

## FOUAD HOUSE BURNED

Dear friend,

Before going to Syria, on the 16<sup>th</sup> June, I have to explain to you our pitiful situation there...

During two years and eight months, our city, Nabek, remained far away from civilian war and any kind of manifestation or protest... For your information Nabek is in between Damascus & Homs, at 80 Km far from both sides, in the Kalamoun Mountains. The inhabitants are about 70.000 (69.000 Sunnites & 1.000 Christians) living friendly in peace and reciprocal respect

On about the 25.11.2013, the Syrian rebels with armed groups from Arab countries and Asian nations, like tceenis, Azeri, Afghanis, Turkmens... and even from European Union, have been expelled away from neighboring cities of Nabek, they came and occupied the center of the town, especially the residential Christian areas, using the civilians as human shields. They blocked the high-way between Damascus and the rest of the north Syria and destroyed the city, Churches, Mosques, buildings and State's infrastructure... After almost one month of fighting, our city has been liberated and the vivant rebels escaped to other region.

Our house has been occupied by the terrorists, stolen, sacked and burned... Four to five hours of fire, without flowing water or firemen, our home of 330 square meters has been completely destroyed... More than 3000 books, manuscripts and official documents have been burned, with approximately 600 books of my daughter. Our family archives, our properties documents and our albums became ashes and sands, my collection of Syrian/Aramaic & Byzantine icons, watches, pipes, Chinese and Iranian carpets are completely lost (stolen or burned, I don't know). I prefer not to go on detailing all what we lost...

You know, dear friend, that I respect the Islam, the Prophet & the teaching of the Holy Koran, but I cannot accept the Fatwas of a lot of Sheikhs, Ulemas & Exegetes who authorize the so called Jihadists to kill, to destroy, to steal, to burn... religious houses, civilian building, State infrastructures. I cannot understand a Moslem Jihadist who cut the head of the Christian, only because he is Christian... I cannot understand a Moslem Jihadist who burns a Christian home, who has in the middle of his Library (mine) the Allahu Akbar invocation and the Sourat 96 Iqra' in the name of your God.

I am 80 years old... At this age it is too late to change my convictions, but I have to confess that I am confused about so many thinks... The Gospel teaches me that I have to conquest the Paradise loving my neighbor, Moslem or Christian, black or white, man or woman.

For this reason, I can't understand the conviction of the Jihadist who says Allahu Akbar, while he cut the head of a Christian, a Shiite, an Alawite, or any other human, in order to conquest the Paradise.

The month of December 2013 has been the most dramatic one, during all my life... I confess that I cried a lot, silently, for the personal library I lost and for my daughter library that lost all

her books, her albums, her school attestations and her Diplomas... We spent at Paris, near my daughter's family, quite two months... I went out of home 4 or 5 times only when the child obliged me to go with them outside.

So, we are going in Syria on the 16<sup>th</sup> of this month, in order to see what to do there and to decide about what we still have... I will go to the sepulcher of my father and my ancestors to pray for their souls and to ask them to advice me what to do : turn back to Syria or stay in Lugano near my daughter family, far away from the problems of the Middle-East countries.

Our return ticket is for the 12<sup>th</sup> on July... After our return, I will write about your question concerning the sacrifice in the Christian religion, our intention of contacting your friends here the Eitouni family and the result of our Syrian trip...

In Syria, I hope to be able to activate my contacts by Internet...

Hoping you all the best please, dear friend, accept my deep excuses with my best wishes.

Fouad A. Kassis