

## **November 10, 2024**

My name is Suleman Rafiq. I was born into a Christian family in Pakistan and am the second oldest among my four siblings. My wife, Safira Sadiq, and I have always dreamed of having a family and raising children, but God has not yet blessed us with this gift.

Here is some background about our family:

1. **Suleman Rafiq** – Born on May 24, 1990 (Husband)
2. **Safira Sadiq** – Born on September 29, 1984 (Wife)

### **Educational Background:**

**April 2008:** I completed my high school education at St. Peter's English High School in Karachi.

**September 2008:** I was admitted to the X-ray technician course at the 7th Day Adventist Hospital in Karachi.

### **Employment:**

**January 5, 2011:** After completing my training, I was offered a position in the hospital's X-ray lab. I accepted the role as an X-ray technician and continued working there, though I was later forced to go into hiding to escape severe consequences.

### **Family Incident:**

**January 1, 2012:** During a New Year's event, I helped my younger brother, Elisha Rafiq, gain admission to the 7th Day Adventist Hospital. Later that year, Elisha became romantically involved with Safia Khan, a Muslim student from his class. When Elisha first told me about their relationship, I warned him about the potential consequences, urging him to end it. I explained that her family would never accept their relationship unless he converted to Islam, and I tried to make him understand the deep-seated animosity that some Muslims hold toward Christians.

Despite my warnings, Elisha insisted that Safia was committed to him and was willing to convert to Christianity. I knew Safia had little knowledge of Christianity, but I ultimately advised Elisha to stay away from such a risky relationship.

### **The Attack:**

**July 1, 2013:** Elisha and Safia went to Askari Park to spend time together after work. Unfortunately, Safia's cousin, Umer Khan, saw them and reported it to her brother, Taimoor Khan. When Safia returned home, her family questioned her about her whereabouts. At first, she refused to tell the truth, but under pressure, her brother and father resorted to violence, demanding information about Elisha and using harsh language to describe him.

**July 18, 2013:** While Elisha and I were on our way to the Adventist Hospital, we were ambushed by Taimoor Khan, Umer Khan, and four other men. They brutally attacked us, leaving both of us with serious injuries, including bleeding from the mouth and nose. During the assault, Taimoor Khan threatened to kill us if we ever tried to persuade his sister to leave Islam and convert to Christianity again.

### **Aftermath of the Attack:**

After the attack, we returned home instead of going to work. When we arrived, my mother and sisters were horrified to see us covered in blood. They asked what had happened, but we remained silent at first. Later, I explained everything, revealing Elisha's relationship with Safia and the fact that she was now pregnant. I described how Taimoor Khan and his accomplices had attacked us based on the information they had received about Safia being seen with Elisha. Taimoor Khan had vowed to kill us if he heard anything more about his sister.

### **Seeking Help:**

Following the attack, my father returned home and was deeply upset by the situation. After hearing the details, he complained of chest pain on his left side. We rushed him to the hospital, where he was diagnosed with a stress-induced heart attack. The doctor advised us to keep him calm and relaxed.

After returning from the hospital, my father contacted Pastor Sohail Bashir for advice. Pastor Sohail recommended that we leave our home immediately for our safety. Following his advice, we moved to my uncle's house in Ghodera Camp, which was far from our previous location. A few weeks later, Safia called Elisha, begging him not to return because her family had become suspicious of her pregnancy. She feared that if they found out, both Elisha and our entire family would be in grave danger.

As time passed, Safia's health deteriorated. She experienced frequent vomiting and spent long periods in bed, which raised concerns within her family.

### **Escalation of Threats:**

**October 13, 2013:** Safia's mother took her to the doctor, where tests confirmed that she was pregnant. This news devastated her family, and they became enraged, vowing to kill Elisha and me. They blamed me for misleading Safia and convincing her to abandon Islam and the teachings of Prophet Mohammed, whom they believed was inferior to Jesus Christ.

**October 26, 2013:** Despite the ongoing turmoil, with my parents' approval, I married Safira Sadiq, a Christian woman from Drigh Road, Karachi. Safira had completed her high school education at Saint Paul School in Karachi.

**November 20, 2013:** My father received a call from Pastor Sohail, informing us that a large mob had stormed our house. They were chanting that Elisha and I had committed blasphemy by insulting Prophet Mohammed and the Quran. The mob threatened to burn us alive and tried to break down the door, but fortunately, they were unsuccessful. Before leaving, they vowed to return and carry out their threats, including killing anyone they suspected of blasphemy under Islamic law.

Terrified and unsure of what to do, we went into hiding at my uncle's house that same day.

**November 29, 2013:** Taimoor Khan and his men returned to our house, this time firing guns and causing significant damage to the windows and gate. The threats and violence escalated, leaving us in a state of constant fear and uncertainty about our safety.

During this time, our entire Christian community was horrified by the gunfire and destruction. They asked about me and Elisha but could not find any information. The extremists not only damaged our

property but also terrorized our neighbors, hurling insults at our faith. No one dared to intervene. After causing chaos and issuing threats, they eventually left.

### **The decision to Flee:**

Pastor Sohail contacted us and urged us not to leave our hiding place, emphasizing that the situation had become extremely dangerous. When he visited us in Ghodera Camp, he explained the severity of the situation. The attackers were furious and intended to kill us, accusing Elisha and me of blasphemy and disrespecting Prophet Mohammed and the Quran.

After hearing this, my father and uncle agreed that we needed to leave the country for our safety. We asked Pastor Sohail to help us arrange visas and flights so we could seek refuge in Thailand. Pastor Sohail worked diligently to secure the necessary documents and tickets.

### **Escape:**

**December 28, 2013:** My wife, Safira, and I managed to flee Pakistan and reach Thailand, where we now seek refuge and safety.