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“ Chapter 3 of the Book Lamentations comes to mind “

History stotters

Dear friends of Christians for Armenia,

This is the French way of saying that history repeats itself. The renewed Azerbaijani aggression toward Armenians in the mountainous Karabagh region, ethnic Armenians who have lived there for twenty-five centuries (and where Christianity spread very early, being mentioned by the Church fathers already in the second century), painfully remind us of the countless episodes in Armenian history when their homeland has been occupied and devastated by destructive nations or tribes. We can fully expect that all Christian monuments (churches, monasteries), some of them going back to the early Middle-Ages, will be reduced to ashes with loud shouts of *Allahu Akbar*, as we already witnessed after the 44-day war of 2020. If one passage of the Bible comes to mind at the moment, it is the third chapter of the Book of Lamentations : it seems to perfectly express the plight of the Armenian nation through the centuries, now especially.

As of today, 105,000 refugees (out of the estimated 120,000 ethnic Armenians in Nagorno-Karabagh), have arrived in the territory of the Republic of Armenia, having left everything behind and fearing for their lives. Many elderly people have died of exhaustion during this brutal exodus. Among the refugees are some 30,000 children, fully dependent on humanitarian help from outside, while the very harsh Armenian winter is rapidly approaching. Traditional hospitality and support from local Armenians will ensure that no refugee camps are set up for a long time, but the long-term perspective looks very gloomy. If the Republic of Armenia is recognized as a democracy in terms of its constitution and institutions, the State is incapable of taking care of such a huge and sudden influx of refugees. Let us also say it straightforwardly, as painful as it is to admit it (we've never hidden this fact in our newsletters), post-Soviet Armenia, independent since 1991, is still a country where endemic corruption prevails within the governing class and its oligarchs (also in the military leadership). It has certainly been a factor of social disintegration amidst the grave external dangers, preventing unity and national cohesion to build up a stronger capacity of resistance. Without solid ethical norms, which can only be instilled in the hearts and minds by the Holy Spirit through the faithful preaching of the Gospel (not via traditionalist and sacramental rituals), there will be no reformation of public and social life there, or elsewhere.

A relief fund for refugees

Since 1991, when Rev A.R. Kayayan established the ministry of *Christians for Armenia*, we have been working very closely with the Christian educational center and technical college *Endanik* in the Northern city of Gyumri. It





serves as a hub for our activities. We value and cherish the trusted collaboration we have with its remarkable staff and directors, Artur and Knarik Minasyan, who established it upon the rubble of a devastating earthquake in December 1988. Through the years, through perseverance and hardships, *Endanik* has become a model educational center with affirmed Christian values and ethos. They are expecting some 50 to 60 children from Karabagh and will have to provide everything not only for them, but for their families as well. We are speaking of some 150 people to host, clothe and feed, in addition to providing education for the children.

Christians for Armenia would like to make a special appeal to your generosity in order to raise emergency funds to help these refugees. If you live in the U.S. or Canada, you can send a check to the address below, adding (separately) the mention : *Refugee fund*. Otherwise, you can also make a donation via Pay Pal by clicking the link at the bottom of our home page on our website www.christiansforarmenia.org. 100% of the funds will go directly to provide food, clothing, and shelter for these families. Of course, we will report to you about the follow-up of this endeavor in upcoming newsletters.

“The unique solid cornerstone is Christ himself”

Building up on a spiritual foundation

The foreseeable loss of ancient, very valuable Christian monuments mentioned above is a very distressing perspective. However, we should always keep in mind that for us Christians, the ultimate building is the one edified on the unique solid cornerstone, Christ himself, upon whom we are called to be built up as a spiritual house (1 Peter 2.4-5), regardless of architectural wonders inherited from the past. We need to remind this to Armenians as well and continue our work of edification in that sense. We are glad to report that Rev Mark Vander Hart's third book of Bible studies on Genesis is about to go to the printer in Yerevan. In terms of the Bible translation, the book of Joshua has been completed and is now going through the phase of editing. Our team is making good progress. It is a tangible sign that we do not forsake our objectives, regardless of circumstances. There are still huge uncertainties about the future of Armenia and its internal security, as further claims from Azerbaijan are made on its territory to encircle it completely. There is no space here to develop all kinds of geostrategic explanations or hypotheses about what may happen or not. Our mission is to continue proclaiming that The Lord reigns, that His justice will prevail and His final judgement will fall upon his enemies, whoever they are (Rev. 20.11-15).



A sight which will not be seen anymore : Armenian youth visiting the Parliament in Nagorno Karabagh.

Warmly in Christ,

Rev Eric Kayayan

On behalf of Christians for Armenia

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