

Haiti Plunging into Chaos, State of Emergency Declared

Two mass prison breaks have sent the Caribbean nation of Haiti reeling even further into the cycle of violence plaguing the nation.

The powerful gangs challenging the government for control of the country now reportedly control up to 80% of the nation's capital, according to UN estimates.

"We have chosen to take our destiny in our own hands. The battle we are waging will not only topple Ariel's government. It is a battle that will change the whole system," says gang leader and former police officer Jimmy "Barbeque" Chérizier.

CNN was interviewing gang members in the days leading up to the prison break, with some as young as 14 years old, detailing the tragic and merciless situations they had to deal with on a constant basis.

"I see people dying in front of me every day," one 14-year-old gang recruit from the city's Martissant neighborhood told CNN, visibly distraught, in an interview last month. "The thing I hate the most is when (other gang members) kill someone and they make me burn the body," he said.

On Sunday night, a state of emergency was declared as the notorious gangs staged two mass prison breaks—one in the capital of Port-au-Prince, and the other in Croix des Bouquets.

It is estimated that around 4,000 inmates escaped, with at 12 people being killed amid the chaos.

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USA Today reported that, "On Monday, heavily armed gangs then tried to seize control of Haiti's main international airport. Reports from the scene said airport employees and others fled the scene amid whizzing bullets.

"It was not immediately clear Tuesday who controlled Haiti's international airport."

With a multitude of reasons why Haiti has been destabilized to this point—corrupt and ineffective leadership, poverty, food insecurities and much more—there is a spiritual battle being waged in the country as well.

As Charisma magazine has previously reported, there are many dark practices being performed throughout the island nation.

One of the ministries on the ground in Haiti reported witches terrorizing the small Christian communities in an attempt to dissuade them from attending evangelistic events:

"In the months prior to the crusade, apparently witches were going around into the very village I preached the gospel just two weeks ago. As a part of their voodoo rituals, they were offering blood sacrifices, which led to them eating children. They taunted the few believers who were there, saying that the locals needed to follow the power of the witches."

Other Christian outreaches, such as Danita Estrella Watts and Hope for Haiti Children's Center/Danita's Children, have been working with the people of Haiti for years offering practical and spiritual aid to the country's most vulnerable.

"It's so easy as founder and CEO of the organization to be focused on processes, procedures, administration, staffing, growth," Danita confesses. "But the Lord has convicted me that all that means nothing if we're not reaching their souls."

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In the midst of a civil war ravaging a nation, children dying of starvation and sickness and a void in leadership for a people who greatly need it, God is able and willing to bring peace and comfort to the people of Haiti.

There must be prayers and intercession on the behalf of those suffering, as well as others who are willing to administer practical aid to the those suffering. Haiti may be past the point of going back to the way things were, but God is able to bring them into a season of something new, with righteous leadership that will serve the needs of the people.

King David, the apostle Paul and James the the brother of Jesus, all endured physical and spiritual suffering in their lives, and they left us with important and powerful Bible verses that will help guide those enduring similar circumstances in life:

“This poor man cried, and the Lord heard, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord camps around those who fear Him, and delivers them,” (Ps. 34:6-7)

“Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weaknesses, for we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God,” (Rom. 8:26-27).

“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone merry? Let him sing psalms,” (James 5:13).{eo}

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