**EMEK SHOLOM HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL CEMETERY – Kristallnacht Memorial Service**

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*“Never Again – What We can Do Today To Stop Genocide”*

**Genocide in Darfur**

Genocide has been occurring for years in Darfur, Sudan, and the death toll continues to rise without signs of stopping. The two ethnic groups in the region can generalized into African farmers and Arab nomads, and these groups blamed each other for the suffering that came to them because of the drought (in the 1980s) and famine occurring in Darfur. Around the same time, General Omar Bashir took control of Sudan by military coup, which further increased tensions in the area. General Bashir, becoming President Bashir, abolished local councils that had settled the issues and arguments that appeared because of the need for land to reach food and water during the famine.

Darfur was a powder keg that was ignited in 2003 when two Darfuri rebel movements attacked the Sudanese government. The movements, the Sudan Liberation army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), accused the government of favoring Arabs and oppressing Africans as well as accusing the government of marginalizing Darfur. The government reacted harshly to this uprising and unleashed armed Arab militias, known as the Janjaweed, or “devils on horseback,” to plunder villages. The Janjaweed would ride in after air raids ordered by the government and attack the remnant of the village. The occupants would be killed, raped, or abducted, depending on their gender and ethnicity, by the Janjaweed. With their purpose to assault Black Africans in Darfur who were suspected to be supporting the rebels, the Janjaweed demolished over 400 villages, being described as “ferocious gun-wielding men.”

Peace talks tentatively began in 2005, but limited participation and disagreements about objectives hindered these talks. This is illustrated when President Bashir declared an end to the war and announced the release of 57 rebels; however, the very next day, the SLA accused the Sudanese government of attacking it. The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for President Bashir a few years later for war crimes and crimes against humanity, holding him responsible for the massacres in Darfur. President Bashir responded by expelling 13 of the largest international aid organizations from Sudan and disassembling 3 native aid organizations as well. In 2010, the ICC issued a second arrest warrant for Bashir, this warrant charging him with three counts of genocide.

The misery in Darfur has not eased and Bashir has just recently declared his continuing genocidal intentions. The Janjaweed persist to purge Black Africans without showing remorse. The United States government interviewed refugees from Darfur and discovered that over 60% of the people interviewed witnessed the murder of a family member and 80% witnessed the destruction of a village. El Fadel Arbab, a survivor of the genocide in Darfur, wrote an article in which he expressed his confusion and weariness toward the genocide. He wrote, “After the Holocaust happened, the world leaders promised ‘never again.’ But more genocides have taken place. World leaders must make it stop. What I have seen is enough.”

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**Alleviate the Situation in Dafur**

Everyone can help, in their own way, to assuage the situation in Darfur. This area in Sudan is at the extermination stage in the genocide timeline, and the most practical action to take at this stage is armed intervention. The genocide is not as dire as it was when it first began, but it still continues and it is necessary that it is stopped. Writing to a government representative raises his or her awareness of the issue and, by word of mouth, raises the awareness of others in places of influence. In addition, helping the United States army by donating money or care is a welcome option to support the situation. Charities and funds have their information online, and they have information on their websites about ways to donate. The American Red Cross and Armed Forces Foundation both help those who have served during and after their service, and the programs have a location on their website where generous users can simply click a button to donate funds, which will be used to assist those injured or in need of help during their service in the army.

As a result of this genocide, about 300,000 people have been killed, there are about 2 million refugees, and approximately 4 million people are dependent upon the aid of organizations. In March 2009, a consequence from issuing an arrest warrant for President Bashir, the government of Sudan ejected 13 aid agencies from Darfur. The International Rescue Committee, Save the Children, Doctors Without Borders, and Care International were among the 13 organizations to be expelled from Darfur, programs that provided schools, health centers, and sanitation programs. Today, there are still many holes left in the services despite some services having been restored; specifically, aid that protects and treats women and girls from and after sexual assault is missing. The more funds these programs acquire, the more they can help the victims and refugees in Darfur and other areas of the world. The International Rescue Committee had a budget cut that forced it to reduce the education that it was providing to those in Darfur and reduce hygiene activities. Funds can be donated through the program’s website, and 92% of the donations go to assisting others. Share wealth, share kindness, and give a life by just taking a moment to make a contribution to a program giving assistance to those suffering on account of this genocide.

Moreover, knowledge is power, but knowledge also means understanding. Educating people oblivious to devastating incidents like this helps them recognize that not everyone is as fortunate as they are and help is needed. People are out there who would donate time and money to helping to stop genocide if they only knew that they could and how to go about doing it. It is simple to raise awareness for causes. Social networks are effective in spreading news. For instance, spreading a chain email message, making a Twitter page, a Facebook page, or an Instagram account, or creating a website are advantageous ways of spreading awareness of the genocide in Darfur. If more people are involved in the same movement, then more can be done to help said movement.

Summarily, simple steps can be taken to assist victims of such an unfortunate event. Charities and aid organizations can use any sum they are given and put it to a worthy cause. Sending a check to these groups is the most valuable way to help because cash donations enable them to put the money towards food, medicine, clothing, and other supplies. However, if there is no knowledge of these charities, then they cannot receive the funds they need to undertake the programs the people of Darfur need. We, the people, can help the ones who are suffering and in pain by taking action and supporting others who are working towards a beneficial cause.

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