



Open Doors

SECRETS ENCLOSED

2024 VOLUME 4

Inside: Khada's
dangerous secret

STARTING AFRESH, THANKS TO YOU

When Sarah's husband discovered her secret faith, his anger and violence almost destroyed her. Today, thanks to you, Sarah has rebuilt her life.

Your kindness means Sarah, a secret believer in Egypt, has a home, a church family, and hope for the future.

Eyes closed, Bible in hand, Sarah was praying alone at home in Egypt when she heard footsteps...*

It spelled danger. For a year, Sarah had been secretly following Jesus. A friend at work had shared the gospel and Sarah, unhappy in an abusive marriage, was drawn to the hope and peace of Christianity.

Sarah turned her back on Islam – but it came at a cost. “If my husband found out about my faith, I was exposed to rejection, persecution and even divorce. I had to be wise and cautious.”

So as the footsteps closed in, Sarah froze in fear.

Abused and abandoned

It was her husband, Rashed,* back early from work.

Rashed stepped into the room, saw Sarah with the Bible, and exploded into a rage. He beat Sarah so violently she ended up in hospital. While she was being treated, Rashed left home with their two children.

“GOD WILL NEVER ABANDON ME.”

Sarah was broken. “I felt fear... fear of people who consider Christians as infidels, fear that I wouldn't see my children again, fear because I'm vulnerable,” she said. With her secret faith exposed, Sarah had no choice but to resign from her job and flee the area.

That's when your kindness reached Sarah and helped her start again.

Safe and stable

The friend who first shared the gospel with Sarah introduced her to an Open Doors partner, called Shereen*. Thanks to you, Shereen was able to find a house church and a home for Sarah, cover her rent and help her find a job. “Your support

made me feel safe and stable,” she said.

Then, last year, the final piece of the puzzle fell into place... Sarah received a phone call from her oldest son, now aged 15. “We've been searching for you for years, Mum,” he said.

With tears in her eyes, Sarah remembers their happy reunion. “There are no words to express the joy I felt,” she smiles. “There are no limits to the love, mercy and grace of the Lord.”

Today, Sarah keeps her faith secret for her own protection. Her conversion means she remains a target for extremists. So outwardly, Sarah lives as a Muslim, but in her heart she follows Jesus – and your support keeps her faith strong.

“I know God will never abandon me,” Sarah said, with certainty. “I have come to understand that God is always here.”

**Names changed and re-enactment images used to maintain secrecy*



PLEASE PRAY

- Pray for the Lord's protection over Sarah and her two sons, as they live, worship and serve.
- Pray that God will reveal himself to other Muslims in Egypt who are searching for love and peace.
- Pray that Egypt's secret believers will powerfully reflect the love of Jesus in their lives and actions.

SUSTAINED BY YOUR PRAYERS

Every minute you spend in prayer for secret believers matters. Please pray for courageous Christians, Elmahdi* in Morocco and Hila* in Afghanistan...

NAME
ELMAHDI

STATUS
DIVORCEE, BARRED FROM SEEING CHILDREN, SECRET BELIEVER

COUNTRY
Morocco
#24 IN THE WORLD WATCH LIST

As a young man, Elmahdi* was intrigued by the extraordinary life of Christ. His quest for truth led him to explore Christianity online, and Elmahdi was drawn to faith and baptised. But what would his wife, a strict Muslim, think? Fearing the worst, Elmahdi kept his new faith secret...

But Elmahdi couldn't keep making up excuses to attend church. His wife became suspicious, searched her husband's phone – and discovered his conversion. She presented him with an ultimatum: revert to Islam, or divorce.

It was a desperate choice, but Elmahdi couldn't turn his back on Jesus. Today, he's divorced. He hasn't seen his beloved

children since 2022. And in his hardest moments, he's tormented by thoughts of reverting to Islam to be reunited with his son and two daughters.

PRAY

- Please pray urgently that Elmahdi will remain strong in his faith.
- Ask God to reunite Elmahdi and his children, just as He did for Sarah*.
- Pray for comfort and peace for Elmahdi in his darkest days.



NAME
HILA

STATUS
WIDOW, SINGLE PARENT, EDUCATED, SECRET BELIEVER

COUNTRY
AFGHANISTAN
#10 IN THE WORLD WATCH LIST

Hila's* childhood was unusual. Her parents allowed her to go to school, even though most girls stayed at home. Hila was clever – and even after marrying at the age of 18, she carried on studying at university.

But things changed in Hila's second year at uni. "My husband introduced me to the Bible after watching a TV programme,"

she said. "We delved into the Bible, finding guidance and inspiration."

The couple gave their lives to Jesus, and even found other Christians to walk with. But one day Hila's husband went to another village to buy Bible study books – and never returned.

"He was sacrificed in the way of Christ," said Hila. Now, this mother-of-two gets by with help from her community – but she needs your prayers.

PRAY

- Lift up Hila to the Lord and ask God to bless, strengthen and comfort her.
- Pray for God's protection over Hila and her children as they follow Jesus secretly.
- Pray boldly that Afghanistan will be freed from oppressive forces.

**Names changed and illustrative images used to maintain secrecy*

A SECRET NO MORE: MEET THE OPEN DOORS PHILIPPINES TEAM!



BJ CANDOLE, DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Role:

Speaking in churches for Open Doors

Serving since:

June 2011

Graduate of:

Broadcast Communication

From:

Polytechnic University of the Philippines

Church:

Kapatirang Kristiano sa San Juan

Fun fact:

5yrs married to a fellow Open Doors worker, with two young kids



PAULO BIBAY, CHURCH RELATIONS SPECIALIST

Role:

Speaking in churches for Open Doors

Serving since:

June 2024

Graduate of:

Marketing Management

From:

Polytechnic University of the Philippines

Church:

Kamuning Bible Christian Fellowship

Fun fact:

Enjoys playing table tennis with fellow scholars at Asian Theological Seminary



MAFE GAYONDATO, ADMIN & FINANCE SUPPORT COORDINATOR

Role:

Donation processing, resource delivery, and general administrative tasks

Serving since:

April 2009

Graduate of:

Business Teacher Education

From:

Polytechnic University of the Philippines

Church:

Xaris-Faith Bible Church

Fun fact:

Loves photography, the nature, and mountain climbing



ANNA GARCIA, DIGITAL MARKETING SPECIALIST

Role:

Online strategies and content lead on the website and social media

Serving since:

April 2020

Graduate of:

Mass Communication

From:

Centro Escolar University

Church:

Victory

Fun fact:

Loves to explore cafés with a nice view of nature



ALBERT PONCE DE LEON, DATA QUALITY OFFICER

Role:

Systems management and backend process support

Serving since:

September 2022

Graduate of:

HRM

From:

Trinity University of Asia

Church:

Kapatirang Kristiano sa San Juan

Fun fact:

Newly married to an Open Doors employee

OPEN THE DOORS OF YOUR CHURCH!

Are you a pastor or church/missions leader looking for a:

- ✓ **Speaker for your upcoming Missions Month/Sunday?**
- ✓ **Speaker** to talk about today's worldwide Christian persecution?
- ✓ **Speaker** for your **Prayer Meeting** focused on the nations where the Gospel is not yet welcome?

✓ **Missions Booth**, or **regular missions and prayer resources**, to engage your church for global missions?

Let Open Doors Philippines help you!

INVITE US to visit and speak in your church. Contact us to book a schedule:

SMS/Viber: 0998-883-0821

E-mail: philippines@od.org

See you in your church and be blessed and inspired by the extraordinary faith, courage, and endurance of Persecuted Christians today!

*Also open to church invitations outside Metro Manila via online or a special arrangement.

KHADA'S DANGEROUS SECRET

Secret believers like Khada, in Afghanistan, risk everything to follow Jesus. They rely on your support to survive.

Khada*, in Afghanistan, carries a secret that could get her killed. But she's trusting you with it today – because she needs your support.

The book was handed over silently, with no introduction, by Khada's close friend at work. Khada slipped it into her bag and took it home to show her husband...

It was a Bible.

Even just holding it in their hands put this couple in extreme danger. Like almost everyone in Afghanistan, Khada and Ehsan* were strict Muslims. But curious, they began to read – and what they discovered changed their lives.

"We had questions, which we solved together, and my husband told me he would follow whatever path I took," said Khada. "We chose the path of Christ."

The decision came with the highest cost you could imagine.

Three Taliban years

Right now, it has never been more dangerous to follow Jesus in Afghanistan. The country has been among the top 10 most dangerous places for Christians for a decade (according to the Open Doors World Watch List). Since the Taliban seized control in August 2021, things have become worse.

"WE CHOSE THE PATH OF CHRIST."

The reality is, if you leave Islam and you are found out, you will be killed. Many Christians have fled and remaining believers have gone into hiding. If discovered, they face arrest, torture and even death.

No one has any real idea how many Christians are in Afghanistan. But our partner who works



The gospel is shared behind closed doors, and more people like Khada are following Jesus.

in the country says, incredibly, the church appears to be growing.

“The people of Afghanistan are thirsty for love because, for decades, they have experienced war and misery,” he said. “When they hear about the love of Jesus for them, it’s different to the Taliban. They join Christianity.”

“BY THIS EVERYONE WILL KNOW THAT YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES, IF YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER.”
JOHN 13:35

Secrecy is vital. Our partner added, “Jesus Christ motivates believers to operate covertly, spreading the good news among fellow Afghans. They keep faith alive by reading the Word every day and meeting together when it’s safe.”

Unbearable cost

But no matter how careful you are, the danger is always there. As Khada will tell you...

Khada and Ehsan had been baptised and were connected to a group of secret believers. One day, after visiting a Bible study group, Ehsan did not return home. Khada called him again and again, but there was no answer. Night fell, and a chilling fear gripped Khada.

Two days later, her beloved husband’s body was discovered. He’d been tortured and killed. Khada was overcome with grief and pain – but the words of Scripture saved her.

“My friend, the one who gave me the Bible, told me Ehsan was now with Christ,” said Khada. “I stopped crying, read Ephesians 6 and vowed to serve Jesus.”

She added, “I used to talk with Ehsan every day. Now that he is gone, I talk to God every night. I believe He listens and hears all my prayers.”

Not alone

Now, Khada carries her dangerous secret, concealing her faith day in, day out. She supports other Afghan Christians and is raising her children to follow Jesus. But she can’t do it alone.

As a widow, with no agency to find employment, Khada can’t survive without practical support. As a secret believer, she depends on the love and prayers of the global church to keep her faith strong. It’s up to us to help our isolated brothers and sisters.

Your gifts and prayers can provide Bibles, discipleship training and run vital livelihood projects so people like Khada can earn money, in Afghanistan and around the world. We cannot abandon Christians risking everything for faith.

“NOW THAT EHSAN IS GONE, I TALK TO GOD EVERY NIGHT.”

“When we chose the path of Christ, we knew it had difficulties,” said Khada. “In the Taliban regime we face challenges. But with strong faith, we persevere. With hope, we continue this journey. I continue to be a servant of Christ.”

**We’ve changed their names and used re-enactment images because of the extreme danger involved in sharing this story*



You can provide practical aid to secret believers like Khada.



WILL YOU SUPPORT SECRET BELIEVERS LIKE KHADA?

Please pray

- That Khada will know the Lord’s peace and comfort as she grieves the loss of Ehsan.
- For protection over Khada and all Afghan Christians as they bravely follow Jesus today.
- For secret believers everywhere, that God will fill them with strength and courage.

Please give

Every PHP 1,500 provides a Bible each for 5 secret believers, to strengthen their faith even in isolation.

Every PHP 3,250 provides a livelihood for a secret believer for his/her long term and sustainable financial support.

Every PHP 5,000 provides discipleship trainings and resources to 10 secret believers.



**KHADA'S SECRET
COULD COST HER
LIFE.**

**SHE'S TRUSTING
YOU WITH IT...**

**Khada*, in Afghanistan,
carries a dangerous secret.**

A secret that has already cost her beloved husband's life. A secret that could get her killed, too. After all, if you leave Islam and you are found out, you will suffer.

"I chose the path of Christ," says Khada.

**Today, Khada is trusting
you with her secret
because she needs
your help.**

She needs support to survive. She needs prayer. She needs to know she's not alone. Today, you can strengthen secret believers in Afghanistan

and around the world by giving Bibles, discipleship training and practical help.

**Will you support secret
believers like Khada?**

Every PHP 3,250 provides a livelihood for a secret believer for his/her long term and sustainable financial support.

Visit us at www.opendoors.ph to know how to give your support, or contact via SMS/Viber (0998-8830821) or email (philippines@od.org). Thank you and God bless you!

**We've changed her name
and used a re-enactment
image to protect her identity*