

Turkey, October 2005

The saga with many of our Iranian refugee seeking brethren continues here. We are in fairly regular contact with the UNHCR over their cases, and we also have limited contact with one brother who escaped over a river into Greece and is trying to appeal there. Some brethren are on the run or laying low, as they have received deportation orders from the Turkish Government, and yet can't return to Iran on pain of death or persecution. This kind of life is very nervewracking and we ask for your prayers for their nervous and spiritual endurance. On a recent visit we were able to provide some spiritual encouragement to some of these brethren but we have no definite news of any improvement in their asylum appeal situation. However, things are moving more positively for our Iranian brother and sister in Azerbaijan, and we hope to report positively on this soon God willing. Whilst talking of persecution, we're delighted to report that br Abedi and his family, the subjects of earlier carelink prayer requests, have been able to leave Africa and are now being re-settled in Guyana, and we pay tribute to Br Clive Solomon and Sis Sonia Hewingway who did so much to enable this humanly, and also to those organizations in the brotherhood who provided funds to enable this wonderful escape from a terrible situation.

However the preaching of the Gospel continues in Turkey and we are pleased to report further baptisms in the Izmir area: HUSEIYN, ALCIN, MEHMET, GUNNUR and YILDIZ. These were all thoroughly interviewed and have carefully studied Bible Basics. Huseiyn has been in touch with us for some time and broke away from the group he was with after becoming convinced the Lord Jesus is the Son of God and not God the Son. He has a group of 30 people who have been studying Bible Basics in Turkish for some time. We were able to spend some days with our brother and his group and can only say we were very impressed.

Bro. Huseyin is a totally wonderful and dynamic brother with a deeply impressive fluency with the Scriptures and well able to deal with the many 'difficult passages' which he encounters in his zealous preaching. He's been studying our material for a long time and has been in regular contact by email. His excellent knowledge of English [he's from German-Turkish background and lived in Western Europe 20 years] has enabled him to read much of our material. He has around 30 people attending meetings twice per week, and it's wonderful to see the firstfruits of his long labours and also the faithful mailing out of literature done by Br Marcus, Sis Liz and their team. Our brother was previously a preacher with another Protestant group but parted company with them over the trinity issue. He bears in his body the marks of the Lord. After many threats to cease preaching, he was attacked by a gang of Moslem thugs, who pinned him down, heated up a metal cross with their cigarette lighters, and pressed it onto his arms. You can see the damage:



Scars left on our brother at the hands of Moslem thugs.



Brother Huseiyn just after his baptism - just as committed to taking the truth of Christ to others regardless.

Our brother deserves all our support; he's badly in need of many copies of Turkish Bible Basics and also the Turkish edition of Jesus for Moslems. He really needs copies for all his group as only some have their own copies, and at present they are relying on photocopies and reading off the net- and he has an additional 128 contacts which he keeps meticulous records of concerning their progress.

We were much impressed by the thoroughness of Bro. Huseiyn's teaching and we spent time discussing his role as the elder of the group, and took him through the basis of performing interviews for baptism, indeed he put the questions and ended up leading the baptism services for some of the candidates.



Bro. Husseyin assisting with interviewing Sis Yildiz from his well marked Turkish Bible.

Others in his group are likely ready for baptism, but [despite it not being picked up much in the Western media] a major earthquake shook the area on the day of our arrival, and there were 4 aftershocks felt whilst we were there. Further there was an announcement in the newspaper than a major earthquake of up to 7 on the Richter scale could hit the city of 3.5 million people at any time- and therefore many people fled the city. Buildings were rattled and literally thousands of people slept in the street on the 2 nights we stayed there.



The earthquakes were front page news in the Turkish press.

A few people were killed and a number injured, with quite a bit of damage to property, including that of our brethren- seriously cracked walls, and a TV sent crashing to the ground. The baptisms all took place at different times because of all the uncertainty and lack of local transport because of the crisis. The baptism of Sis Gunner was quite memorable. We had been sitting in the hotel bedroom for some time doing the interview, had read Romans 6 and were about to do the baptism. Then Police and ambulances started going around the streets informing everyone by loudspeaker to leave all buildings, that this was not a hoax, and another major shock was expected soon. Should we join the other guests in fleeing the building... or hang on and do the baptism? It wasn't really a question. We did the baptism and went to the harbour- and sure enough within an hour, the shock came, not as powerful as expected. The shocks continued throughout the night, lasting about 20 seconds, feeling like a train was passing by underneath and a distant kind of rumble. We talked about Philippi, and how after the

earthquake there were likely aftershocks going on whilst they were doing those midnight baptisms.

This group are truly wonderful and we're currently trying to arrange for a brother to stay more permanently in the area to assist Br Huseiyn in the huge amount of work there is to do. People in the area [Biblical Ephesus] are relatively open minded for Turkey and there are many Protestant groups. So we really believe that now there is a vibrant and functioning ecclesia in Ephesus, ready to meet the Lord, sound in the doctrine and strong in the word of the Lord and His apostles. The group had a promise to each other that between 9 and 10 every evening they would all read the Bible wherever they were- so giving them a copy of the Bible Companion reading plan to read from to bind them together was a totally natural and logical progression from where they already were. We heard a very significant comment from one brother. He knows some isolated villages which had been staunchly 'christian' for centuries, but in the last 100 years had become Moslem. But they retained an old Christian meeting room, where a Christian man they called 'the priest' lives. Although they're all Moslems, whenever they sin, or the village judges someone to have sinned, they go to see 'the priest' and enter into the meeting room, where he sprinkles water on them and tells them Jesus forgives them. Now all this is of course far from the truth as we know it, but it serves to illustrate the crisis of Islam- there is no provision for mercy, grace and forgiveness, and it is this which our new brethren and sisters are so enthusiastically grasping and preaching in its true terms.

Please do pray for the brotherhood in Turkey and especially for this wonderful group.

With love from your brothers and sisters of the CCM