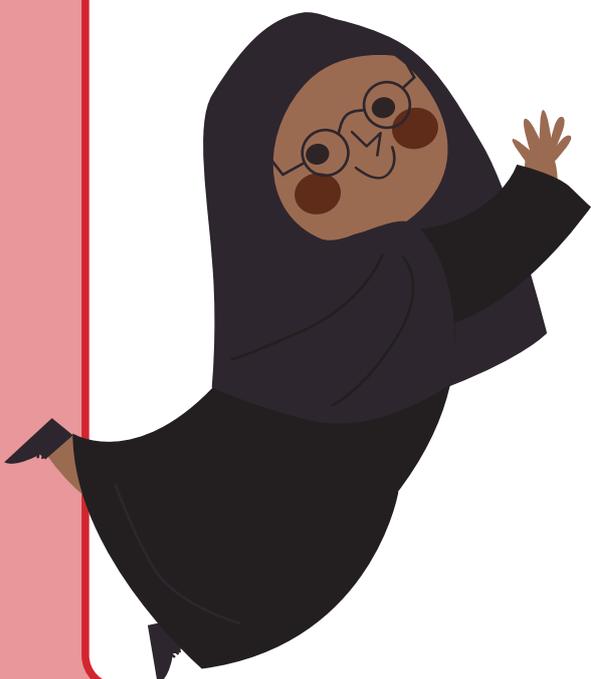
- Iran is known for their beautiful Persian carpets.
- Football is the most popular sport in Iran.
- Tulips are one of Iran's national flowers.

This week we are revisiting the Middle East. Do you remember a country called Persia in the Bible? Today, we call it Iran. If you travel through Iran, you will see snow-covered mountains, deserts, forests, salt lakes and bright blue waters by the sea. What a diverse country!

More than 80 million people live in Iran, yet less than 1% of the population are Christians -- that is about 800,000 Jesus followers. Most of the population is Muslim, and it is illegal to leave Islam. Christians are not

allowed to share their faith openly, and those who convert from Islam to Christianity have to keep it quiet. Christians are in constant danger of being sent to prison if they own a Bible or even talk about Jesus.

Some Christians meet up secretly, but sometimes these churches are raided, and people are arrested. Once they are in prison, they can be there for many years. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, several believers were released because the prisons were too full. Praise God!

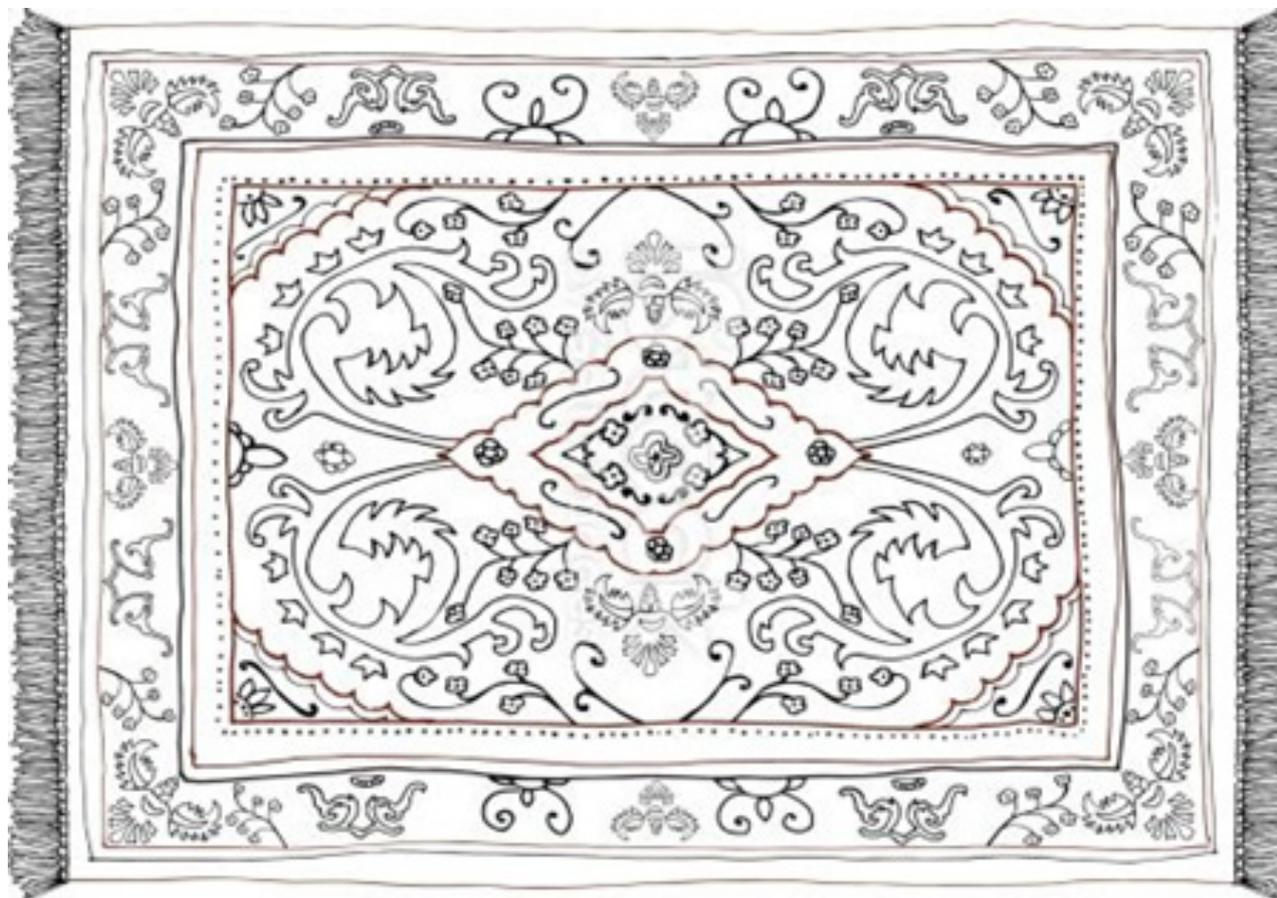


However, the pandemic also makes it harder for Christians to meet. Online resources are very helpful for believers to learn more about following Jesus.

READ THEIR STORY:

My name is Aleah, and I am 12 years old. My parents and I are followers of Jesus. I enjoy learning about Him and knowing that God loves us. Sadly, I can't share about Him and His love with others in my school. My mum and dad often told me about what could happen to us as Christians if we get caught but I never thought that it would happen to us. One day, my aunt came to fetch me from school and told me that my parents and others from our church had been arrested at a gathering and taken away to prison. "Why, God?" I kept asking Him. I prayed that He would protect them and that soon they would be released. I knew I had to be strong and trust in God. I was very grateful for our Christian friends who came to visit us and pray together. We read the Bible, and I felt much better knowing that God was with them. After praying for months, one day, both my parents appeared at the front door. What a surprise! I was so happy to have them back home with me, but I knew I needed to keep on praying for the other believers still in prison.

Creative prayer:



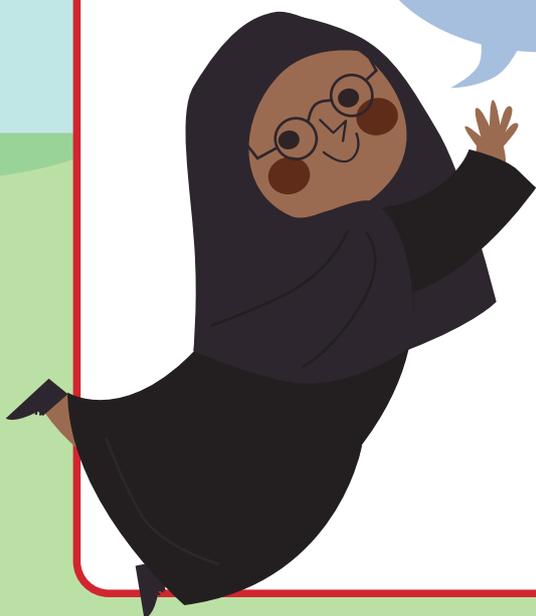
Colour your own Persian Rug! Print this one out or draw your own. Write the verse below on the back of the rug and put it in a place where you will see it as a reminder to pray for the persecuted church in Iran.

“Also pray for me. Pray that when I speak, God will give me words so that I can tell the secret truth of the Good News without fear. I have the work of speaking that Good News. I am doing that now, here in prison. Pray that when I preach the Good News I will speak without fear, as I should.” -- Ephesians 6: 19-20 (ICB)

Prayer points:

- Pray for Christians who are in prison; pray that God will give them hope and encouragement.
- Pray for protection for the believers who meet secretly.
- Pray for opportunities for Christians to share about Jesus with those around them.

I love drinking strong black tea with sugar cubes!



PRAY:

Dear Father, we pray for Iranian believers today. We pray that they will be able to share about You with others without fear at the right time. Please give them opportunities to share about You -- even in prison. Please protect those who are meeting secretly. We pray that the government will allow Christians to freely worship You. Amen.

