

March 2025



PLEASE DON'T LEAVE US

The cosmopolitan city of Sulaymaniyah, in the central portion of Iraqi Kurdistan near the border with Iran, has been a Kurdish center of influence and culture since its founding in 1784. Little did Ibrahim Pasha Baban know that the city he named in honor of his father Sulaiman would become the birthplace of numerous famous Kurdish poets, writers, historians, politicians, scholars, and singers.

A decade ago, Dr. E___ F___ and Iraqi pastor M___ D___ tried to spearhead a project to translate the Bible into Kurdish (Sorani) and to establish a Kurdish church, but they could not find an educationally astute, doctrinally sound Kurdish Christian to implement the project. The situation has changed. On a recent trip to the Kurdistan region, Dr. F___ and Pastor M___ met with DK, a born-again Christian who was previously a high-ranking officer in the Kurdish army. While serving in Turkey, a group of Arabic-speaking Christians witnessed to DK, led him to faith in Jesus, and disciplined him for one year. Because of his faith in Jesus, DK was separated from the army, and a price was placed on his head. Miraculously, the Lord has spared his life.

"I could have gone to Belgium or the U.S. for my safety," DK explained to Dr. F___, "but I chose to stay in Kurdistan because my people are going to Hell, and I need to find a way to reach them! If I live the normal eighty years, then half of my life is already passed. I want to use the rest of my life in the service of the Lord!"

Within a short time, Bro. DK assembled a team, which has completed an accurate translation of the Sorani (Kurdish) New Testament and sent it for final revisions before printing. "The Bible is not complete without the Old Testament!" DK decided. "I have two team members who read and write Hebrew, one Iranian, and several qualified Kurdish translators. We need the

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Old Testament translated,” DK declared passionately. DK’s second vision is the establishment of a church and a Christian radio station in the Kurdish-controlled city of Sulaymaniyah (population 1.5 million). DK has a nucleus of 30-40 Kurds who have accepted Christ as their Saviour, but the Kurdish government has denied their request to establish a church in the city. Not to be stymied, DK has rented a 5,000-square-foot, 3-story building in a rural location for a mere \$650 per month. This site will be the base for the church, radio station, and translation center.

Pastor M___ from B___ will be the figurehead. Although the preparations seem to be falling in line, this endeavor is not without great danger. The Catholic church tried to start a school in Sulaymaniyah a few years ago. When the principal witnessed to the students, he was shot to death by a student, who then took his own life. Another brave female principal of an Islamic Kurdish school and her husband, a teacher, have been carefully taking advantage of their positions by cautiously introducing Christ to their students, but their boldness is very risky.

Bro. DK has assured our ministry partners that he understands the danger involved in witnessing for Jesus, but he feels that he has an advantage because he is a Kurd. CRI partners believe that God has opened this door but . . . WE NEED YOUR PRAYERS!

Pastor DK’s final plea still rings in our ears. “Bro. F___, we need your help and the help of all of your partners in order to reach Kurdistan with the Word of God. PLEASE DON’T LEAVE US!”

EDITOR’S NOTE

CRI partners are actively pursuing the unfolding opportunity in Sulaymaniyah. We will need funds, but our budget is not yet finalized. Please pray for the Kurdish work. We already have radio stations in three Kurdish areas (Erbil, Dohuk, and Kirkuk), but they are broadcasting in Arabic. Kurdish will be a new language for CRI, and the work to provide enough programming for a 24-hour day will be enormous.

PHILIPPINES, Marawi City

Testimony from Honeyvie

My name is Honeyvie. I am fourth-year student at Iloilo Baptist College, but I was born in a staunch Muslim community in Malawi City, Mindanao. I recently went to my hometown for a Christmas mission outreach, which was sponsored by our Christian radio station. When I learned that my sister’s Muslim friend was very ill, I decided to visit his home to witness to him. To gain courage, I reminded myself of the following missionary motto: “Let’s not die from sickness or accidents . . . let’s die in the mission field.” I was shaking in fear as I hid with the friend and his mother in an upstairs room where I shared the Gospel of Jesus. When they prayed “in Jesus’ name,” I cried. The mom thanked me for sharing Jesus and said, “Maybe now God will hear my prayers and heal my son!”

TANZANIA, Morogoro

Testimony by Missionary Jerry Wyatt III

A listener recently contacted the station: “I am just calling because I do not understand eternal life at all.” Our staff member was able to share the Gospel, and the caller trusted Jesus. We are working to produce more Gospel presentations using different staff members’ voices, so that anyone who listens to *Voice of Life* radio will hear the Gospel many times per day.

George Zarris
Christian Radio International

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