



Traffic in Baghdad, Iraq

THE BETRAYAL

Nabil began that day like any other. He worked his first job at the National Electric Department, then began his second—taxiing strangers through the maze of Baghdad’s congested highways and pot-holed side streets. At age thirty-two, he and his wife, who worked for the government, were able to enjoy a modest, middle-class life in tumultuous Baghdad.

Then it happened. Nelly, a young lady from Lebanon who was working in Iraq, climbed into Nabil’s taxi and requested her destination. While Nabil navigated the gridlocked streets (*pictured above*), Nelly chatted about everyday things. She learned that Nabil was a nominal Shia Muslim but had been searching for something real. Then she asked him the question that would change his life forever. “Are you sure that you are going to heaven?”

“No, I am not sure,” was his reply. Nelly spent the rest of the journey witnessing to him about Jesus, the One Who could forgive sin and guarantee eternity in heaven. She

encouraged him to listen to *New Testament Baptist Radio, 102.9 FM*—CRI’s network of eight Christian radio stations headquartered in Baghdad reaching eighty-five percent of the entire country.

That was it! A short encounter with a taxi driver who, in a city of nine million people, she would probably never see again. Nabil did listen that day and the next. And the next. And for two weeks. Something touched the emptiness in his heart. Something drew him to the message of love and forgiveness that he heard.

Gathering his courage, Nabil and his wife contacted Nelly who immediately brought them to the New Testament Baptist Church in Baghdad (the only Baptist church in the city). The congregation (fifty to eighty people) met in a large room on the first floor of a two-story structure that housed the pastor and his family in a very tiny apartment in the rear and the Christian radio station studios on the second floor. After two weeks, Pastor Maher led Nabil and his wife

to accept Jesus as their Savior.

Nabil's life changed! He was so excited about church! When Nabil's wife experienced excruciating reoccurring migraines, church women prayed for her after a Sunday morning service, and the migraines ceased. Nabil and his wife became emboldened. They were baptized and told Nabil's family (devout Muslims who were affiliated with the extreme Al Sadre movement) that they were now believing Christians. Angered by the news, his family plotted to avenge his apostasy.

A mistake that Nabil made at work became the catalyst for an indictment against him. The investigator of the case told him outright, "I can release you and drop the case if you renounce being a Christian." When Nabil refused to renounce Jesus, his family betrayed him. He was sentenced to three years in an infamous Iraqi prison. The following is his first letter to Pastor Maher.

Beloved Pastor Maher,

I am writing this text from jail with tears in my eyes. I envy you because I cannot attend church services. You pray every Sunday and gather in the house of the Lord. I am deprived of this grace.

This is the second week I don't attend church because they put me in jail. Everything you do in church is a blessing. Your prayers are a blessing. Church service is a blessing. Attendance at church is a blessing. The Bible is a blessing.

Tell my brothers and sisters on my behalf to appreciate the grace that the Lord has given them. I am imprisoned because of this grace. Nothing is left for me in this world except my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, my wife, and you, Pastor. Everyone else forsook me.

I am proud of my Lord and His guidance. Jail has taught me that only the Lord Jesus deserves my love and worship. He never forsook me, and He answers my prayers.

My faith is growing, and my heart is full of peace. Tell my brethren to appreciate the Word of God and prayers, because they will only understand these values when they lose them.

*You are my family. The church is my home.
May glory and honor be to our Lord.*

Editor's note: Nabil has spent two years and four months in prison on a flimsy accusation. He has been beaten over his entire body, severely tortured, and has suffered broken ribs and a dislocated shoulder basically because he is a Christian. Despite the betrayal of his family, **Nabil has refused to deny Christ.** Please pray for him!.

Barbara Zarris wishes to thank the many supporters who have prayed so diligently for her over the last year. Her fatigue level has lessened considerably. Her lungs are still working under capacity, but she is feeling much better.

SEND YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE ETERNAL INVESTMENT TO:



ChristianRadio
INTERNATIONAL

P.O. Box 3132, Munster, IN 46321

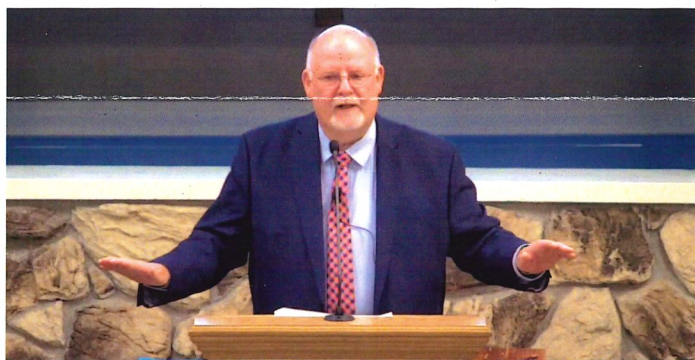
Online Giving: cri-media.org/support

Email: georgeazarris@yahoo.com (502) 817-1001



IRAN Besharat Satellite Television

Missionary Michael Germi has written a new book in English titled *Investigating Islam*. It is worth reading by anyone who wants a clear understanding of Islamic doctrine vs. biblical truth. The book can be ordered through Amazon. Prayer request: Two Iranian converts, husband and wife, whom Michael has disciplined for six years, are seeking a visa to come to a Bible college in America. Please pray for God to show His will in the matter.



MIDDLE EAST www.iranforchrist.com

Missionary Bill Flowers has worked as a radio broadcaster for decades. Because he is fluent in French, he was able to witness to Muslims in Morocco. The experience he gained expanded his vision to include other closed countries in the Middle East. Recently he has developed a Farsi language internet radio station which he will use as a tool to reach Iranian refugees in Armenia.