

# Jordan visit – Amman and Madaba

## Refugee family – East Amman



Sarabyon (aged 64 and Armenian) and Nahrain (aged 58 and Syrian) (means 2 rivers) (no children)

Sarabyon from Armenia and Nahrain from Syria – met in Iraq and married 30 years.

October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003 in Ramadi Sarabyon's brother William and a nephew were shot dead in a drive by killing. They were sitting outside the house in the evening drinking tea. Shortly after they were left a note with a bullet saying unless

they left they too would be killed 'like William'

William was a professor of English who assisted the Americans. The nephew was 14.

Later another brother, a teacher, was kidnapped by Al Qaidah in broad daylight. They robbed him of his ring, necklace and belt and physically abused him. A ransom of \$10,000 was demanded. He was held for 3 days and then released after the money was raised from friends, from family and from the church.

Sarabyon was working as an engineer

They fled to Bagdad – to an area called Dora where there are many Christians. They were waiting for 4 years, with only Nahrain able to work as a primary school teacher, sharing living space with relatives to try and save money.

Arrived here on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015

Brother still there with 6 children in Baghdad waiting for a visa for Jordan, living in a Christian area called Dora. Their only income is her pension – their rent is 160JD per month for a single room, bathroom and kitchen on a balcony. In this area schooling is available for some refugees – run by volunteer teachers who do it after hours.

Nahrain has diabetes, liver issues and blood pressure. She only has enough drugs for a month or so. She last worked as a teacher in 2014

---

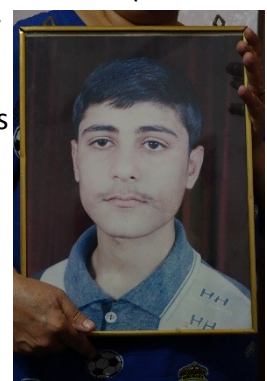
## Visit 2

### We visit Nahrain's brother and extended family.

3 families living in 3 rooms and a kitchen. The Brother and his wife, whose son was shot (we are shown his picture - below). His daughter and husband with 3 kids and another of his brothers with family.

This is the brother whose son was shot at the same time as William. He tells us his brother worked as a translator for the US.

From the day of the shooting they had to leave Baghdad. There are 5 brothers and 3 sisters 92 of whom are in California). The oldest brother had a stroke after the shooting and died 4 months later. Everyone moved to Dora and lived



in one home, spent 3 years waiting for UN to process their papers – then they came to Jordan hoping it would speed up. One brother was a school manager - for 42 years – his younger brother was a teaching assistant. William’s son has good English and was determined to work for the US in an attempt to ‘right’ the wrong done to his family. He has since been given asylum in Chicago.

This family applied to IOM (the UN International Organisation for Migration) – but were upset by their treatment. People did not listen to them, they were told to read the instructions and follow them! They didn’t want to hear their story. They felt they had been accepted – but have since been asked for more and more information relating to letters of recommendation they have provided relating to their work for US forces – including asking details of personal email or cell phone number for the General who had signed the letter. They are concerned that the organisations are choking them – they cannot work, the process grinds on – but nothing seems to happen.



---

### Monday visits: Khalida



3 children Ramah (f) 16, Daniel 14 and Dumien 11

Amar is a mechanical engineer. Khalida has a brother in Sweden. They have two brothers and two sisters still in Karum, in Kurdistan.

They talked about the cities ISIS controls – they focused on the oil centres in Northern

Iraq, Mosul, Tikrit and Ahar. Mosul is described as being very rich in history and also Christianity.

They lived in a smaller town about 30km from Mosul in an area where most people were Christians. Initially after the fall of Saddam – things were reasonably peaceful but then there were two bombings outside his shop. In the first everything collapsed about him and he was worried for his 5 employees, in the second his brother in law was killed.

They had several businesses:

Mechanical engineering business

Family business selling domestic appliances – worth \$500k

Farm – with all its own machinery etc. – This year’s crops harvested and worth 120k – but not sold

8 1,00A Gen Sets to provide auxiliary power for homes

3 shops for construction supplies

Khalida had been building up a children's clothes store and had just spent \$8k on an order for stock Muslim Sunni's were making attacks on Shia and Christian alike.

Children were a real target for kidnapping as they were successful and wealthy, even getting to school was dangerous.

In 2014 they woke up to hear about ISIS – the first city to fall was Mosul. Seems that Muslims within Mosul forced the army out before ISIS arrived- initially they were saying all is OK – but then the black flags of ISIS started to appear everywhere. Christians in Mosul moved out from the centre – mostly to the Ninevah valley. This area was in dispute with Kurdistan government and central government as to control/responsibility. A large 2m x 3m ditch was dug to try and prevent ISIS incursion. They had warnings that ISIS would attack them – but unable to sell their businesses and move as no one had money

August 6<sup>th</sup> ISIS crossed to where the Yazidis were. Kurdistan didn't fight to protect them – and they suffered hardship on the mountains for 2 months – most were killed or died of starvation or illness.

We just left in our small car leaving all behind. Most of family stayed in Erbil. The government tried to open safe route to Baghdad spent a week in Erbil then got thru to Baghdad despite road being controlled by ISIS and then on to Jordan .

When in Erbil Amar revived a call from a Muslim friend back home asking why did you leave it all. Com back it is easy, dimly pay the taxes and convert. A are response was that he left for Jesus - the best thing in life. His friend said he now understands what it is they follow.

Their prayer requests – please note non for themselves!

1 For Christians left in Iraq and Erbil

2 For Khalidas mother in Erbil who has op for kidney stones

3 For their son Joseph - left behind in Erbil

The story then came out that their brother and sister had tried to have children for 20 years and failed, they had Joseph 6 years ago and gave him to them to bring up as their own. What love, what sacrifice, what pain, what loss!

Khalida slept with a knife under her pillow and had terrible dreams. She still wakes at 3 am with nightmares.



### **William, Egclas and Maria**

William was a painter in Baghdad and recognised that he needs to get his family out. In preparation he sold his house for \$190k. Just 2 days later his daughter aged 12 was kidnapped and he received a demand for every single dollar he had sold his house for, if he deducted one cent he would never see his daughter again,

He paid up and 5 days later his daughter was released. After the kidnapping he went to Mosul then Erbil then Baghdad They arrived with absolutely nothing and the church has provided for them. They are fortunate and have been accepted entry to Australia and will leave in a couple of months.

William is also receiving pastoring by a catholic priest by Skype from the U.S.

He didn't really know Jesus before he left Iraq but he does now. He knows God has a plan for him in Australia. He will be the message of a song in Arabic which says - God is in heaven along way away until he found His love now God walks with him every day. We share that gold needs to be purified – and that the hard times we suffer can do this for us.

Lunch was with a Syrian family Ibrahim, Adiba and their 5 children, Amal (f) 16 Nadji (m) 15, Hella (f) Rahaf (f) and Ahmed (m)

---

### **Ahmad, Anwar and her sister Rannah**

(Daughter 12 in school)



Have been here 1 year and 2 days.

They were from the centre of Mosul – he had a pharmacy shop and an engineering workshop making parts for heavy machinery – with 12 people working for him.

Some background. Ahmad had been involved as an engineer/ mechanic with the army in the war with Iraq and then the war with Kuwait. When the US invaded he was captured and held as a POW by the US in Saudi for 6 months. He was offered repatriation through the Red Cross – but told by fellow POWs that if he did so he would be reported to Iraqi authorities as a collaborator and his whole family would be decimated by Saddam. He has 7 sisters and 3 brothers.

In 1997 when returning from his workshop with his nephew and his uncle he went into his house and then a masked gunman forced his way in and threatened them all – demanding money and gold. The gunman's hand was shaking so he took the opportunity to play a trick and looked behind him and said 'Don't hit him!' to an imaginary person behind. As the gunman looked behind he threw the table over him – but he let off a burst of fire. One bullet ricocheted and went into Anwar's mouth – smashing her teeth – but not doing any more damage. He was hit in the shoulder, one bullet crossed his chest and another his arm. His uncle was hit in the leg but the bullet went straight through. His nephew was unharmed and able to take them to hospital.

Then he was given written messages – pay the tax for non-Muslims and support the Mujahedeen - - phone this number before noon or you will be bombed at your office and home. He ignored these as best he could because there were so many factions each making demands like this he didn't know who was who and what was what. He was able to build a new house in Mosul and the day he moved in Saddam Hussein was toppled. Then he started getting more letters and one day in 2003 two Christian neighbours were shot as they got into their car in front of him and his wife. Their bodies lying part in and part out of the car with blood everywhere. They fled to Nineveh and

started all over again.

He managed to recover various items from Mosul and started another workshop and again managed to build a house. Then ISIS came. They fled in such a hurry to Erbil that they even left cash behind in the house. They sold their car and all the gold they had in order to buy flights to Jordan. His father in law and his uncle are still there – but he has not heard from them at all. His sisters were forced to convert – but eventually they were thrown out at the border near Kirkuk – where the church has taken them back and they have come back to the Lord.

When they got to Jordan he tried to get into Europe twice – once via Russia and once via Ukraine. Each time they were caught, arrested, thrown in jail and then sent back to Jordan.

They have had one interview with IOM – but no date for the second interview.

He explained that he had been so busy with work that he only ever went to church 1 time per year to pray for 1 hour. His mother begged him to go – and now he has time! We shared with them what was on our heart and Amir shared the good news with them. They hung on his every word. We encouraged them to use this time of waiting to prepare themselves for the exciting purpose God has for them going forward.

---

### Tuesday pm 1<sup>st</sup> visit:

3 very quick visits with folk in Madaba – all Iraqi Christians



Hassu Jacob, Imama and Muntahah

This is the first visit by anyone – including Global Hope.

Iraqi Christians from Qaraqosh near Mosul. They heard the noise of fighting and fled as they were. Hassu Jacob has been blind for 12 years. They were running on foot. Members of their family and extended family picked them up and took them to Erbil – the short journey took them 12 hours– they stayed in a church there for 3 months but life was too expensive.

They were with a catholic priest who is now a bishop. Fortunately Jordanian airlines offered half price tickets to refugees so they were able to travel – they moved initially to Amman – but again found it too expensive so came to Madaba- here the flat is 150JD – but an equivalent in Amman would be 300-400JD. They feel challenged – the rent is due in 10 days and they do not know how they are going to pay it – they sometimes wonder whether God is with them or not.

Hassu jacob was a handyman, builder , farmer ... whatever was needed. He has left two daughters in Erbil. Muntahah never took a job, they lived simply and were self-sufficient in Iraq.

Their papers have been put forward for Germany – they have two daughters in Germany, 3 in the USA and two left in Erbil. Hassu Jacob's one desire is to meet with his daughters again before he dies.

---

## 2<sup>nd</sup> visit

Bashara and Marie, George (who arrived in Iraq very shortly before they left), Rana and Salaam, Vivienne, Merna and Nuur

Both men come from a plumbing background and use to own their own business in Iraq and employ others. They find some work locally on a non-official basis which helps to pay the bills. The children go to school. Life here is much better than in Hashmi in Amman, much cheaper to live.

Mums both talked about the important discipline of taking the children to church. They have been in Jordan for 10 months.

They were happy in Iraq – but after ISIS they have no reason to go back. Everything has been destroyed and there is still much kidnapping. They were neighbours with the Yazidis - but they saw what ISIS had done with them and knew they were coming back for the Christians. They come from a Syrian orthodox background. They know they cannot stay in Jordan but have been refused access to Australia twice and are now trying for Canada.



They have two brothers still in Erbil one who is a Priest – there are many Christians there - but lots are also leaving for Turkey. This area had the biggest Christian population.

The two sisters are doing an English on a course run by the local Orthodox Church.

How do they feel now? God has brought us to a place where we can go to church without fear and it si much easier – a really important thing for them. There is a higher Christian population in Madaba than Hashmi.

Both families felt really ‘smashed’ at the start of all this... but are much happier now. They recognize that wherever they go they will be ambassadors for Christ.





### 3<sup>rd</sup> visit

Rohaid and Celine Onella (7) and Ebair (31/2)

Initially they went to Lebanon – but hugely expensive – costing them \$500 per month for a tiny flat so came to Jordan. They stayed with Celine’s sister to start with. They are from Bakhdida near Mosul. Like others they heard what ISI did to the Yazidis and had just 3-4 hours to escape from the area to Kurdistan.

### Wednesday am



**Nahla’s story:** Nahla had worked in the airport at Baghdad for years and learned a little English there. Her husband Riad died 6 years ago. She has a son left in Erbil – Bazil and a daughter Zeena. Bashara – her son is still with her.

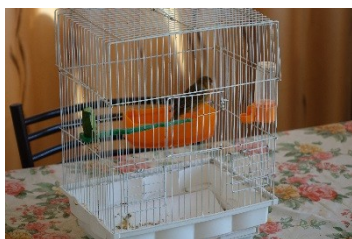
All that Nahla had worked for 45 years was taken away in one night.

In October 2014 she was cleaning out her garage to wash the floor and found a piece of paper on the floor with a threat in it. She did not think it could be for her – but took it into the house and showed it to her son. The threat was simple – leave within 24 hours or we will kill you. She thought it could not be for her as she got on well with everyone, had not upset anyone - they did nothing but she did stop her son from going to work the next day and decided to stay in. The next day at 2pm there was a knock on the door and 3 men – one huge like a bodybuilder were there – all wearing yashmar and glasses...the big guy put his hand over her mouth and pushed her inside where her son was watching TV. They beat him up severely – such that he still has kidney problems a year later and is still on medication. (She is diabetic and has high blood pressure and takes 6 pills every day). They were told they had 3 choices: 1) convert 2) pay tax or 3) be killed. They had one day only and they were fortunate to get that as they normally did not give second warnings...but they were as they were known as ‘good people’. The note was signed by the True Islamist Movement. Notice was taken to all Christians in the area to get out.

They left immediately to hide at her sisters. Fortunately she had just received her retirement payment so she had a little money. The next day they applied for a visa to go to Jordan which takes a week or so, so they then travelled up to her son Bazil in Duhok, Kurdistan (two

grandchildren aged 6 and 4). Her daughter Zena escaped to California – she was threatened and her father in law was kidnapped, kept in a mosque for 24 days and only released when they paid \$50,000 plus two cars plus all the items of gold they had. He was betrayed by one of his workers.

Prayer requests: for Iraq, for Syria – for the Middle East!



One of the team was listening to the bird in the cage which she found in the street and reminded them that Jesus said 'Are not two sparrows sold for a penny....so do not be afraid you are more valuable than many sparrows' Matt 10 29-31

---

## 2<sup>nd</sup> visit

Salaam, Moayed, Nadra, Salaam's wife Nadra and baby Namer - 'Tiger' and Mukelos



Moayed tells us his family are from a village north of Mosul called Telskuf. ISIS started their terror campaign in Mosul and then started to move out to the surrounding towns and villages. Many people were scared and left immediately – some stayed a little longer. They went to Erbil and stayed in the garden of a church – with thousands of families moving into Erbil it was extremely difficult. Rents were really expensive – around \$800 for them to find somewhere and of course they could not camp out in the winter so October 27<sup>th</sup> 2014 they managed to get to Jordan. They lost their house and everything in Iraq. Whilst in Iraq the three men were daily workers – doing all sorts of jobs – as required. Moayed thinks Iraq is finished ... how can you live in a place where all trust is broken down and neighbour betrays neighbour? He thinks nobody will want to return.

They have no work here to do in Jordan – although from time to time Riad and the church are able to organize something for them to do. But they say that we can pray!

They have had their 2 interviews with IOM so they are waiting to find out if a country will accept them. They are looking forward to starting a new life. They have some relatives abroad – 4 in Australia, 3 in Germany and 2 in the USA. Australia has recently asked for another 25,000 so many refugees are applying there hoping to get in, but he is also concerned that the Iraqi Christians will be forgotten and the Syrians taken because they are in the spotlight.



Moayed wants to see Mukelos married and for his sons to have lots of children. His 4 daughters each have either 4 or 5 children. It won't be a big wedding – they cannot afford that – just an exchange of rings, the church service and a little dancing outside the church afterwards- that will be it. Lena our translator laughs with him and says no girl is going to accept that!

Moayed and Nadra have been married for 33 years and he reminisces about how he gave his future father in law some whisky to drink before he asked if he could marry Nadra.

He misses his daughters (they are older) who are all still in Erbil. Their husbands were relatively wealthy so could just about afford to stay there. His sons are more than just sons – they are his friends too.

He is excited to learn English and already recognizes some words.

Moayed tells us it is a real joy to have us visit- the only other people they see are Raed and people at Raed's church.

We ask about prayer requests: he asks for the process with UN to be speeded up. Mukelos went to bed one night around midnight and at 1 pm he looked to be dead. He had a seizure caused by a brain infection. We worked out with translations etc that it was meningitis. He was given expensive treatment and is now OK – but it cost their last \$2,800 of savings. Whilst in hospital they put their bible under his pillow.

---

### Weds PM



Haithem, Tamara, Farah (13) Fehmi (10) and Karam (8)

They are from Mosul – a big family – they lived with brothers etc. and had the same jobs. In 2003 they owned factories – quite big businesses – extremists threatened them and demanded 'taxes'. They felt it would be too dangerous for them to send their children to school. Then in 2005/6 Haithem was kidnapped for 3 days and had to pay a ransom to be freed. After release, the extremists still came to

their house and started shooting outside their door. Fortunately, nobody was injured.

The next day they left Mosul because their neighbours said it was too dangerous to stay. They went to the village of Bartella. They left everything behind, their home, furniture, the factory etc. They tried to start a new life in the village. Farah and Fehmi were still toddlers and Karam was born there. They felt safe enough for the children to start going to school.

In 2010, they managed to start a new company. They kept in touch with the folk in Mosul. A senior employee (a good guy – and Muslim) claimed he had rented the factory from the boss - if owned by a Christian it would have been taken. If Haithem had shut it down – the extremists would have looted it. So the business in Mosul carried on – but not like when he was there running it. The factory built machines for other factories.

Then in 2012, his brother who had also moved to the village had to go to Mosul to get certification for his new baby. He was kidnapped and his brand new car stolen. He was held for 70 days. The

ransom demanded was \$500,000. Haithem did not know if he was dead or alive. He paid the police, army, and everyone he could think of to search for his brother. On the 69<sup>th</sup> day, some terrorists were caught and arrested. So a deal was done – return the terrorist plus \$200k for the life of his brother. They had tortured him. They had beaten him over the head with the wooden cross he wore around his neck and burned his body too. He was sold from one gang to another and they tried to force him to change his faith. He was destroyed by it all. He applied for a visa to Jordan – but could only get out to Lebanon.

The family faced many threats over the years – but his father who passed away after the move to Bartella, had dedicated his whole life to build the factory, and the boys had started work there early – on the shop floor doing the hardest of tasks. He had also built up a chain of six garages that made lots of money. The extremists wrote an N on the house and the garages to identify it as belonging to a Christian and then cunningly called him using the phone from the factory office. (He would not answer calls if he did not recognise the number) “Hello Uncle Haithem “ started his employee – then the extremist took over and said that everything they had identified would be given back to him if he came back to Mosul and converted to Islam. They said they did not want to be unfair! It was not easy to walk away from all this, but they did.

Away from Mosul – in Bartella they started a new life – they managed to get a factory going and even had two cars – one being a smart black Land cruiser, which he proudly showed us on his phone. They also had several houses, a new one that they had moved into just 6 months previously. They did not know that the Kurdish forces would leave

September 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 ISIS started bombing the town. The journey to Erbil would normally take about 30 minutes by car. It took them 10 hours. They were lucky as they followed the retreating Kurdish forces who were pushing their way through the checkpoints and roadblocks.

When in Erbil, he had another call from ISIS – asking him to come back with his brothers – convert and it will all be given back to you.

Jordan was a shock, the family had grown used to comfort and wealth – they lived in a 300m house – each child had their own bedroom, Karam’s bed was a racing car and Fehmi’s room was like a fairy tale princess. Their two sons do not really understand that they cannot have anything they want – Haithem had to work very hard for his father in the factory and he really did not want that for his children.

A lawyer friend in Erbil contacted him and said that the family should put together a list of all the property and businesses that were taken from them – so that at some point in the future they just might be able to get some recompense or compensation. He called his brother in Lebanon to ask him to do it. A few days later, his brother called back and said that he could not do it – he was too upset by it all and why had Haithem asked him to do it. Haithem’s response was that he too could not do it – that is why he asked him.

In Iraq, the family had only really focused on making money. When they arrived in Erbil Haithem was seriously depressed, then they got to Jordan and from October to May, he was in a bad state. Then he started going to church and now he is able to talk openly with us. So it was only after they arrived in Jordan they came to understand what it means – ‘What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but then loses his soul’.

Their prayer requests: For speeding up of the UN IOM process: Their health: The needs of the people of Iraq.

---

## Thursday am

Affaf, Imas, Sabine, Riyam, Ruqia



Affaf (aged 27) was originally in Kuwait with her husband. As Iraqis they were treated badly and paid very poorly in comparison with others. She comes from a large family, 12 sisters and 2 brothers, her husband had a large family with sisters. Kuwaiti's would not permit intermarriage. So two of her brothers are married to her husband's sisters. Schooling in Kuwait was not free unless you were Kuwaiti, so as one of 12 girls, she never had any formal education.

Affaf is one of the 'people without'. She has no papers and no certification. As she had an Iraqi mother she and her husband went to Iraq from Kuwait. He left her to go the UK when it opened up opportunities for 'people without'. He has since abandoned her, marrying in the UK (because Affaf did not give him any sons) and has divorced her – although she has not asked for the papers as she was hoping to get to the UK, technically for re-union, and so would need him to go through the necessary process in the UK to enable this to happen. The British embassy seem to know nothing about him or his UK entry process for her to move matters along in Jordan.

She came to Jordan 6 months pregnant – desperately needing a doctor, as she was constantly bleeding. On the edge of death she was admitted and they gave her blood transfusions and the Christian doctor who was treating her, when he found out her position, paid for all her treatment. Her baby is just 1 now. She tried to do some cleaning work to support herself – but was very tired after looking after the children all day. Also on more than one occasion, men have tried to take advantage of her.

One day she went to Caritas – the NGO who helps refugees with health issues as one of the children were sick. Because she is a 'Person Without' even Caritas would not help her as she could not prove anything about herself. She burst into tears and had to leave the clinic. As she walked away a man approached her and give her contact details for Global Hope – saying that they would not turn her away. He was a Christian. Global Hope visited her around six months ago and helped her move to a slightly better place – her rent has been paid for by a sponsor for 6 months. She has also stopped trying to work, as she is afraid that she could be compromised and then put in prison and then there would be nobody to look after her children. She knows she needs to maintain her integrity for herself and the children.

Affaf was given a fridge and oven by an Emirati man, but when he left Jordan an Iraqi woman who used to visit her and help her from time to time came and took them from her. She did not know what to do – as she did not want to lose the help of this woman. The woman never came back

after that.

*Peter's comments: Affaf is gentle, quiet, has a lovely smile and tells her story without a hint of bitterness or anger. Her care for her girls is evident. But Affaf is also an extremely vulnerable person, used to abuse, without education or any form of personal or social support. As such she is an easy target for further abuse by unscrupulous people. Her living condition are extremely poor – her furniture has been picked up off the street when being thrown out by others, the only thing to sit on in her room is one old bed. She has the loan of a cooker with gas rings (the oven does not work) – but must give it back. Her needs are many, her life really does consist of making it through one day at a time. She needs nurturing, the love of a family, the support of community and the opportunity to blossom as a human being, with all that entails.*

---

## Visit 2: Selwa



Selwa is a single lady, who came to Jordan with her Mum and sister. She lives in a small apartment with no windows whatsoever – but opposite 3 churches which side by side on the hillside in the Marka region of Amman. (One Syrian orthodox, one Episcopal and one Evangelical – she attends the evangelical). Selwa is sick, she suffers constant bleeding and probably will need a hysterectomy. There is a medical charity which gives folk 28 JD – but that only covers a couple of blood tests – not an operation. Global Hope has a small and diminishing

emergency medical aid budget and good contacts with doctors in hospitals who also try to help.

Sadly Selwa is not married and the thought of a hysterectomy is tough to consider.

Selwa was in the church in Mosul when ISIS came. The last wedding to be held there. It was chaos and people did not know what was going on. The men were told to leave, stay and pay the tax, convert or die. They left for Qaraqosh and then on to Erbil and stayed there 1 week. One of her sisters managed to leave ,much earlier and was able to sell up everything and go with her 3 daughters to Sweden. Selwa and her family however had to leave everything behind, houses, cars and land.

Selwa qualified as a nurse – but never got to practice as her first job posting was in Kirkuk and the family would not let her go as they thought it too dangerous. They had planned to build on land next to her large house – but were waiting for her brothers to sort it out, now it will not happen.

When she arrived in Jordan she stayed in a church for 1 month – but then had to move into the little place she is in now.

Global Hope has access to a washing machine which will help her as there is none she can access.

---

### Visit 3:



Nebil, Riva and Lara (and granny!)

Nebil was attempting to get into Europe in 2014 for re-union with his brother. He obtained a 'dodgy' visa to get into Austria in January and travelled there with his brother in law and then made their way across Europe. He got into Holland but was arrested there. The police found his fingerprints in Poland so he was told he could either be sent there – or back to Iraq. He was taken in a blacked out car to the airport

and handed over to security who put him on a plane for Erbil.

Meanwhile Riva left Mosul with the extended family to Qaraqosh in June 2014. Nebil managed to meet up with them there. After 2 months or so ISIS attacked the village – two children were killed and the Kurdish soldiers abandoned their posts and ran – so they ran too. Even arriving at the checkpoint it took 10 hours to get through with Riva's father suffering from diabetes and heart problems.

They have complete the IOM interviews process and have got approval to go to Santiago in the USA – but the process could still take another year. Riva was a math's teacher in Iraq and he was a government employee. They consider themselves incredibly fortunate as a catholic aid agency is covering their rent for a year – but they have nothing for food, utilities or any other bills. Nebil would love to be doing something – but he is not allowed to work. Their daughter Lara is fortunate and is able to go to school.

---

### Thurs pm



Samma, Insam and Sermont and daughter Carmen – (aged 1 year 4 months),

The family came with their sister – but she has returned to Erbil as her father who could not travel to Jordan, has become sick.

Samma explains their story. On August 6<sup>th</sup> 2014 there was shelling onto their village outside Mosul, they thought it might be the usual hit and run process – but when shells started hitting houses and people were killed

they fled to Erbil. They had been there less than a month when they heard that the Kurds has gone back into the region – so the brothers went too. There was no power or water but things

seemed safe so they sent for the women and children.

On the black day of August 6<sup>th</sup> the family were sleeping on the roof when the shelling started. They made an immediate decision to send the women back to Erbil. The men stayed for a while – but shells killed local children and a couple of rockets landed very close to their home shattering the windows. At 11 o'clock, everyone started to leave. They got a message from their church leader that the Kurdish forces were pulling out and were surrendering the area.

They arrived in Erbil the next day and stayed in various churches, public spaces until a man came by, and saw that Insam was pregnant with just 2 months to go. He offered them the use of a shut up dirty old bakery. They cleaned it up and moved in for 4 months before getting to Jordan.

*(Carmen suddenly starts crying – she is not used to seeing anyone else in her home)*

Their rent was 200 JD per month, but the money they had saved has run out and they approached the property owner who agreed to reduce it to 150 JD. They have paid this month – but are now left with just faith to live on. They approached Caritas – but were refused, as they are not part of that church, (Catholic) and another priest who refused them too. They have never had to ask for money in their life and they find it very difficult.

*I noticed a table with a light over it and what appeared to be some craftwork going on – and asked about it.*

Samma then showed us some amazing little mosaic crosses made with tiny pieces of stone glued over olive wood. They cost him 4 JD in materials and he sells them for 7 JD. However, he has 10 or so on the table unsold – and he says he cannot make any more as he is unable to sell them.

*(We buy 7 immediately, then order and pay in advance for another 30 a couple of days later)*

Samma was a physics teacher and his brother worked in a soft drinks factory. Samma then show us a portfolio of the most amazing artwork he has done. All very large scale – exterior work on walls, panels and houses. Skilled and creative!

They too have had two interviews and are waiting for the next step in the process.

Prayer requests: for safety and their home here, for the future – for their father Yusuf and mother Muna and sister Miriam who has gone to help them in Erbil.

---

**Last visit with Global Hope:**



Raed, Affrah, Andre and Andra

This family lived in Baghdad and Raed worked in a factory assembling refrigerators – very busy, working hard and doing overtime. They had a large home there and owned a shop but the number of killings and kidnappings was frightening, so Raed sent Affrah and children to Mosul to stay with her family where they thought it was safer – with more Christians in the area. He stayed in Baghdad to sort out things there and planned to travel to meet up shortly. It took him 3 months to eventually find them again.

Before he could go, ISIS arrived in Mosul. Affrah was lucky to escape with her family to Erbil.

Initially they were in the Nineveh valley – sleeping in a school – hot and claustrophobic with 9 people living in a tiny space. They did not even have a fan. Some of the kids got sick.

When his wife and the family got to Erbil, they were there for a month and then got visas for Jordan. There were over 3,000 families in Erbil.

They are in a tiny space – there is no room for us all to sit and to take a photo with everyone it so we have to go outside. The rent is still 125 JD. They have had the first interview but are still awaiting the second, which has been postponed – but no new date given.

We ask for prayer requests: they ask for peace in the world first – then as an after thought for themselves too. Then they ask for blessing on the children. At this point Affrah busts out that her son Andre had a vision of Jesus. She tells the story that whilst at the school, she had taken him for a shower to cool him down. Afterwards as she was drying him with a towel she noticed he seemed to be swallowing. She asked him what he was doing. Andre said that Jesus had just come and given him a drink. 'Did you not see him mother?' He said. She asked Andre to describe him – he was dressed all in white with longish hair. Our translator is a little 'bemused' so interrupts Andre who is sitting on the floor absorbed toy cars and asks him if he saw Jesus and what he looked like. Andre confirms it. Affrah says she trusts that Jesus is holding her hand wherever they go and that not one step will be taken without him.

---

**Global Hope team:**

The team acknowledge that at times it can be very hard and tiring doing this work. Compassion fatigue is a very real danger. However when they have a team of folk like us with them, we encourage and energise them, we run and we get them to run again with us. It is not just GH who are encouraged; we bring real hope to the families. Every family we visited gave us the best hospitality they could find, sometimes a Turkish coffee or a tea, most often a glass of water. Every family thanked us profusely for coming and asked us not to forget them and to tell the world about their difficult situation. GH say that they learn from every visit, both from the families and from the team. We are making FAMILY across the world. The safest place is to be in God's will – and our place is here.