

# Market Drayton Churches Together: Prayer for Persecuted Christians - 13 Sept. 2018

## Nigeria

### 14 Sept: World Watch Monitor

#### Nigeria: Dozens more killed as Fulani herdsmen violence continues in Plateau state

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/09/nigeria-dozens-more-killed-as-fulani-herdsmen-violence-continues-in-plateau-state>

In Nigeria, dozens lost their lives during the first week of September as Fulani militants continued their killing spree in the central state of Plateau.

Last month, more than 20 people – including a pastor and four members of his family – were killed in various raids attributed to Fulani militants, as World Watch Monitor reported. Among them were Rev. Adamu Wurim Gyang, 50, and his three children, who were set ablaze and burnt beyond recognition, while his wife, Jummai, 45, was shot and left to die in a pool of blood when Fulanis stormed their Abonong village on 28 August.

Since then, the violence has continued, with more attacks in the same area and elsewhere.

On 6 September, four men lost their lives, while two others sustained bullet wounds as Fulani militants attacked their village of Nding Susut, in Barkin Ladi Local Government Area (LGA).

Local resident James Pam, 34, told Watch Monitor that the killings came just two days after a peace meeting between members of the predominantly Christian farmers and the mainly Muslim Fulani herdsmen in Barkin Ladi.

“We thought everything was all right between us until this morning [6 Sept], around 6.30am, when we heard gunshot sounds,” he said. “We later found out that the Fulani militants killed some of our youths, who were on their way to farm.”

Pam said some members of his community lost their lives in previous attacks in April and that the peace meeting was organised by the army commander in Barkin Ladi, with the aim to forestall any further outbreaks of violence in the community. “Unfortunately, the community was still attacked this morning,” he said.

On the same day, gunmen believed to be Fulani militants ambushed six people on their way to farm elsewhere in Barkin Ladi, killing four.

A day earlier (5 September), the traditional ruler of Kwi village, in Riyom Local Government Area, was arrested by security forces. Chief Joshua Dung Lwon, a Christian, spent a night at the army headquarters in Jos, before being released the following day. His arrest took place while attacks targeting his community were going on.

On 4 September, five people were killed by armed men believed to be Fulani militants. According to local sources, the attackers, who came in a van at about 12 noon, sprayed bullets on people at the tin mining site in Razat village, in Kwock Ropp District. The victims were four men – whose first names were Gyang, Jillim, Lamba and David – and a woman called Rebecca.

Other reports said two people were killed by suspected Fulani militants while on their way to another mining site on the same day in Gana Rop, which straddles Bokkos and Barkin Ladi LGAs. A week earlier, on 28 August, the same community had suffered a similar attack, which claimed three lives.

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### 4 Sept: World Watch Monitor

#### Leah Sharibu’s mother pleads with Nigerian president as kidnappers threaten to kill daughter

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/10/leah-sharibus-mother-pleads-to-nigerian-president-as-kidnappers-threaten-to-kill-leah>

The mother of the Christian girl detained by Boko Haram for over seven months has called on Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari to secure her daughter’s release.

Leah Sharibu, 15, was one of 110 girls kidnapped on 19 February 2018 from a school in Nigeria’s north-eastern town of Dapchi, in Yobe state. Within a month, all the others had been released, but not Leah – the only Christian – as she refused to renounce her faith.

On 16 September, Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP), a breakaway faction of Boko Haram, announced that it had killed a Red Cross worker, Saifura Hussaini Ahmed Khorsa, and threatened to kill three other hostages, including Leah.

Her mother, Rebecca, travelled to Jos, capital of Plateau state, over the weekend.

At a press conference on 29 September, she recalled that Leah’s kidnappers had issued an ultimatum stating that Leah was next in line to be killed:

“As we are approaching October, on Monday, I am pleading with the federal government, and the president, to hear my plea and the plea of Leah’s dad, to secure the release of our daughter,” she said.

She also denied reports alleging that she had filed a lawsuit against the Nigerian government, demanding N500m (more than \$1m) in compensation for her daughter’s kidnap.

A copy of the suit, dated 19 September, viewed by Nigeria’s Punch newspaper among other media outlets, was filed at the Federal High Court of Nigeria in Lagos by a US-based non-governmental organisation, and made available to media in Jos on 25 September.

In response to allegations that she had been behind it, Mrs Sharibu said she and her husband knew nothing about it. “I am not after money; all I want is my daughter to be released,” she said.

Saturday’s press conference was convened by Rev. Gideon Para-Mallam, the Regional Secretary of IFES (International Fellowship of Evangelical Students), who is at the heart of peace efforts between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria’s Middle Belt as founder of Citizens Monitoring Group (CMG).

Leah’s father, Nathan, who was not able to travel to Jos due to his work, spoke to media by phone.

He also reiterated his wife’s call to the Nigerian government and the international community to secure Leah’s release.

He said that “since the kidnapping of our girl, the family has been very sad”, adding that her brother Donald, 13, “who used to play, and do everything together with her, has been very affected by her absence, and he kept asking: ‘When Leah is going to come back?’”

“As a father, I have to encourage him, saying: ‘By God’s grace, Leah can come back home anytime’.” He added that he did not know whether the government and insurgents had been in negotiations.

Yesterday, for the first time since Leah’s capture, President Buhari spoke to her mother. His tweet read: “Today I spoke with Mrs Rebecca Sharibu, to reiterate our determination to bring her daughter Leah back home safely. The thoughts & prayers of all Nigerians are with the Sharibu family, & the families of all those still in captivity. We will do everything we can to bring them back.”

It’s the first direct contact with any government official since the kidnap over seven months ago.

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Links to the full reports featured on this sheet, along with information about other relevant articles are available on the Market Drayton Churches Together website, linked from the P4PC section as “Recent Reports”

[churchestogether-marketdrayton.org.uk/p4pc](http://churchestogether-marketdrayton.org.uk/p4pc)

## Kurdistan Mission Update

### 5th Oct: Prophecy Today

<https://prophecytoday.uk/comment/world-scene/item/1221-kurdistan-mission-update.html>

#### Dear family in Yeshua,

Once again I've been privileged to visit an area of the world very few manage to get to. If truth be told, without us knowing of someone going there and hearing about the people and their circumstances, we'd be none the wiser. I'm deeply conscious of the enormous privilege I have in being called to the Muslims of Kurdistan along with suffering Christian and Muslim refugees of the Nineveh Plains. Is there a place more needing of the good news, the great balm of Gilead, than the land where Jonah was sent and where Nahum served the Lord?

This was my third visit, each time flying into Irbil in the semi-autonomous region of Iraq known as Kurdistan. The 'work' in Iraq has pretty much settled into three different areas:

- The Kurds living in the border region with Iran
- Refugees in Irbil
- Returning refugees and Muslim inhabitants of the Nineveh Plains

There is nothing easy about evangelism in this part of the world. Great care needs to be taken at all times. The costs of leaving Islam remain high - Shariah shows no mercy to apostates. Even though many Kurds are leaving Islam they are not necessarily all turning to the God of Scripture. Some who have turned to Messiah are bold enough, while others, understandably, remain cautious.

I'm not sure we in the West can fully grasp the enormity of leaving a cloistered, structured and familial society to follow Messiah. An interesting aspect is this: it seems for the most part that it is the men who are coming to faith, while the women hold back. They are no doubt acutely aware of their close family ties and tribal identity which will be negatively impacted by any serious decision to follow Jesus. We need to be praying particularly for the wives of believers.

Coming together is not easy as groups of Christians draw unnecessary attention. Consequently, larger gatherings are held in the privacy of the mountains. Every single night we had visitors, both young and old, who came to meet with us to discuss Scripture. Bibles were handed out to all who asked. Peshmerga widows, a Mullah and numerous men took Bibles. It's truly an incredible experience to hear a knock on the door at midnight and find men asking for a Bible! It reminded me of Nicodemus.

A meeting with a brother who we visited on the way to Iran was hugely inspiring. He is taking Bibles into Iran regularly where he tells us home groups are exploding.

So, on to Irbil. Those fleeing from the marauding ISIS on the Nineveh Plains headed straight to Irbil as their closest place of relative security. They have languished here for four years in various refugee camps spread throughout the city and other Kurdish cities. All camps are divided into religions, Christians and Muslims. None are mixed. Tens of thousands were housed here.

The latest refugees arriving in Irbil are those driven out by the chaos in Syria. Those we met have left for good and seek asylum in any country that will take them.

We had daily meetings at the fellowship of a local pastor. He has been an incredible servant these four years, reaching out with food supplies and the Gospel to the cultural 'Christians' (mostly from Chaldean Catholic backgrounds). This group of people are so desperately in need of the Gospel. The notion of

these Christians being beheaded by ISIS, literally going as sheep to the slaughter, is haunting. It would appear that most of them were proud of their Christian heritage and culture and were willing to die for it - as opposed to being born-again believers laying their lives down for Christ. This is deeply disturbing - but thankfully we serve a God who is able to know the hearts of all men and who we know judges righteously.

Messages to this ancient Christian community always include the need for God's saving grace by faith. A works-based righteousness ethic remains entrenched. The Gospel is sneered at and attacked by bishops and priests. Their power is abusive and their spirit controlling. They are no doubt in the character of the Pharisees that Jesus condemned for shutting up Heaven to those wanting to enter.

In one camp, Syrians were flooding in literally minutes before I was privileged to address them. It is not easy delivering a message to a people already broken - mentally, emotionally, financially - and yet we know this is the message that gives hope. I've truly sensed the suffering of Messiah, to some degree, when speaking to these people. They too need to appreciate that the Lord enters into these trials with them.

After we left I was told the man sitting next to me was a member of ISIS, himself living in fear of being executed. While in this camp he cannot be arrested, but will be the minute he steps outside. Many of these murderers are back in their communities. They fled cities like Mosul with the liberated inhabitants. All they needed to do was shave their beards, change their clothing and merge in with those leaving.

One group of women were all open to listening to the Gospel. While we visited them three men walked in and sat down. The wife had immediately left once they entered and the conversation was stilted with these intruders. After a few minutes evaluating this new situation, a brother entered the tent and told us to get up and follow. We were leaving. The wife had told him they did not know who these men were and there was possible danger. They had obviously seen us walking around the camp and had caught up with us to hear what we were saying. It was not the first time this had happened to us. But this is life in a world that does not know Messiah.

I left this ancient land, which has been so torn apart, feeling burdened for this people I've come to know and love. There is so much to do and there is great need. I've realised major players can only do so much. Someone like myself with individuals supporting, along with one or two churches, can truly have a major impact - and just our encouragement, our going and being with them, means a great deal. Paul speaks so much about encouraging the brethren in Scripture. It's an honour to do this.

I believe it's the Lord's will I continue supporting these brave men and women. Your support is invaluable and greatly appreciated. Again, I do not personally take any money for ministry; our business covers my costs. Finances that have been raised have gone towards provision of food and household materials, kerosene for widows and orphans during the winter, the purchase of Bibles, urgent medical needs and financial aid for Christian families in dire need.

I also value your prayers. I am under no illusion that this is your average mission. I'm desperately in need of being bathed in prayer, not only for my safety, but for those turning to the Lord from Islam who continue to live in these hostile conditions.

Thanking you all in Messiah Yeshua, who alone sustains us and enables us to serve him.

*Mark van Niekerk*

**International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church: Saturday 17 Nov. 10am - 1pm, St. Mary's Parish Rooms**