

July 26, 2024

**Office of the UNHCR,
United Nations High Commissioner of Thailand.**

Respected Madam,

My name is **Shahid Haroon**, and I am from Multan, Pakistan. I was born in a Muslim family and I am the fourth of six siblings. On May 16, 2023, I came to Thailand with my family, which includes my wife and five children.

The names of my family members are as follows:

- 1) Shahid Haroon (Former Name: Ghulam Mustafa) – August 21, 1979 (Self)
- 2) Rubina Malik – March 3, 1982 (Wife)
- 3) Vanisa Malik – September 27, 2003 (Step-daughter)
- 4) Marina Malik – January 16, 2011 (Daughter)
- 5) Paulen Ashley Malik – December 21, 2014 (Daughter)
- 6) Brock Rafhey Malik – September 12, 2016 (Son)
- 7) Priscilla Hurab Malik – December 7, 2021 (Daughter)

On **April 7, 2023**, I submitted my first application for registration with the **UNHCR** by dropping it in Dropbox. Then, on **June 2, 2023**, we returned to Pakistan. The primary reason for this decision was financial difficulty, but also because I had been in contact with my sister, Bilquis, after leaving home. Therefore, we were convinced that my brother Ghulam Murtaza, who poses a threat to me and my family, believed, that I had already left Pakistan with my family. At that time, my wife and I decided to settle in another city in Pakistan since Ghulam Murtaza knew we were no longer in Pakistan.

To tell you about my family background and my conversion, I must first explain that I was born in a highly religious Islamic family. My grandfather built the first mosque in our area, **Noori Jamia Masjid**, in 1956, which covered an area of **10,000 square meters**. When my father turned 20, he took on the responsibility of managing the entire mosque, where Islamic students from all over Pakistan would come to learn about evangelizing Islam. I personally received Quranic education at the age of 9 from our mosque.

July 2001: When I was 22 years old, I came to Multan city to sell mangoes at the fruit market. My cousin, Javed Iqbal, had a showroom there. After finishing work at the fruit market during the day, I went to Javed's showroom where I met Javed's friend, Akram Marhata. Akram was a Christian, and this was the first time in my life that I was meeting a Christian. In our society, Christians are considered low-caste people, and there are no low-caste people in my village, **Riaz Abad**. I was excited to meet Akram and curious to know more about him. Since Akram was my cousin's friend and I planned to stay with my cousin for a week, I met Akram every day during this period, and we became very good friends. We exchanged numbers, and he gave me a New Testament Bible. The Bible was in Urdu, so I could read and understand it.

When I returned home, I started reading the Bible from the first chapter of the book of **Matthew**. As I kept reading, I felt like Jesus was speaking directly to me. When I reached chapter 5 of Matthew, the message that touched me the most was to love your enemies (**verses 45-48, chapter 5**). I found the

same message in **Luke, chapter 6 (verses 27-36)**. By reading the first four books of the New Testament, **Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John**, I came to understand character of Jesus and his power. In contrast, according to **Surah 47:19** of the **Quran**, Allah tells **Muhammad to seek forgiveness for his sins from Him.**

Eventually, I talked about Jesus' life with my sister Bilquis, who is 1.5 years older than me. She asked me how I knew about Jesus and if he was our Hazrat Eesa. I said yes, but the Quran tells very little about Hazrat Eesa. If you want to know more about him, here, take this. I took the Bible out of my pocket and gave it to her. We were in the kitchen at the time, and suddenly, she started shouting at me after seeing the Bible. Hearing her voice, my eldest sister, Kulsoom, also came into the kitchen. When she saw the Bible in Bilquis' hand, she started slapping me and threw the Bible out of the window. She told me that if I talked about these infidels again in the house, she would tell our father. That evening, I went outside, picked up the Bible from under the window, and continued reading it in my room. I neither came out of my room nor had dinner that night. Before going to sleep, I prayed and told Jesus that **"I know you are alive and that you are listening to me. If you are with me, I want to follow your way of life"**.

A few days later, it was a Friday morning at 5 AM. I had stayed up late reading the Bible that night. Kulsoom came to my room to wake me up for the Fajr prayer and saw my Bible under my pillow. I was asleep at that time. She took the Bible and told my father everything. My father was getting ready for the Fajr prayer at the mosque. When he found out, he woke me up angrily and spent the next two hours trying to explain things to me, sometimes shouting and sometimes speaking kindly. He kept saying that **"Allah is one and that we are Muslims"**. He repeated this sentence at least 100 times. My father took my Bible, and I don't know if he kept it or threw it away. Around 10 AM, I called Akram and asked if he had another Bible. He said yes and told me to come over and get it. That very day, I went to Multan city to get a new Bible from him. From time to time, either a cousin or an uncle would come to try to convince me. Those days were very hard for my family, but I knew it was better to stay silent. A few days later, on **August 27, 2001**, I was reading the Bible in my room when my father suddenly came in. Seeing the Bible, he said things to me in anger that I had never heard from him before and never expected. The last thing he said was that I had to understand or there would be no place for me here. I had until morning to think and tell him my decision. That night, when everyone was asleep, I took my Bible and **Left Home.**

August 28, 2001: At 4:30 AM, I left my house to go to the bus stop. The bus stop is a 30-minute walk from our home. While walking, I initially thought about going to my cousin Javed in Multan city. However, I feared that if I went there, my life would always be at risk. It was only my father who kept giving me warnings till the end, otherwise, no Muslim in Pakistan can even think about abandoning their religion. The first bus to Multan city left at 6 AM, so I waited at the bus stop for an hour. Upon reaching the Multan city railway station, I bought a ticket for the 12 o'clock train to Karachi.

August 29, 2001: At 12 noon, I arrived at the Karachi railway station. When I left home the previous night, I had **1500 rupees**, and by the time I reached here, I only had **855 rupees** left in my pocket. I needed money for food and lodging, so I said a little prayer in my heart and went to a restaurant at the station called **Madina Café** to ask for work. Fortunately, they needed a boy for dishwashing. When they asked me for my name, I froze there a bit, but then I told him one of three name's that I had thought for myself which was, Shahid Haroon. I got three meals a day and a place to stay at the restaurant. Later on, I was able to register this name on my identity card.

When the other workers would go to their shifts, I would continuously read the Bible in my room. There were two Christian sweepers, Saif and Shamaoun, who worked at our restaurant, but they were not allowed to stay in the servant rooms of the restaurant. They used to complete their job and go back home. After working there for a few weeks, I asked Saif if he and Shamaoun went to church. Saif said yes, they only came to the restaurant after finishing prayers at church every Sunday. I asked if I could join them next Sunday. After thinking for a moment, Saif asked me why I wanted to go to church. I didn't think it was appropriate to answer his question then, so I asked if he could meet me in the kitchen at 12 when the other staff went for lunch. Saif agreed. When we met in the kitchen at 12, I showed him the Bible from my pocket. Saif looked at the Bible in surprise and then at me and asked how did I get it. That was all I wanted to hear, and then I told him everything that had led me to have nothing of my own and to be standing there with him. Saif said, okay, this Sunday, come to Nasir Jump, Korangi, at 8 AM. This Sunday, you will pray with us in our church.

October 2002: By now, I had some very good Christian friends. With their help, I quit my restaurant job, started a private patient care job, and rented a one-room apartment near Nasir Jump Church. For a year, I worked night shifts and went to my church for Bible study during the day.

July 6, 2003: Today, I was baptized at my church, **Full Gospel Assemblies**.

February 2007: After working in the field for so many years, I made many good connections. I started a medical agency called "**Nightingale**" in Karachi, providing nurse services for home patients. My agency supplied nurses for all types of home-based patients.

November 2007: Rubina, with her 3-year-old daughter Vanesa, came to our office looking for a job opportunity through our on-duty nurse, Sara Pervaiz. I attended to Rubina in the office that day. A few weeks later, in mid-December, a patient needed day-time care, and I referred Rubina, and the family hired her the next day. Rubina was a separated, single mother and an independent woman. On the 24th, I organized a small Christmas party for my coworkers, and Rubina was also invited. Rubina came with her daughter, Vanesa, who was a very cute child, and I had some chocolates for her. That evening, I spent most of my time with Vanesa and her mother. Eventually, Rubina and I started talking on the phone, and we often went out with Vanesa. After spending some time together, on **February 5, 2008**, I proposed to Rubina.

November 6, 2008: After arranging everything a family needs, Rubina and I got married.

January 16, 2011: After Vanesa, my eldest daughter Marina was born.

February 20, 2011: I moved to Rawalpindi with Rubina, Vanesa, and Marina to attend seminary at **ZBS Bible College**.

December 14, 2013: I graduated from ZBS with a "**Diploma in Theology**". At the same time, Rubina completed a 3-year certification course in **Ministry work**. During my seminary, I also worked part-time as a salesman and started selling my own stocked products after graduation.

February 2014: **Mr. Park**, a **Korean missionary** from **Campus Crusade**, came to ZBS. I met him at the start of my graduation classes. Mr. Park conducted a 5-day "One to One discipleship training," which Rubina and I attended. We then voluntarily provided discipleship training to the youth in different churches in Rawalpindi on weekends for a year.

June 2015: Mr. Park sponsored my trip to **Korea** to join a seminar at his church, giving me my first experience traveling outside my country.

December 21, 2022: Before I proceed, I want to mention again that since I left home in **2001**, I have been in contact with my sister, Bilquis. She married my childhood friend, **Ghulam Shabir**, in **2005**. I never told Bilquis where I lived, and she never asked. However, through her, I stayed updated on my entire family's situation.

It was **8 PM** when Bilquis called to wish **Pauline** a happy birthday. During that call, I also spoke with Ghulam Shabir.

December 22, 2022: The next day, exactly at **9 AM**, I received a call from an unknown number. The caller was my brother, **Murtaza**. As soon as he introduced himself, I recognized him. He said, "Mustafa, did you recognize your brother?" I replied, "Yes," and asked him how he got my number. Murtaza replied, "Why do you need to know? Just tell me, are you still an **apostate**? Because in the family data, your name still shows as Shahid Haroon. Even today, when Aba g (Father) thinks of you, tears come to his eyes. But you are an apostate, and your punishment is **Death**. I will erase you from Aba g's memories as well. Hide wherever you want, it won't take me long to find you. I didn't respond. In the end, Murtaza called me a "**Kafir**" (An insulting term used by some Muslims for Non-Muslims) and "**Chura**" (An insulting term used for Sweepers) before disconnecting the call.

The very next moment, I called Bilquis. I asked her if Murtaza had taken my number from her. She understood and told me that last night, there was a celebration for Murtaza's promotion to **Captain in the Army** at our house. She was talking to me in the kitchen when Murtaza's wife overheard my name. Then Murtaza forcibly took my number from her phone. After telling me this, Bilquis asked if Murtaza was being rude to me, but I didn't think it was appropriate to answer her question. I just told Bilquis not to worry, that my Lord is with me, and that I would call her later.

December 24, 2022: Knowing that Murtaza had been promoted to Captain in the Pakistan Army, it became very difficult to risk my children's lives. The first thing I did was change my SIM card and call my friend, Pastor Muneer, in Model Town, Lahore. The next morning, I left my house in Rawalpindi to take a train to Lahore.

February 10, 2023: It was 10 AM, and Murtaza called me on my new number. He said, do you think you can hide by changing your number? I'm coming to Lahore! Hide anywhere in Pakistan, **I will find you soon**.

I was staying with my family at Pastor Muneer's house at that time. So, I told Pastor Muneer about this call. He advised that I should apply for international protection by going to **Thailand** or **Malaysia**. He said, "Murtaza is a captain in the army, and your entire family is associated with **Sunni Tehreek**. These people are everywhere in Pakistan, and it won't be difficult for them to reach you." After discussing it with my wife, we decided to leave the country.

On the same day, I contacted Muneer's friend, Faisal, who is a travel agent in Islamabad. The next day, I posted our passports to Faisal to get visit visas to **Thailand** for myself and my family.

February 12, 2023: Through Pastor Muneer's reference, I brought my family to Gujranwala this morning, to his friend, Pastor Siddique's place. We stayed with him until we left Pakistan.

On the same day, my wife Rubina told me that we were leaving Pakistan. If you agree, I want to take our daughter Vanisa with us too. I said okay, and asked Vanisa if she wanted to go as well.

April 6, 2023: We flew from Lahore airport to **Thailand**.

April 10, 2023: For the first time, we appealed to the **UNHCR** for international protection.

April 15, 2023: I talked to Bilquis on WhatsApp from my Pakistani number. She asked why my number was off. I told her that I had left the country with my family and that we were now in Thailand.

May 15, 2023: The entire family gathered at our home in Multan for Ami's memorial service. That evening, Bilquis called to offer her condolences. She told me that Murtaza was asking her if she had spoken to Mustafa recently. Bilquis said she told Murtaza that Mustafa had left Pakistan with his family.

After this call with Bilquis, my wife and I thoroughly discussed the difficulties and survival without work here. We decided to return to Rawalpindi and settle there. Because, the first time Murtaza called on **December 22**, we left Rawalpindi for Lahore. After reaching Lahore, when Murtaza called the second time, he said, "Hide in Lahore or anywhere in Pakistan, I will find you." So, we thought Murtaza must have some network in **Lahore** because he didn't know we were previously in **Rawalpindi**.

June 2, 2023: We flew from **Suvarnabhumi Airport** to Islamabad.

February 5, 2024: This morning at **10 AM**, I received a call from Murtaza on my new number from a landline. Like before, he started threatening me again. Murtaza said, so you're back in Pakistan. Where will you hide now? I told him, Brother, why are you troubling me? I am four years older than you, and I have always loved you. Murtaza replied, we all loved you too, but you never thought about us. Now you are an **infidel**, and according to **Islamic law**, you must be **killed**. And I will not let anyone else have the reward of killing you. Don't take this call as a threat; I am telling you to live your life while you still can. I am coming to Rawalpindi.

February 6, 2024: We left Rawalpindi and went to Islamabad to stay with my friend, Pastor Samuel Titus. Pastor Samuel arranged a small house for us to rent.

February 7, 2024: After much searching, Rubina and I could not find our passports in our belongings. So, we both applied for new passports.

April 5, 2024: It was **5 PM**, and I had taken my wife to the G9 market to buy groceries. At that time, more than **100** people came to our house to **kill** me. Marina called me and said, "Papa, don't come home because more than 100 Muslims have come to the house, making noise and looking for you. They have **beaten** me up badly too. While leaving, they gave their phone numbers to the neighbors, telling them to inform them as soon as Shahid returned home. I also heard them say that they are from **Sunni Tehreek**. As they left, they chanted slogans, **Labaik Ya Rasool Allah – The punishment for an apostate is death**.

I called Pastor Samuel and told him everything. He told me to come to his house and said he would go and bring the children. Until we left Pakistan, we stayed at Pastor Samuel's house in the church compound.

April 7, 2024: However, Vanisa was still under the guardianship of her grandmother. Like before, this time we also handed over Vanisa's passport along with our passports to the travel agent to apply for the tourist visas for Thailand.

April 19, 2024: We gave our passports to the travel agent to apply for tourist visas to **Thailand**.

May 15, 2024: My family and I flew from **Islamabad** to **Bangkok**.

The Prophet of Islam prescribes death for apostasy:

Quran [4:89] They wish that you should disbelieve as they disbelieve, and then you would be equal; therefore, take not to yourselves friends of them, until they emigrate in the way of God; **then, if they turn their backs, take them, and slay them wherever you find them**; take not to yourselves any one of them as friend or helper.

Bukhari [52:260] The Prophet said, 'If somebody (a Muslim) discards his religion, **kill him.**'