



Kürdistan

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Dear Pastor,

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“Those who have tried to reach the Mohammedans with the Gospel message and who are in the forefront of the fight, do not call for retreat, but for reinforcements and advance”

Samuel M. Zwemer (from *Islam, a Challenge to Faith*, 1907).

Longing for a Nation

This is the heart of every Kurdish man, woman and child. No matter the differences in politics, religion, tribe or language this is the one desire all are agreed on. They love their flag, their soldiers, and their cultural heritage. Although they were promised a country of their own after the break-up of the Ottoman Empire in 1916, they were denied a nation and spread out among others who hated them. There are an estimated 30 million Kurds worldwide without an internationally recognized piece of land that belongs to them and them alone. Much like the Native American Indian of North America, they are an ‘issue’ for their host governments to ‘deal with.’ The Kurdish Question has ever been answered with genocide and war.



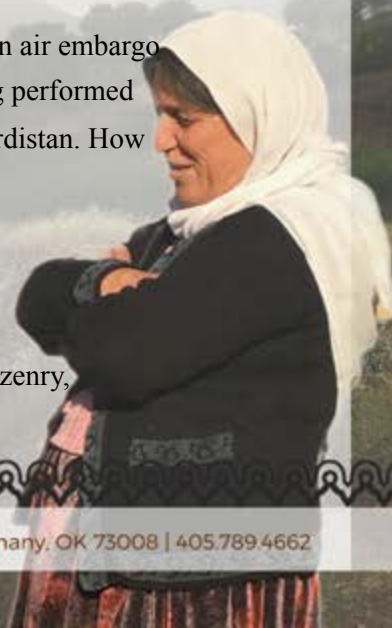
What of the souls of Kurdish soldiers?
These men are Yezidi Kurds fighting
against ISIS. Who will go to them?

Currently

On September 25, 2017, the Kurdish Regional Government (located in the federated territory of North Iraq) held a unilateral referendum. The question posed to the Kurdish people of this area was a simple one – yes for an independent Kurdistan or no and remain in a federated territory. The Kurdish people voted a resounding yes. A 92.7% yes vote resulted from the referendum. This vote was observed by European Union members as well as international independent observers.

At the time of this writing, Iraq is moving troops to the Kurdish border. They have placed an air embargo on the Kurdish airports and banned all international flights in and out. Military maneuvers are being performed on the Turkish and Iranian borders in solidarity with those nations and their opposition to a free Kurdistan. How beautiful those words sound – a free Kurdistan. A home for the people I love. A nation at last.

A reasonable person might ask, “What are you doing there?” or perhaps, “Why didn’t you leave before the air embargo?” The answer is not easy, but it is simple. The gospel will not create a free Kurdistan, but it will free the Kurdish people. The gospel will not create a national Kurdish citizenry, but it will give Kurdish people the citizenship they need so much more.





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Our Purpose

This thing we call missions, spreading the gospel, church planting or just plain soul-winning was never intended to be easy, but it was intended to be done! Neither Apryl nor I subscribe to the philosophy of “The safest place in the world is at the center of God’s will.” It is not supported in Scripture. One can readily see that Paul, Silas, and John the Baptist, to name just a few, found that God’s will was not a prerequisite for safety. Our Savior died while in the very center of the Father’s will. My friend, whether Christians are safe or not, people are still dying without Jesus Christ. A free Kurdistan, while a wonderful thing, is still a temporal, earthly thing and, ultimately, most of the men fighting and dying for it are doing so without a knowledge of Jesus as their Messiah. What a tragedy that a man would toil, fight and bleed for his country only to die without Christ. What waste! What loss! Kurdish men (Muslim men) have bled and died in the fight to keep the Islamic State (ISIS) out of North Iraq and allow all of us here to live in peace. How can we do less, Christian? Can we, who know the wonder that follows this life, do less than those who have no hope in the next life? Kurdish soldiers see the price they have paid for the hope of freedom well worth the cost. Is the price for the freedom of their souls not worth so much more?



Does little Arveen deserve to know Christ less because of the religion of her parents or the color of her skin?

My Christian friend, would you consider our people? Would you consider the Kurdish people? Would you pray for them? Would you come and serve the Lord among them? They are longing for the peace they hope will come with a nation of their own.

Would you come and introduce them to the only One who brings peace?

Your servants,

Matt & Apryl Haynes

