LIFE AFTER FLEEING PERSECUTION BY ISIS

"Remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering." Hebrews 13:3
"...CHRISTIANS SAY IT STRENGTHENED THEIR FAITH.

Christian villages in Iraq lay in rubble. What ISIS did to human beings – crushed, enslaved, tore apart – they also did to the towns Christians occupied.

Now, as Islamic State (IS) militants are being defeated and run out of their strongholds, brave Christians are returning only to find their homes and churches looted, burned and even the water poisoned.

IS took the front doors from homes and tiles from the floors. Church yards were used as firing ranges. Christians were kidnapped, their money, jewelry, and property stolen. Those who couldn’t leave were ordered to convert to Islam and spit on a cross.

But Christians say it strengthened their faith.
As the cold winter rain moved in, we brought relief aid including food, blankets, and hygiene items to hundreds of displaced Christians in the area.

Near Mosul, CFI went to a children’s hospital that had finally been able to re-open, to kids battling leukemia and thalassemia. Their tiny bodies were bandaged and stuck with needles. We threw a New Year’s Eve party at the hospital with clowns, entertainment – and gifts. The kids loved it! For once, they smiled.

Your kindness and support is making a lifesaving difference in the lives of Christians who have been left in the aftermath of having to flee their homes from persecution at the hands of ISIS.

Pictured below is the New Year’s Eve party at the children’s hospital — a source of joy for children battling serious injury and disease.
THE LORD IS A REFUGE FOR THE OPPRESSED... PSALM 9:9

IS captured Mosul in 2014. An ancient city near the Nineveh plains, Mosul was once the home of up to 100,000 Christians, their roots dating to the 1st Century.

Many Christian refugees fled to Kurdistan. The UN refugee camps were reported to be infiltrated by IS, and Christians saw former militants mixing in the crowds. So Christians avoided the camps and lived in abandoned buildings, hoping to return home.

Christian Freedom International (CFI) sought those Christians out. We shipped medical and other essential supplies to refugees, and equipped mobile medical clinics to travel to outlying areas.

Christian Freedom International is a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA). Members of the ECFA are held to the highest standards of financial responsibility. Gifts are used for the project identified unless our Board of Directors, in good faith, determines that the changing situation in the Persecuted Church requires applying them to another urgent project. Your gift to Christian Freedom International is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.
March 2018

Dear Friend of the Persecuted Church,

Christian villages in Iraq lay in rubble. What ISIS did to human beings - crushed, enslaved, tore apart - they also did to the towns Christians occupied.

Now, as Islamic State (IS) militants are being defeated and run out of their strongholds, brave Christians are returning only to find their homes and churches looted, burned and even the water poisoned. About half of the 1.5 million Christians in Iraq fled after 2003. The persistent stayed to protect their homes and heritage - until IS invaded.

The Islamic terrorists captured Qaraqosh - the Christian capitol of Iraq - in August 2014. This once affluent town traces its Christian roots to the 4th Century. Yet IS’s gruesome terror campaign emptied Qaraqosh of Christians as 50,000 fled in an exodus that included the elderly and ill, pregnant women and children.

Ransacked, looted, burned. IS took the front doors from homes and tiles from the floors. Church yards were used as firing ranges. Christians were kidnapped, their money, jewelry, and property stolen. Those who couldn’t leave were ordered to convert to Islam and spit on a cross.

But Christians say it strengthened their faith.

Christian-led militias helped liberate Qaraqosh and people slowly returned in late 2017 to a city in ruins. Walls riddled with bullet holes, trees cut down, graffiti marking property as IS-owned.

IS also captured Mosul in 2014. An ancient city near the Nineveh plains, Mosul was once the home of up to 100,000 Christians, their roots dating to the 1st Century. IS’s horrific reign forced Christians to pay jizya (a tax for being Christian) and stole their property. Nearly every Christian is gone, either murdered or fled. Churches were destroyed and vandalized. Even the tomb of the Prophet Jonah was blown up.

(Over, please)
The people who fled their villages are hesitant to return. Some say they will return when the towns are habitable; when there is clean water and public services.

Many Christian refugees fled to Kurdistan. The UN refugee camps were reported to be infiltrated by IS, and Christians saw former militants mixing in the crowds. So Christians avoided the camps and lived in abandoned buildings, hoping to return home. Please, pray for them.

Christian Freedom International (CFI) sought those Christians out. We shipped medical and other essential supplies to refugees, and equipped mobile medical clinics to travel to outlying areas. Kurdish military and the Nineveh Health Authority brought wounded people to our mobile clinic for life-saving aid. We also supplied medication for Iraqi refugees in a mission in Lebanon. We ask especially for your prayers for the children who have lost their families in the attacks.

Now that IS has been run out of Qaraqosh, people want to return. But the damage IS caused left water supplies intentionally contaminated with E. coli. So our local co-worker went to work, fixing a well for an elementary school. It now provides clean water to 100 school children in the Christian town of Qaraqosh.

As the cold winter rain moved in, we brought relief aid including food, blankets, and hygiene items to hundreds of displaced Christians in the area.

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Obviously, there is much work to be done before Christians can again live and thrive in Iraq — where their ancestors have lived for centuries. Governments and UN agencies have neglected Christians and re-directed aid away from Christians refugees and villages. So even the small kindnesses of medicines, clean water and clowns are a bright light in this dark region for Christians.

Your kindness and prayers, your gifts and donations to CFI turn up in Iraq as acts of love.

God bless,

Wendy Wright
Director of Global Programs

P.S. We have a large relief mission planned for Spring of 2018. Any amount you send for this project will be a tremendous blessing for persecuted Christians.