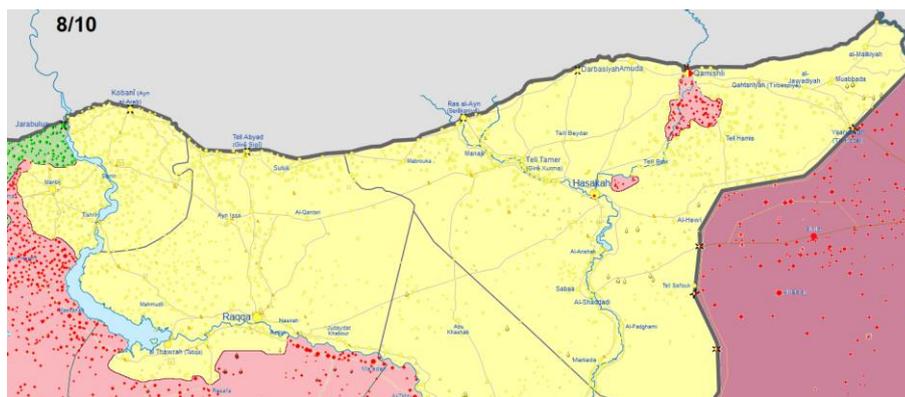


Monday 25th November

Turkey's recent invasion of Syria

At the time of writing, Turkey has recently invaded Syria after the US announced a sudden and unexpected withdrawal of its troops from the north. The US troops had been supporting the Kurdish fighters, who have been allies in the fight against the Islamic State. In its offensive, Turkey has seized a 75-mile long strip of land in Syria along almost the whole border from the Euphrates to the Iraqi border. This was part of its attempt to create a 20 mile deep 'safe zone' to resettle up to two million refugees currently in Turkey and to remove the Kurdish fighters there who the Turkish President Erdogan sees as terrorists.



Map of Northern Syria

Turkey had agreed to a US request for a ceasefire for 5 days from Friday 18th October until Tuesday 22nd October, as long as Kurdish fighters left the Turkish border area in northeast Syria. Many had already fled. The deal was just set to end and Turkey was going to relaunch its offensive, when Turkey and Russia announced a new deal.

Under this deal, Russia has agreed to allow Turkish troops to remain in the area they have taken and retain sole control. Kurdish fighters were given 6 days from Wednesday 23rd October to leave the safe zone. Russian and Syrian forces moved in immediately to oversee the Kurdish withdrawal. The deal also sets out plans for joint Turkish-Russian patrols along the border from 30th October to ensure peace in the area and an end to the fighting.

The UN says more than 176,000 people, including almost 80,000 children, have been displaced in the two weeks since the fighting began in north-east Syria, which is home to some 3 million people.

- Let's pray for God's mercy on this region and for good to come out of this crisis; that there will be a way to bring healing, forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Pray for believers on the ground to find ways to speak life and hope in this desperate situation, where the people of Syria have been at war for over 8 years.
- Pray for President Erdogan, that he would desire to live at peace with and be particularly merciful towards Kurds and Syrian refugees living in and around Turkey's borders.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019_Turkish_offensive_into_north-eastern_Syria
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/cx1m7zg0w5zt/syria>

Tuesday 26th November

Turkey today **Pop: 80 million** **Muslim: 99%**

Turkey is often described as being at a crossroads - between Europe and Asia, between West and East, between developed and developing.

Within Turkey, society is polarised as never before. Political, religious and ethnic identities are causing strife and deep-seated anger. There is a hopelessness that can be seen in peoples' eyes.

Over the last 18 months, the economic situation there has deteriorated significantly: the currency has lost a quarter of its value, inflation is running at over 20%, and unemployment is high. The price of many basic products is rising and people are finding it harder to make ends meet. It is fairly common for companies there simply not to pay their workers if they are short of money.

In a shocking turn of events earlier this year, opposition mayors were recently elected in Ankara and Istanbul – Turkey's political and economic centres. President Erdogan disputed the results of the election in Istanbul and the election was rerun. The opposition mayor, Mr Imamoglu, won by an even larger margin after the second vote. In recent years Kurds and Christians have spoken about feeling more oppressed, as the country has begun to move away from its traditional secular identity and more towards a religious one.

Turkey remains one of the most beautiful countries in the world, with warm, hospitable people, each of whom has been created in the likeness of God and whom God is longing to make His child.

You can watch a video clip about Turkey from Prayercast and read more [here](#)

- Pray that the rulers in Turkey would be wise and honest and for wisdom and righteousness to grow in their hearts.
- Pray for the rich and powerful to care for those who depend on them and for companies to pay their workers what they have rightfully earned.
- Pray for wise leadership to peacefully navigate tensions between nationalists, radical Islamists and Kurds.
- Ask for whole families and communities to respond to the Father drawing them to Himself.

Sources of some material: <https://besbin.net/> and <https://www.prayercast.com/turkey.html>

Wednesday 27th November

Persecution of believers

Even though it was one of the earliest mission fields and home to many New Testament churches, hostility and persecution of believers is very prevalent in Turkey. As a secular state, the Turkish government does not have laws against conversion or proselytism. However, it is culturally accepted that to be a Turk, one must be Muslim, even if nominally so. Friends and family members can make

life difficult. Muslim extremists, government intimidation and family pressure discourage many from coming to Christ and there is a deep national resentment towards Christianity, making outreach more difficult.

Fear inhibits new believers from sharing their faith and stunts the growth of the church among their people. Fear also prevents disillusioned Muslims from actively pursuing a life of faith in Christ.

In September this year, Mission Network News reported on the entry ban and deportation of Christians. A worker in Turkey recently informed us that an organisation to which most of the locally-run churches belong had been labelled by the government as a national security risk. This probably led to the expulsion of various foreigners in recent months who were helping to lead such churches.

Even in the midst of persecution, God still stands, and He is calling out to His people in Turkey to accept the love and peace that only comes from Him. Even if the ground seems hard, we know that God can soften even the hardest soil! And so we pray for the 99% there that have never heard the gospel.

- Pray for the Turkish Church, that believers remain bold in their faith and for the gospel to advance in power amid increased hostilities and persecution.
- Pray for the foreign gospel workers who have been expelled, that any injustice in this situation will be overturned and that righteousness will be done.
- Please pray for the Turkish authorities, that they wouldn't see foreign Christians as being enemies of the country, as threats to national security, but instead, that they would recognise them as being a blessing in the land.

Sources: <https://www.prayercast.com/turkey.html>

https://www.mnnonline.org/news/three-things-you-need-to-know-about-turkey-and-its-christians/?utm_source=MNN+Weekly+Missions+Prayer+Requests&utm_campaign=59e13531c2-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_TEST&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e13bef42a6-59e13531c2-84402651

Thursday 28th November

Recent Prayer Conference in Turkey

Earlier this year, I went to a prayer conference in Turkey, where many believers from different countries had gathered to pray and intercede for the salvation of Muslims across the world. During the conference, about 80 of us from different organisations met for a time of focussed prayer for Turkey.

The leaders of the prayer-time shared that they felt this was a time of revival for this country. Workers there had spent many years without seeing any fruit, but felt things were changing. We proclaimed that "those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy" (Ps 126:5). It was so encouraging to hear that the church is strong and growing. Believers are emerging in different towns across the country. The prayer now is for local believers who will reach out to their own.

We heard a testimony from a local believer and her assistant. She had spent an hour and a half telling a local man about Jesus. He wrestled with what he heard and then chose to accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour. The Holy Spirit really impacted him. He works with 900 people and every break he would tell someone about Jesus. Although such a new believer, he is walking closely with the Lord.

We put seeds on a map of Turkey and believed for new shoots to burst forth. We prayed for rain to water the seeds so that a lush harvest would cover the country. We asked for workers for every strategic city, town and village.

We joined together to sing the worship song Spirit Break Out. Listen to it [here](#) and pray.

- Pray for God's Spirit to break out over Turkey and over every city, town and village so that we would see revival and God's kingdom established in Turkey.
- Pray that workers continue to be encouraged and stand strong, even when they don't see the fruit of all their labours. Let's ask God to add to their numbers.
- There is a Christian TV station in Istanbul. Let's pray that the programmes are seen by many local people and that they are curious to watch some of the content and learn more about Jesus.

Friday 29th November

A message from a new field worker in Turkey

Recently a field worker has gone with Frontiers to Turkey. We praise God that she was able to go and that prayers for more workers are being answered. This is her story from the field:

"During my first few weeks here, I found myself reading over and over how the Word became flesh. I read of how Jesus grew from a helpless, vulnerable baby to a boy, a youth, becoming a man. There was no speeding up the process; it took time, time to grow to depend on and trust in the Father and see His care. In many ways, I have to start again as I learn a new language and adjust to a new culture.

My language lessons are going well. It's hard work, but my language teacher and I laugh a lot. This week I began speaking and we were both amazed to find I can produce sentences! A precious moment this month was when I walked into a shop and the owner welcomed me by name. As I walked down my street this week, some people that I pass each day greeted me with smiles. Not everyone is friendly though; some are very suspicious of me, wondering what this foreigner is doing here.

Through my prayer and worship times the Lord meets with me, sustaining me and guiding me. He reminds me why I am here and of the promises He has given me for this land. Right now, fulfilment seems a long way off, but He is with me in the mundane as much as He is in the miraculous. I know this time is also a time for preparing the ground in prayer, building Godly strongholds in this place, bringing His presence here. I remember months of praying as I looked at this land on the map on the wall and 'told' it "I am coming to you!" because I believed that is what He had said. Now here I am, just as He said. He is still speaking, there is more to come."

- Pray for our worker as she settles into the life God has called her to in Turkey; that while a stranger in a foreign land, it will soon feel like home.
- She has long had a heart for Turkey and its people and bringing the message of God's love to them. Pray for her to build those right relationships and have meaningful conversations that encourage her and bring people into God's kingdom.
- Pray for Muslims to be attracted to Jesus through knowing her, as she seeks to model her Lord and Saviour.

Saturday 30th November

Hope for Turkey

Just as we read of a worker's hope for this country yesterday, so today we hear from another worker in Turkey who shared the following encouraging story:

"Sometimes when reading familiar passages, we experience words popping off the page which grab our attention! Recently 'fruitful and prolific' caught mine.

"But the Israelites were fruitful and prolific; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them." Exodus 1:7

Other Bible translations for 'prolific' use 'exceedingly fruitful', 'increased abundantly' and 'increased greatly'.

In Genesis 32:13 it says: *"Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'"*

Abraham, Isaac and Israel didn't physically see the land full of their descendants, yet in Hebrews 11:1-2 the ancients were commended for their faith, which was the confidence in what they hoped for and the assurance of what they did not see.

We can pray in confidence for fruitful and prolific movements to Jesus Christ in Turkey among each people group, local and refugee; for the Father to multiply and grow them to be exceedingly strong and for the land to be filled! We can exercise faith for what we do not yet see but for what we believe is God's will.

People in Turkey are coming into the Kingdom of God. Imagine a crowd of people worshipping and rejoicing before the throne of God.

Listen to this beautiful worship song by Danny Gokey - Haven't Seen It Yet:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qe47sUtewa4>

- The song declares that "God is moving with a love so deep, Hallelujah for the victory. Good things are coming even when we can't see it." Let's pray that although we can't see the victory yet, good things are coming for Turkey because God is moving and there will be crowds of people worshipping Him.

- Jesus, we ask you to draw your followers' families into the Father's eternal kingdom. Do the same for their offspring and continue it so they number as the stars of heaven! Let us be hopeful and assured of what we don't see yet but believe is coming!