

# The Harvest Is Plenty and the Workers Are Waiting

Padideh's journey from impoverished exile to a key member of Iran Alive's ministry team was strewn with heartache, rejection, and disillusionment. But God had her in His care every step of the way—a truth she knows now but had to walk a hard road to discover.

## *From Comfortable to Cast Out*

Padideh was born in Tehran before the 1979 Islamic Revolution; the eldest child of intellectuals. Her father was a university professor who worked for the Department of Foreign Affairs in the Shah's government while her mom worked for an archaeological firm. They were a tight, happy, comfortable family.

That all changed when the Islamists overthrew the Shah. Because of their status as intellectuals and her dad's vocal disagreement with the Islamic regime, her parents were black-listed by the radical government and sentenced to what would be a five-year exile in a remote village on the Iran-Turkey border where they fought for survival as farmers.

Not only were her parents stripped of good-paying jobs and shipped to the middle of nowhere, but the Islamists ordered the villagers, their new neighbors, to shun them and to buy none of her father's produce. On top of that, the villagers spoke Turkish, and Padideh's family only knew Farsi. Communicating with their new neighbors was almost impossible.

*"Imagine how we went from a comfortable and happy life in Tehran to sudden poverty, pain, and suffering in a remote border village because of this exile," Padideh said. "The emotional and financial pressures that we faced were immense. I witnessed my parents' tears many times."*

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IRAN ALIVE  
MINISTRIES

TRANSFORMING IRAN INTO A CHRISTIAN NATION — ONE SOUL AT A TIME



### *A Turn for the Worse*

Shortly after the move, Padideh's mother got pregnant and gave birth to her youngest brother. However, the joy of her son's birth was cut short by the death of her own mother, who lived far away. The shock of the move and her mother's passing sent her into severe depression. To fight the depression, Padideh's mom took some strong medication without any guidance from a doctor. The resulting overdose left her paralyzed from the waist down and bedridden.

This trauma broke her father. Ostracized, jobless, and now with the sudden crippling of his wife, he transformed virtually overnight from a kind, pleasant dad who read bedtime stories to his kids into an angry, frustrated menace.


*"My mother and I spent many nights in each other's arms, shedding tears without any support or assistance," Padideh recalled.*

### *Exile Ends, Troubles Deepen*

After five long years, Padideh's family was allowed to return to Tehran, but her parents couldn't hold any government jobs. That left them just as poor as before, so they turned to local relatives to help them. But instead of treating them like family, those relatives took one look at her disabled mother and shunned them, just like the Turkish villagers.

That was the final blow for her embittered father. He divorced her mom and left the family when Padideh was just 10. She remembers that dark day all too well.

*"I didn't sleep that night," she said. "My eyes were fixed on the door until morning. I hoped that my father might return, but he never did."*



*...my spouse and I came to understand that the true God is Jesus, the one who gives life.*

That put the weight of the family on little Padideh's shoulders. Every day, she had to cook, do house chores, get her siblings ready for school, and care for her bedridden mother.

*"All in all, a 10-year-old girl had to do wonders," she remembered. "I grew resentful toward God because I thought He was the one who had caused all this misfortune."*

### ***Searching for Allah, Finding Jesus***

Diving into her schoolwork, Padideh also dove into Islam, trying to impress her peers and teachers with her devotion. She thought if she respected Allah and carefully followed all the rules that her mother would be healed, her dad would come back, and the good life they once had would return. To Padideh's dismay, none of it was to be.

Years passed. Padideh went to college, where two Christian friends in her dorm told her about Jesus. But all the hardship in Padideh's life had made her bitter; she wanted nothing to do with the supposedly loving God they told her about.

*"These discussions meant nothing to me because I had become a hardened and prejudiced Muslim," she said. "Also, because my mother was disabled and my father had abandoned us and treated us mercilessly, it had caused me to not associate God with lovingkindness. Instead, I was very resentful towards Him. It was out of fear of God and His wrath that I prayed and performed my Islamic duties, but I had no real relationship with God whatsoever."*

That would change in a miraculous way.

### ***God's Power Wins the Day***

A few days after hearing the Gospel, Padideh met a young Muslim student named Hamid. He warned

her to stay away from Christianity because it was the wrong path.

The friendship quickly blossomed into romance. But when Padideh asked her mother's permission to marry Hamid, her mother said she had to wait and do two things: First, finish her studies and second, travel to Mecca (a 30-hour car ride from Tehran) to get permission from an Ayatollah.

It was in Mecca, ironically, that Hamid and Padideh first began to question Islam seriously. One thing that struck them as wrong was every religious authority's unwillingness to answer any of their spiritual questions. The second was visiting the Kaaba (the black shrine in the middle of Mecca's Great Mosque that is considered the holiest place on earth by Muslims).

*"Seeing the Kaaba for the first time, I realized how small and thorny it was," Padideh said. "And we had to circle around it every day, which seemed very foolish and meaningless to me as a young person."*

*We realized that the god introduced by Muhammad was not the Almighty God because all religious ceremonies were conditional, and every religious ritual had terms and conditions. If you didn't perform them correctly or made a mistake, everything would be invalidated. When I returned from Mecca with Hamid, we completely turned away from prayer and Islam, and we were no longer Muslim."*

They did get married, however. Padideh had a miscarriage a few months later. Desperate to have a child, she prayed to Allah, sought help from holy shrines, and made vows wherever she found the tomb of a dead imam. Just like when she was little, none of her prayers were answered.

## *New Life, New Education*

Then, Padideh called one of her Christian friends and told her the problem. The friend came over and prayed in Jesus' name that Padideh would have a son. Three months later, Padideh and Hamid found out they were pregnant again. It was a boy.

*“Witnessing this miracle, I saw the hand of Christ in my life,” Padideh said. “Every day, as my son grew older, I witnessed the miracle of Christ before my eyes. Through our son, we experienced the love of God, and it was then that my spouse and I came to understand that the true God is Jesus, the one who gives life. We both knelt down and surrendered our hearts to Christ.”*

After their conversion, the couple got connected to the 4:12 Leadership Training School, where they deepened their relationship with God through the school's extensive leadership training classes. Soon after arriving, Hamid and Padideh became volunteers in the school and began to help other students with their needs.

That was four years ago. Padideh is now one of the key leaders of 4:12 Leadership Training School, which has 3,700 students but only two paid staff and 16 volunteers to care for them all—this leaves more than 2600 students waiting for training and active engagement. She and Hamid also help students at 4:12 with marital issues, drawing from their own experiences with hardship. Many of the students that they've counseled are today serving other families in other Iran Alive ministries.

*“I'm glad that I found my path at 4:12 Leadership Training School and was able to illuminate all the dark corners of my life with the courses that I learned in this school and be an agent of transformation with the light of Christ for others.”*

## *The Power of Your Partnership*

Over the next year, IAM is committed to investing heavily into its growth to ensure that the next generation of leaders and pastors is equipped to serve and shepherd in their communities.

Nothing will stop God from establishing His throne in Iran.



*Hormoz Shariat*

Dr. Hormoz Shariat  
President/Founder  
Iran Alive Ministries

P.S. Please consider investing in the next generation. Help us eliminate the school's waitlist for 2600 students this year.

### *Special Invitation: Meet Next Gen Leaders*

📅 August 29th ⌚ 6 PM Central

Join us for an exclusive webinar to meet the young Iranian leaders from the 4:12 Leadership Training School. Learn about their journey and see the impact of your support.

*Celebrate the future you've helped build!*

Hosted by: **Iran Alive Ministries**



Register for the webinar by scanning the QR code or RSVP by emailing [info@iranaliveministries.org](mailto:info@iranaliveministries.org)

Use the enclosed gift form to make your contribution to Iran Alive Ministries. Your investment in reaching Iran for Christ will continue to transform the hearts of men, women and children!

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*Transforming Iran Into a Christian Nation—One Soul at a Time*