

# Iran Releases Seven Christian Prisoners

✖ Seven Iranian Christians were released from prison on bail on Saturday, Jan. 29. Four women were released from Tehran's Evin prison, and two men and a woman were released in the city of Isfahan three days earlier. The seven spent one month in prison after being arrested along with 31 other Christians on Dec. 26, 2010. Some of the other 31 have since been released. All were arrested simply because they are Christians.

Two of those who remain in prison are Rasool and Maryam Abdolahi, whose arrests left their two children to live as orphans. While Maryam was able to call her children from prison, the traumatized children have not heard from their father in more than 34 days. All of the other prisoners were able to call their families. Church leaders are extremely worried about Rasool.

At least 26 other Christians are still in prison, including Yousef Nadarkhani, who was sentenced to death for apostasy. Two couples, Vahik and Sonia Abrahamian and Srash and Arezoo Kermanjani, have been in prison in Hamadan for nearly four months. Two others, Mojtaba Keshavarz and Shahin Rostami, have been held in Arak for more than three months. Church members are concerned for their health. Sonia is suffering from the poor conditions in prison, and Shahin is diabetic.

The women released in Tehran were Ladan Nouri, Nasrin Hosseini-nia, Anahita Zare and Sara Akhavan. Sara Akhavan's family gave up their trade license in exchange for her bail, and if authorities decide she has broken bail, the family's livelihood will be gone. Sadly, the trade license was not valuable enough to secure bail for Sara's sister, Leila, who remains in prison. Rafi Nadipoor, Basir Amini and Yasaman Yar-

Ahmadi were released in Isfahan.

Continue to pray for Christians in Iran, who face extreme pressure under the government's new policy of "religious cleansing."