

TRANSCRIPT

Save the Persecuted Christians & Save Nigeria Group
A JOINT WEBINAR

Nigeria Update: Episode 4 **Slavery in Nigeria, Then and Now**

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[00:00:00] **Dede Laugesen:** Hello, everyone. Welcome, and thank you for attending today's Save the Persecuted Christians and Save Nigeria Group webinar. This is our biweekly, every-other-Wednesday Nigeria update, and I am your host, Dede Laugesen, president and CEO of Save the Persecuted Christians.

Today we're going to be talking about an important topic that many people in America and the Western world don't discuss often enough, and that is slavery. Nigeria and Africa, of course, have a long history of involvement in the slave trade and being victimized by it. The United States long ago renounced slavery, and much of the Western world has, but it is [00:01:00] still very prevalent throughout our world, and even in our own Western societies modern slavery exists.

So today we wanted to take a look at how slavery operates in Nigeria, its past and its present, and what it looks like for the future of Africa.

We have some very important guests today. We have Stephen Osemwegie as my co-host. He is the president of Save Nigeria Group. And we have Dr. Charles Jacobs, Pastor John Haruna, Doug Burton, and Mike Arnold, and I will introduce each of them as we go along.

Our first guest today is Dr. Charles Jacobs, a longtime friend and partner of Save the Persecuted Christians. He is president of Americans for Peace and Tolerance and a board member of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East. He's a professor of public law and political science at Washington and Jefferson College, [00:02:00] and he has worked on slavery issues in Sudan for a very long time, and across Africa.

Dr. Charles Jacobs, it is so good to have you here. Tell us a little bit about the history of slavery in Africa, Nigeria, and how it operates today.

[00:02:18] **Dr. Charles Jacobs:** Okay. Thank you. I'm happy to be here.

Let me start with my own experience, because I've actually witnessed this and seen this in Africa. About 25 years ago, I was a human-rights person, and I read an article in *The Economist* magazine. It was this little tiny article on page 47 saying that you could buy and sell Black women in Sudan and Mauritania and other places in Africa for about \$15 or \$20. And I was shocked at the fact, but I was even more shocked that it was on page 47 in a little item.

Why wouldn't it be the lead story on our watch — that we in America, who had murdered each other in the Civil War [00:03:00] over the issue of one man owning another, over the issue of Blacks being enslaved — and here we are today on our watch, and this was still happening and nobody cared?

That, to me, became the central cognitive issue that led me to understand an awful lot about the modern world, why the human-rights communities pay attention to X but not Y. The short answer is that they pay attention to things where white people do bad stuff, and they don't pay attention to the crime itself. It all depends upon who the perp is and who the victims are. And we can talk about why that is. I've written a book about that.

So I met Sudanese people in New York City who were the diaspora people of Sudan, and they told me about the massacres that were happening because there was a [00:04:00] — we didn't know at the time what the word jihad was, but there was what we thought was a civil war. So there was an assault on the Black Christian South, the mostly Christian South, by the Islamic Arab North. They actually did call it a jihad, we found out later, in which villages were stormed and innocents were slaughtered. The men were all slaughtered, and they captured the women and children as slaves, concubines, in order to project Muslim civilization through the wombs of the captives.

I was enraged. I wrote about this in *The New York Times*. I broke the story. This was 1994, and I had a Muslim partner from Mauritania, and he and I broke the story: bought and sold, this is what happens, and why didn't anybody care?

So I partnered with a group called Christian Solidarity International, who were the heroes of this. A man named John Eibner, who is an unsung hero, found a [00:05:00] way to go rescue the slaves by paying Arabs who lived near the border between north and south to go up north and fetch them, find them, steal them, buy them back. And in effect, we redeemed mostly through his effort, though I raised money in America and made this a big story in America those years ago. It was on all the news channels.

The picture of me with the kids in Sudan — we redeemed hundreds of thousands of slaves, and it was the best thing I ever did in my life except get married to my wonderful wife and have children. There we are. CSI is Christian Solidarity International, and these are the villagers who helped us distribute the food when we got the slaves back.

To make a long story short, this came up to George Bush, the president, through his church, and he forced Khartoum to allow the South to secede, and now we have South Sudan, which [00:06:00] is the world's newest nation.

Fast-forward 25, 35 years, and here we are again, and that jihad has spread throughout much of Africa. It's not just in Sudan. And the place where most people know that it is now is in Nigeria, and that's because of all the work that everybody on this panel and others have been doing to make this a human-rights catastrophe that the West must respond to, not only for idealistic reasons. After all, we need to free slaves. That's what America is. America is an abolitionist nation.

And in fact, one thing I've been telling the Nigerians that worked for us in Sudan, even though it's not logical, is that Americans cared more about the enslavement of Blacks there than they did about the murders of Blacks there. It doesn't make any sense, right? But it makes sense if you know American history and American politics.

So for me, helping the Nigerians really means doing all the things we're [00:07:00] doing, but really ringing the bell about the enslavement of Black women and children.

And here is a woman who was enslaved in Nigeria. Her first name is Mercy. She was at a conference that we held. That's Dumisani Washington's head on the left. She's talking about the fact that she was captured, enslaved, and she didn't want to describe the horrible things that happened to her while she was a slave. But I know what those horrible things were because I went to Sudan three times illegally in a war zone way back, and I interviewed the people who survived the slave raids, who were either brought back or who had escaped and weren't taken. They told me what happened to them. It's the most horrible thing you can imagine.

On the left is Leah Sharibu. She was enslaved and captured by Boko Haram in 2018, and she is still enslaved and [00:08:00] captured, and she refuses to convert to a faith not her own. They want her to be a Muslim. She won't do it. That's what they do. They force them to become Muslim. She's not doing it, and she is the poster child. Mercy may be another one now.

On the right is an Israeli girl, Noa Argamani, who was captured in a jihad raid. The same kind of jihad raid that happens in Africa happened in Israel on October 7, 2023. And the same thing happened to the Jewish girls as happened to the African girls, and that's why we have a similar enemy that is hunting Jews and Christians down under the name of jihadism. That's what we have to scream about and raise our voices about.

There is no known number of girls and women from Nigeria that have been taken. And by the way, this happens in more than Nigeria. It happens in [00:09:00] 20 more African countries. But we know more about Nigeria. And it's difficult to get the Nigerians to tell us the names and the pictures of the women who escape because they're afraid, understandably afraid.

So Mercy, who you just saw, is the only one that I have found so far that lives in America and can give talks and be interviewed on video and live. We can bring her to campuses, we can bring her to Congress, et cetera. And my hope is that we can get more of these people from Nigeria. At least if we knew the names and the pictures of the girls and the women, this would do much to help our own case to bring this terrible scourge of jihadism that is circulating around the world.

[00:09:51] **Dede Laugesen:** These girls oftentimes are stigmatized when they come home, right? They're marginalized in their own community, especially if they've had children [00:10:00] while they've been held captive and enslaved as a sex slave.

[00:10:06] **Dr. Charles Jacobs:** Yes, of course. In Sudan, I know cases where I was there and I interviewed a woman who had come back, and she was impregnated by her master. She was telling me the story of how terrified she was about how her own husband, her own Dinka Christian South Sudanese husband, would take the news that she's carrying another man's baby, an enemy baby.

By the way, this happens to everybody. This happens to the Israelis as well, and it happens to Africans all over. And in this particular case, the husband was this wonderful man who was accepting and who knew. But there's terror in this, and there's also the terror of, you know, these are very conservative societies, and if you have to say you were raped, that's not a good thing in society. This may harm your marriage and your future. So there are [00:11:00] all of these reasons for the Nigerian girls and women not to come forward about what's happened to them. That's correct.

But we have to keep pursuing this because, in my view, more than massacre — at least in the case of Sudan, maybe it's changed now, but in the case of Sudan, it was the slavery more than the massacre that got people really upset.

[00:11:23] **Dede Laugesen:** I couldn't agree with you more, Dr. Jacobs. This issue in Nigeria of the kidnap-for-ransom industry, which is happening at industry scale — I mean, they are taking women and children every single day.

Just this last week, in a more southern state, more southwest state, a group of almost 40 students and their teachers were taken, and the math teacher was beheaded on camera. That went viral. And these children are still being held. [00:12:00] And in the past two months, we've heard of multiple communities that have been attacked and just hundreds of people have been taken off into the forests, and now they're being held.

Many of them will be ransomed out. Other family members — it's like a revolving door. They'll be brought in. A family member, someone who brings the ransom, and the person gets free, and that person who brought the ransom goes in.

It's really a very horrible situation, and I call these ransom camps the torture camps, where prisoners are being held near military installations in the many forests throughout Nigeria, the open-air Auschwitz camps, because it truly is like there are open-air concentration camps all over Nigeria that the Nigerian government is doing nothing about.

And people are being [00:13:00] enslaved day after day after day. They are using the children for their warriors. They are using the children as sex slaves. And it's just horrible.

I wanted to talk a little bit about the scale in Africa. According to the 2023 Global Slavery Index — this is data from 2021 — an estimated 7 million people in Africa are living in modern slavery on any given day, and those numbers likely have gone up since the jihad, as you had said, is spreading. This represents a prevalence of 5.2 per 1,000 people, the fourth highest among world regions. Forced labor: 3.8 million, and forced marriage: 3.1 million. And we know this is happening so much in Nigeria—

[00:13:49] **Dr. Charles Jacobs:** And—

[00:13:49] **Dede Laugesen:** —and is not being addressed.

[00:13:49] **Dr. Charles Jacobs:** The question is, where the hell is Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, right? The behemoths of the human-rights establishment in the West. And we need to [00:14:00] understand — we can have a discussion about this a little later. I won't take up time now. But we need to understand why they're silent about this—

[00:14:07] **Dede Laugesen:** Right.

[00:14:07] **Dr. Charles Jacobs:** —or almost silent about this.

[00:14:07] **Dede Laugesen:** Right. So our next guest today is the editor of TruthNigeria.com. Doug Burton has been a longtime partner of Save the Persecuted Christians. We've been working together since 2019 on Nigeria, and he really has become one of the premier experts on what's happening in Nigeria, the conflict there.

Doug, it's so good to be with you again. We were here just two weeks ago talking about Deborah Emmanuel, who was murdered by a mob who accused her of blasphemy, and Leah Sharibu, whose birthday was going to be the next day. She's now 23. She was taken into captivity when she was 14.

Doug, tell us what you're seeing in Nigeria with regard to modern slavery and how it ties to Nigeria's past.

[00:14:57] **Douglas Burton:** Thanks, Dede.

[00:15:00] Slavery in the form of keeping vast numbers of hostages in camps, hostages for ransom, is happening all across northern Nigeria. It's spreading as an industry. It's called the kidnapping industry, but as Dr. Jacobs has correctly pointed out, it is a form of slavery because the men and women and the children — and many children — in these hostage camps are being exploited for all kinds of things. For, as you pointed out, for sex slavery. They're tortured. And we have seen a great increase in jihadist-related captures over the last three years.

We have some photos that we can share. First photo I'd like to present is of a young woman who recently came out just a few days ago. This is a young nursing mother named Comfort Sunday from the state of Borno, and she has a remarkable [00:16:00] story. She was captured in November of 2025, November 15, and she survived seven months in a Boko Haram camp. During that time, she was tortured, she was coerced to recant her faith, and she refused to do it. She tried to escape the camp twice and was beaten severely each time she did it.

She was captured in November along with another young woman who was part of our community while she was out farming. Comfort Sunday wouldn't give up her faith and wouldn't stop trying to escape. So we have a story on our website, TruthNigeria.com, in which she says, "During my last attempt" — she was just rescued about eight days ago — she said, "If they had caught me after this third attempt to escape, I definitely would have been killed. They would not have kept me."

So [00:17:00] this is a case of a woman who's nearly starved to death, as well as being beaten, and there are hundreds and—well, in the state of Borno, which is the northeastern state, which is infamous as the ground where Boko Haram, the ISIS insurgency, has been fighting against the government of Nigeria, and other ISIS-related insurgencies have been trying to take over the government and establish a caliphate.

This is a photo of an unloading of food. I believe this is in a north-central state, in Kaduna. This is illustrating one of our stories about captures of hundreds of people in southern Kaduna. This is in the county of Kajuru, which has been victimized again and again and again. This is an unprotected area in a so-called ungoverned part of Nigeria, of which there are [00:18:00] hundreds of ungoverned places in Nigeria, which are in fact controlled by criminal gangs. They're called bandit gangs, but they're Muslim radicals. They live and breathe jihad. They believe jihad justifies any kind of crime.

And what we're seeing in the county of Kajuru is a captive population. This is something that no one talks about. But there are weaker tribes that are Christian in north-central

Nigeria. And in Kajuru there's a very important tribe — and you showed a picture earlier of Mercy, I think it was Mercy Bawa. She's a member of the Adara tribe. This is one of the very majority-Christian tribes that's in a position of weakness and has been taken over by a stronger tribe, the Fulani tribe, that has been entrenched in governance and in the national security [00:19:00] establishment for 200 years.

What we're seeing at Truth Nigeria is that there are weaker tribes that are, in fact, captive populations. We used to talk about captive nations during the time of the Soviet Union. Well, Nigeria has 300 ethnicities, and among them are several captive ethnicities. These are groups of people who can never really get out of control. They are subsistence farmers or they're small-plot farmers. Jobs are very hard to get in Nigeria. There are not enough factory jobs to lure people off of farming. So if people are desperate to make money, often the only way they can do that is by farming, and they become a naturally sedentary population who are preyed upon by the slave raiders or the hostage takers.

In Nigeria they're called bandits, but in fact they are terrorists, and their purpose is to [00:20:00] move the Christians off of the land, to take over their land and establish their own ethnic communities there. And the same thing that's happening in Sudan and many other countries — there is an Islamist jihad whereby the religious goal is to take over the non-Muslim populations, and we're seeing this in a dozen states across Nigeria.

The kidnapping thing was evident when I started reporting on Nigeria seven years ago, but in the last couple of years it has become a major industry. Just to give you an example of the amount of money that is being generated by kidnapping for ransom: in southern Kaduna itself — now Kaduna is in the north-central part of the country. It's one of the bigger states. It's got a population of over 6 million people. But in southern Kaduna itself, within this county and some surrounding counties, every year \$1.4 million is generated through ransoms [00:21:00] just in this area.

But think about the millions and millions of dollars that are generated by the kidnapping industry in all 12 states of the North. More recently, we've seen Boko Haram kidnapping large numbers of people. We know that there are at least 400 men and women — chiefly women and children — at various camps in the Mandara Mountains, on the border between Nigeria and Cameroon. And these men and women, these people, have been there for months. They've been there for more than two months, more than 60 days. They're being starved, they're being whipped. There is routine rape of many of the women.

So what we're seeing is not only torture, but exactly as pointed out, a kind of slavery. And it is making [00:22:00] huge profits for the criminals, both the insurgency such as ISIS and the so-called bandits who are not considered terrorist organizations by the U.S. government. They're not tracked and they're not targeted as a terrorist group, and

they should be. This is one of the deficiencies of U.S. policy, or the U.S. alliance with Nigeria, that needs to be discussed.

[00:22:25] **Dede Laugesen:** And just a little level setting here: the definition of modern slavery refers to situations of exploitation that people cannot refuse or leave due to threats, violence, coercion, deception, or abuse of power. It includes forced labor, forced marriage, debt bondage, human trafficking, descent-based — which is hereditary slavery — and child exploitation. So everything that we've talked about with regard to Nigeria is happening with regard to [00:23:00] modern-day slavery.

And maybe — I haven't heard much about hereditary slavery in Nigeria, but I'm sure that it happens. It happens in Pakistan regularly with the brick yards, where a family will ask for \$50 for some medical bill, and before you know it, generations of that family are immersed in slavery. But we don't see that as much in Nigeria. Everything else regarding modern slavery happens there.

And regarding these personal stories of these women: Dr. Jacobs, I believe I've met Mercy before. I think we may have brought her here to the United States in June of 2019, if it's the same Mercy, and I think it is.

[00:23:49] **Dr. Charles Jacobs:** It is.

[00:23:49] **Dede Laugesen:** I didn't know that she was living in the United States now, and I'm so happy to hear that. And I will connect with her again.

But one of the reasons why I work so [00:24:00] diligently with regard to Nigeria is because I myself was an abused child and teenager, and I know what sexual harm causes a woman, and being able to redefine yourself, heal, and come into a new perspective.

When I went to Jos, Nigeria — Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria — and visited with Dr. Gloria Puldu, who is the president of the Leah Foundation, she runs a center there in which they bring women in from the IDP camps and give them nine weeks of training and counseling and skills, and they live on campus. And at the end of that time, they help them move into society.

And I was able to speak with these women, and they were telling us these horrible, horrible stories of what had happened to them. And so I stood up and told them also my story, [00:25:00] because these things connect across boundaries. They connect across cultures. For me to be a mom of a large family here in the United States and to have been a victim of sexual abuse as a child, to see these women and children being abused like they are in Nigeria, it pulls at my heartstrings, and it has committed me to them in a way that is unlike any other.

And I know our next guest, Pastor John Haruna, he is from Jos, Nigeria, the Plateau area, which is just consistently coming under daily attack. He is the senior Christian clergyman based in Kuru District of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria, at the Church of Christ in Nations. And John and I were just with Mike Arnold and Stephen Osemwegie down in Texas for one of our city tours where we're coming and bringing Nigeria [00:26:00] to your church, to your city. So please let us know if you'd like us to come. We are open to it, and we'd love to come and tell your people what is truly happening in Nigeria: it is a genocide.

Pastor John Haruna, please come off mute and tell us about your people, about the women and the children and the men and the families being destroyed by the slavery of the jihadists in Nigeria.

[00:26:31] **Pastor John Haruna:** Thank you so much, Dede. I really appreciate what is going on and the way you are bringing awareness and talking about this issue. As one of the speakers mentioned, why is the world not talking about this? Like you said, maybe we'll come to that later. But I'm totally shocked and surprised that the United Nations and all these international organizations [00:27:00] are just quiet. Is it because it's religious, or what?

But let me first of all address the issue of my experience as a pastor in Jos. You all know my story. The church I pastored was bombed. The Lord helped, I survived, and I've seen horrors. I was going to a particular community to visit the members. We were attacked, and those ahead of us were killed, and we survived. Three times I survived from the hands of these wicked people, and I know that God, just in His mercy, delivered me because most of the people we are working with died and were killed.

Now, after my church was bombed and I survived, then the person who took over [00:28:00] from me, Reverend Polycarp Zongo, was kidnapped by Boko Haram, and he was taken to one of their forests. And I was there with the wife, encouraging her, praying with her as well. He spent, I think, about a year or two, and when he came out, the story he told us — it was just unimaginable that human beings are going through such an experience.

These people will go to communities, raid the communities, bring these girls, and rape them. It's such torture that it's unbelievable.

Recently, I was sharing with Reverend Ezekiel — you talk about these Fulani militias that come to our [00:29:00] communities. I have an official document that we presented to the government here that shows the number of communities raided by these people. Looking at the record here with me, as at 2012, we had over 102 communities well documented, and the number of people killed and the number of the communities.

And we discovered what they do. They come and raid these communities, kill the people, take over the communities, and rape these young girls. It's so sad when you hear their stories. Some escape.

I remember recently, with Reverend Ezekiel, talking with some of the victims that escaped. It was a horrible experience. The two girls were taken, and one saw how they were raping her sister to death [00:30:00] — that's how terrible and inhuman these people can be. And now she escaped, but telling her story — she's now traumatized, and she's going through a lot.

The problem with this is, it's true, I agree, that there is that stigma. When they come and start telling their story, the way society looks at them is sad. And I just hope that we will think deeply about that as well, how to educate the community and how to welcome such people. Because if you don't have a safe place for them, going back for them to reintegrate into society becomes a really big problem.

But my major concern from what I've experienced in my community is this. Dede, thank you for explaining what modern slavery is all about. That's the little bit that I want to really talk [00:31:00] more about. We have seen these communities raided, people killed, and then women and children, sometimes they survive and they run away to the city. I have videos of me with all these people in the camps. And each time I review this video and see their experience, it creates more burden in my heart.

And I told them, "How do you survive?" I have seen and experienced situations where people come to these communities. You know what they do? They pick them out and tell them, "Look, since you don't have hope here, there is nothing here for you." Because they are on the street. If not for some of these Christian organizations that are coming from the U.S., trying to help resettle them, I have seen many of them taken away from communities where nobody can help them because they don't have a place.

Most of them were taken to [00:32:00] cities. I have seen those taken to Lagos. I have seen those taken to other cities with the understanding that "we're going to find a job and a better place for you," and they end up as sex slaves. And some of them, I have heard, are taken to Italy, then taken to Libya and elsewhere. I have seen those even taken to Lebanon. It's like they come to employ them and take them there, because that's the only hope they have.

[00:32:36] **Dede Laugesen:** There's organ trafficking, and especially—

[00:32:39] **Pastor John Haruna:** Oh yeah.

[00:32:39] **Dede Laugesen:** —those who are taken out of Nigeria are often being fed into these organ-trafficking rings, right?

[00:32:45] **Pastor John Haruna:** Exactly.

[00:32:45] **Dede Laugesen:** And many times, what we know from China is that these forced organ donors are often kept alive as parts and pieces are taken from [00:33:00] them until, at last, organs that are vital and bring about their death are taken. So the horror just goes on and on.

John, your concluding thoughts on the trauma and how your church and others are helping your communities deal with this trauma, and then we'll go to Mike after you.

[00:33:25] **Pastor John Haruna:** Like I said, I've seen these people traumatized to a point where — well, we don't even talk about the government because the government doesn't even care about these people. That is one of my burdens, that the government doesn't even know that these people exist. There is no plan, there is no program for them. So you see them on the street.

So what do we do? With our little resources, we create a safe place for them to stay and then see how we can rehabilitate these people.

[00:33:54] **Dr. Charles Jacobs:** Yeah.

[00:33:54] **Pastor John Haruna:** Because the trauma on them is so high. If me as a pastor, who has experienced this and [00:34:00] is still traumatized by what I have seen, and then imagine these people taken to such camps—

[00:34:07] **Dede Laugesen:** And now — well, and my concern, Pastor, is the children. There are so many children, especially in Plateau and the heavily affected areas that are out of school. Nigeria has at least 18 million children out of school, one of the countries with the highest numbers of children out of school. And these children are roaming the streets, and they're ripe for radicalization, and they know that their government doesn't protect them. There's no trust in institutions. It's just really a horrible situation to be in.

I'd like to go now to our friend Mike Arnold. He has really been digging into understanding the history of the jihad in Nigeria and how it has come to this point, [00:35:00] and understanding America's involvement and the U.K.'s involvement in that system. We're talking about slavery, Mike, and maybe you can give us that historical point on how Islam and jihad are really driving forces in the world today of modern slavery. Take us down that road.

[00:35:28] **Mike Arnold:** Absolutely. Thank you.

And it's not just modern slavery. It's the historic slave trade, going way back. I do have two personal experiences — close encounters, if you will — that I'd like to share briefly before we go into the history.

I was in Jos in April of 2024 and came upon an orphanage that had 286 children, adopted by a husband and wife who had no outside support. They just couldn't [00:36:00] say no. Amazing. But the way it started — the husband, Sam, was in Jos one day and saw a commotion. The police had pulled over a truck that was full of children. The reason they pulled it over was they assumed it was going to the slave market, like an everyday thing. It ends up the driver was taking them to another orphanage far away, and that's why Sam and his wife Marilyn stepped up and ended up taking a whole bunch of children. But these kids were just driving down the road in a truck, and the police just assumed it was a slave trafficker because it happens all the time. It really, really opened my eyes.

And then the next time I was in Nigeria — in fact, if Oleg has the video cued up — this is in the new Kuchingoro IDP camp. This is a young woman that we've helped.

[00:36:54] **Speaker 6:** I'm here with a young woman named Katu Ali. She's from Gwoza. [00:37:00] She was married, had a husband, had a child, when Boko Haram came and abducted her. They took her. They lived in caves. She was forcefully married to somebody she didn't want to be forcefully married to, and he raped her. She lived with them for nearly 10 years. This is a child of Boko Haram that she's holding right here. The government did send troops in eventually, after a decade, and she was rescued, and then pretty much cut loose. She's found her way down here to new Kuchingoro IDP camp, trying to survive.

Sadly, her prior husband won't take her back. But the government that rescued her has given money and other assets and forgiveness and resettlement to the people who did this to her, but they cut her loose [00:38:00] to fend for herself. I fail to see where there's any justice, any righteousness in that. That's a travesty. That's backwards. The people that did this need to be persecuted, prosecuted, and put down. People like her and this child — they're the ones that need the government support.

[00:38:18] **Mike Arnold:** She had a prior child with her first husband. He came all the way down to new Kuchingoro, took that child, who was then 11 or 12 years old, never knew this guy — all he knew was Boko Haram, living in a cave — took that child, left her back because he didn't want this Boko Haram child. We put her up in housing, started getting her some counseling and some care. And sadly, her baby died, baby Rebecca. So her former husband came back and got her and took her back, so now she's back with her former husband.

But just a horrible, tragic, traumatic situation. That's what slavery looks like in Nigeria today. It [00:39:00] just leaves human beings, innocent people, in its wreckage.

The Sokoto Caliphate was built on slavery. The Sokoto Caliphate is still the power base of Nigeria. It's northern Nigeria, established in the early 1800s. It quickly became the

largest pre-colonial empire in history, bigger than Pharaoh's Egypt by some measures. And at its peak, it had a population of 2.5 million slaves, the second-largest slave society in modern history. Half the population of the caliphate was slaves by the late 1800s.

They didn't just keep them for themselves. They were central to the international slave trade. It didn't overlap much with the Atlantic slave trade. It did some, but the caliphate was started in 1804, and the Atlantic slave trade was stopped by 1808 for all intents and purposes. But [00:40:00] they fueled, and were the dominant provider for, primarily the trans-Saharan slave trade — the one we never hear about because it's still open. It's still going on.

The caliphate generated income that way. They would pack up these slaves. The reason you don't have these massive Black populations in a lot of the Arab countries is that they'd castrate the males and send them up to North Africa, to the slave markets. There are still slave markets going on in Nigeria, in Libya, in North Africa, with Nigerian slaves that are captured, enslaved, and trafficked by northern Nigeria. It is still alive and well in Nigeria today.

The estimate is, and this is as of 2021, 1.6 million Nigerians today are slaves. And they're not just given as brides. There are slaves in households doing the chores and providing sex in Lagos, in Abuja, all over. A lot are in the Middle East. [00:41:00] Mali is a big one. There are 20,000 to 40,000 Nigerian women trafficked to Mali for sex trafficking.

It's ongoing. It's a major source of power and income and labor for the Sokoto Caliphate today, and nobody talks about it. Do these Black lives matter? Where are the abolitionists? It's horrific, it's ongoing, it's institutional, it's industrial, and it's happening today in Nigeria.

[00:41:43] **Dede Laugesen:** People are always surprised to hear, but it was those relationships that were formed during the slave trade with Britain and the caliphate that meant that the caliphate was set up to have that administrative power, that political power, when the U.K. created Nigeria as a country. Right, Mike? Can you talk a little bit about that — about the U.K. and—

[00:42:00] **Mike Arnold:** Yeah.

[00:42:00] **Dede Laugesen:** —their relationship with the jihadists and the caliphate and slavery, how that works together?

[00:42:21] **Mike Arnold:** Absolutely. When — so it was the Berlin Conference in the 1800s. The European powers got together, not one African present, and they got the map out and divided Africa like a pie and said, "You get this, and you get this, and you

get this.” And so much horror and bloodshed — and still today, strife and a lot of what you’re seeing comes out of that evil, just, “Here it is. Go plunder it. We won’t stop you.”

And Nigeria, the region we call Nigeria, was claimed by the British. They found that they had two [00:43:00] areas. They had the Northern Protectorate and the Southern Protectorate. They were never one nation. They were never one people. You had these rabid slavers, jihadists, totalitarian dark-ages warlords, a feudal society in the north, and you had a very entrepreneurial, burgeoning, vibrant south.

And what the British did was they defeated, militarily in some measures, the caliphate and said, “We’re your bosses now.” But they left it intact. They left the power structure intact. They left the whole system of governance intact and used them as their enforcers. They were a lot easier to deal with. They called it indirect rule because what does Islam mean? It means submission. And so they found a people under submission. So instead of resubmitting them to Britain, they just said, “Keep your submission. We’ll deal with your bosses. We’ll make you very rich, and we’ll keep you in power.”

[00:44:00] And that’s what they did.

And when they amalgamated what they called Nigeria, it was an administrative move for efficiency. They lumped the two together. This was in the early 1900s. The administrator’s girlfriend came up with the name Nigeria for this amalgamation, and they shackled the south effectively as slaves to the caliphate in the north. The British liked that arrangement. Slaves, no doubt about it, were a central part of the trade. They knew all about it. At the time the British were dealing with it, half the population of the North was slaves. They didn’t care. “Leave it alone. We just want the oil. We just want the resources.”

And so, yeah, that’s why Nigeria exists today. That’s why it’s still under the control of the caliphate North. And that’s why all this stuff — when the colonial powers came to the caliphate, they could have cleaned it up. If they had any benevolent intent, when they had [00:45:00] control, when they had knocked it down militarily, they could have disbanded it, but they didn’t. They left it intact because they were easier to deal with, more corruptible. They didn’t care. “Go do your stuff,” they said. “Go take the oil. We don’t care.” And so yeah, that’s where Nigeria as we know it exists today.

[00:45:16] **Dede Laugesen:** Wow. Well, thank you for that historical perspective, Mike. I think it’s important that we continue to say it over and over again, that the problems in Nigeria started with the West. We created them, and we need to own them as well. And thankfully, we have President Trump who’s doing that.

Stephen, you’re my co-host, my faithful friend. We’re in this together. We’re in this fight together, and we’re hoping that a whole bunch of people will come with us to Washington, D.C., on June 20, when we’re all rallying in front of the White House. It’s

going to be a really special day, and we call everybody — if God's put it on your [00:46:00] heart to care for Nigeria, now is the time that He's calling you to come and stand, to be there in your physical presence, with your voice, with your face, and showing your love for the people of Nigeria, because these people need you.

Right now, there are just tens of millions of dollars flowing in to lobbyists in Washington, D.C., to tamp down news of this genocide of Christians in Nigeria. And we've been through a regime just before President Trump, under President Biden, in which racism and reparation for slavery in the United States and all of these issues were just on the streets every single day, Black Lives Matter, all of this. And yet we do not see that the same people decrying racism in the United States and crying about the sin of slavery — even though we left it behind several [00:47:00] hundred years, or 150 years, 175 years ago — we don't care in America.

Stephen, what is going on? Why is there such a disconnect with the death and destruction and the enslavement of the people in Nigeria to the American audience and people in the West? What's going on, Stephen?

[00:47:23] **Stephen Osemwegie:** Thank you to our audience. Thank you to our guests. Very delighted to join my brother Mike Arnold and Burton and Dr. Charles. When you look at the difference in the reaction, like you said, I point it down to media blackout. I don't think enough people know what is happening, and that is at the heart of where you get the lessened reaction to what is happening.

I think this webinar which we're hosting is one way, but the real truth is that mainstream media does not want to show the American public what is happening. [00:48:00] Some of it could be attributed to convenience. Africa was allegedly called a dark continent, and at the same time they called those people there dark people, so what happened there didn't really matter.

However, that was a lie, and it's still a lie. Africa is not a dark continent. Africa is one of the largest, one of the most populated, one of the richest continents, both in resources and in human capital, et cetera. But the world was designed by a Western-facing narrative. People told our stories, and thank God for people like Mike Arnold and others that have gone into the history and are now unearthing that there existed some level of independence, little countries, societies who participated in the slave trade that even the [00:49:00] entire world is still not aware of.

We hear about chattel slavery, the trans-Atlantic slavery. But the real truth is, the Arab-Africa slavery through the Sahara was worse a hundredfold than chattel and trans-Atlantic slavery. As a matter of fact, Mike Arnold, I'm sure you will know this, that the slaves that were taken from Africa to the Arab world and all the Islamic countries, the

males were castrated so they don't reproduce. That is to tell you how bad it was. The males were castrated.

So the world has — Africa has — been pillaged for so long, some people kind of disconnect from the pain that we shout on top of our voices. And the media does not help either. They attribute this suffering in Africa to, “Oh, Africans can't govern themselves. Oh, well, when will they wake up?” Well, 500 years of country and European [00:50:00] colonialism — Africa has not been allowed to be.

You heard about the Berlin Conference. The country we call Nigeria, Ghana — they were all created by powers that came with weapons and forced it on the locals. And I'm from Benin, Edo State in southern Nigeria today. Our kingdom in 1897 — Benin Kingdom was sacked by Britain. They call it the punitive expedition, and they burned Benin City down, killed hundreds of thousands of my ancestors. For what reason? They did not allow the British to come into the town during their festival, so Britain committed a genocide in 1897.

So we are a victim of European overreach. And today the suffering that's happening, the slavery that is going on, the terrorism, the genocide against Christians and other minorities in Nigeria — the same Western-controlled media is ignoring it. People like CNN, the NBCs of this world, they won't touch it. They'll say it's [00:51:00] climate change. Oh, it's any other thing but the reason, which is to create a radical Islamic caliphate of terror in order to make sure women are not free. They can keep them as sex slaves, enslave men, and the options they give are convert to a radical form of Islam, pay your taxes, or you're killed. There is no fourth option to live in a different faith.

So what is happening, Dede — it's not that the American public is not sensitized. It's that there's a gap in the narrative. People are not aware. You heard about what happened in Gaza. Well, people want to demonize Israel and all that's happening in the Middle East when they're trying to defend themselves, fighting against being surrounded by groups that want to destroy them, and they have the right to defend themselves. But people attack Israel by pointing out, “Oh, genocide in Gaza.” Well, there's a bigger genocide that is happening in Nigeria. [00:52:00] How come the media in the United States is not talking about the genocide that is happening with 11 million people alive and awake next door?

So we begin to talk about these issues on this platform and other platforms for the world to be aware. And on June 20, next month, right here at Lafayette Park — I'm in Washington, D.C., at the moment — so right here at Lafayette Park outside the White House, it is an opportunity for Americans of all faiths across the country. Please make your way down to D.C.

On Friday the 19th is a holiday, so you can take that day to travel. But if you live within the DMV — Maryland, D.C., and Virginia — we are going to be here at 10 o'clock on Saturday, June 20.

And we have tagged the rally Save Nigeria Rally. But the real purpose of that title is not necessarily for the sake of it. It is designed to wake the American public up that a major country, 240 million people in West Africa, is [00:53:00] in danger of falling to a radical ISIS caliphate and Boko Haram and the dreaded group they call the Fulani Ethnic Islamic Militia, who are perpetrating major violence against Christians and other minorities in Nigeria.

Every 41 minutes, somebody's killed in Nigeria, and it is most likely a Christian. Thirty-five people are killed a day, and Christians are the prime target of this group that has decided to create a caliphate, having been dislodged from the Middle East. So there is a risk to the people on the ground, our people in Nigeria, but there's a larger risk to the world if that region is allowed to fall into the hands of the radical terrorists.

So that is why June 20 is important for you to come and hear from us. Dede will be there, myself as well, and others. We invite you, and I thank you, Dede, for this webinar that we keep doing. It is part of creating that awareness that will create an awakening here in America.

[00:53:56] **Dede Laugesen:** Amen. Thank you so much, Stephen, for partnering with [00:54:00] me on this. It's important that we continue to educate not only the American public, but the public officials as well, who are being hoodwinked by these lobbyists who are paid so much money.

And I know that we have some conversation that we'd like to have among our panelists. So Doug, I know you had some comments you wanted to give regarding what Stephen was saying, so go ahead, over to you, and then we'll go to Dr. Charles Jacobs.

[00:54:26] **Douglas Burton:** Thank you, Charles. And thank you, Stephen.

Look, the West doesn't know what's happening in Nigeria. There is a media blackout in the West. But really the reason for it is that the Nigerian media itself doesn't tell the truth. The reason people in the West can't figure it out is that there has been a systematic cover-up of the truth by the Nigerian government, by its spokesman, by the media, and by the quiescent and solicitous [00:55:00] Nigerian clergy itself.

Let me explain. I've been in media all my life, really for 50 years. What we're seeing is that the extent of the so-called genocide against Christians — it isn't acknowledged by the government. They deny it. They say, "Oh no, there's not persecution. No, there's no disproportionate persecution of Christians. The insurgents, the bandits, they attack Christians in equal numbers as well as Muslims. So many Muslims are dying out in the

killing fields.” That is not true. The Truth Nigeria reporting shows that that is completely false. That’s a denial. It has to be exposed.

Secondly, there’s a problem with clergy. The clergy are quiescent. There is a Christian heresy called quietism — at least my boss, Judd Saul, says so, and I agree with him. Quietism was a movement in the late 1700s that informed, [00:56:00] inspired Christians to stay out of politics entirely, never to talk about government at all. No, that’s wrong. The Nigerian clergy are too forgiving. In fact, I would say: clergy, stop forgiving. They are daily forgiving the murderers. They’re forgiving the slavers. They’re forgiving the rapists. Stop it. Fight back.

For example, I’m giving you an example. There are thousands of villages that have been taken over. They’ve been burnt down and taken over by Fulani ethnic militia. But do we see that the local villages create barbed-wire fences around their villages? No. Do they have armed guards around their churches on Sundays? No. They set themselves up as sitting ducks.

They should stop it. You know, we’re in the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. Our [00:57:00] revolution began with Minutemen who decided, not on the order of any superiors, to resist the British. They got their guns together and they decided to stop the British contingent that was coming to take over the armory in Lexington and Concord. There was no George Washington. They decided to do that by themselves.

Honestly, if there is going to be an end to the killing in Nigeria, the Christians have to stand up for themselves. And honestly, they can win. Half of the country is Christian. They are defending themselves with homemade weapons, and they’re doing it actually very effectively. They kill many of the Fulani marauders who come into their villages.

But the disparity is that the Nigerian government has disarmed the Christians. They have the strictest gun control in the world. Christians can’t own weapons, but the Fulani terrorists have all got AK-47s and [00:58:00] AK-49s. It is intolerable. It’s a travesty. And the media in the United States doesn’t say this because the Nigerian media doesn’t say it. It’s incredible. The Nigerians are sleepwalking into their own genocide, and that has to stop.

[00:58:19] **Dede Laugesen:** We have a statement from one of our guests, François. Thank you, François. “CAN and many other clergy, especially Pentecostals in Nigeria, are actually protesting and fighting in prayer.” And prayer is one thing, but digging traps into the ground and putting up thorn barriers — I mean, I’m thinking of all kinds of things that I would be doing around my community and my house if these kinds of threats were occurring.

And I know that Judd Saul with Equipping the Persecuted, a longtime partner and good friend, is on the ground there helping to [00:59:00] train the security guards for the communities. They call them vigilantes, which is a terrible name for them, but these community guards are oftentimes — whatever they do, they're arrested for having any kind of weaponry whatsoever, and the terrorists are favored by the government again.

So Dr. Charles Jacobs, I see you wanting to have some—

[00:59:25] **Dr. Charles Jacobs:** Ramps. Okay. This has been an incredible conversation, and what we have here is the making of a team, a real team of people who can concentrate on what I think would be the most explosive news that could power a revolt in the States. And I just want to say a couple of things about that.

I want to suggest that we reconstitute at other times and let's make — what we don't have is a strategy. We have all the information. We have videos. We have people. We have the [01:00:00] deep knowledge of everybody who spoke here. We have personal experience. We don't have a strategy except to scream and cry.

So I want to suggest that we come up with a strategy, and I just want to say two things about it. First of all, to get attention on us, we have to go on the attack, right? We have to go on the attack. We have to attack those people who are failing in their jobs and who are covering up this. And it's not just the Nigerian government. It is the Nigerian government, and we should attack them too. But in the States, we should attack Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. We should write — and I'm happy to, I'm a writer, I'm happy to do this with some of you — we should write absolutely devastating attacks on Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch for turning a blind eye. We know why they're doing it.

It's not because Africa's a dark continent, because Africa wasn't a dark continent when Human [01:01:00] Rights Watch and Amnesty International wanted to eradicate apartheid. They wanted to eradicate apartheid because the bad guys were whites, and that's the whole trick of this. That's the whole trick of this. The human-rights community is a fraud because it pretends to be against evil. It only exists so that decent white people can say, "I'm not the bad guy. I didn't do imperialism. I'm not a racist. You see, those are the racists."

But if you say that the perpetrators are not white, that screws up their whole program. They're not going to get any expiation points for talking about Muslims raping and killing Black people. That doesn't work. So that's the key underneath it. They are pretending to be what they're not, okay?

So there's plenty of room. We have all the evidence. We have the theory. We can lay on them: "You're not doing this because you're not who you say you are. You're a fraud. You don't care about human rights. You only care about being the good white [01:02:00]

guy, and this sacrifices Black people whom you were supposed to take care of in the beginning, and that's why you got your halo, because you did take care of them during the civil-rights movement."

So I want to propose that we think about this, and I'm happy to join any of that.

And just one more thing. Africa is soon going to be the place in the world where there are most Christians. Christians are dying and not replicating themselves in Europe. They're going to be conquered in Europe. If we don't save Africa — I'm speaking as a Jew — if we don't save Africa, the whole Judeo-Christian thing is in danger. And I just wish that the Israelis could wind down this thing they're into. I'm sure they would want to arm you guys in Africa, but they can't right now.

[01:03:23] **Dede Laugesen:** Yeah. Well, I know that Israel is a strong supporter of the Christians in Africa, in Nigeria. And there are a number of Jews also in Africa who believe themselves to be one of the lost tribes of Israel. Very strong connections there.

And of course, Dr. Jacobs, you know we're all about action here, and I'm 100% on board with you for this campaign. Happy to take on Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, and name and shame those who are enabling the [01:04:00] continued horrible, violent persecution that's happening in Nigeria.

[01:04:03] **Dr. Charles Jacobs:** Maybe we can set up a WhatsApp group among ourselves, and we can do some work together.

[01:04:08] **Dede Laugesen:** Yeah, let's do it. Let's do it.

The one thing — I comment on this. We have coming up just shortly after this webinar ends, 45 minutes later, my colleague Frank Gaffney, who sits on the board at Save the Persecuted Christians, our team at BanSharia.com is hosting a webinar today: "Is Sharia a Religion of Peace or a Strategy for War?" I put the link into the chat, and I encourage everybody to go and watch this.

It's about Islam. Islam is undergirded by its Sharia law code, and that Sharia law demands the death of people who leave Islam. All four Sunni schools of jurisprudence agree that leaving Islam [01:05:00] is Islam's greatest sin, and to leave Islam means that you have a death sentence put on your head. It's not just state governments. There are 11 still in the world that mandate the death penalty for apostasy. But there are neighbors and family and friends who, if you apostatize, will kill you.

My friend Nissar Hussain from the U.K. was a U.K. citizen who converted and was horribly tormented for 10 years in Bradford. He came to the United States as our guest in February, and our team has been invited back to speak to the Sharia Free America caucus in June.

I say that if you are a Muslim, you are either a Sharia supremacist who agrees that those who leave Islam ought to be killed, or you are enslaved to a religion by force. If you can't leave a religion [01:06:00] without the threat of death, then you are a slave to that religion. So there are millions upon millions of Muslims enslaved to Islam. So we need to understand what this religion is, its devastating impact in Nigeria and all across Africa, the Middle East, into Europe, and it is here in America.

Steven, Mike, anyone who wants to comment — final comments before we leave.

[01:06:32] **Stephen Osemwegie:** I want to invite everyone watching the webinar, and of course Dr. Charles — I'm very glad to hear your suggestion. I want to invite you here as well to the leadership gala on June 23rd at Hilton. I'll share that information with Dede to help reach out to you.

But others: we're calling on everyone to join us on Saturday, June 20, in just three weeks and a few days, right here at Lafayette Park. [01:07:00] It's an opportunity for you to meet with victims and survivors and others who are interested in what is happening in Nigeria. You will be informed, you will fellowship, and I hope you join us. We need everyone to join us live here at Lafayette Park. And that's the last word I'll say. If you want to RSVP, SaveNigeriaGroup.org is the best place to do so. Thank you.

[01:07:24] **Mike Arnold:** Dede, first, thank you so much for doing this. Everybody, Charles, very informative, and I agree. This is an issue that must be pounded. People need to wake up, and whatever the alarm clock is that gets them to wake up, we need to keep pushing it. This is a big deal. It's the height of hypocrisy to decry slavery here and say how evil America was — and yeah, slavery is evil wherever it iterates — but it's still alive and well there today.

In fact, the same outfit that is one of the largest [01:08:00] enslavers in history — not necessarily the largest slaveholders, but as far as taking free Black Africans, capturing them, making them slaves, and selling them — that enterprise is still alive and well today in Nigeria. We must call attention to it until people wake up. So thank you so much.

[01:08:19] **Pastor John Haruna:** Charles, thank you so much for what is happening now. You can imagine if thousands and millions of people are being killed, communities wiped away, and people taking over their communities in this 21st century, and yet the international community is not shouting, is not condemning it, is completely silent — this is terrible. It means something is wrong somewhere.

And this is the forum that we need. We are speaking, and gradually people are listening. So I really appreciate you for bringing this forum, and I believe that we have to start somewhere, and this [01:09:00] is the right time and the right place to start this. I am boarding.

[01:09:05] **Dede Laugesen:** Thank you, Pastor. We love you, and we love your people.

[01:09:09] **Dede Laugesen:** All right. Well, thank you all so much for being here. Of course, we will have many more views on this webinar in the weeks to come. Please join us again in two weeks — sorry, I'm opening up my calendar — two weeks, we'll be back here on June 10 for another Nigeria update.

If you have ideas for what you'd like to hear and learn about Nigeria, please send it to info@savethepersecutedchristians.org, info@savethepersecutedchristians.org. And please do join us in Washington, D.C., on June 20 for the rally at the White House for Nigeria.

Love you all, God bless, and have a glorious day. Bye-bye.