



BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL *Challenger*

A publication of **Baptist International Evangelistic Ministries**

Vol. 41 No. 2, 2023

Earthquake Victims in Turkey

On February 6, 2023, at 4:17 a.m. local time, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake shook southeast Turkey, destroying buildings, roads, and communications. After the initial quake, aftershocks continued to shudder across the land, wreaking additional damage. The confirmed death toll is over 59,000 people in Turkey, with thousands more in neighboring Syria. The UN estimated 1.5 million were left homeless. Although BIEM

has no permanent personnel in the region of the earthquake, one of our missionary couples who regularly minister among Muslims was within traveling distance. Here's a brief report from them with names withheld for security reasons.

to collect humanitarian aid, which we gave to Christian brothers and sisters in cities hit by the earthquake....”

While visiting cities affected by the earthquake, together with Turkish brothers we set up about 100 tents (with insulation) for families.... We also distributed warm thermal underwear and warm clothes to people. Many groceries were distributed

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“**T**he first thing we did was to declare a time of prayer with Christian Turks. Then we began



Turkey's February 6 earthquake made some places look like a war zone.



The unexpectedness of the earthquake resulted in damage to countless vehicles that could have been parked in safer areas, if only the owners had known.

Christians from both inside and outside Turkey responded with prayer and action.



The collapse of houses, apartments, and stores created instant needs.

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 ...and we helped Turkish churches in their humanitarian-aid efforts.

God gave many opportunities to speak to victims about the love of the Lord. At every chance, we witnessed in both word and deed. People could see real, living love of the Lord through children of God.

Also, thanks to you [BIEM] and your financial assistance, we have aided many refugees, people who have left the affected cities of Turkey. Tens of thousands of refugees arrived in our region.... We were able to take clothes, food, blankets, pillows, hygiene products, and much more to victims.

People also appealed to us for help on behalf of wives and children of Ukrainians who lived in cities where the earthquake occurred. There were about 80 of them. Together with Turkish families who also suffered, they were resettled not far from our city. We helped them with food and clothing. Although some of these Ukrainian women have Turk or

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Emergency tents provide temporary shelter for many who lost homes.



With life turned upside down, some people simply didn't know what to do.

Time for Summer Camps!

Once again, the season for summer camps in Eastern Europe is rushing upon us. Also once again, we at BIEM face the reality that summer camps for kids and teens in war-torn Ukraine are needed now more than ever.

During this time when war is impacting Ukraine's cities with so much death and devastation, children live with fears. They wonder whether their papa will come home from the war alive. Might their home explode from a missile tonight? When they go to bed, will they wake up tomorrow? Naturally, along with such thoughts come deeper worries... What really happens to a person after they die?

As they do every year, our summer camps in 2023 will include a variety of fun

and wacky games; singing; craft times; and plenty of good, wholesome food to nourish young bodies. But most important, leaders will be nourishing campers spiritually with lessons from God's Word. Summer camps sponsored by BIEM give kids a wholesome atmosphere where they can forget the war and learn of their Creator, God, and delve into His Word. Lessons provide vital explanations concerning life and death. The kids also learn how to pray and become a child of God, which many of them do.

This year's camps will require \$50,000 since the cost of food has risen sharply due to the war. Can you help? If so, please designate your gift "Summer Camps." Thank you!

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"Reaching the world for Christ since 1981"

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Quick Glimpses

With so much happening on our fields of ministry, we can't describe everything. But the following photos give quick glimpses of several outreaches. (You can see and hear

more online by going to **BaptistInternational.org** then clicking Video Updates on the Home page. That will open links to numerous brief videos from our foreign fields.)



BaptistInternational.org



Our newest church planters, the Koops, are already seeing fruit. This lady turned to Christ after an evening Bible study!



BIEM's Nikolai Ryzhuk traveled from Belarus to central Russia to preach at this youth conference. Fifteen young people prayed the sinner's prayer to accept Christ!



In Bilogorodka, Ukraine, a special Saturday service ministered to local widows, some of whom lost husbands, sons, or fathers in the war.



Also in Bilogorodka, these five believers were baptized in April. Their shirts declare, "I believe."



BIEM's Pasha Usach (second from left) and his team brought war relief to Kherson. Here, they pause in front of a building devastated by a Russian missile.



This village church near Kherson took quite a beating from hostilities. Funds from BIEM provided temporary plastic sheeting to keep the rain out.

...Quick Glimpses continued from page 3



After a Russian missile struck this apartment building in Uman, Ukraine, funds from BIEM provided plastic sheeting to replace glass windows that had been blown out of neighboring apartments. An informal memorial honors the adults and children who perished that night. ■

Giving When You're Gone...

If you're reading this newsletter, there's an excellent chance you often donate to BIEM and other Christian ministries. What a wonderful way to use one's resources—plowing finances into outreaches that preach the Gospel, distribute Bibles, train nationals, and plant churches to win souls and glorify God.

But have you considered how you can help reach souls for Christ even after you've graduated to Heaven? This subject came up when yet another friend told us he has designated BIEM as a major beneficiary in his Will. That's earthly planning with a heavenly purpose!

Have you made provision for the Lord's work in your own Will? Perhaps you're one of those people who has always wanted to make a huge, one-time gift to God's work at least once but could never afford it. If so, remembering BIEM in your Will could be the answer. As good stewards of the resources God has entrusted to us, each of us must decide how to disburse our final earthly funds. May the Lord guide your thoughts as you consider where to bestow those last gifts when you're gone. ■



When your only other option is sleeping on the ground, the gift of a simple mattress becomes a treasure.

...Turkey Earthquake continued from page 2
Arabian husbands and some have converted to Islam, they don't mind what we do. God has given us this open door, and we are trying to make the most of it for evangelism.

In this situation, we've had a good chance to visit them every week and to fellowship on different topics. That is, we tell them the Good News, which warms their hearts and reveals God's love. We also play games with their children. We conduct various programs for them through which the Gospel can be shared.

Turkish brethren from churches in Hatay, Antakya, and other devastated cities have been asking for help. We prayed and went to them. We ordered and brought warm winter tents for families, mattresses, blankets, warm underwear and clothes, stoves, and food. Together with the Turkish brothers in Christ, we set up tents for affected families and distributed food and clothing.

We constantly had good opportunities to talk about Christ the Savior and to express many words of support from the Word of God. Hearts are full of suffering and grief. Many wonder, "Why did this happen? Why are so many children casualties?" We have one answer, and it's in God's Word. We try to show the Savior and the loving God in this grief. It is not easy, but with the help of the Lord and with your prayers, we believe that the seed will sprout, and some will see Christ.

In the evening, many people gathered around the bonfires in the streets—Turks, Syrians, Arabs, and Kurds. God gave opportunities to witness of the greatness

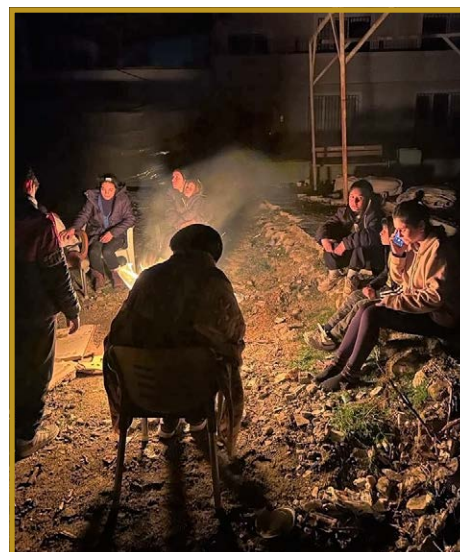


This screen capture comes from a TV broadcast in Turkey warning citizens about missionary activity—gifts of food and clothing, sometimes accompanied by cards saying, "Jesus loves you" in English and Turkish.

of God and His love. We are praying for them and continue to help those in need.

Thank you for supporting us in this and praying for us. We are grateful for your financial support as well.

Of the \$20,000 BIEM was able to provide for this outreach on short notice, we thank Operation Renewed Hope for supplying \$15,000. If you would like to give a gift for this need, please mark your donation Turkey Earthquake Fund. This outreach is continuing, so more help is certainly needed. ■



In evenings, locals resorted to sitting around fires in metal cans for something to do.