

Islamists Destroy Bible Society Bookstores in Egypt

Two bookshops of the Bible Society of Egypt were recently attacked due to an outbreak of violence and unrest across the predominantly Muslim country. The shops in Assiut and Minia in southern Egypt were completely destroyed Aug. 14 after being set on fire.

“These were both very beautiful, fully equipped bookshops,” General Director of the Egyptian Bible Society Ramez Atallah wrote in an email to supporters. “Fortunately we were closed, fearing such an attack, so none of our staff were injured. The attackers demolished the metal doors protecting the bookshops, broke the store windows behind them and set the bookshops on fire. They did the same to many stores on those streets as well as demolishing many parked cars. Similar incidents are taking place across the nation. To date, 15 churches and three Christian schools have been attacked and some set on fire.”

Christians have long suffered from discrimination and violence in Egypt, where they make up 10 percent of the population of 90 million, the Associated Press reported. Attacks rose after the Islamists ascended to power in the wake of the 2011 Arab Spring uprising that led to the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak. However, Christians have come further under fire since President Mohammed Morsi was ousted July 3, unleashing attacks by Morsi’s Muslim Brotherhood, the AP reported.

“The Bible Society of Egypt has been in operation for 129 years and this is the first time we have been the victims of such attacks,” Atallah wrote. “We thank God for His protection, praise Him that none of our staff were injured and are determined—as soon as things settle down—to rapidly restore these two bookshops to continue providing God’s Word in those two strategic cities.”

Atallah said that both shops were insured, but claiming insurance in Egypt takes a minimum of a year and often longer.

He also asked for prayer for “Christians to have a spirit of forgiveness and love towards those who are perceived as being our enemies.”