

President Buhari, Please Stop the Muslim Slaughter of Nigerian Christians

Babies are being hacked to death. Children kidnapped. Women raped and savaged. Young and old burned alive. Houses destroyed, livestock plundered. Muslim herdsman are massacring their Christian neighbors while the Nigerian media misreports and the Nigerian government refuses to act. Some even claim the government is complicit in these attacks.

President Buhari, as the watching, worldwide community, we appeal to you to act decisively and put an end to this horror. Right now, sir, many believe that there is blood on your hands. Please show the world that this is not true.

A Christian colleague texted me from Nigeria on June 25, "Did yesterday's killing of over 200 in plateau state make the news? Babies chopped to death. Charred bodies loaded into trucks and buried in mass graves. Many missing including my host's friend. Herdsman to blame. Weeping here."

I could only shake my head in sadness. Not a word about the slaughter in our media.

While these Nigerian Christians weep, the West remains in the dark.

Five days later, on June 30, I received an email Prof. Gerald McDermott, a respected educator and Anglican church leader. He sent me a series of his recent blog posts from Nigeria, where he has been ministering in recent days.

Here is a sampling of his blogs from Jos, a city in the Middle Belt of the country. These are posted here with the encouragement and support of Prof. McDermott.

June 25: "Jos has been the epicenter of conflict between the Islamic and Christian civilizations in Africa. Anglican Archbishop Ben Kwashi, revered by Christians and Muslims alike here, had his church burned a few years ago by Muslims. Thugs came to kill him but savaged his wife instead, leaving her near dead.

"Christians here complain that the government does not do enough to fight the terrorists, who are divided between Fulani and Boko Haram. The president of Nigeria is both Muslim and Fulani, so Christians here wonder if that is why the government does nothing. Many police and army officers, we are told, want to search aggressively for the bad guys but do not get permission from their superiors."

June 27: "The Christians in Jos live in fear. Last week terrorists targeted several villages just outside Jos. All were well-known as Christian villages. The houses were razed, crops destroyed, and people burned alive. Their charred corpses were heaped in piles of blackened bodies."

This is absolutely outrageous.

But it gets worse: "Christians here are incensed that the Nigerian president is telling the world that the explanation for this brutality is conflict between Fulani herdsman and farmers. As a Nigerian headline put it, 'Bukhari [the president] says 300 Fulani cows were stolen.' In other words, the Fulani herdsmen retaliated because their cows were stolen."

But reliable reports on the ground refute this. "The Fulani herdsman, who are Muslims, have lived in peace with their Christian neighbors for decades. Also, they cried out '*Allahu akbar* [Allah is great]!' as they swooped in upon these villages with death and terror.

"The real story, Christians tell me, is that Islamists from other countries (like Niger and possibly Saudi Arabia) have

radicalized previously-peaceful Muslim herdsmen. And the government, which is controlled by a Muslim administration, is taking advantage of this to consolidate its hold on this Middle Belt of Nigeria. Right now Jos is majority-Christian. But if the government can use these radicals to drive Christians out, Jos can become a majority-Muslim area.”

And what does the world media say about this? “The world media is reporting this as an ‘ethnic clash.’ Some call it ethnic cleansing. But it is really religious cleansing. As Anglican Archbishop Ben Kwashi ... told us yesterday, a mere ‘clash’ does not murder women and children.”

And note that Archbishop Kwashi is not some marginal player. He was just elected the general secretary of the Global Anglican Futures Conference. He himself has been threatened with death, his cattle have been stolen, and his own wife raped and left half-dead.

June 28: “Just a few days ago 300 Christians were killed when Muslim terrorists targeted several Christian villages on the outskirts of Jos.

“Jos has always been mostly Christian and has been coveted by Muslims for generations. It is one of the best places in Nigeria to live and has always resisted Muslim encroachments. Now, with a Muslim president and Muslims in control of the army and every branch of government, Muslims feel emboldened.

...

“More disturbing to Christians, who are still the majority of not only Jos but also Nigeria as a whole, is that top government and army offices are infiltrated by Boko Haram, the Muslim terrorist movement that has slain thousands of Christians and several years ago kidnapped hundreds of Christian girls. Some have never been returned. When President Obama offered intelligence and technological help to Bukhari to find and destroy the Boko Haram kidnappers, Bukhari refused

the help. Knowledgeable Christians here tell me that Bukhari himself has ties with Boko Haram.”

Then this closing appeal: “Only international pressure on Bukhari will change anything. So if you are reading this and can get a message to your government leaders in the States or U.K., please do so.

“And pray for the Christians in Jos. They covet your prayers.”

To each one reading this article, I beg of you to do three things: 1) Share this article with others and do your best to bring it to the attention of your national government. 2) Pray for these persecuted Christians, who are standing strong in the midst of hellish attacks. Their dedication rebukes our spiritual complacency in the West. 3) Pray that President Buhari and his administration would do the right thing and that these Fulani herdsmen would come to saving faith.

Can we sit idly by while our brothers and sisters suffer such unspeakable atrocities?