

### Jihad at Christmas



Muslims attacked an Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) Congregation at their Christmas Eve midnight service, killing the pastor and five worshippers. They then set fire to the church. This terrorist attack took place at Peri village near Potiskum, in Yobe state of Northern Nigeria. Yobe state is overwhelmingly Muslim, but Potiskum, the commercial hub of Yobe has a significant Christian minority. Peri is just 2km outside the city. On Christmas Eve, 6 people were murdered while gathering for worship at a Baptist church in Borno state, in Maiduguri.

### In the Name of Allah

On 1 December, radical Muslims raided the village of Chibok. Chanting "*Allah Akbar*", they burst into the homes of Christians and slit the throats of 10, including one pastor. International Christian Concern, calculates that more than 3,000 people have been murdered by the Boko Haram terrorist group in Northern Nigeria.

### Christianophobia

Rupert Shortt in his book, *Christianophobia: Faith Under Attack*, reports that the outbursts of violence in Northern Nigeria, in 2011, left more than 800 people dead, more than 300 churches razed to the ground and some 65,000 people displaced.

### Exterminating Christians in Iraq

In *Christianophobia: Faith Under Attack*, Shortt describes Iraq as a disaster for the Christian population of this "cultural and spiritual heartland of Christianity", where here less than 200,000 believers remain in this country where once Christians numbered 1 out of every 6 people in the population. Many churches have been desecrated and destroyed, along with their schools and orphanages. Bishops have been beheaded in their churches.

### Intolerance and Hypocrisy

*Christianophobia: Faith Under Attack* documents how Christians are being severely persecuted in countries which often have national constitutions enshrining religious freedom. The courts throughout the Middle East seldom support the constitutionally mandated rights of believers. If anyone was hoping that the Arab Spring would improve matters, they have been severely misinformed. Conditions throughout the Middle East are hostile for Christians and getting much worse.

### Not All Religions Are the Same

To those who claim that the problem is religion, Shortt responds: "*Good religion promotes conflict resolution; bad religion fosters discord.*"

It is quite clear from the almost 300 pages of

*Christianophobia*

that Islam is a religion which fosters discord and intolerance where its adherents form a majority.

### Sudan Arrests Ministers for Baptism of a Convert from Islam

Morning Star reports that the Sudanese government has arrested 2 priests of the Coptic Orthodox Church for baptizing a convert from Islam. Rev. Markus Anthony, a Sudanese citizen of Egyptian descent, based in El-Haj Yousif, in Northern Khartoum and Rev. Sarbion Hussein of the Moro tribe in the Nuba Mountains, were arrested by Sudanese security forces on 16 December.

### **Arab Convert Flees**

The Muslim convert to Christianity whose Baptism has led to the arrests of these two Coptic priests is Eman Abdel Shakoor, a Sudanese Arab. Eman Shakoor was a student from Khartoum Applied College. She converted to Christ two years ago, but remained secret in living out her faith. Recently she decided to make a public commitment through Baptism and was baptised by the two Coptic priests who are now in prison. Eman Shakoor attempted to flee Sudan, but on 22 December, she was stopped at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport by members of the Sudan Embassy in Ethiopia. Her fate is unknown at this time.

### **Travel Agent Arrested**

The Sudan government has also arrested the Khartoum travel agent who is accused of helping Shakoor to leave Sudan. The priests are being detained in an unknown location and their relatives have been denied visitation rights.

### **Arabisation and Islamisation in Sudan**

On 10 December, a church leader, Pastor Kung and his wife, Sune Kung were deported from Sudan. On 17 December, the Sudan government damaged an Africa Inland Church building in El-Haj Yousif in Northern Khartoum. On 19 December, the Sudan government refused to allow the Lutheran Church of Sudan to record their traditional Christmas message on national TV. The President of Sudan, Al Bashir, has stated that Sudan will adhere more exclusively to Islam and Arabic culture. President Omar Al-Bashir is wanted for crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court.

### **US Authorities Have Still Not Designated Boko Haram Terrorists**

The Christian Association of Nigerians has called for the US government to designate Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). According to US military commander in Africa, General Carter Ham, Boko Haram is receiving training, arms and financial support from Al-Qaida.

### **Churches Under Siege in Indonesia**

In Indonesia the police reported that they were heightening security at the 38,499 registered churches across the country during the Christmas season. Indonesia is the largest Muslim nation on earth. Indonesia was rocked by a series of co-ordinated bomb blasts at several churches nationwide on Christmas Eve in 2000. These attacks were attributed to Jemaah Islamiyah, led by Abu Bakar Bashir. Since then Indonesian police have taken extraordinary security measures to protect churches over the Christmas season.

### **Faith Flourishing Under Fire**

Despite severe persecution in 66 countries, and Christians being targeted in 131 countries worldwide, Bible-based, Evangelical Christianity is the fastest growing faith on the planet. *Mega Shift* documents that while liberal denominations are losing members, the Biblically inspired, born-again and Evangelistic churches are growing dramatically. Bible-believing Evangelicals are increasing by 8% a year.

### **Church Growth Under Fire**

Every day an average of 175,000 more Bible-believing Evangelicals are added to the Church. There are well over 707 million Bible-believing Christians who would describe themselves as born-again. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims have been converted to Christ in recent years. It

is this explosive growth of the Christian Church, in many cases at the expense of Islam, that has led to the vicious backlash by Muslim terrorists. There is a desperation that Islam is losing ground and so they are reacting in the only way that they know how, violently.

***"The desert tribes will bow before Him and His enemies will lick the dust... all kings will bow down to Him and all nations shall serve Him."*** Psalm 72:9-11

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See also:

[Persecution Explodes as Muslims Come to Christ](#)  
[Genocide in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan](#)  
[Pray for Christians Under Fire in Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia](#)  
[Urgent Call for Prayer for Christians Under Fire in Africa](#)  
[Sudan Government Destroys Churches and Attacks Bible College in Khartoum](#)  
[Christians Targeted in Nuba Mountains](#)  
[Churches Attacked in Tanzania](#)  
[Churches Bombed in Nigeria and Burned in Ethiopia](#)  
[Churches Attacked in Nigeria](#)  
[Praying for Justice](#)  
[Faith Under Fire in Sudan](#)