

A Light in the Darkness

June 2016

Hope for the Persecuted

Looking for Comforters

There is no doubt, the physical suffering that Jesus bore on the cross was unbearable torture. No one can understand the pain and agony that He endured. **When Isaiah the prophet** tried, through the Holy Spirit, to draw a picture of His suffering, he wrote "He has no form (disfigured) nor majesty that we should see Him, nor an appearance that we should desire Him." Isa 53:2.

But we ever consider the emotional torture Jesus suffered? specifically when He was stripped of His clothing. The Psalmist wrote, "Scorn has broken my heart and has left me helpless; I looked for sympathy, but there was none, for comforters, but I found none." Psalm 69:20

Recently, Muslims in the village of El-Karam, in El Menia, Egypt, attacked the house of a Christian family. When the 70 year old mother ran out of the house to escape the attack, the Muslims stripped her of her clothes. **They forced her to run naked** in the street. She hid behind a car that was parked in the street until the police came two hours later.

By the time the police arrived, 5 Christian homes had been burned. As they stripped the woman of her clothes and burned her home, they were shouting "Allah Akbar" or "God is great".

Out of fear of retaliation, the elderly woman did not file a police report. Five days later, she could not take the shame and emotional trauma anymore; she went to the police station to report her case. As is typical in these cases, the officers at the station refused to file a police report or to document her case. Even the Mayor of her city denied to help her. No official took any step to defend this elderly woman. She and her family lost everything they had including their home.

This woman was not the first nor sadly will she will be the last to carry the pain of broken heart, shame and reproach, like that which Jesus carried on the cross.



Pastor Latif, was arrested by the Egyptian police and put in jail for a year without trial, because of his Christian activities. He understood this kind of pain. His first sermon, after his release from Jail, was titled "They Stripped Him of His clothes".

Pastor Latif was talking about the crucifixion of Jesus, when he stated that the worst torture he himself received from the Egyptian police, was being stripped of his clothes and being left completely naked in a cell full of criminals for 24 hours.

He said there was no place to hide. When asked how he endured the pain, he answered "I remembered the scriptures about Jesus when they stripped Him of His clothes, I felt that I am not better than my master. I was sure that He knew my suffering, my shame and my reproach, and that's what comforted me."

Magdy had a similar experience. He was made to stand barefoot in a small closet full of bugs and the stench of something rotting. He was beaten senseless multiple times by the police and he was tortured by electric shocks to the head and genitals. When asked which part of the torture was unbearable, he said the worst was when

Egyptian police stripped him of his clothing and forced him to run naked in the streets of Alexandria. He said, "It was cold, raining, and slippery. I had to run naked in the street at 2 AM. The police officer was running behind me and was flogging me to run faster until I collapsed." So how did Magdy bare this? He reflects, "I remembered that my Master was crucified naked and that is what comforted me and gave me the strength to carry the shame of being naked."

We should be reminded of Jesus' words in Matthew 25:36, "I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Jesus is looking for comforters who are able to bring comfort to your brothers and sisters in the Middle East. Would you be one of them?

Our Purpose

To raise public awareness of the issue of the persecution of Christians worldwide

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To engage the church and other concerned groups in providing support to suffering Christians worldwide

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To present the hope found in Christ to the persecuted and persecutor alike

Who We Are

Hope for the Persecuted has developed a support network in the Middle East to assist Christians who are suffering persecution, victimization, and hostility for their faith in Jesus Christ.

We offer assistance in three areas:

Physically – food, clothing, safe housing from vindictive family members. Many men are violently angry about their family member's conversion from Islam to Christianity.

Mentally – We publish the only Christian newspaper in the Middle East, All Tareek Wa Al Hague – The Way and the Truth.

Spiritually – We share the Word of God throughout the Middle East by broadcasting Christian radio programs

Here's How You can help make a difference in the Middle East.

Visit our website regularly to educate yourself about human rights issues.

Like and follow us on facebook at the link in the bar below.

Donate: Make a tax deductible donation. All donations go towards safe houses and towards outreach to persecuted pastors and families. Donate on line or by mail donation at the address below.

www.hopeftp.org

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Your Support And Giving Makes A Difference

Reports From Our Missionaries in Jordan and Turkey

"I visited an Iraqi family that had just arrived in Jordan from Irbil. Raad and his wife have two children. They had all lived in Irbil for almost a year, sleeping on the floor of a mechanic's garage. They came to Amman because they were told that it was easier to get a travel visa in Jordan.

Raad and his family now live in a very small apartment on the roof of a 4-story building, which is a far cry from way they had lived in Iraq, before Isis came and took over their village.

Sidra, their daughter is now 6. When she was six months old, she had a severe infection in her ear that was travelling to her brain. In order to stop the infection, the doctor's removed the ear drum from her right ear.

The procedure was successful in stopping the infection from going to her brain but she continued to suffer from the pain of the infection and has hearing loss in her right ear. As a result of the infection and surgery, she is also slow at speaking.

We enjoyed some hospitality and I shared with them about Christ's healing power, and that nothing is impossible for Him. I asked if I could pray for Sidra. As I laid my hands on her ears and started praying, Sidra, put her hands on top of mine and started pushing them toward her ears.

As I was praying, a huge smile appeared on Sidra's face and she started kissing me on the cheeks and crawled up onto my lap. I asked her why she was so happy? Sidra responded, "Both ears are the same." We did some tests and she could hear with her right ear. I was so overjoyed as she continued to hug me. Hallelujah, praise God for his miraculous healing power.

The next time I saw Raad, he said that he called Sidra on the telephone, she put the phone to her right ear and she was responding to what he said. Raad and his family accepted Jesus Christ as their savior and attend an Evangelical church in Jordan.

Thanks to your generous support, we were able to provide the family with rent assistance and also food.

Please keep praying for Sidra, that her hearing will continue to improve as well as her speech.



In Turkey we met a young man named Jonkeen. He was depressed, had no appetite and he said his life was joyless and without meaning. Jonkeen was from Syria and a Muslim. He attended our meetings and had question after question. On the second night he asked to speak to us. He asked for prayer and said he wanted to proclaim his faith in Jesus Christ.

The next day Jonkeen came to the meeting and gave his testimony. He said that he was "born anew yesterday". We had never shared that term with him in all of the meetings he had attended.

In the first couple of days he read Genesis and Exodus from the children's Bible we had given him. His appetite has returned and he goes joyfully to work. He has already invited a co-worker, who noticed the changes in Jonkeen, to come to the meetings with him.



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