

The life in a local IDP (internally displaced people) camp that is among many in Kurdistan.



HOPE IN OUR BROKEN WORLD

2021 STM Kurdistan (July 15 – Aug 2)
Harrison Cheung

Context

Yazidi's have been displaced by Isis in 2014 when they committed genocide. Yazidi's are a people group that has a mixed religious influence from Christians, Muslims, and Judaism. Many reside all over the world as refugees and locally in Iraq as internally displaced people. Refugees are individuals who have been forced to seek safety in another country outside of their home. Internally displaced people are people who have been forced to find a safer place to be in the country.

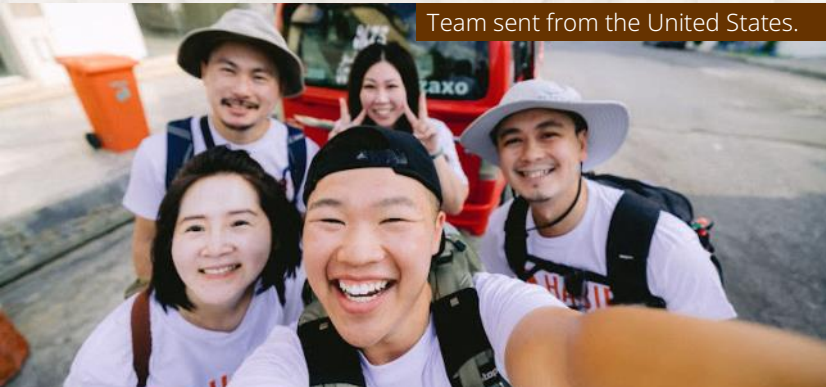
Habibi International is a humanitarian organization that seeks to provide primary medical aid to the people in Iraq. Habibi provides opportunities to those who are medical professions and the heart to serve by providing opportunities in all facets of aid. The people who make up the body are all believers — so while standing as a humanitarian-NPO, they are kingdom-minded.



7 of the youth in the computer literacy class paired with our team for 1:1 training.

Mission

The goal was to evaluate the relationship and climate of Iraq since the pandemic — Our team worked in conjunction with an education team to develop opportunities for remote work. We trained 7 boys to learn basic computer skills in 30 hours and taught them excel in 20 hours. This was a successful pilot program to provide an opportunity for remote working from the US. We spent the rest of the time meeting with families, local workers, and understanding the culture of the Kurdish and Yazidi people in Kurdistan.



Team sent from the United States.

Here's a small excerpt from my report:

I took a glimpse of the small village and as a team, we made our way down the open field to the Tigris River. While I walked through the field it opened my eyes to the beauty of the country and God's creation, and when we arrived by the bank

it was still and peaceful. All this made me think about the purpose and God's plan for me.

The story here really revealed to me the purpose in which Jesus has placed me here in this country. With everything the question I ask is, "Why am I doing this?". I've realized it's easy to speak our faith, but to live our faith out is even harder. While there are many opportunities to serve, I am slowly seeing God draw my heart closer and closer to this region. The relationships with the local workers and internally displaced people (IDP) have shown me hope.

As you read this — the reality is God does not need you anywhere. There are many others who can serve or be a part of the Kingdom — whether it be at home or abroad. The faith and privilege that we have are what makes following Jesus so bold. My realization is if we keep looking for an open door — we'll never realize that we have walked through the door to which we were called. For me, I have realized that I have walked through that door — I have a conviction to return back to Kurdistan to share the gospel and to serve the people.



Some of the youth whom we work with. They are dancing a traditional Yazidi dance.

For His Glory

Learn to love

El Cajon STM, July 19 – Aug 8, 2021
Danny Cheng

I have to relearn and keep reminding myself during this trip that the phrase, 'Love your neighbor as yourself' is a commandment, not a suggestion from God, not something I do at my own convenience. To love our neighbor is intentional, show compassion and be in their life, to know that we are there for them if they need anything, especially sharing our faith when someone else doesn't.

God has provided us an open harvest field that doesn't require an air ticket to serve in our neighbor El Cajon, a unique town mix of ethnicities from the Middle East waiting for us to meet and serve the needs of Muslims Refugees. We praise God that we have reconnected with some families since last year through our backpack drive. Also, we are so blessed to have 35 children with mostly Muslim background



VBS small group



Kurdish pastor Asad & friend

parents come to church to learn about Jesus for four days for our first VBS. With a heavy heart, we encouraged them with Jesus' love and hope even as some of them shared stories of the oppression they faced from war back in their country. While we keep serving the families collectively and the daily necessities might not be as

demanding after a few years of settling in, we hope our caring and bearing good witness of Christ, bringing about salvation for their struggling souls. We're also looking forward to expanding our ministry investment in the youth as they are more open and adapting to the culture, as well as establishing a community support group soon for the Muslim background believers.

The cross-cultural differences and the language barriers between the Syrians, Iraqis Kurds, Arabs, and Chaldeans might not help the ministry any easier but it keeps us striving to learn from them every day. We are also aware of the current situation of Afghanistan and preparing for the next wave of possible immigrants arriving at El Cajon. The Harvest truly is great and needs laborers, therefore we pray the Lord of the harvest to send more workers. We are very conscious if not for the work of the Holy Spirit leading and intervening, we dare not expect to move an inch of God's kingdom. He is the one who changed hearts, we are there to sow seeds and pray and pray like Jesus teaches us how to pray.



Kurdish New Year festival



Traditional Middle East kabob plate