HOPE IN A TIME OF WAR

‘Life was beautiful, we had a home and our animals to look after,’ said Ahklas, a young mother at a camp in Northern Iraq for those who have fled from the Mosul offensive. ‘But when ISIS came to my village, we were so scared. At night I was not sleeping because I could hear the shots of weapons, and my children would wake up crying.’

Ahklas and her family escaped during the night with 16 people in their vehicle. They now live in a tent within the camp, with no possessions. ‘It was too difficult to gather any of our items or clothes – we had to leave quickly after we saw two families near us get killed in an attack. I could only think about saving my family,’ Ahklas explains.

More than 81,000 people have fled Mosul since the offensive began on 17 October 2016, many with just the clothes on their backs. Tearfund’s Betsy Baldwin said, ‘In the last two weeks the temperature in the camps has dropped to zero or -1ºC at night, yet thousands of people are arriving just in t-shirts, having left everything behind.’

Within the camp, Tearfund has set up a clothes shop so families can shop for their own needs and have warm clothing to wear for winter, paying with vouchers they were given. ‘We wanted to make people feel valued, so we created an environment which feels like a shop like, not just like another distribution centre. Shopping is a normal activity that you can’t usually do in a camp,’ said Tearfund’s Anna Chilvers.

‘These clothes from Tearfund will help so much, as winter is coming and we have nothing,’ said Ahklas, ‘I was able to get what I needed for my children, my husband and myself to be warm.’

Now Ahklas sleeps through the night and is grateful her family are safe. Yet, she lives in continual hope she may be able to return to her home and her village once more, and life will be beautiful again.

PLEASE PRAY

• This Christmastime, lift up families, such as Ahklas’, seeking refuge – pray that they would not be separated during displacements and that family units will remain strong.
• Pray that the people of Mosul will be able to leave the city safely to access aid when necessary, and will be protected from the violence taking place.

23 December 2016 One Voice weekly prayer email
tearfund.org/praying
• Pray for wisdom and the protection of Tearfund’s staff who have been working hard to respond to the humanitarian needs of those fleeing Mosul.

A NOTE FROM...

"When I asked Ahklas if there was anything she would like to say to our supporters, she said "Thank you, I am so grateful for you". Please pray for our work on the ground here, as we continue help families like Ahklas' prepare for the winter ahead."

Abigail Drane, Communications Coordinator for Tearfund

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS

Daniel Gatiso is married with two children and lives in the Shebedino district of Ethiopia. Daniel and his family only just got by with the money he earned as a labourer. So when he unexpectedly lost his eyesight in 2010, life quickly started to unravel.

The house that Daniel had built before he went blind began to collapse and, unable to fix their home, the family moved to Daniel’s brother’s house. Living in such close quarters and not being able to contribute to living costs was too much for Daniel’s wife. She took one child and moved back to her parents’ house while the other child remained with Daniel. The family remained separated like this for five years with no prospects of being reunited. That is until the self-help groups in the area decided to intervene.

COMING TOGETHER

Since 2002, self-help groups have enabled people to lift themselves out of poverty and find their own solutions to their problems. So when a cluster of self-help groups in Daniel’s district called Andinet (meaning unity) heard about Daniel’s plight, they knew they needed to help. Andinet is one of 11 Cluster Level Associations set up across Shebedino district with the help of Tearfund partner Kale Heywet Church. In response to Daniel’s situation, Andinet collected £287 along with contributions of food and construction materials. Group members also gave their time and skills to help build.

Today, Daniel and his family live together again in a brand new house. ‘I now feel complete and very happy,’ explains Daniel. ‘I started smiling again after such a long time. May God bless all who helped me and my family.’

PLEASE PRAY

• Praise God for the difference that the Andinet self-help groups have made to Daniel’s life and for the kindness of others.
• Pray for continued blessings on Daniel and his family as they piece life back together again.
• Give thanks for the work of self-help groups in Ethiopia and across the developing world – that they would continue to grow in strength and number.
A BURDEN LIFTED

Mamun Sheikh had been a popular and bright student in his village of Bohorpur in Rajbari district, Bangladesh. Like many boys his age, he dreamed of playing football for his country. Then, at the age of 13, he contracted a muscle-wasting disease.

‘Gradually the lower part of my body paralysed,’ describes Mamun. ‘I could not walk and stopped going to school. Most of the time, I lay down on the bed and felt useless.’ Seeing his father and two brothers work hard all day as labourers and not being able to help hit Mamun hard. ‘My family suffered financially because of my disability. I became a burden,’ reflects Mamun. ‘Many times, I cried and attempted to commit suicide, but I couldn’t. I became hopeless and had no dream in my life.’

SETTING UP SHOP
Thankfully for Mamun, Tearfund partner Baptist Aid visited his village and spotted him lying under a tree. Baptist Aid arranged with the Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC) for Mamun to attend livelihood training. The WDMC also donated £20 – which Mamun’s father matched – for Mamun to set up a grocery shop. Mamun made £15 profit in the first month. One of Mamun’s proudest moments was handing over this profit to his father. ‘I feel proud by doing something and supporting my family,’ says Mamun. ‘I am so grateful to Baptist Aid and WDMC. They gave me new life and a new hope.’

PASS IT ON
Now Mamun is passing this blessing on. ‘I encourage my disabled younger sister to assist me in my shop so that she can increase her skills,’ explains Mamun. ‘I also attend WDMC meetings and encourage other disabled people. My dream is that all disabled people in my community are no more burdens.’

PLEASE PRAY
• Give thanks for the success of Mamun’s business and the positive impact this is having on his family.
• Ask that God would bring a change in attitude towards people with disabilities in Bangladesh.
• Give thanks to the work of Baptist Aid and pray that they would continue to bring life and hope to many more people with disabilities.

PRAYER POINTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

✔️ Praise God that, despite difficult circumstances, we have been able to provide individuals and households in the Central African Republic with clean water, seeds, tools and training. Pray for our ongoing work as we continue to help those in need.

✔️ Continue to lift up the ongoing crisis in Yemen – pray for peace and a sound resolution; and that all those suffering will be able to receive the help they so desperately need.
Continue to pray for Tearfund staff/CRUDAN (partner) responding in Northeast Nigeria. Ask that God will fill them anew and give them strength. Pray that the team will continue to work together as one body, encouraging and sustaining one another.