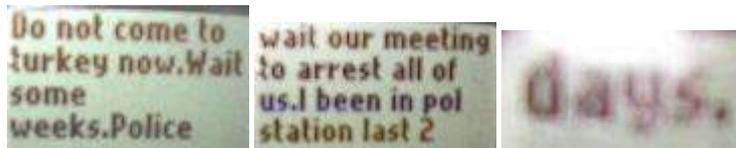


PERSECUTION IN TURKEY, June 2006

A recent week long visit to Turkey has some sobering and prayer-requiring news to report.

Our brothers and sisters in South East Turkey have been targeted by Police and vigilantes for some time, and this has stepped up in recent weeks as a result of a report released by the Department of the Interior concluding that Turkish culture is under threat from the 'Christian' EU [so called!] and from 'faith tourism' whereby visitors distribute Christian literature and arrange meetings. Several of our brothers have been arrested and held in detention for 48 hours. During this time one of them was beaten and had to explain all the contacts he had in his mobile phone book, many of whom of course were brethren and contacts. We ourselves were hassled with threatening phone calls and other threats as a result of this. We received texts about this after already arriving in Turkey:



We travelled to where they were and did what we could to strengthen our brethren.

As if this wasn't enough, one of our Iranian refugee sisters, sister R, her brother and parents were arrested by Police and taken to the Iranian border to be deported. This was after severe beatings. One of them managed to send a text message and our local brethren and network of friends were able to put immediate pressure on the EU Court of Justice, UNHCR and other organs to complain to the Turkish Police. By the time the family were brought to the Iranian border, the decision had been made to release them. This was nothing short of a sort of miracle, God working through huge efforts made all round.

At the time of writing this report, we are together with them in a hotel, along with the other family members, our brother H, and Brother H and his wife sister C. Our sister R and her parents were literally kicked and beaten on the floor. Here is Sister R after she'd gotten some medical attention:



Here is Sister R

Her mother, in her 50s and with heart problems, was kicked and punched all over. Here is one of her bruises:



Mother's bruises

Sister R's father was badly kicked in the lower spine, we're not sure if a bone was fractured. Here we are in the hotel trying to figure out the X-rays:



trying to figure out the X-rays

He can hardly walk at the moment, and is suffering badly from his diabetes. It was very moving to see this loving family gathered so closely together in the hotel room:



family gathered so closely together

One good thing came of all this, however. It was evident to UNHCR that this family really can't remain much longer in Turkey, and so they were given clearance to go to Canada. As of writing this report, they've just returned to the hotel from the Canadian embassy and have been given clearance to leave for Canada soon. This is the parents and their 2 youngest children, one of whom is our sister. However, the two older children, brother H and Sister C and her husband brother H, haven't been given this clearance. They are scared to return to where they are living as the Police and vigilantes are regularly visiting their apartment. At the moment it's not clear what can be done further for them. We can only ask your prayers and continued support as we seek to minister to them all as our brothers and sister. Here are the complete family [from right to left: sick father, mother, four children] crammed into the hotel room, facing being split up for who knows how long, as some go to Canada and the others stay on in Turkey with no immediate prospect of resettlement anywhere. Please do pray for them and continue to help us try to help them.



the complete family [from right to left: sick father, mother, four children]

The last few weeks have seen a number of such cases of our brothers and sisters landing in difficulties through no fault of their own, indeed, often as a result of their faithfulness to their calling. We have to say we find it quite emotionally draining keeping up with it all and we ask your prayers for us too. Finally, we conclude with some good news from Turkey. We reported recently the baptism of a Russian sister currently working in Turkey. She has taken to the Truth like a duck to water, and is in active contact with brothers and sisters world-wide and with groups of sisters in Australia. She is simply so full of the joy of the Truth despite a rather unstable and worrying existence living as an immigrant worker in a poor very Islamic neighbourhood. Here she is delighted with a kangaroo sent from sisters in Australia:



Sister Anna

Our sister was able to be present at the baptism of ERTAN, who after a long and careful study of Bible Basics was baptized in a roof top swimming pool, overlooking a mosque [visible in the photo to the right]. We did the baptism with prayer calls ringing in our ears:



baptism of ERTAN

With love from your brothers and sisters of CCM