



Φιλοξενία



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A NEW LIFE

Nadir was born in a small city in Iran. In the mornings Nadir would study to be an auto mechanic, and in the evenings he attended high school. During his military service, he worked in forgeries making false documents, but he got into trouble for forging some papers for some friends, and he had to leave the country. From Turkey he phoned his father, who told him not to come back because a five-year jail sentence was waiting for him.

In Turkey, Nadir continued to forge documents and also started using drugs. One night, he was using heroin when the police raided the hotel where he was staying with several other Iranians. Nadir was arrested and, after 8 days in jail, prayed, "God, if I get out, I won't use drugs and I won't spend time with the Iranians who are bad, influences on me." The next day Nadir was released.



Nadir kept his promise. His time in prison had detoxified his body from the heroin, and when he was released, he could not find his former friends. He got a job doing heavy labor for 19 months cleaning machinery by hand because the owner couldn't afford cleaning chemicals. But the temptation to start forging again could not be resisted. Nadir made a passport for Germany.

Before he had a chance to use the passport, he met an Iranian named Abraham who wore a cross necklace.

Nadir asked the man if he were a Christian. He answered, "Yes," and told Nadir that he was attending an Iranian church in Istanbul. When Nadir asked him how he had changed his religion, he answered, "I don't know how. God changed me." He encouraged Nadir to read the Bible and to bring his questions to the pastor of the Iranian church. Nadir had a two-pack-a-day smoking habit, so he stayed up late the night before going to church, smoking and reading the New Testament, but he was not able to understand it. In the morning, he got up early to go to church, but as he looked in the mirror while shaving he thought in his heart that God is holy and so he should take a shower to cleanse himself. And suddenly the Bible made sense to him, and he believed it!

When Nadir walked into church that morning, a believer named John approached him and asked if he was a Christian. "Yes," answered Nadir. Had he been baptized? "Yes!" answered Nadir again, thinking of his morning shower after understanding the meaning of the Bible. "I was baptized in the house today." John looked at him strangely, but he and the pastor prayed for Nadir. They told him that he really ought to be baptized "again." Two months later he quit smoking, but was still not baptized.

Nadir wanted to use his false passport to leave for Germany, but the pastor told him, "God told us He wants you to go to Greece...go, pray, ask God."

Initially resistant to the idea, Nadir eventually agreed to go to Greece with Abraham. When they were unsuccessful crossing the border, they returned to Istanbul. "You had to come back because you still need to be baptized!" the pastor told Nadir, so he was baptized.

Successful this time, arriving in Athens with nothing, they slept in the park and began attending an international fellowship. Nadir met Ella there (a Philippino woman to whom he is now married), and she introduced him to HELPING HANDS volunteer Joel Scarborough.

Since then, Nadir has grown stronger in his faith and has been a faithful servant in the various programs here. He has been a house leader in our Nest ministry, he shares an evangelistic message at our soup kitchen each week, and he has co-led, and is currently the primary leader of, the **Persian Christian Fellowship in Athens**. Through his character, behavior, and use of his spiritual gifts we are seeing the kingdom of God advanced in him, and through him, for the glory of the Lord.

Myths About HELPING HANDS:

MYTH #2: *HELPING HANDS* is a foreign organization with a membership of only English-speaking foreigners where Greeks are not really an important part of the ministry.

The TRUTH: *HELPING HANDS* is a GREEK-registered charity made up of GREEKS and various internationals. The members of the Board of Directors are all GREEK nationals as well as the current Associate Director. Our cook is GREEK as well as other members. A few GREEK churches and individuals have been involved financially and by practically serving with us. **MORE GREEK INVOLVEMENT** is both desired and requested.

IMMEDIATE NEEDS

- **TOILETRIES (i.e., SOAP, RAZOR BLADES, SHAVING CREAM, SHAMPOO, ETC.)**

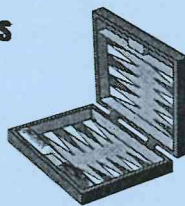


- **BLANKETS**

- **MEN'S SHOES AND SUMMER CLOTHING**



- **CHESS & BACKGAMMON GAMES**



- **TOWELS (BATH AND KITCHEN)**



- **FOOD ITEMS SUCH AS RICE, SUGAR, COOKING OIL, PASTA, BEANS, AND OTHER NON-PERISHABLES**

**MINISTRY FOCUS**

One of the most strategic ministries that God is using around the world today is "Language Ministry". Greece is no exception, and the Athens Refugee Center is a place where refugees are not only able to receive quality instruction in various language courses, but is also a place where strong platforms are built for sharing the Gospel. Curriculum that uses the Bible, loving concern emanating from the teachers, relationships that build trust, and opportunities to involve students in other ARC ministries all work together for us to combine proclamation and demonstration of the Gospel.

In recent months, the following classes have been offered by a variety of volunteers:

- English classes taught by a Greek
- Greek classes taught by Greeks
- English classes taught by Americans
- German classes taught by a Ukrainian
- English classes taught by a Kurd
- Italian classes taught by an American
- English classes taught by Iranians



Please continue to pray for this strategic and effective ministry that helps meet a practical need in the name of Jesus.



Eager students soaking up an English lesson

If you need someone to paint your house, work in your garden, wash your car, or any other odd job, please call us at 32-24-216 and leave a message on the answering machine.

Thank you for helping us share God's love in this way!!!