

Life can be very difficult for Christians in Iran, even Christian children. They are often spat on and cursed while the teachers do nothing. Even if they make good grades, they may not be allowed to graduate, and so cannot enter college or get a good job. Most Christians have to meet in secret house churches with only a few other people, but there is great revival happening in Iran in spite of the difficulties, and especially CHILDREN are turning to Jesus!

True story! In one city in Iran, there is a secret house church that is very unusual. The members are taught to be strong Christian leaders, how to share about Jesus with Muslims, and how to start other new church groups. What is amazing is that most of the members of this church are between the ages of 10 and 13!!! Some are even as young as 5 years old, and the "pastor" is just 16! One of the 15 year old leaders is called Firouz, and he is a typical boy who likes to play soccer and ping pong. He used to be a Muslim, but one day a friend invited him to the bible study, where he learned the truth about Jesus. The more he learned, the more he grew to know and love Jesus, and even though his father and other relatives criticized him and even refused to talk to him, he decided to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. Now he is sharing God's love with many other children.




The Muslim clerics send out spies to try to find the secret churches; they confiscate bibles and Christian materials and recently set up a commission to monitor the Internet in Iran and wage war on websites. They talk about America as the "Great Satan" and yet many of the people still seek to learn the truth. Let's pray for the people of Iran - that they will come to know Jesus and free their country from this strict Islamic rule.

'Til next time,

Your friend, Shirley

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 (Answer to puzzle: Titus; Esther; Hebrews; Ruth; Acts; Numbers = TEHRAN)

World Kids

Fun facts for kids!  True stories!

PAL Page

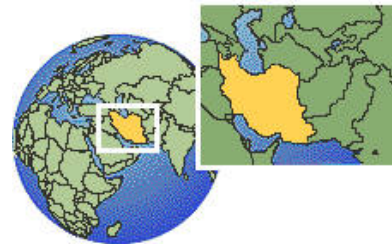
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Can you guess in which country dancing is forbidden?

You may be surprised to know that the answer is **IRAN!**



Iran is a country that is mentioned a great deal in the news right now as it has been recognized as a state that sponsors and supports terrorism. But you will see that there are many different kinds of people living there and in fact **MANY** people in Iran are accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and turning away from Islam! 99% of the Iranian people are Muslims, yet many are unhappy with the strict Muslim laws and are hungry to learn about Jesus, so there is actually a great revival going on there right now.

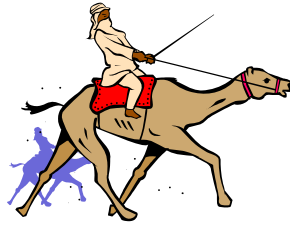


Iran is about the size of Alaska (about 636,000 square miles) and is located between Iraq to the west and Pakistan and Afghanistan to the east. Until 1935 it was known as Persia and it's mentioned several times in the Bible.

The Old Testament stories of Esther and Daniel took place in Persia - what is known as Iran today.



The countryside of Iran is mostly mountains and desert, with huge areas of harsh salt flats, sand and rock. Many people still live as nomads, living in tents and herding camels, goats and other livestock as they travel the ancient routes across the barren land. But they do not just wander aimlessly - they understand the desert and plan their journeys according to the seasons and their needs. They are not just shepherds, but are also skilled at making crafts of leather and metals, which they sell along the way.



Life in the rural areas is very hard and has changed little through the years. For 2,500 years until the 1970's, Persia (Iran) was a kingdom ruled by kings, each one known as a "Shah". The last shah, Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, hoped to modernize Iran using the nation's great income from oil, to build modern cities with universities and hospitals. But these great plans for change upset the religious leaders, especially a fanatical leader named Ayatollah Khomeini, who led a revolution and drove the shah from power in 1979.



Green/white/red stripes

Then for 10 years, Iran fought a terrible war with Iraq and 100,000s of its young men were killed. Since then, although the government is supposed to be democratic, there is a lot of unrest as the clerics (Muslim religious leaders) also try to control the country.

Iran's natural resources are petroleum and mined minerals like iron and copper; and 90% of its income comes from oil and petroleum products. Some of this money has been used to build modern cities like the capital, Tehran, in the north of Iran. Yet most of the economy and business is controlled by the state, and the average income is only \$100 US per month, with 40% of the people still living in poverty. Apart from petroleum products, fruits, nuts and the famous Persian carpets make up the exports, mostly sent to Japan and other Asian countries.



The strict Muslim clerics have tried in many ways to stop the Iranian people from learning about life in the West, and they have many harsh punishments for breaking certain laws. People can be imprisoned or flogged (beaten) for listening to Western music, and even some famous Iranian dancers performing in a theatre in front of a purely female audience, were arrested and sent to prison, as dancing has been banned! In recent years the cities have become very modernized and western technology has begun to affect the daily life of many Iranians. Even though the clerics have made satellite TV receivers illegal, hundreds can be seen perched on the roofs of tall apartment buildings, and many people are hearing the Gospel inside their homes via Christian TV programs. It is against the law to witness about Jesus in Iran, but so many of the people are hungry to hear the message of freedom preached in the Bible.



70% of Iranians are under the age of 30, and life as a teenager is very different in Iran - they can marry at the age of 13 (they used to be able to marry even younger!), they can vote at 15, and can learn to drive at 18. As they learn about life in the rest of the world, many become dissatisfied with the strict Muslim ways in Iran, and they are eager to learn about Jesus Christ and the Bible. Many are getting saved, and one Muslim official complained recently that every day, 50 Iranian girls and boys secretly convert to Christianity.



Books of the Bible Game

Write the correct book of the Bible beside each clue; then write down the first letter of each to find the answer.

- _____ short letter written to a friend of Paul
- _____ story of a beauty queen
- _____ letter written to Jews converted to Christ
- _____ story of David's great grandmother
- _____ story of the early church
- _____ story of the desert wanderings of the Israelites

Answer: _ _ _ _ _