



ARISE AFRICA

THE OPEN DOORS MAGAZINE

Will you stand with
displaced Christians?

2024 Volume 5

**STOP THE
VIOLENCE.
START THE
HEALING.**



Will you take action today?

Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa are asking you to join them.

Join them to stand up against unprecedented violent persecution.

Join them in raising a million prayers and petitions.

Join them to stop the violence and start the healing.

HERE'S HOW

- 1 Add your voice.** Sign the petition calling for Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa to be treated with dignity and respect.
- 2 Add your prayer to the Tree of Prayer and Justice,** so your persecuted brothers and sisters will know they are not alone.
- 3 Visit the Arise Africa website** for campaign news from around the world and stories from Africa.

Add your name now: www.opendoors.ph
or scan the QR code with your phone



International Day of Prayer 2024

STOP THE VIOLENCE WITH THE POWER OF PRAYER

NOVEMBER 3, 2024

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IDOP Prayer Pack includes:

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**AFRICA
ARISE**

'YOU ALWAYS ASK HOW WE ARE'

Violent persecution drove Abraham and his family from home. Now, they're among 16.2m displaced Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa.



Conditions in the Ichwa camp are appalling. But Abraham and his family have hope because of you.

It was midnight when the first gunshots rang out...

Abraham had been warned that Fulani militants were planning to attack his village in Benue State, central Nigeria, so he'd sent his wife and three children to safety. But Abraham could not save his brother.

"They shot him through the door of his home, then he came outside and they shot him in the head."

That was more than three years ago. Since then, Abraham and his family have lived in a makeshift tent in Ichwa, a camp for internally displaced people (IDPs). It's too dangerous to go home because, unless the family convert to Islam, militants would kill them.

But conditions in the camp are desperate...

No food, no hope

"We are struggling to remain alive," said Abraham, who has taken on the role of camp chairman. "Look at my children, how much weight they have lost."

Up to seven people sleep in every tent, and 3,000 people share just 15 toilets. Abraham's children no longer attend school and he worries for their future. He's abandoned his own dream of going to university. It's no surprise Abraham sometimes asks, *where is God?*



Thanks to you, Abraham (left) receives emergency food aid from Open Doors local partners (right).

Your care

But you are bringing hope to Ichwa internal displacement camp. Your generous support means emergency food and practical help are reaching Abraham and other believers.

"When I told people that Open Doors partners were coming to pay us a visit, they were elated because of the help you have been giving us," said Abraham. "Last time you provided food, it lasted for about two months even for families with many members."

"ONCE WE SEE YOU, WE BECOME JOYOUS."

More than food, though, Abraham values your steadfast care – because it shows God has not abandoned him.

"Things here are really bad in the camp but once we see you, we become joyous and excited," added Abraham, with a smile. "You always ask how we are, and that alone makes us very happy. We know God is helping us." Thanks to you, Sub-Saharan African believers like Abraham know they are not alone.

"We always pray God sends angels to our rescue," said Abraham. "We will worship God because He has preserved our lives. I still have God. He will surely deliver me."

PLEASE PRAY



- Ask God to encourage Abraham in his role as camp chairman.
- Pray for an end to hunger and sickness in Nigeria's refugee camps.
- Pray the Arise Africa campaign can raise awareness about violent persecution in Sub-Saharan Africa, and bring an end to the suffering of Christians like Abraham.

STANDING TOGETHER

Your gifts and prayers provided a lifeline to Pastor Soré when violent persecution drove him and his family from their village, in Burkina Faso.



Pastor Soré and his wife Teresa have food, farming support and faith - thanks to your generous care.

The first time Pastor Soré's village was attacked, extremists robbed people. The second time, they raped the women. The third time, they burned everything to the ground.

Pastor Soré, who lives in Burkina Faso, was left with no choice...

"When the terrorists find Christians, they tell them the time of Christianity is over," he said. "We had to flee to save our lives."

Leaving a beautiful home and thriving church, Pastor Soré and his wife Teresa escaped with their own two children and 15 others who had been orphaned or entrusted into their care. They are among two million people who have been driven from their homes by jihadist groups in Burkina Faso.

**"WE ARE DISPLACED,
BUT JESUS WILL NEVER BE
DISPLACED FROM OUR LIVES."**

The country has lost 40 per cent of its territory, mainly in the north, to terror groups. After four days on the road, the group was too big to move into a camp for internally displaced people (IDPs). So they set up a shelter on a desolate piece of land.

"We were so sad when we arrived in this empty space," says Pastor Soré. It's a 2km walk to the nearest clean water pump. In the rainy season, water washes through their makeshift tent bringing mosquitoes and snakes. And in the summer it's unbearably hot.

Not forgotten

But thanks to your kind support, Pastor Soré is not alone.

"First you helped me with prayer that really comforted me," said Pastor Soré. "Then, seeds and fertilizers

helped me grow crops and feed my family. I'm holding in my hands the maize we cultivated with your help. We've been consuming it for three months now!"

He added, "The Open Doors team visits us regularly, so we know you share our pains and burdens and carry them before God."

But what matters to Pastor Soré, more than anything, is knowing that you stand with him. Your care strengthens his faith and emboldens his remarkable ministry...

"We are displaced but Jesus is not, and never will be, displaced from our lives," says Pastor Soré. "I ask God to open doors for me to continue evangelism. Despite our miserable condition, Jesus still brings people who get saved."

He added, "When I look in the Bible, I see all warriors encountered difficulties. It's my turn today. An important truth about suffering is that it is never eternal – but Jesus is eternal."



PLEASE PRAY

"Christians all over the world, I ask you to pray. Pray for Christians in Burkina Faso, especially those who are displaced and living with me, to stay firm in their faith. Pray for me to keep a strong faith and succeed in the work God has called me to. And pray for land where my family can stay and follow Christ."

An Arise Africa Devotional:

A NEED FOR LAMENTING



**“Yet this I call to mind and
therefore I have hope...”
(Lamentations 3: 21- 32)**

Do you know what the [World Watch List methodology](#) ² has as its starting point? The “brokenness of the world” (pp.8-9). That brokenness can crash unannounced into our lives, leaving us wondering how God could allow people and things to cause such pain. At such times the Bible encourages us to LAMENT, to shed our tears of anger and confusion into the palms of the Lord. Many of the Psalms show us examples of this - e.g. Psalm 13. But perhaps the need for lamenting is so great that God has given us a special little guide, a short five-chapter book of poetry.

The Old Testament book of Lamentations is written as a memorial of the 30-month siege and destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian overlords in 587/586 BC. The poetry contains shocking pictures of slaughter, famine, cannibalism, rape, exile and destruction. The writer cannot believe his eyes. But in Chapter 3, God guides him to shut his eyes for a moment. In Lamentations 3:21, he writes: “This I call to mind”. But what is THIS?

Despite all the pain, the writer calls to mind something about God he had almost forgotten. **Read Lamentations 3:21-32.**

Interestingly, this ‘calling to mind’ is not placed at the end of the book to give a cheery ending. It’s here, right in the middle. It’s a central summit. It’s a ray of light in the middle of darkness. Empty and helpless, the writer’s mind turns to Scripture. He recalls how God’s nature is always to be faithful to His promises. He calls to mind and knows in his heart that this is true for every new day, even though there are times – like right now! – when his eyes cannot see it. It’s still dark, but the hymn-like cry of “Great is Thy Faithfulness” emerges as a sudden surge of hope-filled praise.



“It’s still dark, but the hymn-like cry of “Great is Thy Faithfulness” emerges as a sudden surge of hope-filled praise.”

In the book of Lamentations, you could say that chapters 1 and 2 lead up to this pinnacle in chapter 3; and chapters 4 and 5 lead off back down into the valley again. Yes, the writer must open his eyes again and face the very real pictures of devastation around him – but there is something new in his heart - namely, the faith that knows deep down: “This is not God’s last word on the matter.” The lament has reached its goal.

Perhaps you remember Peter, James and John coming down the mountain after seeing the heavenly glory of Jesus Christ in the mountain-top Transfiguration (Matthew 17). They return from a vision of radiant, heavenly beauty to a broken world devastated by arguments, failure and screaming demons. But they return with treasure in their hearts. They know that these horrors are not God’s last word. They have glimpsed eternal life; for a moment they have seen Jesus glorified, and that glimpse was later to be fuel for fearlessly spreading Gospel light into a dangerously dark world.

² This document can be found on the opendoors.org website.

REFLECT

What shapes your heart and mind and prayers when your world turns dark?

APPLY

Thank God for his faithfulness. That, in Him, his promises to us and the Church in SSA are “yes and amen”.

PRAY

Extreme levels of violence – Violence is spiralling in many of the countries in SSA where Christians live. Pray:

- For the resilience and growth of the Church in SSA. Pray urgently that Christians will hold on to Jesus, knowing the global Church has not forgotten them.
- That God will heal and comfort believers suffering trauma because of violent persecution.
- For wisdom and faith as Christians boldly seek to live lives that honor God, even amid growing persecution.

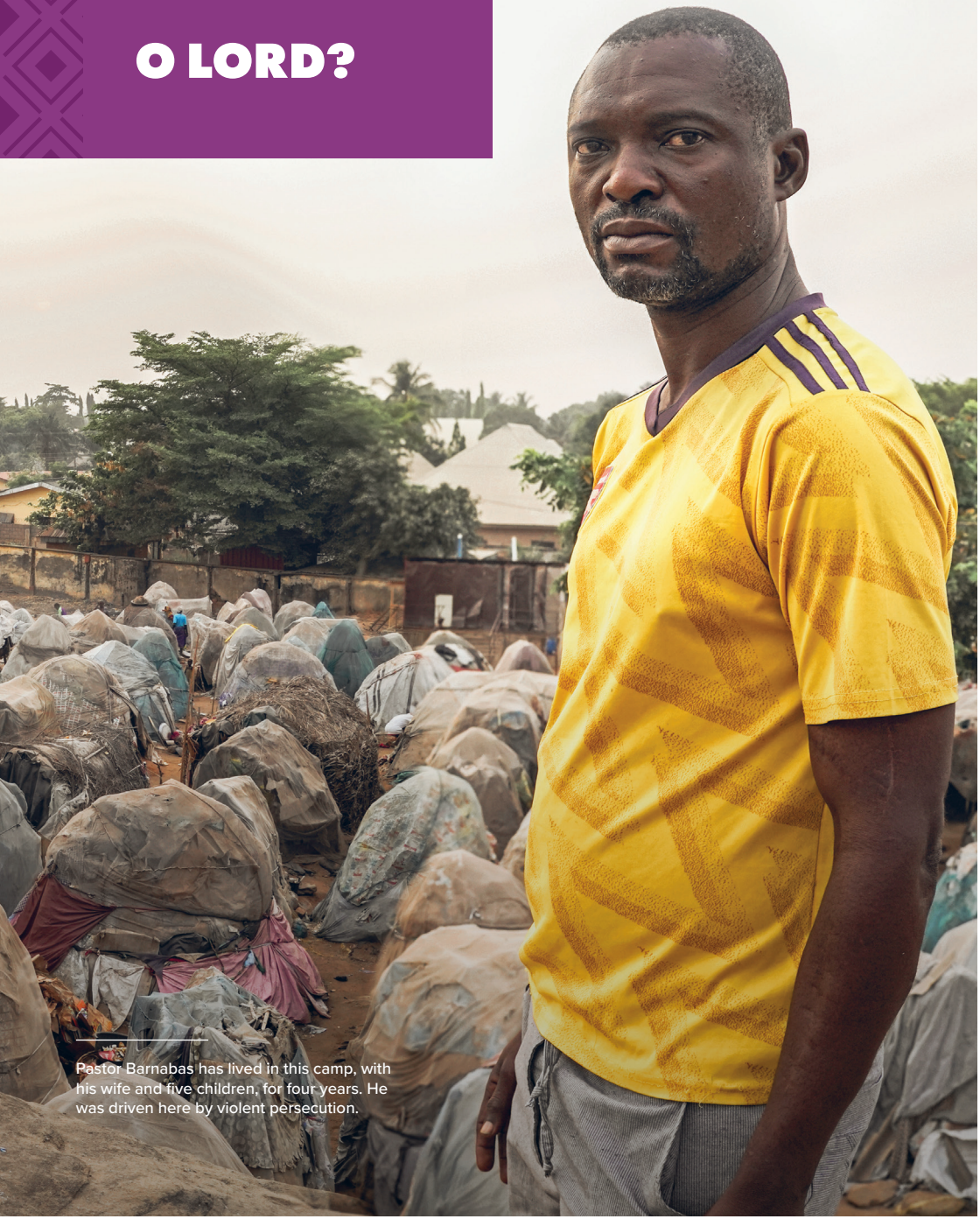
Open Doors

The Arise Africa Campaign is calling for attention to the plight of Christians in sub-Saharan Africa who suffer extreme levels of violent persecution. Please pray for a further roll out of this Campaign this year. That the Lord will bless and use the initiative for His glory and for the strengthening of his Church.

Pray for our partners that work in countries such as Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria and DRC and who do a great deal of work amid increasingly difficult circumstances. May they not be overcome and hold fast to God who is 'compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness' (Psalm 103:8), especially in times when it feels like the wicked are winning.



HOW LONG, O LORD?



Pastor Barnabas has lived in this camp, with his wife and five children, for four years. He was driven here by violent persecution.

More than 16 million Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa have been driven from their homes. Many are persecuted for their faith. It's time to stop the violence and start the healing.

Easily-damaged and temporary shelter tents fill up every direction, offering little relief from the ferocious heat. A sense of hopelessness hangs in the air. There's not enough food, no running water, too few toilets, and disease is rife.

This camp, with its appalling conditions, is 'home' to Pastor Barnabas, his wife and five children. The floorspace of their tent is no bigger than a double mattress. Every day is a struggle to survive.

They've been here for four years.

"Each person you see here... we are all Christians," says Pastor Barnabas. "We are here because of violence. Millions of Christians are displaced here in Nigeria. But the news doesn't care about it, politicians don't talk about it, nobody talks about it. We are remaining in darkness. How would you feel to be forgotten?"

16M DISPLACED

Pastor Barnabas is just one of an estimated 16.2 million Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa forced from their ancestral lands and homes. Like him, many are persecuted for their faith. Islamist terror groups such as Al-Qaeda, al-Shabab and Boko Haram want to establish an Islamic state and target Christians in the region with unprecedented violence.

Believers are being attacked, kidnapped and murdered, and Christian villages and schools are being destroyed. Burkina Faso, 20th in the World Watch List (Open Doors' annual list of 50 countries where Christians are most persecuted), has lost 40 per cent of its territory to terror groups, and in places like Nigeria, militants seem to act with impunity.

ARISE AFRICA:

Stop the violence Start the healing

Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa face violent persecution on a scale never seen before. Now, African church leaders are calling on you to stand with them.

Through Arise Africa, a global campaign, Christians around the world can stand alongside our persecuted family. We aim to provide spiritual, emotional and physical support to four million believers by 2027, and see a resilient, resourceful and influential Sub-Saharan African church shining as a beacon of light.

This year, with the focus on 16 million Christians made homeless by violent persecution, your support is especially vital. You can help to stop the violence and start the healing.

Pastor Barnabas knows first-hand how dangerous it is for believers. After all, it was a deadly attack on his farm that drove him to a refugee camp...

MACHETE ATTACK

"Militants surrounded us, some with guns, some with machetes, some with sticks," remembers Pastor Barnabas. "My brother was shot dead, and his wife was shot, macheted and killed. I kept running and was attacked with a stick. My hand was broken."

The terrifying violence that day not only left Pastor Barnabas with permanent injuries, it had a devastating long-term impact on the family.

"I lost everything," says Barnabas as he steps through the dust and debris of the refugee camp, a child by his side. "Everything in my home was burned. Now I cannot take care of my family.

I cannot feed them. My children no longer go to school.”

Pastor Barnabas pauses for a moment, overwhelmed with emotion. “As a pastor, too, I am supposed to take care of my sheep. But people are losing their hope in God because of the situation they are in. I don’t have anything to give them. We can only pray and share the Word... I feel very, very bad.”

ARISE, AFRICA

Insecurity and instability are putting the future of the church at risk, and creating a displacement crisis, an education crisis and a healthcare crisis. Now Pastor Barnabas and Christian leaders across Sub-Saharan Africa are calling on the global Church to act, through the Arise Africa campaign.

“OUR EYES AND OUR HOPE ARE ON GOD.”

You are invited to share in the pain of Pastor Barnabas and others, speak out against violence, pray with conviction and stand as one with your persecuted brothers and sisters. Your gifts, prayers and action today can help stop the violence and start the healing.

Already, Open Doors’ local partners have provided emergency food and medical help to Pastor Barnabas and other Christians in the camp. Skills training and trauma healing are coming soon. With your support, the persecuted church in Sub-Saharan Africa remains strong and resilient. And Christians like Pastor Barnabas will not give up...

“God has sustained me and kept me, and I will not lose my confidence in Him,” said Pastor Barnabas. “Our eyes and our hope are on God. If God will fight this battle for us, a day shall come when we will live a good life.”



16 million Christians are displaced in Sub-Saharan Africa. They need your help.

WILL YOU STAND WITH THE CHURCH IN AFRICA TO STOP THE VIOLENCE AND START THE HEALING?

Please pray

- For Pastor Barnabas and his family, that their suffering will end, their faith will remain strong, and their lives will be filled with hope.
- For violence to stop. Ask God to change the hearts of those intent on destruction and evil and pray for peace in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- For healing to start. Pray for justice and restoration for persecuted communities, and for Open Doors partners delivering trauma healing.

Please give

Every PHP 1,200 helps provide a displaced Christian with emergency shelter.

Every PHP 2,000 helps sustain a displaced Christian with food, clothing, and medical care.

Every PHP 4,350 gives a displaced child educational support (supplies, materials, etc.) for one month.

Please ACT

Sign the global petition to call for Christians and other vulnerable individuals in Sub-Saharan Africa to be treated with dignity and respect by:

1. Providing robust protection from violent militant attacks
2. Ensuring justice through fair prosecutions of the attackers
3. Ensuring restoration to bring healing to affected communities

Add your name now: www.opendoors.ph

STOP THE VIOLENCE.

START THE HEALING.



Violence against Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa is unprecedented – and it's driving people from their homes.

Open Doors estimates **16.2 million** Christians are displaced. Many are persecuted for their faith.

Pastor Barnabas, in Nigeria, is one of them.

He and his family struggle to survive in a makeshift tent in a refugee camp.

Grieving and traumatised. Hungry. Hopeless.

Four years, they've lived like this.

Violent persecution is causing a crisis of homelessness, healthcare and education. The future of the church is at risk. Now Pastor Barnabas and African Christian

leaders ask you to stand with them, as one.

- Every PHP 2,000 helps sustain a displaced Christian with food, clothing, toiletries, and medical care.
- Sign the global petition to call for change.
- Pray for your persecuted brothers and sisters.

Scan here to make your gift, sign the petition and find out more about *Arise Africa*, the global campaign.



Go to www.opendoors.ph to give now.