

## **“After all that had happened”**

**By Pastor Salam Samuel Hanna**

It is 4:15 a.m. on Monday, February 6, 2023, Syrian survivors of 12 years of war who chose to stay and stuck in their besieged country, were in the apex of their sleep. They lie down on their furniture and put piles of blankets over them from what they had left from before the war and what they got from the help of the philanthropists. It is frosty, and there is no difference between the heat inside and outside the houses. Everything is either too cold or extremely cold with the absence of most heaters and their prices rising. And no one can pull their hand out from under the blanket for fear of freezing. Some of them slept with severity, most slept with empty stomach.

Lightning strikes the earth, and thunder shakes the ears. Whereas rain pours down abundantly to quench a land that is thirsty for everything good. Two minutes separates everyone from the unknown. Some of the unfortunate, do not know that the spirit will travel beyond the boundaries of time and place while his body will be carried back to its origin in the soil (Adam). And some will miraculously survive with physical injuries, but the majority will survive with a deep psychological trauma that can take months and years to heal from.

The clock moved around 4:17 and the earth began to tremble from the north, from Turkey – as it did in a different way 12 years ago – and began to move with it the pseudo-civilization that man built and dedicated his life for its glory. Everyone woke up with fear and panic. And they lost their most precious thing or carried it with them and left their homes, children, precious bags and papers. All for a moment are equal, rich and poor, educated and little knowledge. Everyone is homeless on the street in freezing rain. Looks like we forgot to pray that we didn't run away in winter!! (Matthew 24:20)

In the sleep clothes, everyone came out with yellowish faces, hearts beating fast, shivering and cold at the sides, rushing breaths, dry mouths, confused eyes, unbelievable minds, crying and screaming children. And no one knows what to do. But what the mind could not do, the instinct to survive did. So, the decision of instinct was to flee and get away from an artificial civilization engulfed by human corruption and from the towers of Babylon and their greatness and return to the wilderness where John the Baptist lived and asked, "in the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord." In the state of innocence, people realized that everything is void and caught the wind. Survival is for Allah alone and for those who are with Allah.

In the wilderness, where Jesus began His messages and experiences, and in the place of emptiness where he used to pray, everyone knew that there was the greatest likelihood that no harm would be done to us, even if the earth shook us and the mountains turned over into the sea from the horror of collision.

After years of war, crises, siege, sanctions, coronavirus, moments of earthquake, and when nothing is convincing and right, on the earth of the universe, and after all that has happened and is happening, we repeat with the heirs of Lamentations 3:

*Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed,  
for his compassions never fail.*

*They are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.  
I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion;  
therefore I will wait for him."  
The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him,  
to the one who seeks him;  
it is good to wait quietly  
for the salvation of the Lord.  
It is good for a man to bear the yoke  
while he is young.  
Let him sit alone in silence,  
for the Lord has laid it on him.  
Let him bury his face in the dust—  
there may yet be hope.*

And always thank God...