

Christian Persecution Hits Fever Pitch

Militant Islam is wiping out Christianity in the Muslim Middle East, according to a new study by the British think tank *Civitas*.

“Christianity is in serious danger of being wiped out in its biblical heartlands because of Islamic oppression,” wrote journalist Rupert Shortt. Israel, the only country in the region where Jews, Muslim and Christians are free to practice their religion, was not covered in the report.

Israel opened up churches and other holy sites to Christians in Judea and Samaria and all of Jerusalem after Jordan fled the areas in the Six-Day War in 1967. Jordan prohibited Christians from visiting the sites during its occupation of the area from 1947 to 1967.

Since the rise of the Islamic Hamas movement, (Arab) Christians have been on the run in Israel, but mainstream media have tried to blame Israel for the diminishing Christian community, particularly in Bethlehem. Violence against Christians by Muslims in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, outside of Israel, has been ignored by “blind” politicians, largely because it is politically incorrect to criticize Muslims and then risk being accused of “racism.”

Converts to Christianity often are killed in Saudi Arabia, Mauritania and Iran, the report said, and converts who remain alive may be subjected to heavy legal punishment. Muslim countries are the most widespread offenders of freedom of religion, and *Civitas* estimates that between a half and two-thirds of Christians in the Middle East have left the region or have been killed in the past century.