

HOPE IN HARD PLACES

HOPE PRAYER TEAM

FEBRUARY 2015



PATRICIA MOUAMAR/WORLD VISION

Pray for Syria

Ali* works 10 hours a day, forfeiting his education, to provide for himself and his brother and mother in a foreign land.

"It is simple: If I don't work, I cannot survive," says the 14-year-old Syrian who fled to Lebanon with his family to escape growing conflict.

He works for a man who owns three businesses, including a library. Ali's small pleasure is reading books he borrows from the library at night.

"I read so that I don't forget what I learned the last nine years of my life in Syria," he says. "I refuse to forget what I learned over the years."

But, unlike most children, reading doesn't inspire aspirations for young Ali. He says, "I may die tomorrow, or the day after. I can't dream of the future."

Sadly, Ali shares the sentiments of many Syrians affected by the war, which started in March

2011. More than 7.6 million people are internally displaced within Syria, and more than 3.8 million have fled to neighboring countries, primarily Jordan and Lebanon.

Syrians desperately hope for peace in their country, and refugees are simply trying to survive an extremely harsh winter. Please join us this month in praying for the people of Syria as they enter their fifth year of war and displacement.

*"Do not mistreat
or oppress a foreigner,
for you were foreigners
in Egypt."*

— Exodus 22:21

*Name changed for identity protection.

Content and design by Content Curation, WVUS.

To receive the Hope Prayer Team email in your inbox each month, sign up at worldvision.org/prayerteam.

PRAY for education for Syrian children.



LAUREN FISHER/WORLD VISION

Obida's family fled Syria three years ago. The 11-year-old says, "They shot my teacher. When we were leaving Syria, there was so much bombing all around. My school was bombed. A lot of my friends died." His family now lives in Jordan, and he can't attend formal school because his parents can't afford the transportation costs. Obida is well behind where he should be in school, so he attends a World Vision remedial class several times a week to help him catch up. Many refugee families can't afford rent, let alone school fees, uniforms, and books. Meanwhile, at least 3 million children in Syria can't attend class because schools are in ruins, teachers are missing or deceased, and security is a concern. The education of an entire generation of Syrians is at risk.

Lord, our hearts ache for these little ones who can't go to school. Provide resources to refugee families in miraculous ways so children can get an education. For those in Syrian schools, place Your hand of protection over them as they try to learn. And maintain the will and plans of adults who are working to help educate Syrian children inside the nation and elsewhere.

PRAY for children's protection.



ELIAS ABU ATA/WORLD VISION

Syrian children face many safety and wellness issues. They're especially susceptible to malnutrition, dehydration, and diarrheal diseases. Because of the Syrian health system's deterioration, many have not been immunized or kept current on vaccinations, and outbreaks of measles and polio are common both in Syria and in refugee camps. Due to the nature of living in chaotic, overcrowded, and unfamiliar situations, children also are more vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation. Many children like Ali must work, which leaves them open to many dangers. Without income, parents may marry their daughters off as young as 13. World Vision operates Child-Friendly Spaces in Lebanon and Jordan. The spaces provide a safe place for children to learn, play, and process the emotions of what they have experienced. And World Vision staff members don't hesitate to visit parents if their children don't show up, providing accountability to ensure that kids are safe.

Jesus, You love the little children. Each Syrian child is precious to You. Protect their little bodies from dangerous diseases, and bring healing to those already sick. Keep away predatory adults who are looking to harm or profit from them. Bring loving adults to watch and nurture them as they strive to survive the harsh realities in which they live.

PRAY for life-saving assistance.



NICK RALPH/WORLD VISION

Many Syrians lived comfortable, middle-class lives before they left. But when families like Obida's flee in the middle of bombings and other violence, they don't have the luxury of taking all their possessions. They arrive at refugee camps lacking clothes, shoes, food, water, toiletries, blankets, and even their government-issued identification papers, which makes it even more challenging to get assistance. They have nothing to help them survive. Many still have family in Syria and won't apply for help out of fear of retribution against their family still home. Due to the influx of refugees, rents are expensive and jobs hard to come by in Lebanon and Jordan. World Vision and other humanitarian organizations help by providing personal and household supplies, tents, hygiene kits, food, clean water, and sanitation facilities. But the needs outstrip the funds.

God, You are the Great Provider. You see Syrians' needs with a tender heart. Just as you sustained the Israelites in the desert and fed the 5,000 with just a few loaves and fish, bring the Syrians exactly what they need each day to survive. Comfort them as they struggle, and nourish their souls with renewed hope each morning.