





# IRAN

Bringing the Gospel to the Iranians



Through the leading of the Lord, I recently found myself traveling to a land with the kindest, most hospitable people. These people love America and Americans and are honored to have them visit their country. This is the land of the Persians, the nation of Iran.

For me, visiting Iran was like living in the book of Esther, experiencing the providence of God. I believe we are as free to share the Gospel on the streets of Tehran as we are in America. We have this command from Jesus, and there are no exceptions. I would begin by telling people who Jesus is to me, letting them know how important Jesus and the Bible are in my life, and sharing the Gospel through my testimony. In some cultures, importance, and value are placed in the order in which you talk about things, so I would always start by talking about the Bible and prayer, putting God first. This is what led to seeing so clearly the providence of God. When the people saw what was important to me, arrangements would be made to meet and share the Gospel with

other Iranians, even a Mullah (a scholar of Islamic theology). Iranians are very hungry for the Gospel. One young man who saw me take out my Bible for a discussion commented that he had never seen a Bible. When that conversation ended, I gave him a Bible in Farsi. At a meal later that night, the young man thanked me for the Bible and said he had been wanting to read the Bible for so long and had looked everywhere but could not find one. He decided to pray and ask God for a Bible, and he wanted me to know God sent an American Christian all the way to Iran to bring him a Bible.



A man told me, "Iranians are the worst Muslims in all Islam. The mosques are empty, less than two-tenths of one percent of Iranians attend the Friday prayers (less than 200,000 out of 86,000,000), they don't keep the fast, and wine and beer are made in the privacy of most homes (alcohol consumption is forbidden in Islam)." In addition to those things, I rarely heard the call to prayer while traveling. What does all this say? I am reminded of Elijah on Mt. Carmel in 1 Kings 18, where the prophets of Baal cried out to him, and Baal failed the people because he was not real. Islam has failed the people of Iran, and they know it. The people in Iran have privately walked away, knowing Islam is of man, not God. For example, after spending only fifteen minutes with a man, he told me, "My name is Mohamed. I am Muslim, but if Iran falls tomorrow, I will no longer be Muslim, and I am changing my name."



I showed up in Iran and found God was already working in the people's hearts. Islam is deteriorating in Iran. Iranians have lived with religion for 44 years and are looking for hope. God is honoring His promise "...to seek and save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10). Iranians are having dreams and visions of Jesus by the thousands. That is God's part, and we are the laborers needed to go to the harvest. Not everyone can travel to Iran or the nations Iranians are escaping to as they flee the oppression of Islam, but we can all pray for Iran. Islam will fall, not necessarily with modern weapons of



warfare, but with the power of prayer. This raging spiritual war is fought by the obedient saints of God interceding through prayer. God will get the victory. Please pray for Iran, and if you are one of those fortunate individuals to have an Iranian for a neighbor, befriend them, open your home to them, and see what God can do through you.

- Phillip Smith

Phillip resides in North Carolina where he lives with his wife and daughter. He works as a self-employed cabinet maker and is committed to Jesus and loves the lost all over the world.



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