

A Wife's Perspective: Nightmare of a Husband and Father Imprisoned in Iran

It has been nine months since Saeed kissed the little foreheads of our children as he said his goodbyes early in the morning of June 22. Nine months since Daddy sung to them and tucked them into bed, and nine months since I embraced my husband as we said our goodbyes, thinking at the time we would be separated only a few weeks, as he returned to Iran to continue work on building an orphanage. Maybe if I knew what was to unfold, I would have held him a little longer, talked a little longer?

It has been five months since the frantic phone call that woke me up in the middle of the night, telling me of the horrific way my husband was taken—five revolutionary guards, raiding the house and taking him, not knowing where he was or what had happened to him—five long months. Maybe, that is why still to this day, I suddenly wake up frantic in the middle of the night; I turn over only to find Saeed's empty spot, only to find that the nightmare is not over yet, only to discover that this nightmare will not be over anytime soon.

It has been one month, to the day, since **Saeed** was given his eight-year sentence because of his **Christian** faith. I know deep in my heart that unless we speak out and fight for him, Saeed might not survive the eight years in that horrific prison, especially because he continues to face continued **abuse** and **death threats**.

This nightmare exists because Saeed refuses to deny Christ. He is standing up for what he believes. Are we going to stand up with him? Are we going to be a voice for him when the **Iranian government** is doing all it can to silence him?

How many more nights am I to hold my weeping children as they ask me to tell them stories of how Daddy used to hold them when they were born; how he used to play with them, kiss them and hold them each night before he tucked them into bed? How many more times must I hold back my tears as I sing the worship songs he used to sing to them, as they beg me to sing like Daddy did because they are trying desperately to hold on to the memories of their daddy.

Over the last month, I have pondered over and over how I will ever explain to my children that Daddy has been given eight years in a horrific **prison** and we don't even know if he will survive ... one month; 31 days; 744 hours; 44,640 minutes; 2,678,400 seconds.

During this nightmare, I lean on the promise in Scripture that "We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor. 4:8-9).

Ultimately, God is in control and He controls governments and situations for His glory. There is nothing Saeed and I desire more than to die to ourselves and allow Christ to shine through to this dying world; that He would be glorified in all of this, and many would come to know the saving grace of **Jesus**. Our trust is in the Lord, and He is carrying us through this nightmare and drawing us closer to Him. But I also believe that the Lord is using our prayers, and the political, social media, and other efforts to bring us together as the Body of Christ. He promises to turn all this for His glory.

This nightmare and the plea for my husband's life should cross religious and political barriers. It should grip all human beings at our heart's core, motivating us to do what is right, to stand up for someone whose **human rights** are being violated. While Saeed doesn't have a voice to sing to his children, we each have a voice for his freedom; we can make a difference.

Naghmeh Abedini is the wife of imprisoned American **Pastor Saeed Abedini**, a U.S. citizen. She resides with their two young children in Idaho. The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ), which represents Naghmeh and the children, is at the forefront of a global effort to secure Pastor Saeed's freedom. You can join hundreds of thousands of others in signing the petition to #SaveSaeed at .