CLOSER THAN A BROTHER

EASTER 2020 DEVOTIONAL

DISCOVER THE CLOSENESS OF JESUS

DURING 40 DAYS OF PRAYER AND SCRIPTURE
Dear friend,

Welcome to SAT-7 USA’s Easter 2020 Devotional.

You realize who your true friends are when the going gets tough.

In the same land where Christ was born, crucified, and rose again, believers are withstanding trials with faith and resilience. During these times, Jesus is a true friend, “closer than a brother.” He gives Middle Eastern Christians victory and joy throughout the journey.

Over the next forty days, we will hear real-life testimonies of how the Spirit of the Lord is as close and real today as He was two thousand years ago. Where does the lonely widow in Syria turn for HOPE? What is the future and the help for children in Egypt? Do our brothers and sisters in the MENA truly feel His closeness?

Our prayer is that this season of reflection draws us nearer to the Lord, and to the heartbeat of fellow believers in the Middle East and North Africa.

For Middle East HOPE,

Dr. Rex Rogers
President, SAT-7 USA

JESUS, CLOSER THAN A BROTHER

One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.
Proverbs 18:24

Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.
Jesus speaking in Matthew 28:20

It is mysterious. But it is true. The eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ, for whom and through whom all things were made, is close to His people. He was close not only during His short life on earth. He knows us now, He helps us now and He desires our closeness now! This is news of incalculable joy to anyone who will receive it, but particularly for the lost, hurting, broken and forgotten. Let this truth permeate your heart as you pray for our brothers and sisters in the Middle East and North Africa this Lent.

We’re on a mission to bring life-changing moments of HOPE to Christians in the Middle East. Visit www.sat7usa.org to find out more.

Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26
Pray for protection for Christians in the Middle East as many begin observing Lent.

Thursday Feb. 27
Pray for a growing hunger for Jesus in the Middle East and North Africa in preparation for Easter.

Friday Feb. 28
Pray for your own heart, that it would be open and ready to receive whatever God might want to give in the coming weeks.
JESUS, PRESENT HERE

Truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.

Jesus speaking in Matthew 18:19-20

Anybody, anywhere, any time. If we are gathered in His name, for His purposes, He is there with us. Church gatherings in the MENA, particularly in countries where persecution is severe, happen in the most unlikely places. But as people of all ages and backgrounds come together for times of sharing, worshiping and praying, they experience the presence of Jesus.

SAT-7’s program Family of Jesus, airing on SAT-7 KIDS, helps to point children and families to the love of Christ through worship and Bible teaching. Many groups worship at home as the program is broadcast, experiencing the presence of Jesus as they do so.

Enjoy a free SAT-7 Coloring Book with Bible verses to share with loved ones or a Sunday school class! Visit www.sat7usa.org/color

“"I am a big fan of yours. You positively impacted my life, so I decided to speak up to all my classmates about your program, Family of Jesus. In addition, I encouraged them to read with me the Bible daily during the school break and they responded positively. Today we read chapter one from Matthew and we will continue tomorrow. Thank you for sharing the slogan, ‘We are with Jesus in the school.’ I am blessed.”

Rama, a young girl from Egypt

When we gather

Monday Mar. 2
Where even two or three are gathered in His name, Jesus is present. Thank Him for His desire to be with us!

Tuesday Mar. 3
In Iran last year, there were a number of church raids and arrests of Christians. Pray that God would sustain and comfort these communities.

Wednesday Mar. 4
Thank God that Rama from Egypt found the SAT-7 KIDS channel and is sharing the Gospel at her school!

Thursday Mar. 5
Pray for the impact of SAT-7 KIDS program Family of Jesus, which encourages families to know and worship Jesus.

Friday Mar. 6
Pray for more young people in the Middle East to meet together and experience the presence of Jesus.

Sat. Feb. 29 – Sun. Mar. 1
Pray for churches in the MENA that meet privately in homes, for protection and an outpouring of the Spirit.

When we gather

Anybody, anywhere, any time. If we are gathered in His name, for His purposes, He is there with us. Church gatherings in the MENA, particularly in countries where persecution is severe, happen in the most unlikely places. But as people of all ages and backgrounds come together for times of sharing, worshiping and praying, they experience the presence of Jesus.
Jesus is the crucified one who identifies deeply with the painful human condition. Amazingly, though, the mission of Jesus reaches far beyond identifying with us. He is active all over the world, relieving pain, comforting His people and rescuing victims of sin.

I had been to Turkey for fifteen days, where my husband tormented me the whole time and betrayed me before my very eyes. I felt completely distraught. Opposite my room was a church and one day I asked Jesus Christ to help me and bring me peace. No one knew how I was during those days except for my wonderful God. I spoke with Jesus and asked Him for His protection and promised that I would be a servant in His Church.

A few days after I returned to Iran, one of my sister’s friends whom I didn’t at all know came to see me and saw how I was. I somehow knew that she was a Christian, and she told me that Jesus had told her to come and help me. Then I knew that Jesus had truly touched me and was helping me.”

Feriyal from Iran

Open Doors’ World Watch List profiles the countries where Christians face the most extreme persecution. Among the 25 countries where SAT-7 works, 22 are in the top 50 on the list. It is difficult to imagine, let alone describe, just how much suffering and pain is currently being experienced in these nations. Where is God in all this pain? Does He feel what we feel? How could He ever understand? These deep questions find their answer only in one person: the suffering servant, Jesus Christ.

Sat. Mar. 7 – Sun. Mar. 8
Afghanistan, a country where SAT-7 broadcasts, is number 2 on the World Watch List. Ask God to protect and bless Christians who are suffering in that nation.

Monday Mar. 9
Pray that more hurting people in the Middle East and North Africa would have a revelation of Jesus.

Tuesday Mar. 10
Thank Jesus that He knows our pain and is committed to helping us through it.

Wednesday Mar. 11
Thank God that He answered Feriyal’s prayer by giving her peace and sending one of her sister’s friends to help her.

Thursday Mar. 12
Pray that Feriyal would experience more and more of God’s kindness in her life.

Friday Mar. 13
Pray for healing and comfort for victims of domestic abuse in the Middle East and North Africa.

LIKE US

It’s powerful when Christians choose joy in the midst of suffering. Access their inspiring testimonies at www.sat7usa.org/subscribe
JESUS, OUR PEACE

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.
Jesus speaking in Matthew 11:29-30

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
Jesus speaking to His disciples in John 14:27

True peace on this earth continues to be elusive for many. When we look at our world, we see chaos and division. When we look inside it can be a similar story of pain and conflict. Yet Jesus boldly says to His followers, “Do not be afraid.” It is a command that He truly does have the authority to give, because He is the one who offers us true peace, which “passes understanding.”

I am a regular viewer of the program Keep on Singing. Some time ago I sent a prayer request because I had difficulties at home. My prayer was that my household and I would serve the Lord. I would like to thank you for praying and testify that it has been a while since we had any problems; we now have peace and our lives and ways of handling problems have changed. Truly, thank you for your prayers and being there when we needed you.
Adam, Egyptian SAT-7 ARABIC viewer

I know real peace in my life. I have the same life and I am the same person, but before I gave my heart and the Lord touched me I was always anxious and knew no peace. But ever since I gave my heart to the Lord; my life is full of peace.
Beita from Iran

Want to stay connected with a global church? Keep in touch by following us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SAT7USA

Pray for SAT-7 viewers who are living in turmoil today, that they would know Jesus’ peace when they watch our channels.

Monday Mar. 16
The name of the central city of the Christian faith, Jerusalem, translates as “God will provide peace.” So “pray for the peace of Jerusalem,” as we are encouraged to do in Psalm 122:6.

Tuesday Mar. 17
Thank Jesus that He doesn’t want our hearts to be troubled, but instead He wants us to have a deep peace in Him.

Wednesday Mar. 18
Thank God for Beita’s story of redemption. Pray for opportunities for her to share her story with others.

Thursday Mar. 19
Pray for Adam and his family to continue growing in faith and peace.

Friday Mar. 20
Pray for SAT-7’s Audience Relations Teams, who play a key part in many viewers’ lives as they help and disciple them online and through phone calls.

SAT-7’s Audience Relations Teams receive many calls and messages from people searching for peace, as well as many testimonies from those who have found it in Jesus.
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made.

John 1:1-3

You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

Jesus speaking to His persecutors in John 5:39-40

The Bible, which we commonly call the “Word of God,” testifies to Jesus, the true “Word of God” who has always existed. By reading and living out the words of the Bible we experience the living Word – Jesus – who takes us deeper into relationship with God!

SAT-7’s four channels are committed to showing people the love of God in Jesus, and one way they do this is by producing a variety of discipleship programs that unpack the Bible for children and adults.

Thank Jesus that He is the life behind the words we read, and that He wants to take us deeper into relationship with God.

Monday Mar. 23
Pray for persecuted Christians in the Middle East, that they would find ways to meet together and be fed by the word of God.

Tuesday Mar. 24
Pray for SAT-7’s Bible teaching programs which carry the Good News of Jesus via satellite to millions of people who need it.

Wednesday Mar. 25
Pray for the Christians in the Middle East who cannot worship together freely, that they would find encouragement.

Thursday Mar. 26
Pray for Murat, whose soul has been opened up to the word of God. Pray that He would encounter Jesus in a deep way.

Friday Mar. 27
Pray for SAT-7 program presenters around the world, that they would continue to point people to Jesus.

Your channel has opened up my soul to the Word of God. Thanks to you I feel complete. I thank God that my dreams have come true. May God bless every single one of you! Thank you and all your efforts and your hearts. Every time I watch you I feel that my soul is being refreshed. I thank you in the presence of the Lord for all your programs!

Murat, SAT-7 TÜRK viewer

Go deeper into the joy Jesus offers. Join the SAT-7 Prayer Team by visiting www.sat7usa.org/prayer-team
JESUS, OUR MEDIATOR

I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
Jesus speaking in John 14:6

And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.
Matthew 27:50-51

[Jesus] is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.
Hebrews 7:25

From the fall through to the time of Jesus, there was a huge, cavernous gap between our humanity and God’s holiness. For hundreds of years, God’s presence was focused in one small place: the Holy of Holies, where a thick curtain hung to ensure no one could enter. No one but Jesus! When He died on the cross, that curtain was torn to symbolize that the barrier between us and God had been destroyed forever. Those who trust in Jesus can now confidently enter into God’s presence!

JESUS lives now as our advocate: always making our case to God the Father as He prays for His people. Yes, that’s you and me, coming up in divine conversation! One of SAT-7’s priorities is standing up for the oppressed. Giving a voice to persecuted Christians and others on the margins, SAT-7 encourages dialogue and reconciliation. As SAT-7 speaks up for those who are helpless, we reflect in a small way what Jesus does as our mediator.

I fell asleep one night and I saw God dressed as a king, with twelve servants behind Him, who met me and drew me to Himself with His smile, which was full of kindness. I woke up and understood that God had appeared to me as a human being to draw me to Himself. At the time, I knew nothing of Christ and I had never read the Bible, yet after the dream, I knew that God had visited me as a heavenly king. So I knelt, opened my heart to Him and repented. I am now a daughter of God and the Living Christ is my Lord. My husband, who was addicted to opium, came to Christ as did my children. Truly my garments of mourning have been transformed into garments of praise and joy.”
Pouran, an Iranian SAT-7 PARS viewer

Enjoy more of God’s presence in your life.
Order your FREE motivational Scripture cards at sat7usa.org/scripture-cards

Sat. Mar. 28 – Sun. Mar. 29
Praise Jesus that He makes a way for us to come into God’s presence.

Monday Mar. 30
Pray for the Christians in the MENA who grew up believing in an angry and distant god, that they would know God’s welcoming embrace.

Tuesday Mar. 31
Pray for more people in the Middle East and North Africa to become believers in Jesus, who is the only way to God the Father.

Wednesday Apr. 1
Thank God for giving Pouran such a vivid and beautiful dream. Pray she would experience His presence even more.

Thursday Apr. 2
Pray for SAT-7’s advocacy programs to make lasting change in countries like Lebanon that have suffered recent political crises.

Friday Apr. 3
Pray for SAT-7’s trustees and directors to steer the organization in a manner that reflects the mission and heart of Jesus.
JESUS, GOOD SHEPHERD

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.
I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.

Jesus speaking to a crowd in John 10:10-13 and 27

Wolves attacking a flock. You don’t have to be a shepherd for that violent imagery to make its point. Just imagine a young Syrian family who await the sound of bombs, or Libyan parents receiving news that their teenage boy has been shot for his faith. Into situations like these, Jesus’ words resound: “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.” Even if a Christian’s earthly life is under threat, Jesus’ offer of eternal life remains totally secure.

Sat. Apr. 4 – Sun. Apr. 5
Thank Jesus that He offers a fulfilling life to anyone who will trust in Him.

Monday Apr. 6
Pray that God would guard and bless believers in the MENA whose lives are under threat.

Tuesday Apr. 7
Pray that Syrian refugees, all too aware of the violence of this world, would be protected and guided back to their country.

Wednesday Apr. 8
Thank God for drawing Oylum to himself. Pray that she would receive guidance as her faith grows.

Thursday Apr. 9
Pray for God to powerfully use SAT-7’s discipleship programs, which provide teaching and wisdom for seekers and believers.

Friday Apr. 10 – Sat. Apr. 11
Pray that more people in the MENA would seek Jesus and His guidance, not human wisdom.

I wasn’t a Christian and I was the daughter of a family who was against Christianity. I had been seeing Jesus Christ in my dreams on the same day for the last two years. I feel like crying when I look at his pictures, I love him so much. This may seem weird to you, but I don’t know anything about him. But my soul is telling me to be a Christian, and my heart is pulling me towards that direction. I can’t talk about this with my family or anyone else as a matter of fact. I was so happy to find out that a Christian organization like this exists, and I thought you could help.

One night, I woke up and saw that the TV was on and on SAT-7 TÜRK. I didn’t turn on that channel, it was just on by itself. What does this all mean?

Oylum, SAT-7 TÜRK viewer
“Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

“Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” Jesus speaking with Martha in John 11:21-27, after the death of her brother Lazarus. Jesus was just about to raise Lazarus from the dead.

If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Jesus speaking in John 15:10-11

SUNDAY APR. 12
EASTER SUNDAY

Thank you, Jesus, for who you are:
Closer than a brother,
Present with us when we gather,
Scarred, like us,
Our peace, defeating our fears,
The living Word, the one the Scriptures reveal,
Our mediator, bringing us into God’s presence,
Our resurrection joy!

We pray this Easter that your followers in the MENA would experience new life in place of death, hope in place of fear and joy in place of despair.

We pray that you would strengthen your Church there, increasing their unity, deepening their obedience and helping them to face each new day.

We pray above all that they would know you, because to know you is to have eternal life.

In your name, Jesus, Amen.

Lazarus, dead and buried, rises to walk out of his own tomb. Because of Jesus’ presence, he had hope. And so it is for any followers of Jesus. His closeness changes everything. His closeness is our joy!
WHAT IS SAT-7?

Through powerful, faith-filled television programs and digital media, SAT-7 is making the Gospel available to everyone in the Middle East and North Africa.

SAT-7 broadcasts 24/7 in Arabic, Farsi and Turkish

SAT-7 is watched by over 25 million people

SAT-7 costs less than $1 per viewer per year

Find out more at sat7usa.org

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