

AZADI (FREEDOM)

January –March 2010

RELEASED!

Praise the Lord!

Maryam Rustampoor and Marzieh Amirizadeh (pictured to right) were released from Evin prison in Iran on Wednesday November 18, 2009 without bail after 259 days in prison. However, they may still have to face a court hearing.

"Words are not enough to express our gratitude to the Lord and



to His people who have prayed and worked for our release," they said. Please continue to pray for

these women and for other Christians suffering persecution in Iran and in other parts of the world.

Inside this issue:

Letter From Prison	2
PWO Publications	3
The Next Generation	3
The Ministry of PWO	4
The Joy of Reaching Out	4

Iran Updates

Arrests

There are reports from Iran that several Christians were arrested during the month of December and house church meetings were disrupted.

FCNN (Farsi Christian News Net work) reported that the Mashhad Revolutionary Court sentenced a Christian woman there to three months of house arrest.

Although there were no formal charges filed against her, she was accused of contacting a foreign Christian TV network.



Pray for Iran

Church Services Closed

Rev. Sourik, overseer of the Assembly of God Churches in Iran announced in October at the Central Church in Tehran that government officials had forced the 2 weekly Friday services to be closed. This report was confirmed by contacts in Iran. Please pray for this situation and for believers to remain strong.

Jesus said:

"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

(John 8:32)

LETTER FROM A BROTHER WHO MINISTERS FROM PRISON

The following is a testimony from an Iranian Brother who has been in prison in the US for 13 years. He accepted Christ while in prison. He uses his time to minister to others through letters. He is also working on a personal translation of the Bible into Persian.

A SEARCH FOR TRUTH

MY NAME IS H. I AM 52 YEARS OLD. THIS IS MY TESTIMONY OF HOW GOD SAVED ME. I WAS BORN A MOSLEM. AT THE AGE OF 50 I MET A CHRISTIAN WOMAN WHO BROUGHT ME THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. IN ORDER FOR ME TO UNDERSTAND, SHE USED AS AN EXAMPLE THE STORY OF JOSEPH AND HIS LIFE IN PRISON. AS A RESULT OF THAT ENCOUNTER I BEGAN THINKING AND MEDITATING ABOUT WHAT THE TRUE WORD OF THE LIVING GOD IS REALLY ALL ABOUT.

I WAS A PIOUS MUSLIM WHO COULD NOT CONNECT WITH GOD. I CONSIDERED MYSELF AN OPEN MINDED MUSLIM, AND I ALWAYS FOLLOWED THE ISLAMIC RULES OF LAW. YET IN MY HEART, THERE WAS EMPTINESS.

I CONTINUED MY SEARCH IN ORDER TO FIND OUT WHO IS THIS JESUS. I THOUGHT THAT THE BEST SOURCE OF INFORMATION WAS THE SACRED BOOK –THE HOLY BIBLE. I NEEDED TO LEARN ABOUT "JESUS" FIRST-HAND, READING HIS WRITINGS UNTIL I COULD KNOW HIM COMPLETELY. BUT I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING AT ALL! AS A MATTER OF FACT MORE QUESTIONS KEPT SPRINGING UP INSIDE ME TROUBLING ME EVEN MORE.

I CONTINUED MY SEARCH FOR ANSWERS, FOR THE TRUTH. FI-

NALLY, WITH MUCH PRAYER, I ASKED GOD TO HELP ME IN UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE.

ONE NIGHT I SAW A CHRISTIAN READING THE BIBLE BY HIMSELF. I APPROACHED HIM AND ASKED IF HE COULD HELP ME WITH SOME OF MY QUESTIONS? HE ANSWERED; NO MAN COULD GIVE AN ANSWER TO MY QUESTIONS! ONLY GOD COULD HELP ME, AND ONLY IF I WOULD OPEN MY HEART TO GOD AND ASK HIM TO ANSWER ME. I LIKED THIS ADVICE.

IN THREE WEEKS I ASKED ALL OF MY QUESTIONS AND HE ANSWERED ALL FROM THE BIBLE. I ASKED HIM IF HE WOULD TEACH ME THE BIBLE. HE SAID; ONLY GOD COULD TEACH ME.

WE STARTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, THE BOOK OF MATHEW, I READ VERSE BY VERSE, AND ASKED MANY QUESTIONS AS WE STUDIED THE SCRIPTURES, HE EXPLAINED EVERYTHING FROM THE BIBLE. I LISTENED TO THE WORD OF GOD BY JESUS AND I FOLLOWED HIS ADVICE. I REPENTED AND CONFESSED THAT I DO BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST WHO DIED ON THE CROSS FOR OUR SINS.

THE NEXT DAY AS USUAL I STARTED READING MY BIBLE, SUDDENLY EVERYTHING WAS MAKING SENSE! ALL OF THOSE SCRIPTURES WERE BECOMING ALIVE! STIRRING LOTS OF JOY IN ME, BECAUSE I SOMEHOW KNEW THAT MY EYES WERE OPEN! I WAS NOT QUESTIONING ANY MORE WHO IS JESUS CHRIST, I KNEW IT!!! I UNDERSTOOD WHO HE IS THIS JESUS CHRIST!!!

IN THE FOLLOWING MONTHS OF STUDY I WAS ALLOWED BY GOD TO SEE JESUS CHRIST MORE AND MORE IN MANY OF HIS MANIFESTA-



An Iranian Brother in Christ encourages many with his letters from prison and his ministry for the Lord.

TIONS SUCH AS FORGIVENESS, HUMBLENESS, PATIENCE, JOY, PEACE, FAITH, LOVE AND MANY OTHER WAYS. FROM THAT DAY ON I BECAME A NEW PERSON. IT'S AS IF I WAS BORN AGAIN.

THE EXPERIENCE OF THAT SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTER CHANGED MY CHARACTER COMPLETELY. I ALSO STARTED TO SEE THE VANITY OF MY OLD WAYS, AND I STARTED TO REDEEM THE TIME BY READING THE WORD OF GOD AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE EVERY DAY.

I KNOW THE BEST ANSWER TO MY OLD QUESTION "WHO IS JESUS"? IS THIS;" JESUS CHRIST IS THE LIVING WORD OF GOD, HE IS THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD, JESUS, HE IS MY SAVIOR, AND HE IS TRULY LORD OF MY LIFE. HE IS MY GOD. "NOW I UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF (JOHN 14:16-17) HOW GOD IS TEACHING ME. I PRAISE GOD AND OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST WHO ALONE SHOWED HIMSELF TO ME, AND ANSWERED ALL OF MY QUESTIONS.

PWO PUBLICATIONS: 3RD JOHN PIPER BOOK AVAILABLE FEBRUARY 2010

PWO announces the completion of the Farsi translation of Don't Waste Your Life by John Piper. This book will be available in February 2010.

In the book, Piper encourages believers to live passionately for God. He writes: "God calls us to pray and think and dream and plan and work not to be made much of, but to make much of him [God] in every

part of our lives". This publication is a joint partnership between PWO and Desiring God Ministries.

PWO also produces and distributes The Farsi translation of John Piper's books: Let the Nations Be Glad and Fifty Reasons Why Jesus Came to Die.

Two other booklets that will also be available soon are The Living God

and Going on with God both by Homer Duncan. These booklets have been translated into many languages and are great resources for evangelism and basic discipleship.

For a list of Persian Christian Resources available through PWO go to: www.persianwo.org or email pwo1998@gmail.com

MISSIONS: THE NEXT GENERATION

Wandering through the abstract art hangings of self-portraits at my daughter's Open House was quite enlightening. The last question on each person's visual was this: "If I could visit any place in the world I would like to visit . . ." Of course most filled in the blank with fun and amusing places. Disneyland. Florida. Hollywood. I searched the room to find Somerset's self-portrait curious to find out how she would answer the question.

"If I could visit any place in the world I would like to visit . . . Iran." This was Somerset's desire. I stood in the middle of the classroom smiling and knowing that all of our prayers, and mission trips, and mission celebrations, and guest speakers and musicians, and dinner guests, had somehow touched her in a deep place—in body, mind, and soul.

Westwood Baptist Church Springfield, VA's partnership with Persian Speakers Worldwide began several years earlier. We coveted as a community to support Persian Speakers Worldwide through prayer; through mission education and mission support; through advo-

cacy and humanitarian aid; and through financial means. To date, we are in our second three-year partnership with Persian Speakers and with PWO specifically.

My daughter, Somerset, was with me when I made the first visit to see the PWO representatives. She learned firsthand about their ministry and outreach to Persian Speakers in our area. It was Somerset who helped me iron the nine flags for our special PWO celebrations. The flags represented countries which had the largest concentration of Persian Speakers. Somerset learned the country of each flag and helped me hang the flags in the sanctuary each year. One time when we had finished hanging the flags, she commented: "We need to pray for these countries; their people; and the leaders so that their hearts will be opened to God's love."

If we pray for the winds of change to blow across our globe, then I hope that we will also raise



Somerset serves as a partner in missions to Persian-speaking peoples

up children and future leaders who can welcome such change. I am glad that Somerset has been a part of a church that has stepped out in faith to partner with a previously unknown people group and embrace them as God's children. Philippians 1:3-4 comes to mind when we, as a family, pray each night for our PWO reps and for those who have entered our lives through this partnership but have had to move back to Iran and other closed countries. "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you . . ."

-Nancy Hollomon-Peede

PERSIAN WORLD OUTREACH

Email: pwo1998@gmail.com

Matthew 28: 18-20 (NIV)

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them."

www.persianwo.org



Persian World Outreach, Inc.

is an indigenous mission that is reaching out to meet the physical and spiritual needs of Persian-speaking people (Afghans, Iranians and Tajik) worldwide through:

- *Leadership Training,*
- *Mobilizing & Equipping Workers,*
- *Church Planting,*
- *Bible & Literature Distribution,*
- *Humanitarian Relief, and*
- *Networking & Partnering.*

PWO thanks churches and individuals who support this vision for indigenous missions.

For Partnership Opportunities

contact PWO at:

pwo1998@gmail.com

The JOY of Reaching Out

As the lyrics of a Chris Tomlin song say,

"Greater things have yet to come

And greater things are still to be done in this City

Greater things have yet to come

And greater things are still to be done here.

The other night I went to a New Year's Eve Gala put on by a Persian radio station. They were expecting up to 500 people (mostly Persian) but I would say it turned out to maybe 200. They had a full-course dinner, open bar, 4 DJs and another famous singer who, as his biography states, "has sold out venues around the world and produced 6 successful albums" and "sold over 1 million copies of his albums worldwide."

It was at a nice hotel and most people planned to spend the night afterwards. Tickets were \$99 just for admission and \$185 for the whole

event!! There was no way I could pay that much for just one night, so I decided to just go and let the night unfold.:)))

God was indeed with me! I arrived at around 10:15 and basically sat in my car praying for the first half hour. (There is no way I can explain the intense spiritual warfare that surrounds these outreaches. Sometimes much fear tries to overtake me and I am almost in tears.) However, GREATER is HE that lives in ME than he that is in the world! Praise God! I felt Holy Spirit the whole night!

I went in the hotel and walked around for a while and figured out "the plan". Then I went back to my car and brought all my materials inside (many Farsi Bibles with the info for church and a short, typed gospel message...and a few flowers I had made painted with the colors for Iran). As conspicuous as I felt at first, God placed a hedge of protec-

tion around me the whole night and gave me perfect love which casted out all fear! I looked around the room at all the fancy dresses and suits....and saw faces. Faces of people lost. Faces that didn't know they are perishing....like on the Titanic. Faces that need JESUS!! For the first few hours, I shared with those God brought to me....one by one.

It was amazing how God worked! I ended up giving away 19 Farsi Bibles with letters inside, 1 letter by itself, and 12 flowers that said "God Bless Iran". I also prayed for many people and spoke blessings to them in the name of Jesus. What a great way to end 2009 and begin 2010!!!!Thanks for reading! I hope you are blessed. Please pray for all who were touched by God's love that night! For His Glory and His Kingdom.

—C. (a 22 year old American Christian woman)