

Pastor Saeed Writes His Son Heartbreaking Birthday Letter From Iranian Prison

March 17 is Jacob's seventh birthday.

Like lots of little boys, he's sent out invitations to his birthday party, including to his dad, American Pastor Saeed Abedini.

Tragically, Pastor Saeed remains imprisoned in Iran merely because of his Christian faith.

This week, when one of his family members in Iran was permitted to visit him in prison, Pastor Saeed was able to send a heartfelt, and at the same time heartbreaking, letter to his son.

Pastor Saeed told his son that it "breaks my heart" that he can't be there for his son's birthday. He wrote to Jacob, "[M]y chains are keeping me from you."

Earlier this year, President Obama told Jacob that he would "try" to bring Pastor Saeed home for his birthday. Unfortunately, that hasn't happened.

This week, ACLJ Chief Counsel Jay Sekulow testified before the U.S. Senate on Pastor Saeed's case and the plight of persecuted Christians across the globe. At that hearing, the Obama Administration's Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, David Saperstein, reiterated that the State Department remains committed to bring Pastor Saeed home.

But as of right now, Pastor Saeed remains imprisoned. He is still suffering from injuries sustained in prison beatings. And now he's had to break the news to his son that he will be forced to miss yet another birthday.

It's devastating.

Yet through the trials and tribulations he faces, Pastor Saeed still has hope.

Read Pastor Saeed's powerful letter below:

Letter to Jacob on his 7th Birthday

To my dear beloved son Jacob,

I saw your beautiful birthday invitation that you had made me and I know how much you want me to be there on your birthday. Daddy loves you so much. I long to be there for your birthday and to make this reunion happen, but my chains are keeping me from you.

I want you to know that although I might NOT BE THERE and you might feel my absence, there is One who always IS. One who is always there with you and who can meet all of your needs under any condition. I might not be there on your birthday and that breaks my heart as your father. But I know the One who is there on your birthday who is there for you and cares for you more than anyone could imagine. HE IS THERE with you and His name is I AM WHO I AM.

I AM WHO I AM. It means that God is there with you in every situation that you are going through. This is the name that God introduced Himself when meeting with Moses in the burning bush when God's people were crying out to Him and were feeling His absence. Today there are many people around the world who are experiencing the same things that the people of God were experiencing and that you are experiencing. They are crying out to God and might not be feeling His Presence. They are wondering where is God in all of this. But I want you to remember that despite what you feel, He is always there with you.

Even though I AM NOT there with you, I AM is there with you.

God came in human flesh in Jesus Christ all the way from heaven to the earth to give us the gift of salvation by being crucified on the cross for the punishment of our sin. So on this special day, I want you to accept this gift of salvation. Invite Jesus into your heart as you have invited me to your birthday.

So happy birthday to my big boy and my hero, Jacob Cyrus Abedini. Thank you for standing strong with me in this battle for the Glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

*Your proud Dad,
Saeed*

Pastor Saeed is a loving husband and an adoring father. He wants nothing more than to be there for his son, a son who is being forced to grow up without a father because he believes in Jesus Christ.

We're working not only in Congress and with the State Department but across the globe, aggressively fighting to bring Pastor Saeed home.

As my dad, Jay Sekulow, told Congress this week, every time someone speaks up for Pastor Saeed it helps keep him alive. Every time the President or someone from the State Department demands his freedom it gives hope.

Every time someone signs a petition or prays for Pastor Saeed's freedom it has power. As we continue fighting worldwide for Pastor Saeed and the persecuted church, add your name to our petition for his freedom (below and) at .

Be Pastor Saeed's voice; be Jacob's voice for his dad. It's the best birthday present we could give him.