

Revival in a Once-Hostile Land



A Christian revival is touching the northernmost reaches of Africa. In a region once hostile to the gospel, tens of thousands of Muslims are now following Jesus. Muslims across Northern Africa are converting to faith in Jesus Christ in record numbers.

Quoted in a story by George Thomas for CBN News, Regent University graduate and filmmaker Tino Qahoush said, "What God is doing in North Africa . . . is unprecedented in the history of missions." Qahoush has spent years traveling the region to document the transformation.

He adds, "I have the privilege of recording testimonies and listening to firsthand stories of men and women, of all ages, where they can be sitting in a room and see the appearance and the presence of God appear to them in reality, like a vision. Some of them gave me stories of how they carry on a conversation; it's not just a light that appears." He admits he sometimes feels jealous. "How come Jesus is visiting the Muslim world at this time and age and we don't hear that happening in the traditional Christian community?"

Mission experts say there is a profound move of God in the predominantly Muslim nations of Mauritania, Western Sahara, Morocco, Libya, and Tunisia. The growth of Christianity, especially in the last 20 years, has been unprecedented. And now that growth is also evident in the North African nation of Algeria.

Pastor Salah leads one of the largest churches in Algeria. Some 1,200 believers attend the church in a country where 99 percent of the population is Muslim. "In fact we never thought the Algerian church would grow so big," Salah reports. Every new Christian in his church came from a Muslim background. Since the church opened, they have baptized an average of 150–160 believers per year.

Zino, a former Muslim, was invited by a friend to attend Pastor Salah's church. What he observed transformed him. "I saw Algerians worshiping God with all their hearts and it touched me."

Others, like Farhat, who is also a former Muslim, speak of miraculous encounters. He says he was illiterate and couldn't read the Bible. But when he accepted the Lord, God made a change. "Since then I've read the Bible and understood the Word of God. This is just an example of what God has done in my life and this is the case of many people here in Algeria."

Even though Algeria is overwhelmingly Muslim, the government has given Protestant churches the freedom to register their congregations. The government may harass and intimidate Christians from time to time, but the level of persecution is nothing like it was 20 years ago.

Algeria and the countries of North Africa weren't always open to the gospel. A veteran missionary in the region says things were very different some years ago. Peter [name changed for security reasons] believes the arrival of satellite TV and the Internet have dramatically changed people's perception of Christianity.

"Today in North Africa on TV you can hear native Arab Christians talking about their faith, who are mature Christians, answering questions, involved in debates. You can hear different points of view—the Christian point of view—in your own living room or in the privacy of your own bedroom," he explains.

Emboldened by God's power, Thomas writes, Algerian Christians are now on a mission to take the gospel to the four corners of the globe. "God has put in our hearts to be able to send 1,000 missionaries by the year 2025," says Pastor Qurahmane. "I really believe that maybe one day America will end up with some Muslim convert missionaries coming to reach out to the Muslims there and in other parts as well."

-Jeremy Reynolds is a senior correspondent for ASSIST News Service

From *Prayer Connect* magazine