

## A Life Taken at Easter

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Violence

The attack began around 1:00 a.m. on April 27, 2011 in Nigeria's northern state of Bauchi. Amadi (name changed to protect identity) and her family were Christian and had begun preparing for Easter. Amadi was sleeping when she



awoke to gunshots fired outside her home. Her husband and children were out of town, so Amadi grabbed her handbag and mobile to flee to the home of a neighbor. She never made it there. As she was running she heard a gunshot, and the pain in her leg told her that she had been hit.

The attackers broke into her home and found her sitting on the ground having been shot in the leg. They rushed at her with machetes raised and swung to slash her head but she raised her hand to block the weapon. Though her hand deflected that initial barrage, the wound has never fully healed, and even today she is unable to fully use that hand.

She fell forward to the ground, and using machetes, they attacked again. Both her head and her back were ripped open. No words were exchanged during the attack, though Amadi heard shouted throughout, "*Allahu Akbar*," which means "God is great." When they had finished, they rushed out and Amadi began to hear the voices of neighbors and eventually someone from the military. Bleeding profusely and in a terrible condition, she was taken to the hospital in town.

At the time Amadi was six months pregnant. When she arrived at the hospital she asked that which was most pressing on her mind, "Doctor, can you hear the baby moving?" The doctor quickly checked and then answered with a heart stopping and straightforward report, "no." At that point Amadi said that she lost her mind and did not know what was happening.

Two days later she was transferred to the city of Bauchi so that she could receive better medical treatment. She spent the initial five days in intensive care where they had to first "flush" out the six-month old baby who had been killed and then the placenta.

Amadi spent the next four months in that hospital slowly recovering. Today she is still unable to work or to exert significant physical activity due to the loss of functionality in her hand and reduced mobility in the leg that was shot. At the same time she has remained committed to her faith in Christ and to engagement with the church.

Unfortunately, this is the reality facing many Christians across northern and central Nigeria who have been ruthlessly and intimately attacked by Boko Haram and Fulani militants. It is in the midst of this context that believers have had their character tested and faith formed.