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“Their final destination were clearly rooted in the Triune God.”

*Dear friends,*

### On being a refugee

Once again the most recent geopolitical upheavals at the border between Syria and Turkey threaten the survival of an Armenian community in this region of the Middle-East. The city of Qamishli, situated on the North-Eastern side of this border, has a population of about three thousand Armenians. Until very recently, Qamishli was under the control of the Kurdish armed forces. The Turkish military offensive against this city has already caused a large exodus of its inhabitants. Since the start of the war in 2011, 22,000 Armenian Syrians have taken refuge in the tiny republic of Armenia. With the new outbreak of violence, this number is likely to increase substantially in the weeks to come.

As the Turkish government wages a war against its Kurdish foes in Northern Syria, it is perhaps necessary to be reminded of a largely - also conveniently - forgotten historical reality. One hundred years ago, during the genocide of one and half million Christian Armenians by the Ottomans, many Kurds (who are mainly Muslims) were the active and ruthless instruments in the hands of the Turks, who gave them a free hand to rob Armenians of their possessions. Kurdish horsemen (the infamous regiments Hamidiye Alaylari) did not have a problem of conscience in harassing and massacring the columns of women and children sent to their death in the desert of Syria, in exchange for the spoils.

Ironically, what goes around comes around. Today, the Kurds are desperately striving to build some national homelands of their own across the countries where they are spread (Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran). But they find themselves crushed by their former Turkish masters who refuse to accept, even for a moment, such an outcome. Also their Western allies do not move a finger to come to their rescue. In this situation, it is noteworthy to observe that the republic of Armenia has become a safe haven for a number of them, despite the crimes against Armenians committed by their forefathers. Confronted with their own predicament about their identity, and their struggle to establish an independent homeland, a number of Kurdish leaders have presented public apologies for the collaboration of many Kurds in the Ottoman policies of extermination of Armenian and Assyrian Christians.





“ The main impulse of Christian faith is to know God. ”

Finding oneself, for one reason or another, a refugee or an exile is as old as the world after the Fall. It was to such exiles, spread over regions of the Roman empire, that the apostle Peter wrote his first letter sometime between 60 and 68 AD. It is striking to note the connection of the word “elect” with the words “exiles” and “dispersion” (diasporas) in his address to them (1:1-2). They were not exiles without an ultimate anchor and homeland, because they were elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Christ and for the sprinkling with his blood. The origin of their existence, the spiritual renewal of their lives, and their final destination were clearly rooted in the Triune God, who was the source of their hope in the midst of their tribulations. This should be our prayer for both the Armenian and Kurdish exiles, that they could come to know such hope.

## Progress of our New Testament translation

After completing the translation of 1 Peter and the gospel of Mark, our team of translators of the New Testament have continued with the gospels of Matthew and Luke, followed by 1 & 2 Corinthians. Paul’s next letters are now following in their traditional order. We aim at completing the translation of the whole New Testament in the months to come. We will take the whole of 2020 to carefully review and edit the work done. The trial version published this year continues to elicit much interest among those who received a copy. Our goal is to print the Psalms and New Testament in the first half of 2021. Completing the translation of explanatory study notes is also part of our task (270 pages remaining). It will require not just time, but also an additional budget of some US \$9500 which we hope to secure before the end of this year. Would you consider a special additional gift to help us finish this project?

Our other published books, as well, keep generating positive responses from Armenian readers. One of them recently sent us this letter, commenting on the booklet Revelation and Salvation which was translated years ago (based on one of Louis Berkhof’s work):

The main impulse of Christian faith is to know God. Knowing God is life, eternal life. In knowing God we obtain the key to the truth. It is in His light that we see the light. In general, all those who know God become wiser, even wiser than the most educated people, since sheer human wisdom is folly in the eyes of God.

May not just Armenians, but all inhabitants of the earth gain such true and faithful knowledge through the Gospel, and find their ultimate anchor in the Triune God and His trustworthy Word, in the midst of so many false hopes and deceptive promises of godless homelands.

*The committee for Christians for Armenia*

Please send your donations to the following address:

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