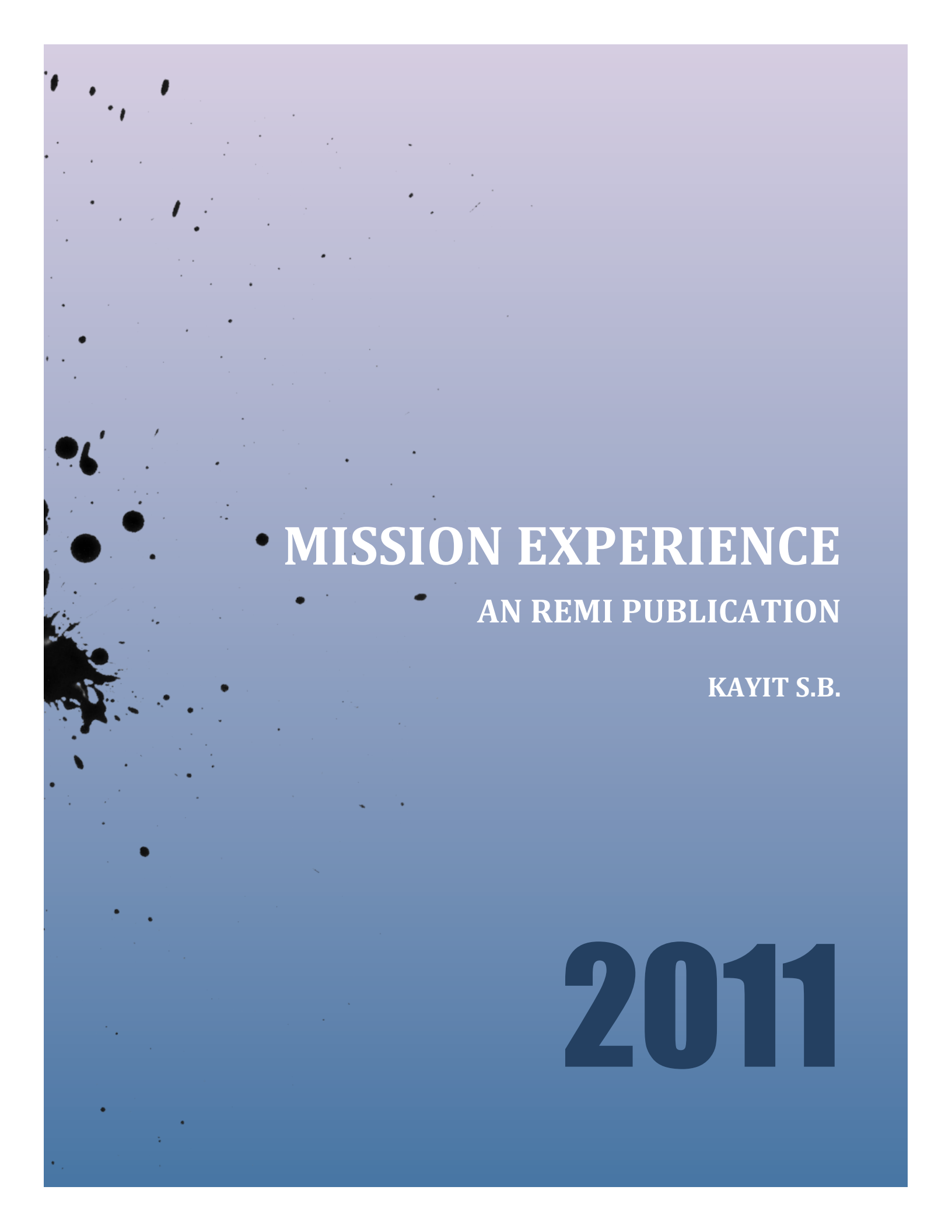




MISSION EXPERIENCE

AN REMI PUBLICATION

KAYIT S.B.

2011

MISSION EXPERIENCE!!!

INTRODUCTION:

Mission Experience is a periodic publication of the Rural Evangelism Ministry International (REMI), to inform the church and the general public on the several mission experiences that REMI mission and missionaries go through during the course of missions, and to contribute to mission education generally.

This maiden edition is centered on a documentary of the experiences recorded by the REMI ministry following the Nigerian 2011 post election crisis. This also gave rise to the need and actualization of this publication.

The recent Nigerian 2011 post election crisis, came as a bitter surprise and a rude shock to many especially the Christians, who just woke up to the reality of what happened on that day. The scripture says; a servant never grows up above his master..... (John 15:20). It is supposed to always be joyful for Christians, seeing that the word of God is coming to pass in their lives. This should inspire the Christians to develop greater faith in God and strengthen them to a better Christian living. But it is not always the case.

Many a times in ignorance and self centeredness the Christian is not always prepared to come to terms with the scriptures been fulfilled in his life, especially when it involves persecution. Matt. 5:11 says, blessed are ye, when men will revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake". It appears God's blessings are no more desired. However events that took place on the 18th April 2011, involving REMI missions and the missionaries were very touchy, painful and barbaric, as it almost brought the 27yrs efforts and toiling of the ministry to naught.

The physical structures and housing of the ministry were all burnt down; some missionaries were beaten up to state of coma, with the women also beaten, debased and dehumanized.

The secondary school and mission students were mercilessly beaten up also. The serving corps members also got their own share of the traumatic and inhuman treatment, as they were not spared.

Some that were left with some strength ran for their lives as far as they could, before finding help from passersby especially the Fulani neighboring the mission house. Some were left in the pool of their blood to die, especially the women. Miraculously, one or two of the victims still found help from the angry mob/rioters.

All these and many more necessitate this documentary publication. So as to reveal and educate the present efforts and devices the enemies of the cross and the antichrist are embarking on to oppose the gospel of Jesus Christ and to also encourage the church to stand up to the tricks and manipulations of the anti Christ. Further details on the assault to REMI ministry and missionaries/ workers are compiled here as personal testimonies from the victims and eye witnesses.

Brief Historical Facts on REMI Ministry

Rural Evangelism Ministries International (REMI) started in 1985 by young medical doctors, a couple, trained in different areas of medicine. The ministry first started as Soba Medical Centre (SOMEK) along Zaria- Jos road. The vision for SOMEK as a ministry was following life's challenges and persecution from where the couple first worked as medical doctors.

As SOMEK, the ministry enjoyed Gods favor and it grew steadily, despite the challenges of being a Christian ministry in a Hausa land and a 99% Muslim settlement. God used SOMEK, then the only medical facility available, to provide spiritual and medical services to the people of Soba and its surrounding villages. This increased the popularity of the mission house and opened up to Jealousy and several fight backs. But, the ministry still grew more and more in God's favor.

SOMEK was very beneficial to the whole region of Soba. This made the centre very popular throughout motor parks and villages that surround Soba

village. You only need to ask for 'Asibitin dan London' which was the popular name given to the ministry till date.

The naming of the mission house (SOMEK) as 'Asibitin dan London' by the inhabitants was deliberate, simply because they will not want to call it 'Asibitin mission'. This perhaps reveals the hostilities mission services encountered in the area also.

By 1989 the ministry grew and started a mission training program, by starting a mission school. The graduates then were better equipped spiritually and in medical services. Most of them were in demand for medical outreaches, in churches and other mission agencies.

It is noteworthy that SOMEK was offering virtually free medical service and free salvation also.

It was the starting of the mission training in 1989 that renamed the mission and vision to Rural Evangelism Ministries International (REMI), as the vision of evangelism was originally burdened on the rural people, based also in the rural areas (villages) of soba. This was to spread worldwide from villages, towns and cities giving it an international effect.

With this development, the ministry was poised to work and it worked hard in training a lot of missionaries. Over the years, the ministry has trained over 600 missionaries in 22 years. And all these missionaries are spread all over, working either in churches, other mission agencies or leading and serving to meet personal calls to serve in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. Some are even serving as missionaries abroad.

The growth of the ministry continued, as in 1997 the ministry considered starting a secondary school add up to the SOMEK and mission training to:

1. Help "train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). Catch them young, you may say.
2. Assist the illiterates that desire to do mission (children and adult) to be literate.

3. Work with orphans and converts, especially those that were facing persecutions for their new found faith in Christ.

This was immediately followed up by the opening and running of nursery and primary schools together with adult classes in various mission fields to increase and ensure the success of the above stated objectives in REMI missions.

The development brought about more glory to God as lots and lots of testimonies came to be in all the areas that the ministry has moved. The details of how the ministry has feared and how God has helped the ministry from inception till date; and how God has assisted the ministry to account for resources and survive in the face of several challenges will be captured in the 'History and development of REMI ministry'.

The focus here is the experiences of REMI following the 2011 Nigerian post election crisis.

Composition and Structure of REMI Ministry:

In order to understand and appreciate the magnitude of the effect the 2011 post election crisis had on the REMI ministry, there is need to be informed of the composition and structure of the ministry in recent times.

From the brief history and development of REMI ministry, we can simply say that the ministry is composed and structured into:

- a. Medical – Outreach/ training
- b. Mission school- outreach/ service
- c. Circular education school- Outreach/ Community service.

These also define the structure and composition of the ministry in terms of human, material resources and the facilities that constitute the ministry. Note: that regardless the specialty, some workers in the ministry have worked across the different areas. And some are confined to their area of specialty.

It is noteworthy also that all the components are programmed and operated in accordance with the spiritual injunction and are all registered with the required licensing body authorizing them. The ministry also has developed adequate structures that accommodate each of the component and they were all situated in a large acres of land that forms the former headquarters of the ministry in Soba (along Zaria- Soba- Jos Road).

All the three components structured to run REMI had grown over the years, to possess and accommodate essential qualitative physical facilities (buildings) that housed the different components structured to run REMI ministry; this was before the burning down of the ministry H/Q:

Pictures of REMI Ministry before the Nigerian Post Election crisis



Pictures of REMI after the Nigerian 2011 Post Election Crisis



As earlier said the events of 18th April 2011, were surprising and a rude shock to the Christians especially. The surprise could be probably for the first time, a national election resulting to such a mass barbaric killing and inhuman treatment to the northern Christians, by their northern Muslim brothers.

The Christians tends to see the whole issue just as the prophet of God Jeremiah saw and commented about the heart of man, in the book of Jeremiah 17:9 thus; “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: Who can know it? Probably except God.

Perhaps this explain why for every little problem, be it tribal, religious, political etc between husband and wife in their room, two traders fighting in the market, land disputes, two almagiris fighting, etc. Before you know it, the problem will make a twist and the Christians will always be on the receiving end. Though they knew nothing about the problem.

But all glory to God, the ever present judge and help to the Church. The following verse to Jeremiah 17:9 i.e. verse 10 says. “The Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings”. This goes to always ensure victory to the church. The Lord also in Isaiah 49:25 saidI will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

We are very mindful of the present dwindling reading culture especially of Christian literatures. We will only highlight the personal testimonies of the victims or witnesses of the event that happened at the REMI headquarters on the 18th of April 2011 (post-election crisis). The testimonies will be published in different editions of mission experience, as there is much to be published in this edition.

Testimonies:

We decide to publish the different experiences and testimonies of REMI ministry staff, who were involve in the 2011 post election crisis, because they seem to have different experiences and testimonies. Bro. Musa B. Gwazah’s

testimony: Musa is in charge of the camp (H/Q) and he is in the medical team of REMI mission.

Musa gives his testimony thus: At about 7:30am on Monday the 18th of April 2011. I was informed of the grouping and regrouping of some strange people around the REMI H/Q (Camp). The groups first gathered themselves just outside one of the camp gates. I initially thought they were on a peaceful demonstration about the election, until they suddenly started moving into camp. They were carrying all kinds of dangerous weapons that you can think of, they had big sticks, clubs, knives, cutlasses, etc. they also carried worn out tyre. I wanted to first understand their mission, so I informed all my people in the camp not to react in any way.

Suddenly they started chasing us, all around the camp in their numbers and before we decided on what to do, they started physically attacking and assaulting us. At this time with them outnumbering us, the right decision we took was to run for our dear lives. This was very spontaneous and uncoordinated.

At first, before the pressure became much for me to run out of the camp into the bush, I saw one of our missionary's mother-in-law being struck on the head with a big club and she fell to the ground. The old woman had been trying to recover from a stroke that had partially paralyzed part of her body. With this, I jumped out of the camp and made my way into the bush. I could hear my daughter crying and shouting daddy! Daddy!! Daddy!!! I couldn't see her and I couldn't stop to look for her, so I paid no attention and I took off. It was no longer making the right decisions, but survival.

We also had some of the secondary school students on extension, about twenty of them. They also were shouting and calling out Uncle! Uncle!! Uncle! I also couldn't pay attention to them or assist at that moment. Everybody was first struggling to save himself.

The operation was so organized that they had those operating inside the camp and some outside waiting in their buses and motorcycles, to chase after us when we come out. Some followed me into the bush with their motorcycles, but I

was faster and more tactical in the bush. I ran into some yam ridges and hid myself near a Fulani's settlement. I couldn't trust the Fulani to seek for refuge. The rioters following me parked their vehicles where they saw me jump into, but they couldn't see where I was hiding. As my dress camouflaged with the grasses. They couldn't insist much, after searching for a while, they decided to go back. This afforded me the chance to move on in the bush, heading to a village ahead. I was almost celebrating freedom, when I saw another group ahead waiting. I first thought they were just standing and not connected to what was happening, I soon realized that I was almost making a mistake. In fact, I didn't know the operation on Christians was not only in REMI camp but also around all the villages in the area. As I approached the group they started coming towards my direction. Again I ran back and vied my way into the thick bushes, meandering within the bushes. It seemed I again ran out of their sight. I decided to jump into a gully eroded pit. For some time I hid for security. They couldn't locate my hideout, I was in there for almost 4 hours, until 2pm when they went to have their afternoon prayer (sallah).

I then came out and headed to one village where the Christians are dominant and this was one of our fields.

I was treated with a warm welcome and accommodated. My senses were now beginning to come back and I began to think of the people in the camp and the other Christians. I also began to think of what to do. It was then, I made a call to the police station at Soba and there was no response. I started thinking of how to reach the police so that they could go to secure the people at the camp. But there seemed to be no help from anywhere.

While I was in the bush, looking back at the direction of the camp, I saw thick black smoke rising up into the air (a sign that the camp was on fire). I bleed on the inside.

At about 8pm in the evening, I was fortunate to link up with one of the pastors in Soba. He was at that time in the police station, I enquired from him about the camp, he then told me nobody was killed (young or old) at the camp.

I passed the night and early in the morning on a hired motorcycle, I headed back to the police station at Soba. Because I was informed that some of my people were now there in the police custody. On my way I moved round the villages around to find out about the others who might be taking refuge in those villages. I was indeed fortunate to find some of the people. I encouraged them and suggested we all move to the police station in Soba.

On getting to the police station, I met most of the people there. We began to make arrangement to evacuate the injured to ABUTH in Zaria.

Less I forget, I was now reunited with my daughter, after the previous day's incident. I also had to start making plans of getting the students back to their various homes. I took them in a bus with injured people to Zaria from where they proceed to their respective homes.

While in Zaria, I was able to make contact with some of our stakeholders in REMI mission that were in Zaria. We arrived Zaria at about 2pm. Very early the next day I got a call from Soba for an emergency. It was one of our missionary Miss Ikuowem, She was beaten and tied to a mattress and petrol was used set her on fire. As God will have it, the fire only burnt the rope used in tying her to the mattress, so the mattress opened, with the mattress still burning one of the rioters rolled her away from the fire partially burnt in several places as she was in coma.

Bro Audu Badarangel's testimony:

Bro. Audu was the acting principal of REMI secondary school at the time of the crisis. He came into the ministry as a convert from Koma hills in Adamawa state. He grew up and schooled while staying with REMI chairman (His mentors you may say).

Audu testifies thus: Before going into my testimony let me first say, I thank the Almighty God for allowing the experience of Monday the 18th April 2011. It made me to see God real and to see that the scriptures speak truthfully about God to us. This seems to be the exact story of the missionaries in REMI and their

students. Because God has not said it was the end of our lives in Soba that day, that's why nobody died in REMI ministry Headquarters that day.

On that fateful day, the violent protesters and rioters stumped into the mission camp and started burning tires and violently attacking us in the camp. We were taken by surprise, not prepared, so we only had to run for our dear lives.

Everybody to his own way. But as we started running away and leaving the camp, they followed us also. We were running on foot, they were on foot, some on motorcycles and buses, but surprisingly, they couldn't catch up with me especially. Sometimes they get so close to slashing us with their dangerous weapons and hitting me with their clubs, but God somehow delivered me. This was how it was with me and some of our students who also ran out of the camp together with me.

We ran and ran until we became tired. They seemed to be catching up on us. I tried to hide myself along the bushes at first, but about three men saw me and followed me. I turned and saw them coming with cutlasses shouting, "See him, kill him, Allahu-akbar!! I ran a bit more, but the bush was open and far. I thought within me, even if I run they will catch up with me. So I turned back to see how close they were to me. I didn't even know that two of them seem to have given up. Only one of them was now pursuing me. As God will have it, I seem to know him. Maybe he never knew I was the one. As I turned we both recognized each other. He used to service the camp generator. He beckons on me to stop. I was really fagged out, in fact it was only God that was leading and helping me. As he beckoned on me, fearfully I slowed down, and he came much closer and God gave me boldness to speak. I couldn't remember his name, but I said to him, you know me and I know you, why your sudden violent attack on us? He couldn't answer, but he was weak and still holding his cutlass, he brought it down he then asked me to run toward another direction into an open farmland. The farmland was too open and I thought to myself, running further, I might come across with another group, as they were chasing us in groups.

So I prayerfully climbed a mango tree that was big and bushy. It was very risky, but God ministered to me, still feeling very unsafe and praying too. God

again ministered to me, as I was thinking of better safety. It came to my mind to call on one Alhaji Ibrahim. Who we do business with, on grains. He suddenly came and picked me up to his house. For the fear that they might attack his house, he contacted the police and they came to my rescue. The police took me to the police station, where some others were now taking refuge. We met some of the student straying; we all made our way to the police station.

We passed the night at the police station, the next day we took off to Zaria. With the security measures by the government, especially on the high way, it was very hectic and cumbersome before we could get to safety. The injured, we all went to the hospital for treatment.

Sister Rose Azaki Testimony:

Sister Rose Azaki is a wife to one of our missionary, Bro. Azaki. They have three children. She is also a missionary, serving in the medical outreach mission of the ministry and God is using her tremendously. She gives her testimony thus:

It all started on the early Monday 18th April 2011. As I woke up, I was by the ministry's hospital gate. I saw youth from the town (Soba) making their way to the hospital. They were carrying tyres and dangerous weapons.

I didn't think it was anything serious. I thought it was just a demonstration against PDP from the election result. Not knowing it was bigger than that.

They got to the camp gate and they met me standing by the hospital gate. One of them shouted, 'Haruna why are you wasting time in killing that woman standing?' Haruna then turned to me and said, 'today we'll kill you all in SOMECE.

This made me run inside the camp, to inform the others. We then all decided that everyone should find his or her way. That's how my husband, myself and the children took to our heels into the bush. My mother in-law staying with us then, was struck down with a club. She was beaten and left unconscious.

We all got missing in the bush and they still followed us into the bush, with their dangerous weapons. Also some were on their motorcycle, some on foot. Of course they caught up with me and the children, who were between the ages of 3 and 5 yrs old, as we couldn't run faster. About eight of them surrounded me and the children, wanting to cut me into pieces. As God will have it, God used one of them to shield me with the children with his hands pleading to the others to consider the children and to let me go. To God be the glory! They yielded, still carrying their weapons, they brought them down and asked me to take the other way and run away avoiding the other groups coming behind.

The way they asked me to follow, wasn't a familiar one, so I really didn't know where we were going. I thought of what next to do and I sort for help around, but it was not forthcoming. Psalm 121: 1-3 came to my mind. I started reciting psalm 23. As soon as I got to where it says "though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I shall fear no evil..... Still reciting, I turned to my children and suddenly, there came a sound of a motorcycle. As the motorcycle drew nearer, I was able to recognize the rider, he was one, Ibrahim, who came as God sent to rescue us. He carried us to some near-by Fulani's hut. He pleaded with almost all the Fulani's huts and their landlords, but none of them agreed to accommodate us, for fear of what might happen to them also. But he encouraged us and said to me, I should not worry. Still determining to help us out, he told me before anybody will kill any of you, they have to first kill me, instead. Note that, the Ibrahim is a Hausa Muslim. This was really the finger of God.

He then took us to one primary school at a village, Sabon gida. He decided to wait there with us until calmness was restored. After a while, the village head (Sarki) of Dan-Isah village learnt that we were at the primary school in sabongida. He sent his son Buhari, to bring us to his palace. The village head (Sarki) and his family members visit SOMEK hospital regularly. They refer to us as their doctors. From there, we again saw God's faithfulness and we started celebrating victory. The village head (Sarki) then took us to the police station to join our other colleagues, who God had also miraculously saved from the crisis. Note that Ibrahim who was determined to die for our survival, proceeded to his village after the village head of Dan-Isah sent his son to take us to the village head's palace.

After sometimes, Ibrahim still called to really ensure that we arrived safely. We stayed at the police station for a day before proceeding to Zaria with others. To God be the glory!!!

Bro Azaki's Testimony:

Bro Azaki is the husband of Rose Azaki (Mrs.). A father of two and a missionary serving in the medical outreach of REMI (SOMEK) also.

Bro Azaki began his testimony first with songs of praise: Oh God! What a privilege to share this testimony of being a partaker of persecution for Christ's sake. I personally and humbly offer praise, thanks and adoration unto the Lord of lords! King of kings! Master of the whole universe! Unto Him shall all flesh return to for judgment. He alone has shown faithfulness to me and my family. Great and awesome God who is still delivering his people from seen and unseen circumstances. !!! He then proceed with his testimony thus:

The 18th April 2011 will be unforgotten and a day in history when me and my family came face to face with death. Yet God in His faithfulness showed us mercy.

It was on a faithful morning at about 6am when we woke up to see thick black smoke all over Soba town. Of course, such smoke spells out trouble around town. Shortly, the Igbo business men and their families started trooping into REMI camp, in quick succession. Suddenly the camp was filled with people (Christians) coming to take refuge. This use to be the norms since 1987, religious and similar upheavals.

In a short while, those pursuing the Igbo businessmen and their family followed after them to the camp. On the way to the camp they were burning tires and holding all manner of dangerous weapons with them. At first, we were calm about it, since it wasn't the first of its kind and the camp had always been preserved by God. Not knowing that this time the story will be different. As we watched them coming near and into the camp, we then heard them openly saying

'kill them, (kashe su,) arna da kafiria!!' As they were fast approaching the camp with shouting and brandishing their weapons. Some on foot, bicycles and motorcycles. With buses making trips load of them to the camp.

We didn't quiet wait for them to round us up in the camp, we decided to run out of the camp. As earlier said, the camp was full with REMI mission workers and outsiders coming to take refuge. Everybody took to his heels. Except some mothers and children, the aged etc. My wife was coming from the hospital gate, as we stood, thinking of what best to do, the rioters, were coming on us and she shouted to me, run away! So I took off leaving her, with the children and my mother, who was just recovering from stroke. She is about 70years of age. My children started shouting, daddy! Daddy!! Daddy!!! I couldn't help. In fact, it was so sudden and such that immediately people could only think for themselves spontaneously.

I ran into the bush as every other person. In the bush, it was running for survival. Seeing that we all ran into the bush some followed us into the bush, some were setting fire on the camp, and some were busy looting our belongings. As I was running in the bush, I turned back to see if they were closing up on me. I saw afar, they were coming and the camp was in a heavy thick smoke, all over the camp area. I then found a hideout, after contemplating , I took cover there. Unfortunately, as I was waiting on time and praying for my life, family and others, suddenly, they caught up with at that hideout. I came out of the hideout to see them. They started beating the hell out of me, hitting me with their machetes and knives, they were also begging me for money. I was begging and pleading with them not to kill me. As God will have it they collected my GSM and all I had. Suddenly, one of them just decided to change his mind. He opposed them beating and trying to kill me. An argument broke out, he was able to win some to his side. So they smuggled me out and fight broke out among them about killing me. Soon, their number reduced. One of the hard liners, was pulling out a knife to punch me with it. He was stopped by that sympathizer.

Some of them were asking me, "where are your girls hiding?" Meanwhile I was bleeding from head to toe from the beating and machete cuts. They also

started telling me their grievances with us Christians. They insinuated that we voted PDP to power and that we are also killing them in Jos.

In my pains, I had them say to me, we have killed one lady in the camp, you will be the next to follow her. They were referring to one of the staff Miss Ikouwem Jacob, who I later learnt of the treatment she received from them. They even thought she was burnt to death.

The issue of killing me really became an issue at this point. But they continued to beat me with their weapons.

Finally, they asked me, if we let you go, where would you go from here? I answered, I will head to angwar mallam dogo community. They told me, it is not safe for me.

On hearing that and seeing I had gained favor with them, I suggested to remain a while with them, if possible. They said, it's not safe for me to stay with them.

After a while, they allowed me to go away from there. I was roaming in the bush, without exactly knowing where to go. Suddenly, I sighted a Fulani settlement and I came across a Fulani shepherd, seeing my condition, he himself became afraid, and pulled out his knife, thinking I will attack him. I avoided him and took another way. On my way I met two other Hausa Muslims. On seeing them, I was about running with the little strength left in me, suddenly, the two men called on me and calmed me down asking me not to run. Doctor! One of them shouted, this being the name they address us (SOMEK staff) with. We will not kill you, don't run. We've once worked for you in your farm. Please don't run we will not harm you, I then stopped, and waited for them. They took me to their village. On getting to their village, they sent for one Mallam Saidu, a former security man working with us at SOMEK (REMI). The man brought food and drinks. I couldn't take anything because I was in severe pains.

He then shaved all the bleeding spots on my head. I was able to also wash the blood from the cuts I sustained from the beating. He informed one of my friends in the village. My friend came, and they carried me to his house and later

called on the D.P.O from Soba division (town). The police driver came with their police vehicle to carry me to their station. I was one of the first to be rescued to the station. While at the station, the thought of my family and mother came to me. I started mourning, thinking they might have been killed. After a while, normalcy was restored and my wife and children were brought, with my mother to the police station, to join me there.

Mrs. Grace M. Gwazah Testimony:

Grace is the wife of Bro. Musa Gwazah the missionary that takes charge of REMI camp. She is also a missionary working with REMI education (secondary school kitchen)

Her testimony is very brief as she left the camp with her children, except one, before the crisis of the 18th April 2011. She testifies thus:

After several efforts to convince my husband to approve holidays period for me and the children during the election. It wasn't until the 16th April 2011, when he reluctantly allowed me. I travelled that day leaving our eldest daughter with him, as she was to stay for her summer lessons.

Even after leaving the camp, I was troubled and felt afraid a little bit. In the afternoon of 18th April 2011, when the news broke out about the state of the nation on the election result. I then realized why I was disturbed about staying for the election in Soba, even so that I was suppose to vote at the camp in Soba.

Worried about the news, especially as it was in and around Zaria, all efforts to make calls (contact) with people in the camp was impossible. Until after a while, I was very fortunate to get through to Abdullah the vice principal. I spoke to him though he was hiding on the top of a tree. We couldn't speak for long as he stands the risk of being exposed from his hide out; add up to a poor network reception. But he was able to give me the picture of the trouble at the camp then. I retired to prayers and intercession.

Until the evening of the next day, when my husband called, I then gave thanks to God for answering my prayers, especially as he told me nobody was killed. But people were beaten up and wounded with weapons and the like. Glory be to God.

Bro. Elias Testimony:

Elias has become like a son in the REMI chairman's house. He grew up, and was brought up, trained in the chairman's house. He was directly in charge of the chairman's residence in the camp. He also works as a store keeper in the REMI school store. He himself is from a Hausa background. Prior to the crisis, he was a very close friend to most of the soba Hausa Fulani Muslims. He testifies thus: Monday the 18th April 2011, have gone down in history as one bad day for me. I just brought out my small generator (I pass my neighbor), preparing to watch the election results computation on television. This was between 7-8am, some Igbo businessmen (Christians) were also bringing some of their motorcycles and some other valuables for safe keeping. "No peace in the town", they said. They are chasing and violently attacking the Christians. I came out to the highway to assess the situation, behold, the rioters were already close. I saw three of them, who were familiar faces, they were supposed to be friends, they were leading the group of rioters, carrying dangerous weapons. I immediately went back to alert the students. The men from the town, who kept their valuables with me, had hardly left us, when the rioters struck into the camp. As the men (Christians) approached the camp main gate to proceed to Pambegua, they were chased back. They had to jump over the fence. Fortunately, with God's help, I was able to lead about six students plus a female out of the camp in the midst of the whole crisis, their intentions was to slaughter us all in the camp, so that they could have easy access to our properties and our female students. We jumped over the fence, and ran into the bush. On sighting us, they chased after us into the bush. We got to a Fulani settlement, though scared of keeping us, they gave us food and water, we were only able to drink the water. We then moved on seeking for safety. We got to some hide out in the bush where we went into hiding as we were really tired of running all day long. I as the leader of the group, climbed up a tree top to hide there. So that I can be able to see, if someone approaches the hide out.

We were very unfortunate, the Muslim rioters caught up with us there. I was asked to come down from the tree, by the rioters. We argued about my Hausa background. One of the rioters collected my phones and all I had on me. I later pleaded for my sim cards, in sympathy; he gave them back to me. The girl (student) running with me heard our voice and came out from her hiding, (which was a mistake). She was captured and held by the rioters. They turned to me and asked me to run away. I pleaded for the girl, but they chased me away. After sometime, I came back to check on the girl, I found no one there. I checked on her hide out, I could only find her phone. I took it and inserted one of my sim in it, and immediately, one of us, Mallam Saminu a teacher in REMI Secondary School called. I described my location to him and he was able to locate me, as he was riding on a motorcycle. I narrated all what happened to him. He picked me up, intending to check on others, the students especially, we soon ran into another group of Muslim rioters. We split up again; I began to run in the bush again, this time I was really face to face with death. I ran out my heart. This group was very fierce and violent, little did I know that they were a group that was earlier assigned to kill me by one of them who was my close friend and an envious friend, who wanted to now kill me so as to possess my possessions. He knows much about me, we do business together and he always convey our goods to the school store when we make purchases. He has even sent for my cattle with my Fulani's shepherd. But the Fulani man refuse to release the cattle's.

When God has not said you will die by a particular circumstance, nothing will happen to you. This seems to be my testimony. In the heat of my turmoil, my father called, I couldn't answer him well. He was able to sense the seriousness of the situation around me, as the rioters were almost capturing me. But as God will have it, believe it or not, I pressed on, running as I could. I didn't even know that those chasing after me have deserted me and went on their way. At a point I turned to see again how close they were to me, only to find that nobody was really after me again. I slowed down to take some breathe. I was still running, but this time I was only being careful.

Suddenly, I heard a voice shouting my name; it was a Hausa friend who once stole my sheep. He was so troubled by that and he made a promise not to

cheat me anymore. At first, I didn't want to trust him. But he pleaded with me to trust him. He was the one God later really used to save my life. As he was able to take me to safety by taking me to my father's house in Giwa local government area, Madobi. My people couldn't believe it, as they had already given up on me. Alhassan, my enemy now turned a savior, was appreciated with gifts, for bringing me all the way, through the bush path back home. But he did not collect any of the gifts. I did it for God, he said.

Faith Abraham testimony

Faith Abraham is a female missionary with REMI ministry posted to work with REMI Education (secondary School). She serves as the school accounting officer and the ministry's chapel treasurer. She also teaches C.R.K in the secondary school.

She gives her testimony thus: - It was early morning of Monday the 18th April 2011, after my devotion, as I sat down for breakfast. Suddenly I saw people through my window running up and down the camp. I left my breakfast and came out to know what was really going on. On stepping out, I saw many people on motorcycles and on foot with knives and other dangerous weapons coming toward the camp. On seeing that, already, I was confused and other colleagues in the camp were on their heels, so I joined, running for our dear life.

I was really favored, as I experienced God's salvation that morning. Because, as they followed me on their motorcycles, I was running and they called on me and asked me to stop running.

They were fast closing on me so I stopped and stood, looking unto heaven. I was really terrified and perplexed. They surrounded me with their weapons in their hands, one of them in Hausa said "mu kakabe ta" meaning, lets finish her! One of them slapped me on the face and another kicked me. I retired to intercession on the inside. Instantly, I will say, God answered me as suddenly, an argument broke out within them as to what should they do with me. Some were sympathizing and some were on the hard line, insisting that they must kill me. As

God will have it, one of them said, “I am weak, seeing that she is a woman”. He was able to prevail on the others and they asked me to run (go).

This happened very close to a Fulani settlement I later was told that they were not really sure, if I was a Fulani girl. So I continue running towards the Fulani’s settlement. There was another group coming towards me, but God use the Fulani people to rescue me.

One of the Fulani men then took me to a Christian settlement (village). As he was taking me to the village, we saw one Mallam on a motorcycle. With the help of the Fulani man he offered to take me to the village where the Christians were dominant. It was a very long ride, so we arrived mararaba takalafiya very tired and worned out. That’s how I was delivered from the hands of the Muslim religious rioters. I proceeded from there to Jos, to my people, to celebrate happy survival. Glory be to God!!!

Sister Ikouwem B. Jacob Testimony:

Sister Ikouwem is a missionary with REMI ministry. She works with the medical wing of the ministry and also with REMI education, as a matron for the girls, in the secondary school. She is the assistant chaplain in the ministry’s chaplaincy, and the choir master of the mission chapel choir in the ministry. She states her testimony thus:

I have been a missionary with REMI ministry since 1991, till date. I have had several challenges in my mission experience. But the Lord has been very faithful and helpful in keeping me and moving me forward in the service.

The post election crisis of 18th April, 2011, is not only the most serious challenge, but has gone into history to be the most deadly and brutal challenge to my life and mission service.

It all began in the morning at about 8a.m . I was alone in my room in the ministry’s camp. I heard some very strange noise, sounding as the noise of battle (war front). I was frighten and terrified. As the sound grew louder and stronger. I became very worried and decided to come out of my room, to find out what

really it was. As soon as I stepped out of the room heading towards the gate to the female hostel, I was greeted by angry and dangerously armed rioters. I was pushed back into the room and was struck down on the head with an iron rod. I cried for help, but no help forthcoming, as I was left alone in the camp. I was beaten up with sticks and clubs, until I fainted. They left me, maybe thinking I was dead. I gained consciousness after a while and I got up to run, they came back again and started beating me until I became unconscious again. They left me. I again gained consciousness and came out trying to run. The gate to the female hostel was locked and blocked with nobody who can come in or out of the hostel, where my room is located. As I was trying to pass through the back of the hostel, they came back again for the third time, caught up with me, as I couldn't run or move fast by my nature. However, I was beaten again dragged back to my room, they decided to wrap me up and tie me with my mattress and set it on fire. The room was locked and on fire, they left me to burn to death. But, Jer 20:11 says..... My persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail:..... Also, Lam 3:22-23 says, it is of the Lords mercies we are not consumed, because his compassion fails not..... Verse 37 of that scriptures says, who is he that saith and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commanded it not. The angel of the Lord came to save me as the fire only burnt part of the mattress and the rope which was used to tie me in the mattress. So the mattress rolled open and most of the fire was put off by itself. I was still burning on the mattress when someone came to rescue me, he dragged me off the fire to the back of the ministry's chapel near the schools sport ground, he dumped me into a ditch I was unconscious, I only woke up after a long while, still very weak, I laid there for almost a day. Until the police came to finally rescue me the next day. They found me naked in the ditch (uncompleted foundation). They plucked leaves and covered me with them, thinking I was dead. They later realized, I was still alive, so they carried me in their open truck and took me to a clinic in soba town. The clinic belongs to a Muslim medical practitioner, they knew they couldn't handle my situation, they were hanging-on falsely, pretending to be on top of the situation, hoping I might just pass on there, instead of referring me to the hospital where I will be better cared for. Until Musa Gwazah the O.C. of the ministry's camp came from Zaria on hearing about my situation. He came and

transported me to Zaria ABUTH, where I was hardly and only with God's help, I was attended to, as there was no service in the hospital for the 24 hours curfew imposed throughout the state then.

God used the REMI ministry Chairman, his friend's, relations and former colleagues who work with the hospital. Also, my sister and the church in Zaria and many other persons God use to assist in ensuring I obtained the best care and medical attention I need.

I was hospitalized for three month before I began to get better from the injuries of burns, bruises even from broken bottles etc. Surgery all over my body etc.

I may still need some plastic surgery in some areas of my face and body for burns and injuries from clubs and sticks etc. This may only be possible by the much assistance I further get. I thank God, my colleagues, the church, other mission, ministries, individuals, groups and all those that God have used as a help during my ordeal from the hands of the Muslims.

To God be the glory !!!

Bro. Barminas Ephraim's testimony:

Barminas Ephraim is the new acting chaplain of REMI ministry. He had served in different departments before his new appointment. This includes serving in the medical department of the ministry. He is full of praises to God for his life and family for surviving the post election crisis.

In the morning of 18th April 2011, at about 10am after the announcement of the presidential election. Suddenly, Christians began to troop into our camp from the town. In times past, the camp had always provided protection and refuge to the Christians, from the town and surrounding villages, during such upheavals.

The day was really a dark day in the camp. I saw Hausa Muslims pursuing the Christians with all manner of dangerous weapons. They pursued them into the camp. They were in their numbers, far outnumbering us in the camp. The scene was that bad that everybody had to escape for his life. Many of us were very unlucky, they were either unable to run or they got caught up while fleeing. I was among the first to leave the camp that day. As I was running, the thought of others in the camp came to me, especially Sister Ikouwem who I know cannot even walk well. I had my GSM with me so as I was running away, I made several calls, and I was only able to get through to Istifanus and Saminu. With the phones we were able to locate each other and we started walking on foot, trying to get to Dutsen-Wai, which was tens of kilometers away. We became tired and began to seek for help on the way. We decided to move toward the main road, i.e. Zaria-Jos road.

We had no money and nothing on us. We were stopping vehicles, a bus stopped and we entered. We were heading to Dutsen-Wai. We got someone to pay our transport fare. On approaching Dutsen-Wai, the bus stopped. The rioters were everywhere. They stopped us and demanded that the Christians in the bus should be brought out. They urged the driver to bring them out. Fortunately, the driver told them there was no Christian in the bus. That's how they allowed us to pass through their road block. And that was how God helped us to escape death from the hands of the Muslim rioters. We were saved, but all of us in the camp were left as Job in the scriptures, who lost everything he had when he was tempted. We forgive the Muslims and pray for their salvation.

To God be the Glory!!!

Lessons from the testimonies:

From the testimonies of the missionaries, though stated from different experiences, it is very easy to make up a single story experience that sum up the whole experience.

Also, there are some striking aspects of the testimonies, which can be spiritually connected. For instance, "they were chasing after us on their bicycles

and motorcycles and we were on foot, but they still couldn't catch up with us on most instances". Absolutely, this must be the finger of God at work. Or how could you explain the fact that some climbed and hid on the top of trees, and they were not seen.

How about those that were taken to safety by the same people who were chasing to kill them! Or the missionaries that found safe haven with those that were supposed to be looking for their lives or their properties?

When we consider what happened on the same day in other places, the people that were killed, maimed or otherwise, what happened with the REMI missionaries was no drama, play or stage manage. Obviously, it was God at work for the ministry, and for the missionaries.

Yes, properties in hundreds of millions of naira were looted, damaged or burnt and vandalized. But the valuable resources, human life were not wasted. This confirms the scriptures in 1John 5:4 that "...for whatsoever is of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world: even our faith". Also take a look at this scripture: I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. (Heb 13:5-6) For a just man falleth seven times and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief. This shows Gods faithfulness to missions.

The bible says, "God does not change". The same God that assisted the first missionaries in missions is very much sufficient for missionaries anytime, anywhere. Hence, REMI missionaries were spared by His faithfulness.

But why persecution?

REMI and perhaps other missionaries might be asking the same question, but why persecution, when it is God's work we are doing? As the saying goes; "... the truth is always bitter" the gospel of Jesus Christ is the whole truth of God to man and the power of God unto salvation to every man that believeth, it is salvation sweetened by the power of God. Satan does not believe the gospel of Christ, so

he will do all he can to stop it, if possible, persecutions is Satan's strategies to stop the spread of the gospel.

Another reason for persecution to the church or missions is Jesus Christ himself was persecuted (John 15:20 and 21). Missionaries or believers generally should not only be prepared for persecution but must partake in persecution. The word of God should prepare and encourage believers to joyfully passed through whatever persecution (strategy) the enemy may put forth.

Peter, Paul and others were severely persecuted even unto death, today we have the gospel and enjoy God's abundant grace (salvation). The great commission must not die in our time for fear of persecution.

".... For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted..." (Heb 2:18).

Also, ".... Why art thou cast down, oh my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of His countenance..." (Ps 42:5). Believers, especially missionaries, should be encouraged to continue serving God in missions. Job said "... for there is hope for a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout up again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease..." (Job 14:7)

What do we do?

Believers, missionaries especially, might be wondering and asking, "what shall I do, in the wake of persecution ?" believers "MUST NOT GIVE UP". Certainly, we cannot and must not give up mission.

As missionaries, we were commissioned to "... go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen!.. (Math 28:19-20)

This is the mandate. It is worth everything of the believer, including dying for it. Call it persecution, adversity or whatever, surely, it may be unavoidable.

Every man including the believers, once in a while, is caught in its web. “Many are the afflictions of the righteous...” (Ps 34:19^a). Job in his trying times said, “man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble...” (Job 14:11). So we cannot run away from disasters or what we might call persecution. In fact, persecution is a taste of our faith. Satan’s troubles are often times God’s appointment for your promotion, to give you a glorious lift and put your enemy to a sentence of eternal bitterness.

Why we cannot shy away in the face of persecutions. If the believers refuse to give up on God, He will not give up on us “.... But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord: he is their strength in the time of trouble.

God is not interested in your defeated life. It is your victory or success that attests to his power and wonders before those around you. It is the believer’s testimony of victory and success that attracts men to Him. When we give up on God as a result of persecutions, we lose our testimony that will attract men to God. Besides, believers that hold on, despite persecutions, they can never lose out i.e. they shall be rewarded at the end, (Ps 37:23-25). Math 11:12 says: And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Believers might even be required to be more radical in mission than to chicken away in the face of persecution.

Conclusion:

Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commanded it not? (Lam 3:37). Believers must know and understand that only God has the final say on any matter that concerns his creation, especially his own servants. Not the adversity, persecution... etc that confront us. Believers, in mission especially, must know or remember that Satan’s tricks or strategies remain the same. They have not changed. The scripture says: the thief cometh to steal, kill and destroy.... (John 10:10). But as long as we belong and serve God, And we know that all things will work together for good to them that love God,.... (Rom 8:28).

Believers must allow God (Scriptures) to comfort and encourage us in doing mission:

James 1:2 says: my brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world (John 16:33). Apostle Paul in his final missionary trip saith: “....confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God...” (Acts 14:22)

Trials and troubles we are told workout patience, which in turn produces experiences. Experiences produces hope in the believer. Hence, Apostle James said: “consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develop perseverance.....” (James 1:2-4 NIV)

Finally, believers must hope in God for reward. “ For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry (Heb 10:36-37). God’s promises will work for us, if we will learn to walk in patience. When we are trusting God in tribulation or persecution, lets believe that he is faithful, and that in due time he will respond. Psalm 30:5 NIV says: for his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts for lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. God is very much enough for believers in whatever situation Satan appears to us.