

Islamic Terrorists Assassinate Muslim Professor Who Defended Iraqi Christians

A courageous Muslim law professor who stood up for the rights of persecuted Christians in Iraq has paid with his life for defying the ruthless Islamist militants who are trying to impose Shariah law throughout the Middle East.

Christians in Iraq's second-largest city of Mosul, which has been taken over by the terrorist group called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), are being forced to choose between converting to the Muslim faith, paying the *jizyah* (the Islamic tax for non-Muslims), fleeing or facing death by the sword.

Professor Mahmoud Al-Asali, a law professor who lectured on pedagogy at the University of Mosul, had the courage to make a stand against this brutal duress, which he believed go against the Muslim commandments, according to a report on a Vatican news website. But he paid for this bold stand with his life: He was killed by ISIS militants in Mosul on Sunday.

Chaldean website –one of the news sources that offers timely updates on the inferno Christians are experiencing in Iraq–announced the news. Amid the brutal tragedies currently being witnessed in Iraq, the website did not want to let this act of great courage go unnoticed, the *Vatican Insider* reported.

Professor Al-Asali knew what he was risking: People in Mosul know that in Raqqa—a Syrian city which ISIS seized last year—there are many human-rights activists who have paid for their opposition to ISIS's acts of intolerance with their own lives. But Al-Asali was nevertheless unable to stand by in silence, according to the Vatican report. ISIS is the ruthless Sunni offshoot of al-Qaida that has taken over parts of Iraq,

sometimes murdering Iraqi soldiers it captures, and is involved in the Syrian insurgency.

Many other Muslims also are standing up against the brutality and intolerance of ISIS. They have launched the “I am Iraqi, I am Christian” campaign in response to the letter N’s written on the walls of Christian homes in Mosul. On Sunday, some of them turned up outside the Chaldean Church of St. George in Baghdad, with a banner displaying the slogan and posted a picture on Facebook.

But these acts of rebellion have not been successful in stopping the madness of ISIS fundamentalists. And so on Monday, the ethnic cleansing continued, with the *jizyah*—the Islamic “protection” tax which all non-Muslims are required to pay if they wish to stay or return to Mosul—being applied. The monthly figure to be paid is \$450, which is an impossible sum for anyone living in northern Iraq to pay.

On Monday, yet another historic Christian location fell into the hands of the Islamic State: the Syro-Catholic monastery of Mar Benham, close to Qaraqosh, the Christian city in the Nineveh Plain to which the majority of Christians have fled. Monks have been present in Mar Benham since about the fourth century.

“They forced the three monks and some families residing in the monastery to go away and leave the keys behind,” the Syro-catholic bishop of Mosul, Yohanna Petros Moshe told *Fides* news agency. The *Baghdadhope* blog reported that the monastery underwent restoration work in 1986 and became a pilgrimage destination for Christians and some Muslims too.

Historian Dr. Timothy Stanley recently decried the West’s silence over the plight of Iraqi Christians, calling it “a war crime that, strangely, no one seems to want to talk about,” according to a report on .