



TESTIMONIES AND TUNES IN THE TAJIK TONGUE

SAT-7 PARS’ mission is to provide holistic Christian television for everyone in the Persian-speaking world. Thanks to a courageous Christian musician, the channel has now produced its first series in the Tajik dialect, called *Our Salvation is in Him*.

“There is a need for programs in the heart language of Tajikistan,” says Director and Producer Mikael Tunér, who grew up in the region and whose vision is to make a variety of shows in Tajik. While Iranian Farsi is widely understood among all Persian-speakers, audiences feel a sense of familiarity and belonging when a presenter speaks in their mother tongue.

A PASSION FOR WITNESS

Christians in Tajikistan make up less than 0.07% of the population, and they are coming under increasing pressure from the government. Thus SAT-7 PARS has been looking for Tajik-speaking program hosts for a long time, as it is a challenge to find Tajik Christians willing to talk about their faith on television. Finally, Tunér says, “God sent us Mahinbonu!”

Mahinbonu Gazanova is a well-known Christian singer who began her personal relationship with Jesus at age 42.

Now 65, she is as eager as ever to tell others about God’s work in her life. “In Tajikistan, I can only talk to people I meet face-to-face,” she says. “I prayed for the opportunity to share my testimony with many people in my country via radio or television.” Within a week, God answered her prayer, and the opportunity arose to appear on SAT-7 PARS. In mid-2017, Mahinbonu travelled to the IRR-TV studios in Finland to record the first series of *Our Salvation is in Him*.

A VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

Mahinbonu shares her testimony over the course of the series, interspersing it with worship songs she has written. “As Mahinbonu shares the story of how she became a believer, she is lending her voice to those who are unable to share their own stories,” explains Tunér.

Mahinbonu’s songs also enable Tajik viewers to praise God in their own language, in their own homes.

The set of *Our Salvation is in Him* is decorated with brightly-coloured *suzanis*, the traditional folk embroidery of Central Asia, to further help Tajik viewers feel culturally at home.

Unfortunately, the filming of *Our Salvation is in Him* was cut short when Mahinbonu fell ill after making eight episodes. But God’s hand was still in the project. The day Mahinbonu had to leave the studio, Tunér heard from another Tajik Christian singer interested in working with SAT-7 PARS. Farangis Soleiva will join the team in 2018 to record the five remaining episodes of the first season.

The channel’s team is praying for Mahinbonu’s recovery and giving thanks for God’s provision for the program, which will air soon. ■

**Persian dialects broadcasted
on SAT-7 PARS:
Azeri, Dari, Farsi, Tajik**

SIX YOUNG MEN FIND JESUS THROUGH SAT-7 PARS

Young Ramin* contacted us, eager to know more about Jesus after watching SAT-7 PARS. Excited that he had discovered God's love, Ramin asked us to contact some of his friends who also wanted to know more about Christianity. In just a few weeks, Ramin and five of his friends decided to follow Jesus.

Before praying with Ramin, the SAT-7 PARS Audience Relations team wanted to be sure he understood who Christ was and what His life, death, and resurrection mean for us. Ramin confirmed that this was the reason he wished to take this step and the team had the joy of praying with him as Ramin gave his life to Christ.

Ramin had already been speaking about Jesus to some of his friends. He asked us to contact him the next day and talk to his friend, Darius*, who also wanted to learn more. The call was arranged, and the following day a SAT-7 team member spoke to Darius, explaining God's love. Darius then asked the team member to pray with him and gave his life to Jesus.

25-year-old Toofan* thanked us for contacting him, too, and for helping him understand more about Christ. He says:

"My friends and I have decided that we are done being away from God. No matter the pressures we face, we surrender our lives to Jesus Christ. All I ask of you is to not leave us on our own, but keep teaching us because we don't have anyone to do that here."

SUPPORTING NEW BELIEVERS

"We encouraged all these men to watch the programs and worship the Lord together, telling them that Jesus told us where two or three are gathered in His name, He is in our midst," says a member of the Audience Relations team. "This is the true meaning of church."

These new believers need the support of their brothers and sisters around the world. They specifically asked for prayers that they will make God's love visible to those around them, and for local connections with other believers.

BEING A CHRISTIAN IN AFGHANISTAN

Less than one percent of the population of Afghanistan is Christian. Christians are often extradited from their families and communities. Many lose property and employment. Harsher penalties include imprisonment; on occasion, even death. There is only one legally recognised church in Afghanistan, which is not open to local nationals. Many believers are isolated and forced to keep their faith secret. Moreover, since the literacy level in Afghani-

stan is very low – under 40 percent according to UNESCO – the few printed Christian resources that are available are not accessible to all.

SAT-7 PARS is a lifeline for many of these believers. The channel provides accessible biblical teaching in their own language. But most importantly, it brings hope.

Please pray for these men. Pray for God's protection over them as He continues to guide them growing in their faith. Please also pray for strength and wisdom for our SAT-7 PARS' Audience Relations team as they continue to support and encourage these men. ■

**names changed, photo for illustrative purposes*



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