

Vol. 3
ISSUE 3



Global
iNSIGHT

The Suffering of Muslim Background Believers

Nothing could have prepared me for what awaited me after accepting Christ. What began as a quiet, personal step of faith quickly erupted into a storm of hostility and rejection. When my decision became known, it struck like a tidal wave—sudden, violent, and overwhelming. Within a single day, friends, relatives, and well-wishers turned into adversaries. Those who once showed affection became bitter, unleashing relentless verbal assaults. In that moment, I lost everything.

Becoming a follower of Christ completely alienated my family from me. They could not understand my faith, nor were they willing to accept it. My father disowned me and, on two occasions, chased me with a sword—once even after I was married. My mother starved me, locked me in the bathroom, threw me out of the house in the middle of the night, and even attempted witchcraft against me, which by God's grace did not succeed. My cousins, uncles, and aunts were no less cruel. For three and a half years, I was beaten daily and endured severe persecution, which in many ways continues even today.

Scripture reminds us that suffering is not unusual for those who follow Christ. Jesus Himself said, "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first" (John 15:18), and again, "In this world you will have trouble.

But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Persecution is an inevitable part of the Christian life, especially for believers from Muslim backgrounds. When their conversion becomes known, they often lose everything—their possessions, relationships, livelihoods, and social standing. Many live under constant threat, and some even lose their lives for their faith.

The apostle Paul speaks of "knowing Christ... and the fellowship of His sufferings" (Philippians 3:10), a reality that Muslim background believers understand deeply. Yet Scripture assures us that suffering is never meaningless. "These trials will show that your faith is genuine" (1 Peter 1:7), and "suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope" (Romans 5:3-4). Though the trials are painful and often unbearable, God uses them to refine us, deepen our dependence on Him, and strengthen our faith—enabling us to stand firm for Christ, no matter the cost.

Please pray for Muslim background believers around the world who face suffering and persecution from even their closest friends and family when they make the decision to follow Christ. Please pray that they will be strengthened to endure these trials.

Expanding iTEE's Ministry Work in the Muslim World

Twice since August of 2025, iTEE Global staff members have traveled to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to explore ministry needs and to develop relationships with Christian leaders in one of the most difficult regions of the world.

One North African country they visited sends out thousands of Islamic missionaries each year to win converts for Islam all over the world. This country is quite hostile to Christianity, and our team knew that their brothers and sisters in Christ often suffered greatly for their faith. Yet amazingly, on several occasions complete strangers, such as a taxi driver or person on the street, would see our staff members and ask them for prayer. This was a surreal experience!

Because of the local hostility to Christianity, our team learned

that it was very important to develop trusting relationships with local Christian leaders. These relationships can take time to flourish.

One such leader from an evangelical denomination had served as a pastor in Egypt and later in Iraq when the latter was an active war zone. God burdened his heart to reach Muslims with the love of Jesus. He was busily serving the church and its needs, yet there were so many Muslims outside the church walls who needed Christ, and his pastoral responsibilities prevented him from reaching them. He was frustrated by the immensity of the needs around him and his own time limitations; however, in recent years, the Lord has opened the door for him to focus on reaching many Muslims. He is discipling these Muslim-background believers and

has asked iTEE Global to assist him in training them to become missionaries. By using iTEE Global's training materials, he can equip leaders who will assist him in carrying out his vision for the lost. Multiplication of disciple-makers will dramatically expand the ministry.

Our team met another pastor who had become a follower of Jesus in his home country of Yemen but had moved to this north African nation. This pastor had led a group of believers in Yemen, even while his own knowledge and training were limited. When he arrived in his new country, Christians who were not of Muslim background were afraid of allowing him to worship with them in their churches, because he used to be a Muslim. Christians in this country know that their government's agents prohibit anyone from a Muslim background from entering a worship service in a Christian church. The church may face fines, or in some cases, be burned down as a penalty.

Our team learned how challenging it can be for Muslim-born believers, like this pastor, to fellowship with Christians who are not from a Muslim background. It is extremely difficult for newly born-again Muslims to find a church willing to baptize them for fear of retribution from the Muslim community or government officials. MBBs often lack fellowship and a Christian support network they can depend on. Jobs may become scarce, their education opportunities will be limited, and family and friends could become hostile.

Khalid is one such believer in this same country. Years ago he was a devout Muslim. One day, he had some free time and began watching



Expanding iTEE's Ministry Work in the Muslim World continued

Christian satellite television. He was drawn to the message of Jesus Christ and the grace of God through Him, even though he still considered himself a Muslim and saw no reason to change his religion. After more than a year, he watched another Christian program that candidly discussed troubling aspects of Muhammad's life, drawing on authentic Islamic sources. With further research, Khalid was astonished to discover that this information was accurate. During this time in his life, the

Person of Jesus Christ became increasingly compelling, while the corruption in Islam's founder caused Khalid to sink into deep despair as he questioned all he had believed. What should he do now? Ultimately, Khalid gave his life to Jesus. Yet there is no Bible School or seminary in his country where he can study. Our team was an answer to his prayers. Khalid hopes to join an Arabic-speaking cohort in 2027 once iTEE Global's bilingual Arabic-English Master Trainers are ready to teach in their native languages.

While the circumstances are severe in the MENA region, there is great hope, as MBBs are being disciplined to train and lead small congregations that can support one another while remaining inconspicuous.

Please pray that the Lord would continue to grant iTEE Global access to Muslim Background Believers in these regions, so the church can be strengthened and disciple-makers can be multiplied.

Breaking Through the Barriers

On their second trip to the region in December, our MENA Team met Christians living and working in one of the most sensitive countries in Islam. Ten years ago, this country even prohibited foreign visitors from bringing in a personal Bible. Christians there lived in extreme danger. Although the political climate has changed for the better in the last decade, it is still dangerous to live as a Christian, especially if you are from a Muslim background.

When our team arrived, they were greeted with great joy. They met expats and nationals who love the Lord and want to make Him known in this country, and there are a number of MBBs there. We are thankful for God's wonderful work at bringing people to Himself. However, those Christians with Muslim backgrounds face many challenges. For example, one man confessed that he was at a loss to know how to treat his wife or raise his children in a biblical way, since Islam's family values can be quite different from biblical ones. He is not alone in wondering how to live as a godly husband and father.

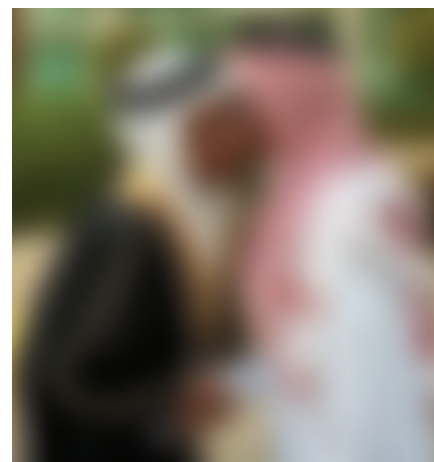
MBBs also struggle with how much information can be shared with others, including their own families. Sometimes when adults become Christians, they cannot even tell their spouse or children about their conversion, due to concerns for the family's safety. The spouse and the spouse's family may be hostile to the believer's new beliefs. At school, children could unwittingly reveal the new faith of their parent or parents, which would cause severe repercussions.

Pray that God will instruct these Christians, and that our staff at iTEE Global will have wisdom from God's word to respond to these challenges

MENA Leadership Training

Currently, iTEE has a cohort of pastors and Christian leaders from the MENA region studying in English online. All are bilingual (primarily English-Arabic), and after this year of training we hope that some of them will start teaching courses face-to-face in Arabic in 2027. Please pray that God will grant our regional staff wisdom and grace to prepare these leaders for disciple-making, and that He provides funds to translate 15 courses into Arabic as quickly as possible. These bilingual leaders will use the courses in Arabic to train others in the MENA region.

Also, please pray that the Lord would grant our MENA region staff wisdom and grace to prepare MBBs in the Arabic world for the multiplication of disciple-makers.



Another Cohort Beginning in May: More Pastors and Leaders from the MENA Region

In May of this year, we anticipate launching a second online cohort for the MENA Region. This group will consist exclusively of students from a network of MBB pastors and leaders located in multiple countries.

Prayer Requests

- For our MENA cohort of Galatians students
- For additional volunteers to teach and facilitate iTEE courses
- For the Lord to call new staff, volunteers, and students to iTEE to become multiplying disciple-makers
- For Philip's healing and his need for a double-lung transplant. Philip is our India director for discipling Muslim Background Believers.
- For funding and wisdom to translate courses into Arabic and possibly Farsi.

Due to security concerns, we have not shared the pictures of the people we met.

Ministry Opportunities

Human Resources Director

Directs all efforts of iTEE Global in recruiting staff to the ministry and processing all applications, and ensures the applicant's successful integration into the ministry. This person will also oversee and provide member care of staff.

Course Publisher/Course Migrator

Works with existing course materials to prepare them for use in print and on the web. This can include some modifications to make the course materials more interactive. This may also include migrating the courses from one online platform to the ITEE University Moodle platform.

Translation Manager

The Translation Manager (TM) works primarily with each language translator team (translators, editors, graphic artists, and course publishers) to help provide them with the resources they need to effectively translate course materials. The TM will also work with iTEE Global leadership to establish priorities, and to provide regular, accurate reports of translation efforts.

For a detailed list of opportunities, please see iteeg.org/opportunities.

If you are interested, contact: HRinfo@iteeg.org



Global iNSIGHT in your e-mail: iteeg.org/newsletter

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