



April 2016

WHERE TRANSFORMATION HAPPENS

Christian Refugees Find Home in CBSI



The Parvez family fled their homeland to seek asylum in Thailand because denying Christ was not an option. They are pictured here with Koko and Devendra Rai (on the right).

The warning was clear: Convert to Islam or die!

Dr. Parvez had to make a decision. Would the zealots really carry out their threats? Should he abandon his busy medical clinic and his comfortable home to save his family's lives? Where could they safely go?

The pressure to convert to Islam had started 18 months before. With each successive visit to his clinic, the extremists had become more threatening. The zealots accused him of blasphemy—a capital crime in that undisclosed country.

The decision was suddenly upon him when a friend at church warned him not to go to the clinic. The extremists were waiting for him. Denying Christ was not an option, so Dr. Parvez and his family fled for their lives.

With only what they could carry in their luggage, they left their homeland and escaped to Thailand, where they hoped to get asylum. That was nearly three years ago.

Without refugee status and with no legal way to work, Dr. Parvez, his wife, two teenage daughters and two younger sons are reduced to living in a single room—six people in a tiny, one-room apartment.

CBSI Study Strengthens Them to Face Hardships

Dr. Parvez found a church for his family in their new country. There they learned about a nearby Community Bible Study International class, and his whole family began attending.

“These days we are studying the book of Acts,” said Dr. Parvez. “It is about the life and ministry of the apostles after Jesus Christ’s resurrection. It gave me courage and strength to face these hardships.

“If we relate our lives to their lives, they were persecuted for being believers of Jesus, and so were we. I learned so much from the apostles’ lives. They were jailed many times. They were punished harshly for preaching, but they stood firm in their beliefs. Even when they were persecuted, they were joyful to be able to do something for Jesus and for His people.



The Parvez boys have found a home in their C&Y class.

“The study of the book of Acts has strengthened us to endure these hardships,” continued Dr. Parvez. “And we have

been encouraged by our friends in the CBSI class.” His wife, Shamim, added, “As I am studying, I feel I am becoming strong in faith. I am not complaining to God anymore.”

Daughters Start CBSI Study at School

Until recently, the children had not been able to attend school. Sixteen-year-old Meerab said, “We really missed proper study and a proper place to live and play. And then there is the constant fear of being arrested and taken back home.”

Regional Director Devendra Rai was able to get help for the four children to join a school. Within the first month, Meerab and her sister, Angel, took what they had learned in CBSI and started a Children & Youth Bible study for 14 students, including a Muslim girl. The girls lead the study after school on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.



Meerab and Angel Parvez have already started an after-school C&Y class.

Meerab said, “I learned in Acts we should face hardships bravely for Jesus and should not stop sharing the Word of God with other people who are in need.” And that is what she and her sister are doing!

God’s Word Transforms Lives

Dr. Parvez and his family are among thousands of asylum seekers throughout the world who are fleeing persecution for their faith in Christ. Community Bible Study International has an opportunity to bring hope and encouragement to some of them, and you can help.

Would you pray for the Parvez family and the others like them to be granted asylum status so they can legally work and live in safety?

Would you pray about making a donation to help us expand our life-changing Bible studies in Thailand, throughout the countries of the East Asia-Pacific Region, and around the world?

Thank you!

With joy in Him,

Frank + Marian

Frank & Marian Vroegop
CBSI Director & Associate Director

P.S.: As we finalized this letter, Dr. Parvez received a United Nations ID card, so the family no longer has to fear being arrested and deported, but he is still not allowed to work in Thailand. Please continue to pray that he can be given official asylum status.

