

History of Anhil

Anhel- Village of figs between the valleys

The village Anhel was already populated before Christ. During thousands of years of history, it played an important part in the history of the Syriacs in Turabdin.

The village is named Anhel, because is situated on a hill and is surrounded by valleys. "Anhel" is derived from the Aramaic language and means: "Between the valleys". Nevertheless Anhel was also mentioned in different sources as Bet- Nahle, An- Nahl, Deborahaita, Anhill, Anhel and Enhil. After the foundation of Turkey the original name of the village was changed into Turkish language. So it was called "Yemişli", which means "village of figs". Anhel is famous for its great variety of fig-trees. You can see a lot of other villages of Turabdin if you are in Anhel, because the village lies on a hill: In the Southeast you can find the mountains of Izlo and in the East the mountains of Kardu (also called Cudi). In addition to that also the mountains next to Kfarburan and the fortress of Mardin, which lie in the North and West. Anhel is situated next to the street Midyat- Nusaybin about 12km away from Midyat and 30km away from Qamischli in Syria. Furthermore Anhel is surrounded by villages like Kafro Tahtayto, Barmunus, Kfarshoma (Karschaf), Sat, Daline and other villages of the Mhallami (Mhalmoye). It has got a great variety of fruit- trees like for instance pomegranate, figs, mulberries and almonds. At the same time, Anhel is famous for its vineyards and vine. The time of the foundation and the founder of the village are not known. But still there are different findings, which indicate a settlement, which refers deeply into the past. According to a legend, Christianity was brought into the village by the Saint Mar Eschaya of Aleppo. Anhel was often mentioned in religious sources. Many manuscripts from the Middle Ages survived the varied history of the region, among them also two sacred books from the 9. century. In the books of the land registry from the 16. century, Anhel was listed among the rich and Christian settlements. The number of inhabitants increased from 68 to 108 families between the years 1526- 1570. In the 17. century a Special Patriarch and a Maphrian came from Anhel and above that it was the diocesan town. But in 1821 a Maphrian coming from Anhel was killed by Kurds. Also many restorer of historical books and authors came from this village. Unfortunately, the Kurds robbed and burned Anhel in 1855 under the command of Massur Beg. In the course of this attack also three priests died. The Syrian writer of historical events, mentioned many scholars, authors, patriarchs, katholikois, bishops, kings and prominent men, who came from Anhel. In a history book about Turabdin and a monastery, called Mar Gabriel, it is said that bishop Simon of the Olives (+734) had built a church, called Saint Febronia, inside the town Nisibis (Nusaybin). But when he wanted to build another church near the first one, in honour of the martyr Mar Theodoros who had died in Nisibis, the building was destroyed by members of the church in the East. That is why Bishop Simon turned to King Georg (Jirjis) of Anhel and the whole Turabdin. He wanted the king to send him worker for the construction of the church called Mar Theodoros. King Georg belonged to the supporters of the council of Chalcedon (Kaldiköy/Istanbul). When Bishop Simon came to Anhel, a woman, called Pume (from Hasankeyf), was brought to him, because her head was bent. The bishop prayed for her and she was healed in the presence of the king. As soon as king Georg saw this miracle, which was performed by Bishop Simon, he also found the right faith and the face of the Bishop seemed to be like one of an angel. Immediately he wrote a letter to all his subordinates, in which he told them to help the Bishop with the construction of the church. Shortly after that, 300 workers went with him. Later on the King had built a chapel in honour of Saint Simon of the Olives, which still exists today. In these days people say that the chapel is situated in the house of Danho Kahya in Anhel. The village also has got a little piece of the holy cross and 6 relics of the Saints: Georg, Gabriel, Jakob of Edessa, Abraham of Kaschkar and Abay. These relics were brought to Anhel by the Katholiko Ablahad of Beth Kando. Referring to the story of the town Dara, king Anastas was the son of a farmer from Anhel. The Article was written by Sami Akcan, editor for the Newspaper Qenneshrin and translated into English by Silvia Bulut.