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MERF News

Middle East Reformed Fellowship—“Declaring the Whole Counsel of God”

April 2018



Iran & Beyond

Farsi or Persian language is spoken by about 110 million in the world -- mostly in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan and large communities in neighbouring states, including Pakistan, the Gulf States and Iraq as well as by Iranian immigrants around the world. The vast majority of these are Shiite Muslims with little opportunity to meet Christians or read a portion of Scripture. In this generation, the internet is gradually changing this; many Farsi-speakers are tired of enforced Islam and desire to explore alternatives, including the Christian faith.

Above: Iranian girls in traditional dress. Right: Table to celebrate Persian New Year - 1st day of Spring

Shadkami

Shadkami means Rejoice. **WWW.SHADKAMI.ORG** began in 2012. It presents materials appealing to a wide variety of interests in order to gently introduce the gospel. Persian poetry is effective; it introduces

life issues God's Word also covers in audio messages. Recent audio programme titles: "The Result of Our Tasks", "How Do We Pray?", "What Is Wisdom and Knowledge?", "What Power is in Love?", "Why Don't We Like Older Age?"

Roshdino

Roshdino means New Growth. **WWW.ROSHDINO.ORG** seeks to nurture believers and serious seekers in God's Word. Each book of the Bible and much Christian literature are freely downloadable from the site. Teaching messages are also available. Recent audio programmes covered passages in: Exodus, Isaiah, Jeremiah and the Gospel of John.

Many are drawn to listen to the regular weekly series of online radio programmes and relax with videos of beautifully illustrated readings. The sites are linked to related Facebook pages, YouTube and other social media. Visitors can interact by comments, raise





WWW.SHADKAMI.ORG



WWW.ROSHDINO.ORG

questions or make prayer requests. There are often expressions of thanks and praise to God for the programmes. Many are eager to find a Bible in print.

The number of visitors to these sites has steadily increased month by month, as viewers share the link with their friends. Now each month tens of thousands directly visit the site and many more do so via other online pages and sites. Hundreds have become regular subscribers, coming back again and again to read, listen, view and download materials. New Android and iPhone applications make it even easier.

Sadly, recent international tensions have caused Iranian residents to become much more cautious about internet connections. Pray for peace.

Prayer Requests

- ★ M, in Iran, asks for prayer to know more about Jesus.
- ★ N, in Iran, lost 19 family members in the November earthquake.
- ★ R, in Iran, and three friends long to be baptized; they pray for the Lord's timing.
- ★ Z, in Iran, was beaten by her husband who took away her Bible.
- ★ K, in Iran, fears divorce

threats due to her faith in Christ; she is frightened of losing custody of her toddler.

- ★ K & N, after great expense returned to Iran from Turkey since their asylum application was rejected; they ask to grow in faith and find edifying fellowship.
- ★ Reza, a refugee in Turkey, has severe back pain due to heavy labor; he asks for prayer.
- ★ Shapoor, in a refugee camp in Serbia, asks prayer for the processing of his papers; he is eager to grow in faith.
- ★ Payam, a refugee in Germany, asks prayer for European churches to be faithful to Scriptures.

Online Study Group

Due to their Islamic environment, Farsi believers are often lonely, with little or no opportunities for Christian fellowship. Also, there are few qualified Farsi-speaking Bible teach-

ers. Thus, a regular Farsi online Bible study group is providing fellowship and teaching. It draws together serious seekers and young Christians located around the world to study God's Word. There are also opportunities for one-to-one follow-up with group members.

Praise God for historic openness to the gospel among Iranians, Afghans and other Farsi-speaking people. Pray for MERF's Farsi outreach team preparing weekly gospel audio messages and interacting with those who respond.

Please encourage anyone with contacts to Farsi-speaking students, refugees, colleagues, friends and neighbours to share the SHADKAMI.ORG link. Rejoice in much new growth in Christ among Iranians, Afghans and other Farsi-speaking people.

MERF-England & Wales
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MERF-Scotland
 63 Broomhouse Cres., Cambuslang,
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International Evangelical Church
 Sundays 10:30 am & 6:00 pm – John Calvin Centre
 57 Stylianou Lena St., Larnaca, Cyprus

but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.
 —John 20:31