

Libya's Bloody Uprising Worse Than News Media Reports

The headlines coming out of Libya paint a pretty dire picture. Moammar Gaddafi is blaming Osama Bin Laden for protests—and he vows to “die as a martyr” rather than giving up his power.

Meanwhile, at least 23 have been killed in clashes in north-western Libya. Foreigners are fleeing the nation as fast as they can. Gas prices are rising—and nobody is sure what will happen next.

But for all the reporting coming out of Libya and the Middle East, Open Doors is certain that it's much worse on the ground than what mainstream media is chronicling.

“There are no police in the streets and no safety and protection anymore,” an unnamed source told Open Doors. “Libya is a tribal society and that is affecting the situation for the worse. The tribe of Gaddafi will eventually turn against the other tribes and that will create civil war. Please pray that Moammar Gaddafi will come to his senses and that peace can be restored. Please pray for Libya and for the Christians there.”

Gaddafi has reportedly threatened major violence against people who continue to protest and demand that the long-time dictator step down. In fact, on Tuesday night Gaddafi appeared on state television to call on his supporters to take to the street to fight protestors. Supporters appear to have answered the call as hundreds have already died. Some reports indicate that African mercenaries have come into the country to disperse the demonstrators.

How is all this impacting Christians in Libya? The key word is pressure. Libya is ranked number 25 on the Open Doors 2011 World Watch List of the worst persecutors of Christians. But

matters there could grow worse for Christians in the midst of revolution.

Although the small indigenous church in Libya is very hard to contact, Open Doors reports that Christians are under major pressure. Anything that is “different” is a cause for suspicion, and many believers are scared of what could happen to them.

Open Doors reports that there is also a larger expatriate church made up of mainly African believers. The situation for people in this church is also troubling; their personal safety is under threat both for being believers and for being black Africans.

Open Doors suggests the following prayer points:

- The bloodshed will stop in this country
- Gaddafi will stop his purge of protesters and the Lord will work in his heart
- Safety for the indigenous believers and the expatriate Christians