

# barnabasaid

JULY/AUGUST 2010



## IN THIS ISSUE

Towards the spiritual transformation of the UK

Shedding the light of hope in Bethlehem

**Africa:** encouragement from the letter to Smyrna

# Contents

**3 Project News**  
Honey flowing for Ugandan believers

**6 Newsroom**  
Yet more violence in Indonesia and Iraq

**Pull-out Supplement**  
Christianity in the UK:  
facing our challenges

**9 Resources**  
New book on Muslim evangelism from Isaac Publishing

**10 Meditation**  
Reassurance from Revelation for suffering African Christians

**12 Project Update**  
Hope and a future for Christian children in Bethlehem

**14 In Touch**  
Can you help your church to help Barnabas?

To guard the safety of Christians in hostile environments, names may have been changed or omitted. Thank you for your understanding.

**Front cover:** Children at St Aphrem's Christian School in Bethlehem, which is supported by Barnabas Fund

Unless otherwise stated, Scripture quotations are taken from the New International Version®.

Every effort has been made to trace copyright holders and obtain permission for stories and images used in this publication. Barnabas Fund apologises for any errors or omissions and will be grateful for any further information regarding copyright.

© Barnabas Fund 2010

## Nehemiahs needed for today

**In 1910, only 14% of the 250 million Muslims worldwide were under Muslim rule. Many of the others were ruled by "Christian" powers, with Britain ruling 80 million Muslims, France and the Netherlands 29 million each, and Russia 14 million. Muslims believed that Christianity had triumphed over Islam. Indeed, many Christian missionaries believed the same.**

In 1900 Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi of Syria had published an influential tract entitled *Umm al-Qura*, which purported to be the secret protocol of an Islamic congress convened in Mecca during the pilgrimage of 1899. At this imaginary congress the roots of the Islamic decline were discussed in detail. Some 56 reasons for the weakness of the Muslim world were identified.

Back then Muslims questioned whether Islam had a future. But in 2010 the question is: does Christianity have a future in Europe? Or will Islam finally triumph? This scenario is being raised not just by thinking Christians, but by secularists, academics and others. Islam is plainly advancing in demographic terms, as biological growth, immigration and conversion continue to increase the Muslim populations of European countries. More importantly, Islam is re-shaping European society in many areas, including politics, economics, education and law.

The growing influence of Muslims in Europe is no chance development. Rather it is a response to the calls of many Muslim leaders over recent decades, who have urged Muslim minorities to Islamise their host societies. This is part of the Islamic duty of *da'wa* (mission), which Muslims must practise internally within the Muslim community and also externally amongst non-Muslims.

Muslim outreach is facilitated by the spiritual vacuum that has developed in European society over the last century. The same unbelief and godlessness also fuel the anti-Western attitude of many Muslims. To quote

a Lebanese TV channel, "The West has industry, tourism, and sights that tempt us, but is devoid of faith." As the American scholar Robert R. Reilly explains, "The thing Muslims loathe most is not Christianity or Judaism, but unbelief." His fellow Christian, Samir Khalil Samir, born in Egypt and living in Lebanon, has written, "Muslims are not offended by religious symbols, but by secularized culture, by the fact that God and the values that they associate with God are absent from this (Western) civilization."

What should be our response as Christians? The problem is not just Islam, but also a weak and insipid Church. The answer surely lies in a spiritual transformation. In the book of Nehemiah we find the people of Israel in great trouble. They had been unfaithful to the Lord, refusing to obey the law that He had given them. As a result He had sent them into exile, and the remnant that had returned to Jerusalem was vulnerable and in disgrace.

Nehemiah's name means "consolation of the Lord", which is close to the meaning of "Barnabas", "son of encouragement". In his difficult context Nehemiah faced opposition, discouragement and dishonesty. But God used him with others to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and bring about a spiritual transformation that changed the life of the nation.

Today we need more Nehemiahs. Like him, we face formidable challenges. But with God the impossible can be done. We need a spiritual transformation, which will in turn change the whole face of society. We need to pray for a movement of God's Spirit today like those we have seen in history.

With this in mind, Barnabas Fund is launching Operation Nehemiah, which seeks to bring spiritual transformation to the UK and the West. Please turn to page i to read more.

**Dr Patrick Sookhdeo**  
International Director

These are the pages where we report how your gifts are bringing hope and aid to our brothers and sisters who suffer for their faith in the Lord Jesus. Whether helping individuals, families, churches or ministries, your gifts change lives and situations. We have space to describe only a small selection of the many projects we have been able to support, but thank you for making them all possible. Please pray as you read.

## Uganda: Bees for Believers

A grant of AU\$10,405 has enabled nine Christians from a Muslim background to set up small bee-keeping enterprises to support themselves. They live in a part of Uganda that is around 90% Muslim, where food scarcity is a recurring problem, where almost all the shops in the local town belong to Muslims, and where anti-Christian violence has occurred a number of times.

Converts from Islam suffer persecution from their Muslim relatives. The grant covered a 30-day training course that combined bee-keeping and Bible study and supplied the hives and other equipment that they needed.



**Project reference**  
56-856



**Nine converts to Christianity learn bee-keeping to support themselves**



## Project News

# Burma (Myanmar): Helping a Hundred Children

An urgent email appeal from Barnabas earlier this year requested help for a group of approximately 100 Christian children on the brink of starvation, who were making their way through the jungle to seek refuge in a Christian orphanage. They were fleeing the anti-Christian violence through which many had lost one or both of their parents. Barnabas supporters responded generously, and we were able to send a grant of AU\$24,090 for rice, blankets, pillows, mosquito nets and other needs of the new arrivals and children already in the orphanage.



**Project reference**  
75-821



**In tears, but safe after their long and dangerous journey**



**This boy's mother was gang-raped until she died and he lost his father in the jungle while fleeing from the soldiers. He is just one of 100 new arrivals at the orphanage**

## Gulf States: Christian Literature for Christians under Pressure

There are large numbers of Christian migrant workers based long-term in the Gulf, as they earn money to support their families back home in places such as Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, the Philippines or parts of the Middle East. Their living and working conditions are often very harsh, and they can face much persecution for their Christian faith. In this situation Christian literature can be a vital means of spiritual encouragement.

A grant of AU\$12,900 has helped to equip a Christian resources centre for migrant workers in one Gulf state, where Christians come from approximately 16 different countries. The grant will assist with providing shelving, Scriptures, Scripture portions and other Christian literature. Some of the literature is given away free and some is sold at a discounted price.



**Project reference 00-360**  
**(Christian Literature Fund)**

## Bangladesh: Strengthening Christian Students

The Bible Students Fellowship of Bangladesh plays a vital role in supporting and encouraging the small number of Bangladeshi Christians who manage to get to university. As the likely future leaders of a Christian minority that is despised and marginalised, these young people are key to the future of the Church in Bangladesh. A grant of AU\$3,340 covered 73% of the costs of four regional conferences held earlier this year, attended by 320 students in total. The

conference theme was Hebrews 10:22-24, and the students looked at faith, hope and love on the three consecutive days of the conference. There were workshops on mission, culture, and dealing with the frustrations of life as a Christian student or seeking work in a country where Christians are discriminated against.



**Project reference**  
04-640



**Conferences for Bangladeshi Christian students encourage them to stand firm in the frustrations of the present and equip them for future ministry**

## Egypt: Feeding the Poorest



**Barnabas Fund helps the churches to provide nutritious food and other basics**

The Christian community of Egypt has become increasingly needy over recent decades as most of the wealthy elite have left the country. In Upper Egypt many Christians live in severe poverty. There are children who do not even know what an egg is. Recent grants from Barnabas Fund

totalling AU\$231,380 will help local churches to support the poorest Christians with food and other basic needs in the coming year.



**Project reference  
11-220**

## Central Asia: Surgery for Baby J

A baby, aged 11 months, needed surgery to remove a large tumour-like growth on his spine. The tumour was most likely due to contamination of the local water sources by an ecological disaster last year. But relatives and neighbours told the little boy's parents that it was a punishment from God because they had left Islam to follow Christ. His parents, who live in a part of Central Asia where Christians suffer severe persecution, held firm in their faith, but they did not have the money to pay for the operation, after-care and the necessary travel costs. Barnabas Fund gave a grant of AU\$1,284, which covered 88% of the total needed and enabled two successful operations to be performed. Baby J can now move his legs, which was impossible before.



**Baby J with his mother**



**Project reference 00-671  
(Medical Fund)**

## Indonesia: Earning a Living After the Earthquake

When two earthquakes struck West Sumatra, Indonesia, on 30 September 2009, there was huge devastation and loss of life. We have already reported on how Barnabas sent food and shelter kits in the early days following the quake (*Barnabas Aid*, January/February 2010, page 3). Amongst the many victims were some Christian families who earned a living of about AU\$9.30 a day making bricks. The ovens in which they baked the bricks were destroyed by the earthquake. Ironically, this came at just the time when bricks would be in great demand as damaged buildings had to be reconstructed. Without their ovens, the Christians could only work as labourers, earning around AU\$3.50 a day.

A grant from Barnabas Fund has enabled 25 Christian families to build new ovens and resume their brick-making trade. The cost of one oven was AU\$372.



**A Christian brick-maker holding a brick mould. Barnabas has enabled 25 families of brick-makers to build new ovens after the West Sumatra earthquake last year**



**Project reference 00-634  
(Disaster Relief Fund)**

## IRAN: SOME CHRISTIANS RELEASED, OTHERS STILL HELD

Six Christian prisoners were released from detention across Iran during March and April, but the Christian community are still praying for others who are being held without charge, report Farsi Christian News Network (FCNN).

After two months in solitary confinement, Vahik Abrahamian was temporarily released on 24 April. It is still unclear what charges have been filed against him, but he has been instructed to present himself at court once a date for a hearing has been set.

Daniel Shahri, aged 19, was arrested at his home in Isfahan on 11 April.

Thankfully, he was released ten days later; he still faces charges of blasphemy and spreading Christian propaganda.

Reza, an Azeri-speaking Christian, was arrested at his home in Tabriz and spent 50 days in detention, accused of such offences as “leading a home-based church, pastoral services given to members and teaching the Bible to converts”. He was released on 11 April pending a future trial date and has been banned from contacting his friends and fellow Christians.

Maryam Jalali, Mitra Zahmati and Farzan Matin were held for 80 days in Evin Prison, Tehran after being arrested on Christmas Eve as they gathered at a private residence to celebrate Christmas. The women were released on 17 March.

Maryam Rostampour and Marzieh Amirzadeh, who were released on 18 November 2009, were in court during the week of 13 April facing charges of propagating Christianity and apostasy. It was confirmed on 23 May that they were acquitted of all charges. The women have now left Iran after the Iranian authorities warned them that any future Christian activity in Iran would have severe consequences. Hamid Shafiee and Reyhaneh Aghajary, who were arrested on 28 February, have also been released and reunited with their sons. They are expected to face a court hearing at a later date.

Despite these good news stories, Bahnam Irani, a Christian leader in Karaj arrested on 14 April, is still in prison.



Vahik Abrahamian was released from Evin Prison, Iran, on 24 April

## INDONESIA: CHRISTIAN BUILDING BURNED IN MOB VIOLENCE

On Tuesday 27 April hundreds of Muslims descended on a building site belonging to a Christian education foundation in Cibereum, in the Bogor regency of West Java. They ransacked and set fire to the building, and destroyed other property. Residents claimed that the rioters were from outside the village, which suggests that the attack may have been orchestrated.

Muslim leaders had accused the foundation of reneging on an agreement not to create a Christian education centre in a mainly Muslim area and of planning to build a chapel there. Incited by these reports, Muslim residents took matters into their own hands. A spokeswoman for the foundation denied the rumours, saying that the building was intended as a meeting-place.

Police completely failed to prevent the attack. In the afternoon of the same day the local government directed that

construction of the building should be postponed until further notice.

An Indonesian church leader said that acts of destruction and anarchy should not be tolerated. “Isn’t this country based on the law?” he asked. “Why have this country’s people behaved like thugs recently?”

West Java has witnessed a spate of anti-Christian attacks in the last few months, and incidents of intimidation and violence have been reported from other parts of Indonesia, particularly from areas where militant Islamist groups are present and active. Even in some areas where there is no violence, Christians are enduring intense pressure, arising either from government restrictions on religious freedom or from the extension of Islamic sharia law. A prominent cleric from Indonesia’s biggest Muslim organisation has said that sharia law should take precedence over laws passed by the country’s parliament.

## IRAQ: BOMBS INJURE CHRISTIAN STUDENTS

Up to 80 Christian students were injured and a shopkeeper killed in Mosul when a roadside bomb and a car bomb were detonated in close proximity to each other on 2 May.

The students were travelling from the mainly-Christian town of Hamdaniya to Mosul University when the bombs exploded, tearing through the side of one of the buses. The force of the blast killed a nearby shop-owner and left many students dazed and covered in blood from the impact of shrapnel and shattered glass. Many of the victims were taken to a nearby hospital.

The Christian community in Mosul is increasingly concerned as anti-Christian violence continues to intensify (see *Barnabas Aid* May/June 2010).

## NIGERIA: CHRISTIAN JOURNALISTS MURDERED

Two journalists from a Nigerian Christian magazine, deputy editor Nathan Dabak and reporter Sunday Gyang Bwede, were stabbed to death in a predominantly Muslim suburb of Jos, Plateau State, on 24 April. This is just the latest in a string of violent attacks on Christians in Plateau State since the beginning of 2010, which have now spread to nearby Bauchi State as well. Some local Nigerian Christian leaders have said that international reporting about the January and March 2010 conflicts was inaccurate owing to deliberate manipulation and deception by some local Muslim sources. They believe the Muslim reports greatly inflated the number of Muslims killed. The recent murders of the Christian reporters are a matter of extra concern in light of this.

On 15 April, the bodies of Christian pastor Ishaya Kadah and his wife Selina were discovered two days after they were kidnapped in Boto village, Bauchi State. Police have arrested two suspects, and security has been stepped up in the city of Bauchi. Four days later, the mutilated bodies of two elderly Christian farmers were also found, in the village of Rim, south of Jos.

On 10 April the homes of three leading officials in the Christian village of Kura Jenta, 20km south of Jos, were targeted shortly after midnight by a Muslim gang. The attackers employed the same tactics as those used in Dogo Nahawa on 7 March, setting homes ablaze and then waiting for the residents to come out in order to kill them. But these homes were made of concrete blocks with zinc roofs; the residents did not leave their houses until after the attackers had fled.

On 6 April Muslim youths chanting war songs blocked the road as a group of Christians were returning from a church meeting in the Nassarawa Gwom area of Jos, the scene of violence in January. The ensuing clash between the two groups led to the death of one Christian youth at the hands of the security forces who arrived to restore order.

Plateau State witnessed terrible violence between Muslims and Christians, including horrific massacres, in January and March, at a time when the country was in political limbo. The Muslim President Umaru Yar'Adua had been taken ill in November 2009 and was in hospital for several months in Saudi Arabia. Yar'Adua died on 5 May and acting-President Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian, was sworn in as head of state on 6 May.



Two women survey homes wrecked in anti-Christian violence in Plateau State in March

## EGYPT: CHRISTIAN TWINS LOSE COURT CASE

On 30 March a court in Egypt rejected a lawsuit filed by a Christian mother, Camilia Lufti, against the Egyptian authorities (according to the Assyrian International News Agency). She was challenging their refusal to re-instate Christianity on the birth certificates of her twin sons, Mario and Andrew, who are now 15.

When the twins were born, both their parents were Christians, but later their father, Medhat Ramsis, converted to Islam. Under Egyptian law, children of a converted parent are reckoned to follow his or her Islamic faith until the age of 15, so Medhat changed the religion listed on Mario and Andrew's birth certificates to Islam.

The aim of Camilia's court case was to restore the boys' identity as Christians before their national identity cards are issued in June. If these cards list them as Muslims and they then say that they are Christians, they will be seen as apostates from Islam and would be likely to suffer severe reprisals.



**Mario and Andrew, who lost their recent court case, say, "We want to remain Christians and we do not wish to become Muslims." (Source: AINA, <http://www.aina.org>)**

The court refused to recognise certificates issued by the boys' church as proof that they are Christians. Only the Muslim university in Cairo has the authority to validate a change to someone's registered religion. However, Mario and Andrew, having reached the age of 15, should now be allowed to choose their own faith. They are committed to the Lord and have stated their intention of remaining Christians.

## INDIA: EVANGELIST MURDERED

Ravi Murmu, a Christian evangelist from Jamalpur, Bihar State, was brutally murdered on the night of 2 May. He was among a group of evangelists who were showing the Jesus film in nearby Laxmanpur. Some reports suggest Ravi stayed behind to fix the generator at the end of the film, while others say he was separated from the team on the way home.



**Christian evangelist Ravi Murmu was murdered following a showing of the Jesus film**

When he did not return home that night, a search was organised; his body was found with his right hand severed and deep cuts on his neck and other parts of his body. Ravi's personal belongings, including his watch, mobile phone and motorbike, were found with the body, suggesting that robbery had not been the motive for the attack. The police have reportedly detained two people in connection with the murder.

When asked how the family was coping with the murder, Ravi's brother (also an evangelist) replied, "The peace of God still reigns in this house and in this family." Ravi leaves behind his wife and an 8-year-old daughter.

## EGYPT: REPORT REVEALS INCREASING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHRISTIANS

A recent study from the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR) has detailed the increasing frequency and geographic scope of sectarian violence over the last two years.

The study found that between January 2008 and January 2010, there were at least 53 incidents of sectarian hostility or tension, in 17 of Egypt's 29 governorates. In Minya governorate alone there were 21 incidents.

The study sets out the main types of incidents. First are "acts of collective retribution", of which the majority involve Muslims attacking Christians. These occur when all the people in one group are held responsible for the actions of one member. If a Christian is accused of harming a Muslim, the Muslim community in that area believe that they all have a responsibility to take revenge for that act against the whole

Christian community. Recent examples include the violence in Nag Hammadi in January 2010 and Farshoot in November 2009 (see *Barnabas Aid* March/April 2010).

Secondly, violence is often prompted by Christians engaging in prayer or worship services, or building a church (see *Barnabas Aid* January/February 2010). Objections come not only from Muslim citizens but from state officials as well. The report states, "on more than one occasion, state representatives have refused to allow a group of Christians to worship in a home or have arrested and questioned those who do so."

The EIPR believes that the state does not have a plan for tackling the growing sectarian violence because, until recently, it denied the existence of any tension and viewed any incidents as isolated events. The

police seem unable or unwilling to intervene to protect the homes and property of Christians, and all too often no one is brought to justice for the violence.

However, it seems that state officials are now beginning to recognise the dangers of such tension and to admit that there is a problem. The report makes a number of recommendations to the Egyptian government, including investigating all incidents of sectarian violence, bringing those responsible to account and fairly compensating the victims. It also suggests reviewing Egyptian legislation to ensure it is free of faith-based discrimination. It calls on the Islamic and Christian religious establishments to work together to promote tolerance and coexistence.




# Christianity in the UK: rising to the challenges

**“Put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”  
(Ephesians 6:13)**

It is a commonplace even in secular circles that Western society is currently facing serious problems. Economic and financial crisis, political instability and social dislocation threaten the good order and flourishing of our communities, at local, national and international levels. As Christians we can trace these tensions to an underlying spiritual vacuum, generated by a widespread rejection of the Christian faith, and issuing in a crippling dearth of intellectual and moral absolutes. Yet the churches are struggling to re-fill this vacuum in the face of hostile forces arrayed against them.

As Christianity in the West has entered one of the most challenging periods of its long history, it has found itself seriously beset on two sides. On one front it faces an aggressive and strident secularism that is hostile to all religious faith. On another it is confronted by an energetic and partly radical Islam, which aspires to become the dominant religion in the West. Both these movements want to weaken the influence of Christianity and relegate it to a purely private and personal sphere. Their effects can already be clearly seen in the UK.

Secularism and humanism often seek to portray Christianity as an outdated belief system and the Bible as composed largely of myth. In popular literature the person of Jesus is caricatured without regard to responsible historical scholarship. Many of British society’s opinion-formers lose no opportunity to convey the message that Christians are intellectually inadequate or irresponsible, socially limited or ludicrous, and morally juvenile or hypocritical. This message has now become a widely accepted – almost standard – view within all the important institutions and media that shape national life.

Islam’s challenge to the West, not least to the UK, is multi-faceted. In its politicised forms it calls into question the established order of secular liberal democracy, and confronts widely accepted Western

norms of freedom and equality, tolerance and individual rights, in pursuit of a more dominant role for itself within society. Religiously it is engaged with vigour and commitment in Muslim mission (*dawa*), and is an enthusiastic participant in the interfaith dialogue movement. These discussions, however necessary in a plural society, have tended to reinforce the widespread conviction that all religions are much the same, and to mute the distinctives of the Christian message, while at the same time presenting Islam as a religion that is morally, theologically and spiritually superior.

The churches in the UK have not always responded well to this twofold challenge. Christianity is widely perceived as divided, often with good reason. The lack of an agreed stance on a large range of theological and moral issues, and of a common view on the place of religion in the social and political sphere, has not only weakened Christian witness; it has also left Christians increasingly vulnerable to discrimination and marginalisation. Urgent and determined action is required in many areas if the churches are to stem, and then reverse, the advance of secularism and Islam.

In this extended pull-out supplement we focus in particular on the issues raised by the challenge of Islam to society and the churches. A major article explains the increasing Islamisation of the West, with special reference to the UK, considering in particular its effect on institutions and specific groups, and on the Christian community. There follows an introduction to an exciting new initiative, sponsored by Barnabas Fund, to promote the spiritual transformation of the UK. This strategy is designed to be a dynamic and effective response to the current crisis, for which we will invite your encouragement and your prayers. While this deals mainly with the UK it also has great relevancy in the Australian context. We pray it will help you to think more deeply about Christianity in Australia and as a result pray and give yourself to promote a spiritual transformation here also.

# The Islamisation of the West

## INTRODUCTION

**“Islam entered Europe twice and left it... Perhaps the next conquest, Allah willing, will be by means of preaching and ideology. The conquest need not necessarily be by the sword... Perhaps we will conquer these lands without armies. We want an army of preachers and teachers who will present Islam in all languages and in all dialects.” – Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a popular Sunni Muslim cleric, head of the European Council for Fatwa and Research<sup>1</sup>**

Since the 1960s large numbers of Muslims have been migrating to the West. Muslim migration is unusual because of radicals within the community who are *deliberately* seeking to create dramatic changes in their host societies; they want Islam to gain social, cultural, economic and political power.

has been dramatic. In Western Europe, there were only about 50,000 Muslims in 1900. By 1970 the number had grown to 3-4 million, and by 2008 it exceeded 25 million. Forty percent of Rotterdam’s population is Muslim. In Brussels the figure is 33 percent and in Marseilles and Malmo 25 percent. Muslims comprise an estimated 20 percent of the population of inner London, 15 percent of the population in Birmingham, and 10 percent in Paris and Copenhagen. Muhammad has become the most common name for newborn boys in Brussels and Amsterdam, and the third most common in England. Muslim populations are growing much faster than non-Muslim ones. This growth is due to continued migration, higher birth rates and conversions. Many Muslim leaders have expressed their vision of an Islamic Europe in the foreseeable future, achieved primarily by demographic changes.

Bernard Lewis predicted in July 2004 that Muslims would form a majority in Europe by the end of the 21st century. He repeated his warning in 2007, arguing that Europe is experiencing a dramatic demographic shift coupled with a process of Islamisation.

**“We’re the ones who will change you ... Just look at the development within Europe, where the number of Muslims is expanding like mosquitoes. Every western woman in the EU is producing an average of 1.4 children. Every Muslim woman in the same countries are [sic] producing 3.5 children. By 2050, 30% of the population in Europe will be Muslim... Our way of thinking ... will prove more powerful than yours.” [Mullah Krekar, a Kurdish Islamist radical from Iraq, who has been granted asylum in Norway<sup>2</sup> ]**

Secularism has already undermined the Judeo-Christian basis of Western society, and this makes it easier for radical Muslims in the West to progress towards their goal. There are also other factors that seem to make many Westerners ashamed of their Judeo-Christian heritage and values. These factors include guilt and shame about two world wars, colonialism, racism and the Holocaust.

What is happening in the West is linked to worldwide developments in Islam. Muslims around the globe are regaining their confidence and promoting a resurgence of Islam. Their aim is to establish Muslim control in politics, economics and culture in every country. In this process the Islamic world is growing more assertive and intolerant towards the West. This resurgence of Islam and the increasing power of Islamism (political Islam) strongly impact Muslim communities in the West. In response, the West is gradually changing its structures, laws and customs to suit its Muslim communities.

## MIGRATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Muslims are still a minority in the West; however, their growth rate

### Example: the number of Muslims in Britain

The 2001 UK census found that 1,591,126 people identified themselves as Muslims – this amounted to 2.7% of the total population.<sup>4</sup> However, other estimates from Muslim bodies, NGOs and academics suggest that the real figure was much higher. In 2002 Professor M. Anwar, head of the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations at the University of Warwick, calculated that the Muslim population was 1.8 million. In 2001 the Muslim Council of Great Britain estimated that there had been 1.7 million Muslims in the UK in 1999. In 2002 a Government sponsored delegation of British Muslims told senior figures in Egypt that there were about 3 million Muslims in Britain.<sup>5</sup> British Census records have also been criticised because vast numbers of respondents have refused to answer the question about religious affiliation. This evidence suggests that the government is underplaying the size of the British Muslim population.

So even though recent government estimates have shown dramatic increases in the size of the Muslim population from their earlier estimates, they may still vastly underestimate the true size of the Muslim population and should therefore be treated with caution.

<sup>1</sup> Yusuf al-Qaradawi on Al-Jazeera Television (Qatar), 24 January 1999, <http://www.aljazeera.net/programs/shareea/articles/2001/7/7-6-2.htm>, quoted in MEMRI Special Dispatch Series, No. 447, 6 December 2002.

<sup>2</sup> “Krekar claims Islam will win”, *Aftenposten*, 13 March 2006.

<sup>3</sup> “Islamic Europe?” *The Weekly Standard*, 4 October 2004; “Europe Will Be Islamic By End Of This Century Says Princeton Prof”, *Free Republic*, 28 July 2008.

<sup>4</sup> “UK Population”, *British Council*, [http://www.britishcouncil.org/diversity/race\\_population.html](http://www.britishcouncil.org/diversity/race_population.html), viewed 13 January 2003.

<sup>5</sup> “British Muslims visit Cairo and Riyadh, Jan 02”, Press Release: [www.bashirkhanbhai.co.uk/cl\\_cairovisitjan02.htm](http://www.bashirkhanbhai.co.uk/cl_cairovisitjan02.htm), viewed 14 January 2004.



The Office for National Statistics found that the Muslim population had multiplied ten times faster than the rest of society during the period from 2004 to 2008. In 2008 the government's Labour Force Survey calculated that the British Muslim population in 2008 was 2.4 million.<sup>6</sup> However, this may well be a considerable underestimate.

Barnabas Fund has undertaken some intensive research into this question. Embassies of Muslim states were approached and asked for their current figures on the number of Muslims in Britain whom they represent, and published material from government agencies (such as the Department of Communities and Local Government) as well as Muslim NGOs dealing with specific Muslim ethnic groups was used. Low and high estimates were recorded, and the results are shown in the following table:

	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Pakistanis (1st generation immigrants only)	900,000	1,200,000
Bangladeshis	353,000	500,000
Indians	160,000	200,000
Afghans	55,000	70,000
Iranians	75,000	85,000
Turks	230,000	500,000
Arabs	250,000	400,000
North Africans	130,000	130,000
Somalis	100,000	150,000
Other Sub-Saharan Africans	70,000	300,000
European Muslims e.g. Albanians, Kosovars	70,000	100,000
Asylum-seekers	?	?
South-East Asians	?	?
Converts to Islam	?	?
Others	?	?
	2,393,000	3,635,000

? indicates that reliable figures are unavailable.

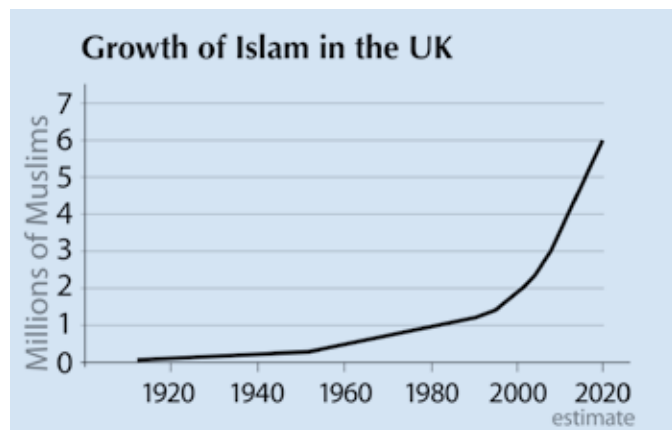
In 2007, there were 28,300 people who applied for asylum in the UK. In 2008 the figure was 30,545. Most asylum-seekers end up staying in the UK, and many of them are Muslims. Making a conservative guess that a third of asylum-seekers are Muslims an extra 10,000 Muslims are added to the British population every year. Because very few asylum applications are accepted, and most applicants who stay do so illegally, the great majority of this 10,000 will not be included in embassy figures. Estimates for the number of asylum seekers currently resident in the UK range from 620,000 to 1.1 million, who could include between 200,000 and 350,000 Muslims. There are no reliable figures for converts to Islam, but estimates range from 10,000 to 60,000.

Pakistani-origin Muslims form by far the largest single group of British Muslims. **It is important to note that the figures from the Pakistani High Commission cover only first-generation Pakistani immigrants.** But many Pakistani-background Britons are now second, third and even fourth generation immigrants; a reasonable estimate would be between 600,000 and 800,000. So the total figure for Pakistani Muslims must be far higher than the table indicates, perhaps between 1.5 and 2 million.

So although the minimum figure in the table matches the government estimate of 2.4 million, it is likely to be too low. It would seem fair to estimate the current (2010) number of Muslims in the UK as being certainly 3 million, most likely at least 3.2 million and possibly as many as 4.8 million.

How long has it taken for the British Muslim population to grow to this size? In 1915 there were only 10,000 Muslims in the UK, and the level remained low for the next four decades. The main waves of Muslim immigrants arrived in Britain after the Second World War and as British colonies gained independence. By 1954 there were some 24,000 Muslims. Most of the new arrivals came from the Indian subcontinent (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh) in search of jobs. Later waves of immigrants included Asian Muslims evicted from Uganda by Idi Amin in 1972. Arab Muslims from various countries in the Middle East experiencing economic difficulties, civil war and persecution also found refuge in Britain. Iranians fleeing the Islamic Revolution of 1979, and later Kurds fleeing persecution in Iraq and Turkey, joined the flow. Muslim immigrants and asylum-seekers arrived from the Balkans during the disintegration of Yugoslavia and from Afghanistan during its decades of war and civil strife. Recently there has been an influx from Somalia and sub-Saharan African countries.

The following graph shows how the Muslim community in Britain has grown since 1915, and how the growth has accelerated drastically in the last decade. It also gives an estimate of the number of Muslims in Britain in the year 2020 (6 million).



### Impact of Islamism

Many Muslims who settle in the West are traditionalists wanting to recreate in their new country the Islam of their homeland. A few are secularists who migrated in order to escape the growth of radical Islam in their home country. Still others are Islamists who have moved to the West with the definite plan of working for the rule of Islam and sharia throughout the world. It is this last group who are spearheading the process of Islamisation in the West, although many mainstream Muslim organisations are also actively supportive of it.

Islamism is inherently political and considers that the state powers must be controlled by Islam. It is deeply rooted in orthodox Islam and thus appeals greatly to many conservative and traditional Muslim groups. Islamists have developed programmes for

<sup>6</sup> Richard Kerbaj, "Muslim population rising 10 times faster than rest of society", *The Times*, 30 January 2009.

Islamising the West in stages. These include infiltrating both Western Muslim communities and non-Muslim Western societies, especially their power centres.

The current population explosion in Muslim countries, coupled with the growth in the number of Muslims migrating into Western states, is seen by many Islamists as a sign of God's providence, tilting the global balance in favour of Islam. They believe that Muslims in the West must seize this unique opportunity to expand Islam's sphere of influence, changing Western Christian and secular culture in favour of Islam.

Islamists want Islam to be not just an equal alongside the many other faith communities, but to be privileged and protected, the dominant player. Islamic norms and practices are promoted as Muslims make their presence felt in politics, economics, law, education and the media.

Islamists are never satisfied with what they have achieved, but use every opportunity to ask for more. The then Bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir-Ali, complained that in dealing with some Muslims "there can never be sufficient appeasement and new demands will continue to be made".<sup>7</sup>

Islamists have created a vast network of interlocking organisations committed to spreading Islam in the West. These institutions are used to lobby for Muslim causes. They are often led by well-educated Muslims born in the West, who are able to engage effectively with wider society.

### THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN ISLAMISTS AND THE EXTREME LEFT

The fall of Soviet communism weakened the Western hard left and forced it to look for other allies in its struggle against capitalism and Christianity. It has developed links to radical Islamists, many of whom take part in demonstrations against Western governments and their policies and stir up resentment among many Muslims. Although Islamism and the extreme left have very different ideas and goals, they are united in their hatred for America.

Left-wing intellectuals present a sanitised view of Islam, ignoring its terrorist forms, playing down the place of Islamism and emphasising the guilt of the West. They offer Islamists a privileged platform in the media channels and academic centres that they control, calling any criticism of Islam "Islamophobic" and thus silencing all dissent.

### ISLAMIC MISSION (DA'WA)

Islam is a missionary faith that makes *da'wa* (mission) a duty for individual Muslims and also for Muslim communities and states. *Da'wa* has two dimensions: first, internal *da'wa* aims to revive the faith and commitment of Muslims; then external *da'wa* calls on non-Muslims to accept Islam. It is not limited to converting individuals, but includes converting whole societies and establishing states or enclaves ruled by Islam.

Islamist movements are dedicated to *da'wa* as part of their attempt to make Islam the dominant religion in the non-Muslim

world.. They expect Muslims in the West to witness to Islam and persuade or force their adopted states to accept sharia law. Islamists' efforts in such fields as law, economics and culture are not just small steps to meet the needs of Muslim individuals and the local Muslim community, but are part of an overall plan to change the character of host states until they become part of the global Islamic *umma* (nation).

Islamists now encourage Muslims to make their mission more suitable for the West. Terms and concepts that might offend Western people are avoided. Islam is presented not as an alien religion to be imposed on Western society by force, but as a peaceful and tolerant religion, closely related to Christianity and dedicated to social justice and equality. Islamists also often engage in interfaith dialogue with Christians with the aim of promoting Islam.

Oil-rich Muslim states such as Saudi Arabia, Libya and Iran are using their considerable resources and influence to fund and promote a large network of Islamic mission organisations. Non-Muslim societies and states are pressured to meet their demands.

At the same time, the threat of violence, whether terrorism or rioting, is part of *da'wa*. Western governments have to allocate vast resources to fighting Islamist terrorism. Terrorist threats also make governments more eager to respond positively to the requests of their Muslim communities, hoping that this will prevent them from becoming radicalised.

### MOSQUE-BUILDING

Some observers estimate that by 2007 there were over 1,700 mosques in the UK, over 1,600 in France, over 1,200 in the US and over 1,000 in Germany. The largest and most ornate mosques are often funded and supported by Islamic states. The increasing numbers of mosques, and their magnificence, speak of the presence and permanence of Islam in the West and reflect the growing confidence of Muslim communities.

Recently plans to build several "mega-mosques" in the UK have caused much controversy and raised inter-communal tensions. Muslims claim that these structures will be needed to accommodate their growing numbers in the West. However, the need for Muslim places of worship could be met by smaller, less eye-catching buildings. The ambitious designs of many mosques suggest a desire to have a very visible presence, claim superiority for Islam, and dwarf Christian cathedrals and churches.

### ISLAMIC SHARIA

Sharia law defines the faith and identity of most Muslims, who submit to it as God's will. Traditionalists, Islamists and modernists all take this view, while differing on how sharia should be understood and put into practice. In the West there is pressure to have parts of sharia added to the secular legal system and applied in the public sphere.

As a result of Muslim demands, various public bodies, including the police, hospitals and the prison system, allow Muslims to follow certain sharia regulations. Informal, voluntary sharia courts are operating in many Muslim communities. These put Muslim women

<sup>7</sup> "Bishop attacks 'Muslim hypocrisy'", *BBC NEWS*, 5 November 2006.



in real danger of severe discrimination in matters of marriage, divorce, custody of children and inheritance.

Important non-Muslim public figures have joined in the demand for an increased public role for sharia. In Britain the Archbishop of Canterbury has argued that some role for Islamic law is unavoidable and that in order to hold society together the country should permit Muslims to follow some parts of it. He was followed by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Phillips, who argued that sharia could operate in Britain in the field of marriage, family disputes, and finance as long as it did not contradict the laws of the land. He also said that sharia should be one (voluntary) basis of arbitration and mediation, which could then be enforced by English law. Similar voices are heard in other Western states.

#### THREATS TO FREE SPEECH

Islam does not separate religion from the state, and many Muslims believe that the state should protect Islam. Muslim institutions in the West frequently complain about Islamophobia and demand laws to ban hate speech and insulting religion. They are supported by Muslim states and Muslim international organisations such as the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), who seek to give Islam a special place in all societies. They claim that Islam, the Qur'an, sharia and Muhammad must all be protected from criticism, however factual the criticism might be. In 2007 an act was passed in the UK outlawing the use of threatening words or behaviour meant to incite hatred against groups of people because of their faith.

Islamist organisations in the West also use the laws on libel, human rights and equality to silence any criticism of Islam. Large funds are set aside for hiring skilful lawyers. This

approach puts off many people who might otherwise criticise Islam and so limits their free speech. This situation is beginning to limit public discussion of Islam and even of the threat posed by Islamist terrorism. It presents a real challenge to both civil rights and national security in Western states.

The OIC and its member states are also pressuring other countries at the UN. Since 1999 the UN Commission on Human Rights, and its successor the UN Human Rights Council, have passed annual resolutions criticising and opposing the defamation of religions; one was even passed in the General Assembly in 2007. These resolutions are non-binding, but the UN has also established a committee to work on a binding treaty against defamation of religions.

Legal protection of this kind for *individuals*, including Muslims, is acceptable to most people, but the OIC's aim is rather to protect a set of *ideas*, namely the religion of Islam, from any kind of criticism. Moreover, although these resolutions supposedly apply to all religions, the most recent ones have particularly singled out Islam as needing protection.

This campaign is a first step towards changes in the law of Western and other non-Muslim states to favour Islam. As a result the UN is increasingly censoring its own language and inserting terms such as "blasphemy" and "defamation of Islam" into its documents. Non-Muslim states seem to have decided to keep quiet about Islam. Thus freedom of speech and expression is being limited in many international organisations and conferences.

#### VIOLENCE AND THE THREAT OF VIOLENCE

Some Muslims have resorted to violence and the threat of violence to frighten governments into meeting their demands. Examples include the riots in Oldham, UK in 2001 and in Paris in 2005. This approach seems to be effective in the West, where governments want to avoid riots in the streets of their cities. The Danish cartoons of Muhammad and the riots and violence that followed prompted many Western politicians to express sympathy with Muslim anger.

In addition, leading Western personalities, both non-Muslim and Muslim, have been threatened, attacked or even murdered. Examples are the fatwa against Salman Rushdie in Britain (1989); the assassination of Theo Van Gogh (2004) in the Netherlands; death threats against the politicians Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Geert Wilders in the Netherlands; death threats to the *Jyllands-Posten* editor Flemming Rose and cartoonist Kurt Westergaard in Denmark; and a plot to kill cartoonist Lars Vilks in Sweden. As a result the media, academics and publishers have also begun to censor their own work.

#### PRESENTATION OF ISLAM

Islamists present Islam to the non-Muslim West as tolerant and peaceable. They have a project to rewrite texts about Islam for Western audiences. They present Islam and Islamic history in the best possible light, stressing only its peaceful and pleasant features while denying the intolerant and violent ones, not least its many wars of expansion. They have created an atmosphere in which it is becoming difficult for public figures to criticise Islam or talk openly about the challenges posed by Islamism.

Islamists are also seeking to change the way that Western people see the world (the Islamisation of knowledge). Islamic bodies have been founded in the West to promote an Islamic way of thinking, based on the principles of the Qur'an, the words and deeds of Muhammad, and the ideas of Islamic civilisation. Some of these bodies are linked to Islamist movements, while presenting a moderate face to their Western audiences. Their academic standing encourages some Western academics to co-operate with them.

Some Western governments are changing the language they use to describe the Islamist terrorist threat. Terms such as "War against terror", "Islamic terrorism" and "Islamist terrorism" are being abandoned, because they anger Muslims and increase tensions with the wider Muslim world. No link may be openly made between Islam and terrorism or radicalism. For example, in April 2010 the US government decided to ban all mention of Islam in important national security documents.

### ISLAMIC FINANCE

Islamist movements deny that Western financial products are consistent with sharia. So they have invented a range of alternatives and are trying to convince other Muslims to use them. The Western media has supported the founding of Islamic banks and financial institutions in the West. Western governments increasingly support the introduction of this "Islamic finance", hoping to attract investment from the oil-rich Middle East.

London has become the main Western centre for Islamic finance and investment outside the Middle East. In a 2005 survey several Islamic companies indicated that the UK was the most sharia-friendly of all the Western countries.

By accepting these Islamist interpretations of sharia as representative of all Islam, Western governments have strengthened Islamists, while weakening Muslim moderates and progressives. Individual Muslims are now under increasing pressure to use so-called "sharia-compliant" financial products.

### EDUCATION

Islamists would like to control the whole of Western education. Although the number of Muslim schools is growing, most Muslim children attend state schools. Wherever possible, Muslims demand that Muslim girls be allowed to wear Islamic clothing. They also call for special prayer rooms to be set aside in schools for Muslim prayers, for halal food to be provided, and for permission for Muslim pupils to leave school premises for Friday prayers.

Other requests include the provision of alternatives to mixed-gender sports activities, and the exemption of Muslim pupils from dance and drama. Where Islam is not already part of the curriculum, there are calls to include it, preferably taught by Muslim teachers from outside the schools. Further, some Muslims check school textbooks and ask for any supposedly anti-Islamic material to be removed, even if it is true. They try to vet all books about Islam in schools, colleges, universities and public libraries, and to influence publishers to provide textbooks that present a positive view of Islam. Governments, educators and publishers wanting to avoid being accused of prejudice, racism and Islamophobia often yield to such requests.

### ACADEMIC CENTRES OF ISLAMIC AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

Islamists also fund academic chairs and support Muslim academics taking up lecturing posts in Western universities. A growing proportion of senior staff positions in Western departments of Islamic and Middle Eastern studies, and much of their funding, now come from Muslim countries. But funding from Muslim sources often has strings attached, and there is clear evidence that at some universities the choice of teaching materials, the subject areas and degrees offered, the recruitment of staff and advisory boards and even the selection of students are now influenced by donors. University staff may censor their own work so as not to offend the donors.

### RADICAL MUSLIMS AT WESTERN UNIVERSITIES

In recent decades Islamist activists have gained a larger place in many Islamic student societies in colleges and universities. They radicalise Muslim students, encourage separation and isolation from the staff and non-Muslim students, and encourage female Muslim students to wear Islamic dress. A number of Islamist terrorists studied at Western colleges and universities.

### NO-GO ZONES FOR NON-MUSLIMS?

Poverty, racism and the need for mutual support made the first generations of Muslims in the West live close together. But more recently this process has been encouraged by Islamists and even by governments. It creates a growing sense of separation from wider society and encourages young Muslims to seek their identity in radical Islam. Extremist literature is being widely distributed in some mosques and Islamic centres, further encouraging this process.

An Islamic character is being imposed on many inner-city areas where Muslim social networks are very powerful. In such areas non-Muslims feel outnumbered and threatened by the Islamic community. Some commentators suggest that they have become "no-go" areas that it is dangerous for non-Muslims to enter.

### CONCLUSION

Governments and the public must be made aware of the danger of allowing Islamist activists to take over Muslim organisations and claim to represent all Muslims. The excessive demands of Islamists must be rejected, along with their blaming of host societies for all the difficulties faced by Muslims. It is important that democratic Western societies do not give up their hard-won heritage of equality before the law, freedom of expression and freedom of religion. It must also be made clear that tolerance must work both ways and that threats of violence are unacceptable. Muslim communities must try much harder to isolate and expose Islamists who reject integration and the violent radicals among them.

For Christians the growing Islamisation of the West can be seen as both a challenge and an opportunity to sharpen our thinking and renew our evangelism. As we Christians see Muslim zeal, commitment, and willingness to sacrifice, we should be driven to repent, to pray for revival and act boldly for God in this generation. We need to stand firm on our Biblical foundations, beware of compromises and reach out in love to Muslims, offering them the Gospel of salvation in Christ.



# Operation Nehemiah: towards the spiritual transformation of the UK

The preceding pages have set out some of the challenges faced by Christianity in the UK, especially from the increasing power of Islam in the West. Some Christians suggest that these are a threat and a warning of a coming judgment on a society that has rejected God, the Gospel of Christ, and its Christian and Biblical heritage and turned to relativism, atheism and immorality. Be that as it may, there is a widespread view among Christians of many traditions that the churches' response to these difficulties has been insufficiently focused, coherent and effective, and that a new approach is required.

Since its beginnings in 1989 Barnabas Fund has sought to address the challenge of Islam to the West, including the UK. Throughout this period we have presented uncomfortable facts that others have sometimes been reluctant to acknowledge or have even ridiculed. We have had not only to challenge the thinking of Christians but also to address societal issues.

So, for example, when an attempt was made to introduce a law in the UK against incitement to religious hatred, it was Barnabas Fund that initiated the opposition to it, pointing out the devastating effect the well-meant law would have had on free speech and religious liberty. Our International Director, Patrick Sookhdeo, chaired a campaign group that secured the defeat of the bill on two separate occasions. Similarly in Australia and New Zealand we were able to take action on this issue both directly and through working with other groups. We are currently involved in a similar campaign in the US.

As a result of our first campaign against the Islamic apostasy law Prince Charles convened a meeting of Muslim and Christian leaders at Clarence House to discuss

the issue and invited Patrick Sookhdeo to brief those present. In this context we were able to present the problems facing Muslim converts to Christianity, and at the end the Prince expressed his sympathy and concern and called for action.

In many of our initiatives we have had to stand alone, often being criticised as extremist by church and mission leaders. Yet much has been achieved, for which we are thankful, and the weight of evidence regarding the challenge of Islam to the West now lies with us.

So on the basis of more than 20 years of engagement with this issue, and in response to the urging of many of our supporters to take a more definite stand, we have felt it right under God to initiate and sponsor a new programme of action. This will first be focused on the UK, but we hope and pray that it may spread to other countries also.

*Operation Nehemiah* is grounded on the firm conviction that as a nation the UK has largely forgotten the Christian faith – the core truths and basic principles of the Bible that have shaped our national life – and that individual churches and Christians have shared to some extent in this collective amnesia. Therefore the campaign aspires to nothing less than the spiritual transformation of the UK.

*Operation Nehemiah* will address issues that affect the whole of the country, and will counter opposition to the Christian faith from whatever source this comes. But it will concentrate in particular on meeting the challenge of Islam, in its many and varied forms. Outreach to those currently outside the Body of Christ, and building up those already within (and, God willing, new converts too), will both be integral parts of the strategy.

Many aspects of the campaign have still to be worked out in detail, but it will comprise the following ten elements:

- **Society.** We will campaign for a “minimum” space for Christianity in the public square, opposing its marginalisation relative to other faiths and discrimination against it based on secular assumptions.
- **Lobbying.** We propose to engage with the political process to combat moves further to secularise society, limit freedom of speech, religion and conscience, or give protected status to any faith.
- **Theology.** We will seek to develop among Christians a Bible-based theology, a theological understanding of secularism and Islam, and an insight into the theological challenges facing the churches.
- **Mission.** We will encourage and support the evangelisation of the UK, especially outreach to Muslims, and will also seek to defend Christians from the impact of Islamic mission.
- **Education.** We mean to prioritise education, by encouraging good teaching within the churches, disseminating relevant information about the nature and agendas of Islam, and resourcing Christian instruction in schools.
- **Ministry.** Our strategy will include the development of resources to promote discipling and teaching, and especially of programmes to address the needs of converts from Islam.
- **Prayer.** We intend to promote and organise serious and sustained intercession for the UK, especially regarding the impact of Islam on society – and not least for the conversion of Muslims.
- **Morality.** We aim to teach Christians the importance of holy living, integrity and righteousness, and to demonstrate the beneficial effects of Christian ethics upon society.
- **Finance.** We will work to create a funding base to provide support for the activities listed above, mobilising Christians to support the programme not only in prayer but also through finance.
- **Research.** We will monitor the impact of secularism and Islam on UK society, the churches and mission, and the global developments that affect it, producing materials to guide Christian decision-making.

We trust that, with the Lord's help, *Operation Nehemiah* will be delivered by a broad coalition of Christian organisations, churches and concerned individuals. In future editions of *Barnabas Aid* we will be updating you on the launch and progress of the campaign and suggesting ways in which you can get involved. But at this stage we would ask for your prayers, as we draw together the various strands of the developing strategy and turn them into specific actions.

## BARNABAS FUND HOPE AND AID FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

### Australia

Postal Suite 107  
236 Hyperdome  
Loganholme QLD 4129  
Telephone (07) 3806 1076 or 1300 365799  
Fax: (07) 3806 4076  
Email [bfaustralia@barnabasfund.org](mailto:bfaustralia@barnabasfund.org)

### New Zealand

PO Box 27 6018, Manukau City, Manukau, 2241  
Telephone (09) 280 4385 or 0800 008 805  
Email [office@barnabasfund.org.nz](mailto:office@barnabasfund.org.nz)

### UK

9 Priory Row, Coventry CV1 5EX  
Telephone 024 7623 1923  
Fax 024 7683 4718

From outside the UK  
Telephone +44 24 7623 1923  
Fax +44 24 7683 4718  
Email [info@barnabasfund.org](mailto:info@barnabasfund.org)  
Registered Charity Number 1092935  
Company Registered in England  
Number 4029536

### Jersey

Le Jardin, La Rue A Don, Grouville,  
Jersey, Channel Islands JE3 9GB  
Telephone 700600 Fax 700601  
Email [bfjersey@barnabasfund.org](mailto:bfjersey@barnabasfund.org)

### USA

6731 Curran St, McLean, VA 22101  
Telephone (703) 288-1681  
or toll-free 1-866-936-2525  
Fax (703) 288-1682  
Email [usa@barnabasaaid.org](mailto:usa@barnabasaaid.org)

### International Headquarters

The Old Rectory, River Street,  
Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 5DB, UK  
Telephone 01672 564938  
Fax 01672 565030

From outside UK  
Telephone +44 1672 564938  
Fax +44 1672 565030  
Email [info@barnabasfund.org](mailto:info@barnabasfund.org)

[www.barnabasfund.org](http://www.barnabasfund.org)

**In this edition we give advance notice of two forthcoming titles from Isaac Publishing, highlight some of our booklets, and feature our new DVD on supporting Christian children.**

## Coming Soon

*Isaac Publishing is pleased to announce the imminent publication of two new titles. Advance orders are welcome, but please note that the books may not be available for a few months in some parts of the world. They will be advertised again after publication.*

### ***Tainted Legacy: Islam, Colonialism and Slavery in Northern Nigeria*** Yusufu Turaki

In recent years thousands of Christians in Nigeria have died in brutal attacks by militant Muslims. In this important study, Yusufu Turaki traces the origins of this violence to the historical impact of Islamic colonialism and slavery on Northern Nigerian society. He argues that these practices have bequeathed a legacy of discrimination and cruelty to the Christians of Northern Nigeria.

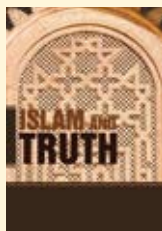
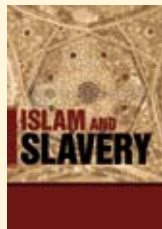
**Isaac Publishing, paperback, 210 pages, \$20 + P&P**

### ***Breaking Through the Barriers: Leading Muslims to Christ*** Rosemary Sookhdeo

Christians who want to reach Muslims for Christ need to have a basic understanding of Islam and how it differs from Christianity. We must also know something about Muslim culture and how our Muslim neighbours will expect us to relate to them. Rosemary Sookhdeo has provided this accessible introduction to guide us through the challenges of evangelism among Muslims and to help us share our faith effectively.

**Isaac Publishing, paperback, c.192 pages, price to be confirmed**

## Now Available



These four booklets provide background information about a range of issues relating to the nature and practice of Islam. They trace key themes and developments in Islamic teaching, describe the challenge of Islam to society and the churches in the West, and highlight some of the reasons why Christians are persecuted in many Islamic contexts.

Advertised in a previous edition of *Barnabas Aid*, these booklets are now in stock.

**9-12 pp, \$1 + P&P**

## Why Does Barnabas Fund Exist?



### ***A Call to Compassion*** Patrick Sookhdeo

Many organisations are dedicated to the relief of poverty, the righting of injustice and helping the persecuted. So how is Barnabas Fund different from the others? We have prepared this booklet to explain why we exist, why Christians suffer (especially in the Muslim world), and how your gifts can help them.

We begin by looking at what the Lord Jesus said about helping other Christians, the example of the early churches, and practical reasons for Christians to help each other. We then look at what the Bible says about different kinds of poverty, and the link between this and persecution. We also examine why Christians so frequently suffer in Muslim-majority contexts. Finally two case studies show how small gifts can transform whole Christian communities.

**60 pp, available free of charge**

## “Whoever welcomes a child in my Name...”



### ***Bringing Hope to Christian Children***

Where Christians are persecuted, it is often the children who suffer the most. Young and vulnerable, they are easy targets, unable to protect themselves or flee. Many have to deal with more pain and suffering for Christ than some of us will experience in our lifetime.

Barnabas Fund has produced a DVD (4.00 mins approx.) that highlights the plight of needy Christian children and shows the ways in which Barnabas is helping them. It can be used to raise awareness, encourage prayer and stimulate practical support.

**Available free of charge**

**To order any of these products, please visit [www.barnabasfund.org/shop](http://www.barnabasfund.org/shop). Alternatively please contact your nearest Barnabas office (addresses on back cover).**

“Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life”

### A meditation by Francis Omondi, a senior Christian leader in Kenya, on the recent sufferings of persecuted Christians in Nigeria

**“To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. I know your afflictions and your poverty – yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.”**  
Revelation 2:8-11

Every time Christians suffer, we should see Christ suffering in them. Their blood is His own, and their tears are His own, and we are invited into the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings. (Philippians 3:10)

This year began with very disturbing news of attacks on defenceless Christian communities in Jos, Nigeria. This place was once peaceful, a buffer between the south of Nigeria and the turbulent north. But its large Christian population has come under increasing attack from Muslim extremists, which has made living there almost impossible. In light of the recent atrocities, one Christian leader stated, “We live in the abode of Satan himself!”

The ancient city of Smyrna had much in common with Jos today, and in chapter 2 of the book of Revelation the Lord spoke by His Spirit to encourage the church there. He

showed them that He was aware of their physical plight, living in economic poverty, and He also acknowledged that they had been through immense afflictions. These problems imposed daily pressure on them to turn away from God.

The Christians of Smyrna were facing pressure from fellow citizens who, although they were Jews, are described here as a “synagogue of Satan”. These Jews had turned against the Christians and were slandering them, probably by denouncing them to the Roman authorities. Thus they are doing Satan’s work.

But the Lord also warned that even bleaker days were ahead as a result. More suffering would follow at the hands of the Romans: some believers would be thrown into jail, which might lead to their deaths. This event too is attributed to the devil. But notice that this testing was only temporary and relatively brief. Also Christians who overcame it, and the other trials they endured, by remaining faithful even to the point of death, would be given the crown of life, and they would not be hurt at all by the second death.

This passage has at least two lessons for us:

First, Satan has power to inflict evil. He works through those who have given themselves to him to cause evil for the body of Christ. Those who want to walk in faithfulness to the Lord may come under great pressure: they may be tempted by evil; they may be afflicted; they may even suffer great harm.

The ability to choose is part of our human nature created by God. We have freedom to follow the Lord or to follow Satan, and this will not be taken away from us. So when



those who do evil deal Christians a heavy blow, as they did in Jos, this is certainly not the will of God; rather those who have carried out this heinous crime have used their freedom wrongly. Events such as this, in which human freedom is abused to defy the will of God and destroy the lives of many other human beings, are tragedies in the fullest sense of the word.

How then do we view death and tragedy on this large scale? What will enable us to face such difficulties and transform us into faithful witnesses to God’s grace? Tohito Kagawa reflects on death in his book *Meditation*, where he says:

I do not deny the eventuality of death, death lies sternly upon my course, nevertheless I believe that Love [the love of God] has far greater power than death. “Death is swallowed up in love ...”

Love is stronger than death, love’s glory tramples even death under feet [*sic*]. I am thinking that death is transformed through love. Death is an aspect of change, while love is the substance that persists through all changes.



Christian women in Dogo Nagawa, near Jos, Nigeria, scene of a terrible anti-Christian massacre in March

Secondly, the evil that happens to us is not final, however grievous it may appear now. The harm caused to us by our painful trials does not have the last word in our lives; the Lord sets a limit to the pain we endure today. God is aware of it and will help us through our ordeal if we trust Him. Even the threat posed by death is nullified by the promise

that Christ will save us from the second death. So our suffering in this age is limited by the Lord Himself, and we know that if we die for Him He will deliver us from eternal death and give us eternal life.

I have been amazed by the stories that have emerged from an earlier outbreak of anti-

Christian violence in Borno, northern Nigeria. A well-coordinated attack on Christians triggered by Boko Haram (a Muslim extremist group) left churches and homes destroyed by fire and many Christians dead. Perhaps the most striking story concerned the brutal murder of two pastors who refused to convert to Islam to gain their freedom and save their lives. One of them, George Orjih, preached to the leader of the militants about Christ before his martyrdom. A fellow kidnap victim who was later released reported:

While we were lying there, tied up, George turned to me and said, "If you survive, tell my brethren that I died well, and I am living with Christ. And if we die we will know that we died for the Lord".

George is said to have been singing and praying throughout the ordeal, encouraging the believers not to give up but to be faithful even to death.

Not even death, not even martyrdom, has the last word in the lives of Christians. The second death cannot touch us, and there remains for us a resurrection to eternal life.



A boy beside a car burned out in anti-Christian violence in Nigeria



# ★ Bethlehem School @ Looking Forward 🏠

Inside the building, the school is bright, tidy and spotlessly clean, decorated with children's handiwork. Outside, the play area is small but beautifully kept, with evergreen shrubs and trees around the grass, and an excellent array of outdoor play equipment under a trellis roof to provide shade in summer. Both the building and the equipment are painted in cheerful colours, and flowering plants complete the picture. Furniture in the school is made by local Christian craftsmen. *Where is this lovely school? Bethlehem.*

cross was buried deep in the foundations of the extension as a sign that the school is founded on the Lord Jesus Christ. The construction project also provided much-needed employment in the area; some of the builders were fathers of children at the school.

At the official opening of the new building, the head-teacher said "It is an occasion that only a few years ago seemed so far-fetched, a dream and a wish longed for, for ages." But thanks to funding from Barnabas Fund and our generous supporters, this dream became a reality.

## HARDSHIP IN BETHLEHEM

Today the pressure on Christians in Bethlehem is increasing. Unemployment in the area is high, and even higher amongst Christians. Some of the Muslim community make life very difficult for the Christians by intimidating, harassing and even attacking them physically, seizing their land and properties and boycotting their businesses.

Numbers are dwindling as many Christians emigrate from Bethlehem because of the

## THE DREAM BECOMES REALITY

St Aphem's Christian School in Bethlehem first opened its doors on 12 September 2003 thanks to financial assistance from Barnabas Fund. When the school began, it had 15 children, four boys and eleven girls aged between three and five. But as the school gained an excellent reputation for quality education in a healthy, happy environment, the number of pupils who wanted to join the school began to rise. As a new class was added each year, the school building had to be redeveloped to provide space for the growing numbers. A

**"St Aphem's School is shedding the light of hope for a brighter future, giving love and care, bringing joy and happiness, and spreading peace and reconciliation," said the school's headmistress in December 2006.**

hardship and discrimination, seeking a better future. But those who remain can feel even more vulnerable and marginalised as they are mainly the poorest Christians, those who cannot afford to leave. Reports suggest that Bethlehem's Christian population has declined from a 60% majority in 1990 to only about 30% today.

## HOW DOES ST APHREM'S RESPOND TO SUCH NEED?

- **Minimal Fees:** Christian schools make a huge difference for Christian children in places where theirs is the minority faith and they are discriminated against, but in Bethlehem private school fees are a luxury that most Christians cannot afford. However at St Aphrem's, no matter how poor the family are, their children can still get an education in a Christian environment. This is because, thanks to support from Barnabas Fund, the school is able to charge very low fees or, in some extreme cases, children attend free of charge.
- **Subjects:** There are 18 teachers at the school, to instruct the children in Christian religious education, languages (Arabic, English and Aramaic), maths, sciences (social and scientific), computer skills, physical education, music, and ethics.
- **Meals:** A study of Palestinian children showed that they are now shorter than in earlier generations, owing to poor nutrition. The father of one girl at the school mentioned to the teachers that his family can hardly ever afford to eat meat. Some of the families receive help in the form of food parcels (provided by Barnabas Fund through their churches), and once or twice a month the school provides simple cooked meals for the children.
- **Extra Tuition:** Many of the students come from families where the parents are illiterate, meaning they are unable to help and encourage their children academically. The school tries to work with these children through private tutoring sessions, to help them with their learning.
- **Activities:** In 2007, the teachers organised a summer school of games and activities to keep the children entertained during the holidays. They also developed an after-school programme of sports, music and French lessons for the children at the parents' request.

## IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT LESSONS

The teachers are always considering new ways of developing the curriculum to include more play and creative work and so help the students develop. The school day is interspersed with times of play.

Mrs Sarras is a teacher at St Aphrem's. She says "I always dreamt of working in an environment where the teacher is respected and has the chance to use modern teaching and learning methods; an environment where the child is the centre of education and where you can teach through play." The lesson on Valentine's Day this year was about the values of love and loving one another. One puzzled 5-year-old boy said to his teacher, "But you love us all the time. We don't need a special day!"

## KEEPING CHRIST AT THE CENTRE

Needy Christian families supported by St Aphrem's especially value the fact that Christ's words about loving one another are put into action at the school. These families see Christ reaching out to them through Barnabas Fund supporters, as your generous gifts enable them to offer their children a better future and encourage them in their faith.

*"In terms of schooling, life isn't easy for Christians," comments one Christian worker in Bethlehem, "public schools ... are imbued with Islamism ... their children could easily lose their Christian faith."*

One of the main reasons that St Aphrem's is so popular with Christian parents is due to its strong Christian principles, offering an environment that encourages and strengthens children in their faith in Jesus Christ from the three-year-olds upwards. The day starts with prayers and songs of praise in Arabic, the



**St Aphrem's is fortunate to have outdoor space for the children to play, as it is unusual to have an outdoor playground in Bethlehem**

children's mother tongue. The children are taught Christian hymns and songs and pray before meals. They are also taught Aramaic, the language that the Lord Jesus spoke, with help from a local church minister.

## REPUTATION LEADS TO GROWTH

St Aphrem's has quickly gained an impressive reputation. At an end-of-year party in 2009, the Head of Directorate at Bethlehem's Ministry of Education praised the school for its excellence and professional achievement. The school was also praised by the Archbishop of Canterbury and other senior church leaders from the UK who visited the school in December 2006.

## CAN YOU HELP?

Increasing numbers of parents want their children to study in such a loving Christian atmosphere. Seven years after it first opened, St Aphrem's is urgently seeking to expand again to accommodate over 200 students. Will you help to support this vital project with your prayer and gifts?



**Project Reference 65-251  
Expansion of Bethlehem School**



**The children enjoy sports and games to keep them healthy and active**

## Barnabas Fund represented in Toowoomba

This past Easter Barnabas Fund went to Easterfest in Toowoomba. We went with a twofold purpose of encouraging more folk to become aware of the plight of the Persecuted Church and let them know how Barnabas Fund seeks to bring hope and aid to our Christian brothers and sisters. Easterfest is the largest festival of its kind in Australia with around 40,000 people attending.

We are very grateful for the work of Barnabas Fund Church representatives who give of their time to share at local churches, Christian Events and Conventions about the ministry of Barnabas Fund. To find out what is involved in being a Church representative for Barnabas Fund, please see the article below.



## Raising our profile in New Zealand

January is the month of holidays, sea, sun and relaxation in the southern hemisphere and it is also the time for Christian camps and conferences. Mark Sims, Barnabas Fund's New Zealand Field Director, attended three events in January 2010 – the New Wine camps at Totara Springs near Matamata and El Rancho, Waikanae, and the Parachute Music Festival at Mystery Creek, Hamilton – to present the message of Barnabas Fund.

Below is a picture of the display stand at the four-day Parachute Music Festival, a Christian music festival with an attendance of over 25,000 people. Mark was ably assisted by three young men from Whitiara Bible Church, two of whom can be seen in the picture. *Barnabas Aid* magazines were distributed, and people were invited to sign the petition to abolish the Islamic law of apostasy. These events have been a great opportunity to take the message of the persecuted Church to a wider audience.

## Have you got a heart for the persecuted Church?

If you share our passion for serving persecuted Christians and have the skills and determination to help your church understand their plight, then being a Barnabas Fund volunteer might just be for you. There are three key roles:

**Church Reps** raise awareness of the persecuted Church by distributing our magazines, prayer materials and other literature among their church congregation and home groups; they encourage prayer; and some might choose to run special events that raise funds for vital projects supported by Barnabas Fund.

**Area Reps** make contact with local churches and Christian

leaders, seeking opportunities for Barnabas Fund to visit and speak. They also recruit and support church reps. We would love to see a Barnabas representative in every church.

**Speakers** visit churches and church meetings to speak on the subject of the persecuted Church, to be the voice for those who so often suffer without being heard.

If you're thinking "God is calling me to be involved", and you are interested in one of these roles, please contact our Australia office on 1300 365 799 or email [bfaustralia@barnabasfund.org](mailto:bfaustralia@barnabasfund.org) for more information.



# The aid agency for the persecuted Church



## Donation Details

Name ..... (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Rev, Dr)

Address .....

.....P/C.....

Phone .....

Email .....

- Please add me to your email news service.  
We will not give your details to anyone else.

**I want to give \$ .....**

- To wherever the need is greatest (General Fund)

- To .....  
Please give project name & or number\*

## Donation Options

- 1  **Cheque/Money Order** - made payable to Barnabas Fund Australia.

- 2  **Credit card** - Visa  Mastercard  Amex

Cardholders Name ..... Card Number .....

Expiry Date ..... One off gift \$ ..... or

I authorise Barnabas Fund to deduct \$ \_\_\_\_\_ each month/ quarter/ half year/ year from my credit card (please circle)

Signature .....

- 3  **Internet Banking**

Deposit Reference ..... Please enter your full name so we can identify your donation on our bank statement

Barnabas Fund Bank Details: Account Name: Barnabas Fund Australia  
Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia  
BSB: 063 252  
Account Number: 0090 0025

- 4  **ezidebit**

For Australian supporters who wish to give regularly through their bank account

Name of banking institution .....

BSB ..... Branch .....

Account Number ..... Account Name .....

Please pay Commonwealth Bank of Australia BSB 063 252 for the credit of Barnabas Fund Australia Ltd

A/C # 0090 0025 \$ ..... (amount in words)

starting on (date) ..... and then every month/ quarter/ six months/ year (please circle)

until further notice.

Signature ..... Date .....

These instructions are new/ in addition to/ replace earlier automatic payment instructions in favour of Barnabas Fund (please circle).

- 5  **Website** Go to [www.barnabasfund.org](http://www.barnabasfund.org)

The Enclosed payment is in lieu of a gift

- please send a **Gift Card**.

To make an alternative gift for a loved one, please complete the following and we will send you an attractive gift card to give to show how their gift will be used to bless their Christian brother and sisters. Please write clearly

Dear ..... a gift of \$ .....  
(tick if you do not want the amount to be stated...)  
has been recieved on your behalf.

From .....

## Receipt

- No receipt needed
- Please **POST** me a receipt
- Please **EMAIL** receipt to address above

Please send the following free resources (indicate quantity required):

"A Call to Compassion"

"Bringing Hope to Christian Children" DVD

## Other

Please send me a form for regular giving

YES NO (Please circle)

Please send me information on being a Barnabas Fund Church representative

YES NO (Please circle)

# The Barnabas Fund Distinctive

## What helps make Barnabas Fund distinctive from other Christian organisations that deal with persecution?

### WE WORK BY:

- directing our aid only to Christians, although its benefits may not be exclusive to them (“As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, **especially to those who belong to the family of believers.**” Galatians 6:10, emphasis added)
- aiming the majority of our aid at Christians living in Muslim environments
- channelling money from Christians through Christians to Christians
- channelling money through existing structures in the countries where funds are sent (e.g. local churches or Christian organisations)
- using the money to fund projects that have been developed by local Christians in their own communities, countries or regions
- considering any request, however small

- acting as equal partners with the persecuted Church, whose leaders often help shape our overall direction
- acting on behalf of the persecuted Church, to be their voice – making their needs known to Christians around the world and the injustice of their persecution known to governments and international bodies

### WE SEEK TO:

- meet both practical and spiritual needs
- encourage, strengthen and enable the existing local Church and Christian communities – so they can maintain their presence and witness rather than setting up our own structures or sending out missionaries
- tackle persecution at its root by making known the aspects of the Islamic faith and other ideologies that result in injustice and oppression of non-believers

- inform and enable Christians in the West to respond to the growing challenge of Islam to Church, society and mission in their own countries
- facilitate global intercession for the persecuted Church by providing comprehensive prayer materials

### WE BELIEVE:

- we are called to address both religious and secular ideologies that deny full religious liberty to Christian minorities – while continuing to show God’s love to all people
- in the clear Biblical teaching that Christians should treat all people of all faiths with love and compassion, even those who seek to persecute them
- in the power of prayer to change people’s lives and situations, either through grace to endure or through deliverance from suffering

“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25:40)

## How to Find Us

You may contact Barnabas Fund at the following addresses:

### Australia

Postal Suite 107, 236 Hyperdome, Loganholme QLD 4129  
**Telephone** (07) 3806 1076 or 1300 365 799  
**Fax** (07) 3806 4076 **Email** bfaustralia@barnabasfund.org

### UK

9 Priory Row, Coventry CV1 5EX  
**Telephone** 024 7623 1923 **Fax** 024 7683 4718

### From outside the UK

**Telephone** +44 24 7623 1923 **Fax** +44 24 7683 4718  
**Email** info@barnabasfund.org  
Registered charity number 1092935  
Company registered in England number 4029536  
For a list of all trustees, please contact Barnabas Fund UK at the Coventry address above.

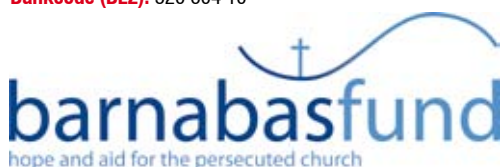
### Germany

German supporters may send gifts for Barnabas Fund via Hilfe für Brüder who will provide you with a tax-deductible receipt. Please mention that the donation is for “SPC 20 Barnabas Fund”. If you would like your donation to go to a specific project of Barnabas Fund, please inform the Barnabas Fund office in Pewsey, UK.

**Account holder:** Hilfe für Brüder e.V.

**Account number:** 415 600 Bank: Evang. Kreditgenossenschaft Stuttgart

**Bankcode (BLZ):** 520 604 10



### Jersey

Le Jardin, La Rue A Don, Grouville, Jersey, Channel Islands JE3 9GB  
**Telephone** 700600 **Fax** 700601 **Email** bfjersey@barnabasfund.org

### New Zealand

PO Box 27 6018, Manukau City, Manukau, 2241  
**Telephone** (09) 280 4385 or 0800 008 805  
**Email** office@barnabasfund.org.nz

### USA

6731 Curran St, McLean, VA 22101  
**Telephone** (703) 288-1681 or toll-free 1-866-936-2525  
**Fax** (703) 288-1682 **Email** usa@barnabasaid.org

### International Headquarters

The Old Rectory, River Street, Pewsey,  
Wiltshire SN9 5DB, UK  
**Telephone** 01672 564938

**Fax** 01672 565030

From outside UK:

**Telephone** +44 1672 564938

**Fax** +44 1672 565030

**Email** info@barnabasfund.org

## **barnabasaid** the magazine of Barnabas Fund

**Published by Barnabas Fund** The Old Rectory, River Street, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 5DB, UK **Telephone** 01672 564938 **Fax** 01672 565030

From outside UK: **Telephone** +44 1672 564938 **Fax** +44 1672 565030

**Email** info@barnabasfund.org

© Barnabas Fund 2010. For permission to reproduce articles from this magazine, please contact the International Headquarters address above.  
The paper used is produced using wood fibre at a mill that has been awarded the ISO14001 certificate for environmental management.