

# Essay on the earthquake

[Environment](#), [Disaster](#)



It is an unforgettable story in my life. I was nine years old, and the huge earthquake happened. It was in 1999, Turkey. The earthquake took only forty seconds, but it was like forty hours, forty fear-filled, panic-strewn hours. No-one who was there will ever forget the story. It is a story which to this day hurts my feeling, haunts my dreams and follows me like an evil shadow every day. It was the day when my sister was born and the day when she died.

When I was nine years old we had guests into our house. The visitors were my uncle's family. They stayed with us until noon, arriving on 17th August, 1999. They left us, and their daughter stayed with us that night. The earthquake happened in the morning at around two or three o'clock. I was sleeping when it happened. It was the day when my sister was born and died. We were expecting a baby, but unfortunately she died. We had everything ready for her, her clothes, her room, whatever she needed, but the earthquake struck, and she passed away. Even though my sister passed away, we did not have time to experience our grief for her fully. We did not have time. We had to think ourselves. We had our own lives to save - callous though that may sound. We had to survive.

Anyway when I was sleeping, my father burst into my room and told me to leave the home - NOW! That very moment and to take nothing with me. I was half naked and embarrassed. But when I got outside and looked around all my neighbors were half-dressed like me. Some of them were completely naked, such was their rush to leave their homes behind. but I was missing somebody.

After staying at our street, bombarded by bits of falling masonry and flying bricks, we headed to a public park to be safe. Everybody left their homes and stayed in a safe place. In the morning sun was shining as normal, but the sky was red like blood. Communication was impossible: phones systems were down; the streets were impassable. We were so worried about our relatives. Finally, after hours of tense and anxious waiting we learned that everybody in my family was all right. Then we could relax - a little. But we still had no idea about what was really happening.

The government did not have ability or the resources to reach all the places to help people, because they were not expecting too. After a week passed, everybody went back to their homes and helped each others. After a while my family and some other families decided to go to Golcuk which is small town in Turkey and which was the epicenter of the earthquake - it had suffered the most damage. We took some stuff such as blankets and food.

When we got Golcuk, nothing could have prepared me for the scene I witnessed. Everywhere was destroyed; people were still buried under fallen buildings. People were trying to save lives with their own tools. When they heard some noise, however faint, they worked harder than usual. We worked there until noon; then, exhausted and faint with fear, we slept in our car like everyone else. The next day, we worked as hard as we could. While we were working, we discovered many corpses lying where the falling buildings had crushed them and their families. After we helped many people, we left Golcuk and got back to my town, Istanbul. When we got back we found out that my uncle's building was so damaged that the government closed it

because it was not safe. So they were homeless too, but they had money. They were lucky: they got a new house then and found some small happiness.

Most people were hopeless, homeless, unhappy, and they did not want to live any more - their entire families had been buried by the collapsing buildings. I think it was the biggest psychological problem in Turkey. Our government got places for homeless people and supported people who lost their families - as best they could. But how can you replace an entire family? After the earthquake it took years to be able relax and for most of our nation to sleep easily. Even now when we feel shaking, we don't know what to do, and we always remember that horrible day - the suffering, the sadness, the enormous loss of life.

In conclusion, I will never forget the disaster. The earthquake took the lives of a million people. It also took their family, their homes, their workplaces, and their livelihoods. It just left us upset, bereft and mourning families. It was the most horrible time that I lived in, and I also believe it was a warning from God. I was very young, and I was unsafe and vulnerable as all the children. Most of Turkey's population had no idea of what it meant to live through an earthquake, but we quickly learned what it was like. I hope that we will not live again through anything as terrifying and destructive as long as we live. It is a hard and terrifying lesson to have to learn.