



KURDISTAN OF IRAQ

SPECIAL REPORT

OUR PRESENCE IN IRAQ & THE MIDDLE EAST

Back in 2004 the likelihood of planting a successful Mission to establish a foothold in Iraq seemed highly improbable if not impossible. A number of American & British civilian personnel had been captured and brutally murdered on camera by insurgents then broadcast world-wide on the internet. From the beginning there was a deliberate attempt by the media and opposition politics to manipulate public support for the war effort; sadly, it wasn't some much about the right or wrong of it as an obvious political power struggle between the parties, here and in Britain. From the beginning the action over there was cast as a "No Win" scenario and another "Vietnam." This had consequences in the region that are still playing out to this day. This mindset of unpopularity effected the Christian as well as the Secular world. Even in our own churches in those early days, I was confronted with the "*Got no time for Iraq*" mentality; which, I confess both troubled and disturbed me. For us the issue wasn't political, it was spiritual, an opportunity to take the Gospel into a part of the world that had been closed off for almost fifty years. Our success in Iraq wasn't the effort of majority support, it's the result of the faithful few churches and individuals that believed, sacrificed and stayed with us in what was a slow and sometimes frustrating and risky effort.

WISDOM IS JUSTIFIED BY HER CHILDREN!

I doubt that those who stood with us truly appreciate the dramatic impact they've had in what could arguably be called the hot zone of world conflict. Despite our reports most have no idea of how many lives they've touched or the impact they've had in the region.

*Kurdistan Regional Government states,
"Praise Chapel, Dohuk is the
Largest Protestant Church in N. Iraq."*

During those early years, I never even saw another "Born Again" Christian. I knew others were there, I sensed it; but they weren't visible and in those days there were no more than a handful of them; and they were hidden. I focused on working with the Muslim Kurds; staunch allies and friends, people whom I'd come to love, respect and admire.



There's a successful Church in N. Iraq today because of the invaluable support and help of these gracious and liberal hearted people.

Those were difficult days, there were no Banks to transfer funds through. A few times my resources were exhausted and resupply delayed by the difficulties of the time. It was these people who nourished and provided for me until relief would arrive. They protected me from those enemies who would have destroyed me on sight had they opportunity or access. They opened every door I'd need to succeed in their nation.

A NEW CULTURAL PHENOMENA IS UNFOLDING

Something new is happening in the region today, there's a new cultural phenomena is unfolding before our eyes in Iraq, Egypt and among the Syrians and others throughout the Middle East. *There's a weariness and shame over the excesses of radical Islam.* Many are sickened by the violence and devastation brought on by the radicals. They've seen their deception and depravity first hand. This has created a spiritual vacuum and an unprecedented spiritual hunger. Not all see it. To quote Pastor Layth Ibrahim . . .

“Most of the churches here are asleep and oblivious to this fact.”

Pastor Layth predicted this coming cultural shift years ago. Now it's here; we dare not miss the opportunity. There are *“Seasons of the Soul”* for nations and individuals; it's not sensationalism to state that these seasons may never come again;

*“THE HARVEST IS PAST, THE SUMMER IS ENDED,
AND WE ARE NOT SAVED.” - JEREMIAH 8:20*

Jesus wept over Jerusalem because they knew not the hour of their visitation; He knew the terrible consequences of their *“Missing it.”* Those consequences came upon that generation and have effected the course of history down to the present hour. Today, we can see these prophetic elements as we read the Bible, It's so obvious to us, as we read, how the people of that day missed them; yet we can be just as oblivious or cavalier about the Signs Of The Times meant to alert us today.



As Biblical Prophecy unfolds before our eyes, it's imperative to have correct

PROPHETIC PERSPECTIVE

Some Simple Things We Should Observe

Location: We need to know what time it is; our proximity within GOD'S prophetic timeline.

We need to know the Biblical location where these prophecies are to take place as the Prophets themselves understood them; not where they fit in our observation of current world affairs as we attempt to make them fit into our own eschatological model or that of others. There's an old adage; *“It's all about Location, Location, Location!”* Most would agree; we live in days of dynamic prophetic fulfillment. Yet caution is called for as we observe and interpret what we see or we could end up drawing wrong or counterproductive conclusions.

Expectation: We may not know the day or the hour of His return but we are warned to live cautiously, in the expectancy of His sudden imminent return. *“When you see these things begin to come to pass, know that the end is near. Look up! For your redemption draws near.”*

Problems: our time expectations can become distorted; we tend to want it NOW! If we don't get it when we want it, we tend to invalidate it then slack off and fail to maintain our lamps like the 5 foolish virgins. We fail to understand that prophecy is a complex unfolding; it doesn't all

happen overnight, it can, and usually does, take years to unfold because the LORD has His own strategic purpose in these times. Our expectations, if not met or flawed, can disappoint us. We can develop an unhealthy, “*Been there, done that.*” attitude of skepticism.



Prophecy in motion can be fluid, it can ebb and flow like a tide in its process; but when the time comes, it can smack history like an unseen meteor striking the earth.

Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth, and has long patience for it, until he has received the early and the latter rain. - James 5:7

Beware of Extremes of Response: There’s an episode told by commentators concerning the church at Thessalonica; at some point they heard that The LORD had come. Their response was to dress themselves in white garments and gather on their rooftops, crying and pleading for the LORD to come back for them. They feared they’d been left behind. Some scholars say this is the motive for Paul’s teaching to them concerning Christ’s return. We’re not to be sitting on the roof tops waiting for HIM, we’re commanded to occupy until HIS return. Nor can we allow somebody’s failed eschatological model or speculation to put us in the seat of the scornful, “*Where is the promise of His coming, all things remain the same since the days of the fathers.*”

A More Sure Word of Prophecy: We must understand it’s a process and we’re part of that process. In your patience, possess ye your souls. Soon, HE that shall come, will come.



THERE AND BACK

PLANTING A NEW CHURCH IN ZAKHO

Zakho straddles the Habour River near the Iraq/Turkey border. Back in 2004 it was my first home and operations base. I stayed there because Mohammed, my Kurdish Interpreter lived there with his family. Their house, *pictured above*, was my first home in N. Iraq. From here, Mohammed and I traveled throughout all of Kurdistan, from the Turkish border to the Iranian border on the other side. Ultimately, I switched my digs to the *Bazaaz Hotel* in downtown Zakho; I paid the princely sum of \$15 a day for my windowless concrete cubical. It had a small refrigerator, single bed (hard as a rock) a nightstand, shower and a Western Toilet which I regarded as my chief luxury. We only had power for two hours in the morning and two to three hours at night. My first three years were in Zakho then Mohammed and family moved to Duhok so I moved too.

In Duhok, I met Layth Ibrahim, a Free Methodist Pastor pioneering a successful church in his home which he'd leased and enlarged to accommodate his vision.



In him I knew I'd found a ministry I could partner with in Iraq. Later, he sent a couple he'd disciplined into Zakho to pioneer what will become a very successful Free Methodist Church.



Pam Howard and Pastor Donna Neville had just come in to minister for us at that time. Pam ministered in that small house church in Zakho as its first outside guest speaker. Her message touched two men and their families facing persecution in their village. They were threatened with expulsion from their homes and village for coming to the church. Pam ministered a word that broke through their fear and emboldened them *to stand up for Christ and be baptized;*

serious business in the Middle East! - From that service onward the church began to thrive. Zakho is growing rapidly. Another group of families from Zakho have been traveling all the way to Duhok to attend Praise Chapel there. In the Current economic climate it's difficult for these folks to come every Sunday and too expensive for Pastor Layth to provide transportation. When they can't make it to Duhok, Pastor Layth Live-streams the service to them via Facebook. This is a temporary solution.

These folks have been requesting a Praise Chapel in Zakho to attend; they're committed to work with us if we come; which is exactly what we intend to do. For me, this is like coming full circle and returning to where our work started ... I always planned that we would; and now Pastor Layth has seen the opportunity and has seized the moment.





OUR TEAM IN IRAQ

What & Whom You're Supporting When You Give

When I went to Iraq in 2004 it was just me. I needed very little equipment or furnishings. I'd hired Mohammed as my full time guide and interpreter, his vehicle and Son In Law as our driver. It was a bottom line budget and very efficient for a Mission like Iraq. Today our monthly budget includes support for two pastors and their families, two other couples in Egypt and me and my family.

THAT'S A PERSONNEL BURDEN AS BIG AS SOME LARGER CHURCHES!

Personnel Support is just one facet of the ministry that we have in the Middle East, There's Airfares, Ground Transportation, Projects. Equipment, Facilities and more. Yet, our monthly support base has remained basically the same as though it were only one missionary out there. It's not, we have a Team of competent men and women who are getting the job done in a very difficult and dangerous environment. I wish we could show you all their faces but we can't without compromising them to predatory forces who watch the Internet just as you do and would target them, and their families.

With ISIS gone and stability returning to Iraq our Middle Eastern Outreach Base in Duhok is once again the fully functional safe haven it was designed to be; to bring in Workers from other

not so safe Middle Eastern nations for training, equipping, encouragement and support. From the beginning this was our stated purpose and goal.

WE'RE SERIOUS ABOUT REACHING THE MIDDLE EAST!

Like any work vehicle, we can't run without fuel, like any expedition, we can go no further than our supply line permits. Missions and World Evangelism is not a "ONE SHOT WONDER" its a grueling ongoing struggle spanning generations. There are Laborers and Senders, without our Senders and their willingness to be Visionaries and Patrons of the Great Commission, the efforts abroad will simply die a slow death and disappear. World Missions needs your help, not platitudes or excuses. We have to Up the Ante if we want to succeed and that doesn't necessarily call for those who do give to give more, it calls for more to get involved on whatever level they can. If we all chip in together we'll see the fruit of our efforts in our lifetime, significant fruit.

WORLD MISSIONS NEEDS YOUR HELP TO SUCCEED

We have an immediate need right now

WE NEED TO RAISE **\$4000** FOR AIRFARES
TO BRING THE IBRAHIM'S FROM IRAQ TO OUR CONFERENCE IN SAN DIEGO.

THIS IS OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE TO OUR NEXT STEP IN OUR MIDDLE EASTERN STRATEGY. THIS IS JUST THE BOTTOM LINE FOR NOW, THERE'S MORE TO COME BUT I ASSURE YOU, IT WILL BE PRODUCTIVE.

We're on our countdown for Conference in October and you don't want to miss out on this opportunity to participate in something that is going to have a tangible impact this year in

IRAQ, EGYPT AND THE MIDDLE EAST

You can give through Praise Chapel Missions - PO Box 1769 - Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91729

or Donate Online through Jack Harris Ministries at: <https://jhmin.com>

Please Designate your Check or Online Donation "Middle East"

THANK YOU FOR YOUR VISION AND FAITHFULNESS!

Sincerely, Jack Harris