

News from SAT-7
Year-End 2024

INSIGHT

Lebanon's Churches In The War Zone
Standing With Algeria's Courageous Believers
Awards For SAT-7 Films

SUPPORTING THE CHURCH

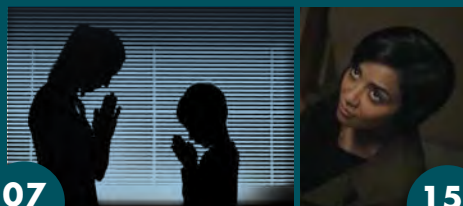
Encouragement, Teaching, Resources



CHRISTIAN MEDIA
FOR THE MIDDLE EAST
AND NORTH AFRICA



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Front cover image: Maroun Bou Rached, Executive Director of SAT-7 Lebanon, on the balcony of the Beirut studio

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STRENGTH IN THE FACE OF CONFLICT

As I write this, the conflict in the Holy Land that has been going on for a whole year has now spread to Lebanon, killing and displacing many more people. Our hearts are broken time and again by the scenes of death and devastation. The number of the dead is known only to God, but each one of them was precious to Him. And He sees the pain of the injured, hears the cry of the bereaved, grieves with those who have lost hope.

Yet by God's grace, the Church in these troubled lands has not lost hope. As SAT-7 has listened to its words and witnessed its work during the past year, we have been inspired by its courage and resilience in the face of such acute distress, and by its readiness to offer encouragement and practical help to people in need. Most recently, Christians in Lebanon have been opening their homes and churches to people who have fled the conflict.

Throughout this time, SAT-7 has worked to support the Church in the Holy Land, Lebanon, and beyond. Through various programs, especially our live shows *You are Not Alone* and *Voice of the Church*, we are providing a platform for Christians to pray for one another, share their stories, and build each other up in faith. And we are offering Christian perspectives on suffering and peace to help believers stand firm in Christ. You can read about our response to the Lebanon war in this edition of *Insight*.

But the task of supporting the Church in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is also a regular and ongoing part of SAT-7's ministry. Several other places in the region are currently affected by war, and in every country believers face a range of other challenges. Some of these are highlighted in the following pages.

But you can also find out here how SAT-7 supports the churches in their discipleship. We focus especially on Christians in Algeria, Türkiye, and the Persian World, whose contexts are very different but who need the same strengthening through Christ and His Word.

In one of our programs on the Holy Land conflict, a guest prayed, "Lord, may SAT-7 be the instrument through which Your voice is heard when all hope is lost, because You are the God of peace." This is our prayer for ourselves too, that we might be a channel of God's strength to all the Christians of the MENA. Thank you so much for supporting us in this work.



Rita El-Mounayer
SAT-7 CEO

BROADCASTING FROM BEIRUT DURING BOMBINGS

As the worst violence to hit Lebanon in almost 20 years erupted at the end of September and intensified in the following weeks, SAT-7's studio in Beirut has continued operating, broadcasting programs that offer comfort and support to the country's shaken people.

The studio is only a few kilometers away from parts of the city that have been hit in airstrikes, and the blasts can be heard and felt by the production team working there.

One of the studio's flagship programs, *You are Not Alone*, has increased production from one to two episodes a week (three in some weeks), while a new magazine program for children called *Jesus is Our Strength* is also airing three weekly episodes live from Lebanon. On October 22, a one-off special called *Good Morning Beirut* aired live from the studio balcony to encourage viewers with two hours of traditional Lebanese worship songs, messages of hope, interviews, and prayers.

"We want to stay committed to our ministry in the Middle East, and this is so important," said Maroun Bou Rached, Executive Director of SAT-7 Lebanon. "We are

salt and light in this area where people really need peace and a message of hope."

SAT-7 ARABIC has been using all of its platforms to bring helpful and comforting messages to people in Lebanon and the wider region. A crawl across the screen is featuring prayers and encouraging Bible verses as well as important emergency information.

The channel's Viewer Support Team is connecting with people on the ground and directing them to churches in Lebanon that are offering help, and is also providing vital emotional and spiritual support.

Every Saturday, Facebook live prayer sessions for Lebanon have attracted high levels of engagement, with participants sharing prayers, Bible verses, and testimonies. The one in October attracted over 150,000 views,

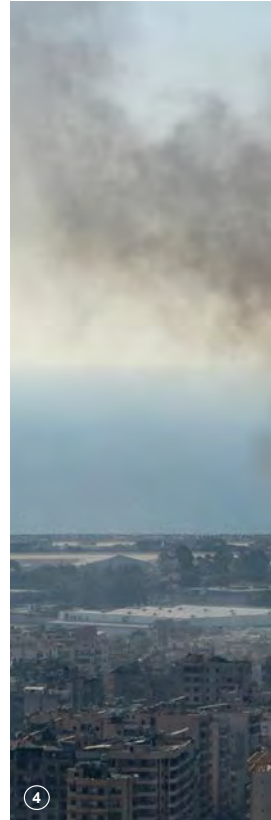
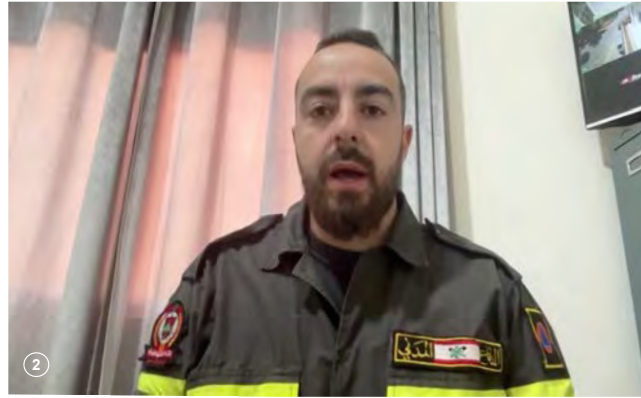
over 800 likes, and nearly 300 comments. "The response was overwhelming," said Marianne Awaraji, SAT-7 ARABIC's Audience Relations Manager. "Through SAT-7's platform, viewers have found a safe space where their voices are heard, their prayers are lifted, and their faith is encouraged."

“

You, Lord, are all-powerful, and nothing is too difficult for You. In the name of our Lord Jesus, extinguish the flames of war, and let Your name be glorified everywhere. Comfort the hearts of the grieving, and heal all the wounded. Only our Lord Jesus is able to do all things, and nothing is beyond Your power. Amen.

Viewer prayer from Facebook Live event





FACING FEAR WITH FAITH IN LEBANON

“We are living in very difficult circumstances. We are sleep-deprived and anxious. But we keep faith in God and His promises, and we are passionate about SAT-7 and its mission.”

Sarah Soueidy from the production team of *You are Not Alone* sums up the feelings of SAT-7’s staff in Lebanon, as well as many of its viewers and program participants. Living in a conflict zone is frightening, and Christians are not immune to feelings of fear and stress. But many are also testifying to how their faith in Jesus is bringing them comfort and hope during this difficult time, a message they are keen to share with others in Lebanon and beyond.

“We are trying to provide a voice of hope and faith and resilience during these difficult times in Lebanon and the whole Middle East region,” said Sarah, as she described the aim of *You are Not Alone*.

The program has been giving a voice to people affected by the conflict in Lebanon, highlighting how churches and other organizations are supporting those in crisis and sharing messages of encouragement from church leaders.

Nisreen, a mother of three from Rmeish, a town on the southern border of Lebanon, shared the heartbreaking story of how her children used to be afraid of the sound of explosions but are now getting used to it.

“It makes me upset that these children are not being raised safely, going to school, and living in peace and security,” she told *You are Not Alone*. “This was imposed on us, and the children have to adapt to the fact that this is a reality we can’t escape.”

Nisreen expressed her fears for her children’s future and also for their more immediate needs, such as accessing medication and education. But she is also holding onto faith.

“Our strong faith is in Jesus Christ – He is our salvation. This is what keeps people in my village strong... To find resurrection, we must walk on the path of Calvary. We are all holding the cross and walking towards salvation. That’s why we say we are children of hope and the resurrection. We are holding tightly to our faith.”



A "refuge" for children

The violence is of course especially frightening for children, and adults who have lived through previous wars in Lebanon know how long-lasting the trauma can be. Andrea El-Mounayer, SAT-7 KIDS Channel Manager, grew up in Lebanon during the country's civil war, so she can identify with the feelings of young viewers and knows what they need at this time.

“

I feel terrified and anxious. When I think about the people who are out on the streets without homes, it makes me sad. When I feel anxious and worried, I pray.

Marah, a Syrian girl, aged 14, living in Lebanon

“In times of war, fear, and uncertainty, SAT-7 KIDS becomes a refuge, a source of comfort, and a voice of reassurance for young hearts,” she said. “Through the laughter, stories, and prayers shared on SAT-7 KIDS, we try to soothe their fears, giving them something to hold on to, something to believe in beyond the darkness around them.”

The channel is using dramas, songs, and prayers to help children understand what is happening in an appropriate way, to address the questions that they have about war, and also to encourage them to take refuge in the Lord through faith.

In one short drama, featured in *Jesus is Our Strength*, a mother talks to her young daughter about the time she experienced war

as a child. “Do you know what your dad and I did when we got scared?” she said. “When we were afraid, we prayed and talked to Jesus, telling Him how we felt... He helped us by giving us peace, and we felt safe.”

The mother relates the concept of war to a disagreement the daughter had with her friends at school, teaching her that conflicts arise when we do not respect differences. In early October, the children from *La Fiesta* came together in Lebanon to film a powerful song called “Peace.” During the recording, they could hear the sound of bombs in the distance, but they felt safe being together and uniting in prayer, finding comfort in the words of the song: “Let’s sing together, hand in hand, from all our lands. We raise our voices with Jesus. Your peace, Jesus, is our joy.”

Diala Khoury, one of the children’s mothers, who is also part of the SAT-7 KIDS team, said, “Even though we were hearing the sounds of war, we wanted this message to reach every child in Lebanon, every child across the world. Our Lord Jesus knows; He is in control; He sees everything. We trust Him to change this situation. Don’t be afraid; trust in the Lord Jesus.”

- ① Sirene Semerdjian, presenter of *You are Not Alone*
- ② A civil defense officer sharing his experiences
- ③ Broadcasting *Good Morning Beirut* (see page 3)
- ④ Smoke from an airstrike on Beirut's southern suburbs
- ⑤ A mother comforts her daughter (from a drama shown on *Jesus is our Strength*)
- ⑥ Children from *La Fiesta* celebrating God's peace
- ⑦ Sarah Soueidy from SAT-7 Lebanon

STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS: THE CHURCH IN LEBANON

The response of the Church in Lebanon to the conflict in the country, which has displaced over a million people, has been truly inspiring.

Churches of all denominations in different parts of Lebanon have been working tirelessly to help the displaced and needy, providing accommodation, cooked meals, supplies, and also emotional and spiritual support through counseling and pastoral visits.

Father Nehme Saliba, a priest of the Orthodox Church, told SAT-7's *Different Angle* program, "Jesus taught us to be the good Samaritan. Our efforts are the five loaves of bread and a few fish. This is how weak we are in front of this tragedy. Our abilities are limited, but with the help of the Lord we are doing all we can to make a difference and show solidarity with each other as one people who are seeking peace."

The efforts of the Christian community in Lebanon are making an impact, and people are noticing. Several Lebanese Christians have used the word "opportunity" to describe how they view the current situation.

Enaam Haddad from the Resurrection Church Beirut told SAT-7, "Let's see this challenge, this attack on Lebanon, and the destruction

happening in our country as an opportunity for the Church to show the love of Jesus to the world around us. People have already begun to see it, and not only see it but also testify about it."

Christians comprise around a third of the population in Lebanon, and although they are not being specifically targeted, the conflict is affecting everyone. Lebanon is a small, densely populated country with a religiously and ethnically diverse make-up. Since the civil war (1975–1990), members of different religious groups have lived more within their own communities, but nowhere is safe. Christians have had to evacuate their villages in the south, and on October 14, the northern, Christian-majority town of Aitou was hit in an airstrike that killed at least 21 people.

Amid fears that the conflict could stir up sectarian tensions within Lebanon, the Church has an important role to play as "a prophetic voice," says George Makeen, SAT-7's Ministry Content Adviser. "The role of the Church is to stand and proclaim reconciliation, to proclaim love, and even to give itself in times of need. By reporting stories of how churches are opening their doors to host those who could be considered our enemies, SAT-7 is amplifying that voice."



A church leader collects supplies for displaced people

Members of a local church support children displaced by the conflict by engaging them in games



BUILDING UP CHRIST'S BODY IN THE MENA

Imagine that the Church in your country has been dwindling for decades. Maybe you live miles from the nearest fellowship, or your church's building has been closed by the authorities. Or perhaps your family and neighbors are so hostile to your faith – especially if you come from a different religious background – that you cannot meet in person with other Christians anyway. Then suppose that you also cannot access reliable resources to help you grow to maturity in Christ, or that you may be severely punished if you are even found with a Bible.

These are conditions all too familiar to many Christians in the MENA. Like believers everywhere, they long to learn more about Jesus and what it means to follow Him, but their opportunities to do this are severely limited. Some countries have recently seen a serious decline in their Christian presence, and the very survival of some ancient churches is threatened. Untold numbers of isolated believers have no opportunities for fellowship or instruction in the Christian faith, and faithful church leaders lack resources to support their congregations. Discrimination, restriction, and persecution pile further pressure on believers trying to stay faithful to Christ.

SAT-7 is deeply invested in supporting the committed and courageous Christians of the MENA in their discipleship as they navigate these numerous challenges. Our broadcast services enable Christians to join in worship and connect with each other from the privacy of their homes. Our teaching and talk shows deepen viewers' understanding of Christian faith and life and give them the opportunity to ask questions. Our theological training gives pastors confidence in handling the Bible and communicating it to others. And by addressing topics on every aspect of life from a Christian point of view, our programs inspire and guide adults and children, families and churches, in their walk with God.

We use a variety of satellite programs and digital media activities to appeal to a wide range of viewers, and our Viewer Support Teams accompany them in every step of their faith journey through fellowship, counseling, and encouragement.

Turn the page to find out more about the difficulties faced by our brothers and sisters in various countries of the MENA. And then read on, to learn how SAT-7 is supporting the Church in Algeria, the Persian World, and Türkiye.



CHALLENGES TO DISCIPLESHIP IN THE MENA

The Christian presence in the nations of the MENA ranges from the large and prominent churches of Egypt and Lebanon to the few isolated believers of Afghanistan and Yemen. The figures below give the approximate numbers of Christians in each country and their proportion of the total population.* They face a wide range of obstacles to their growth in Christ...

ALGERIA 131,000, 0.3%

Church buildings shuttered

The largest Christian denomination in Algeria, the EPA, has had all but one of its churches closed by the authorities since 2017. The body responsible for granting permits to them refuses to issue any. Those who gather for worship without authorization are liable to arrest.

LIBYA 36,000, 0.5%

Isolated believers

Christians in Libya struggle to find fellowship with each other. Very low numbers, violent social hostility, and acute political instability all discourage them from coming together. There are hardly any churches, and in recent years many believers have emigrated for their own safety.

EGYPT 9,700,000, 9%

Isolated believers

The Egyptian government generally supports the country's large Church, but believers are often treated as second-class citizens within their communities, especially outside the cities. They are disadvantaged in employment and liable to accusations of blasphemy, while Christian girls are sometimes kidnapped and coerced into marriage with non-Christians.



DID YOU KNOW?

According to tradition the Church in Egypt was founded by Mark the Evangelist?

SAUDI ARABIA 2,200,000, 6%

Faith-sharing inhibited

The many expatriate Christians in Saudi Arabia are mostly left undisturbed, but they are forbidden to share their faith with Saudi nationals and can be expelled for doing so. And if Saudi Christians are open about their love for Christ, they put themselves in grave danger.



DID YOU KNOW?

After becoming a believer in Syria, the Apostle Paul lived in Arabia (Galatians 1:17).

IRAQ 196,000, 0.5%

Declining Christian presence

The Christian presence in Iraq in 2003 was an estimated 1.5 million people, nearly 6% of the population. But following invasion, civil war, the activities of so-called Islamic State, and ongoing insecurity, the number has decreased to under 200,000, just 13% of its previous size.

*Many of the above countries do not publish official statistics for the number and proportion of Christians, and estimates are often very uncertain. The above figures are the latest available (2020) from the [World Christian Database](#).

SYRIA 798,000, 3.8%



Small churches

Some historic Syrian churches have hundreds of thousands of members and can resist anti-Christian pressure from the government and militant groups. But many smaller Christian denominations have few resources for ministry and are much more vulnerable to the bad effects of social instability and official hostility.

TÜRKIYE 252,000, 0.3%

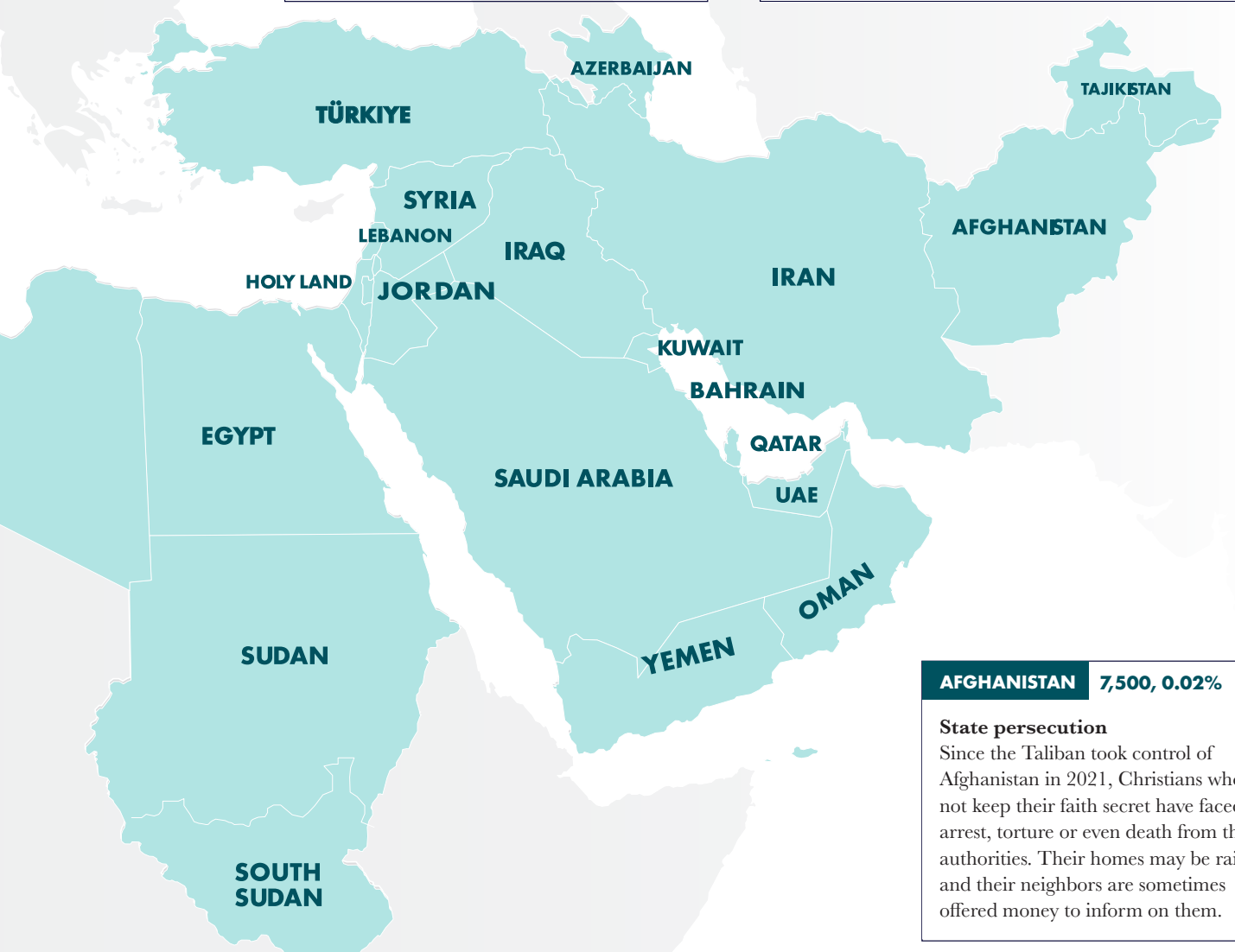


Widespread misconceptions

In Türkiye, allegiance to the nation is closely associated with adherence to the majority faith, to which all Turkish citizens are tacitly expected to conform. Christianity is seen as a Western religion, and Christians seen as a threat to order and security.

DID YOU KNOW?

At least six New Testament books were addressed to places in what is now Türkiye.



AFGHANISTAN 7,500, 0.02%



State persecution

Since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan in 2021, Christians who do not keep their faith secret have faced arrest, torture or even death from the authorities. Their homes may be raided, and their neighbors are sometimes offered money to inform on them.

LEBANON 2,105,000, 37.2%



Economic instability

Christians share in the effects of the severe economic and financial crisis that has afflicted the country for the last six years. Churches find their programs difficult to maintain, and many Christians have emigrated.

DID YOU KNOW?

The ancient Armenian Apostolic Church has large communities in Lebanon, Syria, and Iran.

IRAN 602,000, 0.7%



Community hostility

Iranian Christians who have left the majority faith are liable to accusations of “acting against national security.” They may be imprisoned or coerced into inter-faith marriage, or lose their family, education, job, or inheritance. Churches of traditional Christian communities are forbidden to welcome them.

DID YOU KNOW?

In Acts, people from the Persian World are present on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:9).

SUPPORTING THE CHURCH... WHEN THE DOORS ARE SEALED

When the largest of Algeria's Protestant churches was closed by the authorities five years ago, the senior pastor made a moving and powerful statement: "They can seal our churches – but not our hearts." His words have proved true since then as believers have persevered in faith and continued to serve.

The doors of the Full Gospel Church of Tizi Ouzou were sealed on October 15, 2019, a move that left the 1,200-member congregation without a meeting place and also brought to a halt SAT-7's live broadcasts of its weekly services. Many other churches belonging to the Protestant Church of Algeria (EPA), an association of more than 45 congregations, were closed at around the same time.

The closures began in 2017, and today all but one of the EPA churches are shut. Algerian law requires all religious groups to register with the government, but despite repeated attempts by the EPA, none of its churches has been granted a license.

"The church where we were worshipping had more than a thousand members," said SAT-7 Producer Samia Kessai. "And in one day you find everything closed, nothing. I miss the church, and I want to be back in a big church again."

Learning to adapt

The closures could have been disastrous for the Church in Algeria and for SAT-7's broadcasting activities there. Growing congregations were suddenly deprived of fellowship and nurture, and Christians were left discouraged. But local believers and our program-makers have been learning to adapt together.

Samia's husband and co-producer Salah said congregations were unprepared for meeting as house churches, and many believers were left isolated. Some small groups are forming, though, and SAT-7 is equipping them for this different style of church.

No longer able to film our long-running and popular series *My Church in Algeria* – live weekly broadcasts of church services – we are now broadcasting an adapted version of this program called *Home Church in Algeria*.

Filmed in a set styled like a family home, the program features Bible teaching, worship, and prayer with a small group of believers who share food and fellowship. It gives isolated believers an opportunity for teaching and a sense of connection to other Christians across the country, but it also models house church meetings.

"This is very important to the Christians in Algeria right now," Salah says, "because it gives them tools and shows them how to meet together in homes and how to form smaller communities."

The program is made in the language spoken by the Kabyle people in the north of the country, where the Algerian Church has grown rapidly in recent times. "For Algerians, it's very important to have programs in your own language," Salah explains. "This makes you really want to watch these programs."

"God loves this country"

Samia and Salah regularly hear from viewers who are grateful for SAT-7's programs. "Many people, especially women, have called me personally and said thank you," Samia shares. "And not only believers – even the non-believers who watch our programs call in."

Samia also serves as part of SAT-7 ARABIC's Viewer Support Team, interacting with Algerians who contact us through social media. Salah shared how his wife dedicates countless late nights to connecting with women online. "I try to convince her to go to sleep," he said, "but she adamantly refuses, claiming that the viewer is on the verge of accepting Jesus."

Samia admits that she does not know why God has allowed the church closures to happen in Algeria, but through her ministry with SAT-7, she does know that He is undeniably at work. "God has a timing for everything," she said. "We believe that God loves this country, loves these people, and He has a good plan for them."

“

The church where we were worshipping had more than a thousand members, and in one day you find everything closed, nothing.

Samia Kessai

“THANK YOU FOR CARING FOR ME”

One-to-one discipleship from SAT-7’s Viewer Support Team is helping isolated believers in Algeria to continue growing in their faith.

Fatima, a widow from the Kabylia region, came to faith and was baptized but said life “became harder after the churches were closed down,” leaving her without Christian fellowship. She contacted SAT-7’s Viewer Support Team and was keen to take up our offer of discipleship.

“I learned so much from your teachings,” Fatima said. “The topics we discuss are truly relevant to my daily life, and I can see my life changing because of this.”

She explained how she is reading the Bible daily and sharing her faith with others.

“I now enjoy an excellent relationship with the Lord, and all my fears vanished,” she added. “Thank you for caring for me. I am thankful to God for SAT-7. May the Lord bless you.”



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②



③



④

- ① Praying outside a shuttered church building
- ② An episode of *Home Church from Algeria*
- ③ Samia and Salah Kessai
- ④ A congregation at worship in the open air



WORKING TOGETHER TO GROW DISCIPLES

SAT-7 PARS is continuing to invest in the growth of Persian-speaking Christians in Afghanistan, Iran, and Tajikistan, in partnership with other Christian ministries in Europe and the United States. The channel's varied range of new and established discipleship programs are building relationships with isolated Christians, helping children learn about God, and sharing biblical teaching, to help believers persevere in the face of communal hostility and state persecution.

Investing in Afghan believers

SAT-7 PARS is delighted to be releasing more content for our viewers in Afghanistan in their heart language of Dari. All six of our current Dari programs bear witness to the beauty of partnership in the Kingdom of God, with SAT-7 either broadcasting partners' content or creating programs in collaboration with them.

A two-and-a-half-hour block of Dari programming each Friday afternoon consists of two established programs produced by Pamir Ministries, *Secret of Life* and *Window of Light*, and a new weekly home church service for Afghan believers from Ariana Church. Presented by married couple Hossein and Shahnaz, each episode of Ariana Church

unpacks a different discipleship topic and features Bible readings, teaching, and worship videos.

SAT-7 also produced and is currently broadcasting discipleship program *Following Christ* in collaboration with partner Media Mission the Messengers (aka Sansa) and *Sweet Truth* with Operation Mobilization and the Afghan Hope Church.

Our regular closed Bible-teaching sessions held on Zoom are also reaching isolated Afghan believers. "Greetings in the Lord to my brothers and sisters," said Jamil from Afghanistan, a regular attendee. "I thank God for you at SAT-7 who are thinking of us and are providing these classes for us. We have no one here in Afghanistan apart from you."

Children and youth

Sunday School is SAT-7 PARS' new faith-building program aimed at children aged 4–8 years old. Produced in partnership with Media Mission the Messengers, the program will introduce young viewers across the Persian world to the foundations of the Christian faith and God's immense love for them. The presenter will be joined by a book that comes





to life, and together they will teach Bible stories and apply them to daily life using songs, crafts, and graphics.

For older teens and young adults, new program *Generation of Hope* will connect young viewers to the teaching and heart of Jesus through engaging and educational segments. As presenters discuss how young people can navigate career choices, education, and relationships, this live show will also showcase young Christians who have made a positive impact in the world, giving viewers peer role models who are doing God's work.

Generation of Hope will "build young people up and empower them to pursue a life full of faith, hope, and love in Christ," says Nazanin Ashari, SAT-7 PARS Programming Manager.

Established shows not slowing down

SAT-7 PARS' much-loved discipleship programs are continuing to produce encouraging Bible-based content for believers in the Persian world.

Throughout its ninth season, *Principles of Faith* has been broadcasting the Good News of Jesus and exploring His life-transforming message. Presented by Milton Danil and Aylin Ashyar, the program shares biblical truth with Iranian adults and equips them with the wisdom to apply it in daily life.

"You are a true example for me in my life," said Narges, a *Principles of Faith* viewer from Iran. "I always think of you, my dear brother and sister, and once again I sat in front of the television like a child to watch your program."

Armita, another viewer of the program, got in touch to share her gratitude. "I have recently started watching your programs, and I thank God that through you, dear friends, we are able to hear God's word in our own homes," she said. "This is the kindness of the Lord that is being shown to us. May the Spirit of the Lord always be with you."

SAT-7 PARS discipleship program *Question Mark*, a viewer-centric talk show, has now completed its seventh series. Along with a variety of mature Christian guests, well-known host Sally Momtazi is helping believers and seekers across the Persian world get answers to their burning questions and go deeper in the faith.

Fariba, a woman from Iran, has been especially helped by the program in recent months. "Greetings to you, dear Bible teachers," she said to our team. "[Your] teaching and wise answers to our questions have been a source of blessing and helped my faith to grow. I give thanks for you, your guests, and your blessing-filled programs."

- ① Pastor Norullah Noor on the set of *Following Christ*
- ② Aylin Ashyar and Milton Danil, presenters of *Principles of Faith*
- ③ Discussing mental health on *Question Mark*
- ④ Filming the *Sunday School* program
- ⑤ Shahnaz leading a home church service for Afghan believers
- ⑥ Broadcasting *Secret of Life*

GROUNDING MODERN DISCIPLES ON ANCIENT FOUNDATIONS

SAT-7 TÜRK's programs increasingly strike a balance between highlighting Türkiye's Christian heritage and sharing practical discipleship content for today. Taking these together, Turkish believers can see how God has shaped their country in the past and how He is shaping their character in the present.

Highlighting heritage

Türkiye's rich Christian past is widely misunderstood or ignored, with many Turks seeing Christianity as foreign and irrelevant. But new programs are changing the narrative by celebrating Türkiye's broad Christian heritage.

The Story of Life in Gökçeada was a documentary-style series exploring the Christian roots of Gökçeada, an island city off the west coast of Türkiye that is also close to Greece. As the presenter visited different places, a story of faith and peace was uncovered. Greeks and Turks, Christians and non-Christians may have a complicated history in the region, but on Gökçeada, many live side by side in peace.

Set to be broadcast this autumn, *Witnesses of Time* finds Christianity's influence in various parts of mainland Türkiye. Leading faith figures open up the pages of history, and have honest discussions about Türkiye's Christian past during 13 fascinating episodes. Interviews with church leaders, locals, and experts are supported by creative camera work and cinematic music, giving the program both a high-quality feel and a mass appeal.

Daily discipleship

SAT-7 TÜRK talk show *Practicing Discipleship*, which finished its first season earlier this year, equips believers to activate their faith with biblical wisdom. The presenters repeatedly emphasize how our faith must impact our actions, not just increase our knowledge.

In an episode entitled "How to Pray," co-presenter Serli Balık laid the foundations for a thriving prayer life. "Often, [prayer] is something we do as a routine. But we [shouldn't] make our prayer a routine without understanding why we pray. To pray is to be in the presence of God... an attempt to be in the assembly of God."

Essence of the Gospel, presented by well-known pastor Cem Ercin, offers the Gospel to all in an engaging way. The long-established program continues to show viewers the world through Jesus' eyes.

"We need the Holy Spirit, and there is a way to receive Him," said Cem in a recent episode. "That way is the Cross of Jesus Christ. Only [by approaching the Cross] will we receive the Holy Spirit. And when we receive Him, we will hear the voice of God."

[...] New programs are changing the narrative by celebrating Türkiye's broad Christian heritage.

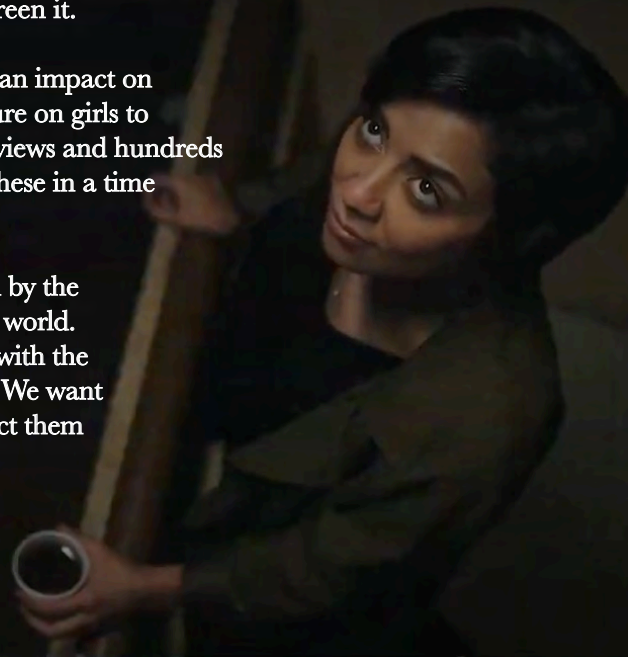


PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FOR SAT-7 FILM

SAT-7 film *Perhaps God Sees Me* won the Best Humanitarian Short Film Award at the prestigious Alexandria International Film Festival for Mediterranean Countries in October. The film was created as part of SAT-7's *Youth for an Enabling Society (YES)* project and tells a powerful and moving story of overcoming mental health issues and finding self-worth. It stars a well-known Egyptian actress and has attracted widespread positive media coverage in Egypt. Other broadcasters have asked to screen it.

Other short films from the *YES* project are continuing to make an impact on social media. A video that highlighted the dehumanizing pressure on girls to conform to beauty and fashion standards attracted 1.5 million views and hundreds of comments. One viewer said, "We need more messages like these in a time when people are often judged by their appearance."

Meanwhile, a film festival and photojournalism competition run by the project attracted 168 entries from young people across the Arab world. *YES* project lead Rafik George said, "We were really impressed with the short films and photos that were submitted for this competition. We want to inspire young people to use media to highlight issues that affect them and to make a positive impact in their communities."



HIGHLIGHTING PRESSURES ON ARAB MEN

Addressing men and the challenges they face because of cultural and religious expectations is a key part of SAT-7's Gender Equality and Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB) project.

Two new campaigns on social media are shining a spotlight on the pressures Arab men typically experience.

Project lead Maggie Morgan said, "To have a more equal society, and dignity for all, you have to talk to women and men, young and old. When it comes to FoRB, religious texts can be used to oppress women, but they can also be used to put more pressure on men."

The first campaign, called *Men Have Rights Too*, is already making an impact. Four short videos have attracted over 12 million views; one highlighted how boys and men are often told not to cry, but that they should have the right to express their feelings without being shamed.

The second campaign tackles toxic masculinity and is aimed at teens. Short videos present different scenarios in which 16-to-17-year-old boys are bullied for not being "man enough", highlighting the pressure they face to conform to unhealthy expectations.



Both these projects are implemented by SAT-7's Cairo studio and are run in partnership with the Norwegian Mission Society supported by Digni.



PRECIOUS TO GOD

Chantal, a 30-year-old from Egypt, was feeling “deeply distressed” when she first contacted us. Having encountered God in a monastery, it became a special place where she felt spiritually alive. However, after a “trivial issue”, she was refused entry for a prolonged period of time. It led to a cascade of other issues for Chantal.

“I have been feeling abandoned by God and unable to live my life normally,” Chantal said via the SAT-7 Woman page on Facebook. “I was very close to God during my time at the monastery, and remembering it now makes me cry. I feel a heavy burden. I have been feeling lost and struggling to find my way back.”

Our Viewer Support Team was deeply empathetic with Chantal’s situation as they talked with her extensively about her feelings of abandonment by God. The team discussed reconciliation with God and shared the message of salvation in different ways, along with relevant Bible verses and videos.

The team prayed with Chantal before encouraging her to join an online community that could help in her discipleship journey. It was just what she needed.

“Thank you so much for your time and care,” Chantal said. “I attended the prayer meeting you introduced me to and it was beautiful. It made a big difference for me. I love talking to you; if everyone were like you, the world would be at peace. Yesterday’s meeting touched my heart, reminding me how precious we are to God despite tough spiritual battles. I feel encouraged by our conversations. Your support has made a significant difference in my life.”

“I want you to pray for my church to go deeper in God’s Word. Also, you can pray for my family to come to know Jesus Christ. God bless you.

Kubilay, Türkiye



“Hello Auntie Mariam, I really love your program and on Tuesdays I don’t go anywhere so that I can take part in *Church4Kids*. Every week, the program helps us to learn the stories of the Bible properly, to be blessed by the things the Lord has done, and understand the immensity of those things.

I love you very much, Auntie Mariam. Thank you for always working hard and putting time aside for us. I am grateful to you.

Mojdeh, Iran



FINDING STRENGTH AMIDST PERSECUTION

Along with his local community of believers, an Iranian man named Arzhang is facing intense persecution for his faith. But the twin influences of SAT-7’s teaching and local Christian leaders have fortified his faith.

“You and my pastor have helped me to grow in my faith ever since I came to faith,” he said. “I have been blessed by your longstanding programs, and I always encourage others to watch *Principles of Faith*, *Question Mark*, and *Our Neighborhood*. I have also been blessed by your other teaching programs.”

Arzhang wants other Iranians to encounter the truth through SAT-7’s discipleship programming. “I always pray that you will be used to help Iranians to come to a deeper understanding of the truth, because it is the truth that sets people free.”

But Arzhang needs his local house church to survive and thrive, too. “Please pray for our church in my town, which is going through difficult times and is facing persecution. We really need God’s grace.”

Arzhang has come to recognize the beauty of the family of God, seeing the work of SAT-7 and his local church as different ways of strengthening believers with the same love of Jesus. “I love you all even though I have never seen you, but we are one in heart and in the Lord. This is a true honor, and there is nothing in the world as wonderful as the love in the body of Christ.”

GROWTH IN FAITH ON ZOOM

For around 18 months, SAT-7 PARS has been facilitating Zoom teaching classes for isolated Persian believers. The sessions, which contain worship music, teaching, discussion, and prayer, have proved to be extremely encouraging and fruitful for the majority of attendees. Shahrads has been attending these classes and contacted us to say:

“Respectful greetings. I wanted to tell you that the change and growth that has happened in me are all the fruits of my participation in the Zoom classes. The teaching that Brother Farshid and Sister Marjan provided have enabled me to grow in my faith and to be blessed. Before I attended these classes, I was a different person altogether and I was in error, but now the life I live has real meaning. Through your teaching I realized how truly awesome and loving the Lord is.

“I thank God for you, dear friends, and especially for Brother Farshid and Sister Marjan, without whom I may not have become a member of the Lord's spiritual family.

“Thank you for the time and attention you have given to me, and may the Lord thoroughly bless you.”



HONOR FOR NEW FEATURE FILM

SAT-7 TÜRK's feature-length film *Yakamoz*, which marks the 100-year Anniversary of the Greek-Turkish population exchange, has won the Jewel Award for best drama from the CEVMA (Christian European Visual Media Association).

Collecting the award, SAT-7's Ministry Content Adviser George Makeen said it was an honor for the film to receive this recognition. "These awards are given to visual media that are creative and well-produced but that also have strong content and a clear Christian message. We are proud to have been recognized as a ministry that can produce powerful content that makes an impact."

Ümit Teymur, acting Executive Director of SAT-7 TÜRK, said the team was "delighted" with the award and the impact the film is making. "We are so pleased that this powerful

story resonated with the judges and that its Christian message of accepting the other and loving the stranger has been recognized." Premiering on June 28 this year, *Yakamoz* shares a message of peaceful coexistence rarely depicted in the Turkish media. It has been well received, garnering widespread secular media attention and being shown in cinemas across the country. It has also won four further awards in Cyprus and Türkiye.

The fictional story is set in a real historical context. After years of war, a peace agreement between Greece and Türkiye was signed in 1923, resulting in the forced relocation of two million Greeks and Turks back to their respective ancestral nations. The film showcases an important piece of Türkiye's Christian heritage, as three quarters of those displaced were Greek Orthodox Christians.



ENGAGING TAJIK CHRISTIAN WOMEN

SAT-7's first-ever program aimed at Tajik women, *World of Women's Thoughts*, is broadcasting now on SAT-7 PARS.

High-quality Christian content is desperately needed among Tajikistan's isolated Christian population, many of whom are unable to gather legally and face persecution if they confess their faith.

Produced by SAT-7 Partner Media Mission the Messengers (aka Sansa), *World of Women's Thoughts* is part of a wider strategy to ramp up support for Tajik Christians in their life of faith. "Our viewers from Tajikistan are in dire need of Christian teaching and lifestyle examples," says producer Mikael Tunér.

World of Women's Thoughts, a talk show presented by two Tajik sisters, discusses women's thoughts and how God's Word can help them to overcome destructive ways of thinking. During the 20 half-hour-long episodes, the hosts will also share stories from their own faith journeys. They have found religious freedom far from their homeland.

Because Tajik is closely related to Dari, the Persian language spoken in Afghanistan, *World of Women's Thoughts* will also benefit Afghan women, who are in great need of Christian discipleship content too.



PURSUIING PEACE AFTER HORRORS OF WAR

Voices calling for and working towards peace are desperately needed in the MENA. A new SAT-7 ARABIC program, *Journeying towards Peace*, is providing a platform for people who have turned from violence after experiencing the horrors of warfare to tell their stories of peace, repentance, and forgiveness.

Asaad Chaftari, a militia leader during the Lebanese Civil War, experienced a huge turnaround in his life when his wife introduced him to Christians who encouraged him to accept the love of Christ. His journey of repentance culminated in his issuing a public apology to all the Lebanese people who had lost loved ones in the war.

He said, "I learned the value of others and that I shouldn't think little of them or despise them because they are different from me."

Joseph Obeid was badly injured in the war, and his wife lost the baby she was carrying. But he has found peace by choosing to let go of the past. "We can't have peace if we stay focused on what happened," he said. He now writes dramas and Christian songs and prayers. "God gave me a talent, and I am using the talent that He gave me," he said.



FINDING STRENGTH IN JESUS

SAT-7 KIDS is broadcasting a new magazine-style Christian show called *Jesus is Our Strength* for children between seven and twelve years of age.

The program, which launched in September, provides a dynamic, engaging platform for children to learn about faith, kindness, and community through fun activities, inspiring stories, and interactive segments. It encourages children to explore their own experiences and their questions about living a Christ-centered life.

The show provides multiple segments that are different every day. Monday's episode focuses on character-building and understanding Scripture. On Tuesday, the presenters use stories and challenges to engage the young viewers.

Wednesday's episode consists of fun, facts, and faith exploration, while Thursday's offers celebration in music and worship.

The program is broadcast on satellite, but SAT-7 KIDS is also planning to produce a social media version containing interactive content that will build strong connections between the team and their viewers.





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