

Nigeria's Miracle in the Rubble

Dozens of Pentecostal and charismatic believers were injured or killed when terrorists launched two suicide bombs at churches in the Northern Nigerian town of Bauchi in July.

"Witnesses said the force of the blast near the Harvest Field Church of Christ on the outskirts of Bauchi city caused the building to collapse on the worshippers inside," state Police Commissioner Mohammed Ladan told the AFP news agency.

Boko Haram, a radical Islamic sect linked to al-Qaida, was blamed for the bombings. Northern Nigeria ranks 13th on Open Doors USA's World Watch List. In the past year about 1,000 believers died through persecution there, and about 5 million Christians are believed to be under intense pressure as a result of their faith.

Boko Haram has vowed to eradicate Christians from areas of Nigeria and has destroyed more than 50 churches and killed about 10 pastors since 2009, but the Lord had a hedge of protection around believers at Harvest Field of Christ Church.

"A dead body from Living Faith Church nearby was thrown by the impact of the blast into our church," says Mbami Godiya, pastor of the 50-member Pentecostal congregation. "Yet none of our members died in this attack."

The blast threw a Harvest Field Church of Christ deacon across the sanctuary, but he landed unscathed. The congregation is calling it a miracle—and returning good for evil in the face of ongoing terrorism.

Indeed, it seems without God's intervention, many in the congregation would have died, Godiya insists, pointing to the blood stains that spread right up to the place where he was

sitting. Godiya and his congregation so narrowly escaped that he can only credit the delivering power of God.

“Even houses that aren’t close to this church were affected. Some of them had their doors and windows blown off or destroyed by the impact of the blast that took place in our church, yet we still came out alive from this,” Godiya says. “God really had mercy on us.”

Godiya believes that this deliverance was a response to prayer. The 15-year-old church and its 50 members gathered in June to pray for God’s protection. The theme for June’s prayer meetings was “help from above.” The congregation prayed fervently for protection—and Godiya says God answered.

“When the suicide attack on our church took place, I did not panic because I knew we were prepared for this,” Godiya says. “We’ve been thanking God for His mercies and sustainable grace since June. We are alive. We have no reason to complain about the attack.”

Emboldened by the experience, Godiya is now crying out to his brothers and sisters in Nigeria about the power of **prayer** to thwart any satanic attack on churches there.

He is encouraging churches to take the battle to the principalities and powers in the heavenlies. But just as passionately, the **charismatic pastor** is reminding war-torn churches there that the secret to overcoming hate and evil plots is to love your enemies.

“We will extend the love of Christ to even those who plan evil against us, as that is the instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hatred is from the heart,” Godiya says with grace in his eyes.

“Once we focus our attention on Christ, hatred will not be part of our lives and instead, love will radiate to even terrorists who have been killing us and destroying our

churches. We have learned to take our problems to God, instead of lamenting on them."